

For discussion on  
17 May 2016

**Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs**

**Free Admission to Permanent Exhibitions of Designated Museums  
of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department**

**PURPOSE**

This paper briefs Members on our initiative to offer free admission to permanent exhibitions of designated museums of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD).

**BACKGROUND**

2. We are dedicated to promoting culture as well as knowledge in arts, history and science, and to encouraging more visits to the museums for building a wider audience base. As one of the highlights of the “Appreciate Hong Kong” Campaign, the month-long “Enchanting Museum” initiative was launched in January 2016 whereby visitors were offered free admission to all LCSD museums (excluding the Hong Kong Museum of Art and Hong Kong Space Museum which have been closed for renovation). The arrangement was well received by the public. The five fee-charging museums<sup>1</sup> recorded a total attendance of over 317 600 visitors in the month, representing a 58.5% increase in comparison with the attendance in January 2015. In particular, the Hong Kong Science Museum attracted over 126 000 visitors which more than doubled the attendance for the same period in 2015.

---

<sup>1</sup> The five fee-charging museums included the Hong Kong Museum of History, Hong Kong Heritage Museum, Hong Kong Science Museum, Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence and Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum.

3. In his 2016 Policy Address, the Chief Executive announced that the Government would make free admission to permanent exhibitions of designated museums of the LCSD a standing practice. We are now working on the detailed implementation arrangements with a view to introducing the free admission initiative in 2016.

## **EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS**

### **General admission charges of the LCSD museums**

4. Among the 17 museums<sup>2</sup> managed by the LCSD, general admission fees are levied in the following seven museums –

- (a) Hong Kong Museum of Art (HKMA);
- (b) Hong Kong Museum of History (HKMH);
- (c) Hong Kong Heritage Museum (HKHM);
- (d) Hong Kong Science Museum (HKScM);
- (e) Hong Kong Space Museum (HKSpM);
- (f) Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence (HKMCD); and
- (g) Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum (SYSM).

5. The standard general admission fee for an adult to get a single entry to permanent exhibitions of the above fee-charging museums is \$10, except for HKScM which charges \$25. Concessionary rate pitched at 50% of standard tickets is currently offered to full-time students, persons aged 60 or above, person with disabilities (PWD) and one accompanying carer of a PWD. Groups of 20 persons or above can enjoy a 30% discount on standard tickets.

---

<sup>2</sup> There are 17 museums prescribed in the Schedule of Designation of Museum Order (Cap. 132P), including the Hong Kong Museum of Art, Hong Kong Museum of History, Hong Kong Heritage Museum, Hong Kong Science Museum, Hong Kong Space Museum, Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum, Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence, Fireboat Alexander Grantham Exhibition Gallery, Flagstaff House Museum of Tea Ware, Law Uk Folk Museum, Lei Cheng Uk Han Tomb Museum, Sam Tung Uk Museum, Hong Kong Railway Museum, Sheung Yiu Folk Museum, Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre, Ping Shan Tan Clan Gallery cum Heritage Trail Visitors Centre and Hong Kong Film Archive.

## **Free general admission to fee-charging museums**

6. Groups of 20 persons or above organised by schools, charitable and non-profit making organisations can apply for fee waiver in advance to enjoy free admission to permanent exhibitions. Children under 4 years old will not be charged. Furthermore, admission to permanent exhibitions of the fee-charging museums on Wednesdays and the annual International Museum Day, Hong Kong (usually a specified Saturday and Sunday in May) is currently free to all.

## **Museum passes**

7. Apart from tickets valid for a single entry, different categories of museum passes for durations ranging from a week (\$30), a month (\$50), 6 months (\$50) to a year (\$100 for an individual and \$200 for a family up to a maximum of four members) are also available. The museum passes allow holders unlimited entries to both permanent exhibitions and special exhibitions in fee-charging museums.

## **NEW ARRANGEMENTS**

8. To encourage museum visits, public museums in the Mainland (except the science centres; and those housed on heritage sites / in historic monuments (such as the Palace Museum)) and in some countries (such as the United Kingdom) offer free admission to their permanent exhibitions. In similar vein, there have been increasing calls from the local community for free admission to all public museums in Hong Kong, with a view to enriching the cultural life of Hong Kong people and making museum visits more accessible to people from all walks of life, particularly the under-privileged groups.

9. In consideration of the overwhelming support of the month-long free admission to the LCSD museums under the “Appreciate Hong Kong” Campaign in January 2016, we will make free admission to permanent exhibitions of designated LCSD museums a standing practice. Under the new measure, the public will be offered free admission to permanent exhibitions of five designated fee-charging LCSD museums including the HKMA, HKMH, HKHM, HKMCD and SYSM.

10. Given the larger number of interactive exhibits in the HKScM and HKSpM, we have to pay heed to their capacity constraints in determining the number of visitors the museums can accommodate under the initiative of free admission in order to keep the interactive exhibits in good condition and to ensure a safe and pleasant museum visit for the visitors. Taking into consideration the capacity of HKScM and HKSpM as well as the objective of enhancing the promotion of science and astronomical knowledge among students, we will offer full-time students free admission to permanent exhibitions of these two museums<sup>3</sup>. The current concessionary half-fare admission will continue to be offered to senior citizens aged 60 or above as well as PWDs and one accompanying carer of each PWD. The existing mechanism for fee-waiver applications will remain valid for schools, charitable and non-profit making organisations. The arrangement for free museum admission on Wednesdays and International Museum Day, Hong Kong, will also be maintained, i.e. everyone can visit permanent exhibitions of all LCSD museums on these days free of charge.

11. To complement the free admission initiative mentioned in paragraphs 9 and 10 above, we will also reduce the charges of standard, group and concessionary tickets of the HKScM by 20% as set out below –

<b>Types of tickets</b>	<b>Existing Fee</b>	<b>Revised Fee</b>
Standard	\$25	\$20
Concessionary	\$12.5	\$10
Group	\$17.5	\$14

As regards the HKSpM, the charges of standard, group and concessionary tickets will remain at the current level, i.e. \$10, \$7 and \$5 respectively.

12. In anticipation of significant reduction in the subscription of the weekly, monthly and half-yearly museum passes after the initiative of free admission is launched, these three types of passes will be abolished because it would not be cost-effective to issue such passes. The price of yearly museum passes will be reduced by 50% as listed below –

---

<sup>3</sup> Except the Stanley Ho Space Theatre at the HKSpM.

<b>Yearly passes</b>	<b>Existing Fee</b>	<b>Revised Fee</b>
Standard	\$100	\$50
Concessionary	\$50	\$25
Family	\$200	\$100

13. The arrangements and fee levels for admission to permanent exhibitions of the LCSD museums and museum passes before and after the implementation of the free admission initiative are set out at **Annex**.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

14. The estimated revenue forgone arising from the implementation of the above new arrangements is summarised in the following table -

<b>New Arrangements</b>	<b>Estimated Annual Revenue Forgone</b>
(a) Free admission for all visitors to permanent exhibitions of five designated fee-charging museums (i.e. HKMA, HKMH, HKHM, HKMCD and SYSM) (paragraph 9 above)	\$4.4 million
(b) Free admission for full-time students to permanent exhibitions of HKScM and HKSpM and reduction of general admission fees for HKScM by 20% (paragraphs 10 and 11 above)	\$1.8 million
(c) Abolition of weekly, monthly and half-yearly museum passes and price reduction of yearly museum passes by 50% (paragraph 12 above)	\$5.1 million
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$11.3 million</b>

## **CONSULTATION**

15. We have consulted the three Museum Advisory Panels (MAPs)<sup>4</sup> on the proposed new arrangements set out in paragraphs 9 to 13 above, and received the general support of the MAP Members.

## **WAY FORWARD**

16. Pursuant to Section 124J of the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap. 132), the Secretary for Home Affairs is empowered to make regulation to provide for the fees and charges payable by an individual as a member of the public in connection with the matters specified in Schedule 16 (including the admission to museums). The Government will amend the Public Health and Municipal Services (Fees and Charges) (Museums) (Regulation) (Cap. 132CK) as soon as possible in order to implement the aforesaid new arrangements to offer free admission to museums and to reduce the price of yearly museum passes for the benefit of the public at large. We plan to table the Amendment Regulation at the Legislative Council in May 2016 in order to commence the negative vetting procedure as soon as possible. Subject to completion of the negative vetting procedure within the current legislative session, the initiative to offer free admission to permanent exhibitions of museums will come into effect in Q3 2016 at the earliest.

## **ADVICE SOUGHT**

17. Members are invited to note and comment on the arrangements for free museum admission as set out in this paper.

Home Affairs Bureau  
May 2016

---

<sup>4</sup> The three MAPs advise on the work of LCSD museums in relation to art, history and science streams respectively. Members of the MAPs comprise museum experts, academics, marketing professionals and community leaders.

**Existing and Revised Fees to Permanent Exhibitions of the LCSD Museums**

Item	Existing Provisions	Existing fee (HK\$) <sup>1</sup>	Revised fee (HK\$)
<b>Museum Tickets for a Single Entry</b>			
1.	<b>Standard Ticket</b>		
	(i) Hong Kong Museum of Art (ii) Hong Kong Museum of History (iii) Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence (iv) Hong Kong Heritage Museum (v) Dr. Sun Yat-sen Museum	10	Free
	(vi) Hong Kong Science Museum	25	20
	(vii) Hong Kong Space Museum	10	10
2.	<b>Group Ticket (for 20 persons or above)</b>		
	(i) Hong Kong Museum of Art (ii) Hong Kong Museum of History (iii) Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence (iv) Hong Kong Heritage Museum (v) Dr. Sun Yat-sen Museum	7 (per person)	Free
	(vi) Hong Kong Science Museum	17.5 (per person)	14 (per person)
	(vii) Hong Kong Space Museum	7 (per person)	7 (per person)
3.	<b>Concessionary Ticket (for full-time students, elderly aged 60 or above, PWDs (including their carers on 1:1 basis))</b>		
	(i) Hong Kong Museum of Art (ii) Hong Kong Museum of History (iii) Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence (iv) Hong Kong Heritage Museum (v) Dr. Sun Yat-sen Museum	5	Free
	(vi) Hong Kong Science Museum	12.5	10 (Free for full-time students)
	(vii) Hong Kong Space Museum	5	5 (Free for full-time students)

<sup>1</sup> Pursuant to section 9 of Provision of Municipal Services (Reorganization) Ordinance, Cap.552, the admission fees for museums approved by the former Urban Council (“UC”) remain in force. For museums gazetted after 1.1.2000 in the post-UC era (viz. the Hong Kong Heritage Museum and Dr. Sun Yat-sen Museum), the fees are prescribed under sections 2 and 3 of the Public Health and Municipal Services (Fees and Charges) (Museums) Regulation, Cap.132CK.

Item	Existing Provisions	Existing fee (HK\$) <sup>1</sup>	Revised fee (HK\$)
<b>Free admission to all existing fee-charging museums</b>			
4.	Persons aged below 4	Free	Free
5.	Wednesdays	Free	Free
6.	Groups of 20 or more persons from schools, charitable and non-profit-making organisations applied for fee-waiver in advance	Free	Free
7.	International Museum Day, Hong Kong <sup>2</sup>	Free	Free
<b>Museum Passes (for unlimited number of entries to both permanent exhibitions and special exhibitions of designated museums)</b>			
8.	<b>A pass for 1 year</b>		
	- concessionary rate (for full-time students, elderly aged 60 or above and PWD)	50	25
	- members of the same family (up to a maximum of 4 persons)	200	100
	- any other person	100	50
9.	<b>A pass for 6 months</b>		
	- concessionary rate (for full-time students, elderly aged 60 or above, and disabled persons)	25	To be abolished
	- any other person	50	To be abolished
10.	<b>A pass for 1 month</b>	50	To be abolished
11.	<b>A pass for 1 week</b>	30	To be abolished

<sup>2</sup> Usually a specified Saturday and Sunday in May