PRESS RELEASE

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**Mayor of LivCom Awards host city urges communities to “think globally”**

The Mayor of the host of the 2011 International Awards for Liveable Communities (LivCom) in Songpa, Seoul, South Korea, Park Choon Hee (pictured), has urged leaders of other municipalities around the world to work together in “thinking globally and acting regionally” to combat climate change.

Inviting cities and communities from across the globe to participate as entrants for this year’s awards finals in October, Mayor Park Choon Hee said: “On behalf of the city of Songpa, Seoul, Republic of Korea, I welcome the LivCom Awards 2011. Songpa is a big city with 690,000 residents. Its historical breadth as the pivot of an ancient kingdom some 2,000 years ago remains very much alive to this day. Songpa has also elevated Korea’s national prestige by hosting the 1988 Olympic Games. At this point, we are proud to announce that we are hosting the LivCom Awards 2011.

“By inspiring the spirit of “Think Globally, Act Regionally” in order to cope with climate change, Songpa is building a cornerstone for sustainable growth in the areas of culture, welfare, and environment. The city is also pooling the efforts of the whole community to make Songpa the world’s best liveable city and can be an example to others.”

Alan Smith, Chief Executive of LivCom said that communities which make it through to the finals would have unrivalled access to share in Songpa’s experience which includes a number of collaborative efforts to accomplish sustainable growth of the community, including the City of Water: Water-Way Project, which connects four waterways with a total length of 27km; the Alternative Energy Development Project, which fulfils both environmental and welfare needs by supporting those on low incomes through profits from the operation of public solar power generators; the River Restoration Project for the diversity of the ecosystem; and the construction and utilisation of the 116km-long bicycle path to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to improve the health of the residents.

Mr Smith said: “The International Awards for Liveable Communities is now an established competitive event in the calendar of municipalities great and small, but is far more than just a competition – it is a major learning opportunity.

“In addition to acknowledging International Best Practice, LivCom has the objective of developing and sharing International Best Practice.

“By observing presentations, delegates become aware that other communities are facing similar challenges to their own, but are addressing them in a different way. Delegates from various communities will meet during the Finals and exchange information on mutual challenges. These partnerships continue for many years, and typically result in the quicker resolution of challenges and the saving of significant funds on an on-going basis.”

The process is for communities to register by 31st May, submit a written report by 30th June, which is assessed by an independent panel of judges in July. The Judges invite a number of communities to attend the finals of LivCom, where they will be required to make a verbal presentation to the judges, with other delegates observing the presentation, and to answer a series of questions from the judges. There are three sections to the awards – Whole City, Sustainable Projects and a Bursary Award to the value of £10,000.

There is no community registration fee, and a number of delegates from each community may attend the Finals without the payment of any fee.

Mr Smith added: “Participating in the LivCom Awards need not be expensive in time or finance, but can generate positive returns for many years. Participation in the LivCom Awards is an investment in the community.”

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