

Gloucester City Council

Meeting:	Council	Date:	12th September 2013
Subject:	Memorandum of Understanding – Paju, South Korea		
Report Of:	Chief Executive		
Wards Affected:	All		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
Contact Officer:	Julian Wain, Chief Executive		
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Appendices:	1. Memorandum of Understanding re. memorial		

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update Members on the progress on the agreement of a Memorandum of Understanding with Paju in South Korea.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Council is asked to **RESOLVE:**

(a) that progress be noted; and

(b) that a further report establishing the agreement be received in due course.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 Paju is the major city in South Korea closest to the site of the Imjin River where the Gloucester regiment fought with distinction during the Korean War. The bravery of the regiment remains much remembered and appreciated in Korea.
- 3.2 Earlier in 2013, the Mayor of Paju, the Korean Ambassador and a sizeable delegation visited Gloucester and presented to the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum a cheque for £94,000 which is to be used to establish a section of the museum dedicated to the Korean War. The historic links between Gloucester and Paju are therefore well preserved and this will be enhanced when a new memorial is opened in Paju shortly.
- 3.3 The new memorial is in commemoration of the Gloucestershire regiment directly, and Korean dignitaries are keen that there should be a reciprocal visit by a Gloucester civic party in due course.
- 3.4 Councillor Brown, in his capacity as then Mayor, signed a Memorandum of Understanding to cooperate on the development of the memorial in March of this year. This specific agreement is with the Province of Gyeonggi, rather than the city. A copy is attached at Appendix A.

- 3.5 Both during the Korean visit, and in subsequent conversations with GFirst and the County Chamber of Commerce, the possibility of deepening economic links with Korea have been discussed, and indeed the possibility of a business delegation at the same time as the Civic visit mooted.
- 3.6 Since that time, Gloslinks have enquired as to the possibility of twinning arrangements with Paju, and the subject has been raised as a question at Council meetings on more than one occasion.
- 3.7 The Leader of the Council in reply has reminded Members that it is Council policy not to pursue further twinning arrangements, but that a memorandum of understanding, particularly relating to the enhancement of economic co-operation would be useful subject, clearly to the agreement of Paju.

4.0 Progress

- 4.1 Officers have had discussions with officers in Paju concerning an agreement of this nature, and in their turn they have taken soundings from the Mayor of Paju. Initial feedback is that the idea has been warmly received.
- 4.2 Paju has similar agreements in place elsewhere, as well as an extensive list of twinning arrangements and have proposed the use of a form of document such that they have used elsewhere. This is being sent to us and we are currently awaiting sight of it.
- 4.3 Meetings and further discussions are to be held on the possibility of deeper economic links. It has been suggested that the promotion of potential economic links with Korea should be included in the Gloucestershire Growth Plan, on which Council will receive a report shortly.

5.0 Next Steps

- 5.1 The proposed document will need to be examined and consulted on with relevant partners, and arrangements made for signing. Discussions will need to continue to explore the economic links and establish how they may be put in place.

6.0 Financial Implications

- 6.1 None at this stage, although the implementation of an agreement may require some investment. It would be intended that expenses arising would be borne by business or sponsorship wherever possible, and it may be that funding for developing of trade links would be available through the Growth Fund.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

7.0 Legal Implications

- 7.1 Documentation will be subject to legal advice before the agreement is signed. The Council has power to enter into an agreement of this nature and is certainly acting in its powers in attempting to develop the economy of Gloucester, as well as cement historical links with Korea.

(Legal Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

8.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

8.1 None at this stage.

9.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

9.1 The PIA Screening Stage was completed and did not identify any potential or actual negative impact; therefore a full PIA was not required.

10.0 Other Corporate Implications

Community Safety

10.1 None specific to the report.

Sustainability

10.2 None specific to the report.

Staffing & Trade Union

10.3 None specific to the report.

11. Background Documents:None