
REPORT 2
(1215/11/IM)

MAYORAL TRAVEL - UNITED NATIONS COPENHAGEN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE DECEMBER 2009

1. Purpose of Report

To seek Council approval for the Mayor to travel to Copenhagen in December this year to attend the United Nations climate change meetings.

2. Executive Summary

It is recommended that the Council approve the Mayor's official travel to Europe to attend the United Nations climate change meetings, departing on 12 December and returning on 22 December 2009. This is a landmark event in regard to global progress on climate change and it is appropriate that it is attended by the Mayor.

In attending the United Nations meetings the Mayor would be exposed to the development of a major new global climate change agreement, and would meet with members of the New Zealand delegation and other delegations to discuss their approaches and to highlight the role of local government.

The Mayor would attend the Climate Summit for Mayors (the Summit) which is held in conjunction with the UN meetings (see attached Summit details). The Summit is attended by Mayors from a range of cities such as London, Los Angeles, Paris, Sydney and Tokyo, who are taking leadership in responding to climate change. It is an opportunity for Mayors to connect and share best practice approaches and to agree on a strong statement regarding the role of cities in climate change. This statement is to be presented to the United Nations climate change meetings.

The Mayor would represent both Wellington city and Local Government New Zealand. The LGNZ National Council approved the Mayor's leadership role at Copenhagen on 26 July 2009 (see attached letter from LGNZ). From a national perspective, the meetings are an opportunity to promote progress being taken at the local level across the country, to connect with other local government representatives and to gain insight into work taking place within other jurisdictions. For Wellington city there is opportunity to learn from the actions of leaders in the field and to share our own experiences.

Finally, travel to Copenhagen also provides additional opportunities to explore related climate change initiatives in areas such as urban design and waterfront development, local initiatives, and emerging technologies and research. Partnership agreements to share information and approaches will be sought with key cities such as Copenhagen and Seoul. Outcomes and agreements resulting from the meetings will be included in the development of Wellington city's own revised Climate Change Action Plan, due to be finalised as part of the 2010/11 Annual Planning process. Attendance at Copenhagen is timely, as the draft Climate Change Action Plan will be considered by Council prior to the travel.

3. Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Council:

- 1. Receive the information.*
- 2. Agree to the Mayor's official travel to attend the United Nations Climate Change meetings in Copenhagen in December 2009 and for the costs to be met from the International Relations Budget (COST01 C145).*
- 3. Agree to the Chief Executive writing to LGNZ requesting financial support for Copenhagen travel costs, given the Mayor's role of local government representative from New Zealand.*
- 4. Note that a report-back will be presented to the appropriate Council meeting in accordance with Council policy.*

4. Background

From December 7-18 the major annual UN climate change meetings are taking place in Copenhagen, Denmark. It is anticipated that significant decisions on a global agreement building on the Kyoto Protocol and the UN Framework Convention for Climate Change will be made.

The Copenhagen Climate Summit for Mayors (the Summit) is organised in parallel with the UN meetings but with a city focus. The Summit is run in conjunction with the C40 Cities climate leadership group (40 major cities combating climate change in partnership with the Clinton Climate Initiative) and ICLEI (Local Government for Climate Protection, of which Wellington city is a member).

The Summit is a key meeting attended by Mayors from a range of cities taking leadership in responding to climate change. The Summit includes elected representatives from a range of leading cities such as London, Los Angeles, Paris, Sydney and Tokyo. It is an opportunity for Mayors to connect and share best practice and approaches and to agree on a strong statement regarding the role of cities in climate change. This statement is to be presented to the major United Nations conference been held in parallel. A distinctive feature of the

Summit is the establishment of linkages between all levels of government in seeking workable solutions to the climate change challenge.

Wellington has set challenging emissions reduction targets and commenced an ambitious work programme on climate change. Attendance at the Copenhagen meetings will enable Wellington to be recognised internationally as a committed city in efforts to respond to climate change and to learn from the best practice of leading international cities.

Council officers are currently working on a comprehensive review of the Climate Change Action Plan for Wellington. This review will shape a response in line with our agreed emission reduction targets, and the need to adapt to the likely impacts of climate change. A component of the Council's climate change work programme involves investigating initiatives, partnerships and approaches being taken by cities in New Zealand and overseas. The Copenhagen Climate Summit for Mayors provides an excellent opportunity to engage with Mayors and officials from cities that are demonstrating leadership in climate change. It also builds on council attendance at the ICLEI climate change meeting held two years ago in Bali, Indonesia.

The Council's demonstrated commitment to climate change can be seen through a range of initiatives, programmes and commitments including:

- ICLEI membership and participation in their Communities for Climate Protection Programme (CCP-NZ)
- Agreement to the Council's Climate Change Action Plan in December 2007
- Setting of ambitious emission reduction targets out to 2020 and 2050
- Restating our joint focus on reducing emissions and responding to climate change impacts through the latest LTCCP process
- Current review of the Climate Change Action Plan to ensure we deliver on our targets and respond to climate change impacts.

However, there is further opportunity for Wellington to refine and enhance its climate change responses, particularly in areas such as compact urban development, integrated transport planning and uptake of technology. GROW Wellington is working on a centre of excellence for sustainable energy, incorporating technologies such as induction charging for electric buses, marine and wind energy. However, exposure to the world's best practice will allow for other approaches to be tested for their appropriateness in a New Zealand or Wellington specific context. Establishment of ongoing relationships and agreements with leading cities will allow for these advantages to be fully realised over time.

5. Discussion

The draft UN text for negotiation in Copenhagen contains over 100 references to sub-national and local government, local communities, local policies and local resources. The Mayors' Summit aims to influence the UN global agreement by urging heads of state to commit to ambitious targets and deliver a message to the UN on the important role that cities play. A selected local government

leader will be chosen to address nations at the UN high-level segment plenary session.

If the work and experiences of cities and local governments are recognised in the new UN climate agreement, this will strengthen their voice in the international climate change arena, gain recognition for their mandate at a national level and potentially benefit additional resources at the local level. This will ensure that the entire chain of government, from national to local, is involved in the implementation of the climate agreement in each country.

Participation and involvement in the Copenhagen meetings provides for the Mayor to convey messages on:

- Wellington city's commitment and response to climate change (including the development of our Climate Change Action Plan) and progress and success to date
- the impact of the New Zealand Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) on the local government sector
- experiences from councils throughout New Zealand (as a representative of local government)
- LGNZ's climate change position statement.
- positioning Wellington's future and our "Green capital" ambition as a competitive advantage

In addition, meetings would be held to seek city partnership arrangements around climate change, such as Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) between Wellington and other key cities. Cities which are considered significant and with which we would seek to build relationships include: Copenhagen (as host of the Climate Summit for Mayors and the UN meetings and as a recognised leader in urban design and development and responding to climate change); and Seoul, Korea (as a city which is seeking to transform itself based on green technologies). Further information on these cities is included in section 5.1.1 and 5.1.2. Contact would be established with additional cities on the basis of commonalities such as renewable energy, innovation and urban development. Contact would also be made with organisations representing local government across other jurisdictions.

While in Copenhagen, the Mayor would meet with members of the New Zealand delegation to the UN meetings, including Associate Minister for Climate Change Issues (International Negotiations) Tim Groser and the Minister responsible for Climate Change Issues Nick Smith. It is also likely that Prime Minister John Key will attend. Government officials with the delegation have signalled that they will be available for discussions during the conference period. This offers an opportunity to remain informed of progress at the UN negotiations.

Given the Mayor's role as Vice-President of the LGNZ national council and membership of the Australasian Mayors' Council for Climate Protection (AMCCP), LGNZ has confirmed the Mayors local government leadership role in Copenhagen (see attached letter from LGNZ).

5.1 Bi-lateral Meetings

The Mayor's focus would be on forging connections with cities with which climate change partnerships would be of mutual benefit. The Mayor would seek official meetings with the Mayor of Copenhagen (Ms Ritt Bjerregaard), and the Mayor of Seoul, Korea (Mr Oh Se-hoon). Other informal meetings and discussions would be facilitated through the Copenhagen Climate Summit for Mayors and existing relationships. Further formal contact would also be sought with the following cities:

- Beijing, China: sister city relationship and member of the C40
- Sydney, Australia: sister city relationship and member of the C40, Sydney has developed an innovative vision: 'Sustainable Sydney 2030' which has informed planning for 'Wellington 2040'
- Portland, USA: innovative city response plan and MoU with GROW Wellington

5.1.1 Copenhagen, Denmark

Denmark is the established global leader in wind energy technology. There is potential to gain insight into what has driven this success and lessons that could apply in Wellington. This would link well with the work being managed by GROW Wellington through the Sustainable Energy Centre of Excellence.

Wellington also has existing linkages with Copenhagen through the work of renowned Copenhagen urban designer Jan Gehl. Gehl was commissioned to complete Wellington's 'City to Waterfront Study' in 2004. The opportunities to gain insight and ambition from Copenhagen city are significant. Copenhagen has achieved international recognition for its advanced urban design, including waterfront development, integration of pedestrian, cycling and public transport, level of commitment, mixed-use built form and open spaces.

Officials at the Danish Embassy in New Zealand have been liaising with their colleagues in Copenhagen on Council's behalf to arrange meetings with appropriate officials and political leaders. The purpose of these meetings would be to further explore best practice in urban design, renewable energy technology and climate change responses. We would seek to develop an ongoing agreement (such as an MoU) around information-sharing on climate change, renewable energy technologies and urban design and development.

5.1.2 Seoul, Korea

Korea has transformed its economy through technological innovation. It has developed its vehicle production industry and is shifting its focus to achieving success in response to climate change and sustainability by applying advanced technologies. Seoul is recognised as taking a lead position on 'greening the city' having made some major changes to improve its liveability and environmental credentials. Seoul has been called the "world's most wired city" (Time Magazine, 24 August 2009), is a member of the C40 and was host of the most recent Climate Summit for Mayors meeting in May 2009 – to which the Mayor was invited but was unable to attend. The May meeting was a component of the build-up for the Copenhagen Climate Summit for Mayors in December.

Council officers have been in contact with Korean officials, with the aim of developing an MoU covering information sharing on issues such as renewable energy, 'green technologies' and climate change. An elected official from Seoul is seeking to meet with the Mayor in November to commence political level discussions. There would be additional opportunities to discuss the MoU with Korean officials at the Copenhagen meetings.

5.2 Events and Attendance

If Council agrees to the recommendations in this report, the Mayor and an appropriate Council officer would depart New Zealand for Copenhagen on 12 December 2009 and return on 22 December 2009. From 14–17 December, the Mayor would attend the Copenhagen Climate Summit for Mayors. From 18–19 December the Mayor would attend the United Nations climate change meetings. Bi-lateral meetings discussed above would be aligned around the commitments of the Summit and the UN meetings.

5.3 Costs

The approximate cost of the Mayor's travel to Europe is estimated as follows.

Air travel	\$12,500
Accommodation	\$6,000
Meals	\$2,000
Transport	\$600
Incidentals	\$200
Total	Approx. \$21,300

Accommodation in Copenhagen is more expensive than usual in December this year due to high demand for the UN meetings and Mayors' Summit, and a range of other parallel events occurring alongside these. Travel, accommodation, meal and incidental expenses (totalling approximately \$21,300) would be funded from the International Relations budget. Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) is supporting the Mayor as New Zealand's local government representative to Copenhagen. If agreed, funding will be sought from LGNZ to partially offset the costs of travel to Europe, given the Mayor's LGNZ representative role.

6. Conclusion

Council approval is sought for the Mayor's travel to Europe to attend the Climate Summit for Mayors in December 2009. The Mayor would attend the meetings listed in this report for the period December 14-19. There would be opportunities to connect with other Mayors and officials in an effort to strengthen relationships with cities that are leading in climate change, urban development and renewable energy.

This is a landmark event in regard to global progress on climate change and it is appropriate that it is attended by the Mayor. Exposure to international best practice and decisions on climate change will improve the Council's understanding of climate change responses. Outcomes and agreements resulting from the meetings will be timely to feed into the process of developing Wellington city's own revised Climate Change Action Plan, due to be finalised as part of the 2010/11 Annual Planning process.

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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. The recommendations in the paper support the development of the Councils Climate change policy work and implementation of the Environment 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.