

**REPORT TO: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE - 18TH AUGUST 2003**

**REPORT ON: GLOBAL DIGITAL CITIES NETWORK**

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**REPORT NO.: 529-2003**

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

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

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1. It is recommended that the Committee agrees that: -

2.1.1. Dundee City Council participates at the fourth annual meeting of the network in Gold Coast City, Australia in September of this year.

2.1.2. The Council is represented at the fourth 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 £2500 for which provision has been made within the Economic Development Department revenue budget for 2003/04.

**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 the 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 11<sup>th</sup> September 2000 that the City joins the Global Digital Cities network. Since then annual meetings have been attended by the Council in Korea and Japan with the third annual meeting being held here in Dundee in 2002.

6.2. The cities that inaugurated the network are Dundee, Chunchon, Kagamikahara, Nizhny Novgorod in Russia, Yanji, Jilin and Shenyang from the Republic of China, Inuyama of Japan, and Gold Coast City of Australia. Taipei the capital city of Taiwan is to join the network this year. Gold Coast City is to host the fourth annual meeting during the week of the 24<sup>th</sup> to the 26<sup>th</sup> of September 2003.

6.3. Since the inauguration of the network the secretariat has been based in the city of Chunchon, South Korea and work on developing the activities of the network has started. For the last three months a senior officer from Chunchon has been based in

Gold Coast assisting with the preparations for the fourth meeting. There are three principal strands to the development work. The strand of the most immediate importance to Dundee relates to student exchanges, though the other two strands of developing a web based information exchange mechanism and company exchanges hold promise for the future.

- 6.4. Since 2000 The University of Abertay Dundee has hosted groups of students from Chunchon on three occasions and Kagamihara and is delivering some of its course work in Korea. This is in addition to the existing links between the University of Abertay and Gifu/Kagamihara Japan as set out below.
- 6.5. The link between Abertay University and Gifu goes back to 1996. Gifu University is one of only 12 national universities in Japan, and covers an extremely wide spectrum of faculties and subjects. In the faculty of computing, it has a virtual systems laboratory and around 500 students. Abertay is the only British university to have an exchange relationship with Gifu, and this has opened up a number of opportunities for staff and students:
- A research and staff exchange agreement funded wholly by the Japanese government.
  - A Japanese language course, attracting 60-70 first year students this year and enabling students to take placements in Japanese companies as part of their degree in Computer Arts or Computer Games Technology.
  - 20-30 student placement agreements with blue chip companies, such as Sony, Playstation, Fujitsu.
  - Involvement in the International Society of Virtual Systems and Multimedia.
  - Developing links between the IC-CAVE centre at Abertay and the Japanese games industry.
- 6.6. Gold Coast City is a centre for the development of digital industries and a programme biased in that direction is under preparation by the City for the Annual meeting. Support for the City and its role in the network has been forthcoming from both the University of Abertay and SET with both indicating that they continue to be supportive of the initiative. The University has already indicated that it will be represented at the September meeting.
- 6.7. The continuing commitment from the Council will be to participate in this years meeting in Gold Coast. The cost for this is estimated at £2,500 for the financial year 2003/04. This cost assumes the Council being represented as before by one member and one officer at the meeting. It is proposed that the Council be represented by the Convener of the Economic Development Committee and the Director of Economic Development or their nominees.
- 6.8. The immediate benefit to Dundee will be in reinforcing the link between Gifu and the University of Abertay Dundee where real benefits for the students of the City are already apparent. Subsequently the benefits should be a better understanding of the developments in these key 21<sup>st</sup> century industries and useful contacts with other small developing digital Cities. This initiative will also continue to place the City of Dundee in a world context as a Digital City.

7. **CONSULTATIONS**

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

8. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

8.1. No background papers, as defined in Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

**DOUGLAS A A GRIMMOND**  
**DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**DATE: 11TH AUGUST 2003**