

TOWN TWINNING NETWORK

WEDNESDAY, 23 MARCH 2011

PRESENT:- Councillors Doreen Dart (Chair), Raymond Fisher, Peter Mallinson, Stan Pajak and Kevin Small; Derrick Gustafson (Highworth Twinning Association), Mr Bruce Clarke and John Mayell (Swindon Ocotal Link), Mike Ide (Wroughton - St Germain les Corbeil Twinning Association), Andy Lane (Chattanooga, USA), Roger Gower (Salzgitter Twinning Association) and Margaret Tester (Swindon Borough Council).

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Eric Shaw, Hassan Nur, Tom Wilkes, Nazma Ramruttun, Superintendent Bonne and Stephen Taylor.

8. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting. Councillor Peter Mallinson and Roger Gower made non prejudicial declarations of interest in respect of Agenda Item No. 8 in their capacity as members of the Swindon Salzgitter Adult Twinning Association.

9. Public Question Time

No public questions were received during the meeting.

10. Minutes

Resolved – That, subject to the following amendments, the minutes of the meeting held on 1st December 2010, be confirmed as a correct record:

- Minute 2 (Appointment of Vice-Chair) – should read that Andy Lane be Vice-Chair of the Town Twinning Network until December 2011, not 2010.
- Minute 6 (Highworth Twinning Association) – Derrick Gustafson reported that the new committee had been elected by the management committee and not at the AGM.

11. 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 in Agenda Item 8 on the grounds that it would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information concerned (Minute 14 refers.)

12. A Decade of Action for Road Safety

Margaret Tester (Road Safety Manager) informed members of the Network about the UN's campaign 'Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011 – 2020' which was a global road safety campaign. She explained that schools were very much involved

in road safety and that she hoped that some of the Network members might be interested in sharing this information with their counterparts in their twin towns and that this might be a good way of getting young people involved in their organisations. Margaret confirmed that there were sources of funding available from the UN to enable groups to participate in this campaign and added that Arval (Fleet Managers) were also very keen to become involved.

If anyone is interested in further information, please contact Margaret Tester on Swindon 466399. Margaret also agreed to inform the Network of any progress in the meantime.

13. 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 welcomed Roger Gower to the Network and advised that he was now the new Chair of the Salzgitter Twinning Association. Roger advised that he had also taken on the role of secretary and the group were currently making arrangements for a visit to Swindon by a group from Salzgitter from 15th – 22nd June 2011. Two visits had been proposed, one to Wadsworths Brewery and another one to the Houses of Parliament which was to be sponsored by the Swindon MP's. The Sub-Committee would be meeting again soon to finalise the proposals and alternative activities were also being arranged. Councillor Kevin Small advised that he would be able to offer some advice on places to visit in London and added that whilst he had made enquiries about participating in a visit to Salzgitter in the past he had been advised that this had not been possible. Roger responded that this may be due to insurance issues but asked that Councillor Small contact him with regards to any future visits and he would try to ensure that any requests to participate in visits to Salzgitter could be met.

Councillor Small reported that he had made some progress regarding the possible exchange between football referees in Salzgitter and Swindon.

Swindon Ocotal Link (SOL)

Bruce Clarke reported on the following activities of SOL:

- A young person was currently working as a volunteer in Ocotal.
- King William Street School had contacted SOL with regards to developing a link with Ocotal and this would be pursued.
- 50 Venture Scouts from Wimbledon had asked to go to Ocotal in July 2012. SOL would facilitate this trip and would identify a project for them to work on.
- The link between the Rotary Clubs had produced a very successful disabled people's assessment centre. Unfortunately, the Ocotal Rotary Club had since closed down and they were currently looking for another club to continue this link.
- A successful Bollywood evening had raised approximately £950 and Bruce advised that quite a few younger people had participated in this event.
- Target of £5K raised had been met and was sent over in January to support:

the following four objectives:

- Bursaries
- Old people's home
- Health project
- Civic links

Bruce added that a busy year ahead was expected but that no visits had yet been organised due to the current cost of flights. SOL was being re-designed in order to meet the four objectives listed above and work was ongoing to develop Duke of Edinburgh links with Ocotol.

Swindon Torun Link

Councillor Stan Pajak reported that the link had been invited to participate in the Torun half marathon in May but that, as it was too early in the year, a team would not be sent. However, an invitation had been sent to Torun for them to participate in the Swindon half marathon in October and it was hoped that a visit could be arranged around the same time. The group were also trying to establish a link between the Chambers of Commerce in Swindon and Torun but that it was proving to be quite difficult to develop business links.

Wroughton – St Germain les Corbeil Twinning Association

Mike Ide advised that the next visit was still to be arranged but that it was anticipated that this would happen in October. The social fundraising events were continuing and the current membership was around 22.

Highworth Twinning Association

Derrick Gustafson reported that the officers had been elected at the AGM in March and that he would continue as the representative to the Town Twinning Network. He reported on the following activities:

- There would be a visit of Pontorsonnais to Highworth from 29th April to 2nd May to cover the May Day festivities.
- There would be a visit to Pontorson from 2nd – 5th June that would coincide with a visit from Wassenberg to Pontorson. As there were only about 20 people going, they would be travelling in cars rather than a coach.
- A safari lunch would be held some time in August.
- The annual quiz would be held on 21st October.
- There would be a visit from Wassenberg to Highworth from 29th October to 1st November which would include ratification of the Charter signed last year in Wassenberg.

Chattanooga

Andy Lane reported that he would be speaking to everyone involved in this link in the next couple of weeks to find out how, and if, this link could be progressed. He would report back on any progress at the next meeting of the Network. He was intending to visit Chattanooga later on in the year and the Chair also advised that she would be willing to go over as well. The Network also felt that it might be useful for a trip to be arranged and that this might facilitate the development of the link.

Nova Hreod School

Tom Wilkes submitted information informing the group that Nova Hreod would be hosting two visitors from their link school in Cape Town from 2nd April for seven days.

14. Application for a Town Twinning Grant

Members of the Town Twinning Network were asked to consider an application for a grant of £1000 from the Salzgitter Twinning Association to assist with the costs of a cultural visit to Swindon by a group from Deutsch-Englische Gesellschaft (DEG) from 15th – 22nd June 2011. In response to a query regarding the email from the grants team, the clerk confirmed that the £500 grant referred to came out of a different budget and was to be used specifically for administration and running costs.

Resolved – That the Town Twinning Network recommends to the Director of Law and Democratic Services that a grant of £1000 be approved for the Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association.