

Government accepts proposals to improve public museum services

The Secretary for Home Affairs, Dr Patrick Ho, today (May 30) received a recommendation report from the Committee on Museums (Committee) proposing improvement measures to public museum services. The Committee recommends in the main that a dedicated statutory Museums Board with wide community involvement be set up through legislation to take over the management of the public museums under the Leisure and Cultural Services Department.

The Committee's recommendations cover six main areas: (i) development strategy of public museum services; (ii) performance enhancement and promotion of patronage; (iii) community involvement and partnership; (iv) funding of public museums; (v) governance of public museums; and (vi) museum staff development. The recommendations have taken into account views and proposals received during the series of focus group meetings with stakeholder groups and overseas experiences.

"We wish to express our sincere gratitude to the Chairman and members of the Committee for their dedicated efforts over the past two years in putting together a comprehensive report with an extensive series of recommendations which are conducive to the long-term development and enhancement of public museum services in Hong Kong," Dr Ho said.

"The Government accepts in principle all the recommendations, and would carefully consider each of the recommendations with a view to drawing up detailed implementation plans.

"We accept in particular the Committee's recommendation that the Government should conduct comprehensive consultation and maintain regular dialogues with museum staff throughout the process of institutional change, and draw up a remuneration package which would encourage a stable transition of the staff to the new institution. The Government would follow this up with an appropriate engagement process with the existing museum staff to ensure a smooth transition," Dr Ho said.

The Panel on Home Affairs of the Legislative Council would be briefed at its meeting on June 8 on the Administration's response to the recommendations.

The Committee on Museums was established in November 2004 to advise the

Secretary for Home Affairs on the provision of public museum services. The Committee is also tasked with following up on the policy recommendations relating to museum services put forward by the Culture and Heritage Commission. The membership list and terms of reference of the Committee is at the Annex.

Ends/Wednesday, May 30, 2007

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