

Report to Council

Agenda item 7.1

Post Travel Report by Councillor Kevin Louey: Osaka, Japan, 28 August to 1 September 2018

27 November 2018

Presenter: Councillor Kevin Louey

Purpose and background

1. To report to Council on the travel undertaken by the Chair, Prosperous City Portfolio, on matters in relation to the Business Partner City (BPC) Network, Councillor Kevin Louey, to Osaka, Japan to participate in the BPC Network Roundtable 2018, 28 August to 1 September.
2. On 31 July 2018, Council approved the proposal for Councillor Louey to travel to Osaka from 28 August to 1 September 2018 to participate in the annual BPC Network Roundtable, and undertake meetings with current and potential partner organisations in support of Council's international business objectives.
3. Councillor Louey was accompanied by an officer from the Council's International and Civic Services branch.

Key issues

4. The roundtable attracted strong representation from BPC Network members, with delegations from nine member cities attending. Councillor Louey held meetings which focused on further strengthening long-standing connections with significant business and government partners through the BPC Network. The attendance of Mayor Yoshimura and Mr Michiteru Kashiwagi, Director General of the Economic Strategy Bureau, Osaka City Government, allowed Councillor Louey to reinforce the strong civic and business relations between Melbourne and Osaka.
5. Councillor Louey's presentation to the BPC Network, consistent with the roundtable theme of 'Creation of Business Innovation and Strengthening of International Competitiveness', highlighted Council-led initiatives that enhance Melbourne's economic global market presence by supporting innovation. The presentation centred on the City of Melbourne's Open Innovation Competition on Accessibility held in early 2018, showcasing the positive impact the program had on stimulating private sector solutions to accessibility challenges in urban environments.
6. The roundtable provided an opportunity to foster new connections with emerging business cities in Asia. Many delegates expressed an interest in learning more about:
 - 6.1 Melbourne's startup ecosystem and the government policies that underpin it.
 - 6.2 The strategies behind the Open Innovation Competition framework and the possibilities of involving international businesses in future competitions.
7. Councillor Louey took part in a lunchtime briefing and discussion with David Lawson, Consul-General and Senior Trade Commissioner in Osaka, Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade) and Adam Cunneen, Commissioner, Victorian Government Trade and Investment, Tokyo Office.
8. In a meeting with the Mayor of Osaka, Hirofumi Yoshimura, Councillor Louey expressed that the City of Melbourne was looking forward to hosting the Mayor when he travels to Melbourne from 16 to 20 December 2018 with a business delegation focused on health and life sciences.
9. A detailed summary of the outcomes and benefits of the travel undertaken is included as Attachment 2.

Recommendation from management

10. That Council notes the report by Councillor Kevin Louey on travel to Osaka, Japan to participate in the Business Partner City Network Roundtable 2018 between 28 August and 1 September.

Attachments:

1. Supporting Attachment (Page 2 of 6)
2. Outcomes and Benefits of Travel (Page 3 of 6)
3. Photographs – Briefings, meetings and other commitments (Page 4 of 6)

Supporting Attachment

Finance

1. The cost associated with Councillor Louey's participation in the 2018 BPC Roundtable in Osaka was \$4500.37, which included business class airfare (\$3855.75), accommodation for three nights (\$546.99) and incidentals (\$97.63).

Conflict of interest

2. No member of Council staff, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a direct or indirect interest in relation to the matter of the report.

Relation to Council policy

3. The Director, City Economy and Activation, has confirmed that the travel costs accord with the requirements of the travel guidelines outlined in the Councillor Expenses and Resources Guidelines.
4. The travel aligns with Council Plan 2013–17, Goal 3: a prosperous city and year four outcomes of a sustainable resilient municipal economy that is globally connected. *Melbourne: Doing Business Globally* (approved November 2014) guides Council's international activities to deliver business development activities that increase exports and inward investment, including engagement with key cities and markets in Asia.

Environmental sustainability

5. The carbon emissions resulting from air travel were offset with the purchase of credits.

OUTCOMES AND BENEFITS OF TRAVEL

Outcomes

1. The following is the list of outcomes arising from the travel.
 - 1.1. Councillor Louey's presentation was well received and generated significant interest in City of Melbourne policies and programs, and enhanced the City of Melbourne's international profile as a global innovation hub.
 - 1.2. Targeted talks with the Mayor and support staff from the City of Osaka created more interest from the city to bring a strong health and life sciences contingent in their business mission.
 - 1.3. An invitation from Osaka was extended to make the startup businesses from Melbourne eligible for application to be funded to attend Hack Osaka 2019, the City of Osaka's premier startup event.
 - 1.4. Consul-General David Lawson extended an invitation for a City of Melbourne employee to use a desk in the Consulate-General office for a period of time in 2019. The offer was in conjunction with an offer of business support from Commissioner Adam Cunneen and the Victorian Government Business Offices.
 - 1.5. Daikin Industries and Hankyu Hanshin Properties Corp requested more information on the Sister Street Agreement MoU. They are interested to involve themselves in the discussions around urban planning and design and to promote engagement and knowledge sharing, as a corporate stakeholder in Midosuji Boulevard.

Benefits

2. The following is the list of benefits associated from the travel.
 - 2.1. Continued high level discussion to promote mutually beneficial engagement with Osaka. Demonstrated our continuing commitment to the city-to-city relationship in the year of our 40th anniversary of the Sister City Relationship. These discussions were held in the context of *Melbourne Doing Business Globally*, Council's strategy guiding international connections.
 - 2.2. Engaged in talks with the Osaka International Business Promotion Center to allow them to better shape the business delegation for 2018 to fit the respective capabilities and needs of our two markets.
 - 2.3. Continued to build on Mayor Yoshimura's strong personal knowledge of, and familiarity with, Melbourne and Melbourne's sector strengths.
 - 2.4. Strengthened connections with senior Australian in-country representatives of the Australian and Victorian governments.
 - 2.5. Gained insights into the progress of respective BPC cities in cultivating strong and self-sustaining startup industries. Developed an awareness of potential markets for sharing Melbourne's startup ecosystem capabilities and connecting Melbourne startups for collaboration opportunities.
 - 2.6. Reaffirmed the City of Melbourne's long-standing connections with attending members of the BPC Network.

PHOTOGRAPHS – BRIEFINGS, MEETINGS AND OTHER COMMITMENTS



Councillor Louey on a tour of the Osaka Innovation Hub and Knowledge Capital Building, Osaka.



Councillor Louey presenting a gift to Mr Michiteru Kashiwagi, Director General of the Economic Strategy Bureau, Osaka City Government.



Briefing on Osaka's bid to be host of the 2025 World Expo.



Group photo at the beginning of the roundtable presentations.



Councillor Louey delivers his presentation on the Open Innovation Competition for Accessibility.



Lunchtime briefing on the G20 to be held in Osaka in 2019.



Site tour of the new island constructed as part of the bid to host the 2025 World Expo.



Councillor Louey receives a gift from Osaka Mayor Hirofumi Yoshimura.



Councillor Louey meeting with Mr Hirofumi Yoshimura, Mayor of Osaka.



Site tour of the battery testing facilities at Osaka battery production company INTEX.