
REPORT 4
(1215/52/IM)

MAYORAL DELEGATION TO CHINA – REPORT BACK

1. Purpose of Report

This paper is a report back on the November 2006 Mayoral delegation to China.

2. Executive Summary

A Mayoral delegation visited China from 2 November to 11 November 2006. The delegation included the Mayor Kerry Prendergast, Councillors Armstrong and Morrison and representatives from Positively Wellington Business and other organisations. It visited Shanghai, Xiamen, Beijing and Xi'an. The purpose of the delegation was to develop further cultural, academic and business opportunities for Wellington with China. The delegation was in a good position to investigate tactics and ideas to strengthen academic ties with Chinese institutions. It also aimed to foster closer relations with Beijing (our new sister city) and reinforce our long term sister city relationship with Xiamen.

The delegation met with many Chinese dignitaries, academic institutions, the Olympic organising committee and film and television officials.

As a result of the Mayoral delegation to China there is a heightened profile of Wellington in the cities visited and strengthened interest in academic exchanges, events and ongoing business initiatives. It is expected that there will be a greater number of cultural events in Wellington which will contribute economically and culturally. The events are expected to underpin a growth in the relationship with and understanding of China. Many business opportunities were explored with members of the delegation anticipating further progress and fruition of some initiatives.

3. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 1. Receive the information.*

4. Background

Council agreed in April 2006 that a Mayoral delegation visit China to foster closer relations with our new sister city, Beijing, and reinforce our long term sister city relationship with Xiamen. As well as those two cities the delegation

also visited Shanghai and Xi'an because of their economic, academic and cultural importance. Internationalisation is a key component of the Wellington Regional Strategy and the Mayoral delegation was intended to promote international relations and trade opportunities in China. The delegation's itinerary was developed to address cultural, academic and economic relationships between Wellington and China. Economic relationships and benefits are derived by a higher level of trade opportunities and increased tourism. Cultural relationships are concerned with building a stronger platform for participation and awareness of both countries, signified by a higher degree of visibility and events along with academic exchanges and programmes. A strong academic community that has international relationships underpin successful cities and with that in mind, the delegation sought to explore mechanisms for academic exchanges and relationships. By addressing both cultural and academic opportunities, the international relationship would be strengthened and would help create an environment conducive to increasing trade opportunities.

The Mayoral delegation coincided with other New Zealand wide initiatives in China so the Mayoral delegation could take the opportunity to emphasise Wellington in the context of those initiatives.

The Mayoral delegation included Mayor Prendergast and Councillors Armstrong and Morrison. The officers that accompanied them were Chief Executive Garry Poole, Director Recreation and Events Derek Fry, Waveney Parkinson, Mayoral Office Manager and International Relations Officer Tom Yuan. In addition 14 business representatives from Positively Wellington Business, Arda systems, the Gibson Group and other organisations joined the delegation. Pianist Dan Poynton and writer Nathan Gray also joined the delegation in Beijing, Shanghai and Xiamen.

5. Discussion

5.1 Key achievements

The major benefits of the Mayoral delegation to China are concerned with a heightened profile of Wellington in the cities visited and strengthened interest in both academic exchanges and a greater number of cultural events in Wellington which will contribute economically and culturally. The events are expected to underpin a growth in the relationship with and understanding of China. Many business opportunities were explored with members of the delegation anticipating further progress and fruition of some initiatives. Some examples of key achievements are:

- Memorandum of Understanding signed between Xiamen and Wellington
- Business opportunities were identified and are now being progressed with further potential opportunities in the pipeline
- Olympic promotions to travel to Wellington
- A Chinese event or display for the Wellington Chinese New Year Festival

- Possibility of a Chinese State leader visiting Wellington in 2007
- Support for the installation of a Chinese Garden in Frank Kitts Park
- Support for a Wellington garden in Xiamen
- Establishing relationships with key dignitaries in China.

This report does not detail every meeting or every event attended but rather notes some of the highlights. The delegation also met with New Zealanders living in China, discussed academic exchanges and further study trips from China to Wellington.

5.2 Beijing (Thursday 2 to Sunday 5 November)

The Mayoral delegation paid a courtesy call to His Excellency Tony Browne, New Zealand Ambassador to China who hosted a function for the delegation. Ambassador Browne accompanied the delegation to a meeting with the Beijing Mayor, Wang Quishan. Discussions were held about our sister city relationship.

The delegation met with the Beijing Organising Committee for the Beijing Olympic Games. The delegation promoted Wellington businesses for Olympic contracts. The Committee were positive about Wellington as a destination for Olympic promotional events. The first of these events was a visit to Wellington from the Chinese swimming team on 24 February 2007 to swim the Cook Strait. (The swimming team will swim 5 straits internationally – symbolising the five rings of the Olympic emblem.) It is anticipated that further Olympic promotional events will be held in Wellington with an Olympic exhibition scheduled for October or November 2007 and featuring 50 performers. In addition there will be an Olympic photograph exhibition and an Olympic theme produce market.

There is a possibility that the president of China will visit Wellington following the APEC conference in October 2007.

The Chinese People's Association for Friendship hosted a lunch for the delegation and discussions were held about a Chinese funded exhibition planned for Te Papa celebrating 120 years since the birth of Rewi Alley.

The Beijing Information Office was supportive of the possibility of bringing Chinese events to Wellington and further work is being undertaken to progress proposals. Currently it is anticipated that events will include:

- Beijing dancing group and crafts people in Wellington 4 - 12 March 2007 performing and displaying their skills for Chinese New Year and attending some school programmes. The acrobats also perform at the Asia Pacific Lantern Festival
- Peking University Children Cultural Troupe in April
- Beijing Cultural Showcast in November

The Beijing Information Office was also supportive of the proposal to install a Chinese garden in Frank Kitts Park and viewed the proposal to provide features for the garden.

The delegation promoted Wellington as an ideal feature in the World History Documentary, a large filming project being developed by CCTV. CCTV has agreed to that proposal and the documentary will be shown throughout China on CCTV channels and also on Air NZ flights.

A business seminar was held in Beijing on Saturday 4 November to promote business and economic opportunities.

5.3 Xi'an (Sunday 5 to Monday 6 November)

While in Xi'an opportunities were explored with the Xi'an Film Studios, Xi'an University of Arts and Sciences, Jiao Tong University 4th Medical School and Xi'an International Business Incubator (XIBI). Following preliminary discussions at the Xi'an Film Studios, Stephanie Hopkins from the Gibson Group, intends returning to Xi'an to explore film and exhibition opportunities in the region.

At Xi'an University of Arts and Sciences, some progress was made regarding a possible partnership between the university and the three Wellington region polytechnics. (The proposal already has support in principle from WelTec, Whitireia and TOP.) The Mayor's presence and support contributed to the progress made in those discussions. David Powell (Wellington School of Medicine) was exploring the possibility of providing distance education to China. The meeting with XIBI was to explore and quantify opportunities for selling web based project management software and identify business agents or partners. Sales opportunities were identified and are now being progressed. In addition there may be partnership opportunities with multimedia companies housed in the Xi'an Science Park.

The business opportunities and potential partnerships require further development however those opportunities were expedited as a result of the trip and should lead to a stronger economic relationship.

Xi'an University is interested in either student or teacher exchanges with Wellington and the Shannxi Earthquake Administration hope to promote the base isolate technology (as used at Te Papa) for earthquake proofing in the province.

The Mayoral delegation met Mayor of Xi'an, Mr Chen Baogen and he is supportive of a strong relationship with Wellington.

5.4 Shanghai (Tuesday 7 to Friday 10 November)

New Zealand Trade and Enterprise held a seminar in Shanghai, opened by Foreign Affairs Minister Phil Goff, to promote business relationships with New Zealand. The Mayoral delegation took the opportunity to actively promote

Wellington at those seminars. The Wellington contingent attended the Air New Zealand Gala to further increase Wellington's profile.

The delegation met with the Deputy Mayor of Shanghai. This was valuable in establishing a stronger platform for further joint initiatives.

The Mayoral delegation joined with the Mayors of Dunedin, New Plymouth and Rotorua along with the Chief Executive of Natural History New Zealand, Michael Stedman, to visit Shanghai International Studies University. A montage of documentaries was shown to the Chinese dignitaries and Mayor Prendergast spoke to the gathering. A New Zealand documentary was shown on a major Chinese television channel.

The Wellington City Council had facilitated a performance by Elena at the Shanghai International Arts Festival and the delegation attended her performance. This Wellington concert was very well received and highly commended by viewers. Preliminary discussions were held about how the Wellington and Shanghai International Arts Festivals could collaborate. Mayor Prendergast also visited with the Shanghai Music School.

5.5 Xiamen (Friday 10 to Saturday 11 November)

The visit to Xiamen was short and included meetings with the Secretary of CPC of Xiamen, Deputy Mayor of Xiamen and Xiamen Government representatives. A Memorandum of Understanding between Wellington and Xiamen was signed to further detail the relationship between the sister cities. CentrePort and the Port of Xiamen also signed a Letter of Intent outlining their co-operative relationship. A business and education seminar was held focussed on Wellington and the potential for business opportunities between the two cities.

The Xiamen government is funding the construction of a permanent Wellington Garden in Xiamen and Councillor Morrison along with Garry Poole visited the site. The garden is expected to be complete by September 2007. To celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the sister city relationship between Xiamen and Wellington, the delegation attended a piano solo concert by Dan Poynton held at Xiamen University on 10 November.

6. Conclusion

The Mayoral delegation to China in November 2006 proved to be a valuable trip that will strengthen both cultural and economic ties between Wellington and China.

Contact Officer: *Mayor Kerry Prendergast*

Supporting Information
<p>1) Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome <i>The delegation's trip to China supported the Wellington Regional Strategy and the Council's vision for strong economic, cultural and academic relationships.</i></p>
<p>2) LTCCP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact <i>Not applicable</i></p>
<p>3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations <i>Not applicable</i></p>
<p>4) Decision-Making <i>This report does not seek a decision</i></p>
<p>5) Consultation</p> <p>a) General Consultation <i>Not applicable</i></p> <p>b) Consultation with Maori <i>Not applicable</i></p>
<p>6) Legal Implications <i>Not applicable.</i></p>
<p>7) Consistency with existing policy <i>Not applicable</i></p>