

## 1. STRATEGY FOR SISTER CITIES

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Corporate Plan Output: Sister Cities	

The purpose of this report is to present to the Council a Strategy for the Future of Sister Cities.

### BACKGROUND

In August 1998, the Council considered a report from Tourism and Leisure Group Ltd relating to the structure of Sister Cities within Christchurch City Council. The following policy statements were agreed.

#### 1. **Endorsement of the Existing Policy Relating to Committee Membership and Appointment of Office Bearers**

- Appointments be made for a three year term, after each triennial election, until such time as the legal status of Sister City Committees is confirmed.
- Each Sister City Committee recommends to the Council (via the Cultural and Social Services Committee – now Community Services) a person to act as Chairperson.
- Chairpersons not be appointed for more than two consecutive terms, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- 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.
- Each Sister City Committee elects its own Deputy Chairperson.

#### 2. **Criteria for Establishing New Sister City Relationships and Reviewing Existing Relationships**

- 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 re-classification of the relationship.
- That a Working Party be developed to further explore a strategy for the Christchurch City Council's Sister Cities.

### 3. Working Party for Sister Cities

A working party comprising 14 people was established to determine a strategy and a series of recommendations for the management of Sister Cities in Christchurch. Membership of the working party is attached (Appendix A).

Terms of reference were provided by the Council to guide the committee in the development of a strategy. The working party set out to:

- Develop a vision for Sister Cities
- Develop a set of criteria for determining type and resourcing of new and existing relationships
- Determine an annual evaluation system for relationships
- Determine a long-term performance review system for relationships
- Determine the total number and geographic location of new relationships

The working party agreed the following strategy for Sister Cities:

## Strategy for Sister Cities

### Vision

*Christchurch will continually enhance the quality of life of its citizens and understanding of diverse cultures from around the world through proactive (citizen) Sister City relationships.*

## **Objectives**

The following objectives for Sister Cities will assist committees meet this vision:

- To promote relationships between the people of Christchurch and the people of its Sister Cities.
- To continue to increase international understanding and opportunities for wider reaching relationships through the promotion of our Sister Cities in Christchurch.
- To involve a range of community groups including (but not limited to) schools and other focus interest groups, and where appropriate local business under the auspices of key business facilitators.
- To promote Christchurch as a city welcoming tourism and visitation and international economic development.

## **Implementation**

- Each Sister City Committee will include in its membership a minimum of one and a maximum of two elected members.
- Each Sister City Committee will review its membership annually.
- Each Sister City Committee will receive a minimum annual grant of \$3,000 to enable them to manage their relationships.
- Sister City Committees will provide an annual plan and programme of activities with budget allocations defined, within the annual plan process of Council each year. Additional funding, in the form of grants, will be considered based on the annual plan.
- An annual report using a standard format is provided to Council at the end of each financial year.
- A longer-term review of each relationship will be carried out every three years commencing 2003.
- International Relations Co-ordinators will oversee and service the committees and Council will provide free of charge a venue for each Sister City Committee meeting.

## **Scope for the Future**

- The consideration of new Sister City relationships should be made on the basis of near equal distribution of resource, personal interest and economic development opportunity into the areas of:
  - Education/arts/culture/sport 35%
  - Commerce/investment of capital 35%
  - Personal fulfilment, community awareness/support 30%
- Existing relationships will be assessed against criteria for new relationships but, given the inconsistency in rationale for their selection, they must also be assessed in relation to the objectives for Sister Cities agreed by the Council.
- Sister City relationships can develop from, or be re-classified to become:
  - Friendship cities
  - Special relationships
  - Strategic partnerships(Criteria for each of the above is attached – Appendix B)
- Future location of Sister City and alternative types of relationships should be considered in line with Central Government and regional initiatives in relation to international trade, immigration and education exchange. Consideration to ease of access to any future Sister City, and the volunteer support base in the community must also be given.
- All future relationships must contain short and long-term review clauses and a mutually agreeable sunset clause.

#### **4. Transitional Arrangements**

The legal status of the committees has been raised in recent times during the Sister City Chairs and Deputy Chairs meetings. There is a concern among the Chairs that because the committees have no legal standing they have some difficulties in raising funding through funding agencies and sponsorship through corporate organisations. The legal adviser for the Council has provided some initial clarification on options for legal status, however, it will take some time to clarify the best option for the Council and seek the agreement of the Chairs of the committees.

As the committees have been awaiting the development of this strategy to consider changes to their office bearers, we have advised them it would be appropriate for them to retain their current structure. The office bearers were not changed following the last local government election, pending the development of this strategy. Given that some of the current Chairs are keen to step down from their position, it would be appropriate for each committee to recommend to Council an interim chair to lead their committee.

It may be appropriate, depending on the finally agreed legal status of the committees, to reconsider the existing policy relative to committee membership and the appointment of office bearers.

#### **RESOURCING FOR FUTURE SISTER CITY RELATIONSHIPS**

A number of groups and organisations have approached the Council in recent times to request a Sister City relationship. The strategy presented here provides criteria around which these approaches can be considered. However, in order that a new Sister City relationship can be considered it would be necessary to provide additional resources.

The International Relations team of three staff presently service the six existing committees, manage the visiting delegation programme and much of the Civic and Ceremonial activities that the Council is involved in.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the Strategy for Sister Cities be endorsed.
  2. That staff prepare a report to the Community Services Committee by March 2001 on a recommended legal status for the Sister City Committees.
  3. That each existing Sister City Committee recommend to the Council an interim chair to lead the committee through to the time when their new legal status has been determined.
  4. That the Council agree on the criteria for alternative types of relationships.