

TOWN TWINNING NETWORK

WEDNESDAY, 4 DECEMBER 2013

PRESENT:- Roger Gower (Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association), Andy Lane (Chattanooga, USA), Councillor Kevin Small, Councillor Junab Ali, Councillor Abdul Amin, Councillor Mike Bawden, Councillor Toby Elliott, Hassan Nur (Somalia) and Eileen Mochan (Swindon Ocotal Link)

Apologies for absence were received from Mike Ide, John Mayell, Councillor Michael Bray and Derrick Gustafson

28. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

29. Public Question Time

There were no public questions.

30. Minutes

That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2013 be confirmed and signed as a correct record, subject to Councillor Junab Ali's name being added to the list of those giving apologies for absence.

31. 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 verbal reports from those Town Twinning Associations and Links present at the meeting:-

Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association

Roger Gower reported that the Association's Annual General Meeting was held in November 2013 and those in official positions were reappointed.

Roger confirmed that the Association were beginning to assemble the group to visit Salzgitter in June 2014 and he spoke briefly about the visit in June 2013 to Swindon from the Salzgitter Twinning Association. He explained that following discussions between the Twinning Associations, it was agreed that each Association would be responsible for their own travel costs to the respective towns.

Marion Jefferies had been appointed as publicity manager. Marion had previously worked with Bruce Clarke at Swindon 105.5 radio station and it was hoped that the Twinning Association would receive some publicity through Marion's links with the station.

Further discussions had been held about the launch of a website and it was felt this would be of great benefit for the Association. Roger may contact Members about funding issues.

The Network was reminded that the Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association was set up in 1975 and would be celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2015. It was suggested that an official Council event should be planned to commemorate the Twinning link to be funded by the Council.

Swindon Ocotal Link

Eileen Mochan reported that she was the new secretary for SOL and that a number of fund raising events were being held.

Eileen explained that it was SOL's 25th Anniversary in February 2014 and a celebration event was being organised.

Salahley, Somaliland

Hassan Nur reported that £68,000 had been raised to help fund the Salahley road construction project in Somaliland, which would connect Hargeisa to the largest district under Marodijeh region in the south and of the most populated rural district in the Hawd of Hargeisa.

Hassan also reported that 200 families originating from Somaliland had been made homeless from typhoon Haiyan and that his organisation were raising funds to help with the disaster relief. He explained that a letter had been sent to the Mayor of Swindon but Hassan had not received a reply. The Director of Law and Democratic Services was asked to investigate this further.

Chattanooga

Andy Lane reported that he was still holding discussions with Forward Swindon about a possible business delegation to Chattanooga. Andy also referred to a publication called 'CityScope' that was produced on a quarterly basis by Chattanooga city to promote the region and suggested that Swindon could produce a similar publication to promote itself.

Resolved:

It was resolved that:

- (i) The report and updates from members of the Network be noted; and
- (ii) The Director of Law and Democratic Services be asked to liaise with the leader of the Council, Councillor David Renard, and Councillors Kevin Small and Mike Bawden about the possible options to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the Swindon Salzgitter Twinning link.