



MINUTES

Twinning committee

16:00 to 17:00

23 October 2014

Present: Councillor Lubbock (Lord Mayor, in the chair),
Councillors Brociek-Coulton, Bogelein, Jones and Maxwell:
Mary Corbould (Rouen), Waltraud Jarrold and Jill Noble
(Koblenz); and Doug Underwood and Sandra Underwood
(Novi Sad)
Ex-officio member: Councillor Brian Hannah, Chairman of Norfolk
County Council

Apologies: Councillors Gayton (vice chair) (El Viejo) and Bremner

1. Announcements

The Lord Mayor said that since the last meeting she had attended the Norfolk and Norwich Novi Sad Association's annual luncheon and the Norfolk and Norwich Koblenz Friendship Association's annual dinner. She thanked the members of the associations for their hospitality and said that it had been a good opportunity to learn more about Novi Sad and Koblenz and the work and activities of the associations.

2. Minutes

The democratic services manager/twinning officer referred to the committee papers and apologised that an early draft version of the minutes had been attached to the agenda in error. He circulated copies of the final set of minutes and pointed out the changes to the list of members present, the appointment of the chair and vice chair and additional text to the item 5(a).

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2014, subject to item 5(d), second paragraph, final sentence, deleting "attack" and replacing with "tack".

3. General reports (reports of the twinning associations)

(a) Norfolk and Norwich Novi Sad Association

Doug Underwood referred to the association's newsletter and presented the report. The 2014 visit to Novi Sad and Montenegro had been very successful. Serbia had been subject to terrible floods this year but the week of the visit was relatively dry. The visit had included a trip to a vineyard where the transport was a bit dubious in terms of health and safety but great fun. The annual luncheon had been attended by the Lord Mayor and the Chairman of Norfolk County Council. The low attendance at

this year's luncheon was attributed to some members being unable to attend because the date of the luncheon had been brought forward. The annual, fund-raising, Paul Cross Memorial concert would be held on 17 January 2015 at the Assembly House.

Sandra Underwood referred to the International Piano Conference held in Novi Sad and said that the association had received a letter from Adam Possener, aged 13, who had written of his positive experience performing at the festival and attending the music school. A copy of the letter had been reproduced in the association's newsletter.

RESOLVED to note the report.

(b) Norfolk and Norwich Rouen Friendship Association

Mary Corbould referred to the association's newsletter and presented the report. She said that a party of 32 people from Norfolk had attended the rowing event in Rouen. Sixty crews had competed, comprising four teams from Norwich and teams from Hanover one of Rouen's twinned cities. The teams from Norwich considered that the River Seine was more formidable than the River Yare. There would be other rowing events with crews from Rouen and Hanover next year. The arrangements for the association's annual visit to Rouen were in hand.

Mary Corbould then referred to an issue which she had raised at the Norfolk Association of Twin Communities meeting and said that many French adults want to have a good command of English and were actively looking to stay with British families. Host families currently received £350 per week for an adult staying a week. Anyone interested in hosting an individual or family was asked to contact Host in the UK by emailing hostintheuk@gmail.com.

Discussion ensued on the links fostered through contacts with common interests in the arts and sport. Mary Corbould said that Professor Alistair Forbes had forged links between the University of East Anglia's medical school and the hospital in Rouen. The twinning officer had instigated a link between rugby clubs in Wymondham and Rouen and there were regular exchange visits. He would be taking part in a vets' rugby tour next year.

Mary Corbould said that she would be visiting Rouen in a couple of weeks' time, to attend a film festival and would be staying with a family whose family members had stayed with her during the summer. All the films would be in English.

RESOLVED to note the report.

(c) Norfolk and Norwich El Viejo Friendship Link

RESOLVED to note that there will be a report on the activities of the Norfolk and Norwich El Viejo Friendship Link at the next meeting of the committee.

(d) Norfolk and Norwich Koblenz Friendship Association

Waltraud Jarrold referred to the association's newsletter and presented the report. She reported on the recent visit from a group from the Norwich Diocese to Koblenz. Two representatives from the Koblenz Diocese had been invited to the inauguration of the new Dean at Norwich Cathedral. She also referred to the association's annual programme of events, including cultural and musical events, and fund raising for Feed the Minds and Meningitis Now. The association would be celebrating its 35th anniversary next year.

Waltraud Jarrold and Jill Noble had met with the new manager at Dragon Hall and discussed the possibility of relocating the yellow post box which had been a gift from Koblenz, there. She reminded members that information held on the twinning associations at Dragon Hall should be kept up to date. She suggested that the twinning associations and the committee could support Dragon Hall by holding events and meetings there.

Members were also advised of the regular German conversation meetings hosted by Waltraud Jarrold for members of the association each Wednesday.

In response to a question, the twinning officer undertook to arrange for the vegetation obscuring the Koblenz Avenue sign to be removed.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) note the report;
- (2) ask the twinning officer to notify the relevant officer to arrange the removal of the vegetation obscuring the Koblenz Avenue street sign.

4. Twinning fund – financial position

The twinning officer presented the report which provided a breakdown of income and expenditure during the period. He reminded members that the twinning fund was available to the associations to host or make visits.

Doug Underwood pointed out that secretary of the Norfolk and Norwich Novi Sad Association had submitted an application for the twinning fund in June 2014. The request was for £200 to support the association's annual Paul Cross Memorial Concert which would be held in January 2015 and therefore would be required before the next meeting of the committee. The association had expected that the committee would have determined the application in time for the concert. The twinning officer apologised as the application had not been submitted to the committee for consideration and suggested that it was granted subject to ratification at the next meeting of the committee.

RESOLVED to note:

- (1) the twinning fund balance (in hand) at 15 October 2014 was £2,767.55;

- (2) that the twinning officer will grant £200 from the Norfolk and Norwich Novi Sad Association, in consultation with the chair, and subject to ratification at the next meeting of the committee.

5. Twinning activities

The twinning officer presented the report. He said that it was expected that the plaque would be in place on the Novi Sad friendship bridge by 27 October 2014. Doug Underwood expressed concern that the plaque needed to be securely fixed.

During discussion the committee considered how the associations could attract new members through the use of social media. There was general consensus that the twinning associations had been established to create friendship after the world wars. Foreign exchanges had been a way of keeping costs down and establishing friendships between the twinned cities. The twinning associations promoted activities for young people through music and sport. It was suggested that the associations considered using Facebook and social media to attract young people. Foreign exchange provided the opportunity for young people to practice their language skills and learn about another culture. The twinning associations needed to arrange activities which reflected young people's interests. It was also noted that it was also difficult to attract young people in the twinned cities. Some young people became involved in twinning through family membership.

Discussion also ensued on holding a future meeting of the committee at Dragon Hall to promote twinning. The committee could apply for a small grant to cover refreshments and other associated costs.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) note the report;
- (2) ask the twinning officer to consider the feasibility of arranging a twinning event or meeting to be held at Dragon Hall.

6. Date of the next meeting

RESOLVED to confirm that the next meeting of the committee will be held on Thursday, 26 March 2015 at 16:00.

CHAIR