

TWINNING ADVISORY GROUP

MINUTES OF A MEETING of the Twinning Advisory Group held on Wednesday 27 November 2013 at 11am in Lady Mayoress's Parlour, The Guildhall, Portsmouth.

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

Present

Councillors Hugh Mason (Chair)
 Lynne Stagg (Lord Mayor and Vice Chair)
 Terry Hall
 Peter Eddis

Representatives of the twinning committees

Rev. David Stephen Butler (Caen, Duisburg & Haifa Committee Member) from 11:30am

Honorary Alderman Robin Sparshatt (Caen Committee Chair)

Kevan Chippindall-Higgin (Duisburg & Caen Committee Member)

Also in attendance

Peter Smith-Parkyn (Local Democracy Assistant)
Claire Looney (Partnership & Commissioning Manager)

25 Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received.

26 Declaration of Members' Interests

No interests were declared.

27 Minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2013

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Twinning Advisory Group meeting held on 27 November 2013 be confirmed as a correct record, subject to the deletion of paragraph 2 on page 14

28 Communications from the Chair

No communications have been received.

29 Financial Summary to 19 November 2013

The summary of the grants made to date from the Twinning Budget was presented. It was agreed that spending had been prudent and the summary was noted.

30 Portsmouth City Council's international contact officer

Claire Looney, the Council's international contact officer gave a verbal update on Portsmouth's international link activities.

With regard to Caen, there is an outstanding matter of a youth football competition that is expected to take place in May 2014. Due to an apparent link with a team in Portchester, Caen are being asked to contact them directly as they are not in Portsmouth.

TAG was advised that United States' congressmen may be passing through Portsmouth on their way to D-Day commemorations. It was agreed that Portsmouth US links should be contacted to ask about their arrangements.

With regard to Maizuru, art work pictures have been sent to Maizuru for their annual Children's art exhibition.

RESOLVED that the updates were noted.

31 Sister City Links update

The Lord Mayor, Councillor Lynne Stagg informed the group about the Portsmouth Atlantic Compact. This is an educational link project between Portsmouth Rhode Island (USA), Portsmouth Virginia (USA), Portsmouth New Hampshire (USA) and Portsmouth (UK). A website portal for this has been created, located at <http://www.portsmouthatlantic.org/>.

The Compact was discussed and it was agreed that whoever is in the role of Lord Mayor would be asked to sign any agreement required.

The Lord Mayor Councillor Lynne Stagg mentioned that she is provisionally booked to visit Zhuhai, China on 23 March 2014. It is expected that Mr Albert Choi (Chair of the Portsmouth Chinese Association) and Councillor Hugh Mason will also be going, all self-funding. Given the potential economic benefits, it was suggested that Kathy Wadsworth, the Council's Strategic Director for development might be a useful addition to the delegation.

Councillor Terry Hall commented on the Zhuhai link, expressing the emphasis on business and education. Councillor Hall noted Zhuhai's desire to develop a Port Solent/Gunwharf type development and that Kathy Wadsworth has had difficulty getting relevant people to respond. Councillor Hall also remarked that the link between the University and Zhuhai is improving.

32 Updates from the Twinning Representatives and grant proposals

Caen Committee

Honorary Alderman Sparshatt tabled a report on the friendly competition between Portsmouth and Caen at the Great South Run and the committee's provisional events list for 2014.

Peter Smith-Parkyn informed the group that so far the Portsmouth City Council runners, who took part in the Caen-Portsmouth twinning challenge in the Great South Run have raised over £500 towards the Lord Mayor's appeal charities.

Honorary Alderman Sparshatt and Kevan Chippindall-Higgin explained that £300 reimbursed for the blue services visit from Caen had been well received. Talks are taking place for a reciprocal visit to France. It was agreed that all such events should include Caen City Council in the future, as there is the possibility of funding to support this type of activity. Kevan Chippindall-Higgin informed the group that he is progressing with linking the Police forces and will put forward a suggestion to arrange a football match between the two forces.

Honorary Alderman Sparshatt spoke on Mayor-making 2014 and events preceding D-Day commemorations next year. He said that the French veterans greatly appreciated coming to Portsmouth and this should continue in future years. Claire Looney was asked to provide the programme of events and inform Councillor Terry Hall and Honorary Alderman Sparshatt.

Rev. David Stephen Butler offered to contact the Royal British Legion ahead of the D-Day Commemorations, asking whether they would again be happy to provide hospitality for our French guests.

Honorary Alderman Sparshatt reported that Portsmouth's participation in Caen's International fair earlier in November was a great success. With special thanks going to the Kings Theatre, Groundlings and Miltoncross school who were a credit to the city. Both Honorary Alderman Sparshatt and Councillor Frank Jonas had personally thanked the children who took part. It was agreed that with Councillor Peter Eddis's help the Lord Mayor will write a thank you letter to all those who took part. It was also noted that the Lord Mayor's chauffeur had been thanked for his role in delivering the gifts for the other delegations early on the day of departure to France.

Honorary Alderman Sparshatt agreed to provide the Lord Mayor's Office with a list of gifts required for future activities. Councillor Eddis agreed to compile a list of suitable local products which any of the twinning committees may consider using when purchasing gifts.

Whilst, for personal reasons, the Lord Mayor was at the last minute unable to attend as part of the formal delegation, it was noted that Councillor Frank Jonas stood in for the Lord Mayor and was reported to have given a brilliant speech at the official dinner.

The group discussed the selection process for the formal delegation in future years and it was agreed that the delegation will be chosen in future by the Lord Mayor and the Chair of the Caen Committee. With the preferred option

being both the Lord Mayor, the Chair of the Caen Committee and two others to be agreed by Lord Mayor.

Honorary Alderman Sparshatt submitted five bids for events taking place next year, which were :-

- Caen's International Fair 2014 for £1,800 and;
- Great South Run 2014 for £750 and;
- Courants de Liberté 2014 (10k run in Caen) for £700 and;
- Westlake Brothers commemoration service for £100 and;
- Development of educational/school links for £400.

The group considered and supported all the bids to be recommended for approval at the next Resources decision meeting.

Haifa Committee

Rev. David Stephen Butler reported on behalf of the Haifa Committee that committee administration had improved with the addition of their new member Mrs Teresa Deasy. He however raised a concern that the new start time for their meetings of 7pm had the effect of reduced attendance.

Duisburg Committee

Kevan Chippindall-Higgin reported on behalf of the Duisburg Committee that an attempt to secure EU funding was impeded with Council officers being unable to provide the details needed to submit the funding bid. The group were informed that the Council as "parent" organisation was being asked to guarantee the bid and would be liable for any repayments. Officers were therefore unable to authorise this bid.

Claire Looney informed the group that the EU funding application process and reporting is very time consuming and cumbersome. Further, that new funding opportunities are published in the new year. Concern was raised that the different twinning groups might be bidding for the same funds, which would not be helpful. It was agreed that committees wishing to bid for EU funding ought to bring their suggestions to the group, so that a co-ordinated approach can take place and necessary advice and authority may be sought. It was however noted that the EU funding officer has no capacity at present to support new initiatives. It was suggested that the Committees could nominate funding champions from within their members and/or advertise for new members with relevant skills.

It was agreed that Claire Looney will provide the committees with the information on EU funding opportunities, when available. Further that Councillor Hugh Mason will discuss with Sue Page (the City Council's Finance Manager) with regard to requisite details to allow for necessary authorisation for potential external funding bids.

Rev. David Stephen Butler commented that Duisburg Committee has not met since 13 June 2013. It was suggested that if a meeting is not arranged soon,

that those members of the committee wishing to hold a meeting arrange for one. Peter Smith-Parkyn was instructed to ask for the dates of all twinning committee meetings, so that they can be circulated.

Other grants submissions

Councillor Hugh Mason proposed sending a Portsmouth City 2014 calendar to each of Portsmouth's Sister City links, to maintain contact and good relations. The group agreed with this proposal.

RESOLVED that the following requests be made to the next Resources Decision meeting

- (1) the grant of £1800 be recommended to Resources to the Caen Committee for a l'International weekend 2014 and;**
- (2) the grant of £750 be recommended to Resources to the Caen Committee for Great South Run 2014 and;**
- (3) the grant of £700 be recommended to Resources to the Caen Committee for Courants de la Liberte 2014 and;**
- (4) the grant of £100 be recommended to Resources to the Caen Committee for the Westlake Brothers Commemoration and;**
- (5) the grant of £400 be recommended to Resources to the Caen Committee for development of Education /school links and;**
- (6) the grant of up to £100 be recommended to Resources to provide 2014 calendars to Portsmouth's Sister City links;**

33 Date of the Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 15 January 2013 at 11am.

The meeting concluded at 12:35pm.

Chair

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