

4. INVITATION TO VISIT SONGPA-GU, SISTER CITY OF CHRISTCHURCH

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The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for the Deputy Mayor Lesley Keast and Councillor Carole Anderton to visit Songpa-Gu at the invitation of Mayor Lee, Mayor of Songpa-Gu, Sister City to Christchurch.

BACKGROUND

Mayor Lee visited Christchurch in February of this year to officiate at the opening of the Sister Cities Gardens. It was his first visit to Christchurch in his role as Mayor. A business delegation also visited Christchurch at the time of Mayor Lee's visit and met with local business people.

In his letter of invitation Mayor Lee has invited Deputy Mayor Lesley Keast and Councillor Carole Anderton, Mr Clyde Sugden (Chairman of the Christchurch-Songpa-Gu Sister City Committee) and Mrs Sugden and also a troupe of 16 performers from Aranui High School's Cultural Group. Mayor Lee also offers his city's congratulations on Christchurch winning the 2000 Air New Zealand Sister Cities' award, for the best cultural project in respect to the Gardens opening.

Recent invitations sent to Mayor Garry Moore have been unable to be accepted due to other commitments.

The last official visit by an elected member from Christchurch to Songpa-Gu was in September 1997. At the invitation of the then Mayor, Mayor Kim, Councillor Pat Harrow, Jim Williamson (then Director of Operations) and Sue McFarlane (International Relations Co-ordinator) attended the Paekje Festival.

2001 HANSUNG PAEKJE FESTIVAL

The Hansung Paekje Festival to be held from 17 – 23 September, is the most important cultural event in Songpa-Gu. Songpa-Gu was the ancient capital of Korea for around 500 years during the year Hansung Paekje era 2000 years ago and the festival is held in celebration of this. On Peace People's Day an Overseas Sister City Parade and International Folk Festival is held to celebrate the city's multicultural links. Officials from each of Songpa-Gu's Sister Cities are brought together to join in the festivities.

It is proposed that this years delegation of Deputy Mayor Lesley Keast and Councillor Carole Anderton, (Chairperson of Community Services Committee), Mr and Mrs Sugden, and the Aranui High School Cultural Group will depart Christchurch 17 September and return on 25 September.

TRAVEL EXPENSES

Most of the on-ground costs for the Christchurch City representatives will be met by Songpa-Gu City Hall, including costs for 12 of the Aranui High School Cultural Group. The students will pay their airfares and remaining on-ground costs. The Christchurch - Songpa-Gu Sister City Committee will meet the airfare and remaining on-ground costs for Clyde Sugden. Mrs Val Sugden will join the delegation at her own cost.

The costs for air travel and remaining on-ground expenses for the Deputy Mayor and Councillor Anderton will be met from the Councillors Travel Budget.

In line with the Councillors' Overseas Policy air travel will be by way of economy class. Deputy Mayor Keast and Councillor Anderton will travel by Singapore Air.

The return airfares will cost approximately \$1,539.00 per person and accommodation for additional days not covered by Songpa-Gu City Hall will cost in the vicinity of NZ\$200 per person per day.

Recommendation: That the Council approve the visit of Deputy Mayor Lesley Keast and Councillor Carole Anderton to Songpa-Gu, Sister City to Christchurch, at the invitation of Mayor Lee.