

Report No.1

Report to Meeting of Malmesbury Town Council 23rd February 2016

Friendship Agreement

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1. To invite the Town Council to consider entering into a Friendship Agreement with Bad Hersfeld, Germany.

2. Background

- 2.1. A few years ago a representative of the Friends of Malmesbury Association from Bad Hersfeld in Germany visited Malmesbury and whilst here explained what an important role St Lullus (Lull) had played in the formation of a monastery in their town before becoming the first Bishop of Mainz.
- 2.2 Such was the impact and influence St Lullus had upon Bad Hersfeld and the surrounding area that they have commemorated the anniversary of his death with a festival since the year 852. It is now considered to be the oldest such festival in Germany.
- 2.3. St Lullus had spent some time at Malmesbury before he travelled to Europe as a missionary and is mentioned briefly within one line in the Malmesbury Abbey Guide.
- 2.4 There is a growing interest within Bad Hersfeld for there to be closer links with Malmesbury, it being the town where St Lullus studied. Their local school choir performed in the Abbey last year and a number of residents have made journeys to Malmesbury as individuals and in groups staying at local hotels and guest houses.
- 2.5 A brass band from the town will be performing this April in or near Malmesbury as part of yet another visit to our town.

3. Proposals

- 3.1. The Town Council of Bad Hersfeld and the Friends of Malmesbury are seeking to enter into a Friendship Agreement with Malmesbury Town Council in order to encourage friendship and understanding between the two communities.
- 3.2. There is no intention to impact upon the long established twinning arrangements with Gien and Niebull and would be very similar to the agreement entered into with Malmesbury South Africa.
- 3.2 The Friendship Agreement with Malmesbury SA seeks to encourage opportunities to encourage greater cooperation between citizens and enterprise although the distance does provide difficulties.
- 3.4 The rationale behind entering into such an agreement is to enable there to be a formal point of contact in both towns whenever organisations or individuals are seeking to make visits or exchange information.

4. Financial implications

- 4.1 There are no financial obligations falling upon the Town Council as a consequence of entering into a Friendship Agreement just as there were none when the agreement was made with Malmesbury SA.

4.2 The document is called a Friendship Agreement but may also be referred to as Friendship Charter and does not bind the Town Council to any legal or financial obligation.

5 Recommendations

5.1 Members are requested to consider the request to enter into a Friendship Agreement with the town of Bad Hersfeld and instruct the Town Clerk accordingly.

Jeff Penfold
Town Clerk