

Swindon Borough Council

Town Twinning Network

Monday, 25 July 2005

Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, Swindon (Anticipated meeting room)

At 6.00 p.m.

**Conservative
Councillors**

Doreen Dart
Chris Van Roon
Deborah Baylies

**Labour
Councillors**

Derique Montaut
David Glaholm

**Liberal Democrat
Councillors**

Stan Pajak

John Mayell, Swindon Ocotal Link
Mr Reg Clarke, Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association
Mr Bruce Clarke, Swindon Ocotal Link
Mr Phil Eagle, La Garenne Link
Mr D Ainscough, Lydiards - Tessy sur Vire Twinning Association
Peter Mallinson, Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association
Mike Ide, Wroughton - St Germain les Corbeil Twinning Association
Dr D Worsnip, Highworth - Pontorson Twinning Association
Steph Trinci, Swindon Chamber of Commerce
Daryl Jones, Senior Economic Development Officer

Committee Officer: Alison Smith (Telephone 01793 463612)

Email: alsmith@swindon.gov.uk

Swindon Borough Council, Civic Offices, Euclid Street, Swindon, SN1 2JH (Telephone 01793 463000)

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
- 2. Minutes** (Pages 1 - 2)
To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 26th April, 2005.
- 3. Public Question Time**
See explanatory note below. Please phone the Committee Officer whose name and number appears at the top of this agenda if you need further guidance.
- 4. Update on Swindon Borough Council Twinning Projects** (Pages 3 - 10)
- 5. Reports from the Town Twinning Associations and Links** (Pages 11 - 12)
- 6. Update on the Potential Chattanooga Link** (Pages 13 - 16)

Date of Despatch: 18 July 2005

Public Question Time - Swindon Borough Council is committed to increasing its accountability to the public and to promoting active citizenship. Up to 15 minutes will be allowed at the start of all Council meetings for questions to the Chair from members of the

public about the work of the Committee (except for confidential matters and specific planning applications). Questions must be relevant, clear and concise. Because of time constraints Public Question Time is not an opportunity to make speeches or statements. Prior notice of a question to the Director of Law and Corporate Governance is desirable - particularly if detailed background information is needed.

Access Arrangements – *The Venue is wheelchair accessible and an infrared receiver hearing system is provided. If you would wish to attend the meeting but have any special requirement to enable you to do so please contact the Committee Clerk above, as soon as possible prior to the date of the meeting.*

If you would like to receive any of the pages contained in this agenda in a larger print size please contact the Committee Officer whose name appears on the first page of this agenda.

TOWN TWINNING NETWORK

TUESDAY, 26 APRIL 2005

PRESENT:- Councillors Derique Montaut (Chair), Doreen Dart and Philip Steele; Mr Reg Clarke and Peter Mallinson (Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association), Mr Bruce Clarke (Swindon Ocotal Link), Mr Phil Eagle (La Garenne Link) and Daryl Jones (Senior Economic Development Officer)

Apologies for absence were received from John Mayell and Mike Ide.

18. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting. Councillors Philip Steele and Doreen Dart made a non prejudicial declarations of interest in respect of Agenda Item No. 5 in their capacity as members of the host party for the Salzgitter visitors.

19. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd March 2005, be confirmed.

Matters Arising

Minute 13 – Reg Clarke circulated a report on the outcomes of the official visit to Salzgitter that took place from 8th – 11th April, as agreed at the last meeting of the Town Twinning Network.

Minute 15 – Daryl Jones and Bruce Clarke agreed to design a pro-forma requesting information from each of the twins and links in order to develop an overall Twinning Business Plan.

Minute 16 – Dr Worsnip confirmed that the application from the Highworth – Pontorson Twinning Association to the European Commission had been unsuccessful because it lacked sufficient European content rather than because of the high number of applicants.

Potential Link with Chattanooga – Councillor Dart reported that a preliminary meeting would be held this week to discuss this issue and confirmed that the Chamber of Commerce were supporting this link. Daryl Jones added that community groups tend to develop links to suit themselves and that, should these groups wish to make their links more official, then an approach to the Council should be made. A progress report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Network.

20. Exempt Items - Exclusion of Press and Public

Resolved – That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local

Government Act 1972, the public be excluded during the discussion of the matters referred to in the additional urgent item on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 5 and 7 of Schedule 12A to the Act. (Minute 21 refers.)

21. Application for Town Twinning Grant

Members of the Town Twinning network were asked to consider an application for a grant that had been received from the Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association for £1000 to assist with the costs of a visit to Swindon by Salzgitter delegates between 1st and 8th June 2005.

Reg Clarke confirmed that Salzgitter had become an official twin town with Swindon in 1975 and that this year was its 30th anniversary. A number of exchanges had been made over these 30 years that had involved different groups, including families, official delegates and officers of the Council. There had been a positive exchange of ideas and information between the two Councils and external funding had assisted with officer exchanges, particularly in relation to Education and the Youth Service. The grant was to be used for a visit by Salzgitter delegates to Swindon in June and a number of events and visits had been arranged to Swindon and the surrounding areas including a tree planting ceremony at the Polo Ground and a formal farewell evening. Reg Clarke made it clear that this visit would be separate to the official Civic visit that is due to take place later on in the year.

Members of the Network asked what community involvement there would be as part of this visit and whether there would be an opportunity for other groups to participate in the events. Reg Clarke replied that the visit was still in the planning stages and that numbers had not yet been confirmed which meant that there may be spare capacity on some of the events which could be available to members of other twins and links. The Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association would also be promoting the visit to schools and other community groups and information would be circulated to members of the Town Twinning Network.

Resolved – (1) That the Town Twinning Network recommends that a grant of £1000 be approved for the Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association; and (2) That the Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association report back to the Network on the outcome of the visit.

22. Any Other Business

Bruce Clarke informed the Network that he would be putting a proposal forward to the next meeting seeking approval to obtain insurance for public events that all Swindon twins and links could use and benefit from.

To: The Chair and Members of
the Town Twinning Network

Date: 25th July 2005

By: Director of Law and Corporate
Governance

Parish/Ward: All

Update on Swindon Borough Council Twinning Projects

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To provide a verbal report updating members of the Town Twinning Network on the activities of Swindon Borough Council in relation to Twinning Projects since the last meeting of 22nd March 2005,

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That members of the Town Twinning Network note the activities of Swindon Borough Council.

3 Financial and Procurement Implications

- 3.1 There are no direct financial or procurement implications relating to this update. Any future activity that has financial implications would be subject to a separate report.

4 Social, Environmental, Staffing, Legal/Human Rights, Risk and Other Implications

- 4.1 Social Implications – This report has no direct social implications. It is anticipated that any activity will strengthen links between Swindon and its twin towns and widen the horizons of the individuals and groups involved in twinning activities
- 4.2 Environmental Implications – There are no environmental implications arising from this report
- 4.3 Staffing Implications – There are no staffing implications arising from this report
- 4.4 Legal/Human Rights Implications – This report has no specific legal or human rights implications
- 4.5 All other Risk Implications – None

- 4.6 Links to Corporate Plan – The Council is committed to developing and promoting a strong local image and “pride of place” for all (objective 4 – an economically prosperous place).

5 Detail

- 5.1 The Town Twinning Network seeks to promote co-ordination and co-operation in the development of Twinning Links and in the development of other International friendship links between the people of Swindon and communities in other Countries.
- 5.2 The Town Twinning Network meets five times a year in order to encourage the development of International friendship links and commercial links between the people of Swindon and communities in other Countries by the provision of a forum for discussion and the exchange of information.
- 5.3 The Senior Economic Development Officer will provide members of the Network with a verbal update of the activities of Swindon Borough Council in relation to Town Twinning activities that have taken place since the last meeting on 22nd March 2005 as follows:-
- 5.4 Salzgitter - Training Bridge exchange of three Council trainees went ahead during May 2005. Funding for these trainee exchanges was applied for through British Council. Report attached as appendix 1.
- 5.5 Salzgitter – Meeting with Director of Community and Housing to discuss future youth activities with Salzgitter. Youth exchange planned for Summer 2006.
- 5.6 Torun – Hosted the Senior Economic Development Officer from Torun City Council who was living in Swindon for 1 month.
- 5.7 Torun – A meeting with a business Director from Helical Poland who was developing the Torun City Speedway track. He wanted to help Swindon develop better business links with Torun using the Speedway development as a good example of business links.
- 5.8 Torun – Swindon Borough Council and Polish Community will host Torun Folk Dance group (Kadzioleczka) at the Polish Community Centre on 28 July at 6pm.
- 5.9 Torun – Request to link and perform joint music events with Torun City.
- 5.10 Torun – A group of 6 trainees from Torun Electricity company will do their annual training exchange in Swindon for 9 weeks from 20 August 2005.
- 5.11 Torun – A young student from Torun is currently doing her work experience in Swindon and Wiltshire and is currently living in Swindon.

5.12 Ocotal – Group insurance request for events and displays at on public sites. Proposal attached as Appendix 2.

5.13 Opportunities for funding from EU and British Council – 2005/06.

6 Appendices

6.1 Appendix 1 - Report on Training Bridge Council Exchange project.

6.2 Appendix 2 - Proposal for group Insurance for all members of the Town Twinning Network.

7 Date

7.1 5th July 2005

The Director of Finance and Director of Law and Corporate Governance are consulted on all reports.

Further information regarding this report can be obtained from Daryl Jones on Direct Dial No. 463158 or Email djones@swindon.gov.uk

The Lead Member for the service area subject to this report is Councillor Mike Bawden, Leader of the Council.

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The preparatory visit for this year's exchange trip to Salzgitter took place on 27 & 28 April. Monika Bruer and I discussed the arrangements for our trainees under five main headings, (a) travel to, from and within Salzgitter, (b) accommodation and subsistence, (c) work placements, (d) language tuition, and (e) cultural learning.

Generally travel costs are more expensive than budgeted, partly due to the very limited availability of cheap flights to Hanover as it is not a tourist destination, and partly because the long distances from Swindon and Salzgitter to airports require additional transfer costs. We spent much time looking for the cheapest costs at workable times of day given the shortness of time available before the exchange and chose flights from Gatwick with either coach or car transfers.

We found suitable host families for our trainees, but regrettably the only families available all lived some distance from the town hall, requiring daily bus trips to work, thus incurring additional bus pass expenses. However, the standard of accommodation chosen and the choice of families were the most suitable for the trainees' needs, and would give them the added bonus of learning how the local transport system functions!

Sarah Bakewell was allocated a work placement in the personnel and training department, which reflects her own role in Swindon, and Katie Sworn will have a split placement between the Social Services and the Housing departments, again to reflect her own job.

The budget for language tuition is based on a 'per person' cost, but the tutor is paid by the lesson, whether there are two people in the class or ten, so we had to compromise with the amount of tuition to try to stay within budget. We therefore agreed that three days of lessons, four hours per day, would suffice as both trainees studied German at school to 'A'-level standard.

We looked at a number of options for cultural learning and agreed on an outline plan which would include some key excursions to help understand the local history and the German way of life. We also agreed how these excursions would be managed - in some cases they would be supervised by city council officers, in others by the families and some would be supervised by the German trainees who came to Swindon in November; Daniel, Claudia and Janet.

Overall we covered just about all the details of the visit and produced a draft timetable which balances tuition, work placement, cultural opportunities and time with the host families. We also agreed the content of the workbooks for Katie and Sarah and discussed some ideas for research topics to give their visit some focus. As always my hosts were very welcoming and hospitable and, as I had already been to the local visitor attractions on previous visits, this time I was treated to guided tours of the fire training headquarters and the region's recycling plant, which due to my association with Swindon Services was very interesting and informative.

On Monday 09 May I accompanied Katie and Sarah to Salzgitter for the start of their **exchange visit**. Apart from jams on the M25 making our coach trip to Gatwick 45 minutes late, we arrived in Salzgitter without hitch. Monika Bruer, her assistant, the Head of Personnel and the host families had laid on a small reception for us (which was most welcome because, due to the late arrival at Gatwick, the trainees had not eaten for 10 hours!).

Sarah and Katie were then taken home by the families and collected in the morning from their houses for a guided tour of the Steelworks. This is a must-do experience for any visitor to really understand Salzgitter's recent history, both at a local and a national level. In the afternoon we gave the trainees a familiarisation tour of the town centre, bought their weekly bus passes and worked out their bus stops, bus services, route numbers and timetables. In the evening they went with their host families to a presentation at a local hotel organised by the German equivalent

of the Women's Institute.

On Wednesday morning, Katie and Sarah attended their first language classes having arrived at the Community College on the bus (so Tuesday's preparation had been a success!). I sat in for these lessons and was very happy with the teacher's focus and pace. She will concentrate on the themes that will provide most benefit in the time available - introductions, useful conversation, how to ask for directions, food, shopping, everyday necessities without getting overly bogged down with grammar. Work-place vocabulary, we decided, would be best learnt during their work placements. After lunch the trainees were taken to the local museum and I returned to Swindon.

The rest of their programme includes two more days of language tuition, eight days in their work placements and two or three more cultural visits. Monday 16 May is a public holiday in Germany, so they have one less working day, and they will be travelling back to England on Friday 27 May.

From the time we arrived on Monday until the time I left on Wednesday, Katie and Sarah were cared for and everything was arranged for their comfort. They are both happy with their families and accommodation and neither of them had any complaints or worries, and I am confident that, should any problems arise, they both have the knowledge to express them and will get the right support to address them.

Many thanks,
Phil

Proposal for group Insurance for all members of the Town Twinning Network

10th June 2005

Members of the network who have sought to run an event or put on a display at public sites such the Brunel Plaza, Town Centre or in a council or privately owned venue will know that they are requested to provide insurance prior to booking typically:

£5,000,000 for Public Liability

£5,000,000 Employers liability (includes use of volunteers)

The total cost for one days cover is usually in the region of £300!

Swindon Ocotal Link regularly incurs these sorts of charges as, I'm sure, do other town linking groups. I would like to propose that the Town Twinning Network takes out a group insurance for all its members.

The agency I have spoke to sees no problem in this arrangement. The cost would be in the order of £500 - £600 and would last all year for up to a set number of defined events.

As chair of SOL I am happy to go ahead and find the best price and make the necessary arrangements if the Committee feel this is appropriate.

Bruce Clarke
Chair
Swindon Ocotal Link

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To: The Chair and Members of
the Town Twinning Network

Date: 25th July 2005

By: Director of Law and Corporate
Governance

Parish/Ward: All

Reports from the Town Twinning Associations and Links

1 Purpose

1.1 To provide verbal reports updating members of the Town Twinning Network on the activities of the following Town Twinning Associations and Links since the last meeting of 22nd March 2005:

- Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association
- Swindon Ocotal Link
- Swindon Torun Link
- La Garenne Link
- Highworth-Pontorson Twinning Association
- Other Twins/Links present at this meeting

2 Recommendations

2.1 That members of the Town Twinning Network note the activities of the Twinning Associations and Links.

3 Financial and Procurement Implications

3.1 There are no direct financial or procurement implications relating to this update. Any future activity that has financial implications would be subject to a separate report.

4 Social, Environmental, Staffing, Legal/Human Rights, Risk and Other Implications

4.1 Social Implications – This report has no direct social implications. It is anticipated that any activity will strengthen links between Swindon and its twin towns and widen the horizons of the individuals and groups involved in twinning activities

- 4.2 Environmental Implications – There are no environmental implications arising from this report
- 4.3 Staffing Implications – There are no staffing implications arising from this report
- 4.4 Legal/Human Rights Implications – This report has no specific legal or human rights implications
- 4.5 All other Risk Implications – None
- 4.6 Links to Corporate Plan – The Council is committed to developing and promoting a strong local image and “pride of place” for all (objective 4 – an economically prosperous place).

5 Detail

- 5.1 The Town Twinning Network seeks to promote co-ordination and co-operation in the development of Twinning Links and in the development of other International friendship links between the people of Swindon and communities in other Countries.
- 5.2 The Town Twinning Network meets five times a year in order to encourage the development of International friendship links and commercial links between the people of Swindon and communities in other Countries by the provision of a forum for discussion and the exchange of information.
- 5.3 Each of the Town Twins and Links will give a verbal update at the meeting on the activities that have been undertaken since the last Town Twinning Network meeting.

6 Appendices

- 6.1 None

7 Date

- 7.1 11th July 2005

The Director of Finance and Director of Law and Corporate Governance are consulted on all reports.

Further information regarding this report can be obtained from Alison Smith on Direct Dial No. 463612 or Email alsmith@swindon.gov.uk

The Lead Member for the service area subject to this report is Councillor Mike Bawden, Leader of the Council.

To: The Chair and Members of
the Town Twinning Network

Date: 25th July 2005

By: Director of Law and Corporate
Governance

Parish/Ward: All

Update on the Potential Chattanooga Link

1 Purpose

- 1.1 Andy Lane from Darackmotorsport will attend the Town Twinning Network on 25th July to give a verbal update on the progress that has been made with regards to the potential link between Swindon and Chattanooga, USA.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That members of the Town Twinning Network note the progress made in relation to the potential link between Swindon and Chattanooga, USA.

3 Financial and Procurement Implications

- 3.1 There are no direct financial or procurement implications relating to this update. Any future activity that has financial implications would be subject to a separate report.

4 Social, Environmental, Staffing, Legal/Human Rights, Risk and Other Implications

- 4.1 Social Implications – This report has no direct social implications. It is anticipated that any activity will strengthen links between Swindon and its twin towns and widen the horizons of the individuals and groups involved in twinning activities
- 4.2 Environmental Implications – There are no environmental implications arising from this report
- 4.3 Staffing Implications – There are no staffing implications arising from this report
- 4.4 Legal/Human Rights Implications – This report has no specific legal or human rights implications
- 4.5 All other Risk Implications – None

- 4.6 Links to Corporate Plan – The Council is committed to developing and promoting a strong local image and “pride of place” for all (objective 4 – an economically prosperous place).

5 Detail

- 5.1 The Town Twinning Network seeks to promote co-ordination and co-operation in the development of Twinning Links and in the development of other International friendship links between the people of Swindon and communities in other Countries.
- 5.2 A request from the business community has been placed with the Town Twinning Network to create an official Swindon friendship link with the city of Chattanooga in the USA. This is the first international link that Chattanooga has made with a town in the UK.
- 5.3 American twinning is seen very much as increasing commercial as well as social benefits. The way in which Swindon currently views twinning would need to be broadened. This would not detract from its ethos but broaden its horizon.
- 5.4 Currently Britain is seen as the USA's best partner in Europe and Swindon can take advantage of that.
- 5.5 The background of both Chattanooga and Swindon are very similar:-
- 5.5.1 Both are famous and founded around the railway
 - 5.5.2 Both are seen as strategically located in the countries for distribution and communication
- 5.6 Both are in the process of developing their commercial hubs

6 Appendices

- 6.1 Appendix 1 - Briefing note about the options for an official Swindon friendship link to Chattanooga (to be tabled at the meeting).

7 Date

- 7.1 13th July 2005

The Director of Finance and Director of Law and Corporate Governance are consulted on all reports.

Further information regarding this report can be obtained from Daryl Jones on Direct Dial No. 463158 or Email djones@swindon.gov.uk

The Lead Member for the service area subject to this report is Councillor Mike Bawden, Leader of the Council.

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