

Sister Cities

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1. Purpose

This policy has been developed for the purpose of providing guidelines for Sister City relationships. It ensures that the use of public funds to support such a relationship is transparent and accountable to the community.

2. Background

Council established a formal sister relationship with the City of Xuzhou in 1996. The relationship was entered into with the aim of enhancing mutual understanding, friendship and co-operation.

The overall goals of the Sister City relationship are embedded in fostering better world relationships specifically overcoming barriers of language, culture and beliefs as well encouraging respect and understanding between people.

Our sister city relationship aims to:

- foster international understanding and goodwill;
- promote the understanding of diverse cultures through exchange and education;
- encourage international communications to promote peace and tolerance;
- break down cultural differences through providing experiential opportunities;
- encourage the exchange of ideas relating to good government;
- promote and exchange ideas which break down cultural barriers;
- encourage community education about other cultures; and
- develop and expand economic opportunities for local business enterprises.

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3. Scope

This policy applies to all Councillors and staff of the City of Greater Dandenong (CGD)

4. References

- Adopted at the Ordinary Council Meeting on.
- Regulation 11(c) of the Local Government (General) Regulations 2004 in reference to the keeping and maintaining of *Statutory Registers of Overseas and Interstate Travel*
- Councillor Support and Reimbursement Policy
- Travel Policy

5. Council Policy

The following criteria and requirements have been developed to ensure accountability and transparency:

Overseas Delegations

It is important to ensure a consistent and accountable approach to overseas delegations given the costs associated with such visits, therefore the Sister City Relationship will operate:

- On a bi annual basis, i.e. CGD will send a delegation to China every second year and on the alternative year host a delegation from City of Xuzhou.
- Delegation size will be limited to four people (Typically one staff and three Councillors).
- Visit will be limited to generally four days of official duties.

The following applies to Councillors and Council officers who travel to China (Council's Sister City – Xuzhou):

Travel Authorisation

Travel by Councillors and staff must be approved in an open meeting of the Council prior to any overseas trip being undertaken. The report seeking approval will include full details of the proposed travel, Councillors and staff intending to travel and estimated costs.

All overseas travel must be approved by council resolution prior to any bookings being made and/or travel undertaken.



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Class of Travel

Air travel will be by economy class for all Councillors and Staff unless otherwise determined by way of council resolution.

Councillors and Staff may upgrade the class of travel at their own expense.

Accommodation for Sister City Delegation

CGD Official Delegation - City of Xuzhou pays for accommodation for all delegates.

Xuzhou Delegation - CGD pays for accommodation for all Xuzhou delegates.

The Cost of non essential room extras will not be covered by Council.

Reasonable costs for personal telephone calls and internet access for Council business will be reimbursed by Council.

Meals

Whilst the CGD delegation is in Xuzhou, the City of Xuzhou pays for all meals.

Whilst Xuzhou delegation is in CGD, CGD will pay for all meals.

Reasonable daily meal requirements of individuals will be reimbursed by Council on presentation of receipts. No reimbursement will be made without receipts.

Reporting Requirements

A detailed written delegation report shall be submitted by the head of the delegation to Council within one (1) month upon return of the approved trip. The report shall provide comment on the value of the trip, benefits to the Council and/or local community and provide recommendations for further action if appropriate.

Statutory Register for Overseas or Interstate Travel

All travel and associated costs must be submitted for inclusion in the *Travel Register*. It is the responsibility of the individual traveller to provide all supporting documentation relating to the cost of the trip.

In the case of Councillors all supporting documentation relating to cost can be submitted to the Mayor and Councillors Executive Assistant who is to ensure its inclusion on the *Travel Register*.

Officers will submit supporting documentation to the Chief Executive Officer.



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Travel Expenses for Mayor and Mayor's Partner

In accordance with Council's Travel policy where a spouse, partner or another family member accompanies the Mayor or a Councillor representing the Mayor on an approved trip, the Mayor or Councillor shall meet the full cost incurred by any additional travel, meals, entertainment or accommodation by the accompanying person.

6. Related Documents

Overseas and Interstate Travel Register.