



23 February 2016

Agenda Item: 4

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S VISIT WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM TO CHINA AND MALAYSIA

Purpose of the Report

1. To report back to Economic Development Committee on the Chief Executive's participation in a week-long visit to China and Malaysia from 20- 27 September 2015, hosted by the University of Nottingham.

Information and Advice

2. The University of Nottingham invited the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive of the Council to attend a trip to China and Malaysia as part of a delegation to create greater trade, research and investment links.
3. The University of Nottingham hosts this "On Location" visit annually and invites a range of local partners and stakeholders of the University. All costs (except international travel) are met by the University. The University operates a campus in China (in the City of Ningbo) and in Malaysia (near Kuala Lumpur). Both of these ventures are in partnership with the Governments of the respective Countries and have a world-wide (and local) reputation for innovation and excellence in research and academic standards.
4. The University has formal aims and objectives for its international strategy and agreed measurements of success – these can be found on the University's website and by following this link <http://nottingham.ac.uk/globaluniversity/internationalisationstrategy/index.aspx>.
5. On 17 June 2015, Policy Committee agreed that the invitation from the University should be accepted by the Chief Executive, who would attend on behalf of the County Council. Policy Committee felt that because this was the Council's first major engagement with the initiative, it was important to establish the potential in advance of any further engagement.
6. Policy Committee resolved that a report would be submitted to the Economic Development Committee within 12 months of the trip.

Summary of the visit

7. A detailed itinerary for the visit is attached at Appendix A of this report.

8. A 30 strong delegation participated in the visit, which included senior representatives from the business community, alumni of the University, and the public sector (including Nottingham City Council). All of the delegates had established links with the University of Nottingham.
9. The Chief Executive used the opportunity to gain a full understanding of the University's connections with China and Malaysia, and to evaluate the potential for further engagement by the County Council. In addition, during the visit, the Chief Executive held discussions with University colleagues the City Council's delegates, to understand the City Council's International Strategy, particularly in respect of its links with Ningbo. These links had been established through previous engagement with the "On Location" visits.
10. The Chief Executive also used the visit to promote Nottinghamshire as a destination, evaluate the potential for inward investment into Nottinghamshire, and to evaluate the potential for local businesses to trade with China and Malaysia. To this end, ahead of the visit, the Chief Executive held discussions with United Kingdom Trade and Investment (UKTI).
11. Over the 7 day trip, the delegation visited the University's international campuses in China and Malaysia.
12. The first half of the trip was from 20 September to 24 September and took place in China at the University of Nottingham Ningbo Campus (UNNC).
13. The delegation met with key University representatives to tour the Ningbo Campus. The delegation learnt how the University leveraged its unique position as the first western university campus in the region to develop extensive investment links and research collaborations between the UK and China. The delegation also met important business and government officials, including the Vice-Mayor of Ningbo. This was particularly helpful in gaining an understanding of how the University managed a long-standing international partnership. This partnership has been built on the principles of reciprocity, commitment, social and economic responsibility, and quality.
14. The delegation learnt about contemporary approaches to common Anglo-Chinese challenges such as improving educational outcomes in schools, reducing levels of childhood obesity, growing numbers of older people and waste management. Many of these challenges resonate with those we face in Nottinghamshire.
15. The China element of the trip also included a visit to Shanghai (China's largest city and financial centre) to engage with key business and government representatives, and alumni of Ningbo.
16. The second half of the trip was from 24 September to 28 September and took place in Malaysia at the University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus (UNMC).
17. The delegation visited the University's new 'Crops for the Future' research facility and learnt about opportunities for research links with the region. The Malaysia campus has a strong focus on environmental issues and works on a range of diverse projects such as elephant protection and research into the problem of stubble burning in Indonesia, which causes widespread pollution in the region.

18. The delegation also attended the UNMC 15th anniversary celebration dinner hosted by Professor David Greenaway, Vice Chancellor of the University. This provided an opportunity to engage with senior representatives from the university and key business contacts. Members of the Royal Family of Malaysia were present at the dinner, some of who are alumni of the University of Nottingham.

Key benefits

19. The visit offered a unique insight into how an important local partner has developed fruitful links with modern emerging economies. There was clear evidence that benefits accrue to the University and international partners from this initiative both in financial, educational and social terms. That said, the University of Nottingham has been able to prioritise this area of work and invest resources. Clearly, given the Council's financial circumstances, similar direct investment is not possible. However, there are potential benefits of continuing a partnership with the University and City Council. It is the view of the Chief Executive, that this is most likely to derive benefit by focusing on working with the University and the City Council on their partnership in Ningbo.

20. As stated earlier in this report, Nottingham City Council has an established link with Ningbo, some of which is facilitated by the University. This is enshrined in the City Council's International Strategy, which has been developed for the period January 2014 to March 2017.

21. In the International Strategy, the City Council aims to attract investment, support international trade and grow the visitor economy, in order to boost growth. The City Council is promoting Nottingham as a well-connected, cost competitive location with excellent quality of life and diverse culture. All data points to London and the South East being the pre-eminent destination for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and development capital, but the costs of expansion from London can be prohibitive and do not always offer particular locational and/or sector advantages over Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. The key selling messages for Nottingham for FDI, which can also apply to Nottinghamshire, are:

- Location and proximity to London/access to Europe
- Cost of living
- Access to finance
- Soft landing packages for inward investors
- Growth sectors
- Universities and skills

22. Through this approach, the City Council hopes to attract inward investment. In addition, the City Council is seeking ways (working with the University) to offer local businesses assistance if they are considering trading with China. Through its long-standing operations in the Ningbo area, the University has well-established links with the local economy and the local, regional and national Chinese Government.

23. This report seeks permission to explore these opportunities further, to exploit any value they might offer for Nottinghamshire. Specifically, further discussions would be held with colleagues from the City Council and the University to ascertain the most effective way for

the County Council to engage with this partnership, now the initial steps towards closer working have been taken by the Chief Executive.

24. The caveat for this continuing activity is that this should be undertaken by officer to officer discussions and that there is no resource available to support hard investment. If the ongoing discussions identify the need for any such investment, this would need to be considered by means of further reports to the appropriate Committee and by identifying the source of such investment. To this end, through discussions with the City Council and the University of Nottingham, efforts will be made to identify any sources of external funds, bearing in mind the challenging financial position of the County Council.

Gifts from China and Malaysia

25. During the trip the UNNC presented the Chief Executive with two gifts on behalf of the Council. These are:

- Framed artwork by Tu Wei (Quinn) student at the University of Nottingham Ningbo
- Framed Chinese paper cutting – artist unknown

26. These will be presented to the Chairman of the Council outside of this Committee meeting.

Other Options Considered

27. The option recommended in this report is considered to be the most appropriate, given all the circumstances.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

28. The report to Policy Committee on 17 June 2015 required a report to be submitted to Economic Development Committee within 12 months of the visit return date to consider the benefits from the visit.

Statutory and Policy Implications

29. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1) That the Economic Development Committee recognises the generosity of the University of Nottingham in inviting the County Council to participate in their “On Location” visit to China and Malaysia, and the Chair of the Committee writes to the University of Nottingham to thank them accordingly.

- 2) That the Economic Development Committee authorises the Chief Executive to explore the potential of further engagement with the University of Nottingham and the City Council, in respect of their joint work in Ningbo, China. This recommendation is on the proviso that no resources of the County Council (other than officer time) is committed to this area of work without express authorisation by the appropriate Committee.
- 3) That the Chief Executive provides an update report in a further six months.

Anthony May
Chief Executive

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Paula Mullin, x74298

Constitutional Comments [CEH 12.02.2016]

The report is for noting purposes only.

Financial Comments [SES 12/02/16]

There are no specific financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- *Visit to China and Malaysia*, report to Policy Committee, published 17-06-2015

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All

Appendix A: Detailed itinerary for the visit

Hosted Tour of The University of Nottingham Ningbo China and The University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus

Arrive Shanghai Sunday 20 September

Transfer by road to the Sofitel Hotel, Ningbo

6:30pm Ningbo alumni and business network reception, including the presentation of the Alumni Laureate Awards, in the Sofitel Hotel (Tian Tong room on the 3rd floor)
(Dress code: smart/casual)
OR evening at leisure

Monday 21 September

09:00am-09:30am Guests to have breakfast
Briefing by the Vice-Chancellor in the Pu Ji room, 3rd floor, Sofitel Hotel

09:45am Collection from the foyer of the Sofitel Hotel and transfer to The University of Nottingham, Ningbo Campus

10:00am Welcome and introduction to The University of Nottingham Ningbo Campus, Professor Chris Rudd, PVC and Provost and Mme Xu Yafen, Chair of WEG, International Conference Centre

Overview on UNNC infrastructure development, Mr Edward Wu, Director of Campus Services; research project presentation, Professor May Tan-Mullins Head of School of International Studies; student experience project presentation, Abdullah, President of Students' Union

11:40am Interactive showcase of the Ningbo Campus (guided tour with University student ambassadors)

1:00pm-2:00pm Lunch and reception with UNNC Staff, Robin Hood Restaurant, Staff Hotel

2:15pm Leadership Seminar

3:50pm Transfer to Sofitel Hotel

5:20pm Collection from the foyer of the Sofitel Hotel and transfer to the New Century Grand Hotel

6:00pm Civic Dinner hosted by the Vice-Mayor of Ningbo Municipal Government
(Dress code: lounge suit/business attire)

Tuesday 22 September

Please ensure that you check out of the hotel and bring your luggage with you as we will not be returning to the hotel

- 9:00am Collection from the foyer of the Sofitel Hotel and transfer to The University of Nottingham Ningbo Campus
- 9:30am Student business project pitchfest, Conference Room 453 in Admin Building
- 10:45am Tea break
- 11:00am Lectures and seminar on China's economy, culture and challenges
- 12:45pm Informal lunch on campus with student poster board presentation, Arabica Coffee Shop in Admin Building
- 2:00pm Transfer by road to Grand Central Hotel, Shanghai

Informal dinner at local restaurant
OR Evening at leisure

Wednesday 23 September

- 9:00am Collection from the foyer of the Grand Central Hotel for walking tour of the French concession, including informal lunch (return at 3:00pm)
OR day at leisure
- 6:10pm Collection from foyer of the Grand Central Hotel and transfer to Hyatt on the Bund
- 6:30pm VIP dinner for major stakeholders and business partners in Shanghai;
(Dress code: lounge suit/business attire)
- 10:00pm Close and transfer to the hotel

Thursday 24 September

- Depart Shanghai on flight to Kuala Lumpur
- Accommodation at the Grand Millennium, Kuala Lumpur
- Dinner at local restaurant
OR Evening at leisure

Friday 25 September

- 8:30am Collection from foyer of the Grand Millennium and transfer to The University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus
 - 9:30am Welcome and introduction to The University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus from SA and SC Presidents. Balcony, Trent Building
 - 10:00am Strategic overview of the campus and plans for future development by Professor Christine Ennew and other UNMC Executive staff
 - 10:45am- Showcase of the Malaysia Campus (guided tour with University students), including tour of the Crops for the Future Research Centre
 - 12:30pm- Lunch with UNMC staff and students. Lower Ground Foyer, Great Hall
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- 2:15pm Presentation of the Jan Atkin Prize and Vice-Chancellor's Achievement Awards
- 2:45pm Presentations from staff and current students. Refreshments served in the outdoor foyer, Block B.
- 4:00pm Transfer to the Grand Millennium
- 7:00pm Collection from the hotel foyer and transfer to dinner
- 7:30pm Dinner with selected senior UNMC staff
(*Dress code: smart/casual*)

Saturday 26 September

- 9:00am Collection from the foyer of the Grand Millennium Hotel and transfer for walking tour of Kuala Lumpur
OR
Morning at leisure
- 2.00pm Transfer to hotel

Afternoon at leisure
- 6:15pm Collection from foyer of the Grand Millennium Hotel and transfer to the Hilton Hotel
- 7:00pm The University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus 15th Anniversary Gala Dinner
(*Dress code: Black tie*)
- 11:00pm Close and transfer to the hotel

Sunday 27 September

Optional visit to the Management and Ecology of Malaysian Elephants (MEME) research centre

- 08:00am Collection from hotel
 - 10:30am Arrival at MEME
Tour of reservation area; informal presentation from Dr Ahimsa Carmo-Arceiz, Associate Professor of Geography; lunch
 - 2:15pm Depart
 - 5:30pm Arrival at Grand Millennium Hotel
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