

# **COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Paper 06/03

## **Report of the Education and Publicity Sub-committee**

### **Purpose**

This paper briefly reports on issues considered by Members of the Education and Publicity Sub-committee (EPSC) since the last Council meeting, and seeks a steer on aspects of the criteria for the award of grants from the Sustainable Development Fund (SDF).

### **Proposal**

2. We propose that –
  - (a) Members take note of the comments of the EPSC Members and the Legislative Council Panels on Environmental Affairs and Planning, Lands and Work, as incorporated into the revised funding criteria for receiving grants from the SDF at **Annex A** and;
  - (b) Members accept the EPSC's recommendation to earmark a fixed percentage of the annual allocation of SDF for programmes initiated by the Council for Sustainable Development, leaving the bulk of the allocation for programmes and initiatives proposed by community organisations and other eligible applicants (see paragraph 5 below).

### **Issues Considered by the Education and Publicity Sub-committee**

#### *Terms of reference*

3. At its first meeting on 13 May 2003, the EPSC adopted the

terms of reference at **Annex B**. Members considered that an agreed definition of the term “sustainable development” would help in promoting education and publicity on this issue, noting that the Strategy Sub-committee would look at the issue of defining sustainable development for Hong Kong in the context of developing a Sustainable Development Strategy.

*Operation of the Sustainable Development Fund*

4. Following on the Council’s advice, Sub-committee Members considered the proposed scope, objectives and funding criteria for the Sustainable Development Fund and agreed that -

- (a) other than programmes initiated by the Council itself, priority should be given to community organisations applying for grants from the Fund;
- (b) therefore, government agencies should only be eligible for grants if the relevant project was to be organised in partnership with a community organisation, with the latter being the lead agency for the project;
- (c) there should be a fixed percentage of the SDF annual allocation that the Council should draw for its own initiatives, leaving the bulk of the annual allocation to community organisations or eligible applicants for their community programmes;
- (d) initially, only applications for grants exceeding \$50,000 should be accepted *except* in the case of applications by schools and individuals; and
- (e) there would be two calls for applications to the Fund per year.

The EPSC also accepted that the funding criteria should be reviewed annually in the light of operating experience.

5. As regards the notional amount of funds that the Council may require, based on experience in conducting participatory stakeholder workshops and various education and publicity programme, the SDU

proposes that the Council may use some \$2 million in the first year, out of the annual allocation of \$10 million, to carry out various tasks in relation to the formulation of a Sustainable Development Strategy and the drawing up and implementation of an education and publicity programme.

#### *Education and Publicity Programme*

6. EPSC Members noted the work being done by the Sustainable Development Unit (SDU) on education and publicity, and agreed to consider priorities for future initiatives having taken stock of the programmes being run by the SDU and other organisations. The Sub-committee also considered the need for assessing the level of public awareness of sustainability issues by conducting a baseline survey and then monitoring changes in attitudes and awareness subsequent to the launching of publicity programmes.

#### **Establishment of the Sustainable Development Fund**

7. The Administration consulted the Legislative Council joint Panels on Environmental Affairs and Planning, Lands and Works on 14 May 2003. Members generally supported the establishment of the SDF, while suggesting clarification of some of the funding guidelines, noting in particular that -

- (a) duplication of the roles of other existing Funds should be avoided through coordination with the other funding committees and the establishment of clear funding guidelines;
- (b) individuals, particularly students, should also be eligible for grants to conduct research or for further study relevant to sustainable development;
- (c) a clear definition of the term “sustainable development” and a set of objective assessment criteria would help in vetting applications; and
- (d) projects supported by the Fund should be non-profit seeking.

8. The SDU has liaised with the secretariats of a number of existing funds with aims that might be considered similar to those of the SDF, to ensure that the duplication of applicants' efforts and government's resources can be avoided as far as possible. The amended funding guidelines at **Annex A** take account of the comments raised by EPSC and LegCo Members. The Director of Administration will make a submission to the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council at its meeting on 13 June 2003 seeking an allocation of \$100 million for the formal establishment of the SDF.

### **Further Action**

9. Subject to Members' advice and the approval of the Finance Committee on 13 June 2003, we shall finalise and promulgate the detailed funding guidelines, application forms and assessment criteria for applications to the SDF and make arrangements to publicise the Fund. We shall prepare to receive the first batch of applications for grants from September onwards. The ESPC will report back regularly to the full Council on progress with the establishment of the SDF and its operation.

Council Secretariat  
May 2003

**Sustainable Development Fund****Proposed Funding Guidelines***Nature of Projects to be Supported*

1. Projects selected for funding support will be expected to enhance Hong Kong people's understanding of sustainable development, or encourage the local community to put the concept of sustainable development into practice. Research projects that meet these criteria would be eligible for grants from the Fund.
2. The concept of sustainable development involves integrating the economic, social and environmental aspects of development. Projects failing to demonstrate clearly full integration of at least two of these aspects would not be supported.
3. The benefits must accrue to the local community as a whole, and not just a single organisation, a consortium of companies or a narrow sector.
4. Projects should be non-profit making in nature. Any income derived from a project should be used to further the project's objectives.
5. In considering a project proposal, due consideration will be given to -
  - (a) whether there is a demonstrable need for the proposed project;
  - (b) the technical and project management capability of the applicant;
  - (c) whether the proposed project's schedule of implementation is well-planned and the duration is reasonable;
  - (d) whether the proposed budget is reasonable and cost effective in general terms;
  - (e) whether the proposed project has one or more alternative sources of funding support or would be more appropriately funded by other sources (e.g., the Environment and Conservation Fund, the Community Investment and Inclusion Fund, the Innovation and

Technology Fund, etc.);

- (f) whether there is likely to be duplication of work between the proposed project and other community projects; and
- (g) whether the proposed project has the potential to become a self-sufficient ongoing initiative.

#### *Eligibility for Grants*

6. Applications may be submitted by non-government and community organisations as well as by individuals. Joint applications involving different organisations will be acceptable. Government departments may only apply for grants in partnership with non-government organisations, and in such cases the latter should be the lead partner in the proposed project.

#### *Administrative Matters and Monitoring Mechanism*

7. Funds approved cannot be used to create any permanent staff posts or recurrent financial commitment.
8. Except in the case of applications from schools and individuals, the minimum amount to be applied for should be not less than HK\$50,000. Applicants will be required to provide a full, itemized budget for proposed projects.
9. Successful applicants will be required to provide regular progress reports on the implementation of projects, and to complete an end-of-project evaluation that measures the success of the project against its stated aims.

**Annex B****Terms of Reference of the Education and Publicity Sub-committee -**

- (a) To advise on a continuous education and publicity programme to promote public awareness and understanding of the concept and practice of sustainable development;
- (b) To foster partnerships with stakeholders in the community on initiatives aimed at promoting public awareness of and community participation in sustainable development; and
- (c) To advise on the disbursement of grants from the Sustainable Development Fund in accordance with the funding criteria determined by the Council for Sustainable Development.