

TOWN TWINNING NETWORK

THURSDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 2005

PRESENT:- Councillors Doreen Dart (Chair), Deborah Baylies, Stan Pajak and Chris Van Roon, Mr Reg Clarke and Peter Mallinson (Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association), Daryl Jones (Senior Economic Development Officer), and Dr D Worsnip (Highworth - Pontorson Twinning Association).

Mr. Andy Lane (Darack Motorsport) was also in attendance.

Apologies for absence were received from Ms. Steph Trinci, John Mayell, Mr Bruce Clarke, Mr Phil Eagle, Councillors David Glaholm and Derique Montaut.

1. Appointment of Chair

Resolved – That Councillor Doreen Dart be Chair of the Town Twinning Network until November, 2006.

(Councillor Dart took the Chair.)

2. Appointment of Vice-Chair.

Resolved – That Councillor Chris Van Roon be Vice-Chair of the Town Twinning Network until November, 2006.

3. Minutes

Resolved - That, subject to the changes set out below, the minutes of the meeting held on 15th September, 2005, be confirmed.

(a) Eric Craigie be added to the attendance list.

(b) Minute 34 (1) should read that the Town Twinning Network noted the reduction in the Revenue Budget 2005/06 to £2,000 (not £2,00) from £5,000 from the previous year.

4. Matters Arising

Minute 25(3) - no response had been received following the press release that had been sent out regarding the activities of the Network and encouraging other groups in Swindon, with International links, to participate.

Membership Forms – there was still some confusion as to the purpose of the membership forms and whether they were needed in order to qualify for funding. Daryl Jones responded that, in order to qualify for funding, each group would need to have a simple constitution and a group bank account. The purpose of the membership forms was to identify any future demands that may be made on the grants budget and to compile a list of the activities of all the twins and links in Swindon and the surrounding areas.

5.

Public Question Time

No public questions were received during the meeting.

6.

Town Twinning Link with Chattanooga, USA

Mr. Andy Lane from Darack Motorsport updated members of the Network on the progress that had been made with regards to the potential link between Swindon and Chattanooga, USA. Andy confirmed that there were groups of people in both Swindon and Chattanooga who were willing to take this forward and were just waiting for the agreement to be put in place before progressing anything further. Daryl Jones confirmed that there were no financial implications for the Council in setting up a friendship agreement but that the final decision would have to be made by the Cabinet. A friendship agreement is normally a pre-cursor to the establishment of an official Twinning agreement, but this can take some time due to the potential costs to the Council.

Resolved – (1) That members of the Town Twinning Network note the progress made in relation to the potential link between Swindon and Chattanooga, USA, and

(2) That it be recommended to the Cabinet that the Council sign the Friendship and Co-operation Agreement between Swindon and Chattanooga, USA.

7.

Reports from the Town Twinning Associations and Links

The network considered (a) a report of the Director of Law and Democratic Services dated 31st October, 2005 and (b) the following verbal reports from Town Twinning Associations and Links:

Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association

Reg Clarke reported that a Salzgitter delegation had visited Swindon from 30th September to commemorate 30 years partnership between the two towns. The programme for the visit had included a welcome dinner and a mini conference and Reg had also been awarded the Federal Republic of Germany's Embassy Award.

Two teachers from Moredon School and two from Pinehurst school had visited Salzgitter to assess the possibility of school exchanges in the near future. Six tutors from the Salzgitter Fredenberg Gymnasium College had visited Swindon College.

Peter Mallinson added that a grant application had been made to the European Union for a grant to visit Salzgitter in May 2006. This application had passed the first stage of acceptance and the final outcome would be known on February 15th 2006.

Swindon Torun Link

Councillor Stan Pajak reported that the Torun and Swindon Twinning Enterprise (TASTE) trip to Torun would take place on 18th November, 2005. 45 people would be going, including the Mayor and Mayoress of Swindon and a reporter from the Evening Advertiser.

Visitors from Torun would be invited to come to Swindon for the Brunel celebrations next year.

Highworth-Pontorson Twinning Association

Dr Worsnip thanked the network for the grant of £300 that went towards the flower exhibition in the Church at Pontorson. Each of the flower displays depicted famous people who had lived near to the Church in Pontorson. Dr Worsnip added that each French Twin Town had a budget that was used specifically for Twinning activities which meant that visitors to these towns were always treated very generously.

Dr Worsnip asked for clarification on whether transport costs were specifically excluded as part of the criteria that the Council uses for the allocation of grants as they were planning a trip for next April and would wish to apply for a grant. However, the only costs involved would be travel costs. The Director of Law and Democratic Services would be asked to clarify this.

They were considering setting up a tripartite twinning between Highworth, Pontorson and Vassenberg and the next twinning visit would take place in Vassenberg to celebrate European Day. Dr Worsnip added that Pontorson and Vassenberg had been twinned for 25 years.

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

8. Update on Swindon Borough Council Projects

The Network considered a report on the activities of Swindon Borough Council in relation to Twinning projects since the last meeting of 15th September, 2005. Daryl Jones reported on the following projects:

- Training Bridge exchange of 4 Salzgitter Council trainees were currently here in Swindon for 3 weeks. The trainees attended this meeting and gave a short presentation on what they were involved with.
- Meeting with youth leaders to discuss future youth activities with Salzgitter and Ocotol. Youth exchanges were planned for the Summer, 2006.
- A community exchange trip to Torun was going ahead from 18 – 21 November, 2005.

Resolved – That members of the Town Twinning Network note the activities of Swindon Borough Council.

9. Update on Youth Exchanges

Daryl Jones updated members of the Network on the development of youth exchanges between Swindon's twin towns and friendship links to take place in 2006. A number of meetings had taken place with the youth service on the following potential youth exchanges:

- The Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association were keen to send a football team over to Salzgitter in July 2006 as part of football in the community.
- Funding was available to take young people over to Ocotol next summer – officers were trying to get the Duke of Edinburgh group involved in this.

Resolved – That members of the network note the progress made with regard to youth exchanges between Swindon's twin towns and friendship links in 2006.

10. Any Other Business

The Chair informed the network that Daryl Jones would be leaving the Council at the end of December, 2005 and thanked him for all his hard work on Town Twinning and wished him all the best in his new job.

The next meeting of the Town Twinning Network will be held on Thursday 5th January, 2006 at 6pm.