

BRIDGWATER TOWN COUNCIL TWINNING FORUM

Minutes of the Meeting held 7.30pm Wednesday 1 Oct 2014 at the
Town Hall Meeting Room

- 1) **Present**;-Cllr Steve Austen (Chair) Cllr Brian Smedley (Secretary)Cllr Mick Lerry (Czech) Stella Austen (Mayoress) Hilary Bruce (Italy) Keith Giles (La Ciotat) Peter Johnstone, Janet Johnstone, Ros Holman (Homberg) Pat Morgan & Mike Grabner (Malta) Tim Mander (Czech Soc Chairman)
- 2) **Apologies**:- Cllr Ian Tucker (Hungary)
- 3) **Minutes of previous meeting (23 July 2014)**- approved
- 4) **Matters Arising**- none
- 5) **Finances**. – All groups had now received their £300 Town Council grants. Each group agreed to put £50 into the Twinning conference budget.
- 6) **Twinning reports**

La Ciotat *Keith Giles* summed up the projects on offer pointing out that the key visit in October was imminent and had been achieved with the full co-operation of the La Ciotat council.

- ❖ **BLACKDOWN CHOIR** 12-16th October The main project this year would be this choir + a group of Bridgwater-La Ciotat supporters. Keith said the Choir would perform in the newly renovated Eden theatre. He hoped the group could visit the Museum where Bridgwater Mayor Oscar Coates robes were on display. This month also saw the 1720 festival in La Ciotat
- ❖ **IRENA HUBBLE-BREZOWSKI** (*a lecturer at Bridgwater college*) had suggested a college to college link up which we were investigating.
- ❖ We are in touch with the private language school **FRENCS** in la Ciotat
- ❖ The **October visit** would also include a round table discussion on future twinning projects

Homberg *Peter and Janet Johnstone and Ros Holman* mentioned the recent Homberg Society meeting which discussed plans for the Germans to come to Bridgwater in August 2015. They issued an invitation to other twinning groups to support their skittles evening which would be held at the **West India House**, Durleigh road, Bridgwater on **Saturday 11th October**, 7 for 7.30, which would cost £10 and would feature a skittle ploughmans to raise funds for the senior twinning group.

Uherske Hradiste **Cllr Mick Lerry** is the Czech rep from BTC and **Cllr Steve Austen** from SDC. **Tim Mander** is the Chairman of the Czech Friendship Society. Brian Smedley, as administrator for Bridgwater International, outlined the projects coming up

- ❖ **KROMERIZ PROJECT** We had gained EU funds for a UK worker for 12 months. Although we had tried to get a Bridgwater worker, we had not been successful and so the place went to Georgia Baker from Bristol who nevertheless came to Bridgwater for her induction and training..

- ❖ **ALTECH-SARVAR** - (Football) . A British / Czech/Hungarian link,.
- ❖ **BATA UNIVERSITY (Zlin)** – had been developing a link up with Bridgwater College but had a recent change in management and s wished to postpone a return visit until 2015
- ❖ Plans for a **BRIDGWATER POLICE VISIT** to UH were put on hold due to the precarious nature of the imminent Czech local elections. We were asked to wait until after October 11th
- ❖ **MUZIK-** ‘Modern London for **Civil Engineers**’ . Student civil engineers project (tbc)
- ❖ **Dagmar summer camp 2014;**- Akropolis family centre project
- ❖ **Erasmus +;**- **Mobility/ mental & Physical learning disabilities in the community** (autism/downs) EU GRANT APPROVED and Czechs would come to Bridgwater in January 2015 for a 2 week project with Bridgwater College.
- ❖ **Erasmus+;**- **Gruntvig. Project involving volunteer workers with the Red Brick Building, Glastnbury.** EU GRANT DECLINED
- ❖ **EU projects / Barbora Szolonyova** . Projects were being sought for 2015. We had proposed an Energy and Community Benefit related link up..
- ❖ **STRODE COLLEGE-** Lynn Pack would take 20 Childcare students to Prague April 2015
- ❖ **BRIDGWATER COLLEGE** Ian Luckhurst would take 30 History/Sociology to Prague in Feb 2015
- ❖ **RABI GABI** – mr Uhers Klezmer band had agreed to tour UK including Bridgwater 7-13 March 2105. This would include the twinning confernece
- ❖ **WBC;**- (**Workers Beer Company**) .This was a fundraising job placement at festivals with which we could raise funds. Workers placed this year Glastonbury 25-29 June...4 (2 Cz 2 GB) Reading 22-24 aug ...8 (3 Cz 5 GB) Leeds 22-24 aug (4 GB) ,4 Latitude (4 GB) 17-20 july ...4 Tolpuddle (1 GB) 18-20 July .
- ❖ **Sheldon choir** –A choird from the Blackdowns wished to visit Prague and české Budejovice in 2015
- ❖ **Czech Bird watchers** – were keen to visit Somerset in April 2015
- ❖ **České Budejovice high school** would visit Somerset in July 2015

Marsa *Pat Morgan* and *Mike Grabner* said their society had been very busy especially with publicity material to the newspapers. They had funded **Rachel Wise** a Bridgwater scout to go to the World scout jamboree in Japan. They had developed links with **st Mary’s school** (9-10 year olds) and were keen to involve about 40 children on a Malta project. The Mayor of Bridgwater had presented them with a plaque for the vice president although they were disappointed that their September **regatta trip** had not gone ahead. They also sought advice on the missing ‘Marsa’ signposts on the **towns twinning signs**. Tim Mander advised them to contact Lawrence Hackling at County LEHackling@somerset.gov.uk. The Marsa group were interested in talking with Bridgwater International about closer co-operation.

Priverno *Hilary Bruce* was the Italy rep on the group which operated through Bridgwater International. Brian Smedley outlined the upcoming programme.

- ❖ **Bridgwater-Priverno civic visit** – The Mayor would be leading a small group to Priverno on 3-6 October. This would include planning a school link up as Priverno had ow told us they had free accommodation available

- ❖ **Voice of the People (Italy)** 17-20 Oct. Yvette Staelens choir would link with an Italian choir. There would be 47 Somerset people travelling and they would perform in the cathedral
- ❖ **RHODE LANE WANDERERS** . Have amassed grant money and sponsorship but have rejected offers for almost a year now . It was agreed to relook at this based on the new accommodation offer
- ❖ **Priverno UK summer camp** . The *Teodosio Rossi school* summer language schools would be relooked at in conjunction with Language camps for Italian students planned by Hilary
- ❖ **Bridgwater College Pen Pals** -Irena Hubble Brezowski would like to set up some links which could eventually lead to a visit

Sarvar Cllr Ian Tucker was the spokesman. Brian Smedley outlined the recent trip to Hungary.

- ❖ **Sarvar Hungary (Football)28-31 August ALTECH-SARVAR** – Czech and British footballers had gone to Sarvar to take part in an international football tournament (both had lost heavily to the Hungarians). Hungary was in the run up to elections and the outcome was uncertain.

7) **Town Twinning Conference.**

- The meeting agreed that a Twinning conference would be held at the Bridgwater Arts Centre on Saturday 7th March 2015 from 1100 to 1530 including a lunch.
- It was agreed the conference would be free and designed to showcase the 6 Bridgwater twinings with 30 minutes each and a breakout room or area each for display of materials
- The evening would be an Internationalist concert by the Rabi Gabi klezmer band from the Czech republic.
- catering would be provided by the twinners featuring food of the different twinned countries.
- Twinners were asked to discuss possible coinciding visits by their partners including any musicians.
- The cost of the event would be £250 + £50 publicity. The meeting agreed each twinning group would pay £50 to cover this.
- It was further agreed that the day event would be free and that the evening concert would be used to subsidize the Rabbi Gabi tour-which had to include transport, food, and accommodation

- 8) **Future Meetings;-** The next meeting would be **Wednesday 26th November** 2015 in the Town Hall meeting room 7.30 where the key agenda would be Conference preparation

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