

Corporate Policy & Strategy Committee

10.00am, Tuesday 12 May 2015

Invitation from Geneva – UniversCités Network

Item number	7.7
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	All

Executive summary

The City of Geneva, in partnership with the University of Geneva, has invited Edinburgh to join a newly proposed network of cities which have universities in their central heart. The invitation to attend a first exploratory meeting in Geneva on 19 and 20 March was received by both the Lord Provost and the Principal of the University of Edinburgh. Due to the timing of information received on other cities attending, and the need to understand the extent of political representation, a decision to be represented was required to be made under Paragraph 4.1 of the Committee Terms of Reference and Delegated Functions. The purpose of this report is to note this decision. Details of the meeting are contained in the feedback report in the Business Bulletin.

Report

Invitation from Geneva – UniversCités Network

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- 1.1 To note acceptance by the Convener of Culture and Sport to attend the inaugural meeting of a new network initiated by Geneva, alongside the Vice Principal International of the University of Edinburgh. The proposed network is entitled UniversCités and its purpose is to exchange good practice on the opportunities and challenges shared by cities and city centre based universities.

Background

- 2.1 The Mayor of the City of Geneva and the Rector of the University of Geneva have invited a select number of cities with universities at their heart to consider establishing a new network entitled UniversCités. The invitation was sent to the Lord Provost and the Principal of the University of Edinburgh. The dates of the inaugural meeting were 19 to 20 March 2015. Both the University of Edinburgh and the Lord Provost responded positively to the initiative. However, details of the cities attending, the format of the meeting and political representation were received outwith the Committee reporting schedule.
- 2.2 The other cities which have responded positively to the initiative and attended the inaugural meeting are Barcelona, Nantes, Lyon, Beirut, Brussels, Dakar, London, Milan, New York, Prague, Rome, Sao Paulo and Zurich. Expert speakers attended from Columbia University, New York, Beijing and Geneva / the United Nations.
- 2.3 The University of Edinburgh was represented by the Vice Principal International and the Convener of Culture and Sport attended for the Council.

Main report

- 3.1 A copy of the invitation to the Lord Provost to attend an inaugural meeting of the proposed network 'UniversCités' on 19 and 20 March is attached as Appendix 1.
- 3.2 As a new initiative, it was important to identify which cities and universities had agreed to attend, and to consider the programme for the event. As this

information came outwith the Committee reporting schedule, the Director of Economic Development, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, agreed representation at the meeting by the Convener of Culture and Sport under Paragraph 4.1 of the Committee Terms of Reference and Delegated Functions as a matter of urgency.

- 3.4 The Council works very closely with all the universities in Edinburgh under a 'Town and Gown' Programme led by External Relations. This includes the production of civic welcome and promotional films for all international students arriving in the city and for international student recruitment abroad. The Council and the universities keep in regular touch on international events and activities and undertake joint projects
- 3.5 While this particular initiative by the City and University of Geneva is specifically directed to our relationship with the University of Edinburgh given its central location within the city, it is anticipated that the learning and profile gained within the initiative will be of benefit for the Council's relations with all of Edinburgh's universities through the Council's Town and Gown programme.
- 3.6 In accordance with reporting requirements for elected members attending events, details of the meeting are held in the Business Bulletin.

Measures of success

- 4.1 Raise the city's international profile
- 4.2 Promote Edinburgh's expertise in Town and Gown relations
- 4.3 Learn from international good practice
- 4.4 Strengthen links with cities with universities at the heart of their economy

Financial impact

- 5.1 The cost of air travel was £290.15 per person. The cost of accommodation was £88.00 per person. Two representatives attended the inaugural meeting – the Convener of Culture and Sport and the Head of External Relations and Investor Support. The costs were met from the External Relations budget.

Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 The actions and outputs described in this report adhere to the risk compliance policy and governance arrangements. In addition the recommendations in the report do not impact on any existing policies of the Council.

Equalities impact

- 7.1 The Council's European and International Strategy, External Funding Strategy and Parliamentary activity supports the Council's commitment to equal opportunities.

Sustainability impact

- 8.1 Modern technology is utilised wherever possible in international liaison and all travel is in accordance with the Council's Sustainable Travel Plan.

Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 The External Relations team engages across the Council and with a wide range of players in the city of a consultative basis. This includes a Team Edinburgh / Team Scotland approach linking closely to the Consular Corps, the Scottish Government, the Chamber of Commerce the Parliaments, the Higher and Further Education Sectors, Festivals Edinburgh and Marketing Edinburgh.

Background reading / external references

Appendix 1: Letter of invitation from the City of Geneva and the University of Geneva

Greg Ward

Director of Economic Development

Contact: Elaine Ballantyne, Head of External Relations and Investor Support

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Links

Coalition pledges	P30 - Continue to maintain a sound financial position including long-term financial planning P31 - Maintain our City's reputation as the cultural capital of the world by continuing to support and invest in our cultural infrastructure
Council outcomes	CO7 - Edinburgh draws new investment in development and regeneration CO25 – The Council has efficient and effective services that deliver on objectives CO26 - The Council engages with stakeholders and works in partnership to improve services and deliver on agreed objectives
Single Outcome Agreement	SO1 - Edinburgh's economy delivers increased investment, jobs and opportunities for all
Appendices	1 - Invitation Letter and enclosures

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Principal and Vice Chancellor
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Edinburgh EH8 9YL

Geneva, 10 February 2015

Dear Mr Lord Provost, Mr Principal and colleagues,

We are writing in reference to our letter of 22 December 2014, regarding the organisation of two days of exchange, the aim of which is to evaluate the feasibility of creating a "UniversCity" network.

We are delighted that our letter generated interest within one of your institutions. Please find enclosed additional information that will answer some of the questions you may have about the project and the event on the 19–20 March.

We would also like to take this opportunity to let you know that, so far, seven cities and nine universities¹ have responded positively to our invitation. It would be an honour to count you among our guests as well.

As indicated in our previous letter, our colleagues Ms Laurence Wiedmer, Head of the City of Geneva's External Relations Service (laurence.wiedmer@ville-ge.ch, +41 (0)22 418 29 86) and Ms Christiane Fux, Assistant to the Rector's Office of the University of Geneva (christiane.fux@unige.ch, +41 (0)22 379 77 95) will be very happy to answer any questions you might have.

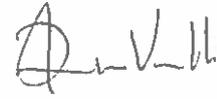
¹ Barcelona, Boston, Brussels, Dakar, Edinburgh, London, Milan, New York, Prague, Rome, Sao Paulo, Zurich

We hope that you are interested in the project and that we will hear from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sami Kanaan', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Sami Kanaan
Mayor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jean-Dominique Vassalli', with a stylized, cursive script.

Jean-Dominique Vassalli
Rector

Enclosure(s)



**UNIVERSITÉ
DE GENÈVE**

RECTORAT

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THE LORD PROVOST OF EDINBURGH	
05 JAN 2015	
LP	WARD
RECORD NO	



V L L E D E
G E N È V E

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Principal and Vice Chancellor
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Geneva, 22 December 2014

Dear Mr Lord Provost, Mr Principal and colleagues,

Unusual though this letter may be, we are writing to suggest a partnership that will unite our respective political environments and academic institutions. We would like to invite you to Geneva on 19–20 March 2015 to discuss the possibility of creating a “UniversCity” network of city-based universities.

In our capacities as Mayor of the City of Geneva and Rector of the University of Geneva, we have realised that a university at the heart of a city has many advantages over out-of-town campus universities, but that it also faces challenges and restrictions that campus universities do not. We quickly reached the conclusion that it would be extremely interesting and valuable to share experiences with other cities and universities.

How can we take advantage of our location to strengthen ties between cities and science? What opportunities exist for the transfer of scientific, technological and cultural knowledge, to name but a few fields? Could political debate benefit from the proximity between city and university? These are just some of the questions that we would like to discuss with our counterparts, including yourselves, in other universities and cities that are lucky enough to experience this closeness.

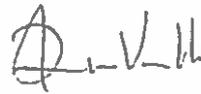
Our colleagues Ms Laurence Wiedmer, Head of the City of Geneva's External Relations Service (laurence.wiedmer@ville-ge.ch, +41 22 418 29 86) and Ms Christiane Fux, Assistant to the Rector's Office of the University of Geneva (christiane.fux@unige.ch, +41 22 379 77 95) will be very happy to answer any questions you might have. Please kindly let us know whether you are interested, by January 30, 2015.

We hope that we will have the pleasure of meeting you, or meeting you again, in Geneva on 19–20 March 2015. Please find enclosed a list of all the cities and universities that we have contacted.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Sami Kanaan', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Sami Kanaan
Mayor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jean-Dominique Vassalli', with a stylized 'D' and 'V'.

Jean-Dominique Vassalli
Rector

1. **University of Basel / Basel**
2. **University of Barcelona / Barcelona**
3. **University of California / Berkeley**
4. **Humboldt University / Berlin**
5. **Saint Joseph University / Beirut**
6. **Boston University / Boston**
7. **Université libre de Bruxelles / Brussels**
8. **University of Cape Town / Cape Town**
9. **University of Chicago / Chicago**
10. **Cheikh Anta Diop University / Dakar**
11. **University of Edinburgh / Edinburgh**
12. **Leiden University / Leiden**
13. **Imperial College London / London**
14. **University of California / Los Angeles**
15. **Université Lumière Lyon II / Lyon**
16. **Universita degli Studi di Milano / Milan**
17. **Université de Montréal / Montreal**
18. **Université de Nantes / Nantes**
19. **New York University / New York**
20. **Université Pierre et Marie Curie - Sorbonne Universités / Paris**
21. **Renmin University of China / Beijing**
22. **University of Pennsylvania / Philadelphia**
23. **Charles University in Prague / Prague**
24. **LUISS Universita Guido Carli / Rome**
25. **University of Sao Paulo / Sao Paulo**
26. **Yonsei University / Seoul**
27. **Saint Petersburg State University / Saint Petersburg**
28. **University of Sydney / Sydney**
29. **Keio University / Tokyo**
30. **University of Toronto / Toronto**
31. **University of Zurich / Zurich**