

TOWN TWINNING NETWORK

WEDNESDAY, 11 JANUARY 2012

PRESENT:- Councillor Doreen Dart, Councillor Raymond Fisher, Councillor Kevin Small, Andy Lane (Chattanooga, USA) and Mary Creffield (Swindon Ocotal Link).

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Stan Pajak, Roger Gower, Derrick Gustafson, Mr Bruce Clarke, John Mayell and Hasan Nur.

1. Appointment of Chair

Resolved – that Councillor Doreen Dart be Chair of the Town Twinning Network until December 2012.

(Councillor Dart took the Chair)

2. Appointment of Vice-Chair

Resolved – that Andy Lane be Vice-Chair of the Town Twinning Network until December 2012.

3. 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 Kevin Small made a personal and prejudicial pecuniary declaration of interest in respect of Agenda Item No. 9 in his capacity as treasurer for the group applying for a Town Twinning Grant.

4. Public Question Time

No public questions were received during the meeting.

5. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 21st September 2011, be confirmed as a correct record.

Matters Arising

Schools and Twinning – Paddy Bradley (Director, Schools and Learning) circulated a list of those schools with International links. Members of the network thanked Paddy for this information and queried whether this information was made public to enable other groups interested in twinning to contact the relevant school. Following the meeting, Paddy responded that 'a number of the schools have the information on their websites. If it is not, other agencies could contact schools direct. It is information in the public domain.'

6. 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 9 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 8 refers.)

7. Reports from 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 reports for the Town Twinning Associations and Links:-

Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association

The Chair advised that Roger Gower was currently in hospital but that the next meeting would be held on 20th January 2012 at 7pm in the Civic Offices. Members of the Network asked for their best wishes to be forwarded onto Roger.

Swindon Ocotal Link (SOL)

Mary Creffield reported on the following activities:

- A successful quiz held in November had raised £500.
- A recent dinner held at a member's house had also raised £85.
- The next quiz would be held on 18th February 2012 at Cricklade Town Hall from 7pm – 11.30pm.
- Three members would be visiting Ocotal during March and April 2012.
- Still waiting to hear from King William School who had approached SOL with the intention of developing a link with a school in Ocotal.
- The membership fee was £5.
- Good support received from the Rotary Club and it had been agreed that a large amount of money raised during a recent fundraising event would be sent to Ocotal.
- The next meeting would be held on 7th February 2012.

Swindon Torun Link

Representatives from the Swindon Film Festival had been put in touch with contacts from the international film festival, Tofifest, held in Torun every year. It was hoped that there would be some form of communication between the two before the next Swindon film festival which runs from 1 – 10 March 2012 and that they would be able to report any further development at the next meeting of the Network.

Highworth Twinning Association

The Chair advised that Derrick Gustaffson was also in hospital but that he had submitted the following report:-

'The visit to us from Wassenberg was a great success with 31 Germans visiting including their Vice-Mayor. The charter was ratified in St. Michaels. Our AGM will be February 17th. We will visit Wassenberg 17 – 20 May. The date for a Pontorson visit has not yet been fixed. Personally, I do not intend to stand for re-election to our Committee. I would like to

thank you all for your friendship during our meetings over the last year or so. It has been a pleasure. I have not had enough time to find a substitute to attend this meeting, nor do I know who will attend in the future.'

Members of the Network expressed their sadness that Derrick would no longer be attending these meetings and also asked for their good wishes to be forwarded to Derrick for a speedy recovery.

Chattanooga

Andy Lane reported that he was currently working on a business model that would enable a self-funded business trip to be undertaken, hopefully, later on this year. He added that he would contact the Chamber of Commerce and the Enterprise Board with regards to this trip.

8. Application for a Town Twinning Grant

The network considered an application from the Even Swindon Working Men's Club Wednesday Skittles Team for a grant of £1000 to assist with the costs of a visit to Salzgitter following an invitation by members of the SV Salzgitter veteran football club for members of the club to visit Salzgitter and to play the football team at a game of 'kegeln', a German form of skittles.

Councillor Kevin Small explained the background to the invitation and outlined the details of the visit that had taken place from 1 – 5 December 2011.

Councillor Small left the meeting at this stage and took no further part in the discussions relating to this application.

Mark Feeny (Contracts and Commissioning Team) briefly summarised his reservations with regards to the grant application. Specifically, that it had not been received six weeks prior to the event taking place and advised that this would have been taken into consideration in a competitive market. Members of the Network agreed at this stage that they would consider this grant application but that any future applications would only be considered by the Network if they were received six weeks prior to the event taking place.

Resolved – (1) That the Town Twinning Network recommends to the Director of Law and Democratic Services that a grant of £500 be approved as a one-off cost towards the inaugural launch of the link between the Even Swindon Working Men's Club Wednesday Skittles Team and the SV Salzgitter veteran football club.

(2) That the Town Twinning Network would not consider any future Town Twinning grant applications unless they were received at least six weeks prior to the event taking place.

Councillor Kevin Small made a personal and prejudicial pecuniary declaration of interest in respect of the above item in his capacity as treasurer for the group applying for a Town Twinning Grant and left the meeting taking no part in the decision of the Network whether or not to support the application.

9. Date of next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Town Twinning Network would be moved from 14th March to Wednesday 28th March at 6pm in the Civic Offices.