

SISTER CITIES POLICY (COMMUNITY POLICY)

1. Scope

The Sister Cities Policy (this 'Policy') is to clearly articulate Council's objectives in establishing and maintaining Sister City and Friendship City relationships across the world.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to promote Sister/Friendship City relationships that affiliate the Livingstone Shire with cities in other countries where such relationships:

- have a significant positive influence on the communities involved; and
- promote people-to-people links and a contemporary and positive image of Capricorn Coast region and Queensland, Australia.

The objectives of this Policy are to:

- ensure that Sister City relationships are relevant and effective in delivering long term economic, cultural and social benefits for the Livingstone Shire;
- clearly identify Council's level of involvement in Sister City relationships;
- outline processes for establishing and reviewing Sister City relationships; and
- set out requirements for visits to and from Sister Cities.

3. References (legislation/related documents)

Travel Procedure
Travel Directive
Media Policy

4. Definitions

To assist in interpretation, the following definitions shall apply:

Friendship City	Those consisting of a less formal arrangement with less administrative and financial expectation, which may be appropriate in meeting short term needs and supporting programs run by other sections of the community.
Sister City	A city that is twinned with another. A form of legal or social agreement between towns, cities, counties, oblasts, prefectures, provinces, regions, states and even countries on geographically and politically distinct areas to promote cultural and commercial ties.

5. Policy Statement

The future of the Capricorn Coast region is to create a true global region, renowned for its liveability, connectivity, creativity and prosperity.

Council supports the establishment of formal Sister City relationships with other cities and regions to:

- educate local businesses, schools and cultural groups of the characteristics, assets and the economic and social makeup of the Sister City;
- promote and encourage economic, trade, educational, technology and social exchange and liaison between local government, business and community;
- increase and improve understanding and exchange of information of international, national, state and local government issues;
- enhance and promote the Livingstone Shire Local Government Area and foster close civil relationships with other local authorities internationally;
- foster sharing of ideas, knowledge, values, tolerance and goodwill;
- promote understanding and enhance awareness of the respective regions and their cultures, customs and traditions; and
- facilitate cultural exchange through local schools or educational facilities.

5.1 Outcomes sought from a Future Sister/Friendship City Agreement

Outcomes that are required from a Future Sister/Friendship City Agreement are to:

- formalise the Sister/Friendship City Agreement and confirm the scope of the cultural exchanges;
- support in-bound Government delegations from the Sister/Friendship City;
- lead and/or participate in a small number of focused outbound delegations to the Sister City;
- build the understanding by both partners of the opportunities for business-to- business exchanges; and
- support businesses to become 'export ready' and capable of doing business with the Sister City by providing information and referring our businesses to a range of education, support and cultural awareness training.

5.2 Establishing of Sister/Friendship City Relationships

Council may establish a relationship through a Council resolution or in response to a request from a prospective Sister/Friendship City.

Any relationships must be reported to Council for consideration and outline the potential economic, cultural and social benefits for the Livingstone Shire Local Government Area as well as indicative annual costs.

It may be necessary in the early stages of establishing relationships to form a Friendship Agreement that could be fostered over time in order to grow into a full Sister City relationship. This aligns with official federal approaches to international intercity relationships.

The following criteria will be used by Council when assessing whether or not to endorse a new Sister City relationship:

- Strong cultural linkages between resident communities, including opportunities for interaction in education, sporting, recreational, technology and sustainable development.
- Sound economic opportunities between business communities.
- Similar status of cities in terms of geography, population and industries.

- No more than one Sister City and one Friendship City relationship will be established in any one country, except in exceptional circumstances.
- Promote direct exchanges wherever possible to strengthen cultural ties in support of economic goals.

5.3 Sister/Friendship City Agreements

Relationships will be formalised by entering into an agreement such as a Memorandum of Understanding which outlines the aims and objectives of the relationship and level of commitment by both parties.

Formal visitation by Council to a Sister/Friendship City is not an essential component. In principle, the travel and associated expenses of a delegation shall be paid by the City sending the delegation, except where a reciprocal arrangement applies.

Individual Councillors, community or business members who seek to represent Livingstone Shire Council at a visit to a Sister/Friendship City may only do so where they have received endorsement from Council.

5.4 Sister Cities Advisory Committee and an Economic Development Advisory Committee

In pursuit of the objectives, Council might evolve a Sister Cities Advisory Committee and an Economic Development Advisory Committee and, with the assistance of these committees, may undertake or facilitate such activities as:

- Stimulating exchanges of individuals, information and ideas across a wide range of community, cultural, economic and environmental interests.
- Arranging and/or coordinating visits to Sister Cities by individuals and groups.
- Promoting to our Sister Cities information on aspects of life in the Capricorn Coast region.
- Arranging exchanges of news items and reports between newspapers, radio and television in the respective cities.
- Supporting information exchanges from Sister/Friendship Cities and their respective Countries.
- Exchanges and communications between Chamber of Commerce, churches, educational institutions, sporting bodies, clubs, societies or groups with common interest in Sister Cities.
- Exchange of arts, crafts and educational material between schools and other groups.
- Promotion of mutually beneficial business outcomes and provision of information and support to become export ready.

6. Changes to this Policy

This Policy is to remain in force until any of the following occur:

1. The related information is amended/replaced; or
2. Other circumstances as determined from time to time by the Council.

7. Repeals/Amendments

This Policy repeals the Livingstone Shire Council Policy titled 'Sister Cities Policy' (Version 1.1).

Version	Date	Action
1.0	01/08/2017	Adopted

1.1	23/10/2018	Administrative Amendments – reflect organisational restructure
2.0	16/05/2023	Policy Review – Minor Administrative Amendments and References updated

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