

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	Enterprise, Strategic Planning & Infrastructure
DATE	21 <sup>st</sup> January 2014
DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh
TITLE OF REPORT	KIMO Membership Review
REPORT NUMBER:	EPI/13/263

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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to recommend Aberdeen City Council cease membership of Kommunenenes Internasjonale Miljøorganisasjon (Local Authorities International Environmental Organisation) or KIMO.

Grampian Regional Council was a founding member of KIMO UK. However, membership no longer delivers direct benefits to the Council and therefore it is not considered best value to continue.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee agree to cease membership of KIMO.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

As a member of KIMO the Council pays an annual membership fee of £1,974. The invoice for 2013/14 was received in October 2013.

In addition it is expected that a Councillor and an officer attend 4 UK Business meetings per year (usually held in Edinburgh or Inverness) and the KIMO International AGM (location rotates amongst members).

Membership and most expenses have historically been paid from the Environmental Policy Team budget (Planning & Sustainable Development Service). Further details of annual expenditure are contained in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Estimated annual expenditure

Item	Cost (£)	Comment
KIMO UK Annual Membership Fee	1,095.00	Invoice for 2013/14 received Oct 13.
KIMO International Annual Membership Fee	879.00	Invoice for 2013/14 received Oct 13.
Travel to UK Business Meetings (4 per year)	400.00	Travel costs for one Councillor and one officer to attend meetings, mostly held in Edinburgh or Inverness (approx £50 per train ticket).
Attendance at Annual General Meeting	1,870.00	Flights, accommodation and subsistence for one Councillor and one officer (based on £500 per flight, 3 nights accommodation at £100 per night and subsistence of £45 per day).  AGM location rotates amongst member countries. 2013 - Faroe Islands 2012 - Gothenburg, Sweden 2011 - Aberdeen, Scotland 2010 – Palanga, Lithuania
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,244.00</b>	

#### 4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The KIMO Constitution dictates that any local authority member may give 3 months notice to the National coordinator of their intention to cease membership of the Organisation. Cessation of membership during the financial year should not entitle the member to a refund for the remainder of that year. The 2013/14 invoice for annual membership was received in October 2013 but has not yet been processed.

#### 5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

##### **KIMO International:**

Kommunenenes Internasjonale Miljøorganisasjon (Local Authorities International Environmental Organisation) or KIMO was founded by local municipalities with a shared concern for the state of the marine environment. KIMO was founded in Esbjerg, Denmark, in August 1990 to protect, preserve and enhance northern Europe's oceans. KIMO is designed to give municipalities a political voice at the international level, to share best practice and to find solutions to marine political problems that affect coastal communities.

KIMO work to minimise environmental threats to the marine environment on our behalf by lobbying at the highest level, by conducting research for our information and to back up our lobbying work, and through demonstrative projects such as the Fishing For Litter project. The work of KIMO is driven by locally elected politicians to ensure that relevant issues are addressed.

KIMO has operational 'national networks' in five countries; the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Denmark, Belgium and Sweden.

### **KIMO UK:**

KIMO UK is composed of ten local council members. The KIMO network in the United Kingdom was formed in 1991 shortly after the establishment of KIMO International.

### **Aberdeen City Council's Membership:**

Grampian Regional Council was a founding member of KIMO UK. In recognition of this status Aberdeen City Council appoint a Councillor and an officer to attend meetings. Councillor Milne is the current lead Member. Councillors Donnelly & Coral have been appointed as substitutes. The role of the officer is to support the Councillors appointed to KIMO.

The objectives of KIMO are to:

- Exchange information on effective pollution prevention and cleaning up operations and on sustainable development;
- Monitor and Highlight Emerging Marine Pollution Threats;
- Lobby national Governments, the European Commission and others to take effective actions on issues affecting Northern Seas;
- Lead by example by improving regional marine environments;
- Make joint representations against threatening proposals;
- Develop best practice on coastal issues;
- Undertake demonstrative environmental projects;
- Disseminate information.

In terms of Aberdeen City Council, membership involves:

- Attendance at quarterly KIMO UK Business Meetings (generally held in Edinburgh or Inverness)
- Attendance at the Annual General Meeting (Location rotates amongst member countries);
- Report annually to the EPI committee on KIMO UK and KIMO International Business
- Input to consultations when appropriate;
- Provide professional advice on environmental policy which includes waste, environmental health, the marine environment, disaster recovery, when appropriate;

## **Key areas of work include:**

### **Maritime Safety and pollution**

KIMO was instrumental in ensuring that the Emergency Towing Vessels were retained in Scotland until the end of the spending review. The focus of this work has now shifted to ensure that the provision continues after the end of the spending review when it is expected that the Westminster Government will try to end the service.

KIMO is working hard to ensure that safety and environmental standards are as high as possible in the maritime sector. Recent successful campaigns have involved ship exhaust emissions, container ship safety and the release of polyisobutene from shipping.

### **Marine Litter**

Marine litter is now present in all our oceans and poses numerous threats to the marine environment. UK local authorities spend in excess of £15 million removing beach litter every year (an increase of 37% in the last 10 years) and other industries will also be inconvenienced, both physically and financially by marine litter. Fishing, boating, ports and power generation industries have all reported financial losses due to marine litter. KIMO recently released research detailing the financial cost of marine litter to various sectors of our economy.

KIMO also run the successful Fishing for Litter scheme (see [www.fishingforlitter.org](http://www.fishingforlitter.org) for more information) that physically removes litter from our seas.

In addition, KIMO chair the marine litter group at OSPAR and were heavily involved in the recent EU Good Environmental Status Descriptor on marine litter (part of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive) and more recently have sat on the steering group for the upcoming Scottish Marine Litter Strategy. Through this continued work KIMO hope to encourage policy makers to reduce the amount of marine litter at source.

### **Radioactive Emissions**

Work has continued to ensure that emissions of radioactive substances form both land and maritime sources are reduced with recent engagement focussed on reprocessing activities in Sellafield and the decommissioning of the Dounray site. KIMO has also published a study of shipments of radioactive materials in Europe, the first study of its type.

### **Oil & Gas**

KIMO continues to engage with the Oil and Gas industry and has been fully involved in the stakeholder process of the Brent field, including participation on the specialist Cell Management study. KIMO also sits on the Oil and Gas UK led Oil Spill Response Forum.

## **New work areas**

KIMO has always been a member led organisation and following recent requests from members several new areas of work have been proposed which are:

- Marine Spatial Planning/Integrated Coastal Zone Management;
- Adaptation to sea level change/coastal erosion; and
- Sustainable Coastal Tourism.

### **6. IMPACT**

Attending KIMO meetings allows the Council to share information and gain a better understanding of the current issues contributing to maritime pollution. It also provides an open forum for the Council to express any specific concerns regarding marine pollution issues we have which KIMO can help to explore.

This has the potential to help further the high level priority for the smarter environment contained in the 5 year Corporate Business Plan.

However, membership is not delivering enough tangible benefits to the Council to justify the resources spent.

### **7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK**

The risk of ceasing membership is that Aberdeen City Council may miss out on key opportunities to undertake demonstrative environmental projects or opportunities to make joint representations against proposals affecting our marine environment.

However, some of these risks are likely to be negated through the Council's role in Marine Spatial Planning (as part of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010). Work is currently on-going to develop a National Marine Plan (similar to the National Planning Framework for terrestrial planning). This will be implemented at a local level via Scottish Marine Regions (SMR's) and their own Local Marine Plans. This legislation has been introduced to manage development in our marine environment as well as improve its protection. The Council will be involved in these SMR's and will, therefore, have a say in proposals that affect our marine environment. Part of this role will be to implement Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM).

In addition the Council's Environmental Health & Emergency Planning departments do not feel that KIMO membership influences their service provision and are therefore content for the membership to lapse.

Therefore the financial and human resources currently dedicated to KIMO could be redirected to other work on these matters.

### **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

KIMO Website <http://www.kimointernational.org/Home.aspx>

### **9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

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