

Report of	Head of Commercial Services	Author	Gareth Mitchell ☎ 506972
Title	Establishment of a “Friendship City Relationship” with the City of Yangzhou, People’s Republic of China		
Wards affected	All		

This report concerns the establishment of a “Friendship City Relationship” between Colchester and the City of Yangzhou, People’s Republic of China.

1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 To authorise the Mayor of Colchester to sign a “Friendship City Relationship” agreement with the City of Yangzhou, People’s Republic of China.

2. Reasons for Decision(s)

- 2.1 The Borough of Colchester signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the City of Yangzhou in 2007 to encourage the development of ties between the two communities and in October 2014 the Mayor of Colchester and the Leader of the Council hosted visitors from Yangzhou in Colchester in order to further the aims of the MoU for the mutual benefit of both the Borough of Colchester and the City of Yangzhou.
- 2.2 As a direct result of that visit, the Mayor of Colchester has been invited by the City of Yangzhou to attend the City’s 2,500 year anniversary celebrations at the end of September 2015 as a next step in the developing relationship between the two communities.
- 2.3 As part of the visit the City of Yangzhou has proposed that a signing ceremony is held for both the Borough of Colchester and the City of Yangzhou to sign formally a “Friendship City Relationship” agreement. This report asks for Cabinet’s authorisation for the Mayor of Colchester to sign this agreement on behalf of the Council. A copy of the proposed “Friendship City Relationship” agreement is attached at Appendix 1.

3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 Not to authorise the Mayor of Colchester to sign the agreement which would exclude Colchester from exploiting opportunities of mutual benefit in the fields of economy, trade, science and technology, culture, education, sports, health, personnel with the City of Yangzhou.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 Yangzhou is located in the middle of Jiangsu Province, which already has an established partnership relationship with the County of Essex. There is also a successful existing agreement between the Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service and the museum in Nanjing, a neighbouring city to Yangzhou, which resulted in the Treasures of China exhibition at Colchester Castle in 2012. As the next phase of this agreement, an

exhibition from Colchester on the theme of Life in Georgian England is scheduled to run at Nanjing museum from 30 October 2015 to 5 May 2016.

- 4.2 Yangzhou is an important port city within the Yangtze Delta Region, the most dynamic economic circle in China. Yangzhou covers a total area of 6634 km² with a population of 4.6 million. The city itself covers a total area of 1100km² and has a population of 1.38 million.
- 4.3 Yangzhou has access to a population of 40 million within an area of 100km, and a population of 80 million within an area of 200km. In 2010, Yangzhou's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) reached £22.25m, 13.4% higher than the previous year with the GDP per capita exceeding £4,490. In the "Blue Print of Competitiveness of Chinese Cities 2010" issued by China's Academy of Social Science, Yangzhou takes the 50th place among the 294 cities in the country.
- 4.4 In 2015 Yangzhou is celebrating its 2,500 year anniversary and is listed among the top Chinese cities for historical and cultural aspects. Yangzhou has prospered culturally through much of its long history, leaving the footprints of a large number of well-known poets and scholars and boasting over 340 historic sites and relics. Amongst its most important cultural characteristics are the Yangzhou School of Learning, Yangzhou Opera, Yangzhou art crafts, Yangzhou-style pottery, Huaiyang cuisine, and lacquer and jade wares. The Slender West Lake Park and Yangzhou's Ancient City area have been listed amongst China's world cultural heritage sites.
- 4.5 Yangzhou is one of China's top tourist cities and has been listed as one of the "Top 10 leisure cities in China" for two consecutive years. Yangzhou is rich in tourist resources, boasting the uniquely beautiful sceneries of rivers and a number of gardens and buildings as well as the well-preserved ancient city area of the Ming and the Qing Dynasties. Yangzhou is also a city of museums including Yangzhou Museum, China's Museum for Flat Engraving Typography, China Yangzhou Buddhist Culture Museum, the Museum for Pottery Sceneries, the Museum for Huaiyang Cuisine and the Museum for Industries.
- 4.6 Yangzhou has been a city of trade and commerce since ancient times with machinery, automobiles, petrochemicals and shipping as the four pillar industries of the modern city and the mainstream exported products being electromechanical, textiles and garments, chemicals, shoes and steel. Yangzhou has also been named as "the best shopping city" in China by Forbes for a number of years.

5. Proposals

- 5.1 To authorise the Mayor of Colchester to sign a "Friendship City Relationship" Agreement with the City of Yangzhou, People's Republic of China.

6. Strategic Plan References

- 6.1 The establishment of a "Friendship City Relationship" with the City of Yangzhou has the potential to support the following three aims of the [Strategic Plan 2015-18:-](#)
 - **Vibrant** - promoting our heritage and working hard to shape our future
 - **Thriving** - attracting business and selling Colchester as a destination
 - **Prosperous** - generating opportunities for growth and supporting infrastructure

7. Publicity Considerations

- 7.1 The engagement of businesses and residents through publicity and other communications methods in the future development of the relationship between the two communities and the potential mutual benefits will be important.

8. Financial implications

- 8.1 At this stage there are no direct financial implications arising from this decision aside from the travel and accommodation costs of the visit.

9. Standard References

- 9.1 There are no particular consultation; equality, diversity and human rights; community safety; health and safety or risk management implications.

Appendix 1 - Proposed "Friendship City Relationship" agreement with the City of Yangzhou