



Twinning committee

16:05 to 16:35

10 March 2022

Present: Councillors Maguire (chair), Hampton Oliver, Schmierer and Thomas (Vi); Ann and Chris Rowe (Rouen) Jill Noble (Koblenz); and Ralph Gayton and David Raby (El Viejo)

Apologies: Councillors Brociek-Coulton, Grahame and Thomas (Va) and Waltraud Jarrold MBE (Koblenz) and Doug Underwood and Sandra Underwood (Novi Sad)

1. Minutes

RESOLVED to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2022.

2. Update to the twinning committee

The democratic and elections manager presented the report. He highlighted the recommendations made at the previous meeting and confirmed that these had been approved by the executive director of corporate and commercial services.

The reported balance of the twinning fund was £3489.97 but this did not take into account the grant payments made following publication of the report..

Although there had been a break in committee meetings, with events and activities taking place again, the democratic and elections manager assured committee members that communication channels were open and any grant applications could be sent through.

RESOLVED to note the update report.

3. Reports of the twinning associations

Chris Rowe gave an update on the Norfolk and Norwich Rouen Friendship Association. Although events were still quiet, the association remained buoyant which was promising. Monthly online meetings continued to take place with counterparts in Rouen and the online AGM in October 2021 had seen committee members staying in post until the March 2022 AGM.

Some French friends intended to visit in July for four days which would be a chance for everyone to reconnect.

Chris Rowe would be standing down as chair which meant that the representative on the committee would change. He had had a successful and enjoyable time as chair and thanks the committee and the other associations for their kindness and friendship over the years. Members of the committee gave a unanimous vote of thanks to Chris for all his work in forming links between Rouen and Norwich over the years.

Jill Noble updated the committee on the activities of the Norfolk and Norwich Koblenz Association. The association had been fortunate to be able to hold three events in 2021 between lockdowns. The summer outing had been to Aylsham on the Bure Valley Railway and a birthday lunch was held in September for the associations 41st year. The advent evening, which was usually held at the Great Hospital, was instead held at the Norwich Cathedral refectory due to price increases.

The AGM would be held in March and it was hoped that there would be interest in the summer outing, potentially to a stately home, and a visit to Koblenz at the end of August, subject to travel restrictions. Jill would be stepping down as chair. Members gave a unanimous vote of thanks to Jill for her work as chair of the association and for the activities and links that the association had formed.

The representatives of the Norfolk and Norwich Novi Sad Association had sent apologies for the meeting.

Ralph Gayton gave an update to the committee on the work of the Norfolk and Norwich El Viejo Friendship Link. The government in Nicaragua had required full legal arrangements with the association which would be very costly and the association was having to consolidate its position. David Raby confirmed that the Nicaraguan government had put together a requirement that NGOs with foreign links needed to register formally, and legally, with the government and the foreign office. This meant that there was a need to have a legal representative in Nicaragua, complex documentation to be completed and registration fees.

The Lord Mayor said that he hoped the situation would improve and looked forward to an update in due course.

RESOLVED to note the updates of the associations.

CHAIR