



Twinning committee

16:00 to 16:45

15 June 2017

Present: Councillors Fullman (Lord Mayor and chair, following election), Bremner (vice chair following election), Maxwell, Peek and Wright; and Ralph Gayton (El Viejo), Waltraud Jarrold and Jill Noble (Koblenz); Sandra and Doug Underwood (Novi Sad) and Ann and Chris Rowe (Rouen)

Apologies: Councillors Brociek-Coulton, Ryan and Schmierer

1. Appointment of chair

RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Fullman, Lord Mayor, as the chair for the ensuing civic year.

2. Appointment of vice chair

Two nominations for vice chair were received. Councillor Wright acknowledged his nomination but declined due to his other roles within the council.

RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Bremner as the vice chair for the ensuing civic year.

3. Public questions/petitions

There were no public questions or petitions.

4. Declarations of interest

The chair declared an interest in item 8 (below), Civic visit – Day of the Cities in Novi Sad as Lord Mayor

5. Minutes

RESOLVED to agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2017.

(The chair pointed out that the numbering on the agenda was out of sequence. Members agreed the order that items would be taken.)

6. Twinning Fund – Financial position

RESOLVED, having considered the report, to note that the twinning fund closing balance (in hand) at 1 June 2017 is £3,899,69

7. Paul Cross Memorial Concert

Doug Underwood presented the report.

During discussion members considered the publicity for the concert. The Norfolk and Norwich Novi Sad Association prepared a press release for the event and members suggested that the city council's communications team could assist with circulating this to its press contacts. The committee also considered that other councillors would be interested in attending the concert.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) approve the grant of £250 to the Norfolk and Norwich Novi Sad Association to support the annual Paul Cross Memorial Concert;
- (2) ask the democratic and elections manager to liaise with the communications team to assist with the publication of the press release and to advertise the concert within the city council.

8. Civic visit – Day of the Cities in Novi Sad

(The Lord Mayor having declared a pecuniary interest in this item did not take any part in the discussion. Councillor Bremner as vice chair was in the chair).

Doug Underwood referred to the report and explained the importance of the annual Day of the Cities to the people of Novi Sad and of his regret that the Lord Mayors had not been able to attend for a couple of years. It would be a great honour if the present Lord Mayor attended the event because he had been Lord Mayor in 1989 when the twinning treaty was signed.

Councillor Maxwell and Ralph Gayton endorsed the proposal to pay the travel expenses for the Lord Mayor to attend the meeting. Councillor Maxwell expressed her regret that she had been unable to attend last year due to a conflict with another engagement as Lord Mayor.

Councillor Bremner said that the Whifflers might be interested in attending the event at their own expense.

RESOLVED to approve the payment of travel costs for the Lord Mayor to attend the Day of the Cities in Novi Sad.

(The Lord Mayor resumed the chair at this point.)

9. Reports of the Twinning Associations

(Copies of the reports of the twinning associations were circulated at the meeting.)

The Norfolk and Norwich Novi Sad Association

Doug Underwood presented Norfolk and Norwich Sad Association's newsletter for June 2017, which was circulated at the meeting. Councillor Maxwell as Lord Mayor and president of the association had chaired the annual general meeting in April 2017. Plans were in place for the annual Paul Cross Memorial concert which would be held on 13 January 2018. Novi Sad had been awarded European City of Culture in 2021. He thanked the city council officers who had assisted with the bid. There could be opportunities for the twin cities to hold events in 2021 to celebrate Novi Sad's special status as European City of Culture.

The Norfolk and Norwich – El Viejo Friendship Link

Ralph Gayton presented his report and highlighted the work of the Norfolk and Norwich – El Viejo Friendship Link in improving latrines at the schools in El Viejo that were involved in its education programme. The latrines were mostly earth closets where volcanic ash was used. The poor standard of latrines resulted in health problems and absenteeism from school. The Link did not have the resources to address this issue itself and was looking at ways that it could raise awareness of this major health issue.

Discussion ensued in which members considered sending a letter from the committee to the World Health Organisation UNESCO and the Nicaraguan embassy.

The Norfolk and Norwich / Koblenz Friendship Association

Waltraud Jarrold presented the report on behalf of the Norfolk and Norwich Rouen Friendship Association. The highlight of the association's annual general meeting was the presentation by Phyllida Scrivens of her book "Escaping Hitler" on Joe Stirling's escape from Germany, on one of the "children's trains". Councillor Maxwell, as Lord Mayor, had made a civic visit to Koblenz in April. The choirs of the Norwich Philharmonic and the Koblenz Musik Institut performed in Koblenz; a tradition going on for 34 years. Professor Mathias Breitschaft, music director at the Koblenz Musik Institut, had come to Norwich specially to hear the Norwich Philharmonic performance of "The Seasons" prior to this event. Preparations for the Triorca visit to Novi Sad in July were underway. The summer outing had been to Audley End. The weekly German conversation group continued to meet and had raised money for Feed the Minds and Meningitis Now. The association's annual visit to Koblenz would take place in September. The radio hams were still active and in contact with their German counterparts. The association also wanted to revitalise the link between the libraries of the twinned cities.

Councillor Maxwell expressed her gratitude for the hospitality that she had received on the civic visit.

The committee noted that the Norfolk and Norwich / Koblenz Friendship Association would celebrate 40 years next year (1978 to 2018). The Lord Mayor had been invited to visit Koblenz to mark this occasion in April 2018. Members also

considered that representatives of Koblenz should visit Norwich for the Lord Mayor's celebrations in July 2018. The association also wanted to revitalise the link between the libraries of the twinned cities.

The Norfolk and Norwich Rouen Friendship Association

Chris Rowe presented the May edition of "L'Amitie"; the newsletter of the Norfolk and Norwich Rouen Friendship Association. Members of the association had visited Rouen in May. The trip had been able to go ahead due to financial support from the association. A highlight of the trip was the speech by Christophe Thierry where he had reiterated the successes of twinning. The association's next events would be the annual garden party in July and the annual "November Dinner". The Lord Mayor and consort would be invited to attend. The association would like to encourage younger people to participate in twinning activities.

During discussion members of the Lord Mayor said that he was chair of the Norwich Charitable Trusts and that there could be funding available to encourage young people to participate in twinning activities, for instance to improve web and social media links to the twinning associations.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) note the reports and activities of the twinning associations;
- (2) ask associations wishing to invite the Lord Mayor to events to contact Josie Powell, civic co-ordinator, on 212081 or by email: josiepowell@norwich.gov.uk
- (3) welcome the award of 2021 European City of Culture to Novi Sad and to consider events to celebrate this in Norwich;
- (4) note that it is the fortieth anniversary of the Norfolk and Norwich / Koblenz Friendship Association next year.
- (5) ask representatives of the twinning associations to contact the Lord Mayor for information about the funding available from the Norwich Charitable Trusts.

10. Grants to the twinning associations

(The chair agreed to take this item as an urgent item.)

The committee officer apologised for the omission of a written report to the meeting and explained that it was usual at the first meeting of the year to agree the grants to the twinning associations. Novi Sad, Rouen and Koblenz were given a grant of £200 a year to help cover the association's costs. The El-Viejo Friendship Link chose to have postage and use of rooms instead of a grant.

Following discussion the committee:

RESOLVED to:

- (1) grant £200 to each of the three twinning associations, Koblenz, Novi Sad and Rouen:
- (2) note that the Norfolk and Norwich El Viejo Friendship Link has preferred to retain support in king, ie, photocopying etc.

11. Date of next meeting

RESOLVED to note that the next meeting of the committee will be on Thursday, 5 October 2017 at 16:00.

CHAIR