

**立法會**  
***Legislative Council***

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**Panel on Development**

**Meeting on 24 April 2018**

**Background brief on harbourfront development and enhancement**

**Purpose**

This paper provides background information on harbourfront development and enhancement in Hong Kong and summarizes the views and concerns expressed by Members on the subject at the meetings of the Legislative Council and its committees since the 2008-2009 legislative session.

**Background**

2. The Victoria Harbour is a natural asset for all the people of Hong Kong. In recent years, there has been a growing concern for the protection of the harbour and enhancement of the harbourfront to make it more accessible and attractive for public enjoyment.

Harbourfront Enhancement Committee

3. After a spate of litigation against reclamation in the Victoria Harbour and in view of the heightened public aspiration to protect the harbour, the Administration established the Harbourfront Enhancement Committee ("HEC") in May 2004 to advise the then Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands on the planning, land uses and developments along the existing and new harbourfront of the Victoria Harbour. HEC drew up 22 action areas<sup>1</sup> on both

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<sup>1</sup> These action areas are: Kennedy Town, Sai Wan, Sai Ying Pun, Sheung Wan, Central, Wan Chai West, Wan Chai East, Hong Kong Island East, Lei Yue Mun, Yau Tong, Yau Tong Bay, Kai Tak, To Kwa Wan, Hung Hom East, Hung Hom West, Tsim Sha Tsui East, Tsim Sha Tsui West, West Kowloon Cultural District, Yau Ma Tei, Western Harbour, Tsuen Wan and Tsing Yi.

sides of the Victoria Harbour which set the agenda for action by relevant government departments to enhance the harbourfront. It concluded its six years of service on 28 February 2010.

### Harbourfront Commission

4. The Task Group on Management Model for the Harbourfront ("TGMMH") of HEC released its report<sup>2</sup> in January 2010 recommending the establishment of a non-statutory, advisory Harbourfront Commission ("HC") to replace HEC in advising the Administration on harbourfront planning, design, management and other related matters. In the long run, TGMMH suggested that, to enhance public involvement, vibrancy and timely response to public needs, the Administration could establish an independent, statutory authority with its own executive and dedicated funding for harbourfront planning, design, operation and management.

5. Further to the recommendation of TGMMH, the Administration established HC in July 2010 to succeed the former HEC. At present, HC has 23 non-official members and eight official members. The terms of reference of HC are in **Appendix I**. Four task forces and a working group, namely Task Force on Harbourfront Developments on Hong Kong Island; Task Force on Kai Tak Harbourfront Development; Task Force on Harbourfront Developments in Kowloon, Tsuen Wan and Kwai Tsing; Task Force on Water-land Interface; and Working Group on the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance, have been established under HC to assist it in carrying out its functions.

### **Major views and concerns expressed by members**

6. Over the years, the Panel on Development ("DEV Panel") and its predecessor, the Panel on Planning, Lands and Works, have all along been monitoring issues relating to the planning and development of the harbourfront, as well as the associated projects. At the meeting of DEV Panel on 25 November 2008, members agreed to form the Subcommittee on Harbourfront Planning ("the Subcommittee") to monitor and study the planning, land use and related issues in respect of the harbourfront areas on both sides of the Victoria Harbour. The major views and concerns of members of DEV Panel and the Subcommittee are summarized in the ensuing paragraphs.

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<sup>2</sup> TGMMH's report can be downloaded at the following link:  
[http://www.harbourfront.org.hk/hec/eng/meetings/doc/agenda100218/Paper3\\_2010.pdf](http://www.harbourfront.org.hk/hec/eng/meetings/doc/agenda100218/Paper3_2010.pdf)

## Strategies for planning and developing the harbourfront

7. Subcommittee members considered that successful planning and development of the harbourfront should start with the formulation of a comprehensive and strategic policy, and have clear objectives including, preserving the harbour, promoting a green harbour, and facilitating different uses of the harbour. In this regard, the Harbour Planning Principles and Guidelines promulgated by HEC were useful and should be augmented.<sup>3</sup> While noting overseas experience that good harbourfront developments had evolved over a long period of time, Subcommittee members urged the Administration to set a timetable and devise appropriate measures for achieving the various objectives.

8. On the formulation of policies and strategies, Subcommittee members considered it of vital importance to engage the public in the process. The Administration should conduct district-based studies to gauge public aspirations, especially those of District Councils ("DCs") and the local communities. In particular, the development of facilities in harbourfront areas should cater for the needs of individual districts, and should enable preservation of local characteristics and bring out historical features unique to individual locations.

## Creation of an attractive and vibrant harbourfront

9. Subcommittee members considered that the creation of an attractive and vibrant harbourfront was an essential element in harbourfront enhancement initiatives. They suggested the Administration to work with HC and actively engage stakeholders (including DCs) in organizing activities such as street performances, cultural and artistic activities, at harbourfront areas. To this end, members urged the Administration to review existing legislation to facilitate such activities and work out a mechanism for the public and organizations to make applications for holding activities and events at harbourfront areas.

10. As accessibility was the key in creating a vibrant harbourfront, Subcommittee members considered it necessary for the Administration to improve the accessibility of harbourfront areas so that the public could enjoy the facilities there. They also considered that a vibrant harbourfront should be able to cater for users with different needs and purposes, with the provision of retail, dining and entertainment facilities, as well as separate areas without

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<sup>3</sup> The Harbour Planning [Principles](#) and [Guidelines](#) were published in 2006 and 2007 respectively.

business activities for people to enjoy the tranquility of the waterfront and the breeze.

11. Subcommittee members also emphasized that planning controls such as height restriction should be imposed on harbourfront sites so as to keep the development density low and to enable better ventilation and visual views in the harbour areas. Besides, contaminated seabed at harbourfront areas should be treated to improve the water quality and address the problem of odor.

#### Development of a continuous waterfront

12. Subcommittee members supported the Administration's objective to construct continuous promenades along both sides of the Victoria Harbour for public enjoyment and improve public accessibility and connectivity to the waterfront, while acknowledging the constraints in relation to the existing land uses or facilities, such as port-related facilities, public utilities, and military uses. They urged the Administration to consider constructing elevated walkways or viewing galleries for public access in sites with government facilities that required a waterfront location so that different uses could co-exist at the harbourfront areas where necessary.

#### Public-private collaboration approach in harbourfront development

13. Subcommittee members believed that cooperation and collaboration between the public and private sectors would provide greater flexibility in the development and management leading to a better and higher quality harbourfront for public enjoyment. They noted that the public-private collaboration ("PPC") model with community involvement was a widely adopted and successful policy tool around the world for harbourfront development, redevelopment and management. Under this approach, the private sector, covering commercial, community, social enterprise, community-based trusts, special purpose vehicles and other non-governmental organizations ("NGOs"), could provide the necessary capital, expertise, creativity, innovation, diversity, management skills and versatility that the public sector might not have. Through enhanced cooperation between the public and private sectors, harbourfront projects would become more financially viable and sustainable.

14. Some Subcommittee members had however expressed concerns about public monitoring and public participation in PPC projects, in particular, the private sector partners might have power in deciding on the right of public access to the facilities and the activities to be permitted in such areas. As such, they considered that the Administration should exercise prudence in

developing and applying the PPC model in harbourfront development in Hong Kong, and there should be in-depth discussion by the public on related issues.

#### Proposed establishment of a statutory Harbourfront Authority

15. In October 2012, HC submitted a proposal to the Chief Executive for setting up a dedicated Harbourfront Authority ("HFA") to press ahead with harbourfront development in a holistic manner with an innovative mindset and a more flexible management approach. Subsequently, the Development Bureau and HC jointly launched a two-phase Public Engagement ("PE") Exercise to gauge public views on the proposal. The Phase I PE was launched between October 2013 and January 2014, and the Phase II PE was launched between September and December 2014.<sup>4</sup>

16. DEV Panel was consulted on the two phases of PE Exercise at its meetings held on 22 October 2013 and 25 November 2014 respectively. Members were in general supportive of the establishment of a dedicated authority to develop and manage the harbourfront. Given that the establishment of the proposed HFA was intended for creating a quality harbourfront for Hong Kong people and in light of the substantial resources to be allocated to the authority, members emphasized that the operation of the authority must be highly transparent and accountable to the public.

17. Concluding the two phases of PE Exercise, the Administration reported that diverse views were collected.<sup>5</sup> Some respondents considered that as an operationally independent and financially autonomous body, HFA could take forward harbour development projects in a more effective manner, while others were concerned that the establishment of an HFA would be a protracted process due to the need for legislative backing and allocation of resources (including land resources). Some people were also doubtful about the ultimate efficacy. Furthermore, the public had different views on the process and pace of the transformation from the current model with HC as an advisory body on harbourfront development matters to an HFA, and on the statutory functions, composition, authority and financial arrangements of HFA. Nevertheless, most stakeholders would like to see enhancement in harbourfront facilities as soon as possible.

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<sup>4</sup> For details, please refer to the [public engagement materials](#) published on the website of HC.

<sup>5</sup> For details, please refer to the [Phase I report](#) and [Phase II report](#) of the PE exercise.

## **Council motion and questions**

18. At the Council meeting of 13 July 2011, Members passed a motion on "Perfecting harbourfront planning and management in all districts of Hong Kong". The wording of the motion passed is in **Appendix II**. A written question relating to the development of harbourfront promenades was raised at the Council meeting of 26 October 2011. An oral question relating to harbourfront enhancement was raised at the Council meeting of 11 April 2018. The relevant hyperlinks are in **Appendix III**.

## **Latest developments**

19. In the Chief Executive's 2017 Policy Address, the Chief Executive announced that pending further deliberations on the proposal of establishing a statutory HFA, the Administration would continue to partner with HC and implement harbourfront enhancement initiatives through a dedicated office and with dedicated funding of \$500 million. The aim is to further extend the waterfront promenade along both sides of the Victoria Harbour, beautify areas in the vicinity and improve the accessibility to the waterfront for the enjoyment of all. The Administration and HC will also engage stakeholders in the community, including DCs and NGOs, to undertake pilot projects to activate the harbourfront. These include considering the provision of suitable harbourfront sites for NGOs to organize and operate appropriate short-term events or facilities.

20. The Administration has earmarked resources in the Budget to strengthen the manpower of the Harbour Unit under the Development Bureau and set up a multi-disciplinary Harbour Office to support harbourfront development and the work of HC in future.

21. At the DEV Panel meeting to be held on 24 April 2018, the Administration will brief members on the major harbourfront enhancement initiatives in the near future.

## **Relevant papers**

22. A list of relevant papers with their hyperlinks is in **Appendix III**.

### Terms of reference of the Harbourfront Commission

The Harbourfront Commission is set up to:

- (a) play an advocacy, oversight and pro-active advisory role in the envisioning, planning, urban design, development, marketing, branding, management and operation of the harbourfront areas, their adjacent waters within the harbour limit and associated facilities on a continuous and ongoing basis;
- (b) coordinate and monitor harbourfront planning, urban design, development and management to ensure effective integration of these major aspects;
- (c) foster and encourage the development, management and maintenance of the harbourfront areas and their adjacent waters within the harbour limit in the best interest of the public by the government and/or through a wide range of contractual entrustment/partnership with the private sector (including the community, social enterprises and non-governmental organizations);
- (d) provide advice and guidance to the community and stakeholders including the Harbour Office, government departments, project proponents and others as needed in taking forward harbourfront development initiatives; and
- (e) lead relevant studies commissioned by the Harbour Office on behalf of the Commission, including providing advice on the preparation of briefs/scope of work, assessment criteria for selecting consultants, evaluation of the study process and outcomes, and the recommendations.

(Source: [website of the Harbourfront Commission](#))

(Translation)

**Motion on  
"Perfecting harbourfront planning and management  
in all districts of Hong Kong"  
moved by Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing  
at the Legislative Council meeting of Wednesday, 13 July 2011**

**Motion as amended by Hon WONG Kwok-hing, Hon KAM Nai-wai,  
Hon IP Kwok-him and Hon Tanya CHAN**

That, given that Hong Kong's harbourfront development strategy always plans only one step ahead, and government departments follow different policies on the use of harbourfront land, displaying a lack of foresight and failing to progress with the times, this Council urges the Government to adopt the following measures to perfect harbourfront planning and management in all districts of Hong Kong:

- (a) to make reference to appropriate overseas experience to formulate a forward-looking and comprehensive strategic harbourfront development policy, a development plan and a timetable for implementation with the objective of harbourfront beautification and greening;
- (b) to establish a statutory body and recruit professionals to co-ordinate and implement strategic harbourfront development; formulate harbourfront development master plans for all districts of Hong Kong; organize open competitions on harbourfront design; construct harbourfronts of different styles by integrating the special features of various districts and dovetailing with community characteristics, and undertake a comprehensive planning for the provision of convenient, easily accessible and three-dimensional harbourfront connective networks, so as to link up fragmented harbourfronts and connect them to the communities in the vicinity;
- (c) through the public-private partnership approach, to proceed with continuous monitoring, public engagement and private development throughout the process from strategy formulation and design concept to operational management; encourage public engagement in the planning consultation for harbourfront community construction, and provide public space in private development projects, with a view to providing



local community residents with harbourfront community facilities that suit their needs;

- (d) to support tourism-based harbourfront development, provide high quality tourism facilities that are convenient and attract visitors, including various forms of water transport, and promote diversified leisure water sports, for example, the provision of vessel berthing spaces, water sports rafts, hydroplane and seafood restaurants, etc.;
- (e) to fully utilize harbourfront resources for holding a diversified range of tourism, recreational and festive events, such as international or local mega events such as dragon boat races, boat shows and cross-harbour swimming competitions, etc., with a view to boosting local community economy;
- (f) through harbourfront improvement plans, to revitalize and develop afresh decommissioned old piers and support the development of the local community economy;
- (g) with a view to dovetailing with the plan of harbourfront beautification and greening, and optimizing the precious natural endowment of Hong Kong's harbourfront, the top echelons of the Government should co-ordinate various government departments as early as possible to expeditiously formulate planning and make proper arrangements for the various existing waterfront urban public environment facilities, so as to turn negative factors into positive factors, and in turn revitalize to the fullest extent the various existing public facilities to dovetail with the new strategic development of the harbourfront; and
- (h) to manage harbourfronts with sustainable modes of financial operations;
- (i) when adopting the public-private-partnership approach for putting harbourfront construction and management under private development projects, to ensure that harbourfronts are accessible, and the public can freely enjoy harbourfronts without unreasonable restrictions; and
- (j) to expeditiously resolve the problem of harbourfront areas being used by public facilities or falling within privately-owned land, so that more harbourfront lands can be linked up to form harbourfront promenades for public enjoyment;
- (k) in the spirit of 'Harbourfront for the People', to build the two sides of the Victoria Harbour into a world-class harbourfront area, give a makeover

to the shorelines of Hong Kong Island and Kowloon Peninsula on the two sides of the harbour and energize community connections for showing the distinctive vitality and scenery of Hong Kong's Victoria Harbour; and

- (l) under the people-based principle, to construct a harbourfront promenade stretching from Kennedy Town to Chai Wan, and build infrastructures along the harbourfront promenade, including revitalizing Western Wholesale Food Market, preserving Fenwick Pier in Wan Chai, developing Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter and connecting it with Victoria Park, constructing a cycling park at North Point Ferry Pier, building a cultural and recreational district in Quarry Bay, revitalizing Shau Kei Wan Wholesale Fish Market and the shipyards nearby, constructing a water sports centre in Chai Wan, and constructing a 'new harbourfront promenade in Kowloon' linking up Lei Yue Mun, Kai Tak, To Kwa Wan, Hung Hom, Tsim Sha Tsui as well as Sham Shui Po and cutting through the West Kowloon Cultural District;
- (m) in the course of harbourfront planning and management, to give appropriate consideration to the needs of the shipping, cruise and ferry industries, so as to take advantage of the harbour;
- (n) to provide appropriate ancillary facilities for the public to make good use of harbourfronts for conducting various community recreational activities; and
- (o) to perfect effluent treatment and sewage systems, so as to improve the water quality of the harbour and harbourfront views.

## Harbourfront development and enhancement

## List of relevant papers

| Council/<br>Committee                       | Date of meeting | Paper  |
|---|-----------------|--|
| Council                                     | 13 July 2011    | <a href="#">Motion</a> on "Perfecting harbourfront planning and management in all districts of Hong Kong"<br><br><a href="#">Progress report</a>   |
| Subcommittee on<br>Harbourfront<br>Planning | 19 July 2011    | Administration's paper on "Update on Harbourfront Enhancement Initiatives and the Way Forward" [ <a href="#">LC Paper No. CB(1)2726/10-11(01)</a> ]<br><br>Minutes of meeting [ <a href="#">LC Paper No. CB(1)2926/10-11</a> ] |
| Subcommittee on<br>Harbourfront<br>Planning | -               | Report on duty visit in April 2011 to study the experiences of Boston, New York and Vancouver in harbourfront planning and development [ <a href="#">LC Paper No. CB(1)80/11-12</a> ]  |
| Subcommittee on<br>Harbourfront<br>Planning | -               | Subcommittee Report [ <a href="#">LC Paper No. CB(1)59/11-12</a> ]   |
| Council                                     | 26 October 2011 | <a href="#">Hansard</a> — written question (No. 9) on "Development of Harbourfront Promenades" (p. 571-574)  |

| Council/<br>Committee   | Date of meeting  | Paper  |
|-------------------------|------------------|--|
| Panel on<br>Development | 22 October 2013  | <p>Administration's paper on "Proposed Establishment of a Harbourfront Authority — Phase I Public Engagement Exercise" [<a href="#">LC Paper No. CB(1)65/13-14(04)</a>]</p> <p>Minutes of meeting [<a href="#">LC Paper No. CB(1)352/13-14</a>]</p>  |
| Panel on<br>Development | 25 November 2014 | <p>Administration's paper on "Proposed Establishment of a Harbourfront Authority — Phase II Public Engagement Exercise" [<a href="#">LC Paper No. CB(1)241/14-15(05)</a>]</p> <p>Updated background brief on the proposal of establishing a harbourfront authority prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat [<a href="#">LC Paper No. CB(1)241/14-15(06)</a>]</p> <p>Minutes of meeting [<a href="#">LC Paper No. CB(1)547/14-15</a>]</p> |
| Panel on<br>Development | 24 October 2017  | <p>Administration's paper on "Initiatives of Development Bureau in the Chief Executive's 2017 Policy Address and Policy Agenda" [<a href="#">LC Paper No. CB(1)57/17-18(01)</a>]</p>   |
| Council                 | 11 April 2018    | <p><a href="#">Oral question</a> (No. 3) on "Harbourfront enhancement"</p>   |