

Minutes of a Meeting of the Committee to consider applications to undertake certain duties by Members and foreign travel by Officers held at County Hall, Chelmsford, at 10.25am on 21 May 2013

Present:

Councillors

David	Finch	(Chairman)
John	Aldridge	(substitute for Councillor Dick Madden)
Mike	Mackrory	
Simon	Walsh	

Councillor K Bentley was also in attendance.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors M Danvers and D Madden, for whom Councillor J Aldridge was substituting.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2013 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

4. Approval for a visit to be undertaken by Members and Officers

The Committee considered report FTC/05/13 by the Secretary to the Committee detailing an application for one Member and two Officers to visit Jiangsu Province, China from 12 – 20 July 2013. The application had been endorsed by the Chief Executive and the Section 151 Officer. Councillor Kevin Bentley, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Growth, and Infrastructure and Ge Jing, International Trade Co-ordinator, were in attendance to respond to Members' questions.

Councillor Bentley confirmed that his role on visits to Jiangsu was to act as a facilitator, leading to considerable benefits for Essex businesses and generating direct income for the County Council. He provided examples of how these were achieved. The proposed visit in July, on which he would be accompanied by local business representatives, would involve travel onward from Shanghai and he agreed to make details of his itinerary available to the Committee as soon as it had been finalised.

Responding to Councillor Aldridge, Councillor Bentley agreed to take the opportunity during the visit to raise a particular issue concerning educational exchanges.

In response to a question by Councillor Mackrory, Councillor Bentley confirmed that he had complied with a request by the Committee to prepare a report of a previous visit. He apologised that the report had not been made available to Members and agreed to remedy this as soon as possible.

Resolved:

That the visit of the following Member and Officers to Jiangsu Province from 12 - 20 July 2013 be agreed:

- Councillor Kevin Bentley
- Peter Manning, Head of International Trade
- Ge Jing, International Trade Co-ordinator

The meeting closed at 10:35am.

Chairman
18 June 2013