

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)1727/11-12(06)

Ref : CB2/PS/2/08

**Joint Subcommittee to Monitor the Implementation of
the West Kowloon Cultural District Project**

**Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat
for the meeting on 23 April 2012**

**Communication and co-operation between
the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority and the arts community**

Purpose

This paper provides information on the communication and co-operation between the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority ("WKCD Authority") and the arts community in the development of the West Kowloon Cultural District ("WKCD"), and summarizes the views and concerns of members of the Joint Subcommittee to Monitor the Implementation of the West Kowloon Cultural District Project ("the Joint Subcommittee") on the subject.

Background

2. The Legislative Council ("LegCo") has attached importance to the communication and co-operation between the Administration/WKCD Authority and the arts community in the WKCD development. In its Report on Phase I Study issued in July 2005, the Subcommittee on West Kowloon Cultural District Development ("the Subcommittee on WKCD Development"), established under the House Committee in the Third LegCo to study and follow up issues relating to the WKCD development, called on the Administration to conduct structured and extensive consultation with the general public, in particular the relevant professional sectors and the arts community, to map out the priority of needs in the development of the WKCD project and the financial implications arising therefrom. In its Report on Phase II Study issued in January 2006, the Subcommittee on WKCD Development recommended, among others, that there should be at

least two consultation panels: one for stakeholders and one for the general public.

3. In October 2008, WKCD was established under the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority Ordinance (Cap. 601) ("WKCD Ordinance"). Under section 4 of the WKCD Ordinance, WKCD has the objectives, among others, to uphold and encourage freedom of artistic expression and creativity; enhance and promote excellence, innovation, creativity and diversity in arts and culture; cultivate and nurture local talents in the arts (including local artists) and local arts groups and arts-related personnel; facilitate the development of cultural and creative industries; and facilitate and enhance co-operation between any government or non-government body or organization and providers of the arts, within and outside Hong Kong.

4. Under WKCD, there are the Performing Arts Committee and the Museum Committee responsible for formulating the vision, mission and mode of governance of the performing arts venues and museums of WKCD respectively. These two committees are also tasked to consider and recommend the development strategies and policies relating to partnership with governments, cultural organizations, other performing arts venues as well as performing arts groups and individual artists within and outside Hong Kong. Besides, in response to the recommendation by the Subcommittee on WKCD, WKCD established in June 2009 the Consultation Panel in accordance with section 20(1) of the WKCD Ordinance to gather public views on matters relevant to the functions of WKCD, including the preparation of the Development Plan, which was submitted to the Town Planning Board for consideration on 30 December 2011.

Stakeholder engagement

5. According to the Administration, WKCD has devoted much effort over the past two years to engaging and building partnerships with the local arts and cultural community. To ensure that the future arts and cultural facilities in WKCD will meet the aspirations of users and the public, WKCD conducted 25 and 28 stakeholder engagement meetings during the Stage 1 and Stage 2 PE exercise conducted from 8 October 2009 to 7 January 2010 and from 20 August to 20 November 2010 respectively. After the selection of City Park designed by Foster+Partners as the preferred Conceptual Plan Option ("CPO") for WKCD in March 2011 and up to the conclusion of Stage 3 PE exercise conducted from 30 September to 30 October 2011, WKCD held another 34 meetings with relevant stakeholders to seek their views on the artistic positioning and schedules of accommodation of various facilities. The

Administration has undertaken that the dialogue between WKCDA and stakeholders will continue as the WKCD project progresses.

Partnership with arts groups

6. According to the Administration, resident companies will be an essential component to the operation of individual venues and the development of a vibrant cultural district. As such, WKCDA has planned to invite performing arts organizations to take on a residency role in various forms, including a limited number of full residencies, performance residencies, project-based or short-term residencies; and education partners. There will also be two Resident Company Centres adjacent to the performing venues in WKCD to provide administration and rehearsal and artistic support facilities for arts groups. A study on resident company schemes and the operational and programming arrangements for individual venues in WKCD is being conducted by WKCDA.

Members' concerns

7. The Joint Subcommittee had discussed the subject of WKCDA's communication and co-operation with the arts community in the context of considering the progress of the WKCD project at its meetings in the past three years. Members' views and concerns are highlighted below.

Communication with the arts community

8. Members were concerned about whether WKCDA had put in place a regular mechanism to gauge the views of the local arts community and its mode of communication with them, particularly whether focus group meetings and consultation sessions with the arts and cultural groups had been held. Concern was also raised as to whether WKCDA had been responsive to the views and needs of the local arts community.

9. According to the Administration, WKCDA had been maintaining close communication with stakeholders through various channels such as focus groups. WKCDA had held engagement meetings with performing arts stakeholders every five to six weeks in the form of one-to-one meeting or focus group on, among others, the phasing and priority of the arts and cultural facilities in WKCD. WKCDA would continue to receive views from stakeholders through such engagement meetings. In addition, the Executive Directors of WKCDA had worked closely to ensure that the facilities in WKCD

would meet the cultural and artistic needs and related requirements. The views of the relevant committees under WKCDA would also be taken into consideration in the design and planning of the facilities.

Partnership with local arts groups

10. As the local arts groups attending the Joint Subcommittee's meeting on 16 May 2011 indicated that they did not consider WKCDA as their partner, some members expressed concern about how WKCDA could convince local arts groups that it was their partner, so that both sides would share a common vision to take forward the WKCD project together. It was suggested that the Administration and WKCDA should consider conducting a survey to gauge the views of local arts groups on their relationship with WKCDA, and formulating measures to enhance WKCDA's partnership with the arts community, with a view to promoting the vision of WKCD.

11. In WKCDA's view, it was not surprising that local arts groups had not treated WKCDA as their partner, as WKCDA had not indicated to them the phasing arrangements for WKCD and the impact of the project on their operation and relationship with the Leisure and Cultural Services Department ("LCSD"). The new Chief Executive Officer of WKCDA had tried to establish direct contact and engage in on-going discussions with local arts groups to understand their concerns, with a view to developing a long-term relationship. He would continue his dialogue with the arts community. The Administration stressed that it had all along maintained close collaboration with the arts community and treated it as a partner in the promotion of arts and culture in Hong Kong. Besides the recurrent funding for the nine major performing arts groups,¹ the Administration also provided funding support to small-and-medium-sized arts groups and budding artists.

Provision of venues

12. Noting the concern of the arts community about whether arts groups/artists could access the venues in WKCD and how such venues would be managed, members expressed concern about WKCDA's strategy for venue management, including whether to adopt the artistic accountability system as proposed by the Subcommittee on WKCDD and outsource the management of arts and cultural venues in WKCD. Enquiries were also raised about

¹ The nine major performing groups are the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, the Hong Kong Repertory Theatre, the Hong Kong Dance Company, the Hong Kong Sinfonietta, the Hong Kong Ballet, the City Contemporary Dance Company, the Chung Ying Theatre Company and Zuni Icosahedron.

WKCDA's provision of venues to arts groups for training purposes and how the existing venues managed by LCSD would complement those in WKCD.

13. According to WKCDA, it would build and run the arts and cultural venues in WKCD. WKCDA was consulting stakeholders on the facilities to be built in Phase I of WKCD and due regard would be given to the provision of small and medium-sized performance venues and black box theatres to address the needs of performing arts groups. The increase in the number of performance venues after the launch of WKCD would provide more flexibility to LCSD in assisting small and medium-sized arts groups in accessing such venues.

Cultural programming

14. Members considered that to a large extent, the success of WKCD would hinge on its cultural programming. They were concerned about WKCDA's strategy for programming and expressed worry that WKCDA would merely support the production of profitable programmes to cope with its financial pressure or act as an operator to lease venues to artists. According to WKCDA, the Executive Director, Performing Arts of WKCDA had been heavily involved in the discussion with artists and arts organizations on the programming for WKCD. To make the WKCD project work, WKCDA should play a significant role in the development of an artistic policy and programming. Its role was not to create a central command which would produce all programmes but to collect and reflect the aspirations of the arts community.

Relevant papers

15. A list of the relevant papers with their hyperlinks at LegCo's website is in the **Appendix**.

Appendix

Relevant papers on Communication and cooperation between the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority and the arts community

Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
House Committee	8.7.2005	<u>Report of the Subcommittee on West Kowloon Cultural District Development on Phase I Study</u>
	6.1.2006	<u>Report of the Subcommittee on West Kowloon Cultural District Development on Phase II Study</u>
	20.6.2008	<u>Report of the Subcommittee on West Kowloon Cultural District Development on Phase III Study</u>
Joint Subcommittee to Monitor the Implementation of the West Kowloon Cultural District Project	13.1.2009 Item II	<u>Agenda Minutes</u>
	14.4.2009 Item II	<u>Agenda Minutes</u>
	19.6.2009 Item II	<u>Agenda Minutes</u>
	7.9.2009 Item II	<u>Agenda Minutes</u>
	16.4.2010 Item II(b)	<u>Agenda Minutes</u>
	20.9.2010 Item I	<u>Agenda Minutes</u>
	16.5.2011 Item II	<u>Agenda Minutes</u>

Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
	11.7.2011 Item I(a)	Agenda Minutes
	26.8.2011 Item I	Agenda Minutes

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
19 April 2012