

District Councils prepare for review recommendations

An experience-sharing session to prepare the 18 District Councils (DC) for the full implementation of the District Council Review in January, 2008, was held at the Hong Kong Science Museum today (September 18).

District Councils of the four pilot districts (Sai Kung, Tuen Mun, Wan Chai and Wong Tai Sin) shared their experiences in implementing the pilot scheme with District Council members of other 14 non-pilot districts, particularly on the new initiatives under the review including enhancing district partnership, undertaking district minor works projects; management of district facilities; and support to the councils.

Concluding the sharing session, the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Tsang Tak-sing, said: "We are glad to see that with the support and active participation of the four pilot districts, good progress has been made in various pilot projects designed for the benefit of local residents. Operational experience from the pilot scheme has also provided helpful indicators on the effectiveness of various arrangements for the full implementation of the review recommendations,"

"We will continue to work closely with District Councils to improve the existing arrangements. We will also strengthen our support and resources to 18 District Councils to ensure smooth implementation of the review recommendations in January next year."

"We encourage District Councils to make good use of the additional financial resources and forge closer partnership with other district organisations in carrying out district projects to better meet the needs and aspiration of the community," Mr Tsang said.

To prepare for full implementation of the review recommendations in the 18 districts, additional funds will be allocated to the District Councils. A dedicated district minor works block vote of \$300 million will be provided for the 18 District Councils annually, starting from 2008-09 to carry out minor works projects and the District Council Funds will also be increased to \$300 million each year for the councils for organising district sports, recreational and cultural activities and community involvement projects.

The sharing session was started by Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs Mrs Carrie Yau.

Ends/Tuesday, September 18, 2007