

Twinning committee**12:00 - 16:45****9 July 2015**

Present: Councillor Arthur (Lord Mayor, in the chair following election), Councillors Raby, Henderson, Maxwell, Sands (M), Thomas (Vi) and Ryan (substitute for Councillor Bremner), Ralph Gayton, (El Viejo) and Mary Corbould (Rouen)

Apologies: Councillors Bremner and Jones, Waltraud Jarrold and Jill Noble (Koblenz), Doug and Sandra Underwood (Novi Sad) and Claire Alban (Chair Norfolk Association of Twinned Communities)

1. Appointment of Chair

RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Arthur Lord Mayor as Chair for the Civic Year.

2. Appointment of Vice Chair

RESOLVED to appoint Ralph Gayton as Vice Chair for the Civic Year.

3. Minutes

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2015.

4. Report of the Twinning Associations**Norfolk and Norwich El Viejo Friendship Link**

Ralph Gayton presented the report of the Norfolk and Norwich El Viejo Friendship Link.

For the benefit of new members of the committee he explained that the links schools project supported 200 scholarships each year for those children whose parents could not afford to send them to schools. Working with the local community 9 schools had been selected for the link to support. Each scholarship child received a bag with books and stationery and also a school uniform and each school was provided with a pc and a printer. Another part of the project was to help set up school gardens which had environmental and educational purpose but also provided a source for food. One concern that had been reported was the condition of the toilets in some of the schools which were in very poor condition and there was concern that this could affect the children's health and welfare. Information was vague at the moment and he was trying to find out more about the problem, who was responsible and options for providing support to improve the toilets. Councillor Maxwell suggested that Medi

Aid (?) was a charity that aimed to prevent sickness and they may be able to help. Ralph said that he would investigate this and any other opportunities and keep Twinning committee members informed as more facts became known. He then highlighted that a longstanding and valued member of the Links Executive Committee, Hilary King had passed away. She had made a significant contribution to the activities of the El Viejo link for many years and would be sadly missed.

RESOLVED -

- (1) to note the report;
- (2) ask the Lord Mayor, as Chair of Twinning Committee, to write a letter of sympathy to the family of Hilary King

5. Norfolk and Koblenz Friendship Association

Chris Southgate presented the report and in particular highlighted the charity cycle ride by Koblenz Rotarians from Koblenz to Norwich and the visit of Koblenz Churches to the Norwich Diocese which was a continuation of a longstanding and regular programme of links. The Association's Summer outing to Sandringham had been very enjoyable and the Norwich Kemps Men had represented Great Britain at the Folkloristic International Dance Festival in Vinnegen after which their performance was greeted by the Vinnegen Vintners Band playing Gold Save the Queen!

Of the future events planned he highlighted the concert at The Forum by Norfolk County Youth Orchestra on 19 July. The orchestra from the Norwich contingent of the Triorca orchestra which consisted of representatives from Norfolk, Koblenz and Novi Sad. Longer term planning included the possibility that the Koblenz Music Institute Singers might join the Norwich Philharmonic as part of our 175th anniversary event at The Showground in May 2016 and that the Norwich Cathedral Choir might give concerts in Germany, including Koblenz, in 2016 also.

RESOLVED to note the report.

6. Norfolk and Norwich Novi Sad Association

RESOLVED to note the report of the association.

Norfolk and Norwich Rouen Friendship Association

Mary Corbould presented the report and commented on the highly successful visit to Rouen during May, 2015.

She said there had been low take-up regarding the suggestion of a lunch. However, members had really enjoyed the lunch of the Joint Associations held early in the year and she said that this had been such a successful event that she hoped that it would be repeated. Members of the Rouen Friendship Association would be happy to join in on that or any other type of joint event that might be suggested, particularly one that might encourage young people to become involved as like other associations, it was difficult to attract new and younger members.

Councillor Ryan said that the local media would be very happy to include information on activities of twinning associations and suggested that members should not be afraid to approach them.

Ralph Gayton said that his association had also enjoyed the joint lunch and hoped it would be repeated. Chris Southgate said that he was happy that the joint lunch had been such a success. However, it was a lot of hard work and time consuming to arrange and the intention had not necessarily been to create an annual event. If other people were willing to contribute he was sure that his members would also support that.

Councillor Raby said he had attended a school exchange to Rouen in the very early days of the twinning in 1959. That had been the catalyst in him taking an interest in international affairs and learning several languages.

Andy Emms, twinning officer, said that Wymondham Rugby Club Veterans had visited Rouen in May, 2015. This was a continuation of a link that had started when he visited Rouen with the Lord Mayor in 2009. Rugby Club Rouennais and Wymondham had since then had many exchanges including the youth section, seniors and veterans.

RESOLVED to –

- (1) note the report;
- (2) put the possibility of a joint associations event on the agenda of the next twinning committee.

7. Twining Fund

RESOLVED, having considered the report of the twinning officer, to note that the balance in hand of the twinning fund was £2,317.55.

8. Annual Grant to the Twinning Associations

RESOLVED, having considered the report of the twinning officer, to –

- (1) grant £200 each to the twinning associations for Koblenz, Novi Said and Rouen;
- (2) provide “in kind” support to the Norfolk and Norwich El Viejo Friendship Link.

9. Electronic Reports/Newsletters

RESOLVED to ask the twinning associations to send any reports and newsletters for inclusion on the future twinning committee agendas to the twinning officer/twinning assistant by electronic means and if possible, at least 10 days before the meeting.

10. Future meetings

RESOLVED to note that the next meetings will be held on –

1 October 2015 at 4pm
3 March 2016 at 4pm

CHAIR