

11 December 2007

## UNESCO CITY OF LITERATURE – MELBOURNE BID

**Division** Community and Culture

**Presenter** Morris Bellamy, Manager Arts and Culture

### Purpose

1. To seek Committee's support for the bid for Melbourne to become a UNESCO City for Literature.

### Recommendation from Management

2. That the Community Services Committee endorses the bid for Melbourne to become a UNESCO City for Literature.

### Key Issues

3. In June 2007, the Minister for the Arts, Lynne Kosky, announced the formation of a Steering Committee to advise on the preparation of a bid to UNESCO for Melbourne to be designated as a City for Literature. This designation would be sought through UNESCO's Creative Cities Network. Currently, Edinburgh is the only city designated as a City for Literature.
4. The Bid Steering Committee is chaired by prominent publisher and editor, Eric Beecher. The membership includes representatives from writers, publishers, peak literary organisations, State Government and City of Melbourne. Arts Victoria has taken the key role in supporting the work of the Steering Committee.
5. The preparation of the bid document has focussed on Melbourne's many strengths as a city of diversity and excellence in literary activity. It addresses UNESCO's key criteria of:
  - 5.1. quality, quantity and diversity of editorial initiatives and publishing houses;
  - 5.2. quality and quantity of educational programmes focussing on domestic or foreign literature in primary schools as well as universities;
  - 5.3. urban environment in which literature, drama and/or poetry play an integral role;
  - 5.4. experience in hosting literary events and festivals aimed at promoting domestic and foreign literature;
  - 5.5. libraries, bookstores and public or private cultural centres dedicated to the preservation, promotion and dissemination of domestic or foreign literature;
  - 5.6. active effort by the publishing sector to translate literary works from diverse national languages and foreign literature; and
  - 5.7. active involvement of media, including new media, in promoting literature and strengthening the market for literary products.

6. In the view of the Steering Committee, Melbourne has strong credentials against each of the selection criteria. A bid document of around 30,000 words has been prepared and will shortly be submitted to UNESCO for consideration.
7. A formal vote of support for the City of Literature bid from the Melbourne City Council is sought to enhance the overall bid.

**Time Frame**

8. The current version of the bid is being submitted in draft form for UNESCO and other external feedback. The final version of the bid is due to be submitted in December 2007 or January 2008. It is expected that an outcome from UNESCO will be received in three to four months after the final submission.

**Relation to Council Policy**

9. This initiative supports the Council Plan strategies of:
  - 9.1. build international relationships that consolidate Melbourne's capital city role and promote social equity, environmental quality and economic prosperity; and
  - 9.2. promote, celebrate and further develop the City of Melbourne as a culturally rich capital city that encompasses its key strengths in arts and sports.

**Finance**

10. There are no financial implications of this report.

**Legal**

11. No direct legal issues arise from the recommendation in the report.
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**FINANCE ATTACHMENT**

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**UNESCO CITY OF LITERATURE – MELBOURNE BID**

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There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendation of this report.

**Joe Groher**  
Manager Financial Services

## LEGAL ATTACHMENT

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### UNESCO CITY OF LITERATURE – MELBOURNE BID

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No direct legal issues arise from the recommendation in the report.

Section 3C (2) of the *Local Government Act 1989* (“the Act”) provides that the objectives of Council include:

- “(a) to promote the social, economic and environmental viability and sustainability of the municipal district;*
- (c) to improve the overall quality of life of people in the local community;*
- (d) to ensure that services and facilities provided by the Council are accessible and equitable”.*

Section 3E (1) of the Act provides that the functions of Council include:

- “(a) advocating and promoting proposals which are in the best interests of the local community;*
- (b) planning for and providing services and facilities for the local community”.*

Section 7 of the *City of Melbourne Act 2001* sets out additional objectives, including:

- “(a) to ensure a proper balance within its community between economic, social, environmental and cultural considerations within the context of the City of Melbourne’s unique capital city responsibilities;*
- (d) to work in conjunction with the Government of the State on projects which that Government or the Council determines are significant to Melbourne”.*

**Kim Wood**  
Manager Legal Services