

Minutes of Bridgwater-Marsa Twinning Association Meeting

Wednesday 22nd July 7.30 hrs

Present-Leigh Redman (Mayor) Tricia Brown, Steve and Pat Morgan, Helmi Holder-Wolff, Mike and Di Grabner, Barbara and Gordon Taylor, Chris Hewitt.

Apologies- Joseph Abela, Steve and Stella Austen, and James Morgan.

Chairman's Report-MG Thanked Leigh our new Mayor for holding the meeting in the Mayors Parlour and congratulated him on his new post as Mayor. We then all introduced ourselves to Leigh and Chris as it was his first visit and he explained he had found his late father's diary and was unaware that he had served in Malta and is looking forward to visiting next year to find some of the places mentioned.**PM** gave him a copy of the previous meetings minutes.**MG** mentioned we had not had meeting since April when we had discussed the Twinning Forum/Conference. As we have a new President (**LR**) **MG** wondered if we should ask our honorary Vice Presidents if they would like to continue. **PM** will write and ask Joseph Muscat the Prime Minister of Malta - it was explained to **LR** and **CH** that he had been this for many years which started when he was a MEP and friends of the Mayor and council in Marsa. Our other honary VP is our MP Mr Ian Liddell-Grainger **MG** suggested we write and congratulate him on retaining his seat in the General Election and ask if he would like to continue. It was asked if he was really aware of the Association and **MG** replied that when we meet at Remembrance Sunday at the Mayors Parlour he always asks how we are getting on. It was decided by all that **PM** will write to him. It was suggested we contact our local MEP to congratulate them on the recent election and introduce ourselves.**LR** said there are 5 members that cover the entire South West of England.**PM** will investigate.

MG also explained that **JA** had been trying to contact the Maltese High Commissioner in London but had been having trouble trying to find a date/time when **JA** was in London.

From the last Town Twinning Forum Meeting that Brian Smedley will try and arrange a trip by a choir from the area to go to Malta and asked if we would like to be involved **PM** had said yes please and **MG, DG, SM** and **PM** would go. We had also been asked if we had any feedback from Bill Monteith after his trip with RMA members.

Secretary's Report-PM explained that we had not been able to arrange a meeting due to General and council elections and it had then taken time for the council to start functioning and being able to sort a date out with our very busy new Mayor. At the Last Twinning Forum meeting there had been a long discussion about how often to hold another like event and the place where it was to be held. After a lot of input it will become an annual event and Brian Smedley would like ideas for a theme? Music, art, food to be thought about. Today **PM** had received a call from **BS** to say he had spoken with Bill M who had passed on his thanks for the help we had given him in planning the trip and that they had enjoyed themselves and made contacts that would help in the future. He had not contacted Dominic as he had lost his phone no!

PM has sent a couple of email to **DS** in Marsa but as it is the holiday season they are away at the coast in the caravan and do not get home to check emails that regularly. He has offered to try and get VIP tickets for the Regatta and has offered us to visit for a BBQ. He had spoken to the school who had not received the letters that St Mary's had sent – that Danny had told me, Dominic had spoken

both to the teacher and Headmaster and will be in contact with them when school restarts in late September. When I let **DS** know the 4 of us are going for the Regatta I also let the Mayor and Council know but have not had a reply from them. Dave Loveridge is hoping to go to Malta in September-asked him to let us know and if same time maybe meet.**DS** had also asked for a contact for Bridgwater's Got Talent I had emailed the Arts Centre but as yet no reply. Will follow up, it was suggested that the Carnival may have a list of "In front of Curtain Acts "that appear in the Carnival Concerts.

SM,PM and **MG** had taken part in the service to welcome and instate the new vicar of St John's who is called Rev Lis Sparrow. **MG** and **PM** presented her with a map of her parish as members of the Civic Community. It was a very interesting evening and we were very proud to have been invited to take part (we all wore our Twinning Polo Shirts with our logo on) **PM** had written on our Facebook page and "shared "it so others could see and had a response from Steve Gill our founder who would like to be kept informed as he could not get to meetings as now works on nights.

PM had sent information to the Mercury about the meeting but was not published! She had also sent it to BBC Somerset and put it on Facebook and on the What's on Somerset site.

We have had an invite to the Mayors annual sporting fixture which is for Cricket on 1st August at the Parks- the meeting was asked if anyone would like to attend to let **PM** know by 27th and she could reply.

Some events that Alan Hurford had sent- Town Museum open Tuesday- Saturday 10-16.00hrs. **BT** explained that there is a display of work done by the Sedgemoor Stitches that would end on Saturday 25th July.

Arts Centre Friday 24th @ 7.30 hrs Roger Evens Somerset Ghost Stories- Free event.

Treasurers Report- SM explained we had £625.33p in the bank. It as discussed how we had used monies in the past for **LR** and **CH** to understand.**SM** felt we will need some for the next Conference/ Forum and we will need thoughts of how we could perhaps use some for the ethos of the Association.**PM** pointed out that **BS** had told them that the Core Grant would be available soon.**LR** pointed out for any specific need for funding it could be applied for. **MG** suggested the group will need to take gifts in September? What we could take as in the past we have taken Bridgwater china, Polo Shirts, Helmi's Art Work, A shield for the Scouts for their 100 years. **MG** pointed out that we had presented a cup to the Marsa Team for the Regatta –perhaps we could present it at the Regatta. We had also presented the beautiful Bridgwater Picture that is hung in the new council offices so would like to see that.

PM will attempt to contact the Civic Society to see if they would like us to take something for the Marsa Historical Society.

It was suggested we contact Alan Hurford to see if he can suggest anything " Bridgwater " and also the Tile Museum and Carnival anything would need to be light weight as travelling Ryan Air !

Membership Secretary- TB Welcomed **LR** and **CH** and gave them membership forms- no monies will be due until the AGM in October. **TB** has neighbours who are very interested but were unable to come this evening. She has spoken to Danny (teacher at St Mary's) and he does receive our emails

but has been busy with new baby and his health and now end of term. **TB** had asked if we could possibly have meetings on a Thursday but up until now it was not suitable for the Mayor. She will send out new member's lists when new members added. **PM** suggested as BBC Somerset's Emma Britton had holidayed in Malta a few times if we invite her!

Any other Business- HH-W asked about the display we did in **JA**'s garage several years ago at Fair time about Marsa/Malta but it was a huge amount of work for no real return as **MG** said people thought we were a pop up shop for holidays.**CH** asked what we do to make it really attractive to encourage people to join. It was explained that we try to promote education, young people and awareness of ourselves as much as possible. He was not really aware of us until we were mentioned by someone. It was suggested that perhaps we have a stall in Angel Place (the Manager had offered some time ago to help any way he could) It was discussed that if several of the groups did it there would be more of an impact- we will talk about it at the next Town twinning meeting. It was explained that there are now no reporters based at the Mercury office in Bridgwater which explains some of the "mistakes" that are printed and will make it harder for anything we submit to be considered worth printing.

Date, Time and place of next meeting.

After much discussion about a day **LR** could not manage a Thursday in September- suggested contact Judi, Mayors PA to check date was OK- yes.

Tuesday 15th September 7.30 hrs

Mayors Parlour.