

TOWN TWINNING NETWORK

THURSDAY, 5 JANUARY 2006

PRESENT:- Councillors Doreen Dart (Chair), Deborah Baylies, Derique Montaut, Stan Pajak and Chris Van Roon, Mr Reg Clarke (Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association), Mr Bruce Clarke (Swindon Ocotal Link), Dr D Worsnip (Highworth - Pontorson Twinning Association), Dr M Colley (Lechlade Twinning Association) and Andy Lane (Chattanooga).

Councillor Ray Fisher was also in attendance.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor David Glaholm and Peter Mallinson.

11. Minutes

Resolved – That, subject to the changes set out below, the minutes of the meeting held on 17th November 2005 be confirmed.

(a) **Minute 7** – Highworth Pontorson Twinning Association should read:

- I. Wassenberg (not Vassenberg)
- II. Pontorson and Wassenberg had been twinned for 35 years (not 25 years)

(b) **Minute 9** – Update on Youth Exchanges should read that “funding will be applied for to take young people over to Ocotal next summer (rather than “funding was available”).

12. Matters Arising from the minutes

Minute 6 - The Chair reported that Cabinet had deferred making a decision on the potential link with Chattanooga, USA but that a special meeting was to be arranged between the Chair, Andy Lane and Cabinet Members so that a decision could be made in the near future.

Minute 10 – Councillor Montaut requested that a letter be sent to the Leader of the Council, on behalf of the Town Twinning Network, requesting that officer support be provided for the Network following the departure of Daryl Jones, Senior Economic Development Officer.

13. Public Question Time

No public questions were received during the meeting.

14. Reports from the Town Twinning Associations and Links

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

Swindon Torun Link

Councillor Stan Pajak updated the network on the recent visit to Torun that had taken place during November 2005. The visit had been very successful and had included a blues festival, a walking tour and a reception with the President of Torun. Torun is a University Town and, as such, has a lot of student activity. It is also an historic town with plenty of shops. The Mayor, Councillor Ray Fisher, added that the University had a significant influence upon the town and that he had brought back one of the University brochures, in English, to hand over to the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bath in Swindon. Councillor Pajak reported that another trip may be organised to Torun in the summer.

Councillor Pajak also reported that a suggestion had been put forward to the Governors of one of the Primary Schools in the Northern Sector (PS4) to name it Torun School and that the signposts had gone in for Torun Way and the intention was to take some photographs of these with the Mayor and send them over to Torun.

Swindon Ocotal Link

Bruce Clarke updated members of the network on the recent successful visit to Ocotal. \$10K was taken out and handed over at a public ceremony with the Mayor of Ocotal. Visitors from Ocotal will be coming to Swindon in July of this year for the 15-year celebration of the link.

Bruce also reported that some work was being undertaken on youth exchanges and that a bid for funding was being put together with partners from Salzgitter.

Bruce will bring a short presentation film of the visit to Ocotal to the next meeting of the network.

Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association

Reg Clarke reported that he had visited Salzgitter in December 2005 to discuss future Twinning arrangements between the two towns. Reg had also met with Gavin Jones and Peter Robinson and some progress had been made with regards to youth exchanges. There was also to be a visit from a Church group from Salzgitter in the near future.

Highworth-Pontorson Twinning Association

Dr Worsnip updated members of the network on the following activities:

- Highworth Market 800th Anniversary celebrations
- Visit to Wassenberg – 6th/7th May for the European Day celebrations
- Plant sale – 13th May
- Safari lunch to take place in June 2006
- Wine tasting – 22nd September
- Visit to Pontorson from 27th – 30th October 2006
- Visit of Pontorsonnais from 1st – 4th December for Christmas shopping.

Dr Worsnip also reported on the recent visit to Pontorson that had taken place in October 2005 and which had included a number of floral displays, centred on three local celebrities, in the Church at Pontorson. Dr Worsnip will bring some photos of the visit to the next meeting of the network.

Lechlade Twinning Association

Dr Michael Colley gave a brief overview of the activities of the Lechlade Twinning Association. Lechlade are twinned with La Chapelle des Fougeretz which is a town near to Rennes in Brittany. This town was chosen because of its convenience and ease of travel to and from the UK. The next visit will take place over the May Bank Holiday and the Church Choir from Lechlade will also be visiting and will put on a concert in the local Church. He explained that they were also in the process of trying to set up links between the two primary schools.

A major event that takes place on the 2nd Sunday in September every year is the jam festival and visitors from Lechlade attend this event in order to sell homemade marmalade and lemon curd. This also helps to raise funds for the Association which is self-funding.

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