

**REPORT TO: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE - 15TH OCTOBER, 2001**

**REPORT ON: GLOBAL DIGITAL CITIES NETWORK**

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**REPORT NO.: 555-2001**

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1. To inform the committee on progress with the Global Digital Cities Network, to seek agreement to participation in this year's general meeting, and to set the scene for the third general meeting of the network to be held in Dundee in 2002.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1. It is recommended that the Committee agrees that:-
- 2.1.1. Dundee City Council participates at the second annual meeting of the network in Kagamikahara Japan in October/November of this year;
- 2.1.2. The City of Dundee confirms to the network that the third annual meeting is held in Dundee in October 2002 and that additional provision of £5,000 is included within the Economic Development Department budget for 2002/2003 to accommodate this, subject to the availability of resources.
- 2.1.3. The Council is represented at the second 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 £10,000 for which provision has been made within the Economic Development Department revenue budget for 2001/02.

**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 and that an offer is made to host the third meeting of the network in Dundee in 2002.
- 6.2. The then Lord Provost and the Department's Business Development Manager represented the Council at the inaugural meeting of the network in Chunchon, Korea in November 2000. Representatives of Scottish Trade International, Scottish Enterprise Tayside and the University of Abertay, Dundee accompanied them on that visit. At the

inaugural meeting the offer from Dundee to host the third annual meeting of the network in 2002 was accepted.

- 6.3. 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.
- 6.4. Since then the secretariat of the network has been the city of Chunchon and work on developing the activities of the network has started. 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.
- 6.5. During the meeting in Korea last November representatives from the Council, the University of Abertay and SET visited Hallym University Department of Computing in Chunchon. The prospect of student and staff exchanges was raised then and this has resulted in the first group of ten students and three academic staff from Chunchon attending a two-week course in Dundee in August 2001. This it is hoped will now lead to delivery of Abertay courses in Korea and the exchange of research opportunities for staff of both institutions.
- 6.6. This is in addition to the existing links between the University of Abertay and Gifu/Kagamikahara Japan as set out below.
- 6.7. 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.
- 6.8. Support for the City and its role in the network has been forthcoming from both the University of Abertay and S.E.T. with both indicating that they will send representatives to the second meeting in Japan in November. Both organisations see this as an ideal complement to the ongoing development of their contacts and as a springboard to the rest of Japan and Korea.
- 6.9. The continuing commitment from the Council will be to participate in this years meeting in Japan and to undertake essential planning for the meeting of the network here in Dundee in 2002. The costs for this are estimated at £6,000 for the financial year 2001/02. 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.

- 6.10. 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.
- 6.11. Outline planning for the meeting here in Dundee in 2002 has already started and it is anticipated that the financial commitment of the Council to this should not exceed £15,000 as in the original report. The support of the other institutions and companies in Dundee is being sought to supplement these core costs. It is recommended that an additional sum of £5,000 is included for this extraordinary event in the Economic Development Department revenue budget for 2002/2003.

7. **CONSULTATIONS**

- 7.1. The Chief Executive and the Directors of Finance and 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.

**DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT .....** **Date.....**