



Coventry City Council

# 8b

## Public report

### REPORT BACK ON CONFERENCE/SEMINAR

**REPORT TO:** Scrutiny Coordination Committee 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2010  
**REPORT OF:** Cllr. Ken Taylor  
**TITLE:** Visit to Jinan Expo Conference  
**DATE:** 19<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2009  
**VENUE:** Jinan, Shandong Province, China

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#### 1 Recommendation

The Scrutiny Board is recommended to note the report on, and the positive outcomes of, the Leader's visit to Jinan, China from 19<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> September 2009.

#### 2 Background

Coventry has been twinned with Jinan, China since 1983, and a key focus of this link has been on economic and trade benefits to both areas, strongly supported by the China Trade Liaison Office (CTLO) within Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce.

During the last 10 years the CTLO has focussed activities on introducing companies from Coventry and the West Midlands to trade and partnership opportunities in China, and in particular Jinan and Shandong province. Over this period the economy has seen benefit from 12 business to business conferences, 6 of which have been in Jinan. Over 80 Coventry companies have participate and following a survey of delegates about resulting trade we can conclude significant benefits have resulted from our twin relationship with Jinan. To date the CTLO can report direct business into Coventry **of £8.3m with a further £16m projected over the next two years.** Business with China from us to them and vice versa, will become more and more important as China's economy grows and their interest and appetite for high-quality branded goods and services grows.

As part of the outgoing mission there was an opportunity to attend the large Garden Expo show taking place in Jinan – being the 7<sup>th</sup> China (Jinan) International Garden and Flower Expo. Coventry was offered the chance to design a garden for the expo, and some of Jinan's other twin cities took up this offer. However it was decided that it would be difficult to resource this, particularly given the timescales involved. In response, Jinan offered to design a garden for us at no cost to us, which we accepted.

The China Trade Liaison Office (CTLO) within Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce organises regular Trade Missions to and from China and works very closely with the Jinan Municipal Government. In recognition of the great importance that Chinese culture attaches to official government representation, and also the expenditure undertaken on the 'Coventry Garden', the Chamber of Commerce strongly recommended a senior political representation from Coventry visit to Jinan, in order to raise the profile of the Chamber's work and to show the Council's ongoing commitment to the cooperation in this area.

The Leader was asked to represent the City Council for this visit and also to act as facilitator to AWM colleagues also visiting China and Jinan at that time, because Councillor Taylor also sits on the AWM Board. This visit therefore did *not* form part of the normal 2 year cycle of civic engagement as agreed in the Coventry / Jinan memorandum of understanding. The council received extensive support and advice from the CLTO who helped to co-ordinate the delegation, with the Council only covering travel and related costs (see below) but forming an important delegate on the trip in the context of our existing relationship.

Richard Hutchins the Deputy Chief Exec of AWM travelled to China at the time of the expo. Part of his programme was to visit Jinan to meet with the regional government to discuss the agreement between the West Midlands and Shandong Province, as well as attending the Sister City celebrations at the garden Expo.

### 3 Cost of attending

Air travel return flights to Beijing	£2250.00
Airport Transfers	£83.60
Internal travel Beijing – Jinan – Beijing	£90.20
Hotel Beijing	£104.50
Express Visa and Courier	£271.70
Travel Insurance	£29.70
Currency	£21.00
Currency Charges internal	£27.70
<b>Overall cost</b>	<b><u>£2878.40</u></b>

### 4 Benefits

The visit also emphasised Coventry's commitment to the relationship between the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce's China Trade Liaison Office (CTLO) and Jinan Municipal Government. The Expo was attended by senior officials fro Beijing and Shanghai and it was noticeable that Cllr Taylor was given VIP status above other delegates. Part of the success of the ongoing twinning relationship has been to ensure that strong personal connections are maintained between Coventry and Jinan and this ensures the long standing and consistent link between the two cities. This message was also taken by the representatives of AWM.

List of background papers

Proper Officer: Martin Yardley, Director of City Services and Development Directorate

Author: Juliette Verdier Stott, External Funding Officer, City Services and Development Directorate.

(Any enquiries should be directed to the above)

Contributors: Paula Deas, Regeneration Strategy & Resources Manager, City Services and Development Directorate - ext. 3775

John McGuigan, Director of Strategic Planning and Partnerships, Chief Executive's Directorate - ext. 1522

Mark Eaton, China Trade Liaison Office, Coventry & Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce – Tel 024 7665 4295

Other contributors: N/A

Papers open to public inspection

**Description of paper:**

None

**Location:**