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Paper for the House Committee meeting on 24 June 2016

**Report of the Subcommittee on Public Health and Municipal Services
(Fees and Charges) (Museums) (Amendment) Regulation 2016**

Purpose

This paper reports the deliberations of the Subcommittee on Public Health and Municipal Services (Fees and Charges) (Museums) (Amendment) Regulation 2016 ("the Subcommittee").

Background

2. According to the Administration, the month-long free admission to the Leisure and Cultural Services Department ("LCSD") museums¹ launched in January 2016 under the "Appreciate Hong Kong" Campaign was well received by the public. To further promote the appreciation of art, culture, history and science, as well as to widen the audience base, the Chief Executive announced in his 2016 Policy Address that the Government would make free admission to permanent exhibitions of designated museums of LCSD a standing practice.

3. Under the new initiative, the following changes will be made to the existing arrangements for the seven fee-charging designated museums²:

- (a) all visitors should be allowed free admission to permanent

¹ Except the Hong Kong Museum of Art and the Hong Kong Space Museum which were closed for renovation during that time.

² Among the 17 museums managed by LCSD, general admission fees are levied in the following seven museums:

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

exhibitions of five fee-charging designated museums, namely the Hong Kong Museum of Art, Hong Kong Heritage Museum, Hong Kong Museum of History, Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence and Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum;

- (b) full-time students should be allowed free admission to permanent exhibitions of the Hong Kong Science Museum ("HKScM") and the Hong Kong Space Museum ("HKSpM") (except the Space Theatre of HKSpM), with a view to enhancing the promotion of science and astronomical knowledge among students;
- (c) to complement the arrangement in paragraph 3(b) above, the fees for admission to permanent exhibitions of HKScM by visitors other than full-time students should be reduced by 20%;
- (d) the charges of annual museum passes should be reduced by 50%, because visitors would enjoy free admission (or admission at reduced fees) to permanent exhibitions of the fee-charging museums under the new initiative. All other museum passes (i.e., half-yearly, monthly and weekly passes) should be abolished in anticipation of significantly lower demand after the implementation of free admission; and
- (e) the existing free admission arrangement for all visitors on Wednesdays and International Museum Day, Hong Kong³, should be formalized.

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

Public Health and Municipal Services (Fees and Charges) (Museums) (Amendment) Regulation 2016 ("the Amendment Regulation") (L.N. 84 of 2016)

5. The Amendment Regulation is made by the Secretary for Home Affairs under section 124J(1) of the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap. 132) to amend the Public Health and Municipal Services (Fees and Charges) (Museums) Regulation (Cap. 132CK) in order to give effect to the changes in paragraph 3 above.

³ Usually a specified Saturday and Sunday in May

6. The Amendment Regulation was gazetted on 20 May 2016 and tabled at the Legislative Council on 25 May 2016 for negative vetting.

7. The Amendment Regulation will come into operation on 1 August 2016.

The Subcommittee

8. At the House Committee meeting on 27 May 2016, Members agreed to form a subcommittee to study the Amendment Regulation. The membership list of the Subcommittee is at **Appendix II**.

9. Under the chairmanship of Dr CHIANG Lai-wan, the Subcommittee held a meeting with the Administration on 13 June 2016. The Subcommittee has also invited the public and the three Museum Advisory Panels⁴ to provide written submissions on the Amendment Regulation. A list of individuals/organizations who/which have provided written submissions is at **Appendix III**.

Deliberations of the Subcommittee

Request for free admission to permanent exhibitions of the seven fee-charging museums of LCSD⁵

10. Members in general welcome the new initiative of free admission. Miss CHAN Yuen-han and Mr Christopher CHUNG, however, consider that all visitors should be allowed free admission to permanent exhibitions of all existing seven fee-charging museums instead of only five designated ones (see paragraph 3(a) above). They have urged the Administration to allow the public, instead of only full-time students, free admission to permanent exhibitions of HKScM and HKSpM as well. According to the Amendment Regulation, among the seven fee-charging LCSD museums, HKScM and HKSpM will admit only full-time students free-of-charge to their permanent exhibitions.

11. The Administration has advised that the proposal is made taking into consideration the capacity constraints of HKScM and HKSpM⁶, and the objective of enhancing the promotion of science and astronomical knowledge

⁴ The three Museum Advisory Panels advise the Government on the work of LCSD museums in relation to art, history and science streams respectively. Members comprise museum experts, academics, marketing professionals and community leaders.

⁵ See footnote 2

⁶ According to the Administration, the area for permanent exhibitions in HKScM and HKSpM is 6 500 m² and 1 600 m² respectively.

among students. The Administration has explained that given the larger number of interactive exhibits in HKScM and HKSpM, if the number of visitors of the two museums is significantly increased, the queuing time for operating the interactive exhibits will be lengthened, thus giving rise to a crowded and noisy environment which will affect the quality of learning experience to be gained by visitors. Furthermore, in light of the increased damage rate of interactive exhibits in HKScM during the free admission period under the "Appreciate Hong Kong" Campaign⁷, the Administration considers it necessary to pay heed to the capacity constraints of HKScM and HKSpM in determining the number of visitors which the museums can accommodate under the new initiative, in order to keep the interactive exhibits in good condition and to ensure a safe and pleasant visit for the visitors.

12. The Administration has further advised that although only full-time students will be allowed free admission to permanent exhibitions of HKScM and HKSpM, the arrangement for free admission to museum on Wednesdays and International Museum Day, Hong Kong, will be maintained. Besides, the existing mechanism for fee-waiver applications will remain valid for schools, charitable and non-profit making organizations. Hence, all members of the public will still have the opportunity to enjoy free admission to permanent exhibitions of HKScM and HKSpM under the new arrangements. The Administration has explained that it aims to encourage more visits to HKScM and HKSpM but intends to do so progressively.

13. Miss CHAN Yuen-han and Mr Christopher CHUNG, however, consider that it is far from satisfactory to allow only full-time students free admission to permanent exhibitions of HKScM and HKSpM, and the arrangement is not in line with the objective of encouraging more visits to museums for building a wider audience base. Miss CHAN Yuen-han has expressed the view that it is a common international practice that local people are not charged for admission to the public museums in their countries. She, together with some other members including Mr MA Fung-kuok and Mr Christopher CHUNG, have suggested that the Administration may implement crowd control measures (e.g., online reservation of tickets and viewing sessions) which may also serve the purpose of regulating the flow of visitors. The Administration has explained that arrangements to distribute tickets for visits to HKSpM by sessions had been made in the past, but it was found that some visitors who had obtained tickets did not show up while those without tickets had to wait for entry, leading to disputes over the admission arrangements. The

⁷ During the free admission period in January 2016, the number of visitors recorded by HKScM increased from 54 508 to 126 372, representing an increase of 132% as compared with the attendance for the same period in 2015. The damage rate of interactive exhibits in HKScM increased from 3.6% in January 2015 to 7.8% in January 2016.

Administration has stressed that given the larger number of interactive exhibits in HKScM and HKSpM, the quality of learning experience will be affected if too many visitors are admitted at the same time. Moreover, at present, the admission rate of HKScM is not low.

14. Some other members including Dr CHIANG Lai-wan and Mr YIU Si-wing have also expressed concern that if all members of the public are allowed free admission to permanent exhibitions of HKScM and HKSpM, many people will be attracted to visit these museums. As a result, visitors will have to queue up for a long time for operating the interactive exhibits or using other museum facilities, and the quality of learning experience will deteriorate.

15. The Administration has explained that as it is the first time to allow all visitors free admission to permanent exhibitions of five designated museums, the Administration intends to conduct a review one year after the Amendment Regulation comes into operation. In light of the operational experience and review outcome, the Administration will further explore the feasibility of allowing all visitors free admission to permanent exhibitions of HKScM and HKSpM. The Administration has undertaken to report the outcome of the review to the Panel on Home Affairs. Mr IP Kin-yuen has expressed support for the approach as he considers it fair to first assess the impact of the new arrangements on museum operation before making a decision on the matter. He considers it important to ensure a safe and pleasant visit for the visitors.

16. Dr Kenneth CHAN has suggested that to encourage museum visits and promote the appreciation of culture, history and science, LCSD should not only resort to free admission or fee reduction but also seek to enhance the quality of museum service by conducting studies to collect useful data for its service planning. At the request of Dr CHAN, the Administration has provided the "Corporate Business Plan of LCSD Museums for 2015-2020 and Annual Plans of Individual Museums for 2015-2016" for members' reference.

Group tickets

17. Mr YIU Si-wing has suggested that the existing arrangement that groups of 20 persons or above can enjoy a 30% discount on standard tickets should be revised. He considers that groups of 10 persons or above should be entitled to enjoy the discount. In his view, reducing the group size will facilitate the tourist industry as there are often just over 10 participants in a tour. The Administration has advised that the fee levels for admission to museums are reviewed as a package and it is not suitable to revise any particular item separately. That said, the Administration has undertaken to consider Mr YIU's suggestion in the next admission fee review for museums.

Recommendation

18. The Subcommittee does not object to the Amendment Regulation. The Subcommittee and the Administration have not proposed any amendment.

Advice sought

19. Members are invited to note the deliberations of the Subcommittee.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
23 June 2016

Existing and Revised Fees to Permanent Exhibitions of the LCSD Museums

Item	Existing Provisions	Existing fee (HK\$) ¹	Revised fee (HK\$)
Museum Tickets for a Single Entry			
1.	Standard Ticket		
	(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.	Group Ticket (for 20 persons or above)		
	(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.	Concessionary Ticket (for full-time students, elderly aged 60 or above, disabled persons (including their accompanying carers on 1:1 basis))		
	(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)

¹ 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\$) ¹	Revised fee (HK\$)
Free admission to all existing fee-charging museums			
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 ²	Free	Free
Museum Passes (for unlimited number of entries to both permanent exhibitions and special exhibitions of designated museums)			
8.	A pass for 1 year		
	- concessionary rate (for full-time students ³ , elderly aged 60 or above and disabled persons)	50	25
	- members of the same family (up to a maximum of 4 persons)	200	100
	- any other person	100	50
9.	A pass for 6 months		
	- 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.	A pass for 1 month		
		50	To be abolished
11.	A pass for 1 week		
		30	To be abolished

² Usually a specified Saturday and Sunday in May

³ The concessionary rate for annual museum pass for full-time students, which pertains to a fee solely for entries to special exhibitions of designated museums, will be separately determined by the Director of Leisure and Cultural Services subject to approval of the Financial Secretary by virtue of section 124K of the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap.132).

**Subcommittee on Public Health and Municipal Services
(Fees and Charges) (Museums) (Amendment) Regulation 2016**

Membership list

Chairman	Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, JP
Members	Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC Hon YIU Si-wing, BBS Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP Hon CHAN Chi-chuen Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok Hon CHAN Yuen-han, SBS, JP Hon IP Kin-yuen Hon TANG Ka-piu, JP Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun, BBS, MH, JP Total : 10 Members
Clerk	Ms Joanne MAK
Legal Adviser	Miss Winnie LO
Date	8 June 2016

《2016年公眾衛生及市政(費用)(博物館)(修訂)規例》小組委員會
Subcommittee on Public Health and Municipal Services
(Fees and Charges) (Museums) (Amendment) Regulation 2016

曾向小組委員會提交意見書的團體/個別人士名單
List of organizations/individuals which/who have
made submissions to the Subcommittee

名稱	<u>Name</u>
1. 利張錫齡女士, JP 藝術博物館諮詢委員會委員	Mrs Nancy LEE, JP Member of the Art Museum Advisory Panel
2. 科學博物館諮詢委員會	The Science Museum Advisory Panel
3. 香港旅遊促進會	The Hong Kong Tourism Association
4. 黃偉賢先生 元朗區議會議員	Mr Zachary WONG Wai-yin Member of Yuen Long District Council
5. 葉智榮先生 藝術博物館諮詢委員會委員	Mr Alan YIP Member of the Art Museum Advisory Panel
6. 龐俊怡先生, JP 藝術博物館諮詢委員會委員	Mr David PONG Chun-ye, JP Member of the Art Museum Advisory Panel