

TOWN TWINNING NETWORK

WEDNESDAY, 2 JUNE 2010

PRESENT:- Councillors Doreen Dart (Chair), Eric Shaw and Kevin Small; Derrick Gustafson (Highworth Twinning Association), Mr Bruce Clarke (Swindon Ocotal Link), Mike Ide (Wroughton - St Germain les Corbeil Twinning Association), David Martin (Geminid), Nazma Ramruttun (Potential link with Beau Bassin, Mauritius).

Apologies for absence were received from John Hamilton, Tom Wilkes, Councillor Raymond Fisher, Andy Lane, Councillor Peter Mallinson, Hassan Nur, John Mayell and Councillor Stan Pajak.

14. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting. No declarations were made.

15. Public Question Time

No public questions were received during the meeting.

16. Minutes

Resolved – That, subject to the following amendments, the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd March 2010 be confirmed as a correct record:

- (a) “Highworth – Pontorson Twinning Association” be changed to “Highworth Twinning Association”.
- (b) Visitors from Pontorson would be coming to Highworth from 21st – 24th May to celebrate the 20th anniversary and not the 21st anniversary.
- (c) “Salaley” in Somaliland should be spelt “Salahley”.

Matters Arising

Minute 11 – Andy Lane, David Martin and Bruce Clarke circulated notes from a meeting they had recently held to discuss the structure of Town Twinning. A copy of these notes is attached to these minutes. Bruce explained that, whilst it was helpful to have Civic recognition, the current structure did not allow for an entrepreneurial approach to town twinning and their proposal was to investigate the possibility of forming an arms length civic twinning/friendship organisation.

The following actions were agreed:-

- (i) a further detailed report be submitted to the next Town Twinning Network meeting outlining how an arms length organisation could be formed and run.
- (ii) A report from the Director of Law and Democratic Services advising how the structure of the Town Twinning Network currently supports town twinning in the Borough of Swindon be submitted to the next meeting.
- (iii) The Head of Economic Development provide a report to the network, within six months, outlining the benefits of twinning and the development of International Links.

- (iv) That the Councillors on the Town Twinning Network meet with the Director of Law and Democratic Services prior to him producing his report.

Minute 12 – Potential link with Salahley in Somaliland. Members of the Town Twinning Network expressed their support towards the development of this group and looked forward to receiving further reports outlining the group's progress towards the establishment of a friendship agreement with Swindon.

Minute 12 – Disneyland. It was agreed that the Chair would write to Bill Cotton (Head of Economic Development) requesting that he attends the next meeting of the Town Twinning Network meeting in September.

17. Reports from the Town Twinning Associations and Links

The Network considered (a) a report of the Director of Law and Democratic Services listing the Town Twinning Associations and Links in and around Swindon and (b) the following verbal reports from the Town Twinning Associations and Links:

Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association

The Chair advised that a group of about 6 people would be visiting Salzgitter in the near future.

Swindon Ocotal Link

Bruce Clarke advised that the 20th anniversary of twinning between Swindon and Ocotal was coming up and he submitted an application form for a grant of £300 to assist with costs associated with activities relating to the 20th anniversary.

Resolved – That the Town Twinning Network recommends to the Director of Law and Democratic Services that a grant of £300 be approved for the Swindon Ocotal Link to assist with costs towards the 20th anniversary celebrations.

Swindon Torun Link

A report was circulated outlining the trip to Torun that takes place from 5th – 9th June 2010.

Wroughton – St Germain les Corbeil Twinning Association

Mike Ide agreed to circulate details regarding public liability costs (this information is attached to the minutes)

Highworth Twinning Association

Derrick Gustafson advised that the AGM had recently been held and the group were now operating without a Chairman and a secretary. Highworth had now officially twinned with Wassenberg and they had recently celebrated the 20th anniversary of twinning with Pontorson.

Chattanooga

The Chair reported that Andy Lane was still very keen to develop this link but that there had been slow progress on the business side.

Potential link with Beau Bassin/Rose Hill in Mauritius

Nazma Ramruttun reported that she had visited in April and had met with the ex Mayor and ex Chief Executive who had accepted a letter of friendship from the Chair of the Town Twinning Network. Successful links were being forged between the two schools and they were keen to develop a website with the possibility of exchange visits taking place following exams.

Geminid

David Martin reported that he was putting together an application to fund exchanges between the over 24 year olds and that the Training Bridge programme was active with exchanges of apprentices who were 18 – 24 years of age. He had also met with the new Culture Manager and was keen to work towards putting in a bid for a cultural exchange.

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Notes from meeting on the structure of town twinning June 1st 2010

Andy Lane, David Martin and Bruce Clarke

1. It was agreed that the current arrangements enable twinning and friendship groups to achieve various levels of civic recognition and this was felt to be helpful.
2. The funding, albeit small, was also helpful and regular reporting keeps members of the network up to date.
3. It was felt that it was the right time for the network to consider moving to the next level of its development due to the following drivers:
 - a) Despite the success of the individual links it is clear that the Council does not have a policy for International Development and for many reasons and competing priorities does not place value on the work of the linking groups or see how the friendship and twinning links can support the Council's strategic objectives. It was also felt that in the current climate this position will not improve and may diminish further.
 - b) The Network is facing its own funding crisis
 - c) The development of the network is hampered by the SBC structure of a Council committee because;
 - a. It does not have control of its finances.
 - b. membership lacks criteria and as such does not place demands on its members leading to atrophy of the network and failure to bring together the extensive linking that goes on in the town.
 - c. Further it was felt that due to no policy on International linking the Council was unlikely to lead on European applications.
4. Yet what was clear was the Civic link to the Mayors office of the various network members was valued by groups and should not be lost. Discussion was had about clarifying the distinction between the Council's executive and the role of Mayor. It was also discussed that the network had a responsibility to supporting the Mayor's office with recommendations and civic arrangements.

Conclusions:

1. **Stay the same** – Given the climate this was the least favoured approach
2. **Become a separate group** – loss of the link to the Mayors Office would a mistake.
3. **Form an 'arms length' civic twinning/friendship organisation** – This proposal would see an organisation set up as legal entity that enshrines its civic responsibilities to the Mayors represented in the network. It would be able to raise funds through grants and EU funding sources maintain a close relationship with authorities through service level agreements and seek sponsors such as the Bristol Twinning example that is housed in the University of West of England.

The proposal at this stage is for the network to decide if it wishes to make changes or not and if so what direction to go in. The meeting recommend we adopt the third approach.

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Alison Smith

From: Mike Ide [mike_ide@hotmail.com]
Sent: 02 June 2010 23:35
To: Alison Smith
Cc: b.clarke22@btinternet.com
Subject: FW: Wroughton Twinning Association - Quote Ref: T100687

Dear Alison,

Would you please forward this message to the local twinning associations in your e-mail contact list. 'cgs' is Community Group Scheme and this premium is for small groups. It is probably a good idea to contact them by 'phone on 01234 358535 to tell them how small your group is, that you have no premises and no employees, etc.. Thanks, Mike

From: cgs@financeredirect.co.uk
To: mike_ide@hotmail.com

Further to our telephone conversation, we can provide the following quotation for

- £1 Million Public Liability - **£46.75**
- £1000 contents cover can be added for an additional **£25.00** (with £100 excess) if required

Please note hazardous activities are excluded (see below for examples of hazardous activities).

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This Policy is not intended to cover hazardous activities or hazardous fund raising events. For example: bungee jumping or any activities involving bungee ropes or cords; rock climbing; mountaineering or abseiling; obstacle courses; "It's a Knockout" type competitions; swimming or diving events of any kind; fireworks or any form of pyrotechnics.

The above list is not exhaustive and should be read as examples only. The intention of the policy is to exclude "hazardous" activities. If you are in any doubt as to what constitutes 'hazardous activities' you should contact us at Finance ReDirect Limited to discuss the type of activities that are excluded.

Please note that this policy excludes Abuse cover. If this cover is a specific requirement for your organisation then please contact us. For the purposes of this policy, Abuse shall mean:

- A) acts of hurting or injuring mentally or physically by maltreatment or ill-use
- B) acts of forcing sexual activity rape or molestation or
- C) repeated or continuing contemptuous coarse or insulting words or behaviours

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Please make your cheque payable to *Finance ReDirect Limited* and write your quotation reference on the reverse. On receipt of your premium cheque you will be sent an acknowledgement e-mail and your policy documents will be issued (usually within 5-7 working days).

If you require any further clarification about the quotation provided and the cover it relates to, or you need to clarify the process involved in placing cover, please contact us by return e-mail

With Regards,

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Finance ReDirect Limited
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Bedford
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