

Consultation Panel
of the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority

Minutes of the Twenty-Ninth Meeting of the Consultation Panel
of the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority

Date : 27 May 2020 (Wednesday)

Time : 2:30 pm

Venue : Board Room, West Kowloon Cultural District Authority,
Units 608-613, Level 6, Core C, Cyberport 3,
100 Cyberport Road, Hong Kong

Members Present:

Chairman

Mr Ambrose HO, SBS, SC, JP

Members

Hon Ronald ARCULLI, GBM, GBS, JP

Ms Mimi CHEUNG Yee-may, JP

Mr Christopher Wicky CHEUNG

Mr CHING Cheung-ying, MH

Mr CHOW Yick-hay, BBS, JP

Prof Derek COLLINS

Ms Anita GIDUMAL

Mr Andy HO Wing-cheong

Prof Lena LEE

Ms Yolanda NG Yuen-ting, MH

Mr Kyrus SIU King-wai

Mr Jason WONG Chun-tat, JP

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Secretary:

Ms Stella WONG
Head, Public Engagement,
Communications and Public Affairs

In Attendance:

Home Affairs Bureau

Mr Kirk YIP Hoi-ying
(West Kowloon Cultural
District)

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Mr Duncan PESCOD, GBS, JP Chief Executive Officer

Ms Judy KWAN
General Manager,
Communications and Public Affairs

Mr Norman HEUNG, BBS Administrative Assistant to Board
Chairman

Agenda Item (3)

Mr LIN Siu-mun
General Manager,
Construction Projects

Mr NG Ying-chuen
General Manager,
Engineering Services

Absent with Apologies:

Mr Chris IP Ngo-tung, JP

Mr Henry CHAN Chi-chiu, MH, JP

Mr Wyborn LEUNG Wai-hong

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Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed Members, the representatives of the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority (“WKCD A”/ the “Authority”) and Home Affairs Bureau to the Twenty-Ninth meeting of the Consultation Panel of WKCD A (“CP”). He also said this was the first CP meeting since he took up the chairmanship and he looked forward to working with Members in the coming days.

Agenda Item (1) - Confirmation of the Minutes of the Twenty-Eighth Consultation Panel Meeting

2. The Chairman said that the Secretariat had circulated the draft minutes of the Twenty-Eighth meeting on 12 November 2019 and had not received any proposed amendment to the minutes from Members. As Members had no other comments, the minutes of the Twenty-Eighth meeting were confirmed.

Agenda Item (2) - Matters Arising

3. The Chairman said that there was no matter arising from the last meeting.

Agenda Item (3) - Update on the Progress of the West Kowloon Cultural District Development (WKCD A CP/01/2020)

4. By way of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr LIN Siu-mun reported on the progress of the hardware development of the West

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Kowloon Cultural District (the “District”). Some projects had been completed, including the Xiqu Centre, Freespace, the Art Park and the Competition Pavilion (previously named as Temporary Pavilion) and some projects were still under construction, including the M+ building, the Hong Kong Palace Museum (“HKPM”) and the Lyric Theatre Complex (“LTC”). The application for fire services inspection of M+ building had been submitted with a target to obtain the Occupation Permit for the building in July 2020. Works for Zone 2A of the Integrated Basement and Artist Square Bridge had started in May 2020.

5. Ms Anita GIDUMAL enquired about the utilisation rate of facilities and number of shows performed in the Xiqu Centre since its opening. Mr Duncan PESCOD updated that for the first six months after opening, the utilisation rates of the Grand Theatre and the Tea House Theatre were over 75% and 66% respectively; while for the studios, the utilisation rate was about 40 – 45%. There was significant impact on the use of facilities since the end of 2019 due to the social unrest and COVID-19 pandemic, as more than 250 performances and programmes of the Xiqu Centre and Freespace had been rescheduled or cancelled. The Authority was working on the protocol for re-opening of the performing arts venues to ensure the safety of participants.

6. Ms Anita GIDUMAL further asked about the financial impact brought by the influence of show cancellation and decrease of capacity on the budget of the Authority. Mr Duncan PESCOD said the impact had been significant. He went on to say that the Board of WKCDA had set up a task force to look at the Authority’s budget. As a result, the budget had been reduced by around 20%. The Authority would review the budget in a six-month cycle for adjustment if necessary.

(Mr CHOW Yick-hay arrived at 2:45pm.)

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7. Mr LIN Siu-mun shared that the Competition Pavilion was a winning design of the “Young Architects and Designers Competition”. The structure of the Competition Pavilion was designed to be demountable.

8. The Chairman asked about the duration of display of the Competition Pavilion. Mr LIN Siu-mun explained that the Competition Pavilion was required to obtain the Places of Public Entertainment Licence from the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department every six months to extend its opening to the public. Mr Duncan PESCOD added that WKCDA was committed to supporting different art forms, including design and architecture. The “Young Architects and Designers Competition” aimed to support and engage local young architects and designers by building and showcasing the winning design as a reward. The Authority intended to look for a more permanent site for the structure and would hope to organise the Competition again in the future.

(Mr Jason WONG arrived at 2:48pm.)

9. Referring to the enquiry of Ms Anita GIDUMAL, Mr Duncan PESCOD shared that the Competition Pavilion had been used for performances like musical dance in Freespace Happening and other ceremonies. Visitors were encouraged to relax and enjoy sunset at the Competition Pavilion or just use it in more or less any way they like.

10. The Chairman suggested that the Competition could be held less frequently to allow a longer display period thus more visitors could enjoy the place. Mr Duncan PESCOD agreed and said that the Authority intended to organise the Competition again in non-annual basis and had been trying to work it as a sponsored event.

11. Mr LIN Siu-mun continued to introduce the facilities and galleries of M+ building, and the development of the Art Park and

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Freespace. The structural work for M+ building was completed and under interior finishing. The Conservation and Storage Facilities and WKCDA Tower were located next to M+ building. For the development of the Art Park, Retail, Dining and Entertainment (“RDE”) facilities were located along the waterfront promenade. The unique features and capacity of The Box, the signature black box theatre of Freespace, were also introduced.

12. In response to the Chairman’s question, Mr NG Ying-chuen added that Freespace was in operation since June 2019. The Chairman further asked about the utilisation rate of Freespace. Mr Duncan PESCOD supplemented that the rate initially was over 70% for a diverse range of performances. The Room and The Studio in Freespace were for both rehearsals and performances. Besides, Lau Bak, the Livehouse in Freespace, had live music at the weekends. In line with the Government's measures to address the situation of public health emergency, the Authority switched to present the live music online and was the pioneer in town doing so.

13. Prof Derek COLLINS asked about the strategy behind the production of Freespace programmes. Mr Duncan PESCOD mentioned that the strategy in the opening period was to be diverse in genres as it could reflect the reactions of audiences towards various performances, such as jazz, dance and theatre. The Authority was also working closely with Hong Kong Ballet, City Contemporary Dance Company and other music clusters to increase the diversity of performances.

14. Prof Lena LEE enquired on the usage of Freespace during the pandemic. Mr Duncan PESCOD responded that essentially all performing arts venues were closed during the pandemic in response to the announcement of Government as they carried the Places of Public Entertainment Licence; while the Art Park was opened throughout the period and had been very popular among the public.

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Spot checks had been conducted and it was known that over 8,000 and 9,000 visitors came to the Art Park on a Saturday and a Sunday in April 2020 respectively. On the weekdays, there were also 2,500 – 3,000 visitors every day. The Authority was looking for provision of more entertainment in the Art Park, such as encouraging street performance permit holders to come and perform.

15. Prof Lena LEE opined that the experience was good as an audience while it was disappointed that the space of Freespace was not friendly to accessibility service provider to provide related service. For example, the audio describer had no proper space to sit for the show “A Dream Like a Dream” by Hong Kong Repertory Theatre. Mr Duncan PESCOD explained that The Box of Freespace was very flexible in configuration and there was no restriction on seating arrangement. The Authority had worked with the producer of “A Dream Like a Dream” and accommodated their needs. While for Jazz Festival, producer arranged simultaneous translator to sit on the stage.

16. Mr LIN Siu-mun introduced the development of HKPM. The construction of the concrete structure had progressed up to the fifth floor and the building was expected to be topped out in late June 2020.

17. In response to the enquiry of Hon Ronald ARCULLI, Mr Duncan PESCOD replied that HKPM would be opened in mid- 2022. Mr LIN Siu-mun added that the construction progress was on track.

18. Prof Lena LEE questioned about the plan of public consultation or stakeholder meeting on the accessibility development for HKPM. Mr Duncan PESCOD agreed that public consultation or stakeholder meeting was necessary; however, there were certain constraints to organise meetings over the last few months due to the pandemic. The Authority would coordinate with the architects of HKPM to resume the consultation as soon as possible to solicit views on the interior design

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from an accessibility perspective. Mr NG Ying-chuen also shared with Members that the Authority and the architects of HKPM had meeting with the Rehabilitation Advisory Committee (“RAC”) on the accessibility measures during the design and planning stage, while the interior decoration work was yet to start thus sufficient time would be allowed to fulfil the accessibility requirements.

19. Prof Lena LEE noted the RAC meeting was held in late 2019 and further inquired about the follow-up actions on the suggestions raised in the meeting. Mr Duncan PESCOD confirmed that most of the suggestions were accepted and emphasised that HKPM intended to organise public consultation on accessibility at the appropriate time.

[Post-meeting note: The Authority had instructed the architects of HKPM – Rocco Design Architects (“RDA”) – to resume the public consultation as soon as possible. RDA had engaged Social Ventures Hong Kong in mid-July to conduct the corresponding public consultation. Given the constraints of arranging physical meetings under COVID-19 pandemic, online meetings would be considered.]

20. Ms Yolanda NG recalled that the Authority had collected feedback from District Councils (“DCs”) members and stakeholders amid the HKPM Public Consultation held in 2017. The development of HKPM was good for the society, hence more effort in public engagement was suggested to put in place to increase the sense of ownership of the public over HKPM. The Authority could consider engage public through online platforms. Engagement with the new term of DC members was also suggested.

21. Mr Duncan PESCOD updated Members that a familiarisation visit with 15 members of Yau Tsim Mong DC was hosted on 25 May 2020 and useful feedback was received. The Authority had been trying to reach out and implement more programmes when the situation was back to normal.

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22. The Chairman opined that Hong Kong citizens had expectation towards HKPM. More community engagement work was suggested to implement at the early stage in building a positive image.

23. Hon Ronald ARCULLI advised to share the feedback acquired at stakeholder meetings on HKPM and the Authority should review it internally. Mr Duncan PESCOD agreed and addressed that the Authority intended to arrange stakeholder meetings regularly.

24. Mr LIN Siu-mun introduced the development of LTC and Integrated Basement. He said that around 680 shock absorbers were being installed below the LTC building to act as a vibration isolation system to absorb the vibration generated by the MTR trains running on the airport express line adjacent to the LTC site in order to minimise disruption to theatre activities and performances.

25. In response to Hon Ronald ARCULLI's enquiry, Mr NG Ying-chuen shared that LTC comprised three theatres for different performances, including a 1,450-seat lyric theatre, a 600-seat medium theatre and a 270-seat studio theatre. The LTC was the second theatre in Hong Kong with vibration isolation system (the first one was Kwai Tsing Theatre). Mr Duncan PESCOD added that other features of LTC including the rehearsal facilities, the Resident Company Centre and RDE facilities, all intended to serve the needs of dance companies.

26. Mr Duncan PESCOD further explained that while the central part of the District was occupied by MTR Corporation Limited over the past 10 years for the highspeed rail development, the Authority decided to give priority to developing arts and cultural facilities at the western end of the District, including the Art Park, Artist Square, M+ and LTC.

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27. Mr CHING Cheung-ying asked about the financial situation of the Authority considering the majority of performing arts venues were closed during the pandemic, which might possibly affect the income and cashflow of the Authority. He further inquired if the financial impact would affect the construction progress, in particular that of the M+ building. Besides, more involvement of local residents in the operation and selection of collections of HKPM were suggested to raise their engagement level.

28. Mr Duncan PESCOD stated that the construction progress of M+ Building and HKPM was on good track though the Authority suffered a bit as factories in Mainland China were ordered to close at the early stage of the pandemic. It was difficult to round up the loss of income during the pandemic. Regarding the overall financial situation, the Authority was indeed facing challenges for the coming few years. He emphasised that commercial developments were crucial to maintain the financial sustainability of the District and the Authority would work on the sustainable development in short and medium term. Despite the challenges faced, the Board of WKCDA had agreed to make an effort to ensure the smooth opening and operation of HKPM, M+ and LTC. Furthermore, HKPM would set up a team in the coming six to eight months to reinforce the public engagement work of the museum, while local professionals would also be recruited for HKPM operation.

29. Prof Lena LEE asked about the interest level of private sectors on ACE (Art, Commerce and Exhibitions) Project. Mr Duncan PESCOD replied that positive response on the Expressions of Interest in tendering had been received.

[Post meeting note: Due to the uncertain market and economic outlook, the response to the actual tender was not as positive as expected. The Authority decided to withdraw the tender and had informed those concerned. In reaching this decision, a combination of factors had been

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taken into account, including a thorough and detailed assessment of the current market situation. The Authority believed it is a prudent and responsible response to the market situation and in the best interest of the Authority and the community that the project was meant to serve. The WKCDA Board would review and assess various options, then would decide the best way forward.]

30. The Chairman enquired about the connection of the Xiqu Centre to the District. Mr NG Ying-chuen shared that a boulevard on the ground would be built as a pedestrian walkway along the way from the Xiqu Centre to the Art Park, and an underground road would be built to connect the whole District and Canton Road. In addition, the 20-metre-wide and 2.2-kilometre-long harbourfront promenade served a great connection within the District. Mr Duncan PESCOD emphasised that the improved connectivity between the city and the District had to be considered, while the in-district connectivity could be further enhanced by the development of the basement.

31. Mr LIN Siu-mun introduced the four public infrastructure works entrusted by Civil Engineering and Development Department (“CEDD”), including Museum Drive, the Pedestrian Linkage System connecting the Xiqu Centre basement to MTR Austin Station, the Artist Square Bridge and Integrated Basement.

32. Mr Andy HO expressed that he was happy to see the construction progress and changes of the District’s development. He opined that a strategic engagement with the public, in particular youth, was important for the coming development of the District to enhance sense of ownership of the locals.

33. Mr Duncan PESCOD responded that the Authority had launched various engagement programmes targeting the community, including membership schemes, sponsorship opportunities, internship programmes, M+ Rover, and the Community Engagement Project etc. Riding on the opportunity brought by the opening of new

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venues, people were encouraged to visit the District and participate in programmes. He further suggested that a meeting could be arranged to share the details of engagement programmes by different teams of WKCDA.

34. In response to the enquiry of Mr Andy HO on the strategy and target segments of public engagement, Mr Duncan PESCOD stated that the Authority intended to implement evolving strategies in relation to different stage of development of the District. The concurrent strategy was to encourage people's physical participation in the District. The Authority valued the engagement with young people hence implemented different learning and participation programmes to engage young people who were interested in arts and culture activities.

35. Ms Anita GIDUMAL wondered if any survey had been conducted to collect feedback of audiences and visitors on performances, connectivity and venue operations. Mr Duncan PESCOD mentioned that general survey had been conducted for some performances and events and positive feedback had been received. There were also exit surveys taken among audiences for the various shows. Again, feedback had generally been very positive. Enhancement works addressing the feedback on the facilities had been carried out. In view of more venues coming into operation in the following years, the Authority had been planning to conduct more targeting surveys for visitors with different interests or distant groups.

36. Ms Anita GIDUMAL further asked about visitors' travelling practice to the District. Mr Duncan PESCOD shared that majority of visitors came to the District by walking from Elements (Kowloon Station), taking minibus from Jordan and Tsim Sha Tsui, as well as by private car.

37. Mr NG Ying-chuen stressed on the strong connectivity of the District with Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and New Territories as there

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were more than 30 bus routes stopped at the Western Harbour Crossing Toll Plaza. Mr Duncan PESCOD said that the Authority had actively promoted the District through different channels and acquired considerable media coverages introducing the harbour view and nice restaurants in the District.

38. Regarding the design of Artist Square Bridge, Prof Lena Lee advised to consider an enclosed and decent design to prevent objects dropping from the bridge to the highway. Mr NG Ying-chuen reported that the bridge would take 18 - 25 months to complete, and WKCD had worked closely with related Government departments on the adjusted design to ensure the safety of visitors and highway users.

39. Mr Duncan PESCOD explained to Members that the original enclosed design for the bridge had actually been rejected by the Legislative Council considering the high cost.

40. Mr Jason WONG advised the Authority to get prepared to cope with the traffic flow brought by the reopened highspeed rail. He suggested the Authority to organise more arts and culture experiences to provide a new way out for tourism industry in Hong Kong.

41. Ms Yolanda NG recalled that activities and promotion events were forbidden on the bridge connecting the District with Elements in the past community events. The Authority should liaise with related Government departments at the developing stage on discussing possible activities on the Artist Square Bridge.

42. Mr NG Ying-chuen added that CEDD had agreed to allow the Authority to install light facilities, such as banner display area on Artist Square Bridge for event promotion. Lighting system would also be installed as a feature of the bridge. The Authority would continue the communication with CEDD for the possibility of other activities.

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43. Ms Yolanda NG emphasised that performances and activities on the bridge were important to showcase a pleasant impression to the visitors. Ms Anita GIDUMAL echoed and Mr Duncan PESCOD agreed and shared that the Authority had organised programmes with performances along the entrances of the Art Park in previous years.

44. Ms Mimi CHEUNG asked about the update on ferry service. Mr NG Ying-chuen replied that the Transport Department had issued a tender for in harbour ferry services in early 2020. Ferry routes included commuting between Hung Hom and Central, as well as between Tsim Sha Tsui, the District, Kai Tak and Central. The services would be commenced in late 2020. Landing facilities were included in the Development Plan.

Agenda Item (4) - Progress Report of the Working Group on Youth and Community Engagement (A presentation)

45. By way of a PowerPoint presentation, Ms Yolanda NG briefed Members on the progress and the findings on the Review of the Community Engagement Project.

46. The Working Group on Youth and Community Engagement (the “Working Group”) held meeting on 30 August 2019 to review and endorse the three event proposals submitted by the programme partners of Tai Po DC, Islands DC, and Kwun Tong DC. However, in line with the Government’s disease prevention and control measures to ensure the safety of the public, participants and working members, the three on-site events scheduled in February and March 2020 had been called off. The Authority would explore with Tai Po DC, Islands DC and Kwun Tong DC for the possibility to reschedule the events in 2020/21. The Working Group would consider to roll out other

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project(s) if the Community Engagement Project could not be implemented in 2020/21 in order to ensure effective use of the resource.

47. A review on the Community Engagement Project was conducted in September 2019 with different stakeholders, including members of the Working Group, representatives of participating DCs and District Office, representatives of Programme Partners and staff representatives of WKCDA. Feedback was collected via questionnaires and focus group meeting. The key findings of the Review were positive and indicated that the project framework and model were effective, and that the objectives could be achieved. Meanwhile, respondents agreed that the Community Engagement Project:

- enabled stakeholders from different sectors to interact (92%);
- attracted more people to come to the District and building a positive image of the District in the community (88%);
- fostered organic development of community collaboration (83%); and
- enabled DCs and NGOs / art groups to work together to generate new ideas (79%).

Furthermore, extended programmes before and after the event were deemed essential to sustain the project objectives.

48. Ms Yolanda NG further urged that as more venues came into operation, the Authority should leverage the engagement with DCs, NGOs and art groups and strengthen the work on the engagement of youth and disadvantaged groups, for instance, providing in-depth programmes, such as job shadowing opportunity and workshops of arts appreciation, etc.

49. Mr Duncan PESCOD commended the effort of the Working Group particularly in the difficult time and believed that the Community Engagement Project was worthwhile to continue to engage the DCs, which would be helpful for the District's development. He

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went on to share the effort of WKCDA made on youth engagement and highlighted the response to the guided tours like M+ docent tours and tree tours were encouraging. The Authority would explore more opportunities to engage young people.

50. Mr Andy HO added that the Authority should put more effort on the engagement with local community, particularly the disadvantaged groups.

51. The Chairman enquired about the policy of Street Performance Scheme. Mr Duncan PESCOD said that there was a low threshold for entry and limited restriction on the performance under the scheme. The main restrictions were noise control and performance duration as to encourage more performers to perform in the Art Park. Performers could perform at designated locations in the public open space in the Art Park.

52. Mr Duncan PESCOD further elaborated that WKCDA was committed to raising the standard and quality of performances, as well as to maintaining the professional development in the arts and culture community. In fact, many shows presented in venues of the District were well-received and award-winning. Though the rental rate of the venues was higher than that of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department venues, WKCDA would work with the performers to pursue the professional standard of performances.

53. Prof Derek COLLINS advised the Authority to reinforce the engagement with young people via educational institutions. Easy access of free education/ learning resource for the educators was recommended.

54. Mr Duncan PESCOD agreed and highlighted different learning and participation programmes targeting educators and students, such as M+ Rover with provision of educational packs and free tours to

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teachers, as well as the West Kowloon Tea House Student Matinees supported by The D. H. Chen Foundation etc.

55. Hon Ronald ARCULLI advised the Authority to organise more programmes riding on the synergies brought by the opening of venues hence boosting the participation of the community members. Mr Duncan PESCOD agreed and shared that the Communications and Public Affairs Department (“CPA”) had already initiated relevant community initiatives.

56. Mr Kyrus SIU advised the Authority to create a section on the website for youth engagement programmes to facilitate better communication with young people. Mr Duncan PESCOD agreed and informed Members that a revamped website was targeted to launch by 2021. More applications or games would be explored to attract younger generations. Sharing on the revamped website by Marketing and Customer Experience Department could be arranged later.

57. Mr Christopher CHEUNG echoed the views about engagement with young people and advised that local universities should be a priority to engage. In addition to internship opportunities, the Authority could partner with different faculties in curriculum development to engage university students.

58. Mr Duncan PESCOD invited Members with an academic background to set up a task force to share their thoughts and ideas on engagement works via educational institutions.

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59. Ms Judy KWAN added that Community Outreach Team of CPA was working on new initiatives targeting different segments and creating synergies among existing learning and participation programmes.

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Agenda Item (5) - Any Other Business

60. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

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