

Report to Council Delegation with UTAS to Budapest, Freiburg, Cambridge and Bristol

Alderman Helen Burnet

November 2016

LIST OF DELEGATES

Alderman Jeff Briscoe

Alderman Helen Burnet

General Manager

Director City Planning

Executive Manager City Design

The Vice Chancellor

Chair, University Built Environment Committee (Dr. Peter Davis)

Executive Director, Commercial Services and Development, UTAS (Jacinta Young)

Sustainability Manager, UTAS (Corey Peterson)

Northern Expansion Project Director, UTAS (James McKee)

Associate Director, UTAS (Angela Castles)

Purpose

Senior joint delegation of HCC and UTAS – V-C, members of University Council, key UTAS staff, HCC GM, senior Management Team and Aldermen

1. Conference in Budapest from Sunday-Tuesday provided some great examples of established university cities across Europe, some for many years who adapted their cities to meet the needs of incorporating university activities within their city centre – examples included car-free areas, urban design, student transit, accommodation, making students a normalised part of the city profile, sustainability. Others were regional cities changing their profile to increase tertiary education opportunities in areas that had traditionally not had high university attendance rates eg Pecs in Hungary, and Krems in Austria.
2. Specific visits to cities of particular interest, namely Freiburg, Baden-Württemberg, Germany, Cambridge, Bristol in England.
3. Opportunities to build relationships between key figures of the University and Hobart City, to reinforce the benefits of a presence of more university functions in the heart of Hobart, and where this could be improved.
4. A recent meeting between some Aldermen, university staff and the Ambassador of the Delegation of the European Union to Australia, Ms Caroline Lambert. https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en/609/About%20the%20EU%20Delegation%20to%20Australia
Ms Lambert looked specifically at links between cities such as Hobart and 3-6 other Australian cities to link with the same number of European cities in order to consider approaches to combatting climate change. This trip was well timed to make links with cities in order to consider benefiting from such an exchange of ideas. Possibilities from discussions include:
 - a. Arhus (Denmark)

- b. Freiburg
- c. Copenhagen
- d. Stockholm
- e. Budapest
- f. Bergen (Norway)
- g. Others

Background

1. Recent Infrastructure Australia bid to build a new Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) building on the corner of Bathurst and Argyle Streets
2. 350 students set to move into purpose-built student accommodation on the corner of Melville and Elizabeth Streets from February 2017
3. Ambitious programme of other University functions from Sandy Bay campus into Hobart, MS1 and MS2, Domain House and other Medical and Arts precinct
4. Building of ACEPA building next to the Theatre Royal due to begin in early 2017
5. A commitment by the UTAS Council to increase education rates across Tasmania and continue with high intake of international students to increase numbers at University campuses of Burnie and Launceston's Invermay campus.

Correspondingly, Hobart City has been

1. Rolling out ICAP projects - increasing place making by the delivery of the Gehl Plan, improved bike and walking permeability across the city
2. Reviewing the Transport Strategy which is invited for consultation
3. Ambitious public art program and social engagement through Creative Hobart programmes
4. Already discussing with the university sustainable transport opportunities between Hobart campuses.

The Program

University Cities Conference, hosted by ACA, Budapest Hungary

Sunday –Tuesday

Reception dinner provided an opportunity to connect with delegates from:

Budapest, Tallinn, Freiburg, Innsbruck, Delft, Pecs - Hungarian regional university.

Conference itself started the next day with talks about large, well-established university cities, including Budapest, Barcelona and Stockholm.

The list of delegates showed the diaspora of university cities from Lapland to Barcelona, Italy, Hungary (see attached).

Whilst these were very established cities for centuries, there was a common theme of getting the housing demography, embedding the university into the city, working with more than one large institution.

Of particular interest:

1. The **Stockholm** universities and city council has taken a very aggressive approach to making a university city work and work well in an adapting environment. Their approach was to go out of their way to welcome international students. Signs and banners, chartered, badged buses were there to greet the students, particularly international students. It smacked of innovation and willingness to make it work. Start up space and support for activities to engage and support the students coming to study in Stockholm.

Day 2 of the conference was probably even more relevant to the Hobart delegation, because it focused more on smaller scale cities.

2. The **Freiburg** talk was an appetizer for our visit directly after Budapest, Professor Bernd Kortmann is the Director of a coordinated research institute which supports community relevant and beneficial research projects. Their courses are taught in English as the lingua franca.

The profile of Freiburg was impressive: with a population of 230,000 it is a popular destination for mainly German residents for its proximity to the Black Forest and as a spa town and wine growing region.

Freiburg has a large well established student population. There is very low unemployment and a high education participation rate.

3. The Austrian city of **Krems** was also highlighted where the university was probably more akin to a technical college – a university of Continuing Education, Fachhochschule. Theirs was a story of working well with the community to attract students, to manage expectations of the local population who didn't really identify with the benefits of a student population. However, they worked very hard to increase student numbers, increase relevant courses - Krems comes from a grape-growing area so viticulture-related subjects but also courses on promoting and marketing wine were introduced. It has seen to be beneficial to the community, new housing stock has been added, and it sounds to be a thriving small town. From website <http://www.euroeducation.net/prof/ausco.htm>

*University of Continuing Education Krems (Danube University - Donau-Universität Krems, DUK)
In 1994 the then University Centre for Further Education and Training in Krems (Danube University – Donau-Universität Krems), now University of Continuing Education Krems, was founded. Aligned to the 2002 Universities Act - as amended (Universitätsgesetz 2002), it has been since 2004 Austria's 22nd University specialising on postgraduate education and further training. See the Federal Act on the University for Further Education Krems*

This is very similar to what UTAS is offering: skills development that fits well with emphasis on agriculture and aquaculture focus of UTAS for Tasmania as a food producing area. The introduction of associate degree courses – to encourage people into university study, as a basis for further learning or to springboard into employment with starter skills – as well as a commitment to working with other education provider such as TasTAFE, augers well for engagement in the sector.

The benefits to the City of Hobart and the greater Hobart regions as well as the state are employment, hospitality and accommodation sectors. The challenge for us is to keep up with the demand and be ahead of the curve with infrastructure, profile of inner city populations, schools.

Visit to Freiburg, south-west Germany

We then spent two days in Freiburg. Similarities between Freiburg and Hobart were:

- On the edge of nature
- Known for their Green approach
- Differences
- Low unemployment rate
- High education rate
- High earning area of Germany

We could emulate much of Freiburg's approach – high student population and corresponding university employment. However, the cost of housing is high.

Sustainability awareness and action with reduced car use and high goals as highlighted in the Council report.

Reduced greenhouse gas emissions targets, good housing models – Vauban district – a former French military base but now a hive of sustainability and innovation.

University approach to sustainability on a massive scale but tied to economic benefits.

Transport options are real, and part of the benefit of a city within the heart of the city is that there is fewer car trips required anyway. Public transport was very good with a great interchange that favoured bike parking over car parking.

Use heat exchange, and pellets from sawdust waste to heat buildings (great example of a zero carbon emissions model).

Cambridge

The delegation visited Cambridge due to the UK's Smart Cities Deal which will see millions of pounds and Euros invested in improving traffic congestion; Cambridge is very congested.

New development at Addenbrooke Hospital which the delegation visited is outside of the old centre of Cambridge, but linked by a bus that travels on a disused railway line – similar to O-Bahn in Adelaide. The hospital extension is of a massive scale with investment from private as well as the public sector. Significant financial commitment to this prestigious NHS facility on an incredible scale of development. Similar problems associated with developing on an old site and controversy when developing this on the green belt. Some sustainability measures were shown to us when we toured the site.

Bristol

Awarded the European Union's Green City Award in 2015, Bristol has been developing into a city with great place making, better public transport and bike riding and walking options.

<https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2015/feb/18/is-bristol-a-worthy-green-capital-of-europe-or-is-it-all-for-show>

They have preserved the old part of their city, and continue to have good public spaces. We walked the city and found projects which were showcasing an area which had been a main 4 lane

thoroughfare, reducing it to 2 lanes and providing better highlights of statues and important buildings.

So too the Georgian square a centrepiece of Bristol which had been carved up by a main road traveling right through it – now a much used area for gatherings and markets.

The debate around train versus buses was dead: Bristol had the discussion 20 years ago, and they are using their public transport network with hybrid buses (reducing greenhouse gas emissions).

We met Council staff who were generous with their time, saw some amazingly beautiful areas.

As with Cambridge, their agenda of reform was very ambitious but there was a great sense of purpose with council staff and already their achievements were impressive.

They were also aware of what hasn't worked, but did show us some areas where the investment by private developers to create shops and residential areas of high quality public spaces was very impressive.

Acknowledgement

I take this opportunity in appreciating the opportunity to attend the conference and visit the places on our itinerary. I also thank the other delegates who were all very enthusiastic to establish strong ties between our organisations, and provide benefits for the City and its long term prosperity.