

COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Digest of the 37th Meeting
held on 12 June 2019 at 3:00 p.m.
in Conference Room, 33/F, Revenue Tower,
Wan Chai, Hong Kong

Present :

Prof the Hon Arthur Li		<i>(Chairman)</i>
Ms Chan Shin-kwan		
Mr Paul Chu		
Miss Natalie Chung		
Ir Alkin Kwong		
Mrs Sandra Mak		
Miss Samanta Pong		
Mr Tam Kent-chung		
Mr Cliff Tang		
Prof Jonathan Wong		
Mr Eric Yeung		
Dr Rita Yu		
Dr William Yu		
Mr Jack Chan	<i>Under Secretary for Home Affairs</i>	
Mr Liu Chun-san	<i>Under Secretary for Development</i>	
Ms Irene Young	<i>Deputy Secretary for the Environment</i>	
Mr Kwok Suk-man	<i>Chief Manager/Support Services Section (1), Housing Department</i>	
Mrs Harriet Lau	<i>Chief Manager/Support Services Section (2), Housing Department</i>	
Mr D C Cheung	<i>Principal Assistant Secretary for the Environment (Sustainable Development)</i>	<i>(Secretary)</i>

In Attendance:

Government Representatives

Environment Bureau

Mr Johnson Wong	<i>Senior Environmental Protection Officer (Sustainable Development)</i>
Ms Channy Yang	<i>Senior Town Planner (Sustainable Development)</i>
Mr Alvin Tai	<i>Economist (Sustainable Development)</i>
Mr Eric Wong	<i>Senior Executive Officer (Sustainable Development)1</i>
Miss Joanne Kam	<i>Assistant Secretary for the Environment (Sustainable Development)1</i>
Miss Mandy Wong	<i>Executive Officer (Sustainable Development)2</i>

For agenda item 2

Support Group on Long-term Decarbonisation Strategy

Mr Lam Chiu-ying	<i>Convenor</i>
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Environmental Protection Department

Mr Francis Cheng	<i>Assistant Director (Cross-Boundary & International)</i>
Dr Mak Shing-tat	<i>Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Mobile Source)</i>
Mr Ray Leung	<i>Senior Environmental Protection Officer (Cross-Boundary & International)5</i>

Hong Kong Observatory

Mr Chan Pak-wai	<i>Assistant Director (Development, Research and Administration)(Acting)</i>
Mr Lee Sai-ming	<i>Senior Scientific Officer (Climate Forecast Services and Climate Change Studies)</i>

Buildings Department

Mr Arthur Wat	<i>Senior Building Surveyor/Kowloon 3</i>
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Programme Director – Policy for Sustainability Lab, Centre for Civil
Society and Governance, The University of Hong Kong (HKU)

Ms Joyce Chow	<i>Senior Project Manager</i>
Mr Darwin Leung	<i>Assistant Project Manager</i>

Independent Analysis and Reporting Agency – Social Sciences Research
Centre, HKU

Prof John Bacon-Shone

Director

Ms Linda Cho

Centre Manager

Absent with apologies:

Prof John Chai

Dr Bunny Chan

Ms Vanessa Cheung

Prof Laurence Ho

Ms Angelina Kwan

Mr Kwok Lit-tung

Dr Thomas Yau

Opening Remarks

As this was the first meeting of the term, Members were reminded that the Council for Sustainable Development (“SDC”) had adopted a one-tier declaration system. When a member had a potential conflict of interest in any matters to be discussed and decided by the Council, he or she should make full disclosure of his or her interest. Members were also reminded to maintain confidentiality of materials of classified content including those in draft form.

2. The meeting noted that Prof Jonathan Wong had kindly agreed to continue to chair the Strategy Sub-committee while Ms Chan Shin-kwan had kindly agreed to take up chairmanship of the Education and Publicity Sub-committee.

Agenda Item 1 – Confirmation of minutes of the last meeting

3. The secretariat had not received any proposed amendments and the minutes would be taken as confirmed.

Agenda Item 2 – Public engagement on long-term decarbonisation strategy

(SDC Paper No. 01/19)

4. Members were briefed on the public engagement (“PE”) progress and the SDC Paper No. 01/19. The following were highlighted:

- (a) In support of the Paris Agreement, Hong Kong would draw up its decarbonisation strategy for up to 2050. The Government had therefore invited the SDC to conduct a PE on Hong Kong’s long-term decarbonisation strategy. A Support Group (“SG”) was set up to assist the SDC in, inter alia, the design and implementation of the PE, compilation and presentation of the PE document, as well as the formulation of recommendations to be made to the Government. The SG comprised experts and stakeholders from different fields, including Members from the former and current terms of SDC, as well as officials from relevant bureaux and departments;
- (b) Concerted efforts of the Government and society were required to promote and implement the decarbonisation strategy to be formulated in due course. The buildings, transportation and energy sectors had to contribute, and everyone had to try their best to reduce carbon emissions through a change in their lifestyles and consumption habits, so as to achieve the carbon emissions reduction target set in the Paris

Agreement i.e. to hold the increase in the global average temperature by mid-century to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change published a report in October 2018, saying that the increase should be further reduced to 1.5°C i.e. net zero carbon emissions by 2050, which was an audacious target;

- (c) The PE would not only gauge the views of the community, but would also help build consensus in developing feasible strategies for carbon emissions reduction. In addition, the PE needed to educate the public on the imminence of climate change and importance of decarbonisation, thus motivating behavioral change towards low-carbon living;
- (d) To kick start the preparatory work of PE, the SG held its first meeting in June 2018. Afterwards, more than 100 participants from 88 organisations attended six focus group meetings and provided solid advice on the compilation of the PE document. With the assistance of the Programme Director (“PD”) and relevant offices, the SG had prepared a draft PE document and a workplan of the public interaction phase;
- (e) There was a knowledge gap amongst the public and stakeholders. Some were very knowledgeable about carbon emissions reduction and focused on relatively more complicated issues such as carbon trade and fuel mix, while some were less knowledgeable on climate change. It was a challenge to draft the PE document with an appropriate coverage and deepness that could be comprehended by all walks of life. In addition, it was difficult to predict the behavioral change and persistence of the public in adopting carbon emissions reduction

measures. Technology advancement was another uncertain factor that prevented them from making a reliable forecast on 2050. Notwithstanding the constraints, the draft PE document was considered comprehensive enough to educate the public and gauge their views on the long-term decarbonisation strategy. Questions were also incorporated in each Chapter to stimulate their thoughts and invite their views;

- (f) The SG was ready to assist the SDC to launch the public interaction phase and make recommendations after public views were collected; and
- (g) Subject to any comments that Members might have, the PE document would be released via a press conference scheduled for 14 June 2019, marking the beginning of the PE's public interaction phase.

5. Members had the following views on the PE:

PE document

- (a) Commented that the front cover design of the PE document was quite plain and not appealing enough to arouse interest of the public. Eye-catching and inspiring slogans to call for carbon emissions reduction were required to draw attention;
- (b) Raised concern about the sub-heading "What Gets Measured Gets Tackled" in Chapter 2 of the PE document, as it did not match the content and proposed adding a short paragraph on the need to engage the territory at the end of this Chapter so as to help pave way for the

- various carbon emissions reduction measures elaborated in Chapter 3;
- (c) Recalled that the PE on municipal solid waste charging had asked the public about their willingness and the amount to pay for domestic waste management, with a view to forging a consensus. The current PE, however, assumed that all agreed to decarbonise and that they had no choice but to join the Government in decarbonisation. Although it was clearly stated in the draft PE document that the per capita greenhouse gas (“GHG”) emissions in Hong Kong had been reduced from around 6 tonnes in 2016 to less than 5 tonnes in 2020, there was no target for 2050. Nor was there any target suggested in the Views Collection Form (“VCF”) to gauge the public’s views on this aspect. The public might not know how per capita GHG emissions of 2 tonnes and 1 tonne would affect their daily lives differently. To improve the flow of the draft PE document, it was suggested that the relationships amongst personal commitments, responsibility of economic sectors concerned, possible action plans and carbon emissions targets could be spelt out more clearly;
- (d) Said that the draft PE document provided comprehensive background information on climate change but there could be more information on the actual situation of Hong Kong. It was expected that the public in general would positively respond to the VCF but might not have the determination to put carbon reduction measures into practice. If the PE document could spell out more clearly the actual status of Hong Kong and provide different carbon reduction scenarios, and if the public was more aware of the constraints of the Government and private sectors in decarbonisation, they would be able to make an informed decision on what they themselves had to do and how far they

should go;

- (e) Commented that though there were some carbon emissions figures stated in the draft PE, they had to be explicitly and prominently shown. Providing different scenarios showcasing the participation of different stakeholders and the level of carbon emissions to be reduced would help the public gain a better understanding of their role and significance in contributing to decarbonisation. In addition, clearly spelling out the carbon emissions to be reduced and cost, if applicable, of different actions suggested in the VCF would help convince the public to take action;
- (f) Commented that the living style of Hanson suggested in the draft PE document might not suit the needs of all. For example, youngsters might prefer meat to vegetables and babies might require more clothing than adults. Some might consider the low carbon lifestyle requirements too harsh and difficult to follow, and hence might be discouraged from taking the first step. It was suggested providing more alternatives such as having Green Day weekly, using public transport instead of private vehicles once a week, etc. Setting an ambitious yet achievable target would motivate people to take action;
- (g) Echoed that more daily examples should be provided so as to help the public understand the impact of their action on carbon emission reduction. The draft PE document might also explain the actions required to achieve a particular carbon reduction target. This would allow the public to reflect on their willingness to do so;
- (h) Said that the ten questions in the VCF were appropriately designed for

the purpose though the open-ended ones were quite demanding;

- (i) Opined that the majority of the respondents would fill in the online VCF. To encourage the public, particularly students and youths, to do so, it was suggested linking the VCF with the Low Carbon Living Calculator;
- (j) Suggested refining some graphics in the draft PE document which were not drawn to scale. In addition, tofu or beans should replace potatoes as substitutes for steaks in the diet option illustrated in the draft PE document. Tofu and beans were on par with steaks as sources of protein while potatoes were carbohydrates; and
- (k) Asked if there would be platforms to reward the public for their decarbonisation effort and drew reference to a territory-wide campaign that recycled polyethylene terephthalate beverage bottles with a small financial incentive. The public was very eager to participate in the campaign and the response was overwhelming. The platform might also be used for a lights-off campaign. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs of the UK had launched a decarbonisation campaign. Its key message was that, while the impact of an individual was limited, the impact of an empowered group of citizens could be significant. It was considered that education alone was not enough to inculcate behavioural change; providing a platform was essential to encourage collective action.

Reducing energy use

- (l) Said that 24 buildings underwent retrofitting which involved the replacement of building services installation and as a result, there were

marked results in saving energy. A matching fund, implemented by the Environmental Protection Department some years ago, had greatly assisted many private building owners to carry out energy efficiency projects. It was recommended reinstating the matching fund to encourage wider participation of property owners in retrofitting and retro-commissioning their buildings;

- (m) Encouraged the wider promotion and adoption of Internet of Things in shopping malls and commercial buildings with the advancement of technology. Sun-shading devices would be automatically drawn when there was strong sunshine, resulting in a relatively steady indoor temperature and less air-conditioning would be required;
- (n) Considered that there was room for improvement in “Scope 3 – other indirect emissions” in the Guidelines to Account for and Report on Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Removals for Buildings in Hong Kong. More examples could be suggested for inclusion by the professional sectors;
- (o) Said that besides engaging property management companies which played a key role in energy saving and conservation in buildings, it was vital to engage the general public, for example, families, in order to gauge their views; and
- (p) Said that the PE aimed to educate and motivate the public to step up decarbonisation efforts, and commented that it might not be easy for residents of sub-divided units to use fans instead of air-conditioning. Shopping malls were found to have relatively low room temperature, so there should be room for improvement.

Publicity

- (q) Suggested inviting celebrities to share energy saving tips on television and radio and more incentives should be provided to motivate members of society to participate in carbon emissions reduction;
- (r) Suggested changing the costume and color of Hanson, the mascot of energy saving, as it had an almost identical look with Big Waster except the small green button. The public could easily mix them up. Having a distinct appearance would help the public identify Hanson and pay attention to the PE. More interactive activities should also be conducted to enable the public to understand the details of the PE document and facilitate a fruitful discussion;
- (s) Suggested using interesting and interactive tools during the public interaction phase to arouse the interest of the public. An example of a “resource allocation” activity in the United Kingdom (“UK), where citizens had to prioritise their wishes on a long list because of limited resources, was cited. Likewise, in the public interaction phase of this PE, the public could be given a calculator with a range of decarbonisation options such as turning off the lights, using less electricity, etc. Through the calculator, the public could gain a better understanding of the impact of their action, if taken, on reducing carbon emissions, and how far they were from the target. The calculator could also be a teaser to arouse interest and facilitate further discussion at the PE events; and
- (t) Suggested having an online game or mobile application on energy saving tips to facilitate the public to clearly understand carbon

emissions reductions for their actions taken. Gadgets such as iPads could be provided at the PE events to allow the participants to experience the game. It was also suggested visiting more schools to promote the PE. Students would help further disseminate the messages to their parents and family members.

6. The meeting noted the following response:
 - (a) The SDC had no pre-determined position, but would provide a range of decarbonisation options to the public and let them decide on their own what to pursue. Instead of listing specific actions which might not be suitable for all people, perhaps it would be more useful for the SDC to gauge public's views on what they would realistically be prepared to do. Views collected would be analyzed and would form the basis of the SDC's recommendations to the Government;
 - (b) To achieve any of the carbon reduction targets, all measures, including adopting a low-carbon lifestyle, intensifying energy saving efforts, and increasing the proportion of zero carbon energy supply through closer regional co-operation, all had to be implemented to various extents. Failing to do one would create pressure on others. In this regard, the public would be asked in the VCF if they supported all these measures;
 - (c) The online "Low Carbon Living Calculator" could help the public to calculate their carbon emission, and that the PD would visit 14 secondary schools to promote the PE;
 - (d) After rounds of refinement, the independent analysis and reporting agency were content with the VCF which would seek views from both

organisations and individuals. The questions on the likelihood to take action on carbon emissions reductions measures in the VCF would reveal if the purpose of educating the public was achieved during the PE process; and

- (e) Detailed action plan in great length could not be provided in a precise and concise PE document. Nevertheless, different efforts in achieving different carbon emissions reduction targets were described in the draft PE document. Other than fuel mix, a low-carbon lifestyle adopted by the whole society was also very important. After the shutdown of the Fukushima nuclear plant in 2011, the Japanese government called for a 20% to 25% reduction of electricity consumption in that summer. The target was successfully achieved. This demonstrated that the Government should take a leading role and appeal to society to make contribution to reduce carbon emissions. Behaviourial change and determined action by society would go a long way in achieving decarbonisation, especially when youngsters nowadays were more receptive to changes.

7. The meeting noted that a press conference would be held on 14 June 2019 to release the PE document, followed by a series of activities during the three-month public interaction phase. Members were most welcome to participate and listen to the views of the public.

Agenda Item 3 – Any other business

8. There was no other business raised.

Agenda Item 4 – Date of the next meeting

9. The Secretary would confirm the date of the next meeting nearer the time.

**Secretariat
Council for Sustainable Development**