

SPORT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE 20 JUNE 2018	5
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SISTER CITIES UPDATE REPORT 2017 - 2018

L .Kirchner | 79/4/1 | #5655583

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that Council:

- 1. Receives and notes this Sister Cities update report; and**
- 2. Approves Deputy Mayor Cr James travelling to Latvia, departing on 4 July 2018 and returning on 12 July 2018 to attend cultural celebrations in Riga, a sister city of Cairns, at the request of the Chairman of the Riga City Council.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The purpose of this report is to document the Sister Cities initiatives in 2017/18 in the areas of governance; cultural exchanges and economic activities and to outline a suite of potential activities for 2018/19, including a scheduled visit by representatives of Cairns Regional Council to Riga in July 2018.

BACKGROUND:

2017/ 2018 HIGHLIGHTS

Governance

Officers reported in May 2017 on Sister Cities' activities and initiatives in the previous 12 months. The purpose of this report is to provide a record of activities in the 17/18 period including:

- Re-signing of the Oyama agreement by an exchange of correspondence;
- Re-signing of the Scottsdale agreement via the medium of skype and subsequent exchange of documents;
- Letter of support for the reappointment of Mrs Hayward (Council's Sister Cities Ambassador) to an Executive position on the national Sister Cities Executive; and
- An application prepared and submitted for a national Sister Cities award in relation to recent overseas delegations.

Social and Cultural Activities

A range of activities occurred including:

- Two school groups in August visited from Minami and Oyama;
- Council provided letters of introduction to two members of the arts community travelling to Riga for a cultural exchange focused on print media;
- Council provided letters of introduction for the Tropical Writers Festival organising committee to each of the seven Sister Cities;
- Council hosted the former President of Latvia and his wife and members of the local Latvian community at a function during their visit to Cairns in late 2017;
- Council provided Sister Cities fans as part of the 2018 Chinese New Year celebrations; and
- Mrs Hayward provided advice and letters of introduction for Cr Zeiger to representatives from both Sister Cities for a privately funded trip to Japan.

Economic

China

- In December 2017, a delegation from Cairns visited Zhanjiang. The delegation was led by Councillor Terry James, Deputy Mayor Cairns Regional Council with support from Mrs Sim Hayward, Cairns' Sister City Ambassador. Angelo Finocchiaro, Council's Program Leader of Economic Development and representatives of Tourism Tropical North Queensland and Study Cairns also participated in the delegation. The delegation attended the 2017 China Marine Economy Expo and also met with the Zhanjiang Education Bureau, Zhanjiang Tourism Bureau, Zhanjiang Farm Bureau and others to explore opportunities for cooperation in the fields of culture, education, tourism, agriculture, economy and trade. Coinciding with establishment of direct flights between Cairns and Guangzhou by China Southern Airlines and direct flights between Cairns and Shenzhen by Hainan Airlines, the delegation was an important initiative in fostering closer relationships between Cairns and China more broadly. An invitation to the Mayor of the Zhanjiang Municipal People's Government to undertake a reciprocal visit to Cairns in future has been extended by Councillor Bob Manning, Mayor of Cairns Regional Council.
- Council provided letters of introduction for a Cairns based company, the AEDU Group, in relation to a meeting with the Zhanjiang Education Bureau. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss establishing a Cairns International School in Zhanjiang. If agreement can be reached the Cairns International School will provide Cairns with a permanent presence in Zhanjiang, employ teachers from Cairns, coordinate regular visits by James Cook University staff and coordinate annual study tours and sporting trips to Cairns.

The AEDU Group is a member of Study Cairns and is an experienced Australian high school operator in China. They are working with James Cook University to deliver this program and it will provide students in Zhanjiang with the opportunity of direct entry into bachelor degrees at James Cook University in Cairns;

- Council is currently working with CQUniversity and James Cook University in relation to facilitating introductions to the Guangdong Ocean University for a planned visit with 25 students in November 2018;
- Ongoing discussions and introductions to Cairns region based businesses are occurring with the Deputy Consul-General and Senior Trade Commissioner in Guangzhou following Councils visit in December 2017.

Lae

- From 5 to 8 October 2017, a delegation from Cairns visited Lae with an emphasis on continuing to develop the close economic and cultural ties between the two cities. The delegation was jointly led by Mrs Sim Hayward, Cairns' Sister City Ambassador, and Gary Aylward, Founding Member of Tradelinked Cairns & PNG. A number of Cairns based businesses, who are members of Tradelinked Cairns & PNG; an association whose aim is to build on the existing business links between Cairns and PNG for the benefit of both communities, also attended. Feedback from Tradelinked Cairns & PNG indicates that a number of business opportunities have arisen for Cairns businesses as a direct result of the delegation.
- Tradelinked Cairns & PNG hosted a delegation from Lae to Cairns in February 2018. The delegation was led by the Hon John Rosso MP Member for Lae and the Hon Ginson Saonu Governor of Morobe. The Mayor hosted a civic lunch for the visiting delegation and Council Officers provided the delegation with a tour of Council's waste facilities (which were of particular interest to the visiting delegation).

COMMENT:

PROPOSED ACTIVITIES 2018/ 2019

Governance

It is important to note that whilst there are no significant relationship milestones in 2018, 2018 marks the 100th year of Latvia as an independent nation. It is also noted that 2019 marks the following significant milestones with Cairns Sister Cities:

- 50 years Minami
- 35 years Lae
- 35 years Sidney
- 15 years Zhanjiang

Visit to Riga (July 2018)

In 2018, Latvia celebrates its centenary as an independent state. Riga, the capital of Latvia, is a sister city of Cairns. This sister city relationship was established in 1988. The Chairman of the Riga City Council extended an invitation to the Mayor's office for two representatives from the city of Cairns to attend one or other of a series of events in Latvia to celebrate to country's centenary. Representatives of Riga City Council last visited Cairns in an official capacity in August 2015 to attend Festival Cairns. The last time representatives of Cairns Regional Council or Council's now superseded Cairns Sister Cities Advisory Committee visited Riga was in 2013 when two members of the

then Cairns Sister Cities Advisory Committee attended the Riga Song and Dance Festival. Given it has been some time since the last official visit by Cairns sister city representatives to Riga, it is considered appropriate that the invitation to visit in 2018 be accepted in order to reinforce the relationship between the two cities.

In response to this invitation, the Deputy Mayor, Cr Terry James and Cairns' Sister City Ambassador, Mrs Sim Hayward will travel to Latvia to attend cultural celebrations in Riga between 5 and 9 July 2018. The Mayor was unable to attend due to work commitments. Meetings have also been arranged with representatives of Riga City Council. Riga City Council will cover the costs of accommodation, meals and local transport for the Cairns' representatives during their visit to Latvia. Cr James will depart for Latvia on 4 July 2018 and return to Cairns on 12 July 2018.

Angelo Finocchiaro, Council's Program Leader Economic Development, has also scheduled a meeting between Cr James and Dr Peter Lam Kin-Ngok, Chairman of the Hong Kong Tourism Board, whilst Cr James is in transit through Hong Kong on the return leg of travel from Latvia. This is considered an important strategic relationship particularly given the direct air links between Cairns and Hong Kong. Mr Finocchiaro is also working with Ms Julie-Anne Nichols, Commissioner, Queensland Trade and Investment, Hong Kong to identify other potential investors that Cr James could meet while in in transit through Hong Kong.

Social and Cultural Activities

Initial discussions from representatives of the various Sister Cities have indicated an interest in:

- Pottery festival program in the Morobe Festival and a Lae artistic presence as part of Festival Cairns 2018;
- Return visits by both Oyama and Minami schools;
- Future photographic exchanges with Riga in September and Cairns in November, with Council's Ambassador potentially attending the Riga event and Council facilitating elements of the return visit by two representatives from Riga; and
- Potential future photographic exchanges with Sidney, Lae and Minami.

Economic

- Return visit to Zhanjiang being considered for late 2018 to mark the 15 Year Cairns – Zhanjiang Sister City Relationship as well as to coincide with inaugural China International Import Expo (CIIE) from 5-10 November 2018 in Shanghai. The Deputy Consul-General in Guangzhou and the TIQ China office has highlighted this event as a key opportunity.
- Continue to work with the AEDU Group and James Cook University in relation to the opening of the Cairns International School in Zhanjiang.
- Continue to work with CQUniveristy and James Cook University in relation to their planned visit to Guangdong Ocean University in November 2018.
- Continue to partner with Tradelinked Cairns & PNG to promote business development opportunities and information exchange between Cairns and Lae.
- CQ University is currently exploring the opportunity to formalise an agreement (MOU) with Hakuoh University, Oyama, in relation to an exchange of students, academic information and other exchanges of an academic nature. Representatives from Hakuoh University are planning to visit to Cairns in August.

OPTIONS:

Option 1 (recommended):

It is recommended that Council:

1. Receives and notes this Sister Cities update report; and
2. Approves Deputy Mayor Cr James travelling to Latvia, departing on 4 July 2018 and returning on 12 July 2018 to attend cultural celebrations in Riga, a sister city of Cairns, at the request of the Chairman of the Riga City Council.

Option 2:

That Council requests further information on the proposed future actions.

CONSIDERATIONS:**Council Finance and the Local Economy:**

Sister City relationships support the local economy through student and teachers exchanges, cultural exchanges, tourism opportunities and trade.

In the 2017/18 operational budget an allocation of \$15k was made for Sister Cities' related expense. This has primarily been used for travel to PNG, Latvia and China. It will be proposed that a similar allocation be made in the 2018/19 operational budget.

	Actuals YTD	Budget	Variance
Operating Expenses			
Travel Expenses	11,879		
Catering	2,246		
Promotional Materials	162		
Other Services	97		
Memberships & Affiliations	500		
TOTAL EXPENSES YTD	\$ 14,884	\$ 15,000	\$ 116

Community and Cultural Heritage:

The above activities and events have assisted in strengthening the Cairns' ties with each of these sister cities both in those countries and here in the local community.

CONSULTATION:

Mrs Hayward's honorary services as both Cairns' Sister Cities Ambassador and on the national executive of the Australian Sister Cities Association, continues to greatly assist Council in its ongoing interactions with each of the seven Sister Cities.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1 – Photos

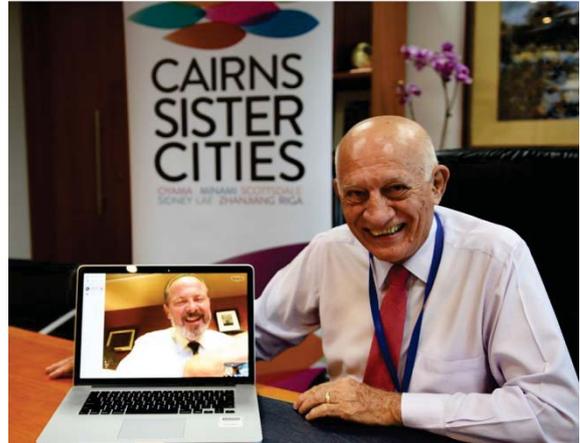


Linda Kirchner
General Manager Community, Sport and Cultural Services

Attachment 1 – Photos



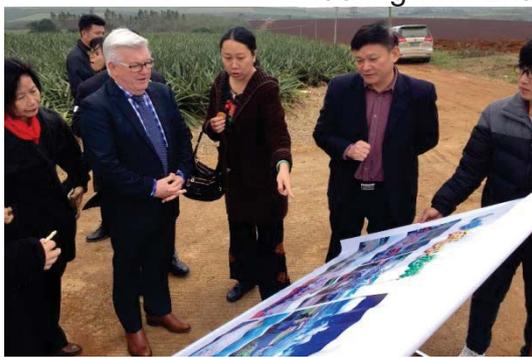
Past President of Scottsdale Sister Cities Committee Scott Miller visiting Cairns



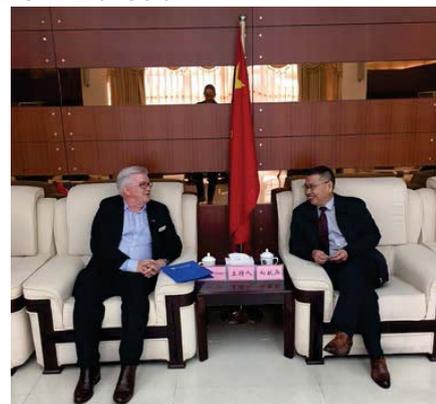
Skype Exchange of Agreements with Scottsdale



Meeting with Zhanjiang Tourism Bureau



Meeting with Xuwen Government



Meeting with Guangdong Ocean University