

## **TWINNING ADVISORY GROUP**

MINUTES OF A MEETING of the Twinning Advisory Group held on Thursday 26 January 2012 at 8:15am in the Executive Meeting Room, The Guildhall, Portsmouth.

(NB These minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda and reports for the meeting.)

### **Present**

Councillors     Hugh Mason (Chair)  
                     Peter Eddis  
                     Terry Hall  
                     Terry Henderson

### **Representatives of the twinning committees**

Honorary Alderman Robin Sparshatt (Caen Committee Chair)  
Charles Stunell (Haifa Committee Member)

### **Also in attendance**

Peter Smith-Parkyn                     (Local Democracy Assistant)  
Louise Wilders (Head of Customer, Community and Democratic Services)

#### **1 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from the Lord Mayor Councillor Buggy and Councillor Jonas.

#### **2 Declaration of Members' Interests (AI 2)**

No interests were declared.

#### **3 Minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2011**

It was proposed and agreed that future minutes would separately record Twinning Advisory Group members, Twinning committee representatives and others also in attendance.

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the Twinning Advisory Group meeting held on 24 November be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.**

## 4 Updates from the Twinning Representatives

### Caen

Honorary Alderman Sparshatt reported that the Caen Committee had recently met with Caen's head of international relations, Lesley Coutts and her colleague Véronique Mauger.

He said that an invitation has been passed on to Caen to invite four people to Portsmouth's D-Day commemorations. It is expected that one of Caen's deputy mayors and a few veterans will be able to accept the invitation which is still to be confirmed.

Councillor Eddis congratulated the Caen committee on this initiative and stated that the attendance of Caen representatives at our D-Day commemorations is good for Portsmouth.

Honorary Alderman Sparshatt told the group that it is the Caen Committee's wish to both promote and send a team to take part in the 10 kilometre run, one of Caen's series of runs called Courants de la Liberté in June 2012.

After a short discussion about possible funding, Councillor Mason stated that he was prepared to vire money between services for twinning, if there are good reasons for doing so.

Councillor Hall said that in her opinion, other resources in addition to finance are needed. It is more important that the people on the committees both attend meetings and are active in doing the work needed. Councillor Hall mentioned that the Caen-Portsmouth Committee will be assisting Mr Smith-Parkyn in ensuring that Portsmouth is represented at Caen's International day on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2012. Honorary Alderman Sparshatt agreed the importance of being represented in Caen and asked if Brittany Ferries were open to giving discounts for travel for twinning related events.

Councillor Mason said that he would be prepared to support the proposal to book the hotel for Caen's delegation to Portsmouth's D-Day commemoration. Mr Smith-Parkyn confirmed that subject to approval he could make the necessary bookings with his corporate purchasing card.

### Haifa

Mr Charles Stunell reported that the twinning grant for both the visit of Haifa's City Engineer and the tourism exhibition of £1500 had been approved.

He reported that the visit to Portsmouth by Mr Ariel Waterman, Haifa's City Engineer and his wife had been a success and a report back from him about his visit was expected.

Mr Stunell informed the group that the Haifa graphic art exhibition is now going ahead and is expected to take place in the Portsmouth Guildhall, from 6<sup>th</sup> February for two weeks. He mentioned that the electronic posters supplied by Tiltan college in Haifa were being produced by Highbury college. In addition El Al airlines were also expecting to supply some material for the

exhibition to promote travel.

Mr Stunell told the group that the Haifa committee hopes that it would be possible for the Mayor of Haifa to be invited to this year's Mayor-making and that a decision on this was expected soon. A discussion ensued about which budget would support the invitation and questions were asked about whether it should be funded from the Lord Mayor's budget.

Councillor Mason asked that the funding arrangements are clarified before the next meeting of TAG.

### Duisburg

A grant request application for £750 was submitted to the group for consideration on behalf of the Duisburg Committee. The purpose of the grant is to pay for flights and accommodation for three people to support setting up of the Crossroutes 51<sup>o</sup> youth theatre project.

Councillor Mason reported that the New Theatre Royal were working on setting up and developing the youth performance project which would celebrate 500<sup>th</sup> birthday anniversary Gerhard Mercator, their famous cartographer. Mr Smith-Parkyn said that the request for the project came direct to PCC via the Lord Mayor's office and that the New Theatre Royal was asking for a small contribution to progress the request.

Councillor Hall endorsed and proposed the grant application, saying that this project is just the sort of project PCC should be funding. Honorary Alderman Sparshatt seconded the grant application, and it was agreed that this would be put forward to Resources portfolio for approval.

A discussion followed that stressed that all future grant applications should be introduced by someone representing the relevant committee. This would enable the group to ask questions about any given project in order to be able to fully consider its value and worth against other proposed projects.

- RESOLVED (1) that Caen be contacted to confirm their acceptance of he invitation to Portsmouth's D-Day commemorations;**
- (2) that Brittany Ferries be contacted to check the availability of discounted travel for twinning related events;**
- (3) that a provisional hotel booking be made for the Caen's delegation visit to Portsmouth's D-Day commemorations;**
- (4) that advertisement of the Haifa art exhibition be arranged on the Council's website and internal Intranet;**
- (5) that clarification be sought with the Lord Mayor's office about which budget is used for guests invited to Mayor-making;**
- (6) that the grant of £750 to the New Theatre Royal, to support the Crossroutes 51<sup>o</sup> project be recommended to the Resources decision meeting;**
- (7) that all future grant applications be proposed by a representative of the relevant link committee.**

## **5 Other matters discussed**

Councillor Mason informed the group that he had continued to seek additional and alternative sources of funding for twinning related projects. He identified to the group the Zurich Travelling Scholarship fund that has approximately £43,000 worth of investments and £36,000 in the bank. No payments had been made from this money for many years. The purpose of the fund is for the benefit of pupils visiting schools outside the United Kingdom for foreign language studies and to encourage exchange visits and the group felt it would be worthwhile trying to promote this fund as part of twinning initiatives.

Ms Louise Wilders, however, shared with the group that the Zurich Travelling Scholarship, along with similar funds is likely to be transferred to the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Community Foundation to operate in the future.

**RESOLVED that members continue to seek opportunities for additional funding.**

Following discussion, Councillor Mason agreed to check with the City Solicitor whether or not his chairmanship of TAG was appropriate, given that he is the portfolio holder for Resources which decides on grant applications and would advise TAG of the outcome.

## **6 Date of the Next Meeting**

Following a brief discussion it was generally agreed that members of the Twinning Advisory Group would prefer to change the start time of their meetings. Mr Smith-Parkyn agreed to contact members of the TAG to arrange a start time that was acceptable to the majority of members.

The meeting concluded at 9am.

Chair

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