
MAYORAL DELEGATION TO CHINA – NOVEMBER 2006

1. Purpose of Report

To seek the Committee's approval to recommend to Council that the Mayor accept an invitation to lead a delegation to visit China in November 2006.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Recommend to Council that the Mayor accept an invitation to lead a delegation to visit China in November 2006 and that the costs will be met from the International Relations budget (COST02 C145).*
3. *Recommend to Council that two Councillors accompany the Mayor and that the costs will be met from the International Relations budget (COST02 C145).*
4. *Recommend to Council that it agree that the Mayor can endorse the Memorandum of Understanding for Co-operation between the Cities of Wellington and Beijing.*
5. *Recommend to Council that it agree that the Mayor can endorse the Memorandum of Understanding for Co-operation between the Cities of Wellington and Xiamen.*
6. *Note that a detailed itinerary is currently being developed in association with relevant Wellington and Chinese parties.*

3. Background

Several projects and initiatives are currently underway between Wellington and China which means that a Mayoral visit to Beijing, Shanghai and Xiamen would be of particular value at this time. The Wellington delegation would be a reciprocal visit to a Chinese delegation visiting Wellington in October 2006.

Both the Beijing and Xiamen governments will host the Wellington civic delegation whilst the Mayor is in China.

Civic initiatives currently underway of particular importance to Wellington and the Chinese cities include:

- the Mayor of Beijing has confirmed upgrading the Wellington – Beijing relationship to Sister City status. Documentation will be prepared for signing during the Sister City conference in Wellington, May 2006 with a ceremony in Beijing in November 2006.
- the All China Youth Federation wish to bring a civic delegation of 100 people (including senior government officials) to Wellington in 2006. Wellington is also invited to bring a similar sized delegation to Beijing, which could tie in around the following activities.
- 2007 is the Wellington – Xiamen Sister City 20th Anniversary. This will be an opportunity to discuss the celebrations with Xiamen.

A range of other projects and programmes are also scheduled which would maximise the value of a delegation visiting China at this time, including

- the China Shanghai International Arts Festival Centre will host Elena's group of 30 people to perform in the 8th Shanghai International Arts Festival in November 2006. Elena is a Wellingtonian violinist and performer/entertainer.
- the All China Youth Federation will host Elena to perform in Beijing after her performance in Shanghai in November.
- Wellingtonian Nathan Gray has written a book and made a DVD about the Great Wall of China, to be published in NZ in August 2006. Development of a Chinese version of his book will be discussed in Beijing in November.
- Dan Poynton, one of NZ most acclaimed pianists, has received a grant from Creative NZ and is excited at the possibility of linking in his performance tour to China with the Wellington City Council activities.
- the Wild Ducks student group from Victoria University have conducted one visit to China in February 2006 and are also interested in joining the November delegation.
- Richard Taylor, Director Weta Workshop, is interested in possibly joining the delegation to make new contacts and follow-up with their business partner and existing relationships in China.
- the Ministry of Culture and Heritage are in discussions for an exhibition by Te Papa to tour four cities in China in 2007.

4. Discussion

4.1 Purpose

The primary purpose of the visit will be to foster closer relations with our new Sister City, Beijing and also reinforce our long-term Sister City relationship with Xiamen. Internationalisation is a key component of the Wellington Regional Strategy and it is anticipated that this delegation led by Mayor Prendergast will help drive international relations and trade opportunities in China.

The Wellington delegation will visit Shanghai, Beijing and Xiamen. There will be high-level meetings with Chinese government officials, meetings with the Mayors in each city and also the central government State Leader of Beijing. The Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs will coordinate the Wellington delegation visit with the other government offices.

The Mayor of Wellington last visited China in September 2003, with a delegation including the CEO of Positively Wellington Business and business representatives. A delegation to include those mentioned earlier, led by the Mayor will provide valuable opportunities for the business and cultural sectors of Wellington to make valuable connections with their Chinese counterparts.

4.2 Reciprocal Visit

Wellington will host a delegation of 100 people from China led by the All China Youth Federation in October 2006.

The All China Youth Federation (ACYF) is the primary government-run China youth organisation, from which the majority of China's current leadership comes - including the present President of China. The All China Youth Federation co-ordinates a variety of exchanges with overseas countries. ACYF is an extremely influential organisation that contributes to the intellectual future of China. The Mayor of Xiamen and former Mayor of Beijing also worked in ACYF.

4.3 Draft Itinerary

While the draft itinerary is not fully developed, this paper seeks approval to develop a programme which would be then circulated prior to the trip. Early approval of the trip would allow maximum opportunity to secure competitively priced travel.

A number of activities have already been identified for the visit. These will continue to be developed to incorporate more specific business meetings for the trade delegation and to leverage other opportunities as they arise between now and November.

Activities include:

4.3.1 Shanghai

- attending the China Shanghai International Arts Festival performance by Elena and her team. The programme of the festival will have two pages featuring Wellington (one page for the message from Mayor of Wellington, another page for an introduction of Wellington City).
- investigating business opportunities identified by a PWB business delegation that visited the Shanghai region last year. The WCC civic delegation will lobby and assist the Wellington business community access the Shanghai market.

4.3.2 Beijing

- the Wellington civic delegation will be hosted by the Mayor of Beijing. This is a high-level engagement with the Chinese government that warrants a similarly high-level group of attendees from Wellington.
- partake in official ceremonies surrounding the newly formed Sister City relationship
- the Mayor will appear on China TV to talk about the Sister City relationship with Beijing and also promote education and business opportunities with Wellington

- members of the trade delegation may also choose to participate in the China Access programme 30-31 October and the Business Week Forum 1-3 November in Beijing, which includes key speakers Hon. George Bush Senior, Former President of the USA, Rt Hon Sir John Major, Former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, His Excellency Dr Supachai Panitchpakdi, Secretary General UNCTAD and Former Director General WTO, Barbara Dalibrad, President and CEO, Equant, France, Victor Fung, Group Chairman, Li Fung Group, Hong Kong, Niklas Zennstrom, CEO and Co-Founder Skype UK.

Previous Relations with Beijing

A Friendship City Agreement was signed when Deputy Mayor David Watt visited Beijing in 1994. A number of civic and business delegations have been sent from each city to the other since then. The most significant events over the past two years are:

- 2005 Beijing Fireworks Festival and Chinese New Year Celebration. The Beijing municipal government sent a fireworks working crew to New Zealand for a 30-minute fireworks show in Wellington on 5 February 2005. A 30-member strong China Acrobatic Troupe joined the Chinese New Year celebration in Wellington. Most of the cost was paid by the Beijing government.

- a Deputy Mayor and a Vice Chairman of People's Congress of Beijing visited Wellington in 2004 and 2006. They both agreed to carry on the cooperation efforts in a number of fields including education, city planning, infrastructure, trade, etc. A MOU for exchange programmes between the two cities was signed in 2005.

- a sister school relationship has been set up between Wellington East Girls College and Beijing Huaxia School in 2004.

After upgrading the existing relationship to Sister City status during Wellington's hosting of the Wellington Sister Cities Conference in May, the local Chinese communities and Wellington City in general are keen to foster links with Beijing to send more cultural performance groups to Wellington to join our Chinese New Year celebrations in the future.

4.3.3 Xiamen

- Wellington and Xiamen have developed positive relations over a 19 year period with a wide variety of activities, particularly in the fields of education, culture and business.
- this will be an opportunity to discuss celebrations for the 20th anniversary of the Xiamen –Wellington sister city relationship.
- the Mayors presence will help open doors for Wellington businesses in the delegation and to identify other opportunities for the Wellington business community that this valuable relationship can present.
- a MOU between the Wellington Chinese Garden Society and Wellington City Council exists in which a site has been set aside for a Chinese Garden on the Waterfront. Xiamen has agreed to assist with the building of the garden. The WCC delegation will seek clarification of Xiamen support with respect to the garden and ongoing maintenance.

5. Timing of visit

The scheduled timing for the trip is 1-12 November 2006. This timing coincides with the Shanghai International Arts Festival where Elena will be performing and also follows on from the China Access Programme in Beijing which some members of the delegation may wish to participate in.

There is a meeting of the Strategy and Policy Committee scheduled for the 9th November that coincides with these dates.

6. Cost

The approximate cost for the Mayor and two councillors to undertake these visits is estimated as follows:

China	
Mayor's travel, accommodation and expenses	Approx. \$9,000
Two Councillors travel, accommodation and expenses	Approx. \$18,000
Total	Approx. \$27,000

These costs will be met from the International Relations (COST02 C145) budget. Both Beijing and Xiamen local government offices will host the civic group in their respective cities in reciprocation of our hosting their civic leaders in October this year.

7. Conclusion

SPC is requested to recommend to Council that it approve the Mayor and two Councillors accepting an invitation to lead a delegation to visit China in November 2006. Early approval of the visit will allow the relevant travel arrangements to be made. The Wellington delegation would be a reciprocal visit to a Chinese delegation visiting Wellington in October 2006. Several projects and initiatives are currently underway between Wellington and China which means that the Mayor leading a delegation to visit Beijing, Shanghai and Xiamen would be of particular value at this time. Both the Beijing and Xiamen governments will host the Wellington civic delegation whilst the Mayor is in China.

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