
REPORT 1
(1215/12/IM)

MAYORAL TRAVEL 2009

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for the Mayor to travel to Hong Kong in March, and Europe and Japan in April/May this year.

2. Executive Summary

Council approval is sought for the Mayor to undertake official travel to Hong Kong between 22 and 26 March 2009 and Europe and Japan between 21 April 2009 and 13 May 2009.

The Mayor has been invited to give the opening address at a Digital Entertainment Leadership Forum (DELFF) in Hong Kong in March. The organisers are paying all travel, accommodation and meal expenses, so there will be no cost to Council other than incidentals.

The Mayor has received several other travel invitations for 2009 and in order to save money has opted to combine them into one trip to Europe/Japan in April/May 2009.

The Mayor has been invited to be part of the Government delegation to attend the ANZAC celebrations at Gallipoli for three days. She will then travel to France to visit Arras and St-Maclou-la-Briere, a city and village in Northern France which have World War 1 and 2 ties with Wellington. She will then travel to Japan to visit our sister city Sakai to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the Wellington-Sakai sister city relationship.

3. Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Council:

- 1. Receive the information.*
- 2. Agree to the Mayor's official travel to speak at the DELFF conference in Hong Kong in March 2009 and reimbursement of any incidental costs.*
- 3. Agree to the Mayor's travel to Europe and Japan in April/May 2009 and for the costs to be met from the International Relations Budget (COST01 C145).*

4. *Note that officers are seeking funding from external parties to offset those costs.*

4. Background

The Mayor has been invited to speak at a Digital Entertainment Leadership Forum in Hong Kong on 24 March 2009.

The Mayor has received several other overseas travel invitations for 2009 and to save money has opted to combine them into one trip to Europe/Japan in April/May 2009.

DIGITAL ENTERTAINMENT LEADERSHIP FORUM (DELF)

Last August, the Mayor visited Hong Kong when returning from her official visit to China and gave several speeches on Wellington's transformation and growth.

As a result, a Hong Kong company called Cyperport has organised a Digital Entertainment Leadership Forum focusing on Wellington's success in the film sector and its positioning as the creative capital. (See Appendix 2)

The Mayor has been invited to give a presentation at the forum detailing what factors have made Wellington successful in digital entertainment. Other speakers include Barrie Osborne, Executive Producer of the Lord of the Rings, Dave Gibson, Founder and Producer of The Gibson Group and Laurence Greig, Grow Wellington's Centres of Excellence General Manager.

Discussions are being held about the possibility of a Film Memorandum of Understanding being signed between Wellington and Hong Kong during the visit.

While in Hong Kong, the Mayor will also meet with Mr HL Kam, the Group Managing Director of Cheung Kong Infrastructure, the company that purchased Wellington's electricity network from Vector last year.

Gallipoli

The Mayor has been invited by the Government to join the Governor-General and other VIPs to attend the Anzac Day commemorations in Gallipoli.

She will depart New Zealand on 21 April 2009 and fly into Istanbul where she will travel by car to Canakkale to join the VIP party on 23 April 2009.

On 24 and 25 April 2009 there are a number of official commemoration services and functions that the Mayor will intend. She will also lay a wreath at the New Zealand memorial site at Chunuk Bair.

She will return to Istanbul on 26 April 2009 then fly to France the next day.

France

The French Ambassador to New Zealand, His Excellency Michel Legras, and other French Embassy staff have been liaising with St-Maclou-la-Briere, Arras and Nord-Pas de Calais officials on our behalf, to organise an official visit to France. (See Appendix 1)

St-Maclou-la-Briere

St-Maclou-la-Briere is a Northern French village saved by the heroic actions of Wellington pilot James Stellin, who steered his plane clear of the village after it got into difficulties during World War 2. He died in the crash.

Following the death of James' father in 1964, the land in Orangi Kaupapa Road in Northland now known as Stellin Memorial Park was bequeathed to Wellington City Council in memory of his son. A look-out was built in 1977 but no plaque was ever installed.

Northland resident John Bickerton approached the Council in 2006 (The Year of the Veteran) suggesting information about Stellin's self-sacrifice be placed at the look-out.

A plaque commemorating James Stellin was unveiled by Mayor Prendergast in 2006 and she gave a commitment at that time to visiting St-Maclou-la-Briere before the end of her term in office.

The Mayor will travel from Paris by rental car to St-Maclou-la-Briere, where she will be hosted by the village Mayor and Council.

The itinerary is still to be finalised but will include a visit to Stellin's grave to lay a wreath and a meeting with the former Mayor Pierre Lambert, who was responsible for the erection of the Stellin memorial and naming their town square 'Stellin Place'.

Arras

In July 2008, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor hosted delegations from Arras and Nord-Pas de Calais Regional Council. The Mayor was invited to make a return visit and again gave a commitment to do so before the end of her term.

Arras is a city within the Nord-Pas de Calais Region and is famous for the network of tunnels dug out by New Zealand soldiers during World War 1.

The Wellington Quarry: The Battle of Arras Memorial opened last year. It commemorates the more than 400 New Zealanders working for the New Zealand Quarrying Company who in 1916 tunnelled over 7 km to join up medieval chalk mines to form a 24 km network of tunnels that extend east of Arras and beyond the no-man's-land that separated the German and Allied lines.

The purpose of the tunnels was to house 24,000 soldiers to await a diversion attack before the Chemin des Dames assault in 1917. To help navigation around the network of interconnected tunnels, the Kiwi troops named them in a geographically accurate way after cities and towns in New Zealand.

Both delegations who visited Wellington last year sought to pay homage to the New Zealand soldiers by building and maintaining close ties with New Zealand. They were keen to initiate discussions with Wellington on the prospect of cultural, economic and sporting ties.

There have already been some sporting exchanges with St Catherine's and St Patrick's Colleges hosting a school group from Arras in 2006 and making a reciprocal visit in 2007.

The itinerary for the Mayor's visit to Arras is still being finalised but will include meetings with the Mayor of Arras, a visit to the Wellington tunnels and memorial, a media conference, and a lunch with representatives of the schools who have exchange relationships with Wellington schools.

It is also planned that she will travel to the nearby city of Lille to meet with Catherine Genisson, a member of the Nord-Pas de Calais delegation who visited Wellington last year and Vice President of both the French National House of Representatives and the Nord-Pas de Calais Region and Mr Daniel Percheron, President of the Nord-Pas de Calais Region.

Council officers are talking to Grow Wellington, Positively Wellington Tourism and the Chamber of Commerce about specific opportunities the Mayor could pursue during those discussions.

Sakai

The purpose of the visit to Sakai is to commemorate the 15th anniversary of the Wellington-Sakai sister city relationship.

Wellington and Sakai have been sister cities since 1994. Since then there has been a high level of exchange between the two cities, mainly cultural, educational and sporting exchanges and reciprocal visits in alternate years.

The most recent exchange was to open the Sakai Cherry Walk Garden in Katherine Mansfield Park in August 2007. The garden was funded by a donation of \$25,000 by the (Sakai-based) Sakai Wellington Association (SWA). The SWA has discussed making further donations of this kind, either by adding to the existing garden, or by creating a larger garden elsewhere in Wellington.

The Mayor will present a Certificate of Appreciation to the SWA. There has also been an invitation to Wellington City Council to plant trees in Sakai at some point in the future. The Wellington Mayoral delegation will discuss these future plans.

The Mayor has been invited to attend a formal 15th Anniversary Sister City Celebration hosted by the Sakai Government and participate in a schedule of activities to strengthen our sister city relationship with Sakai.

The Mayor will have official meetings with the Mayor of the Sakai Government Mr Keisuke Kihara, and the President of the Sakai Chamber of Commerce and Industry Mr Shinozuka, who is also the Chairperson of the SWA. The Mayor's focus will be on promoting Wellington as a tourism destination and an attractive city for investment and doing business.

The Mayor will also visit Sakai's new Kyodo venue and the construction site of a new headquarters for the Sharp Corporation.

Both the Chief Executive of New Zealand Trade and Enterprise Tim Gibson and Positively Wellington Tourism CEO David Perks have expressed an interest in accompanying the Mayor on the visit.

The Mayor will travel by train down to Tokyo after Sakai to visit the Japan Foundation and Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR) to seek further opportunities for funding and support of the Japan Festival of Wellington in July. The Wellington Artist to Japan Residency Programme will be discussed during the visit.

The scheduled timing for the Sakai trip is 9-12 August and Tokyo 13 August 2009.

5. Costs

The travel, accommodation and meal costs of the Mayor attending the DELF conference in Hong Kong will be paid for by the organisers. The only cost to Council will be incidentals such as laundry.

The Sakai Government will cover the meal and transportation costs for Mayor Prendergast during her stay in Sakai.

Officers are also seeking funding from several other external parties to further offset the costs in both Europe and Japan.

The approximate cost of the Mayor's travel to Europe and Japan is estimated as follows:

Europe and Japan

Air travel	\$10845.00
Accommodation	\$3606.53
Meals	\$2671.45
Transport	\$3192.04
Incidentals	\$490.16
Total	Approx. \$20,805.18

6. Conclusion

Council approval is required for the Mayor's travel to Europe and Japan in April/May to allow the relevant travel arrangements to be confirmed.

The visit to France will strengthen ties with St-Maclou-la-Briere, Arras and the Nord-Pas de Calais region in France and fulfil promises made to visit the grave of James Stellan, and to make a reciprocal visit to Arras and the Nord-Pas de Calais region from which delegations visited Wellington last year.

The visit to Japan will further strengthen Wellington's sister city relationship with Sakai and explore potential business opportunities.

Contact Officer: Karen Wallace, Chief Operating Officer

Supporting Information

1) Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome

The recommendations in the paper support Council's overall vision of Creative Wellington – Innovation Capital, and the travel supports Council's international relations strategy.

2) LTCCP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact

The Travel will be funded out of the International Relations Budget (Cost01& C145)

3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations

No direct implications for Treaty of Waitangi considerations.

4) Decision-Making

This is not a significant decision in terms of the Local Government Act 2002.

5) Consultation

a) General Consultation

None required

b) Consultation with Maori

No specific consultation with Maori.

6) Legal Implications

No legal implications.

7) Consistency with existing policy

The recommendations in the report are consistent with existing policy.

APPENDIX 1