

COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY SUB-COMMITTEE

Paper 05/04

Public Involvement Stage of the SD Strategy Engagement Process

Purpose

This paper seeks Members' views on the programme of events for the public involvement stage of the engagement process.

Proposal

2. We propose to work with partner groups on implementing events in phases, targeting different audiences in the following sequence -

(a) Phase 1 - Awareness building

Aimed at the general public with a view to building awareness of the SD strategy engagement process.

(b) Phase 2 - Stakeholder engagement

The focus would be on direct engagement with "informed" groups such as business, academic and professional bodies, social and environmental NGO and other organisations having a strong interest in SD.

(c) Phase 3 - Youth and District-level engagement

With particular emphasis on partnering with schools and District Councils

(d) Phase 4 – Wider community engagement

Consolidated efforts to canvass views of all groups jointly.

Considerations

Partner Organisations

3. Members agreed while considering Paper 04/03 that non-governmental organisations (NGO) should be invited to help implement the engagement process in order to promote community involvement and to help emphasis the point that building an SD strategy for Hong Kong would be an inclusive and participatory project.

4. Subject to Members' views, the Sustainable Development Unit (SDU) will consider which NGO and professional, business and academic bodies might be invited to co-organise events aimed at securing public involvement in the engagement process. The SDU would also consider inviting District Councils, schools, and the news media to take part in the implementation of appropriate activities.

Events

5. The actual events to be organised in the public involvement stage would need to be tailored to the target audience and reflect the type of input sought by the Support Groups (SG). At the first phase, activities could include: a press conference by the SSC and SG Convenors announcing the start of this stage of the engagement process, travelling exhibitions and interactive forums at prominent public venues around Hong Kong, and wide distribution of the "Invitation and Response" documents or "easy-to-read" digests thereof. For the "informed" groups targeted at Phase 2, a series of seminars and workshops could be organised. At the district and schools level, we would anticipate that activities such as public discussion sessions, exhibitions and "hands-on" workshops would be most effective, with

competitions and thematic field trips also being organised for residents' associations, youth groups and students. At the final phase of the involvement stage, we would consider organising one or more large-scale summits aimed at consolidating community views gathered at the earlier events, as a prelude to preparing the SG reports to the SSC. Use of the internet and public surveys could also be considered at this point.

Timetable

6. In view that the current plan to complete the compilation of the Invitation and Response (IR) document by the end of May and commence the engagement process in June, we propose the following timetable for reference -

June - July Phase 1 - Awareness building

July – October Phase 2 - Stakeholder engagement

August – Phase 3 - Youth and District engagement
October

November Phase 4 - Community engagement

Media Strategy

7. In order to ensure that a consistent message is put across with regard to the purpose and specific objectives of the engagement process, there is a need to draw up an appropriate media strategy. In the first instance, the SDU will prepare materials in the form of key points to make and discuss how these might be presented with Members and colleagues in the Education & Publicity Sub-committee and the Information Services Department.

Resources

8. Bearing in mind that this round of the engagement process is a

first “test” of the mechanism for building an SD strategy, we propose a modest commitment of resources that would nonetheless be sufficient to achieve wide coverage for this exercise. Nonetheless, the organisation and implementation of the proposed events would heavily commit the time and manpower resources of the SDU. We shall involve partner organisations as fully as possible in sharing the workload, while recognising the need to compensate outside organisations and individuals appropriately for professional services and other material contributions.

9. The cost of implementing the proposed programmes will be absorbed by the SDU. Once a detailed programme of events is agreed, we shall prepare a budget for this.

Advice Sought

10. Members are invited to comment and to contribute their views on the broad public involvement programme and the specific types of event that would be most effective in taking this stage of the engagement process forward.

Council Secretariat
April 2004