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Corporate Plan Output: Events Management: Sister Cities	

The purpose of this report is to present to the Councillors findings and recommendations relative to the present and future opportunities of Sister Cities.

#### 1. BACKGROUND

In 1995 the Council considered a report recommending criteria for the establishment of new Sister City relationships. Councillors requested staff give greater consideration to the development, monitoring and opportunities for Sister Cities generally.

In May this year The Tourism and Leisure Group Ltd was commissioned to carry out independent research on Sister Cities. The brief to the consultants was to consult with Sister City Committee members, staff, individuals and groups in the community who are either involved in sister cities or have an interest in the concept of sister cities, to research the following:

- Determine and analyse current benefits
- Determine potential benefits
- Recommend appropriate levels of annual support and funding from the Council
- Recommend the geographical location of Sister Cities for future relationships
- Suggest additional opportunities for new relationships.

The consultants were able to fulfil most of the brief. However, they experienced some difficulty in meeting all requirements because of the diversity of views relative to Sister Cities, which became evident during the consultation phase.

Following the presentation of the consultants' report to a Community Services Seminar meeting, staff, in conjunction with the consultants, made the following recommendations in the form of a policy statement for Sister Cities of the Christchurch City Council.

A copy of the consultants' report is tabled.

#### 2. PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF SISTER CITY RELATIONSHIPS

In determining and analysing current benefits, the consultants found that while a large number of activities take place between Christchurch and each of her Sister Cities, the benefits are difficult to determine because of a lack of process for monitoring and evaluation.

Within the report a series of recommendations were made by the consultants, that provide for developing a reporting system aligned with the Council's Annual Plan process.

***Recommendations:***

- That the Council develop a clear, written statement of expectations for Sister City relationships.
- That Sister City Committees develop strategic plans that determine their vision and goals, primary focus of activity, their key opportunities and the resources they will require.

**3. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

We believe it is imperative that the majority of membership of the committees be carried across from term to term of the Council. Continuity of understanding is important, however, this should not prevent the introduction of new blood onto a committee. To ensure survival of relationships, it is important that those with the enthusiasm are encouraged to stay involved. Given that the Council has encouraged community participation through the development of community committees, it is important that each committee is balanced between the Council and community representation within its membership. To ensure recognition of the commitment and the skills of committee members, committee membership should be reported to the appropriate standing committee of the Council at the commencement of each triennial term. In addition, any new memberships to the committees during the term should also be reported through for information.

Replacement and selection of new Sister City Committee members will need to take into account each committee's specific focus of activity.

The report outlined the need for specifically focussed external organisations to follow through on Sister City initiated opportunities if they are to obtain the support of the Sister City Committees for their own initiatives.

***Recommendations:***

- That existing Council policy relating to the selection of chairpersons remain (current policy states):
  - (i) Appointments be made for a three-year term, after each triennial election.
  - (ii) Each Sister City recommend to the Council (via the Cultural and Social Services Committee - now Community Services) a person to act as Chairperson, who is not to be appointed for more than two consecutive terms, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
  - (iii) In the event of the Chair of a committee becoming vacant, the same procedure be used to appoint a Chairperson to serve the remainder of the term.
  - (iv) Each Sister City Committee elect its own Deputy Chairperson.
  
- That membership by Councillors on Sister City Committees be limited to a maximum of two Councillors per committee.

**4. CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING NEW SISTER CITY RELATIONSHIPS AND REVIEWING EXISTING RELATIONSHIPS**

In the past the Council has reacted to invitations for relationships rather than proactively seeking opportunities. The consultants recommended a numerical weighting factor be applied, dependant on perceived importance, to the following areas of potential when selecting new relationships:

- Ease of access
- Opportunity for broad based activities
- Strong, long term economic potential
- People to people interest, energy and commitment

In addition to the development of new Sister City relationships, the consultants proposed classifications for alternative or additional relationships that would provide for variation in the way the Council and the City of Christchurch administer, and establish new international contacts. The alternative classifications recommended are: “friendly” cities and strategic alliances.

In reviewing existing relationships, it is proposed by the consultants that the assessment of annual performance reviews over a longer term should be made against the same criteria as that used in consideration of new relationships. This review should take into consideration increased public awareness and understanding of the relationship, and consideration of the wide range of broad based activities being facilitated.

***Recommendations:***

- That each existing Sister City relationship be evaluated against agreed performance indicators, as set annually within the annual plan process.
- That each Sister City relationship be evaluated on a longer term basis, taking into consideration annual evaluations against performance indicators, to ensure it still has relevance and adds value to each city.
- That, in the event of a Sister City relationship identified as not being of value to either or both of the cities involved, discussions take place between the then current Sister City chairpersons and the Mayors of each city to determine a reclassification of the relationship.

**5. SUMMARY**

The consultants have listed within their report the critical success factors of beneficial Sister City relationships as being selection of the appropriate relationship, and the committee membership to drive the relationship forward; communication locally, and internationally; and active and well-focussed exchange. To achieve effectiveness within Sister Cities it is important to analyse any proactive or reactive approach to new relationships against the strategic objectives of the Council and the criteria recommended within this report.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the report be received.
  2. That the above recommendations be accepted.
  3. That a working party be established to resolve the following additional issues:
    - (i) Total number of Sister Cities to be resourced by the Council at any one time.
    - (ii) Geographical locations of any new relationships.
    - (iii) The weighting allocated for each criteria for the selection of new Sister Cities and the evaluation of existing Sister Cities.
    - (iv) Time line for long-term performance review period.

- (v) The level of administrative and operational support to the Sister City Committees and clarification of the roles of the committee members.
  - (vi) The alternative types, clarification of criteria and resourcing for alternative relationships.
4. That the working party involves representatives from the following in the decision-making process:
    - Councillors
    - Council staff
    - Representatives from Sister City Committees
    - Representatives from associated organisations.
  5. That the alternative types of relationships suggested in the review (ie Friendly Cities and Strategic Alliances) also be considered by the Boards of the Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce, Canterbury Manufacturers' Association, Canterbury Development Corporation and Canterbury Tourism Corporation.
  6. That Councillors not be appointed for more than two consecutive terms of committee membership, unless there are exceptional circumstances.