

**Panel on Planning, Lands and Works
Special Meeting on 30 November 2004**

**Written questions raised by Hon. LEE Wing-tat
on West Kowloon Cultural District**

Reply

Cultural Policy (Q1, 2)

The Government set up the Culture and Heritage Commission (the Commission) in April 2000. After 3 years of unflinching efforts, the Commission submitted the “Culture and Heritage Commission Policy Recommendation Report” (the Report) to the Government in April 2003. The aspiration and vision behind the Report is to raise public concern on culture and develop Hong Kong into an international cultural metropolis. The Report outlines the long-term direction for the cultural development in Hong Kong and puts forward 108 recommendations which cover overall policies as well as implementation strategies.

The Government has accepted 94 of the recommendations for implementation and follow-up, while the remaining 14 recommendations on institutional framework and resource deployment require further study and exploration. The Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) set up three committees in November to advise the Secretary for Home Affairs on the way forward of performing arts, libraries and museum respectively and assist the HAB to further explore and implement the recommendations in the Report by phases.

Meanwhile, the Report also points out that the creation of the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) presents an unprecedented opportunity. It states that the principles of “people-oriented”, “partnership” and “community-driven” must be realised in the planning and development of WKCD; the cultural facilities in WKCD should integrate with other facilities within the district and complement the cultural facilities without the district; in addition, due consideration should be given to the planning of “cultural software”. The Government has incorporated these principles and visions into the “Invitation for

Proposals” (IFP).

Training and Extension Activities in Arts Education (Q3, 5, 25, 27)

The aim of developing WKCD is to elevate the status of Hong Kong in the arts and cultural arena through provision of world-class arts and cultural facilities and presentation of quality programmes in arts and culture. A wide spectrum of arts and cultural facilities and programmes can attract people with different interests to WKCD, thereby enhancing interflows in arts, nurturing local artists and enriching the contents of cultural programmes in the district. The unique landmark and a rich array of cultural presentations offered by WKCD will also attract more visitors both at home and overseas.

The development of WKCD requires a huge pool of arts and cultural talents which is the foundation of prosperity and success for the district. The Government will ensure the proponents’ input to the cultivation of local arts talents. We will also nurture arts talents in an organised manner with relevant organisations. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), the Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC) and the art groups have been enhancing extension activities in arts education. While the tertiary institutions (such as the City University of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Baptist University) have the School of Creative Media and a visual arts academy respectively, the Hong Kong Arts Centre plans to expand the Art School.

For extension activities, LCSD has launched a series of arts education and audience-building programmes in the community and schools; actively developed and extended the audience base through cultural presentations and major arts festivals; and cultivated the general public’s interest and ability to appreciate arts and culture through provision of interactive seminars, workshops and courses, so as to enhance the public’s understanding of arts and their cultural essence, and to solidify the foundation of Hong Kong as an international metropolis. In 2003/04, LCSD held a total of 762 arts education and audience-building programmes. We hope to gradually create a sound ecosystem for arts and culture; promote art-for-all at community level; and bring enlightenment and deepening of education at the school level,

thereby making arts an integral part of our daily life.

In order to encourage students to cultivate their interest in arts and culture at early age, LCSD launched a variety of arts education schemes in schools, including the School Arts Animateur Scheme to tap the arts potential of students through a series of arts training activities. It also encouraged teachers to join the Art-in-education courses to deepen the arts education. In 2003/04, LCSD collaborated with 6 art groups to offer programmes to around 33 000 students of 81 schools. The School Culture Day Scheme is another programme to encourage schools to make arrangements for students to attend designated arts and cultural programmes at LCSD's performing venues, museums and libraries during school hours, with a view to integrating arts, history and science with the learning process and everyday life. In the school year of 2003/04, 1 041 activities were arranged for 111 000 students of 60 core schools and 318 nominated schools.

Various education and extension activities are offered by museums throughout the year, most of which are free-of-charge for all walks of life. School children and groups can make reservation for free visit to museums. Guided tours are offered for free at major museums to enhance their interest and knowledge in the exhibitions.

Community Audience-building Programmes (Q3, 5)

The Audience-building Programmes at the community level include various arts training programmes offered at LCSD's performing venues; the Artists-in-Residence Scheme which facilitates the public's contact with artists; the Cultural Ambassador Scheme which extends arts to the community through provision of arts activities at public venues like parks, shopping arcades, community centres, youth centres and voluntary agencies so that people of all levels and ages can have more access to arts; the District Cantonese Opera Parade which helps promote the development of Cantonese Opera in districts; and the Cultural Services Volunteers Scheme which encourages the public to make best use of leisure times for promotion of arts and culture on voluntary basis. To our expectation, there are around 1 800 volunteers recruited under this Scheme. In 2003/04, nearly 15 000 hours were provided for this

voluntary service.

The 3-year plan of the HKADC aims to forge strategic partnership for creation of an arts environment by inviting participation of the community, public and private organisations to expand the market for arts and build audience participation so that more people can get in touch with arts. Since the commencement of the plan, HKADC in collaboration with various public and private organisations as well as government departments have organised a variety of major projects to bring arts to every corner of the society and confirm the status of arts in the community to become part of our daily life. These projects include Gallery Ferry, jointly organised with the LCSD's Art Promotion Office, New World First Bus Services Ltd and New World First Ferry Services Ltd, to successfully bring the artwork from the land to the sea; the Art Boutiques, co-organised with the MTR Property Management, to allow the public to appreciate artwork when shopping; and the “Artwork on Loan” Scheme co-organised with the Hong Kong Central Library, to enrich the culture life of the senior citizens beyond the age and geographical boundary.

Concessionary Schemes (Q3, 5, 23)

At present, full-time students, senior citizens and people with disabilities enjoy half-price concession for cultural presentations and admission to museums of LCSD. Fee-charging museums offer free admission every Wednesdays. LCSD will also provide financial assistance to non-profit-making organisations for hiring venues to present programmes to senior citizens and community groups for free. The Government will ensure that the operation of the cultural district will take the needs of the disadvantaged groups into consideration.

Research Study on Cultural Consumption Behaviour (Q4)

The Government has been conducting an assessment on the public demand for cultural presentations and service in order to understand the cultural environment and trend of Hong Kong for improvement of the existing cultural service and facilities and formulate suitable cultural policies and initiatives according to the market and the demand of the

audience.

In recent years, the former provisional Urban Council conducted a survey on the provision of museum service in 1998, so as to understand the views of the locals and visitors on the service and facilities of the four major museums (including Hong Kong Museum of Art, Hong Kong Museum of History, Hong Kong Science Museum and Hong Kong Space Museum) for quality improvement. Similar survey on the service of major museums is being conducted at the end of this year.

In 2001, LCSD also conducted a review on the policies and strategies in the provision of cultural service based on the findings of census, to revise the provision of arts and cultural programmes in all districts and formulate promotion strategies including the distribution of programmes and ticket fares. In the same year, LCSD conducted a benchmark survey on cultural services to solicit the public views on cultural facilities and service; and conducted a survey on performing arts activities to know the public preference and level of satisfaction towards different programmes. Similar surveys are regularly conducted every two to three years.

In 2003, the Government also conducted a Baseline Study of Hong Kong's Creative Industries. The Study analysed the importance of creative industries to the economy, the employment condition, characteristics of operation, challenges as well as the significance of mainland markets.

To enhance co-ordination among the Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau in audience-building and provision of programmes, LCSD plans to conduct a survey on the arts and cultural consumption behaviour of the peoples of the three areas in 2005.

In addition to the large-scale opinion survey mentioned above, the libraries, museums and programmes offices of LCSD will also regularly conduct audience opinion surveys on specific areas such as performing arts activities, venue service, programme content and education and extension programmes, etc.

Facilities Planning (Q 17)

We hope that the core arts and cultural facilities of WKCD will create a favourable environment that reinforces Hong Kong's status as an Asia World City; attracts world-renowned performers to Hong Kong; and forges partnership with museums and collectors worldwide to sustain Hong Kong's image of a cultural metropolis.

We expect these arts and cultural facilities to tie in with the existing cultural facilities of Hong Kong so as to facilitate the long-term cultural development of Hong Kong; help raise the standard of local artists; provide a rich variety of activities and adequate venues, enrich our cultural life, enhance our cultural essence and take consideration the views in the sectors of culture, arts, tourist industry, etc.

As a matter of fact, both the consultancy study commissioned by the former Hong Kong Tourist Society and the Planning Department on the demand for cultural facilities in 1999 and the consultancy study commissioned by the HAB and LCSD in 2002 pointed out that Hong Kong needs more arts and cultural facilities.

At present, the average usage rate of 15 performing venues of LCSD has exceeded 90%. In view of ever-increasing demand, we believe that the usage rate of such facilities will reach saturation in the foreseeable future. As the existing facilities are inadequate to meet the demand, the additional facilities arising from the development of WKCD will help alleviate the condition.

Besides, we must stress that the theme and content, space allocation table and technical specifications mentioned in the IFP are for reference only, and they are not mandatory requirements.

Consultations (Q18, 19)

In 2002/03, we invited nearly 100 organisations/individuals of various sectors to express their views on the facilities of WKCD, of which the following organisations or individuals have given their comments:

Hong Kong Arts Development Council
Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts
Hong Kong Arts Centre
Hong Kong Arts Festival Society
Hong Kong Culture Association
Hong Kong Institute for Promotion of Chinese Culture
Hong Kong Lan Ting Society
Hong Kong Designers Association
The Association of Chinese Culture of Hong Kong
General Education Centre, Hong Kong Polytechnic University
Fringe Club
Videotage
Hong Kong Repertory Theatre
La space
Hong Kong Designers Association
Hanart T Z Gallery
Mr WONG Shun-kit
Mr TSENG Sun-man
Mr LAU Kin-wai, Danny
Mr KAN Tai-keung
Mr NG Kau
Mr YU Shu-tak
Asia Art Archive
Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Hong Kong
International Association of Art Critics, Hong Kong
Hong Kong Modern Chinese Ink Painting Association
Hong Kong Curators Association
Hong Kong Dance Company
Spring-time Stage
Chung Ying Theatre Company
Hong Kong Ballet
Hong Kong Dance Federation
Ming Ri Institute for Arts Education
Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra
Hong Kong Sinfonietta Limited
Hong Kong Jing Kun Arts Association
City Contemporary Dance Co. Ltd.

Zuni Icosahedron
International Association of Theatre Critics (Hong Kong) Limited
Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce
Chinese General Chamber of Commerce
American Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong
Singapore Chamber of Commerce
Hong Kong Pearl River Delta Foundation
Hong Kong Tourism Board
Lan Kwai Fong Group

We received the following proposals:

On performing venues

- multi-purpose areas with a capacity of 600 to 800 seats;
- 3- to 4-storey theatre (number of storeys to be opened varies with the audience) with a seating capacity of 1 500 to 3 000;
- venues (e.g. matshed theatre) suitable for the performance of Chinese Opera so that Hong Kong can be developed into a Chinese opera centre;
- concert halls designated for the performance of Chinese music with a 800–1 500 seating capacity;
- major amphitheatres for outdoors activities;
- performing venues should be built according to the international standard with adequate and adjustable space and diversity in design that can cater for multi-media and cross-discipline performances. It should also be well equipped with advanced sound and video-recording system and have enough room for shooting of programmes and storage of musical instruments.

On museums

- museums of a wider theme, for instance, Museum of Living, Museum of Culture etc.;
- a comprehensive modern museum providing fun, interaction with visitors and art education;
- a relatively small environmental protection museum/ handcraft museum/ research centre;

- Museum of Design;
- Traditional South China Ink Painting Museum;
- Modern Ink Painting Museum;
- a major conference and exhibition centre for the organisation of popular activities/ cultural industrial programmes, e.g. Fair/ auction of cultural products and/or activities related to local culture or Pan-China culture;
- museums with new concepts like Museum of the Future, Centre for Art and Media (Germany), Game Museums etc.

Themes/ Fees of Museums etc. (Q20, 22)

When raising the proposal of an ink painting museum, the Government has taken into account its demand and the source of items for collection. As one of main pillars of Chinese arts and culture, ink painting has exerted a profound influence on the art development of our neighbouring countries such as Japan and Korea. This media of creativity is still undergoing evolution and development, producing brilliant artworks every now and then. The setting up of Ink Painting Museum is widely welcomed by the arts sector and openly supported by the Culture and Heritage Commission and some of the art groups. The Government, unofficial art groups and collectors reckon that there is no shortage of exhibits for acquisition and loan.

To ensure the anticipated standard of performance, the Government will monitor the operation, maintenance and management of the facilities. We hope that the facilities will be operated in an efficient, flexible and highly effective manner according to a commercial approach. In appraising the business plans of the proponents, we will consider, inter alia, the pricing policy, i.e. there should be a balance among the users' affordability, market competition and demand.

In fact, the proponents have plenty of room to strike a balance between revenue and the affordability of the community. For example, the museum may adopt a more flexible pricing system so that the proponent can compensate the deficit items with revenue from the facilities that enjoy surplus.

Ground Rules for the Proponents (Q6, 26, 29, 30)

The plot ratio in the WKCD has been set out in the Government baseline. The developer must substantiate any deviation from this baseline with sufficient and reasonable justifications. The Government will negotiate with the proponents on plot ratio and other matters under the mechanism set out in the IFP. Moreover, development parameters in the preferred proposal, including plot ratio, gross floor area for different land uses, building height restrictions and open spaces, must be agreed by the Town Planning Board (TPB) before the Government and the successful proponent enter into a provisional agreement. The Government will then formally submit the proposed development parameters to the TPB for inclusion into the relevant draft outline zoning plan (OZP). The draft OZP will be gazetted under the Town Planning Ordinance for public inspection. Members of the public may voice their views or objections in relation to the draft OZP. All opinions will be considered and processed by the TPB in accordance with the established statutory procedures. Finally, the TPB will submit the draft OZP to the Chief Executive in Council for approval. Any future revisions to the OZP will have to be processed by the TPB according to the statutory procedures. The public and the TPB will be able to monitor the project through this process. It also ensures that the planned land uses are achieved by way of the approved OZP and that the commercial /residential development is governed by law. The Government will stipulate the responsibilities of the successful proponent in the project agreement, land grant and other legal documents to ensure smooth completion of the whole development as planned.

Single Development Mode (Q7, 8, 14)

The single development mode is the key approach adopted in the development of the WKCD and is the basis of the IFP. The WKCD is an integrated development project covering arts, cultural and entertainment facilities. This project requires centralised planning and coordination in order to enhance management effectiveness and to reduce lead-time. Should the project be split up for tendering, the Government will have to make wild assumptions on commercial viability and market inclination, etc. The Government will even have to run the greater risk

of preparing the master layout plan based on such assumptions. The core arts and cultural facilities required by the Government will have to be fragmented and scattered over different lots. As a result, the designs cannot be closely knitted and complementary to each other. This will also result in serious problem in aligning the design, construction and completion date of the canopy, the automated people mover and other infrastructures for the whole district. Moreover, the Government will have to conduct tenders many times over and to prepare a number of complicated but interlocking land grant documents. This is an extremely difficult task and is prone to errors. One cannot view lightly the legal issues and litigations that may arise. Moreover, the large amount of additional resources required from the Government as a result of multi-package approach should never be underestimated. Given the above considerations, the Government is of the view that it is not desirable to divide the project into parts. The multi-package approach will not allow us to complete the arts and cultural facilities as early as we wish because of mixed market responses and different timetables for tender submission and development. Thus, the aim of creating a new cultural and architectural icon for Hong Kong cannot be achieved. By splitting the project into several smaller ones, neither overall socio-economic effectiveness nor local employment will benefit. Having carefully considered the pros and cons of the two approaches, the conclusion drawn by the Government is that the single development mode is the optimal way to carry out this cultural project and is in the public interest.

Concept Plan Competition (Q9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 24)

The Government held the West Kowloon Reclamation Concept Plan Competition in 2001. A total of 161 entries were received. They were assessed by a non-government international panel of judges with ten members. The winner, the first runner-up and three outstanding prize-winning entries were announced on 28 February 2002. Between March and May 2002, the Government held open exhibitions at various venues across the territory. The winning entries in the competition were displayed. Among them was the Foster design which was the winner that featured the canopy as the symbol. That design won the support of the public with little negative comment. Subsequently, the Steering Committee for the Development of the WKCD decided at its meeting

held in September 2002 to adopt in principle the winner's concept plan as the basis for the masterplan of the development. That decision was announced in October 2002. The Government modified the concept plan as appropriate and worked out the baseline design together with the IFP. The mix and the size of the art and cultural facilities in the Cultural District were mapped out in the light of previous surveys and actual needs. It was not an allocation made after the ratio between art/cultural facilities and commercial/residential facilities was set. The IFP, with the mandatory requirements on proponents set out, was approved by the Steering Committee in May 2003.

The Government informed Members in July 2003 of the IFP prepared for the WKCD, and listened to Members' views on its contents, including the integrated development approach, the mix of art and cultural facilities as well as the canopy. Members were generally supportive. The Government subsequently issued the IFP on 5 September 2003. Proponents were invited to submit proposals based on the Government baseline. The technical proposal has to include a detailed masterplan, whereas the financial proposal should include a financial package worked out on the basis of such masterplan as the blueprint. This is to ensure that the masterplan could achieve the planning intention and that the plan would be feasible.

It is laid down in the IFP that the proposals should cover the initial architectural design of the core art and cultural facilities so that the proponents would consider the standard of architectural design at the same time as they consider the masterplan.

Public Revenue Generated by the Cyberport Project and the Number of Companies in Cyberport (Q15, 16)

Under the Cyberport agreement signed between the Government and PCCW in May 2000, the surplus of sales proceeds from the residential development of Cyberport shall be shared between the two parties after completion of Cyberport, deduction of expenses that have become due and payable and transfer of sums to the development fund. The ratio for sharing the surplus of sales proceeds is determined according to the respective contributions from the Government (64.5%) and PCCW

(35.5%). The residential development will provide a total of some 2 800 flats to be completed in five phases between 2004 and 2007. On 9 August 2004, the Government received HK\$1.67 billion as its share of the first allotment of surplus of sales proceeds. Surpluses of proceeds to be gained from future sale of the residential development will be shared at regular intervals.

In 2000, 15 multinational companies expressed intention of becoming major tenants in Cyberport. Some of them have started moving in. In recent years, Cyberport exerted efforts to attract overseas and mainland companies to set up offices therein, so as to absorb new investments and creating job opportunities for Hong Kong. As of now, a total of 32 overseas, mainland and local companies have set up business offices in Cyberport.

Number of Proposals Received (Q31)

It is purely a commercial decision whether organisations in the private sector submit proposals for the WKCD or not. The Government has not ascertained from them their reasons for not doing so.

Home Affairs Bureau
Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau
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