

**For discussion on
10 September 2021**

SSC Paper No. 02/21

**COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
Strategy Sub-committee**

**Preparatory Work for the Public Interaction Phase of the
Public Engagement on Control of Single-use Plastics**

Purpose

This paper reports on the progress of the public engagement (“PE”) exercise on control of single-use plastics and seeks Members’ views on the working draft PE document (at **Annex A**) and the draft questions of the randomised telephone survey (at **Annex B**).

Background and Latest Position

2. At its meeting in April 2021, the Council for Sustainable Development (“SDC”) endorsed the launch of a PE exercise on control of single-use plastics. The Strategy sub-committee (“SSC”) held its first meeting in June to discuss issues concerning the PE. Thereafter, three focus group meetings (FGMs) were held in July, with a total of nearly 70 participants from 61 organisations attending.

Major areas of concern raised at Focus Group meetings

3. The participants of FGMs were stakeholders from various sectors, including retail and wholesale, delivery, logistic and e-commerce sectors; food outlets and pre-packaged food sectors; medical and health; chambers of commerce; recycling trade and suppliers for alternative materials; professional organisations; academics; green groups; and non-governmental organisations (“NGOs”). SSC Chairman convened all three FGMs with SDC Chairman attending one of them on 14 July.

4. Participants of the three FGMs mainly offered comments and suggestions on the following areas:

- (a) To control hard-to-recycle and/or non-essential single-use plastic items by different approaches, for example:
 - (i) Reducing the use of local packaging, including general sales and grouped packaging, and logistics and e-commerce packaging;
 - (ii) Reducing the use of certain festive plastic products like inflatable cheer sticks and glow sticks;
 - (iii) Banning the free distribution of umbrella bags; and
 - (iv) Replacing toiletries (e.g. showering product in small bottles) distributed by hotels by reusable alternatives.
- (b) To enhance the Plastic Shopping Bag (PSB) Charging Scheme in order to ensure its effectiveness in reducing the use of PSBs. In particular, the current scope of exemption could be tightened, and the charging level adjusted.
- (c) The importance of raising environmental awareness among different stakeholders, including the business sector, consumers and young people.

A summary of the views collected is at [Annex C](#).

Way Forward

Preparation of the Public Engagement Document

5. Having considered the views of the SDC, SSC and the FGMs, the Programme Director (“PD”) (i.e. Hong Kong Productivity Council) commissioned by the SDC has prepared a working draft PE document at [Annex A](#), which sets out the key issues concerning the control on single-use plastics in order to provide the public with sufficient background information for informed discussion and expression of views. A Views Collection Form (VCF) is embedded in the PE document to collect the views of the general public and stakeholders.

Rollout of the Public Interaction Phase

6. The public interaction phase is scheduled to commence on 30 September this year, subject to the progress of finalising the PE document. In the light of past experience, we recommend a three-month public interaction phase, during which town hall meetings will be held to collect views extensively and directly from the public and relevant stakeholders. We will also meet a wide range of organisations and stakeholders, including retail and wholesale sector, hospitality sector, medical and health care sector, chambers of commerce, relevant trades and advisory bodies as well as green groups and NGOs to collect their views.

7. To tie in with this PE, we will organise various publicity activities, including producing a TV and a Radio Announcements in the Public Interest (“API”), posters and promotional videos; developing a dedicated website for the public to browse relevant information, including the PE document, and give their views; promoting via social media (e.g. Big Waster’s Facebook and Instagram as listed out in **Annex D**); placing advertisements via various media channels (e.g. free newspapers, MTR stations and bus stops); and distributing online publicity materials through over 100 secondary and primary schools and over 100 Supporting Organisations to raise public awareness of this PE.

Introduction of a randomised telephone survey

8. As this PE topic concerns every individual in the community, a randomised telephone survey is an appropriate tool to collect public views. To ensure that the survey findings can reflect the views of the general public, the raw data will be weighted according to the gender-age distribution of the Hong Kong population published by the Census and Statistics Department. It aims to understand the general public’s views on their basic understanding on the issue and their willingness to contribute in reducing the usage of the single-use plastics.

9. We aim at collecting views of at least 1 000 persons aged 18 or over through their mobile telephones. It is proposed that the telephone survey be conducted soon after launching the aforementioned publicity

activities so that the public can provide their views with sufficient awareness and understanding of the issues.

Advice Sought

10. Members are invited to comment on the working draft PE document (at **Annex A**), in particular the Views Collection Form, and the draft questions of the randomised telephone survey (at **Annex B**).

Secretariat

Council for Sustainable Development

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