

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET MEMBER MEETING – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION

8 August 2019

Report of the Executive Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS UPDATE

(1) Purpose of Report

To summarise the developing action plans for work with Anhui in China and Toyota City in Japan and to report on current workload programmes and associated travel plans.

(2) Information and Analysis

Toyota City

During the 20th anniversary of the relationship between Toyota City and the three councils, Derbyshire County Council, Derby City Council and South Derbyshire District Council, the Toyota City Partnership Development Board (TCPDB) was established. The TCPDB brought new partners into the international relationship with Toyota City, including further education (FE) colleges and the University of Derby, the East Midlands Chamber of Commerce, Marketing Derby and Marketing Peak District and Derbyshire, the National Forest and Toyota Motor Manufacturing UK. The TCPDB exists to maximise the opportunities for local people across five themes: education, culture, the environment, the economy and sport.

The five year action plan began in 2018 and sets out planned work across each of five themes. This year, the TCPDB is planning to:

- extend the opportunities for Derbyshire pupils to host Toyota City students and prepare for a return visit in 2020;
- increase collaboration between the University of Derby and Chukyo University;
- participate in the Japanese Embassy's Season of Japanese Culture and to open up access to cultural opportunities through a Derbyshire-Japanese Society;
- promote the Derbyshire/Derby-Toyota City relationship, e.g. at Chatsworth Country Fair;

- showcase Derbyshire/Derby businesses in Toyota City and promote trade by supporting local business wishing to import/export with Japan;
- collaborate on environmental issues; and
- support Toyota City in its preparations for the Rugby World Cup in 2019 and the Olympics and Paralympics in 2020 by creating and promoting sporting links.

In March 2020, the TCPDB intends to promote Derbyshire/Derby business at a business convention in Toyota City. The Chair of the TCPDB, and up to two officers, will attend this convention at a cost of approximately £4,000. Attendance at the business convention will create an opportunity to showcase Derbyshire products and facilitate links between Derbyshire based and Toyota based businesses. The Department of International Trade is supporting this event by funding two preparation seminars for businesses in advance of the convention and funding the creation of short videos of Derbyshire Businesses which already export to Japan.

Anhui Province, China

The County Council works with the Midlands Engine and the Department of International Trade to promote and foster economic links in China; it achieves this through the Derby and Derbyshire (D2) China Partnership which includes partners in leisure and tourism, sport, education marketing and private enterprise. The D2 China Partnership exists to support UK/Derbyshire businesses in trade with China and encourage inward investment from China; it also provides a developmental platform for educational, sporting and cultural exchange.

This year, the Partnership is planning to:

- continue its work to attract and support inward investors to the County;
- continue to identify new opportunities for economic development through an active programme of investor engagement by receiving and visiting investors;
- promote D2 businesses in China and support local businesses wishing to export to China;
- further develop tourism between China and D2; and
- promote educational collaboration between universities and between local FE colleges and technical and vocational education and training in Anhui.

In September 2019, the Midlands Engine will be present at the World Manufacturing Conference in Hefei, Anhui Province and a D2 delegation will participate in this. The event will be preceded by international Government meetings and as international Partner to Anhui Derbyshire County Council will be there to represent Derbyshire businesses. Two elected members and up to two officers will travel to Hefei, to take part in the conference, promote businesses and meet with investors at a cost of approximately £6,220.

The current D2 China Partnership action plan is attached as Appendix 1.

(3) Financial Considerations

The approximate cost of the travel and visits associated with these action plans is £10,220. In addition to this, members and officers are occasionally asked to attend events which are not scheduled, but within the remit of these action plans. For example, there has already been one unscheduled visit to Yixing at a cost of £1,500. A budget of £12,000 will be available for expenses of this nature.

(4) Environmental Considerations

International relationships, particularly regarding tourism, create an opportunity to discuss environmental concerns with international partners.

Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, health, property, social value and transport considerations.

(5) Key Decision

No.

(6) Call-In

Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report?

No.

(7) Background Papers

Held on file within the Economy, Transport and Environment Department.

(8) OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS That the Cabinet Member:

8.1 Notes the Toyota City Partnership Development Board's five year action plan.

8.2 Notes the Derby and Derbyshire (D2) China Partnership five year action plan.

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- 8.3 Approves the budget of £12,000 for journeys and visits associated with these action plans and any variations to the proposed expenditure be determined by the Executive Director – Economy, Transport and Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member.

Mike Ashworth
Executive Director – Economy, Transport and Environment