

# 立法會

## *Legislative Council*

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### **Panel on Home Affairs**

#### **Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat for the meeting on 9 December 2019**

#### **Pre-construction activities for expansion of Hong Kong Science Museum and Hong Kong Museum of History**

### **Purpose**

This paper summarizes the past discussion held by the Panel on Home Affairs ("the Panel") on the progress and plans on renewal of permanent exhibition galleries of the Hong Kong Science Museum ("HKScM") and Hong Kong Museum of History ("HKMH").

### **Background**

#### Hong Kong Science Museum

2. HKScM was opened in 1991. According to the Administration, HKScM is dedicated to promoting Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics education among students and the general public, captivating the public's interest, curiosity and imagination through interactive exhibits, and providing enlightening programmes for a better understanding and a greater appreciation of the nature. HKScM has 17 exhibition galleries occupying a total area of 7 245 sq m. Sixteen of these galleries are for permanent exhibitions and one (745 sq m) is for housing temporary special exhibitions.

#### Hong Kong Museum of History

3. The current premises of HKMH, with a total exhibition area of 8 000 sq m, have been opened to the public since 1998. Standing at its core is *The Hong Kong Story* permanent exhibition, which has been opened since 2001 occupying an area of 7 000 sq m. Through its eight galleries displaying more than 4 000 exhibits, 750 graphic panels and 53 audio-visual programmes, *The Hong Kong Story* exhibition outlines the natural environment, folk culture and historical development of Hong Kong vividly.

## **Panel's discussion**

4. At its meeting on 17 November 2014, the Panel discussed measures to enhance public museum services and proposals to renew the permanent exhibitions of several public museums (including the permanent exhibitions of HKMH). The Panel also discussed the audience building strategies, programming plans, and the progress and plans on renewal of permanent exhibition galleries of HKScM at its meeting on 19 December 2018. The major concerns expressed by members at these meetings are summarized below.

### Lack of major renewal of the permanent exhibitions of the Hong Kong Science Museum

5. Members in general expressed concern that many of the permanent exhibition galleries of HKScM had not undergone any major renewal since HKScM's opening in 1991. They requested the Administration to renew HKScM's permanent exhibition galleries at more regular intervals to replace outdated exhibits so as to keep up with the latest scientific and technological advancements. Some members requested the Administration to conduct a strategic review of the long-term development of HKScM, with a view to sustaining HKScM's appeal to the public and keeping pace with technological change. These members further suggested that in renewing HKScM's exhibition galleries, the Administration should make reference to overseas science museums, such as the London Science Museum and California Academy of Sciences, and consult the innovation and technology sector in Hong Kong and the policy bureaux concerned.

6. The Administration advised that HKScM had a record-breaking attendance level of over 1.95 million visitors in the financial year 2017-2018 and played an important educational role for local students. While acknowledging the need to keep pace with technological change in planning for renewal the permanent exhibitions of HKScM, the Administration explained that it was also necessary to avoid frequent closure of HKScM for the renewal works so as to avoid causing disruption to public attendance. The Administration advised that the renewal works of the permanent exhibition galleries, therefore, had to be conducted in phases. In this connection, HKScM planned to launch a five-year programme starting from the 2019-2020 financial year to replace and upgrade selected exhibits in five of the 16 permanent exhibition galleries. The total funding required for the above five-year programme was estimated at \$20 million, while the renewal of the remaining galleries would be funded separately.

7. The Administration advised that relevant bureaux and trades would be consulted on HKScM's renewal programme, while the Museum Advisory

Committee and its subcommittees comprising experts from relevant fields would also offer advice. The funding requirement for the proposed five-year programme would cover layout planning, fabrication and installation of the new exhibits, etc. in the five permanent exhibition galleries of HKScM. The Administration informed members that it was also exploring expansion of HKScM in the long run, in order to make room for more innovative exhibits and for conducting experimental workshops for visiting students.

#### Adoption of multimedia technology for exhibitions of the Hong Kong Museum of History

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8. Members in general were supportive of the proposals to renew the permanent exhibitions of several public museums including HKMH. Some members suggested that the Administration should ensure that its museums were providing inspiring and educational exhibitions through the development of interactive exhibits and multimedia programmes that could help nurture creativity amongst youngsters and foster their interest in science, history and heritage.

9. The Administration advised that as far as HKMH was concerned, the proposed renewal of its permanent exhibitions would draw reference to the revamping exercise carried out recently in the Imperial War Museum in London concerning the permanent exhibition on the First World War with a cost of £40 million. The Administration explained that while the two projects were similar in scale, it was the Government's plan to adopt likewise advanced multimedia technology to bring fun and exciting experience to visitors to the exhibitions. Interactive exhibits and multimedia programmes would be developed for this purpose.

#### Enlarging the audience base of the Hong Kong Museum of History

10. Some members expressed concern about the low attendance rates and the large sums of money to be spent on renewing the permanent exhibitions at some public museums including HKMH. These members considered that the Administration should explore measures to attract more visitors to these museums. They suggested that collaboration with the education and commercial sectors should be pursued for the purpose of building up and enlarging the audience base.

11. The Administration advised that since the opening in 1998, the exhibitions of HKMH, which were both entertaining and educational, had attracted more than seven million visitors and been acclaimed as one of the must-see attractions in Hong Kong by many travel agents over the years. In 2013 alone, the total number of visitors to HKMH was about 0.86 million. That said, it was the

Government's future direction to utilize advanced technology to bring fun and exciting experience to visitors to public museums, where possible.

12. The Administration further advised that given the scale and complexity of the works involved, the estimated project cost for the renewal of HKMH was about \$466 million. The renewal works would include commissioning academic research, revamping the design and layout of the exhibition, fabrication of exhibits, development of interactive exhibits and multimedia programmes, removal, fabrication and installation works, etc.

### **Latest development**

13. The Administration will consult the Panel on the proposed pre-construction activities for the expansion of HKScM and HKMH at the next meeting on 9 December 2019.

### **Relevant papers**

14. A list of the relevant papers on the LegCo website is in the **Appendix**.

**Relevant papers on  
Pre-construction activities for expansion of Hong Kong Science Museum  
and Hong Kong Museum of History**

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>Paper</b>
Panel on Home Affairs	17.11.2014 (Item V)	<a href="#">Agenda</a> <a href="#">Minutes</a>
Legislative Council	17.12.2014	<a href="#">Official Record of Proceedings</a> <a href="#">Pages 36 to 47</a>
	2.3.2016	<a href="#">Official Record of Proceedings</a> <a href="#">Pages 151 to 153</a>
	8.6.2016	<a href="#">Official Record of Proceedings</a> <a href="#">Pages 128 to 133</a>
Panel on Home Affairs	19.12.2018 (Item IV)	<a href="#">Agenda</a> <a href="#">Minutes</a>