

MINUTES OF DORSET TWINNING ASSOCIATION AGM
HELD ON ZOOM AT 7PM ON MONDAY 12TH OCTOBER 2020

Present: Peter Wharf-Bere Regis (President); Jacquie Hall, Wareham Twinning (Secretary); Judy Newton, Roger Angel, Bere Regis (Chairman); Fred Flack -Weymouth/Holzwickede; David Warhurst, Jacquetta Morris -Poole/Cherbourg; Joe & Fran Rose, Helen Lamper – Sturminster Newton; Syd Ede – Christchurch, Philip Sharp (Acting Treasurer); John Pounder -Swanage French Circle; Heather Britton, John Dover – Lyme Regis/St Georges; Valerie Jepps, Tony & Margaret Greenham – Beaminster; Philada Rogers – Bradford Peverell; Val Doney – Lyme Regis/Barfleur; Kevin Brookes, Peter Rendall - Weymouth/Louviers.

Prior to the business the Secretary announced that Tony Greenham of Beaminster Town Twinning had been awarded the BEM. Congratulations from all.

Welcome: President, Cllr Peter Wharf said it was a pleasure to welcome all to the AGM in these circumstances. The key was to keep going until we return to normal. Hopefully we can move forward and all meet again next year.

Apologies: Andy Grant, Jane Mead – Blandford/Mortain); Jo & Charlie Thornton – Piddlehinton; Doreen Cleaton – Wareham Twinning

The Minutes of the last AGM (25th September 2019) were agreed (proposed Syd Ede, seconded Helen Lamper.

Matters Arising:

Mr Ede queried whether any progress had been made about the link between the DTA and St Lo (Thierry Motte) as the 'French are waiting'. Cllr Batstone had emailed Jacquie to say she would update Peter Wharf, and the new Dorset Council Chairman – Val Potheary. Peter Wharf had no update except that the Charter could not be found. John Pounder has a copy of a letter from that time and will forward to Jacquie.

ACTION for the Committee to follow this up and hopefully move forward.

Management Committee Report from the Chairman:

The year started so promisingly last October with several Associations beginning preparations to celebrate many years of Twinning. The majority of these events came to a full stop and unfortunately one Twinning group has disbanded . My own association, Bere Regis, should have been welcoming our Twin Village, Cérences, this month. This was to be a Celebration of 25 years. There were two coaches and lots of fun organised but it was not to be. Many associations have encouraged individual members to firm-up personal links using e-mail, Whatsapp, Zoom etc., and the realisation that everyone is struggling at times has been helpful to many both here and in our Twin towns and villages in whatever part of Europe they are. We all foresee Twinning remaining a part of our future regardless of Covid 19, Brexit or anything else that gets thrown at us. I am sure many associations envisage different ways forward as soon as we can, and hopefully there will be much to share when everyone feels safe. For the time being we must just sit tight and look forward to a return to normal times. Whenever that may be.

I regret that this Chairman's Report is so short but sadly there is very little to report. Keep smiling and Restez Prudent.

Statement of Accounts and Subscriptions: The accounts had been distributed prior to the AGM. Philip explained that the income (subscriptions) did not cover the running costs of the Association leaving a deficit of £98. However, there is a 'year plus a bit' in the balance sheet to cover next year in any emergency.

Syd Ede queried the increased cost of the AGM last year (explained by Jacquie that more people attended and the buffet was of a higher standard). Also there was no stationery or postage claimed (an oversight by both Philip and Jacquie, with much communication done by electronic means). Syd also asked whether the accounts had been audited, but it has not been physically possible to do so. The accounts will be passed to an independent assessor with no twinning connections, in the near

future. The members passed the Accounts subject to them being examined with no adverse comment.

Insurance: Philip has been communicating with the broker, and, after the sending of a summary of data from all the members, the broker felt there may be cause to secure a refund for this year, and a reduced premium next year. Philip queried a suspension of cover but was advised that the premium would increase on resumption of such. There needs to be discussion by the Committee as to the 'sharing out' of the insurance costs next year. Maybe even a contribution from our own reserves. Val Doney put forward a proposal from the Chair of Lyme Regis/Barfleur: -

"We wish to propose the adoption of a two tier rate of DTA annual subscription based on the membership of the relevant local association, with a lower annual subscription for the smaller groups."

There was much discussion, both upholding the current sharing of the cost, and also agreeing that the smaller associations are finding it difficult. Various associations vary on the charging of subs to their members e.g. Poole members are all the residents of Poole, and pay no subs.

Val Doney said there were brokers who could provide cover to single member associations, and will send details to Jacquie.

ACTION: Committee to discuss the cost of insurance and division of such among all members.

Website and social media:

It was requested that all Associations check out the website, www.twinning.org.uk especially the links to their own websites, and their contacts. Email Philip on web@twinning.org.uk with any information.

Various associations can be put events etc. on Facebook. Syd suggested Philip might like a simpler platform and suggested he look at Hugo Fox websites.

Constitution: As Dorset County Council is no more and the County of Dorset consists of Dorset Council and Bournemouth Poole Christchurch Council (BCP), we must change our Constitution. The President used to be the Chairman of DCC, so wording has now included the Chair of BCP. Jacquie has contacted David Flagg of BCP. No answer to date. It was stated that Chairmen and /or Leaders of Councils change annually, and maybe there should be someone with an interest in twinning, and who will continue for more than a year. Much discussion ensued, and no decision was made, except maybe the chosen person should have gravitas and dignity. Also maybe come away from politics, and choose an appropriate person as a figurehead. Peter Wharf is happy to remain as President, but is not precious about it. Roger felt we should stay with Dorset Council, and leave out BCP as their take on twinning is different from 'rural twinning' Jacquie to write to BCP for an answer, as well as Syd Ede 'nudging' David Flagg. Jacquie invited members to email her with any further thoughts.

ACTION for the Committee to decide upon the wording of the Constitution, and bring to 2021 AGM for ratification.

The Election of Management Committee: There was a plea for more people/ new blood to join the Committee. Elected are Chairman-Roger Angel, Secretary-Jacquie Hall, Members-John Pounder, Judy Newton, David Warhurst, Valerie Jepps and Kevin Brookes.

Philip Sharp has held the temporary Treasurer's post for a while but wishes to stand down, but he was persuaded to carry on for a couple of months. Philip was thanked for all his hard work despite moving between two countries. Syd Ede is prepared to take it over but not at present. Syd Ede will be added to the Management Committee email group for information.

Reports from Local Associations:

Jacquie had received reports from six Associations: Weymouth Holzewickede, Sherborne Douzelage, Piddlington, Beaminster, Lyme Regis/Bermuda and Christchurch. Jacquie will send them to the Webmaster to put on the website.

Post meeting Jacquie also received a report from Poole.

Date and time and venue of next AGM: Date (it must be before 31st October), time and venue to be agreed.

The Secretary was thanked for her work in arranging the AGM.

The Secretary closed the meeting at 20.45 hoping all members have a better twinning year next year.