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Panel on Home Affairs

**Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat
for the meeting on 10 January 2014**

Planning for Kai Tak Sports Complex

Purpose

This paper provides background information and highlights the major concerns of members of the Panel on Home Affairs ("the Panel") regarding the Multi-purpose Sports Complex ("MPSC") at Kai Tak.

Background

2. According to the information provided by the Administration to the Panel in November 2012, the Government's strategy for developing sports in Hong Kong is threefold: (a) to promote sports in the community, (b) to support elite sports, and (c) to make Hong Kong a centre for major international sports events.

3. While the Government provides sports facilities in accordance with its policy objectives for sports development and to address the needs of residents in individual districts, Hong Kong has a shortage of public sports facilities. According to the standards set out in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines, for East Kowloon (including Kowloon City, Kwun Tong and Wong Tai Sin Districts) alone, there is a shortfall of two sports grounds and four sports centres. The existing venues for staging international sports events also do not have sufficient seating capacity and are in lack of appropriate supporting facilities.

4. The planning vision for the Kai Tak Development ("KTD") is to make Kai Tak a "distinguished, vibrant, attractive and people-oriented community" fronting Victoria Harbour. The planning area of KTD is over 320 hectares comprising six main sub-areas, namely Kai Tak City Centre, Sports Hub,

Metro Park, Runway Precinct, Tourism and Leisure Hub and South Apron Corner. The proposed MPSC will be a significant new feature on this part of the harbour, and will be developed with a view to integrating with the Metro Park.

5. According to the project plan, MPSC will include high quality public sports facilities which will alleviate Hong Kong's shortage of venues suitable for hosting major international events and provide sports venues as well as open space for regular public use. With a mixture of sports facilities, open space, park features and retail and dining outlets, MPSC will be open to the public throughout the day, seven days a week.

Proposed facilities for MPSC

6. The proposed facilities for MPSC include -
- (a) a 50 000-seat stadium with a retractable roof to allow the hosting of major international sports and entertainment events under all weather conditions, and to contain possible noise nuisance from events such as large-scale concerts;
 - (b) a public sports ground with permanent seating for 5 000 spectators. The ground will be a venue for public jogging, athletics training and competition, and football and rugby matches;
 - (c) an indoor sports arena with a main arena with permanent seating for 4 000 spectators and a secondary arena with seating for 400 spectators to accommodate sports such as basketball, volleyball, badminton, table tennis and wushu;
 - (d) park features suitable for use by people of all ages, such as children's play areas, tai chi areas and fitness stations;
 - (e) office space of at least 10 000 square metres; and
 - (f) commercial space of at least 31 500 square metres to accommodate retail and food and beverage outlets.

Members' concerns

7. At the Panel meeting on 9 November 2012, the Administration briefed members on the latest development of MPSC at Kai Tak, as well as the

proposed scope, facilities and implementation plan of the project. Members noted that the initial Technical Feasibility Study on MPSC had been completed and the Administration was considering the procurement and financing options for the project. The major views and concerns expressed by members at the Panel meeting are summarized below.

Inclusion of MPSC in KTD

8. In face of a shortage of sports venues/facilities within the territory that could meet international standards for hosting large-scale sports events and for use by the community, members urged the Administration to speed up the planning and development processes for the early completion of MPSC. They were concerned whether and how the Administration would ensure that the proposed facilities for MPSC would meet the needs and aspirations of both the sports sector and the community at large and be brought up to the requisite standards for hosting major international sports events.

9. The Administration advised that the proposed MPSC at Kai Tak would be a major sports park for Hong Kong people, with a mixture of high quality public sports facilities that would alleviate the shortage of local venues for hosting major international sports events. As it would be Hong Kong's largest ever sports project, the implementation would require careful planning. During the design and planning stage, the Administration would consult the sports sector, various stakeholders and members of the public on the detailed layout and design of the facilities to ensure that the sports complex would meet the needs of the sports sector and the community.

10. While the majority of members supported the proposed development of MPSC at Kai Tak, there were a view that the Administration had made a serious mistake in including MPSC in the approved Kai Tak Outline Zoning Plan, as the site selected for the construction of MPSC was not put to optimal use to address the prevailing problem of land shortage for residential and community developments in Southeast Kowloon.

11. Concern was also raised as to whether the proposed MPSC would be connected with a safe, efficient and reliable public transport system that could cope with the large number of spectators seeking access to the facilities therein, in particular the main stadium. It was essential for a 50 000-seat stadium designed for the hosting of major international sports and entertainment events be connected with a safe, efficient and reliable public transport system. In response, the Administration advised that the Shatin to Central Link under construction was a territory-wide strategic railway project. Two of its stations would be in the close vicinity of KTD, making it a desirable location for the development of MPSC.

Financial arrangements of the MPSC project

12. Information was sought on the details of the recommendations of the consultancy study commissioned by the Administration in 2011 to look into the construction and financing options for MPSC. Some members were concerned about the financial viability of the MPSC project and worried that the project might turn out to be a white elephant if the Government failed to maximize the use of facilities provided in the complex. According to the Administration, the consultancy study was yet to be finalized. The Administration assured members that it would study in detail the recommendations of the consultant when taking forward the comprehensive planning of the project and would co-ordinate its development with other infrastructural projects within KTD. To ensure that the needs of the sports sector and the public could be met, the Administration would continue to consult the sports sector, District Councils and members of the public on the procurement, detailed planning and design, and management of MPSC.

13. The Administration further advised that as a preliminary suggestion, the consultancy study recommended that the "Design-Build-Operate" ("DBO") approach be adopted for the project since it would help ensure the most effective delivery from the planning, design and construction stages through to the long-term operation of MPSC. DBO was a common approach both locally and worldwide for delivering large infrastructure projects, and was normally achieved by the commissioning of a consortium comprising corporations in various disciplines to take up the projects.

14. Noting that the consultancy study had suggested that the public-private partnership ("PPP") model be deployed for the proposed MPSC, some members expressed concern about the possible domination of MPSC by big consortia and transfer of benefits from Government to business if such a financing arrangement was adopted for the project. They enquired whether the consultant had considered various financing options for the sports complex before coming to the view that the PPP model was the most preferable option. According to the Administration, the consultancy study had made a preliminary recommendation that in order to maximize efficiency and innovation, a combination of government and private financing would be appropriate for the MPSC project. While a decision on the procurement and financing plan had yet to be reached, the Administration would study the recommendations of the consultant, in consultation with the Sports Commission and the relevant bureaux, before taking forward the project.

Utilization of sports facilities

15. An enquiry was raised about the measures to be taken by the Administration to ensure the utilization of the new venues and sport facilities of MPSC in the most effective manner, and whether a tiered fee structure would be adopted allowing local sports teams/associations to use the venues/facilities at lower and affordable rates. The Administration advised that to enhance utilization of the proposed sports facilities at MPSC and to optimize their use, the Government would continue to promote school sports, public sports and elite sports. The high quality public sports facilities, open space and park features would be open to the public throughout the day and seven days a week. Apart from providing a 50 000-seat stadium for the hosting of major international sports and entertainment events, the proposed MPSC would include a public sports ground with permanent seating for 5 000 spectators which would be a venue for athletics training and competition, and football and rugby matches.

Latest developments

16. The Administration will brief the Panel on its proposal to conduct pre-construction works for MPSC at the meeting on 10 January 2014.

Relevant papers

17. A list of the relevant papers on the website of the Legislative Council is in the **Appendix**.

Appendix

Relevant papers on Planning for Kai Tak Sports Complex

Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Home Affairs	16.10.2006 (Item I)	Agenda
Panel on Home Affairs	14.10.2011 (Item III)	Agenda Minutes
Council meeting	24.10.2012	Written question raised by Hon MA Fung-kwok on "Kai Tak Sports Complex"
Panel on Home Affairs	9.11.2012 (Item V)	Agenda Minutes

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