



COUNCIL 14. 6. 2012

17. MAYORAL TRAVEL IN SUPPORT OF CIVIC AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

General Manager responsible:	General Manager Public Affairs, DDI 941-8682
Officer responsible:	Marketing Manager
Author:	Manager Civic and International Relations

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To seek approval for:
 - An amendment to the Council's 2005 International Relations Policy specifying that Mayoral travel to Sister Cities and other strategic partners of the city is a key tool to be used to develop these relationships for the benefit of the city and that approval is given for the Mayor, accompanied by the Mayoress to visit each of our seven sister cities once per three year term.
 - Travel by the Mayor and Mayoress to Sister City partners, in support of the city's key international relationships, during the next twelve months.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. Christchurch City Council maintains and develops international relationships that contribute to the city's Community Outcomes and the Council's Strategic Directions. The Council's 2005 International Relations policy emphasises the following Outcomes:
 - (a) A Prosperous City (promoting international investment, access to best practice and technology, and educational opportunities);
 - (b) A City of Inclusive and Diverse Communities (bringing cultural experiences to the city and promoting cultural awareness about different communities both visiting and living in Christchurch); and
 - (c) A City of Lifelong Learning (promoting international education exchanges and attracting high-calibre international students to study and research in Christchurch).
3. The majority of work on these important relationships is conducted remotely and at the staff level, through constant dialogue with counterparts overseas, work together on joint projects, and via cooperation and coordination with our six Sister City Committees and with other Christchurch organisations, particularly Canterbury Development Corporation (CDC), Christchurch and Canterbury Tourism (CCT), Christchurch International Airport Limited (CIAL), the Chamber of Commerce, and Study Christchurch. This work can be given significant impetus, however, by well-timed travel by the Mayor. The presence of the Mayor at a key meeting or event can secure access to leaders and key decision-makers which would otherwise not be possible. It also attracts significantly more foreign media coverage and raises the profile both of the event and the city more widely. This is particularly the case in the Asian region, where Mayoral visits are accorded great significance. For this reason, a Mayoral travel programme is recommended as a key tool in developing the city's international relationships and an amendment to the International Relations Policy, to reflect this, is proposed.
4. During 2012, New Zealand will mark a number of important foreign policy milestones, and celebrations and events around these milestones will offer further opportunities for Christchurch to advance some key relationships in cooperation with central government. New Zealand's formal relations with China, Korea and Japan reach their 40th, 50th and 60th anniversaries this year. It is also 70 years since New Zealand established formal diplomatic relations with the United States of America. Travel to our Sister Cities in each of these countries offers the opportunity to honour these anniversaries, work with central government and advance our city-to-city links. Accordingly it is recommended that the Mayor visit the Sister Cities of Gansu, Wuhan, Kurashiki, Songpa-Gu and Seattle later this year.

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5. The details of this travel will be confirmed over the next month, based around the above anniversaries and key Sister City projects. The visits to several Sister Cities are being combined in order to minimise travel cost and time. A visit to our Sister City of Adelaide is not proposed in 2012, however an invitation to the Lord Mayor of Adelaide to visit Christchurch is under discussion, to mark the 40th anniversary of that Sister City connection and to advance a number of joint projects.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6. There is provision for international travel by the Mayor and Mayoress within the mayoral travel budget of approximately \$42,000 per annum. It is expected that travel to Sister Cities would be allocated from within this budget.

Do the Recommendations of this Report Align with 2009-19 LTCCP budgets?

7. Yes. There is provision within the CIR budget for international travel by a Civic and International Relations staff member, in order to support the Mayor and work with overseas counterparts.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

8. Nil.

ALIGNMENT WITH LTCCP AND ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

9. Civic and International Relations Activity 5.0. and LTP 2009-19 Economic Development, Civic and International Relations, pg 150.

Do the recommendations of this report support a level of service or project in the 2009-19 LTCCP?

10. Yes Maintain and develop strategic city to city programmes. (LTP 2009-19 Economic Development, Civic and International Relations, page 150).

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIES

11. This report reflects the Council's Strategic Directions document; the 2005 International Relations Policy; and the 2000 Sister Cities Strategy.

Do the recommendations align with the Council's strategies?

12. Yes.

CONSULTATION FULFILMENT

13. Not applicable.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council approve:

- (a) An amendment to the Council's 2005 International Relations Police specifying that Mayoral travel to Sister Cities and other strategic partners of the city is a key tool to be used to develop these relationships for the benefit of the city and that approval is given for the Mayor, accompanied by the Mayoress to visit each of our seven sister cities once per three year term.
- (b) Travel by the Mayor and Mayoress to Sister City partners, in support of the city's key international relationships, during the next twelve months.

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BACKGROUND (THE ISSUES)

Our Sister City partners

14. Christchurch has six Sister City Relationships and one Strategic Partnership. Our Sister Cities are Adelaide, Australia (since 1972); Christchurch, UK (1975); Gansu, China (1984); Kurashiki, Japan (1973) and Songpa-Gu, Korea (1995). The Strategic Partnership with Wuhan was agreed in 2006.
15. Each of the Sister City relationships are coordinated and promoted by a community-based Committee. Elected members may sit on these Committees - the Council's Sister Cities Strategy document, adopted in 2000, provides for each Committee to include a minimum of one and maximum of two elected members. The Committees also draw in representation from other key city agencies with an international focus – for example, the Christchurch/China Friendly Relations Committee has a member from the Canterbury Development Corporation (CDC) and the Christchurch/Adelaide Sister City Committee has a member from Christchurch and Canterbury Tourism (CCT).
16. Council staff from Civic and International Relations (Marketing Unit/Public Affairs Group) oversee and assist the Committees and manage their annual applications for funds. The Sister City Committees receive a small annual administrative grant plus modest seed funding for new projects which meet the objectives of the Council's Sister Cities Strategy and International Relations policy. The Council provides each Committee with a free venue for meetings, under the terms of the 2000 Strategy.
17. Sister City relationships and other international partnerships provide diverse benefits and opportunities for the city. Independent research commissioned by the Auckland City Council in 2007 found that its international partnerships facilitated an additional \$55 million of GDP to the Auckland economy each year and while a detailed economic analysis of this nature has not been carried out for Christchurch's international partnerships, clear benefits have accrued for the city as a result of our longstanding Sister City links plus the more recent Strategic Partnership and additional international relationships, such as those developed in connection with our role as an Antarctic Gateway City.

China

18. **GANSU:** Sister City connections are a very significant concept within the Asian region. This Sister City relationship reflects the historical ties between the Chinese province in which Rewi Alley lived and worked and his country of origin (he was born in Springfield). Rewi Alley is a highly revered figure in China, honoured for his dedication over 60 years in helping ordinary Chinese working people. As a result this Sister City relationship is frequently honoured by the Chinese side, including during the 2009 visit to Christchurch of the Chinese Vice-Premier Li Keqiang, and the visit in April 2012 by Chairman Jia. While the Chinese economy is growing rapidly, Gansu in the isolated north-east remains relatively poor and the work of the Committee frequently focuses on assistance, for example through the provision of teachers. Training opportunities for Gansu officials are also being explored with University of Canterbury. In addition, Gansu province offers two annual scholarships for young students/youth ambassadors nominated by the Sister City Committee, which offer a unique opportunity for young Cantabrians studying the Chinese language.
19. **WUHAN:** April 2012 marked the 6th anniversary of the Strategic Partnership between Christchurch and Wuhan. This is one of the city's fastest-growing international connections. The Wuhan Government puts considerable resources into the relationship, including separate visits to Christchurch by both their Mayor and Deputy Mayor in 2009. The Strategic Partnership was also a factor in the inclusion of Christchurch in the programme for the State Visit to New Zealand by Chinese Vice Premier Li Keqiang in November 2009, which gave Christchurch a high profile in Chinese national news at the time.

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20. The Strategic Partnership continues to develop to the benefit of both cities. The relationship assisted in the decision of the Chinese Government to fund New Zealand's second Confucius Institute at the University of Canterbury (UC) which opened in 2009. In September 2009, UC concluded an agreement on a joint PhD programme with the China Scholarship Council, which enables PhD students from Wuhan to apply for scholarships to study at UC. A 'Friendship City Scholarship Programme', which has operated since 2006, has brought over 30 Wuhan students to study at UC. Another 20 Wuhan students will be joining UC in 2012. This is to be an annual programme with UC receiving groups every year from Wuhan's Zhongnan University of Economics and Law (ZUEL), who then complete their double-degree studies at UC after two and a half years of study in China.
21. Collaborative business ventures have also grown out of the partnership with Wuhan, including a partnership recently formalised between local architectural firm Warren and Mahoney and the Central-South Architectural Design Institute (CSADI) in Wuhan. CSADI and Warren and Mahoney are now working together to jointly bid for architectural contracts in China. Canterbury Development Corporation is also investigating the scope for collaborative work on 'green tech' projects with Wuhan Biolake, a high-tech start-up zone.
22. There is also an Antarctic strand to the relationship with Wuhan, as the Chinese Antarctic Centre of Survey and Mapping is based at Wuhan University and works with UC's Gateway Antarctica. The Chinese Antarctic Programme is growing rapidly and is now the largest Antarctic programme in the world. China has ambitious plans to build three bases on Antarctica and sends an icebreaker there every year (the *Xue Long* called at Lyttelton on its way to and from Antarctica during the 2009/2010 summer season). Positioning Christchurch as a key gateway to the ice and reinforcing our links with the Chinese programme will deliver opportunities and benefits to the city. (CDC research in 2007 found Antarctic-related activities contributed over \$87 million to the Canterbury economy.)

Kurashiki, Japan

23. 2013 will mark the 40th anniversary of the Christchurch/Kurashiki Sister City relationship. The Japanese Ambassador is keen to develop this Sister City relationship further and the Sister City Committee has received a proposal to organise a Business Expo around activities marking the 40th anniversary. This proposal is in the process of being canvassed with Christchurch businesses.

Seattle, USA

24. The Sister City relationship with Seattle dates from 1981 and a mayoral visit from Christchurch last took place in 2005. A huge range of joint projects have been instigated under the auspices of this relationship over the last thirty years, involving the education, arts and culture, high-technology and medical sectors. Christchurch's HITLab, based at UC, is a sister lab to the original HITLab at Seattle's University of Washington. This Sister City link also has an Antarctic strand, as the majority of US Air Force personnel working for the US Antarctic Programme come from the McChord Air Force Base in Seattle.

Adelaide, Australia

25. An annual school exchange between South Hornby Primary School and an Adelaide school has grown out of this connection, for which the Committee provides modest support and South Hornby raises some \$20,000 in community fundraising. Education and cultural exchanges were a feature of the relationship in its early years, and the education and research sectors remain involved. In recent years, the Committee has encouraged increased cooperation between Lincoln University and the University of Adelaide's agricultural campus, including in the winemaking sector (cooperation with the Australian Wine Research Institute) and the biotech sector (the Director of BioSA, a bioscience business 'incubator', visited Christchurch in 2009). A new Lord Mayor of Adelaide was elected in 2010 and responsibility for coordinating Sister City relationships was transferred from the office of the Lord Mayor to South Australia's Council for International Trade and Commerce, giving us access to a much wider area than just the Adelaide CBD, via an organisation with a strong business focus.