

**ITEM 10. DELEGATION TO CHINA – OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER 2016****FILE NO: S050647****SUMMARY**

Councillor Kok has received invitations to participate in the following delegations to China/attend events in China during October and November 2016.

*1. China Cultural Centre - China Cultural Trip*

The Director of the China Cultural Centre in Sydney, Ms Zhao Li, has invited Councillor Kok to participate in a China Cultural Trip from 26 October to 2 November 2016.

The China Cultural Trip, designed for use by China Cultural Centres worldwide, was initiated by the Chinese Ministry of Culture over 10 years ago as a means to enhance understanding and cooperation with China Cultural Centre's partners.

This year's China Cultural Trip will focus on cultural exchanges between Shanghai, Chengdu and Sydney. Chengdu, in particular, is strongly interested in having a major cultural involvement in Sydney's 2017 Chinese New Year Festival.

*2. Guangzhou International Sister-City Roundtable and Guangdong 21<sup>st</sup> Century Maritime Silk Road International Expo*

Councillor Kok has also received an invitation from the Guangzhou Municipal Government to participate in the Guangzhou International Sister-City Roundtable from 27 October to 29 October, during which the 2016 Guangdong 21<sup>st</sup> Century Maritime Silk Road International Expo will be held.

As Councillor Kok would be in China at that time for the China Cultural Trip, it is proposed that Council approve supplementary travel to Guangzhou for Council Kok, for the purpose of representing the City at the Guangzhou events.

The proposed scheduled of visits to Shanghai, Guangzhou and Chengdu as detailed at 1. and 2. above provide an opportunity to promote Sydney's Chinese New Year Festival, as well as further strengthen Sydney's profile in three key domestic Chinese markets and more broadly on a national scale.

*3. University of Sydney's Centre in China*

The University of Sydney has also invited Councillor Kok to participate in the launch ceremony of the University's Centre in China on 11 November. The new centre, which is intended to be a research and education hub, is the first established by the University of Sydney outside of Australia.

As part of the program of events, a meeting of the Sydney China Business Forum (Suzhou) will be held on 11 November. Councillor Robert Kok is invited to attend both of the events and deliver a speech on behalf of the City.

The costs of travel and accommodation for Councillor Kok for each of the three events detailed above will be met by the delegation/event organisers.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) endorse Councillor Kok to participate in the China Cultural Trip in Shanghai and Chengdu;
- (B) endorse Councillor Kok to participate in the Guangzhou International Sister-City Roundtable and 2016 Guangdong 21st Century Maritime Silk Road International Expo to represent the City of Sydney;
- (C) endorse Councillor Kok to participate in the launch ceremony of the University of Sydney's Centre in China; and
- (D) note that Councillor Kok will provide a report to Council after the travel.

**ATTACHMENTS**

**Attachment A:** Invitation from China Cultural Centre to Councillor Robert Kok

**Attachment B:** Invitation from Guangzhou Foreign Affairs Office to Councillor Robert Kok

**Attachment C:** Invitation from University of Sydney to Councillor Robert Kok

**BACKGROUND**

1. China Cultural Centres have been established by the Ministry of Culture, People's Republic of China, to build mutual understanding between host cities and China through the promotion of cultural events and activities. Over the past two decades, 20 China Cultural Centres have been established internationally.
2. The China Cultural Centre in Sydney, officially opened by President Xi Jinping and then Prime Minister Tony Abbott during the state visit of President Xi to Australia in November 2014, has been a long-term partner with the City, particularly with the City's Chinese New Year Festival.
3. Shanghai has successful experiences of cultural exchange with the City. In 2013, Sydney artists featured at the Shanghai Biennale, after Council unanimously endorsed a \$20,000 sponsorship for the 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art in Haymarket, which curated a section of the Biennale's Sydney Pavilion.
4. The City of Chengdu, in Sichuan Province, sent approximately 200 performers, artists and support staff to participate in the 2012 Chinese New Year Festival. In 2012, the City and the Municipal Government of Chengdu signed a Memorandum of Understanding. It signalled the two cities' commitment to friendship and co-operation, and promotes mutual understanding.
5. The Sydney-Guangzhou sister city relationship is one of the City's most important and enduring partnerships. 2016 marks the 30th anniversary of Sydney's relationship with Guangzhou in China. A City delegation, led by the Lord Mayor with 100 representatives from local businesses, universities and cultural institutions, travelled to Guangzhou this year.
6. The City has a history of long-standing cooperation with the University of Sydney and its world-renowned China Studies Centre. The City facilitated the signing of two Memoranda of Understanding between Xi'an University and Hubei University with the University of Sydney's China Studies Centre in 2014 and 2015, respectively.
7. As a follow-up of this Memorandum of Understanding, Hubei University has offered Chinese Language Learning Scholarships for five students from the University of Sydney to learn Chinese in Hubei University for up to two years.
8. Councillor Kok is a board member of the Panel of Advisors for the University of Sydney's China Studies Centre. He provides support and assists the China Studies Centre to maintain and extend its relationship with business, government and local communities.
9. The City has provided financial and value-in-kind sponsorship for the Sydney China Business Forum, organised by the University of Sydney since its inception in 2011.
10. The Forum is anticipated to bring together over 200 of the University's alumni who have become successful entrepreneurs and community leaders, as well as Chinese government representatives and leading Australian and Chinese academics.
11. The Forum has become one of the leading business and academic events in Australia focusing on deepening the connections between Sydney and China. The City's ongoing engagement in Asia, particularly with China, is central to maintaining Sydney's global standing and long-term economic prosperity.

**INVITATIONS**

12. Councillor Kok has received invitations to attend the China Cultural Trip from the China Cultural Centre in Sydney; the Guangzhou International Sister-City Roundtable and 2016 Guangdong 21st Century Maritime Silk Road International Expo; and the launch ceremony for the University of Sydney's new China Centre.

**China Cultural Trip**

13. The City, especially through the Chinese New Year Festival, has a history of cooperation and engagement with the China Cultural Centre in Sydney.
14. The proposed visit to Shanghai aims to showcase cultural resources and programs in Shanghai.
15. During the visit to Chengdu, the China Cultural Centre in Sydney will facilitate meetings with local cultural performance groups, for the purpose of exploring opportunities for participation in next year's Chinese New Year Festival.

**Guangzhou International Sister City Roundtable and 2016 Guangdong 21st Century Maritime Silk Road International Expo**

16. The Roundtable will bring together Guangzhou's current sister and friendship city partners which, in addition to Sydney, include cities such as Auckland, Bangkok, Birmingham, Durban, Frankfurt, Fukuoka, Los Angeles, Manila and Vancouver.
17. The program of events will focus on innovation-driven development, port cooperation and sister-city and friendship-city relations and enhance future cultural and economic benefits from our relationship with Guangzhou.
18. In 2015, the Deputy Lord Mayor, the late Councillor Robyn Kemmis, attended the 2015 Guangdong 21st Century Maritime Silk Road International Expo and related Port City Development and Cooperation Forum in Guangzhou.
19. Rebecca Yang, Policy Officer, Office of the Lord Mayor, has also been invited to the Guangzhou International Sister City Liaison Person Forum in the Guangzhou International Sister City Roundtable and will be travelling to Guangzhou to attend this from 27 October to 29 October 2016. All costs, including international fares, food and accommodation for Rebecca, will be met by the Guangzhou Government.

**Opening Ceremony of University of Sydney's Centre in China**

20. The new centre is aiming to serve as a research and education hub for the University of Sydney to increase intellectual exchange and collaboration between China and Australia.
21. As part of the launching ceremony, the Sydney China Business Forum (Suzhou) will bring together more than 200 university alumni who have achieved successes in their careers and self-development in many areas. The theme of the Forum will be 'Innovation, Distributions and the Rebalancing China's Economy'.
22. The cost of Councillor Kok's travel and accommodation for these three invitations will be met by the organisations.

**BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

23. The costs of flights for Councillor Robert Kok from Sydney to Shanghai and Chengdu to Sydney, accommodation and meals in Shanghai and Chengdu will be met by the China Cultural Centre.
24. The costs of domestic flights for Councillor Robert Kok from Shanghai to Guangzhou and Guangzhou to Chengdu, accommodation and meals in Guangzhou will be met by the Guangzhou Municipal Government.
25. The University of Sydney has confirmed that it will cover all costs for international flights, local transportation, food and accommodation for Councillor Kok to participate in the launch ceremony of the University of Sydney's Centre in Suzhou, China.
26. The City may need to cover some incidental expenses, estimated at up to \$1,000 for the period of travel. Funds are available within existing operational budgets.

**CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES**

27. The travel dates will be from 26 October to 2 November 2016, and 11 to 12 November 2016.
28. Councillor Kok will arrive in Shanghai, then travel to Guangzhou to participate in the Guangzhou International Sister-City Roundtable and 2016 Guangdong 21st Century Maritime Silk Road International Expo.
29. Following that, he will visit Chengdu to meet with the China Cultural Centre delegation and Chengdu Government officials to discuss Chengdu and Sichuan's participation in the 2017 Chinese New Year Festival.
30. On 11 November, Councillor Kok will travel to Suzhou, Zhejiang Province to attend the Opening Ceremony of University of Sydney's new centre in China.

**MONICA BARONE**

Chief Executive Officer