

ITEM 4. EXTERNAL MEMBERSHIPS

FILE NO: S050647

SUMMARY

The City of Sydney is a member of a wide range of associations and organisations which provide staff and Councillors with access to up-to-date information and information-sharing opportunities, accreditation, forums or conferences for professional development and policy development.

For example:

- the Parks Forum is a peak international body for park management, providing best practice advice, research and professional development tools for City staff involved in managing our many parks;
- membership of the Council to Homeless Persons gives our staff access to policy information and research on specific issues related to homelessness, a key issue for the inner city; and
- the Cooks River Alliance provides a regional forum for environmental and water management and conservation, including public education campaigns across the Cooks River catchment.

The memberships held by the City of Sydney are reviewed regularly to ensure they remain relevant to the work of the City. This review has recently been undertaken and the City's current memberships are outlined in Attachment A.

The total cost of these memberships is \$582,000. They have been included in the budgets for 2015/2016. The top six memberships account for over \$317,547 and include the Council of Capital City Lord Mayors (CCCLM), Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (SSROC), Local Government NSW, Cooks River Alliance, Sydney Coastal Councils Group and the Tourism and Transport Taskforce. The other smaller memberships make up the remaining \$264,453.

In 2007, Council resolved that new, minor memberships up to the value of \$10,000 be approved by the relevant Director or CEO. New memberships worth over \$10,000 are brought to Council for consideration.

This report seeks Council's endorsement of the existing memberships as outlined in Attachment A. The City's memberships are reviewed annually and any significant changes reported to Council.

In 2012, the City became a Benefactor Member of Sustainable Business Australia (SBA). As a Benefactor Member, the City received increased membership benefits, including an opportunity to participate in the SBA Sustainability Professionals Group, which is by invitation only. The Benefactor Membership fee is \$12,500 (excluding GST). After discussions with SBA, the City paid a fee component of \$7,500 (excluding GST), with the remaining \$5,000 (excluding GST) being provided as value-in-kind for venue hire. It is proposed to do the same this financial year.

The City of Sydney was previously a member of the World Cities Cultural Forum, however, this membership lapsed. The Forum enables the world's leading cities to exchange data, share research and link senior policy makers. It collates and disseminates significant amounts of information in support of evidence-based policy related to the impact of culture on major cities and their inhabitants.

It is recommended the City renew its membership of the World Cities Cultural Forum at a cost of €7,500 (estimated \$AUD 11,300).

RECOMMENDATION

It is resolved that:

- (A) the City remain a member of Sustainable Business Australia with the membership comprising a fee component of \$7,500 cash (excluding GST) and value-in-kind of up to \$5,000 (excluding GST) for venue hire;
- (B) the City renew its membership of the World Cities Cultural Forum at a cost of €7,500 (estimated \$AUD 11,300); and
- (C) Council receive and note the City's membership of the Associations outlined in Attachment A to the subject report.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: List of Existing Association Memberships

BACKGROUND

1. The City of Sydney is a member of a range of associations which provide access to professional support, updated industry information and information sharing, forums and conferences for professional development and accreditation.
2. These range from membership of the Youth Action and Policy Association, the NSW Meals on Wheels Association, the Law Society of NSW and the Spatial Information Industry.
3. The City of Sydney is also a member of the Council of Capital City Lord Mayors, Southern Sydney Region of Councils, Sydney Coastal Councils Group and the Cooks River Foreshore Working Group. The City contributes to and works with these groups to achieve the appropriate goals.
4. A review has been undertaken by staff to ensure the City's membership of these organisations is both appropriate and worthwhile.
5. The total cost of these memberships is \$582,000 per annum.
6. These memberships have been included in the budget for 2015/2016.
7. The top six memberships account for over \$317,547 and include the Council of Capital City Lord Mayors (CCCLM), Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (SSROC), Local Government NSW, Cooks River Alliance, Sydney Coastal Councils Group and the Tourism and Transport Taskforce.
8. The other smaller memberships make up the remaining \$264,453.
9. In 2012, Sustainable Business Australia (SBA) invited the City of Sydney to become a Benefactor Member.
10. SBA is a peak body in the low carbon sector and a think tank focusing on new markets, industries and jobs through the development of the green economy.
11. SBA represents industries focused on developing the green economy and sustainable business practices and provides the City with the ability to directly engage with these businesses.
12. The organisation advocates for sustainable development, communicates the contribution Australian businesses make to sustainable development solutions and promotes policy development to encourage sustainable business development.
13. The Benefactor Membership fee is \$12,500 (excluding GST). After discussions with SBA, the City paid a fee component of \$7,500 (excluding GST), with the remaining \$5,000 (excluding GST) being provided as value in-kind for venue hire. It is proposed to do the same this financial year.
14. The City's membership of the World Cities Cultural Forum has lapsed. It is recommended the City's membership be renewed, as this is the major forum through which the world's leading cities can exchange data, share research and link senior policy makers.

15. The Forum collates and disseminates significant amounts of information in support of evidence-based policy related to the impact of culture on major cities and their inhabitants. Most notably, the World Cities Culture Report is the primary international audit of cities, containing data ranging across the creative industries, demographics, arts institutions, libraries, music venues, visitation rates, and related businesses, such as bookshops and cinemas.
16. Information from the World Cities Culture Report was used in the construction of the City's *Creative City* cultural policy. Continued participation in this project will allow the City to begin establishing a stable, ongoing means of gathering data in relation to comparable international cities. Membership provides the City of Sydney with an otherwise unattainable or costly audit, and benchmarking against comparable cities internationally. This is vital to the implementation of the cultural policy and will form a key part of the policy's evaluation framework, and will offer information relevant to other City's policy work in international, economic development and creative industries.
17. The membership fee for the World Cities Cultural Forum is €7,500 (estimated \$AUD 11,300).
18. It is proposed that the City renew its membership of the World Cities Cultural Forum.
19. The City's memberships are reviewed annually and any significant changes reported to Council.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

20. The existing cost of these memberships is \$582,000. These are budgeted within individual Unit budgets.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

21. Nil.

MONICA BARONE

Chief Executive Officer

Leander Klohs, Executive Manager