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

**Updated background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat
for the meeting on 9 June 2014**

**Development of cultural software to complement
the West Kowloon Cultural District project**

Purpose

This paper provides information on the development of cultural software to complement the West Kowloon Cultural District ("WKCD") project and summarizes the major views and concerns of the Joint Subcommittees formed under the Panel on Home Affairs and the Panel on Development in the Fourth and Fifth Legislative Council ("LegCo") to monitor the implementation of the WKCD project on the subject.

Background

2. By virtue of section 4(2) of the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority Ordinance (Cap. 601), the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority ("WKCDA") is required to perform its functions in ways which aim to achieve various objectives. They include, among others, cultivating and nurturing local talents in the arts (including local artists), local arts groups and arts-related personnel; encouraging wider participation by the local community in arts and culture; and promoting and providing arts education to the local community.

3. According to WKCDA, in the coming years leading up to the opening of the arts and cultural venues in WKCD, WKCDA will organize a series of programmes and activities in collaboration with educational institutes, arts organizations and community groups to link WKCD with the community and to groom talents for WKCD and the local arts sector. In promoting the

development of cultural software, WKCDA will focus its work on three major areas, viz. audience development, artistic and professional development, and governance and organizational development.   According to the Administration, to tie in with the development of WKCD, the Government and its collaborators adopt a multi-pronged approach in promoting cultural software development in Hong Kong, which includes supporting arts programme development, stepping up audience building, enhancing arts education and strengthening the grooming of talents.

Members' concerns

Respective roles of the Administration and WKCDA

4.   Concern had been expressed about the delineation of responsibility between the Home Affairs Bureau ("HAB") and WKCDA in the development of cultural software.   Members had called for closer collaboration between HAB and WKCDA to ensure the re-alignment of the existing public arts and cultural facilities to complement the WKCD project.

5.   As advised by the Administration and WKCDA, the planning and development of performing arts ("PA") programmes and exhibition programmes in WKCD would be based essentially on the recommendations of the Performing Arts Committee and the Museum Committee of WKCDA.   Given HAB's role in overseeing arts and cultural policy to complement the WKCD project, the Administration was mindful of the need to ensure effective co-ordination between HAB and WKCDA.   In the view of the Administration and WKCDA, the relationship between the existing and new arts and cultural venues was complementary rather than competitive and the new arts and cultural facilities in WKCD should help address the venue shortage problem currently encountered by the arts and cultural sector.   The Administration was committed to building up a solid audience base to complement the expanded capacity of performance venues brought about by the WKCD development.

6.   Some members expressed concern that instead of entrusting the task of developing cultural software entirely to WKCDA, the Government should play a leading and more proactive role in the planning and promotion of cultural software development not only for the WKCD project but also for the overall long-term development of the arts and culture in Hong Kong.   The Government should allocate more resources to facilitate cultural software development outside the context of the WKCD project, such as promoting the arts and culture in the community and strengthening support for small and medium-sized arts groups.

7.	According to the Administration, apart from the work being undertaken by WKCDA, the Government and its collaborators had been implementing various initiatives to strengthen cultural software development. In addition to increasing funding allocation to the Hong Kong Arts Development Council ("HKADC") to enhance its support for small and medium-sized arts groups, the Government had since 2011 introduced the Arts Capacity Development Funding Scheme to disburse an annual provision of around $30 million to support worthwhile initiatives from arts practitioners as well as small and medium-sized arts groups. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department ("LCSD") had also increased its funding support for young artists and small and medium-sized arts groups to stage performances in LCSD's arts and cultural programmes and activities. Besides, from 2013-2014 onwards, the District Councils would be provided with an additional $20.8 million per annum under the Community Involvement Fund to strengthen the support for promoting arts and cultural activities in 18 districts.

Arts education and audience building

8.	Members generally took the view that nurturing of audience was pivotal to the success of the WKCD project and students should be given sufficient opportunities to cultivate their interest and appreciation ability in the arts and culture in an early stage. They called on the Administration to enhance collaboration among various government bureaux/departments to promote arts education in schools.

9.	The Administration assured members that HAB had been in close discussion with the Education Bureau ("EDB") on the promotion of arts education in schools. Under the new senior secondary curriculum, students were provided with more opportunities to learn and sustain contacts with the arts and culture. EDB had been supporting schools to implement arts education through the provision of learning and teaching materials, teacher training programmes, financial resources and student activities. In the 2011-2012 school year, the amount of resources directly used by various key learning areas to develop learning and teaching resources related to arts and culture was about $8 million. The Audience Building Office of LCSD also helped to promote knowledge and appreciation of PA at community and school levels through organizing a wide spectrum of audience building schemes and arts educational activities. HKADC had also organized the "Arts Ambassadors-in-School Scheme", which aimed to encourage primary and secondary students with a flair for the arts to become arts ambassadors and take their passion for the arts beyond campuses into the community.

10.	In response to members' enquiry about whether WKCDA would work in collaboration with schools and universities to promote students' interest in arts

and enhance their ability to appreciate different arts performances, WKCDA advised members that it had maintained liaison and discussion with EDB and universities on the organization of events to bring WKCD to the community. WKCDA established a Creative Learning Unit in 2011 to, among others, promote arts education in collaboration with EDB and schools. It had also obtained Short Term Tenancies from the Lands Department to accommodate temporary structures at the WKCD site for organizing a range of arts and cultural activities to build audience.

Nurturing of local arts talents and arts-related personnel

11. Some members expressed worry that upon the launch of the first phase of the WKCD project in 2015, there was still a lack of sufficient arts professionals/administrators in Hong Kong. They considered that nurturing of arts professionals required not only the efforts of HAB but also its collaboration with other government bureaux/departments such as EDB. Members also considered that apart from enhancing the nurturing of local artistic and creative talents, the Administration and WKCDA should also attach importance to strengthening the training of facility management professionals to meet the manpower demand arising from the phased commissioning of the WKCD facilities in the next few years.

12. The Administration stressed that HAB had all along been maintaining close liaison with EDB in nurturing arts professionals. Local tertiary institutions had offered various programmes in arts administration, which should help nurture arts professionals to cope with the manpower demand arising from the development of WKCD. To provide further support for the grooming of local arts professionals, the Government planned to provide an additional funding of $150 million to offer more than 600 new training opportunities to strengthen the training of arts administrators at various level of experience for five years starting from 2013-2014. The training programmes ranged from local internships, attachments to/internships in renowned overseas museums, scholarships for overseas/local arts or cultural Master's degree or professional training programmes, to in-service training for up-coming arts leaders and LCSD staff in charge of duties relating to performing arts, visual arts and museum and arts marketing. In addition, WKCDA had supported and funded various capacity-building initiatives to provide more learning opportunities for practising professionals and to train new talents. It would continue its discussions with local educational institutes and arts organizations, such as the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts ("HKAPA") and the Arts Administrators' Association, to bring more capacity building programmes to Hong Kong in the coming years.

13.   Members in general considered that the Administration and WKCDA should provide more opportunities for local arts talents to take part in the WKCD project, so that they would be able to benefit from the transfer of knowledge and expertise from the foreign talents engaged in the project. WKCDA responded that 90% of its serving staff members were from Hong Kong.   It had always tried to recruit locally and would bring in talents from other places only when the requisite expertise could not be found in Hong Kong. In WKCDA's view, bringing in overseas expertise would not only fill the gaps in the skills required for the success of the WKCD project, but also facilitate the transfer of knowledge to local talents over time, thereby helping build up local expertise.

Support for arts groups

14.   Members were of the view that funding support for various arts groups should aim at promoting diversity and balanced development of the local arts scene.   The Administration was urged to increase the subvention to HKADC to strengthen its support for budding artists and small and medium-sized arts groups.

15.   According the Administration, while LCSD had been playing a key role in audience building and bringing culture and the arts to the public, the core mission of HKADC was to nurture budding artists and support the development of small and medium-sized arts groups through its various funding schemes and programmes.   For the long-term development of arts and culture, HAB had commissioned a consultancy study in early 2010 to develop a new set of assessment criteria and funding mechanism for major performing arts groups ("MPAGs"), an entry and exit mechanism to MPAGs, and an articulation ladder for the second- and lower-tier arts groups to become MPAGs.   Besides, the Administration injected $3 billion into the Arts and Sport Development Fund as seed money in 2010 and the annual investment returns were used to subsidize the long-term development of culture and the arts and sports.

16.   Concern was also expressed that as many local arts groups and arts practitioners were no longer able to operate in industrial buildings owing to the rental increase in recent years, the Administration should step up efforts to make available more arts space for them in districts.   The Administration advised members that additional funding had been earmarked for HKADC to renovate and make available arts space for artists in an industrial building in Wong Chuk Hang.   HKADC would undertake renovation works and operate a scheme to enable new and budding artists to lease the units for arts creation at a concessionary rate.

Mode of governance of WKCD facilities

17.   During the discussion on the facility and artistic partnership framework for PA venues in WKDC at the meeting of the Joint Subcommittee on 28 March 2014, Hon Alan LEONG expressed concern whether WKCDA would implement an artistic accountability system at the PA venues in WKCD under which the artistic directors or resident partners appointed would be tasked to take charge of the artistic programming and operation of the venues. According to WKCDA, it would establish the artistic positioning for each PA venue in WKCD and develop a suitable mode of governance and a business model for each venue which supported its artistic positioning.   The artistic director or resident partner appointed for each venue would take charge of the artistic programming of the venue and be responsible for the artistic output and overall image of the venue.

18.   On the future mode of governance of Xiqu Centre, one of the earliest PA venue to come on stream, members were advised that taking into account the artistic positioning and views of the Xiqu sector, WKCDA decided to directly operate Xiqu Centre, instead of engaging a single troupe to take on a residency role at Xiqu Centre.   WKCDA also advised members that while the advisory committee to be set up would advise the WKCDA management on various matters relating to the programming, partnership, management and operation of Xiqu Centre, the Artistic Director to be appointed would take charge of the artistic direction of the venue and would be responsible to the management and Board of WKCDA.   Dr Hon Helena WONG suggested that apart from the Artistic Director and General Manager, WKCDA should also engage an expert in Xiqu education to take charge of matters relating to the promotion of Xiqu education, audience building and community participation.

19.   Members urged the Administration/WKCDA to carefully devise the facility and artistic partnership framework for the PA venues in WKCD such that both major and small art groups would be provided with the opportunity to become partners of the venues.   WKCDA advised that it would first develop and establish the artistic positioning and business model for each PA venue in WKCD, based on which the requirements to be fulfilled for becoming resident or associate partners would be drawn up.   WKCDA assured members that an open, objective and professional mechanism would be set up under the WKCDA Board's supervision for the selection of partners.

Targets for cultural software development

20.   Some members considered that the Administration/WKCDA should set specific targets for the development of cultural software (e.g. number of visits made to public museums by primary/secondary school students, number of arts

talents trained by HKAPA, and number of arts critics nurtured in a certain period of time, etc.) so as to facilitate review of the progress made in the relevant areas of work.

21.　　The Administration advised that while it might not be suitable to set specific and quantitative targets for cultural software development, which was a long-term undertaking and relatively abstract in nature, it had kept information concerning the arts and cultural programmes organized by the Government and its collaborators, such as the target and actual numbers of participants of individual arts and cultural events/training schemes.　Besides, the key performance targets and indicators in respect of the planned programmes for the promotion and development of culture and the arts were set out in the Controlling Officer's Report incorporated in the Government's Estimates for each financial year.　The Administration also stressed that the goal of software development strategy was to develop the institution, which included the artist community, the audience, the facility's policies, the leadership and the vision, before the opening of the venues.　Such an approach would ensure that the venues were firmly rooted and integrated in the local community when they were commissioned.

Latest development

22.　　The Administration and WKCDA will update the Joint Subcommittee on the development of cultural software to complement the WKCD project at its meeting on 9 June 2014.　Deputations are invited to give views on the subject.

Relevant papers

23.　　A list of the relevant papers on the LegCo Website is in the **Appendix**.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
5 June 2014

**Relevant papers on
Development of cultural software to complement
the West Kowloon Cultural District project**

Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Joint Subcommittee to Monitor the Implementation of the West Kowloon Cultural District Project	16.4.2010 Item II(b)	Agenda CB(2)1283/09-10(03) Minutes
	14.1.2011 Item III(c)	Agenda CB(2)795/10-11(04) Minutes
	27.6.2012 Item I	Agenda CB(2)2369/11-12(01) Minutes
	10.6.2013 Item III	Agenda CB(2)1247-12-13(02) Minutes Supplementary information provided by the Administration in November 2013 CB(2)390/13-14(01)
	29.11.2013 (Item III)	Agenda Minutes
	28.3.2014 (Items III and IV)	Agenda

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