

HUNTINGDON TOWN COUNCIL**TWINNING SUB-COMMITTEE**

A meeting of the Twinning Sub Committee was held in The Town Hall, Market Hill, Huntingdon on Thursday 30th March 2023 following the Strategy & Corporate Plan Committee.

Present: Councillors: A Blackwell; K Brockett (Vice Chairman); D Landon Cole; A McAdam; S McAdam; P Pearce and K Webb.

In Attendance: David Brown and Dick Taplin (Huntingdon & Godmanchester Twinning Association) and Cllr A Norton.

Clerk's Note: Cllr K Webb declared an interest in item 12 as a paid member of HGTA.

9. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from the following Councillors: M Kadewere; P Kadewere (Chairman) and B Luckham.

10. **MINUTES**

Members had before them copies of the minutes from a meeting of the Twinning Sub Committee that took place on 13th October 2022 (M1). The Vice 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.

11. **HUNTINGDON & GODMANCHESTER TWINNING ASSOCIATION (HGTA) REPORT**

i. Meeting with Godmanchester

HGTA had a meeting with Godmanchester Town Council (GTC) to discuss the creation of a service level agreement (SLA) which is similar to the one created by HTC. GTC requested to pro-rata their contribution to HGTA, to approximately 23-24% based on population. The Town Clerk advised that during his meeting with the Godmanchester Town Clerk he suggested that GTC's contribution to twinning was created from the electoral role or the council tax base, it was also suggested that both council's include inflation in their contributions. Members agreed this was a logical and fair suggestion.

It was noted that GTC's precept was considerably lower and if the contribution was based on the council tax base, it would mean a greater percentage of the precept. It was advised that the figure would have no relation to the precept, for example if HTC or GTC submitted an LHI bid, their financial contribution would be the same. It was advised that this suggestion would be shared with GTC.

ii. Mural progress

The mural was making good progress. The event planning was ongoing, there were some difficulties in finding children to contribute as schools had pulled out,

due to capacity and staff shortages. Six spaces for young people were available. Other suggestions were made: the probation office, cadets, of other youth groups.

- iii. Gubbio 10th anniversary
Gubbio's 10th anniversary event, 'Twinners for Tomorrow' was an EU funded event, which HGTA do not qualify for. Gubbio agreed to host HGTA at the same time as the event, due to less funds available this has meant there's a limit to members of HGTA who are able to attend the event.
- iv. Twin Town Business Meeting
The business meeting would be hosted at the same time as the mural project. Plans were underway for this event.
- v. Financial issues
The treasurer of HGTA spoke on his report, which included a 5 year financial plan. It was advised that there was an anticipated shortfall of -£13,530. There was a debate on how this shortfall could be covered, suggestions included more fundraising, doing business meetings virtually and shaving money off the expenditure on the budget. It was advised that business virtual meetings were very difficult to organise, due to the translations.

Other difficulties HGTA have encountered include the rising costs of flights and travel and accommodations for visiting school children and civics from the twinned towns. It was advised that the cheapest option for accommodations for school children from visiting towns was Buckden Towers or Grafham Water. There were no facilities in Huntingdon for this. It was clarified that the business meeting would take place in either of the Town Hall buildings.

The Chairman of HGTA asked members if they had any questions.

A Member queried why only 15 members of HGTA were able to visit Gubbio's 10th anniversary celebrations. It was advised that HGTA were not eligible for the EU grant, so Gubbio agreed to host HGTA from their own civic budget, which resulted in limited numbers able to attend this event.

The Vice Chairman thanked HGTA for their report.

12. **TWINNING SLA**

The draft Twinning SLA for 2023 – 2027 was presented to members, it was noted that in the draft the contribution was £0, but there was already £5,000 set aside in the budget for HGTA. The Town Clerk's recommendation was to set the contribution at £5,000 and add a clause that the figure can be reviewed annually.

It was requested that the Town Clerk write to Godmanchester's Town Clerk, to suggest they base their SLA on their council tax base. It was suggested that a clause could be added to the SLA for members to review the contribution to the SLA following GTC's decision on their contribution.

Members requested evidence that Godmanchester would pay an equal proportion of their twinning contribution. A whole thorough review of the SLA was requested. However, it was advised that HTC wanted to give HGTA some certainty on what they could expect, so they can run their organisation accordingly.

Members decided they would like more information before making their final decision.

It was proposed, seconded and a vote taken:

For: 6

Against: 1

Abstain: 1

It was **RESOLVED** to defer the Twinning SLA to the next Finance Committee.

13. **DATE & AGENDA OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Date to be confirmed, at the Town Hall, Market Hill, Huntingdon, PE29 3PJ.

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

CHAIRMAN