



NOTICE OF MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the next ordinary meeting of an Sister City Advisory Committee will be held on Thursday 22 January 2026 in the Council Chambers, 43-51 Tanunda Road, Nuriootpa, commencing at 5:30 PM.

Martin McCarthy
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
THE BAROSSA COUNCIL

A G E N D A

Welcome by the Chair

1. ATTENDANCE RECORD

1.1 Members Present

Apologies

Nil

Not Present

Nil

Leave of Absence

Nil

2. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

2.1 Minutes of previous meetings – for confirmation:

- 2.1.1 Sister Cities Advisory Committee meeting held on Thursday 27 November 2025 at 5.30pm

2.2 Matters arising from previous minutes

Nil

3. MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

- | | | |
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| 3.1 | Barossa Australia - Grapevine delegation visit September 2025 report and North America Trip Report | 3 |
| 3.2 | Trade Development Working Group Update | 6 |
| 3.3 | Update - Nuriootpa High School Study Tour to Grapevine Texas - September 2025 | 8 |
| 3.4 | Foreign Arrangements Scheme - Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade | 11 |

4. DISCUSSION

- 4.1 Discussion - Member Representation for 2026
- 4.2 Discussion - Exchange Program Reciprocal School Visit

5. DEBATE REPORT

- | | | |
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| 5.1 | City of Grapevine Texas Sister City Relationship - September 2025 Visit Delegation Report | 12 |
| 5.2 | Future of the Sister City agreement between The Barossa Council and Kumenan Town, Japan | 18 |

6. CONFIDENTIAL AGENDA

Nil

7. URGENT OTHER BUSINESS

- 7.1 2027 Barossa Young Ambassador Program Prize

8. NEXT MEETING

To be determined.

9. CLOSURE

MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

3.1 BAROSSA AUSTRALIA - GRAPEVINE DELEGATION VISIT SEPTEMBER 2025 REPORT AND NORTH AMERICA TRIP REPORT

Author: Executive Support Officer
26/206



Grapefest Texas 2025 – Activation Report

Overview

Barossa Australia represented the region at the **39th Annual Grapefest** in Grapevine, Texas between 11-14 September 2025 — one of the United States' largest consumer wine festivals, attracting around **200,000 visitors**. The activation formed part of Barossa's **North America engagement program** under the *2025–2026 Annual Operating Plan*, delivering against the pillars of **Brand & Demand Driving** and **Regional Leadership**.

The event continues to strengthen the long-standing **Grapevine–Barossa Council Sister City relationship** and positions Barossa as Australia's benchmark premium wine region through direct consumer, trade and media engagement.

Participating Producers

Barossa's presence showcased regional collaboration and diversity, with wines poured by:

Two Hands Wines, Yalumba, Pewsey Vale, Elderton, Hewitson, Stage Door Wine Co., Kalleske Wines and **Lambert Estate** (represented by Vanesa Lambert).

Objectives

To:

- Reinforce **Barossa's premium positioning** within the U.S. market.
- Support member wineries through **trade and consumer visibility**.
- Promote **Barossa's unified wine and tourism story**.
- Leverage the **Grapevine–Barossa sister-city partnership** for future cultural and tourism exchange.
- Maintain Barossa's **year-round North America presence** as part of the two-year Export Market Development Grant (EMDG)-supported strategy.

Key Activities

- **International Wine Pavilion:** Poured across VIP and public tasting zones, introducing approximately 7,000 consumers to Barossa wines.
- **Media Engagement:** Broadcast interviews with **WBAP, KLIF, KTCK Radio, CBS** and the **"We Know Texas Vino"** podcast generated strong exposure.
- **Consumer Masterclass:** Hosted a **Barossa Masterclass for ~45 guests**, including Grapevine Sister City members, reinforcing Barossa's heritage and people-centric storytelling.

- **Joint Barossa Australia/Qantas “Visit Barossa” Competition:** Support for 2 winners to visit Barossa in 2025/2026
- **Trade Relationships:** Provided opportunity for additional activations in US market such as regional updates to **MaryAnn Worobiec (Wine Spectator)**, connection with **SATC and Tourism Australia** including attendance at **Americas Market Place** Tourism Trade Show in San Francisco and time with **Napa Valley Vintners**, sharing insights on governance and collaboration.

Outcomes

Outcome Area	Result
Reach	~200,000 festival attendees; multiple radio, podcast and media features (final figures tbc)
Regional Unity	Eight Barossa producers presented collectively under “One Barossa” branding
Trade Relations	Strengthened U.S. wine trade connections; sister-city collaboration renewed
Consumer Impact	High engagement through tastings and masterclass; strong response to Barossa authenticity and diversity
Media Visibility	Five broadcast pieces, including national radio and podcast coverage
Member Value	Direct exposure to new markets; collaborative platform for export storytelling
Data Base	Expansion of Barossa Australia Database

Insights & Learnings

- **Authenticity Wins:** U.S. consumers value genuine, people-led stories — heritage and humility differentiate Barossa from other premium regions.
- **Texas Opportunity:** Grapevine and the broader Texas market remain high value for Barossa's full-bodied wine styles.
- **Trade & Tourism Synergy:** Grapevine provides a foundation for integrated campaigns connecting **wine, food and regional travel** experiences.
- **Ongoing Visibility:** Continued participation should be evaluated through ROI and alignment with other U.S. trade events (ATE, SATC/TA activations).

Performance Measures (AOP Alignment)

Measure	FY26 Target	Grapefest 2025 Result
Trade Engagement Events	3+ per year	Achieved 1
Media Features	5+ per year	Achieved 3 confirmed
Member Participation	≥6 producers	Achieved 8
Brand Exposure	National reach	Achieved
CRM Data Capture	Annual tracking	In progress

Next Steps

1. **Sister-City Collaboration:** Possibility to develop a further co-branded campaign between Grapevine and Barossa (e.g. *Taste the Sister Cities*).
2. **Trade Expansion:** Leverage media exposure to secure wider Texas distribution and retail engagement and ultimately listings.
3. **Education & Advocacy:** Deliver Barossa Wine School sessions at future Grapefests.
4. **Tourism Conversion:** Align with **SATC and Tourism Australia** to position Barossa within Texas travel itineraries.
5. Investigate access to further **event insights** through **festival committee information exchange**.
6. **CRM Integration:** Record all media, trade and partner contacts in **Zoho CRM** for EMDG and performance tracking.

Conclusion

The Grapefest activation reaffirmed that **connection, collaboration and continuity** remain central to Barossa's success in North America.

By showing up, telling our story and sharing our wines together, Barossa continues to strengthen its reputation as a **world-class region** where wine, people and place are inseparable.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

SUPPORTING REFERENCES

Nil

MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

3.2 TRADE DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP UPDATE

**Author: Executive Support Officer
26/207**

Sister Cities Trade Development Working Group – 20th November 2025

Present

Rolf Binder (Chair), Scott Hazeldine, Heidi Helbig, Laura Hodgson, Anthony Grundel (via Teams)

Apologies

Carol Dadds, Elaine Burridge

Where to from here?

Our Sister City relationship with Grapevine Texas is a friendship and wine is a great opportunity for first engagement, but how do we go beyond wine to open the door?

Anthony (Austrade) noted that wine merchants are export ready and know the procedure. Outside wine, generally SA traders are not market ready and not prepared until they get an order and do not generally have the required FDA or SQF certifications. This process can take 18-24 months. The main targets are currently Texas and San Francisco. The Central Market chain will be meeting with Austrade on 3 December 2025 to explore new brand opportunities.

It is noted, 'Trade' developments will sit quiet for a few months until after the State Election and will depend on who gains power and what trade strategies they have in place.

Anthony and Heidi are working on a campaign "Are you export curious?" and would like to work together with RDA, Barossa Australia and The Barossa Council to increase the exposure and explore if there is an appetite in the local community.

Would there be interest in presenting case studies of local businesses that have international trade experience:

- JT Johnson (Kapunda) – export stockfeed pellets
- EAC Animal Care (Tanunda) – international stockists

Barossa Australia Visit to the US

Ruby's visit to the US was strategic with a tourism focus; to look at the marketplace in San Francisco, especially with United Airlines direct flights from Adelaide commencing, visited Napa vintners and Canada. It is becoming more challenging from a wine perspective, but tourism is strong.

Opportunities in Grapevine

- Opportunities for shop frontage in Grapevine is very limited. Is there an opportunity for our products to be in bottle shops/hotels, especially during Grapefest?
- Grapevine events work in 13-week cycles and are the staff are very busy. It would be beneficial to come up with an easy opportunity that is hard to refuse.
- Grapevine brand is their Christmas Festival and being the Christmas Capril of Texas. Would importing US products improve export opportunities?

Exchanges

Could we draw on their festival expertise?

- The Grapevine delegation has not included their events team as they are always planning and working on events.
- There have been wine maker swaps with the US for many years. Would there be capacity for council staff to do a swap or exchange around festivals and tourism.

Barossa Young Ambassador Program

Barossa Young Ambassador Program is of great interest to Grapevine in terms of the ambassador being fully immersed and being a spokesperson for the region.

- Suggestion that we contact Grapevine to assist with initiating this program.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

SUPPORTING REFERENCES

[About Austrade | Austrade](#)

[Export Pellets - JT Johnson's](#)

[Horse & Pet Care Supplements For Health & Wellbeing – EAC Animal Care](#)

MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

3.3 UPDATE - NURIOTPA HIGH SCHOOL STUDY TOUR TO GRAPEVINE TEXAS - SEPTEMBER 2025

**Author: Executive Support Officer
26/208**

The 2025 Nuriootpa High School Study Tour to Grapevine, Texas, was an extraordinary milestone for our school, our students, and our community. It represented the coming together of education, agriculture, and culture, and a pioneering partnership that continues to grow between the Barossa and Grapevine, Texas.

A Journey Built on Community and Vision

This international exchange was over a year in the making. Through BBQs, raffles, sausage sizzles, and sponsorships, students and staff worked together to raise over \$40,000. It was more than a fundraising campaign; it was a lesson in perseverance, teamwork, and pride. Each event united families, businesses, and students around a shared goal to give young people the chance to experience agriculture and education on a global stage.

As Rick Lane reflected, "The year-long campaign of fundraising the money to provide for the experience was the perfect lead up to the actual travel and group bonding." The preparation did not just fund a trip; it built a team and strengthened the belief that regional students can achieve incredible things through hard work and community support.

The Barossa Council, Sister City Advisory Committee, and many local sponsors were instrumental in making this vision possible. Their ongoing investment in this Sister City relationship has created an opportunity that will inspire a generation of young agricultural leaders.

The Texan Experience

From the moment we landed, the Texan hospitality shone through in every detail. Our hosts in Grapevine went above and beyond, crafting an itinerary that was both educational and unforgettable. Students stayed in pairs with host families, allowing them to experience daily American life: school, sport, food, and family in a genuine and meaningful way. The warmth of our hosts turned this study tour into a true cultural exchange.

Students attended Grapevine High School, participating in agriculture and technology classes, exploring livestock barns, and meeting students involved in FFA (Future Farmers of America). They were inspired by the scale and professionalism of agricultural education in Texas and quickly saw the parallels between their own experiences at Nuriootpa and those of their Texan peers.

At Tarleton State University, we toured the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, an institution home to over 2,500 students studying disciplines such as Meat and Food Science, Horticulture, and Ranch Management. Highlights included visiting the "Purple Tractor" student-run teaching lab, touring the dairy and equine centres, and tasting student-prepared Texan BBQ brisket. It was a clear example of how applied learning and industry partnerships prepare young people for the realities of modern agriculture.

Culture, Pride, and Connection

The trip was filled with unforgettable moments: the emotional 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony where Miyu laid a wreath alongside Mayor Bim Lange, the lively Grapefest Grape Stomp where "Team Old Skool" (Mr Lane and Miss Hoffmann) narrowly took the win, the Fort Worth Stockyards where students experienced the heritage of the cattle industry firsthand, and the Mexican rodeo during Mexican Independence Day, which highlighted Texas' rich cultural diversity.

Rick described it perfectly: "The simple aspects of life like food, sport, education, and shopping were amazing to our students. The balance of learning experiences and free time was ideally balanced, and we always felt that we were supported and prioritised."

Every part of the trip highlighted how agriculture, culture, and people are connected. The students learned that while we may live on opposite sides of the world, our values of hard work, innovation, and community are the same.

Agriculture: A Global Connector

As an educator and Wine and Agriculture Coordinator, I have long believed that agriculture is one of the most powerful tools for teaching resilience, leadership, and connection. This tour reinforced that belief in ways I could never have imagined.

Watching our students stand in university lecture halls, tour feedlots, speak with industry mentors, and proudly represent South Australian agriculture on the international stage was one of the proudest moments of my career. It reminded me why I do what I do: to create pathways for young people to see agriculture not as an obligation or a fallback, but as a profession of purpose and innovation.

We need more students in agriculture. Not just those who love the hands-on side, but those who are driven to innovate, problem-solve, and find new ways to feed the world. Agriculture today is about technology, sustainability, leadership, and global connection. The students who joined this tour felt that passion deeply both through their involvement in the Barossa community and through their connection with the FFA students in Texas. They saw how agriculture can unite people, spark ideas, and inspire purpose across continents.

This experience reaffirmed how critical it is to showcase agriculture. It is not enough to teach theory in classrooms; students need to see, feel, and live the scale of the industry, its diversity, its challenges, and its global reach. The study tour showed our students that agriculture connects people across borders, industries, and generations. It is both a science and a story of community.

The Lasting Impact

The relationships forged between students, staff, and host families will last a lifetime. Our young people returned home with a deeper understanding of the world, an appreciation for culture, and a stronger sense of identity as future leaders in agriculture.

For me personally, this tour was a reminder of the power of education when it is grounded in authenticity and community. As someone deeply invested in agricultural education, I saw the spark this experience lit in our students, and it reaffirmed my own purpose: to keep building programs that empower regional youth and celebrate the value of agriculture in every sense.

As Rick said, "The food, the transport, the hospitality, and the whole feel of the tour was unforgettable." And it truly was. This was far more than a trip. It was a transformation for our students, for our staff, and for me as an educator. It was a reminder that when we invest in connection, community, and agriculture, we invest in the future.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

SUPPORTING REFERENCES

Nil

MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

3.4 FOREIGN ARRANGEMENTS SCHEME - DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE

**Author: Manager Governance and OMCEO
26/209**

The Barossa Council has been contacted and met with representatives from the Department of Foreign Affairs to discuss and be informed of Local Governments entering into foreign arrangements including Sister City relationships.

The Foreign Arrangements Scheme commenced on 10 December 2020. Its purpose is to ensure that arrangements between state or territory governments (and their entities) and foreign entities do not adversely affect Australia's foreign relations and are not inconsistent with Australia's foreign policy.

The Scheme provides for states and territories and their entities to notify or seek approval from the Minister for Foreign Affairs if they propose to negotiate, or enter, or have entered a foreign arrangement. It creates obligations in respect of both future arrangements and existing arrangements. It also deals with subsidiary arrangements entered into for the purposes of implementing a foreign arrangement.

The Barossa Council has formally registered with the portal (link below).

Please find attached correspondence from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in relation to the Foreign Arrangements Scheme.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

SUPPORTING REFERENCES

[Foreign Arrangements](#)

DEBATE REPORT

5.1 CITY OF GRAPEVINE TEXAS SISTER CITY RELATIONSHIP - SEPTEMBER 2025 VISIT DELEGATION REPORT

Author: Manager Governance and OMCEO
26/211

PURPOSE

To provide Council with a Sister City Visit Delegation Report in accordance with Council's Sister City Relationships and Engagement Policy following the official delegation travel to the City of Grapevine, Texas in September 2025.

RECOMMENDATION

That Sister Cities Advisory Committee receives and notes the Sister City Visit Delegation Report provided at Attachment 1 in accordance with requirements set out within Council's Sister City Relationships and Engagement Policy following the official delegation travel to the City of Grapevine, Texas in September 2025.

REPORT

Background

Following the signing of the intention to enter into a Sister City Accord with the City of Grapevine, Texas during their visit in April 2023, the Barossa Council was invited to attend Grapevine's premier event, GrapeFest 2023, in September to sign the official Sister City Accord.

Mayor Bim Lange, Jo Moen, Acting CEO The Barossa Council, Scott Hazeldine, CEO Barossa Australia, and a delegation of Barossa Winemakers travelled to the City of Grapevine, Texas from 12th to 18th of September to attend GrapeFest 2023 which facilitated the official signing of a Sister City Accord between the two local government entities.

Since then, Council has proactively established a Sister Cities Advisory Committee (the Committee) pursuant to Section 41 of the *Local Government 1999*. Council then appointed the member representatives to the Sister Cities Advisory Committee on 20 February 2024, consisting of a diverse group of representatives from education, economic development, events, service clubs, community development and business owners.

Members of the Committee are outlined below:

Committee Member	Who
Chairperson	Mayor Lange
Council Staff	Janine Harding, Sister Cities Program Manager Catherine Nacey, Executive Support Officer
Community Members	• Ingrid Day

	• Carol Dadds • Vanesa Lambert • Louise Hickinbotham
Organisational Members	• Scott Hazeldine – Barossa Australia • Rolf Binder - RDA, BGLAP • Sandie Simons - Rotary Club of Barossa Valley • Milly Hoffmann & Rick Lane - Nuriootpa High School

The Committee, in partnership with Council, industry and community, objectives are to support Council's strategic commitment to the development and maintenance of effective international relations via Sister City and Friendship City relationships and provide a framework for entering into, maintaining and assessing such relationships to ensure that maximum benefits can be realised by both parties.

The Committees Terms of Reference and through the signed Accord with Grapevine outline the following:

The Committee will provide advice and support to Council, industry and the community to enhance Sister City relationships and programs and will actively undertake the facilitation of activities with the objective of nurturing and fostering the relationship and providing cross-cultural understanding, building connected communities, and generating mutual benefits for Sister Cities by:

- 2.1.1 Facilitation of the sharing of best practice and exchange of new ideas and successful experiences across a range of disciplines to improve capability and build more vibrant cities and local government authorities.
- 2.1.2 Fostering trade and investment initiatives that promote business development, provide accelerated access and open doors into key markets to connect our cities more effectively with buyers and sellers.
- 2.1.3 Promotion of each other's cities as visitor destinations, cross participation in festivals and events and facilitation of the exchange of destination marketing expertise and experience to enhance the tourism market intelligence of both cities.
- 2.1.4 Facilitation of education, cultural and sporting exchanges that empower our youth, support the education sector, celebrate our unique heritage, create opportunities for artistic expression and activate community participation.
- 2.1.5 Enhancement of each other's reputation and capacity to meet emerging policy issues facing our cities in addition to capitalizing on opportunities to explore innovations and improvements in science and technology, viticulture, rural and urban design, public infrastructure and sustainability.
- 2.1.6 Fostering friendship, mutual regard, and understanding among the citizens of our communities.

The Committee are committed to facilitating and working towards implementing 'on ground' these objectives with direct benefit to our community and industries within.

Introduction

The Committee has been meeting regularly and actively working towards developing the Sister City relationship with clear benefits coming to fruition over the past 12 months.

In support of the Committee objectives, The Barossa Council hosted a delegation of officials from City of Grapevine during the Barossa Vintage Festival in April 2025.

Some of the direct community benefits have been:

- The Committee presented a \$3000 cheque to 2025 Barossa Young Ambassador, Amber Perry, who demonstrated a deep commitment to the community, to attend Grapevine with the other official delegates to perform her role as Barossa Ambassador.
 - Delegates from Grapevine have a keen interest in youth development and education and were particularly interested in the Barossa Vintage Festival's Barossa Young Ambassadors Program which they are now implementing into their 'Grapefest' program.
- The establishment of a Committee Study Tour Working Group
 - Supporting and sending 8 agriculture students and 2 teachers from Nuri High School to join the delegation in Grapevine.
- Supporting our local service groups; Lions, Kiwanis and Rotary to work side by side with the Study Tour students and teachers – connecting, mentoring and creating lasting relationship bridging generational gaps.
 - Seeing amazing fundraising efforts with widespread community support over a 9 month period raising well over \$40,000!
- The establishment of a Working Group focusing on economic development that is working to strengthen regional industries, support economic growth and enhance trade and community prosperity.
- Participation in the Barossa Vintage Festival Parade with a Sister City Float as well as the Touchdown and Taste Off – American Football event, promoting awareness of the Sister City with the community.
- Implementing a 'Meet the Makers' Trade Show so Grapevine delegates could experience some of our local businesses show casing their wares – 14 stall holders including, Aboriginal wines, local gin distilleries, artists, artisan foods and products.

Discussion

A comprehensive itinerary of events, site visits and networking opportunities were curated for The Barossa Council Delegation over the seven day visit providing an opportunity to develop key relationships with City of Grapevine Council Officials, Staff, Business Leaders, representatives from Rotary, Volunteer Groups, the Education Sector and the Tourism industry, Texas government officials to provide a platform for future conversations and collaborations in the pursuit of education, tourism, trade, cultural and innovation outcomes.

In addition to key contacts made with Texas stakeholders, Barossa's delegates also capitalised on the opportunity to establish strong connections with delegates attending Grapefest from the City of Grapevine's other sister cities including West Lothian, Scotland and Parras de la Fuente, Mexico.

Representatives from Barossa Australia and the contingent of Barossa Wineries were also afforded a range of media, education, networking and promotional opportunities as a result of being showcased as a featured wine region at GrapeFest 2025.

A detailed Sister City Visit Delegation Report is provided at Attachment 1 which provides the following for Council consideration:

- Background
- Grapevine Key Statistics
- City of Grapevine Summary & Community Profile
- Detailed Visit Program Overview
- Study Tour
- Barossa Young Ambassador
- Grapevine Visit Key Takeaways
- Financial Analysis
- Acknowledgement and Thanks

The report also sets out a number of observations and opportunities for improvement within the Barossa Council region based on learnings from the visit. These ideas and concepts, summarised in overarching themes within the Key Takeaways section of the report, will be explored further by Council Officers in due course.

To provide Council with additional details on the success of the visit to Grapevine, Attachment 2 provides a collated summary document of Student and Parent commentary and feedback on the experience of being part of the inaugural Study Tour.

Summary and Conclusion

In accordance with Council's Sister City Relationships and Engagement Policy, a Sister City Visit Delegation Report has been prepared for Council consideration following Council's official delegation travel to the City of Grapevine, Texas in September 2025.

ATTACHMENTS OR OTHER SUPPORTING REFERENCES

Nil

Supporting references

[Sister City Relationships and Engagement Policy](#)
[Terms of Reference - Sister Cities Advisory Committee](#)

COMMUNITY PLAN / CORPORATE PLAN / LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Corporate Plan

CS10 Economic Development - Facilitating the economic well-being and quality of life of the local businesses and the community

- CS20 Tourism - Provision of a range of tourism services, including; managing the nationally accredited Barossa Visitor Centre, development and maintenance of tourism resources both digital and printed, customer service delivery encouraging longer stays, dispersal throughout the region, and maximising visitor yield and investment in our region, Tourism Business Support, capacity building, training, product development, marketing

Legislative Requirements

Nil

RISK MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

These statements are qualitative in nature and designed to provide an indication of Council's general position when deciding to take or retain risk in pursuit of its objectives.

1. SERVICE DELIVERY

Refers to the delivery of services to the community, which includes the systems and physical assets that enable provision of these services, including structures (such as roads, buildings and facilities) as well as IT infrastructure, plant, vehicles & other equipment.

Nil

2. SUSTAINABILITY & ENVIRONMENT

Relates to measures to preserve, protect and minimise impact on the natural environment, including sacred and indigenous lands, flora, fauna, heritage, water, waste, hazardous materials and pollution.

Nil

3. FINANCIAL

Refers to planning and control of Council's budget to align with the sustainable achievement of the desired outcomes articulated in its Community Plan.

Council's total financial commitment for the Mayor, CEO and Sister Cities Program Manager's visit to Grapevine including flights, entry requirements, minor incidentals in September 2025 is outlined in the report noting catering and accommodation paid by City of Grapevine as part of the reciprocal arrangements under the sister city arrangements and other out of pocket expenses paid by the individuals. Council did not fund any costs of any other visitor. This expenditure was incurred in accordance with approved budget provisions and relevant policy settings (Sister City Relationships and Engagement Policy; Clause 3.5.3 of the Elected Member's Allowances and Benefits Policy; and Clause 4.1.3 of the Employee Travel and Accommodation Policy) and approved by Council at its meeting of 18 February 2025.

Deliverables and outcomes associated with this spend are detailed within the attached report.

4. PEOPLE

Relates to recruitment, retention, wellbeing and safety of employees and volunteers and engagement and management of contractors as well as the wellbeing and safety of the community.

Nil

5. REPUTATION

Relates to policy, decisions, actions and circumstances that may cause Council to lose credibility with the community, ratepayers, key stakeholders, other levels of government and its own employees and contractors.

The delegation visit to Grapevine, Texas has reinforced the community's appreciation of the valuable opportunities created through our Sister City relationship, highlighting the direct benefits it brings, particularly for our young people.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Engagement with the community representatives appointed to the Sister Cities Advisory Committee enabled extensive collaboration across the community to support the official delegation.

The strong community involvement and shared commitment were instrumental to the success of this delegation.

This partnership not only made the visit possible but also strengthened Council's reputation as a collaborative, community focused organisation that values and invests in international relationships.

On behalf of the Sister Cities Advisory Committee, we extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to all who contributed.

DEBATE REPORT

5.2 FUTURE OF THE SISTER CITY AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE BAROSSA COUNCIL AND KUMENAN TOWN, JAPAN

Author: Manager Governance and OMCEO
26/212

PURPOSE

To provide the Committee with an update on Council's Sister City arrangements and seek the support of the Committee to recommend Council's cessation the Sister City Agreement with Kumenan Town, Japan.

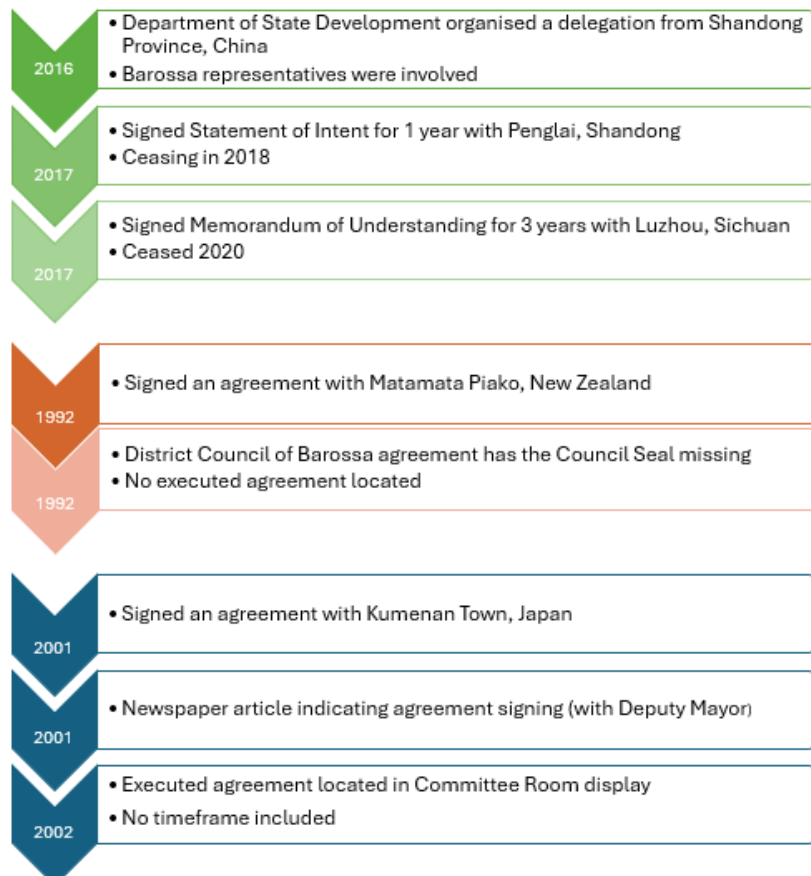
RECOMMENDATION

That the Sister Cities Advisory Committee support the ceasing of the Sister City agreement between The Barossa Council and Kumenan Twon, Japan and recommend that Council formalise the end of the arrangement.

REPORT

Introduction

In undertaking research on The Barossa Council's Sister City arrangements, it is confirmed that the following relationships have taken place:



Background

Sister cities, or twin towns as it is also known in other countries, is an agreement to foster strong cultural and commercial ties between two cities or regions. These long term, formal agreements facilitate a wide range of opportunities for both cities to participate in international educational, community, cultural, technical and business exchanges.

Kumenan is a town located in Kume District, Okayama Prefecture, Japan with an estimated population of approximately 4483 and is known as the birthplace of Honen, the founder of the Jodo sect of Buddhism. The temple where he was born stands in Kumenan Town and is called Tanjoji. The temple has a massive and stunning ginkgo tree, a symbol for the town.

There are few flatlands, and most of the town consists of mountains, forests, and plateaus with the main industry in the area being agriculture. Crops include rice, fruit trees such as pears and grapes, leaf tobacco, and poultry farming.

Kumenan Town in Okayama in Japan entered into a Sister City relationship with The Barossa Council in 2002 by formally signing an agreement that did not stipulate a time period or end date of the agreement.

The relationship initially fostered a mutual understanding and friendship between citizens of the two Councils contributing to good relations between Australia and Japan. The relationship has seen student exchanges (Faith Lutheran College) in the early 2000's between the two towns, involving the sharing of cultures, education, sport, tourism, and economics.

Delegates, students and teachers from Kumenan, Japan visited the Barossa in 2006 and again in 2008.

Correspondence since then has been sparse and involved a Christmas greeting but nothing of substance until 2017, where we received a letter highlighting that it had been over 6 years with no contact and a suspension on the student exchange program.

According to a letter received from a representative from Kumenan Town late 2024 the homestay exchange program of the international sister-city relationship has been suspended since 2011 due in part to the decreasing number of students attending the three elementary schools and one junior high school in the town. Their wish is to have an international exchange project with cultures in the form of school textbooks/picture books between Barossa and Kumenan. No records show that this indeed took place.

Further to this, there has been no correspondence other than an annual Christmas Card greeting.

Discussion

The Barossa Council has now entered into another Sister City relationship with the City of Grapevine, Texas which was formalised in September 2023 and has seen a Section 41 Committee be established with members of the community, industry leaders and staff develop the relationship with a successful Study Tour and community benefits seeing the objectives of the agreement coming to fruition.

Acknowledging that fostering an international relationship and developing on ground benefits requires the Committee and in turn, the Council to commit to resourcing and planning, and as such, we are now seeking the Committee's view on ceasing the Sister City relationship with Kumenan Town, Japan, understanding that the relationship is no longer be producing outcomes for our community.

Summary and Conclusion

The Sister City Advisory Committee is asked to formally recommend to Council that the Sister City relationship with Kumenan Town, Japan be ceased.

ATTACHMENTS OR OTHER SUPPORTING REFERENCES

Nil

Supporting references

Nil

COMMUNITY PLAN / CORPORATE PLAN / LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Corporate Plan

- CS10 Economic Development - Facilitating the economic well-being and quality of life of the local businesses and the community
- BS7 Governance - Provision of governance advice and support in the discharge of legislative responsibilities for policy development, delegations and authorisations, internal review of Council decisions, delegations and authorisations, Native Title claims

Legislative Requirements

Nil

RISK MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

These statements are qualitative in nature and designed to provide an indication of Council's general position when deciding to take or retain risk in pursuit of its objectives.

1. SERVICE DELIVERY

Refers to the delivery of services to the community, which includes the systems and physical assets that enable provision of these services, including structures (such as roads, buildings and facilities) as well as IT infrastructure, plant, vehicles & other equipment.

Nil

2. SUSTAINABILITY & ENVIRONMENT

Relates to measures to preserve, protect and minimise impact on the natural environment, including sacred and indigenous lands, flora, fauna, heritage, water, waste, hazardous materials and pollution.

Nil

3. FINANCIAL

Refers to planning and control of Council's budget to align with the sustainable achievement of the desired outcomes articulated in its Community Plan.

Nil

4. PEOPLE

Relates to recruitment, retention, wellbeing and safety of employees and volunteers and engagement and management of contractors as well as the wellbeing and safety of the community.

Nil

5. REPUTATION

Relates to policy, decisions, actions and circumstances that may cause Council to lose credibility with the community, ratepayers, key stakeholders, other levels of government and its own employees and contractors.

As the arrangement has not been active since 2017, there is no risk to reputation.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Engagement has been made with Barossa Australia, Regional Development Australia Barossa Gawler Light Adelaide Plains and Faith Lutheran College confirming no current communications or arrangements are being conducted. (Faith Lutheran College currently participate in Students Exchanges with Salesio Gakuin High School (Japan) and Charlotte-Paulsen-Gymnasium school (Hamburg, Germany)).