

**COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
STRATEGY SUB-COMMITTEE**

**Council Report on the  
Engagement Process on Population Policy**

**Purpose**

This paper informs Members of the latest development on the Council for Sustainable Development (SD)'s second engagement process on Population Policy, including the preparation of the Council Report on the process at *Annex A*.

Annex A

**Engagement Process**

2. The engagement process commenced with the launch of the Invitation and Response (IR) document entitled "Enhancing Population Potential for a Sustainable Future" in June 2006. A series of engagement events were implemented during the four-month engagement process from June to October 2006. These included three regional forums, five regional workshops, and 15 events co-organised with partner organisations to engage stakeholders from different sectors of the community in dynamic discussions on the Population Policy. Participants came from the academic, business, professional, NGO, youth, grassroots and government sectors.

3. Other promotional and engagement channels included TV/radio Announcements of Public Interest, bulletins and the SD Strategy website with online discussion forum and questionnaire. Roving exhibitions for this engagement process were held at 10 public locations from July to October 2006. The Council for SD hosted a Strategy Summit in December 2006 as a finale to wrap up the engagement process.

4. During this engagement process, the Council for SD distributed over 17,000 copies of the IR document and more than 27,000

summary leaflets. The Council for SD received over 3,000 responses to the IR document, which included written comments, leaflet responses, messages on online discussion forum, etc. There were over 1,700 attendances at the various engagement events. Another 20,000 members of the public visited the roving exhibitions.

## **Council Report**

5. To provide an objective and independent analysis of the stakeholders' views, we have engaged the Hong Kong Polytechnic University's Public Policy Research Institute (PPRI) to conduct an independent analysis and reporting service for this engagement process. The Executive Summary of the PPRI report on the stakeholders' views is at *Annex B*.

Annex B

6. Stakeholders have expressed their major concern about the issues of quality of life, declining fertility rate, manpower and ageing population. The Principles set out in Chapter 2 of the draft Council Report have captured the essence of the stakeholders' views on these issues. The same chapter also summarises the stakeholders' key concerns and comments on various issues, and sets out the relevant Targets to facilitate the work of all parties towards achieving these Principles.

7. In response to the above Principles and Targets, the draft Council Report also sets out a number of recommendations to be proposed by the Council for SD for the Government's consideration in formulating a sustainable Population Policy for Hong Kong. These recommendations are set out in Chapter 3 of the draft Report.

8. The *Commission on Strategic Development's* Committee on Social Development and Quality of Life (the CSD Committee) discussed the draft Council Report on the engagement process at its meeting on 1 March 2007. Members of the CSD Committee were supportive of the community engagement process adopted by the Council for SD to engage the public in preparing the Report. Also, they generally agreed with the principles, targets and recommendations set out in the draft Report. The other views of the CSD Committee included -

- Town planning would have significant implications for our built-environment and the quality of life of a city.
- The demolition of historical buildings would adversely affect established local communities and uproot the sense of belonging of the affected local residents. There was a need to conserve tangible and intangible heritage.
- Better work-life balance, introduction of family-friendly practices and strengthening of community support to families would be important supportive measures in both improving the quality of life and encouraging people to raise children in Hong Kong.
- Promotion of family values and parenthood would be instrumental in couple's childbearing decisions.
- It would be important for Hong Kong to attract quality migrants so as to maintain Hong Kong's productivity and competitiveness. In particular, it was important to attract Hong Kong students studying abroad and Hong Kong migrants to return to Hong Kong.
- Ageing in itself would not be a problem as long as the community would proactively consider ways responding to the phenomenon.

The current draft Council Report at *Annex A* has taken into account views expressed by Members of the CSD Committee.

### **Way Forward**

9. The Council for SD will consider and endorse the Council Report on the engagement process at its coming meeting on 3 May 2007. The plan is to submit the Report to the Government and release it for public information around May/June this year. The Government will consider the recommendations in the Council Report in its formulation of a long-term strategy on population policy.

Council Secretariat  
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