

8. COVENANT OF EUROPEAN MAYORS

General Manager responsible:	General Manager Corporate Services, DDI 941-8528
Officer responsible:	Energy Manager
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PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the Council's approval to join the Covenant of European Mayors as it relates to energy targets.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. The Mayor has received an invitation from Eckart Würzner, president of Energie-Cités, to sign up to the European Union *Covenant of Mayors* (refer attached).
3. The Covenant focuses on commitments to improve energy efficiency by 20 per cent, increase the share of renewable energy by 20 per cent and reduce CO₂ emissions by 20 per cent by 2020. To achieve this, the Covenant requires the signatories to develop and implement a Sustainable Energy Action Plan for their city.
4. The Covenant objectives are well aligned with those of the Sustainable Energy Strategy for Christchurch 2008-18.
5. Joining the Covenant would benefit the Council in the implementation of its Sustainable Energy Action Plan.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6. None.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

7. The Legal Services have considered the Covenant documents and concluded that there are no issues arising from it.

BACKGROUND

Energie-Cités

8. Energie-Cités is an Association of European Local Authorities promoting local sustainable energy policies. It comprises of 167 individual members – city councils, as well as a number of collective members across Europe.
9. The Christchurch City Council joined Energie-Cités in 2006. Christchurch is the only non-European member of the association.
10. Energie-Cités provided valuable practical assistance and guidance in the development of Sustainable Energy Strategy for Christchurch 2008-2018. Energie-Cités is a source of first-class expertise and case studies. Tapping into their expertise provides substantial benefits to the Council.
11. Currently, three Christchurch City Council's projects are published at Energie-Cités' website as best practice case studies, thus giving Christchurch's success a European exposure.

Covenant of Mayors

12. The purpose of the Covenant is to set up co-operation schemes and support structures which help the signatories to implement their sustainable energy action plans. It is an initiative of the European Commission, which decided to fund such structures and schemes.

13. It has to be noted that, unlike other participants, Christchurch (a non-European member) will have no direct access to this funding. However, we may still benefit from the co-operation structures.
14. For example, benchmarking studies are intended to become integral part of the Covenant. The Council would benefit from this as Christchurch is the only New Zealand City to develop, adopt and implement a comprehensive city-wide Energy Strategy, so national benchmarks do not exist. The Covenant's "Benchmarks of Excellence" would assist us to assess our progress in the implementation of the Sustainable Energy Strategy for Christchurch.
15. The commitments required by the Covenant are to:
 - develop a Sustainable Energy Action Plan and implement it
 - organise Energy Days
 - monitor progress in reducing energy consumption and corresponding CO₂ emissions
 - submit an implementation report every second year
 - share our experiences and know-how.
16. The Council has already developed an Action Plan as part of the *Sustainable Energy Strategy for Christchurch 2008-18* and committed to its implementation. The action Plan includes organising annual energy awareness days, monitoring the progress of the action Plan and regular reporting. The 20 per cent energy targets of the Covenant align well with the targets of the *Sustainable Energy Strategy for Christchurch 2008-18*. We are therefore well placed to comply with all the requirements of the Covenant of Mayors.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council authorise the Mayor to sign the Covenant of Mayors.