

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)2828/07-08
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/PL/HA

Panel on Home Affairs

**Minutes of special meeting
held on Monday, 30 June 2008, at 4:30 pm
in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building**

- Members present** : Hon CHOY So-yuk, JP (Chairman)
Hon Albert HO Chun-yan (Deputy Chairman)
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, SBS, JP
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, GBS, JP
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Hon WONG Ting-kwong, BBS
Hon TAM Heung-man
- Members attending** : Hon Mrs Selina CHOW LIANG Shuk-ye, GBS, JP
Hon LEE Wing-tat
Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung, SBS, JP
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC
- Members absent** : Hon James TIEN Pei-chun, GBS, JP
Dr Hon Philip WONG Yu-hong, GBS
Hon WONG Yung-kan, SBS, JP
Hon LAU Wong-fat, GBM, GBS, JP
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, SBS, JP
Hon LI Kwok-ying, MH, JP
Hon Daniel LAM Wai-keung, SBS, JP
Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, SBS, JP
Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP

Public Officers attending : Home Affairs Bureau

Mr SO Kam-shing
Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs (3)

Ms Winnie SO Chui-ying
Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs
(Culture)1

Labour and Welfare Bureau

Mr Stephen SUI Wai-keung
Commissioner for Rehabilitation

Education Bureau

Dr Catherine CHAN Ka-ki
Principal Assistant Secretary for Education (Curriculum
Development)

Commerce and Economic Development Bureau

Mr Kevin CHOI
Principal Assistant Secretary for Commerce and
Economic Development (Communications &
Technology)A

Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Mr CHUNG Ling-hoi
Deputy Director of Leisure and Cultural Services
(Culture)

Hong Kong Arts Development Council

Mr Louis YU
Chief Executive

Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts

Professor Kevin Thompson
Director

Dr Herbert HUEY
Associate Director (Administration) and Registrar

Attendance by invitation : Hong Kong Dance Company

Mr YUEN Lup-fun
Executive Director

Chung Ying Theatre Company

Mr KO Tin-lung
Artistic Director

Mr Angus CHAN Man-bun
General Manager

Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra

Ms Celina CHIN Man-wah
Executive Director

Zuni Icosahedron

Mr Mathias WOO
Executive Director

Mr W K CHAN
Member of Board of Directors

City Contemporary Dance Co Ltd

Miss Clementine CHAN
Managing Director

Mr Willy TSAO
Founder/Artistic Director

Hong Kong Ballet

Mrs Stacey Morse
Chief Executive Officer

Hong Kong Sinfonietta Limited

Ms Margaret YANG
Chief Executive Officer

Ms YIP Wing-sie
Music Director

The Hong Kong Philharmonic Society Ltd

Mr Edward HO
Chairman, Board of Governors

The Composers & Authors Society of Hong Kong

Professor CHAN Wing-wah
Chairman

Spring-time Stage Productions Ltd

Mr KO Chi-sum
Chief Executive Office

The Association of Managers, Cultural Services

Miss Irene LAM Tsz-tsui
Chairlady

Hong Kong Arts Festival Society

Mr Antony CHAN
Development Director

Hong Kong Curators Association

Dr Raymond TANG Man-leung
Vice Chairman

Hong Kong Arts Administrators' Association Ltd

Miss Tisa HO
Chairman

SAHK

Miss CHAU Bik-yee
Manager

Arts with the Disabled Association Hong Kong

Ms Janet TAM
Executive Director

Ms Grace CHENG
Executive Committee Member

Mr HUI Wai-man

Clerk in attendance : Miss Odelia LEUNG
Chief Council Secretary (2)6

Staff in attendance : Ms Joanne MAK
Senior Council Secretary (2)2

Ms Anna CHEUNG
Legislative Assistant (2)2

Action

I. Funding support for the arts groups and manpower training for culture and the arts

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)2416/07-08(01) and (02)]

Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs (3) (DSHA(3)) briefed members on the salient points of the Administration's paper [LC Paper No. CB(2)2416/07-08(01)].

Meeting with deputations

2. Representatives of a total of 17 deputations attended the meeting to give views on the provision of funding support for performing arts groups, manpower training in culture and the arts, and the promotion of the participation of persons with disabilities in artistic creation. Members noted that the representatives of Hong Kong Ballet and Chung Ying Theatre Company would not make oral presentation but would answer questions raised by members.

Hong Kong Dance Company (HKDC)
[LC Paper No. CB(2)2507/07-08(01)]

3. Mr YUEN Lup-fun presented the views of HKDC as detailed in its submission. He said that the audience size for dancing was not large in Hong Kong and HKDC had to stage high quality performances to attract audience. The Company had made progress in terms of number of performances, audience building, box office and sponsorship since its corporatisation in 2001. He further said that the Government subvention had dropped from a subsidy rate of some 94% in 2001-2002 to about 72% in 2007-2008.

Action

4. Mr YUEN added that HKDC had been promoting actively the art of dancing in schools and the community, and would collaborate with Tsuen Wan Town Hall under the Venue Partnership Scheme to promote quality programmes.

Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra (HKCO)
[LC Paper No. CB(2)2721/07-08(01)]

5. Ms Celina CHIN presented the views of HKCO as detailed in its submission. She said that HKCO would continue to promote actively Chinese music culture by organising various programmes. She considered that Government subvention for the major performing arts groups should be maintained at a steady level to provide a stable environment for their development. She pointed out that the contribution of an arts group to the society should not be measured merely by quantifiable deliverables. HKCO had reservations about the figures and categorisation in Annexes 1A and 1B to the Administration's paper [LC Paper No. CB(2)2416/07-08(01)] given the differences amongst arts groups in their ways of categorisation of performances. She also noted that the arts groups' impact on the community had not been taken into account in compiling the figures.

Zuni Icosahedron

6. Mr W K CHAN pointed out that the total funding support for the nine major performing arts groups had amounted to some \$200 million in 2008-2009, expenses relating to cultural and arts services provided by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) amounted to about \$2 billion and the upfront endowment to the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) Authority was in the region of \$21.6 billion. He considered that the Legislative Council (LegCo) should monitor closely the cost-effectiveness in the use of funding allocated not just for the first area but also the other two, i.e. LCSD and WKCD project. Mr Mathias WOO considered that the current review on funding matters for the major performing arts groups should also cover funding matters for the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA), the Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC) and LCSD. Noting that HKAPA was going to launch a series of courses, Mr WOO suggested that an assessment on the manpower requirement of the performing arts industry should first be conducted to ensure that graduates of those new courses would be able to find jobs. He further suggested that the Panel should be concerned about the room for development for HKADC which, since establishment in 1993, had never received any increases in the amount of subvention.

City Contemporary Dance Co. Ltd.
[LC Paper No. CB(2)2507/07-08(02)]

7. Mr Willy TSAO said that Government subvention for the major performing arts groups served to provide a stable environment for the artistic

Action

pursuits of these groups. He pointed out that some arts performances had a high artistic value notwithstanding the relatively few audiences. He considered that the Administration should not regard culture and the arts as commercial business and place emphasis on profit-making in deciding on the amounts of funding for an arts group. He called on the Administration to consider ways during the review on funding matters for the performing arts groups to assist these groups to achieve excellence in artistic creation.

Hong Kong Sinfonietta Limited

8. Ms Margaret YANG and Ms YIP Wing-sie pointed out that Government subvention was vital to the survival of orchestras, especially in a commercial environment like Hong Kong. Ms YIP said that due to inadequate funding, Hong Kong Sinfonietta Limited was unable to launch many of its educational and outreach programmes. She further said that there remained a manpower shortage of musicians and arts administrators in the industry as the unattractive remunerations for these jobs could not attract new entrants or retain talents. She called on members to look into the resource problems pertaining to the arts and cultural sector and enhance its room for development.

Hong Kong Philharmonic Society (HKPS)

9. Mr Edward HO took the view that Hong Kong should embark on timely measures to strengthen the software in culture and the arts in order to realize the vision of the WKCD project. Referring to the reductions in Government funding for HKPS in the past few years, Mr HO called on the Administration to enhance overall funding support for various arts groups including HKPS in order to foster their development. He added that HKPS hoped that the Administration would provide sufficient funding for it to carry on with its outreach programmes which were important to promoting the arts to the community.

The Composers & Authors Society of Hong Kong

10. Professor CHAN Wing-wah said that the Administration should explore enhancing support for local performing arts groups as a whole and should not strengthen the funding support for certain arts groups by cutting resources for the others. Referring to overseas experience, Professor CHAN pointed out the economic benefits generated from the arts and creative industries could be tremendous and would be beneficial to the whole community. Professor CHAN criticized the Administration for presenting inaccurate information concerning "Taught postgraduate programmes" in paragraph 22 of its paper and only mentioning the courses launched by HKAPA without regard to other similar programmes offered by the University Grants Committee-funded institutions.

Action

Spring-time Stage Productions Ltd.

11. Mr KO Chi-sum clarified that what he had said at previous meetings about the unfair competition created by the current funding policy referred to the competition between the subvented and non-subvented drama groups. He considered that the policy had put community drama groups in a rather hopeless situation in terms of manpower training and development of programmes. He further said that while one of the policy objectives of Government funding for arts development should be nurturing young and budding artists, the Emerging Artists Grant established by HKADC in 2007 provided a subsidy level ranging from only \$12,500 to \$30,000 for each applicant. He urged the Administration to strengthen support for budding artists/arts groups by enhancing venue support for them and reducing their financial burden arising from high venue rental/publicity costs.

The Association of Managers, Cultural Services (the Association)
[LC Paper No. CB(2)2507/07-08(03)]

12. Miss Irene LAM presented the views of the Association as detailed in its submission. She called on the Administration to strengthen the professional training for Managers, Cultural Services Grade as well as its staff establishment. The Association was of the view that the Administration should enhance their professional development to improve stability of the workforce.

Hong Kong Arts Festival Society

13. Mr Antony CHAN said that as seen from overseas experience, Government funding devoted for the development of culture and the arts in a city often led to a boost in its tourism industry as well as raising people's quality of life and the city's overall competitiveness. He called on the Administration to enhance support for local arts groups to achieve a sustainable arts scene.

Hong Kong Arts Administrators' Association

14. Miss Tisa HO said that she had elaborated her views at the meeting held on 9 May 2008 and would like to add that she shared Professor CHAN Wing-wah's view regarding the economic benefits generated from Government investment in the arts and creative industries to the whole community.

Hong Kong Curators Association (HKCA)

15. Dr Raymond TANG said that HKCA had already provided a detailed submission [LC Paper No. CB(2)2395/07-08(01)] for the meeting of the Panel held on 9 May 2008. He pointed out that internship was an important part of the formal training of curators, but local museums were lack of resources to offer internship training. He said that in-service training for incumbent

Action

curators was also lacking due to inadequate funding resources. Referring to the Administration's paper, he urged the Administration to conduct the manpower mapping study to assess the demand and supply for, among other, the Curators Grade as soon as possible in order to explore the best possible means to bridge the gap between manpower demand and supply and provide the necessary manpower training.

SAHK

16. Miss CHAU Bik-ye said that the Administration's funding allocation for SAHK was only sufficient for SAHK's provision of existing services and there was no additional funding support for its promotion of arts and cultural programmes for persons with disabilities. She elaborated on the positive impact of these programmes on the service recipients, and pointed out that SAHK only relied on private sponsorship for implementing such programmes. She called on the Administration to provide additional funding support for SAHK as well as free transport service to facilitate the participation of persons with disabilities in these programmes.

Arts with the Disabled Association Hong Kong (ADAHK)
[LC Paper No. CB(2)2464/07-08(01)]

17. Ms Grace CHENG presented the views of ADAHK as detailed in its submission. She said that the right of persons with disabilities to barrier-free participation in the arts and cultural activities should be upheld, and, to this end, the Administration should formulate a holistic strategy for the promotion of such activities for persons with disabilities. Ms CHENG called on the Administration to provide adequate funding for ADAHK to organise more such programmes for persons with disabilities.

Mr HUI Wai-man
[LC Paper No. CB(2)2529/07-08(01)]

18. Mr HUI Wai-man presented his views as detailed in his submission. He elaborated on his experience of participating in the arts and cultural programmes which were targeted at persons with disabilities, and the benefits he had gained. He called on the Administration to implement appropriate measures to facilitate the participation of persons with disabilities in such programmes, such as by providing suitable performance venues which were easily accessible.

Cultural policy and allocation of resources

19. Ms Emily LAU pointed out that one of the major cultural initiatives of the Administration was the implementation of the WKCD project, and LegCo would soon be considering the funding proposal in relation to the upfront endowment in the amount of \$21.6 billion to the WKCD Authority. She

Action

sought the deputations' views on the worthiness of spending such a huge sum of money, as she noted that there were strong views in the community against the implementation of the project. She said that many people had expressed doubt as to whether the project would succeed given the general lack of interest of Hong Kong people in the arts and cultural activities, and they considered that it would only be a waste of public money. Mr YUEN Lup-fun responded that by enabling the public to have access to more quality performing arts programmes, he was sure that people who were opposed to the WKCD project would later change their stance. He said that WKCD was the dream of the arts community and would provide a stimulus in audience building.

20. Professor Kevin Thompson considered it necessary to strive for building quality cultural software, which relied on three types of resources: highly skilled people, intellectual capital and creativity. He considered that the concerted efforts of all sectors of the local arts community were very important for the success of building quality cultural software for Hong Kong. He was of the view that only by creating conducive cultural and societal conditions, to which talented next generation arts practitioners might be drawn, could Hong Kong be realistically developed as a cultural hub. He added that to ensure that HKAPA could proactively equip for the rapid development in the arts and cultural sector, the Academy would carry out a strategic positioning and institutional review in 2008-2009.

21. Dr Fernando CHEUNG considered that the fundamental problem pertaining to the development of culture and the arts was the inadequacy of resources for this area, as shown in the slow pace of development of the hardware and software. He said that the Government's vision was only to develop Hong Kong into an international financial centre in Asia, and culture and the arts were only "decorations". He was of the view that the arts sector had limited room for development unless the Administration devoted more resources to enhance the development of artists and to nurture budding artists by way of providing subsidies and performance opportunities to them. He shared some deputations' view that the lack of career prospect of and low monetary rewards received by artists had deterred new entrants to the industry.

22. Mr LEE Wing-tat also shared the view that resources allocated for the development of culture and the arts were inadequate and the Administration should strive to achieve optimal use of existing resources for this area, including the use of performance venues. He sought the deputations' views on the improvements that should be made.

23. Mr Mathias WOO suggested that as the bulk of resources were controlled by LCSD, a review of the funding provision made to LCSD and its role should be conducted. He considered that the support provided by LCSD for artistic creations was very inadequate, and artists were often engaged in administrative duties and implementing educational programmes at the same time. He also called on LegCo to press for increases in the allocation of

Action

resources for the development of culture and the arts, adding that there was objective information and data for the calculation of the additional resources required to meet the performing arts groups' needs. Mr Timothy FOK suggested that deputations should provide such information and data to LegCo Members for consideration.

24. Mr KO Chi-sum cited the example of the cultural trust fund established in Shanghai and pointed out that the fund was available for application by all local artists/arts groups, and applications were considered on the basis of merits. Under the policy, state-owned or community drama groups could enjoy equal opportunities in getting a share of the relevant subsidies.

25. Professor CHAN Wing-wah considered that Hong Kong could hardly develop into an international financial centre if it lagged far behind in its development of culture and the arts, and Hong Kong should model on international financial centres, e.g. London and New York where the development of culture and the arts was also excellent.

26. Mr Timothy FOK pointed out that Guangzhou was also striving to achieve excellence in its cultural standard and many renowned architects were working for the construction projects there. He asked Mr KO Chi-sum the measures to be taken by the Administration to enhance support for community arts groups. Mr KO reiterated that the Administration should enhance support for budding artists/arts groups. He said that the longstanding problem of mismatch of resources had resulted in inadequate resources allocated to support community arts groups and had deterred the subvented arts groups from achieving self-sustainability.

27. The Chairman invited the deputations' views on the changes that should be made to the existing mode of subsidy for the major performing arts groups to avoid stifling of non-subvented arts groups for development.

28. Ms YIP Wing-sie suggested that a Cultural Affairs Bureau should be set up to make policy decisions on the allocation of resources for the sector. She also suggested that the cumbersome administrative procedures for application of subsidies under the present subvention mechanism should be streamlined to alleviate the heavy administrative workload of the major performing arts groups. Mr Willy TSAO called on LegCo Members to urge the Administration to implement active measures to promote culture and the arts in Hong Kong. Mr KO Chi-sum said that other than the example of the cultural trust fund established in Shanghai, reference could also be made to Korea where the government made direct investment in community arts groups in addition to providing subsidies to meet their recurrent costs.

29. Miss Tisa HO suggested that tax concessions should be offered to corporations which sponsored non-profit making performing arts groups, and consideration should be given to providing funding for budding arts groups to

Action

hire administrative supporting staff so as to relieve their artists from administrative chores. Mr Angus CHAN considered that the existing mode of subvention was too rigid and alternative ways of subsidies should be explored such as offering rental subsidy.

30. Ms Emily LAU expressed support for the suggestion that the Administration's review of funding arrangements should also cover LCSD and the funding support for HKADC and HKAPA. She sought the deputations' comments on the concept of "flagship" performing arts organizations. Mr Mathias WOO said that while he agreed that Hong Kong should have "flagship" performing arts organizations, the concept of "flagship" had not been clearly defined. He felt that at present, the concept was confusing. Mr Willy TSAO and Professor CHAN Wing-wah agreed that being a major city, Hong Kong should develop "flagship" performing arts organizations. Professor CHAN considered that "flagship" arts organizations did not have to be large ones and small arts groups which had achieved excellent artistic quality could also be considered as "flagship" arts organizations.

31. Miss CHAN Yuen-han said that, in the past decade, with the emergence of many budding artists/arts groups which were in need of support for their professional development in the arts field, there was a need to strike a balance in the provision of support to "flagship" arts organizations and budding artists/arts groups. She sought the deputations' views in this regard.

32. Mr Angus CHAN said that as HKADC was responsible for providing funding support to nurture small and medium-sized arts groups and budding artists, it should have a picture of the shortfall of resources for these arts groups/artists. He considered that the Administration's review of its funding support for local arts groups should also cover the adequacy of resources allocated to HKADC. Mr Mathias WOO added that LCSD also had such information since small and medium-sized arts groups applied to LCSD for rental subsidy in the hire of venues and other funding support.

33. Mr Albert CHAN considered that the funding policy should allow those non-subvented arts groups which merited support to have room for survival. He asked for the deputations' views on whether there was a sufficiently large audience base in Hong Kong to support the "flagship" arts organisations in achieving financial self-sustainability.

34. Mr Mathias WOO and Mr Angus CHAN said that there was a large audience size of high standard in Hong Kong as seen from the track record of the box office of the nine major performing arts organizations. Miss Tisa HO considered that members should take note of the possibility of driving an arts organization to become over-commercialized in its productions if its survival relied entirely on the market force.

35. Dr Fernando CHEUNG considered it necessary for the Administration

Action

to examine how far the current funding policy was able to achieve the policy goals which, according to the Administration, were along the six principles including "people-oriented", "pluralism" and "community-driven", etc., and address various problems pertaining to the existing funding policy as pointed out by the deputations at this meeting and the last one held on 9 May 2008. He suggested that the Administration should entrust HKADC to conduct such discussions which should involve all stakeholders of the arts community and, based on the views received in the discussions, work out more concrete details of the cultural policy and improvements to the existing funding mechanism.

36. Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs (3) (DSHA(3)) responded that the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) would be conducting a research study to develop a new set of assessment criteria for the major groups taking into account, amongst other indicators, the artistic quality of the groups, their impact on community, their quantifiable deliverables and their performance in governance and management. The study would also examine the establishment of "flagship" companies, an entry and exit mechanism to the league of majors and an articulation ladder for the second and lower tier arts groups to become majors. He said that the funding study would also examine whether, and if so, what complementary measures should be developed to support the non-subsided performing arts sector. He added that the arts community would be consulted in the course of the study.

37. DSHA(3) further said that the Administration was committed to promoting the development of culture and the arts in Hong Kong. He invited members to note that the total funding allocated for culture and the arts had increased from \$2.5 billion in 2007-2008 to \$2.75 billion in 2008-2009. Moreover, HAB had planned to provide additional cultural facilities in various districts to meet the diversified needs of the performing arts sector and the community.

38. Deputy Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Culture) supplemented that of the provision amounted to \$2 billion made to LCSD, only \$780 million related to venue management and programming expenses concerning performing arts venues, which included the organization of a wide range of cultural programmes and provision of support services to enhance the development of local performers. In 2008-2009, LCSD provided support to about 500 small and medium-sized performing arts groups/artists at a total estimated cost of \$161 million. He also invited members to note that various reviews had been conducted in the past on ways to better utilize resources under the control of LCSD for culture and arts. He said that LCSD would continue to review and enhance its use of resources.

39. Chief Executive (CE) of HKADC said that of the Government funding allocated for culture and the arts, i.e. about \$2.7 billion in 2008-2009, the subvention received by HKADC was about \$83 million. Besides, HKADC had been supporting outbound cultural exchange activities through the Arts

Action

Development Fund involving a total grant of about \$100 million each year. He further said due to limited fund, of the funding applications received by HKADC, the rate of unmet funding demands each year was about 70%. The Chairman requested CE of HKADC to provide relevant details in this regard for members' reference.

Promotion on the participation of persons with disabilities in artistic creation

40. Dr Fernando CHEUNG said that the development of inclusive arts, which was also an art form, should not be treated as a welfare initiative. He urged the Administration to enhance support for the promotion of the participation of persons with disabilities in artistic creations. He invited the deputations concerned to further elaborate on the difficulties they faced in their participation in artistic creations.

41. Miss CHAU Bik-yee said that through participating in the "Jockey Club Arts for the Disabled Scheme", some participants who were SAHK members had actually shown good artistic potential. However, SAHK lacked funding to hire professional teachers to help develop the full artistic potential of those members. Mr HUI Wai-man added that he hoped that personal assistants could be provided to help persons with disabilities in their participation in relevant training programmes.

42. Dr Fernando CHEUNG sought clarification from the Administration on the policy bureau responsible for inclusive arts. DSHA(3) confirmed that inclusive arts were under the policy purview of HAB. He explained that the HKADC and LCS D adopted the same criteria for considering funding applications regardless of whether they were submitted by persons with disabilities, women groups, children groups, or others. Commissioner for Rehabilitation explained that the Rehabilitation Team in the Labour and Welfare Bureau made efforts in encouraging the participation of persons with disabilities in the arts as part of their rehabilitation.

Way forward

Admin
43. Dr Fernando CHEUNG considered that the Administration should provide details of the funding study, such as the timetable for conducting it and specific issues to be covered, as well as any plan to promote the development of inclusive arts. The Chairman said that the Panel should closely monitor these policy issues in the Fourth LegCo and requested the Clerk to include them on the list of outstanding items for follow-up discussions by the Panel.

Clerk

44. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 6:50 pm.