

**HUNTINGDON TOWN COUNCIL****TWINNING SUB-COMMITTEE**

A meeting of the Twinning Sub Committee was held in The Town Hall, Market Hill, Huntingdon on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> October at 7.00pm.

Present: Councillors: A Blackwell; K Brockett; D Landon Cole (ex-officio); M Kadewere; P Kadewere (Chairman); A McAdam (ex-officio); S McAdam and P Pearce.

In Attendance: David Brown and Graham Buck (Huntingdon & Godmanchester Twinning Association)

*Clerk's Note: before the meeting commenced the Chairman lead the committee in a minute's silence in respect for the late Malcolm Lyons.*

1. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED** to appoint Councillor P Kadewere as Chairman of the Twinning Sub-Committee for the 2022/23 local government year.

The Chairman thanked fellow Members for their confidence in appointing him as Chairman of the Twinning Sub Committee.

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from the following Councillors: B Luckham and K Webb.

3. **APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED** to appoint Councillor K Brockett as Vice Chairman of the Twinning Sub-Committee for the 2022/23 local government year.

4. **TERMS OF COMMITTEE**

(i) Members discussed whether the Twinning Sub Committee should be open to members of the public and it was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED** that meetings of the Twinning Sub Committee would be open to members of the press and public with confidential matters being discussed in a closed session.

(ii) The Chairman asked Members whether they wished to co-opt any members onto the Twinning Sub Committee and it was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED** to co-opt members on to the Twinning Sub Committee as appropriate.

- (iii) Members discussed and it was agreed that all agendas and minutes of the Twinning Sub Committee should be made publicly available for viewing with the exception of any private and confidential matters. It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED** to do so.

## 5. MINUTES

Members had before them copies of the minutes from a meeting of the Twinning Sub Committee that took place on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2019. The Chairman asked if there were any queries relating to the minutes, there were none and it was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED** to accept the minutes as a true record of the meeting.

## 6. HUNTINGDON & GODMANCHESTER TWINNING ASSOCIATION (HGTA) REPORT

The Chairman invited David Brown Chair of HGTA to present a report on the activities of HGTA for the year. David Brown gave a verbal introduction of HGTA, it was confirmed that the committee were active over zoom during the lockdowns in 2020 and 2021. After the pandemic, the HGTA committee filled their vacancies and were fully operational.

An update was given on HGTA events, including the following:

- 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with Wertheim – in July 2022, 19 members of HGTA and the Mayors of Huntingdon and Godmanchester visited Wertheim to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of twinning with Wertheim.
- Summer Garden Party – in August 2022, for HGTA members raised funds for the organisation.
- Ukrainian Welcome Meeting – on the 10<sup>th</sup> August 2022, a welcome meeting for Ukrainian refugees was held in the Commemoration Hall.
- Salon Social Function – on 1<sup>st</sup> October, a fundraising social dinner was held by the Salon Sub Committee.
- Business Meeting in Szentendre – 5<sup>th</sup> November 2022, this meeting includes discussion on the next 4-year rolling programme of twinning activities.
- Gubbio Flag Throwers Visit – July 2023
- Youth Cultural Mural Project – September 2023

It was highlighted to Members that the HGTA's service level agreement (SLA) with Huntingdon Town Council (HTC) was due to expire in 2022. Members were given a copy of the current SLA which will be added onto the next Finance Committee to be discussed further. The Chairman thanked HGTA for their report and asked Members if there were any questions/comments.

**ACTION 6.1:** The Democratic Officer to add Twinning SLA item onto the next Finance Committee agenda.

It was noted that twinning activities and events were good for the town, they increased footfall and the reputation of the town.

David Brown addressed concerns about HGTA activities, it was noted that the sudden passing of Malcolm Lyons had caused a brief hiatus but now the HGTA committee was

filled, engaged, and looking to the future. A meeting was held with the Town Clerk where the SLA was discussed and it was highlighted that communication between HGTA, Huntingdon Town Council and Godmanchester Town Council needed improvement. To help communication the Democratic Officer would act as liaison with HGTA to pass on relevant information to Members.

There was a discussion on the SLA, as Godmanchester's Town Council's (GTC) contributions to HGTA were made on a different basis to HTC's, which was disproportionate. It was noted that GTC does not have an SLA, instead the pay based on the level that GTC are involved in twinning activities. It was noted that both towns have seen substantial growth and GTC's agreement with HGTA needed to be reviewed. It was also noted that HTC would not increase their financial contribution to HGTA until GTC's contribution was increased in proportion to the size of their town.

Members asked whether GTC could be invited to future Twinning Sub Committee meetings to help improve the communication between councils on twinning matters.

**ACTION 6.2:** The Democratic Officer to send out the meeting notification for the next Twinning Sub Committee to GTC.

Members spoke in support of the financial contributions, however the imbalance between councils needed to be addressed and made equal.

## 7. **TWINNING WITH UKRAINE**

The Mayor requested for an item on the agenda for the potential of twinning with a town in Ukraine. The Chairman opened up the discussion to Members.

A Member asked whether there was a national body of twinning with an established process. It was advised that there was no wider body who could advise, it was up to the council and their association to make the connection. However, the other towns twinned to Huntingdon would have to agree. It could be added as an item on the agenda at the business meeting in Szentendre in November.

It was noted that Ukraine was in a current state of political conflict, it may be difficult to establish a relationship to move forward the process of Twinning. Concerns were raised about the political implications of what town to contact, whilst they were still at war.

However, there were many other options for creating a friendship with Ukraine, which could then be a stepping stone for future possible twinning. HGTA had already hosted an event for Ukrainian refugees, similar events could be organised in the future.

Members supported the option to move forward with creating a friendship with a town in Ukraine. It was noted that an officer from Huntingdonshire District Council had been working with Ukrainian refugees in the area and should be invited to HGTA's next committee meeting.

**ACTION 7.1:** HGTA to invite the HDC Officer working with Ukrainian refugees to their next committee meeting.

## 8. **DATE & AGENDA OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023, at the Town Hall, Market Hill, Huntingdon, PE29 3PJ.

ITEM NO	ACTION	WHO'S RESPONSIBLE	DATE DUE	UPDATE
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6.1	The Democratic Officer to add Twinning SLA item onto the next Finance Committee agenda.	The Democratic Officer	30 <sup>th</sup> March 2023	
6.2	The Democratic Officer to send out the meeting notification for the next Twinning Sub Committee to GTC	The Democratic Officer	30 <sup>th</sup> March 2023	
7.1	HGTA to invite the HDC Officer working with Ukrainian refugees to their next committee meeting.	HGTA	30 <sup>th</sup> March 2023	

**CHAIRMAN**