

**REPORT TO: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE - 15TH AUGUST 2005**  
**REPORT ON: GLOBAL DIGITAL CITIES NETWORK**  
**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**  
**REPORT NO.: 479-2005**

**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To inform the committee on progress with the Global Digital Cities Network and to seek agreement for participation in this year's general meeting.

**2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 It is recommended that the committee agrees that:-

2.2 Dundee City Council participates in the 6th annual meeting of the network in Dubai, United Arab Emirates in November this year.

2.3 The Council is represented at the 6th annual meeting by the Convener of the Economic Development Committee and the Director of Economic Development or their nominees.

**3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 The costs for this in the current financial year are estimated at £4,600 for which provision has been made within the Economic Development Department revenue budget for 2005/6.

**4 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The City Council will ensure where possible that the principles of sustainable development will be incorporated into the workings of this network.

**5 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no equal opportunities implications arising from this report.

**6 REPORT**

6.1 The Committee agreed at its meeting on the 11th September 2000 that the City joins the Global Digital Cities Network. Since then annual meetings have been attended by the Council.

6.2 The cities that inaugurated the network are Dundee; Chunchon, Korea; Kagamihara and Inuyama, Japan; Yanji, Jilin and Shenyang from China; Nizhny Novgorod, Russia; Taipei, Taiwan and the Gold Coast City of Australia. Dubai, who is a sister city of Gold Coast, Australia as well as Dundee joined the network in 2004. This year they are hosting the 6th annual general meeting.

6.3 Since the inauguration of the network the secretariat has been based in the city of Chunchon, South Korea.

6.4 Since 2000 The University of Abertay has hosted groups of students from Hallym University in Chunchon and these students are due again to visit the city for a two week summer school in English and Computer Games development.

6.5 The link between Abertay and Kagamihara goes back to 1996. Gifu University is one of only 12 national universities in Japan. Abertay is the only British University to have an exchange relationship with Gifu and this has opened a number of opportunities for staff and students.

6.6 Relationships are also being further developed between the other areas in this network.

6.7 Gold Coast City proposed that the network set up an international games competition at the meeting in 2004 in Jilin in order to enable students/gamers to gain an international experience. Dundee, Gold Coast and Chunchon in Korea are all participating in this currently. Sponsorship has been gained locally to enable the Dundee City winner attend the 6th Annual general meeting in Dubai where they, along with other shortlisted winners, will have their work displayed. Gold Coast is a centre for the development of digital industries particularly Games and Film/animation which has strong synergies with this sector in Dundee.

- 6.8 Gold Coast also invited the GDCN partners to participate in their Film Festival sponsored by Warner Bros who have a studio based in their area. This year a student at the University of Abertay Dundee won the international category against stiff competition.
- 6.9 These links were boosted by a visit programme earlier in the year by a senior Gold Coast City Council officer to Dundee who met with several key individuals from local education institutions and local businesses to begin dialogue on further links and exchanges between Dundee and Gold Coast.
- 6.10 Dundee also hosted a visit programme for senior representatives from the Jilin region of China earlier this year. A visit programme was undertaken with both businesses and education establishments with a number of possible areas of development which need further exploration.
- 6.11 Dubai are one of the latest members to this network and they are keen also to see the project undertake international projects of this nature. Acting as hosts for this 6th meeting shows their commitment to this network. As Dundee are also pursuing stronger economic links with Dubai this additional opportunity to exchange ideas with key members of the Dubai municipality affords a good opportunity. Scottish Enterprise Tayside have expressed an interest in also attending this meeting in order to explore this avenue.
- 6.12 The continuing commitment for the Council will be to participate in this years meeting which will also involve the awards of the international games competition. The cost of participating in the meeting is estimated at £4,600 for financial year 2005/6. This cost assumes the Council being represented as before by one member and one officer at the meeting.
- 6.13 The immediate benefit of Dundee being involved in this meeting will be to reinforce the various links with the partners and build further the more recently developed links with Gold Coast, Jilin and Dubai. Local businesses have expressed interest in the sectors in each of these areas and are keen to look at possible collaborations especially within the Interactive/games areas and significant opportunities have been discussed around student exchanges and work placements in Gold Coast around the film sector.
- 6.14 As the relationships between the GDCN cities is maturing there are more opportunities to develop international and cross city projects as demonstrated by the International Games Competition to be showcased in Dubai. In addition to this the sharing of best practice and the subsequent academic exchange which also takes place at the Annual General meeting will provide Dundee with a better understanding of the developments in these key knowledge sectors and useful contacts with other small developing digital cities. It will also continue to place the City of Dundee within a world context as a Digital City.

## 7 **CONSULTATIONS**

- 7.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services) and Depute Chief Executive (Finance) have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

## 8 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 8.1 None.

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**DATE: 8TH AUGUST 2005**