

For discussion on  
17 November 2014

## **Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs**

### **Enhancement of Programming, Audience Building, and Renewal of Permanent Exhibitions of Public Museums**

#### **Purpose**

This paper updates Members on the progress made in the past two years and the future plan to enhance the programming, audience building, and renewal of permanent exhibitions of public museums managed by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD).

#### **Background**

2. Since 2010, upon consultation with the Museum Advisory Panels (MAPs)<sup>1</sup>, LCSD has devised new strategic areas for museum development with the aim of delivering museum services with greater efficiency, flexibility and creativity so as to meet the changing aspirations of the community.<sup>2</sup> The Panel on Home Affairs was last updated on 22 March 2013 vide LC Paper No. CB(2)802/12-13(05) regarding the progress of measures to enhance public museum services.

3. With the expert advice given by Museum Expert Advisers<sup>3</sup> (MEAs), three MAPs and the concerted efforts of museum staff, many of the

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<sup>1</sup> In October 2010, the Government announced a package of measures to enhance the accountability, operation and services of public museums under the management of the LCSD. One of the measures was to set up a Museum Advisory Panel (MAP), comprising museum experts, academics, marketing professionals and community leaders, for each of the art, history and science streams of museums. The three MAPs provide advice on the respective museums' positioning and strategies for business development, programming, branding, marketing and community involvement.

<sup>2</sup> The eight strategic areas are: programming, collections, education, audience building, capacity building, community engagement and partnership, enhancement of facilities and visitor services, and research and institutional development.

<sup>3</sup> Since 2000, the LCSD has been appointing Museum Expert Advisers from different areas of expertise (each term has a period of two years) to provide professional advice to LCSD museums on matters pertaining to the promotion of art, history, science and film, in particular the acquisition of collection items.

programmes and exhibitions organised by the museums in the past two years have won extensive recognition<sup>4</sup> and received overwhelming response, as shown by the record breaking attendance of 6.13 million visitors in 2013. This paper focuses on the efforts made by LCSD in enhancing the programming, audience building, permanent and temporary exhibitions, which will enable it to preserve and present Hong Kong's cultural legacy to increasingly diverse audiences in a way that will give them a better understanding and appreciation of this vital resource.

## **Programming**

4. Exhibitions form the most central and crucial part in terms of museum offerings and play a pivotal role in forging the overall museum experience for the visitors. Currently all major LCSD museums offer both temporary and permanent exhibitions. Temporary exhibitions usually last for only a few months and provide varied programmes of diverse topics of interest with the aim to encourage repeat visits and widen the range of museum's audience. Permanent exhibitions, on the other hand, are often designed to last for a longer period say, 15 to 20 years. They usually contain permanent collections or core materials of the subject matter of the museum which are essential and remain relevant during the entire time they are open to the public.

### Temporary Exhibitions

5. In recent years, LCSD has committed to presenting compelling temporary exhibitions by adopting unique curatorial approaches, harnessing new technology, and employing interactive activities that present art and culture from a local perspective to trigger connections between the exhibitions and the everyday lives of audience members. The blockbuster temporary exhibitions have all captured intense public attention and gained resounding success. Major temporary exhibitions presented in the past two years are listed below:

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<sup>4</sup> For example, the Gold Prize in the Team Award (General Public Service) in the Civil Service Outstanding Service Award Scheme 2013 was awarded to *The Majesty of All Under Heaven* exhibition of the Museum of History, and the Gold Award in the Best Mobile Apps (Mobile Information) category of the HK ICT Awards 2014 was won by the app "Jurassic World" developed by the Hong Kong Science Museum for the *Legends of the Giant Dinosaurs* exhibition. In addition, the education programmes of *The Majesty of All Under Heaven* and *The Splendours of Royal Costume* exhibitions, both from the Museum of History, are selected as best examples in the first edition of "The Best Exemplary Educational Projects from Museums in China" organised by ICOM China.

<b>Major Temporary Exhibitions</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
<b>Hong Kong Museum of Art</b>	
<i>The Origin of Dao: New Dimensions in Chinese Contemporary Art</i> (17 May – 28 August 2013)	99,730
<i>Ju Ming – Sculpting the Living World</i> (28 February – 15 June 2014)	121,060
<i>Paris · Chinese Painting: Legacy of the 20th Century Chinese Masters</i> (20 June – 21 September 2014)	81,560
<b>Hong Kong Heritage Museum</b>	
<i>Fabergé: Legacy of Imperial Russia</i> (6 February – 29 April 2013)	111,470
他 <i>Fashion</i> 傳奇 Eddie Lau 她 <i>Image</i> 百變 劉培基 (17 July 2013 – 13 January 2014)	309,640
<i>Bruce Lee: Kung Fu · Art · Life</i> (20 July 2013 – 20 July 2018)	829,880 (as at 5 Nov 2014)
<i>Studio Ghibli Layout Designs: Understanding the Secrets of Takahata and Miyazaki Animation</i> (14 May – 31 August 2014)	434,620
<i>The Extraordinary in the Ordinary: Chairs for Viewing the World through Time</i> (7 June – 15 September 2014)	198,180
<b>Hong Kong Museum of History</b>	
<i>The Wonders of Ancient Mesopotamia</i> (30 January – 13 May 2013)	180,720
<i>The Splendours of Royal Costume: Qing Court Attire</i> (31 July – 7 October 2013)	113,760
<i>Treasures from Tsarskoye Selo, Residence of the Russian Monarchs</i> (29 October 2014 – 16 March 2015)	8,010 (as at 5 Nov 2014)
<b>Hong Kong Science Museum</b>	
<i>Legends of the Giant Dinosaurs</i> (8 November 2013 – 9 April 2014)	772,470

6. To cultivate a wider audience base, LCSD will continue to strive to bring high quality blockbuster exhibitions to members of the public. The Home Affairs Bureau has signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the State Administration of Cultural Heritage, while LCSD has also signed the MoU with the Palace Museum and the National Museum of China. This paves the way to bring more national treasures that portray the rich tapestry of Chinese history and culture to Hong Kong more frequently and regularly. To illustrate, an exhibition on Mogao Caves, Dunhuang titled *Dunhuang - Untold Tales, Untold Riches* and another on the treasures from the Palace Museum

tentatively titled *Western Instruments Collection of Palace Museum* will be staged in Hong Kong Heritage Museum (HKHM) and Hong Kong Science Museum (HKScM) respectively in late 2014 and 2015.

7. In the international arena, ties with renowned museums like the British Museum, Victoria and Albert Museum, Royal Academy of Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art are being strengthened. Collaborations with overseas museums such as the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam and the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco are also being actively pursued for bringing blockbuster exhibitions to Hong Kong.

#### Permanent Exhibitions

8. To sustain the appeal to the public, cultivate a wider audience base, as well as enhance the educational elements in their services, we will renew the permanent exhibitions of LCSD museums at suitable intervals, which is in line with professional practice of museums worldwide. This will include replacing outdated exhibits, updating and enhancing the contents in the light of new information or archival information surfaced through new researches, extending the scope of exhibitions, and deploying latest technologies to enhance the visitors' experience.

9. Since the last Panel meeting in March 2013, renewal of the permanent exhibitions of the public museums has been carried out in phases. The renewal of the Hall of Space Science and Hall of Astronomy of the Hong Kong Space Museum (HKSpM) and the setting up of the Biodiversity Gallery and the Children Gallery in HKScM will all be completed in 2016. At the last Panel meeting on 12 May 2014, members also expressed support for the expansion and renovation of the Hong Kong Museum of Art (HKMA). The permanent exhibitions in HKMA will be revamped entirely after the renovation. We will seek support from the Public Works Sub-committee and funding approval from the Finance Committee for the project within the current legislative session. Further plans to renew the permanent exhibitions in HKScM, HKHM, the Hong Kong Museum of History (HKMH) and the Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence (HKMCD) are detailed in the following paragraphs.

#### *Hong Kong Science Museum*

10. Opened in 1991, HKScM has 17 exhibition galleries occupying a total area of 7,245 m<sup>2</sup>. 16 of these galleries are for permanent exhibitions and one (745 m<sup>2</sup>) is for housing temporary special exhibitions. Owing to the fast pace of advancement of science and technology in the last two decades, the information on display for many exhibits as well as the presentation technology employed are not in pace with the modern times. Besides, due to the highly interactive nature of the exhibits, many have deteriorated through normal wear and tear to an extent that some are beyond economical repair.

11. To keep members of the public abreast of the latest developments in science and technology whilst sharpening its focus on popular science topics, HKScM plans to convert part of the existing *Life Sciences Hall* and *Occupational Safety and Health Gallery* to a *Palaeontology Gallery* and *Earth Science Gallery* respectively in order to showcase the abundant biodiversity of the ancient world and depict the underlying mechanism that drives the dynamic Earth. It will be followed by the renewal of the existing *Transportation Hall*, *Home Technology Hall* and *Food Science Hall* to introduce the latest development in the respective fields. Preparatory work of the renewal will be launched in 2015 and is expected to complete by mid-2020. The estimated cost of the project is about \$76 million. Major cost items include preliminary studies and design of exhibition galleries, infrastructure, flooring and electrical work, as well as fabrication, installation and integration of exhibits.

#### *Hong Kong Heritage Museum*

12. Established in 2000, HKHM has a total of 12 galleries with a total size of 7,500 m<sup>2</sup>, six of which are permanent galleries, viz. the *Children's Discovery Gallery* (750 m<sup>2</sup>), *Cantonese Opera Heritage Hall* (950 m<sup>2</sup>), *T.T. Tsui Gallery of Chinese Art* (1,500 m<sup>2</sup>), *Chao Shao-an Gallery* (200 m<sup>2</sup>), *New Territories Heritage Hall* (1,400 m<sup>2</sup>) and the *Orientation Theatre* (200 m<sup>2</sup>). These six permanent galleries have been opened to the public since December 2000.

13. In response to the growing concern and interest of Hong Kong people in our own culture and heritage and to revitalize and sharpen the positioning of HKHM as a museum on Hong Kong's culture and heritage, it is planned to revamp the *New Territories Heritage Hall* into *Hong Kong Culture Gallery*, and the *Orientation Theatre* into a *Jin Yong (Louis Cha) Gallery*. While the former gallery will portray in a broader scene the unique features of Hong Kong culture, the latter will be dedicated to one of the most influential modern Chinese language novelists of Hong Kong, Dr. Cha Leung-yung, pen name Jin Yong, whose works and achievements have enormous impact on Hong Kong's popular culture. Preparatory work of the renewal will be launched in 2015 and is expected to complete by end-2019. It is estimated that the revamping will cost about \$43.5 million. Major cost items include renovation of infrastructure, exhibition design consultancy, design and production of multimedia programmes, as well as fabrication and installation of exhibits.

#### *Hong Kong Museum of History*

14. The current premises of HKMH, with a total exhibition area of 8,000 m<sup>2</sup>, have been opened to the public since 1998. Standing at its core is *The Hong Kong Story* permanent exhibition, which has been opened since 2001 occupying an area of 7,000 m<sup>2</sup>. Through its eight galleries displaying more

than 4,000 exhibits, 750 graphic panels and 53 audio-visual programmes, *The Hong Kong Story* exhibition outlines the natural environment, folk culture and historical development of Hong Kong vividly. The exhibition, which is both entertaining and educational, has attracted more than seven million visitors since its opening and has been acclaimed as one of the must-see attractions in Hong Kong by many travel agents over the years.<sup>5</sup>

15. Apart from displaying newly acquired relics to attract visitation, innovative technologies and creative approach like those adopted for *The Majesty of All Under Heaven: The Eternal Realm of China's First Emperor* exhibition organized by HKMH in 2012 would be used to present the new *The Hong Kong Story* exhibition with a view to making it more appealing to young people and tourists through an inspiring visiting experience. Preparatory work for the renewal will commence in 2015 and the renewal work is expected to complete by mid-2021 given the scale and complexity of the works involved. The estimated project cost is about \$466 million. The work includes commissioning academic research, revamping the design and layout of the exhibition, fabrication of exhibits, development of interactive exhibits and multimedia programmes, removal, fabrication and installation works, etc. As a reference, the Imperial War Museum in London has recently revamped its permanent exhibition on the First World War with a cost of £40 million. These two projects are similar in scale.

#### *Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence*

16. HKMCD occupies a site area of about 34,200 m<sup>2</sup>, of which the exhibition space and the Heritage Trail take up 1,165 m<sup>2</sup> and 3,680 m<sup>2</sup> respectively. The site was converted from the old Lei Yue Mun Fort built in 1887 by the British forces to defend the eastern approach to Victoria Harbour. The Fort was then the most sophisticated fortification and an important battlefield in defending Hong Kong against Japanese invasion in 1941. HKMCD was opened to the public in July 2000.

17. The current permanent exhibition focuses on the 600 years of Hong Kong coastal defence using conventional display with few interactive elements. There is also room for improvement in optimizing the use of space and the traffic flow. We propose to have an overhaul of the museum to enhance the content, coverage, presentation and attractiveness of the display with a view to showing a more vivid and comprehensive picture of the local fortifications and coastal defence in their wider historical and geographical context. Preparatory work of the renewal will commence in 2015 and the renewal work is expected to complete by end-2018. The estimated cost of the renewal project is about

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<sup>5</sup> For example, according to TripAdvisor, the HKMH ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> out of 437 attractions of Hong Kong, 3<sup>rd</sup> in the top ten museums in China in the Travelers' Choice™ 2014 Winner and 8<sup>th</sup> in the top 25 museums in Asia. The Hong Kong Science Museum also received the Travelers' Choice™ from TripAdvisor in 2013, while the Hong Kong Heritage Museum, the Museum of Art and the Museum of Coastal Defence received the Certificate of Excellence.

\$30.8 million. Major cost items include exhibit enhancement, exhibition design consultancy, design and production of interactive/multimedia programmes, as well as fabrication and installation of exhibits.

### *Implementation*

18. The renewal of permanent exhibitions will involve on-site removal of old exhibits and installations of new ones, rendering it necessary to close certain exhibition areas. To minimize the inconvenience that may be caused to visitors, closing periods of the concerned museums during renewal will be kept to the minimum, and a staggering closing arrangement will be devised to avoid closing different museums at the same time. During the closure of some permanent exhibition galleries of HKHM, HKMH and HKScM, temporary thematic exhibitions will continue to be held. As regards HKMCD, the renewal project involves relocating both its permanent and special exhibition galleries and hence HKMCD has to be closed in its entirety for nine months. However, outreach programmes will still be organised at suitable venues in the museum.

19. The tentative implementation timetable and estimated expenditure for the renewal of the permanent exhibitions at the four above museums as outlined in paragraphs 10 to 17 above are summarized at Annex. The total estimated funding which amounts to some \$616 million, will be included and reflected in the draft Estimates of the relevant financial years.

### **Audience Building**

20. The permanent exhibitions and the blockbusters organised by LCSD in the past few years have enhanced the image of its flagship museums and the attractiveness of exhibitions to non-visitors. Every effort is made to present mega exhibitions with unique curatorship and visitor experience, tailoring to the needs and expectations of Hong Kong people. Moreover, advanced technology is utilized to bring fun and exciting experience to visitors where possible. As a result, the total attendance of the public museums has been on the rise during these two years, from 5.18 million in 2011 to 6.13 million in 2013, representing an increase of 18%.

21. Apart from setting a new record for museum attendance in 2013, the mega exhibitions have attracted a large number of visitors to purchase museum passes - over 161,455 passes, mostly family passes, were sold in 2013, representing an 18% increase in the number sold (136,722) in 2012 (94% increase over the 83,369 passes sold in 2011). This is highly encouraging from the perspective of audience building as museum pass holders tend to be repeated visitors. Indeed, on average each museum pass holder visits our museums 3-4 times during the one-year validity period. For those who

purchase family passes, they visit our museums with their children who are important targets of audience building.

22. In addition to the liaison meetings with customers and hirers which are conducted regularly to gauge their views and suggestions on museum services and facilities, LCSD conducts biennial opinion survey by interviewing museum goers to capture their views on museum services. According to the latest survey conducted in 2013, more than 90% of the visitors were satisfied with the programmes and services offered by the public museums.

23. As the MAPs are particularly concerned about engagement of youth to foster their sense of belonging to the museums, LCSD has put more emphasis and allocated more resources in this regard. Extension activities targeting at youth and outreach or learning programmes with schools and universities are carried out frequently, while engagement with youth through social media has also become a common practice of the public museums. For instance, the HK SciFest and Science Alive organised by HKScM are both very popular events among youths. As such, the aforesaid survey in 2013 reported a substantial increase of 38% in the proportion of teenage audience, from 17.9% in 2010 to 24.8% in 2013.

24. Through monitoring the results of subsequent surveys, LCSD can keep track of the demographics of visitors and museum service satisfaction level so as to establish exhibition-specific visitors' profile, which will help the museums to identify their target audience for coming years and design the promotion strategy accordingly.

25. LCSD will continue to engage and consult the MAPs, MEAs, as well as academics and institutions in the relevant fields on LCSD's initiatives to enhance the programming, audience building, permanent and temporary exhibitions of public museums.

### **Advice Sought**

26. Members are invited to note the content of this paper and to advise on the proposed arrangements for renewal of museum exhibitions.

Home Affairs Bureau  
Leisure and Cultural Services Department  
November 2014



**Annex**

**Tentative Timetable and Estimated Expenditure  
of the Four Renewal Projects**

<b>Museum</b>	<b>Commencement</b>	<b>Completion</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>
Hong Kong Science Museum	2015	Mid-2020	\$76.0 million
Hong Kong Heritage Museum	2015	End-2019	\$43.5 million
Hong Kong Museum of History	2015	Mid-2021	\$466.0 million
Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence	2015	End-2018	\$30.8 million