

COUNTRY AND MARINE PARKS BOARD

Summary Report of the Country Parks Committee

1. Purpose

1.1 This paper aims to inform members of the major issues discussed at the Country Parks Committee (CPC) meeting held on 20 September 2018.

2. Consultancy Study on Enhancement of the Recreation and Education Potential of Country Parks and Special Areas – Public Consultation

2.1 The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) and their consultants updated members on the progress of the consultancy study on enhancement of the recreation and education potential of country parks and special areas, and sought members' views on the enhancement proposals and the public consultation plan.

2.2 Concerning the proposals, members generally advised that the designs of the proposed facilities should be compatible with the surrounding natural environment. Some of them also hoped that the designs could show the unique character of Hong Kong country parks. Besides, members reminded AFCD and their consultants to pay attention to a few issues, including accessibility of country parks, safety of participants in the adventurous activities, as well as the regulations with respect to buildings and provision of accommodation. Members also had some discussions on the pros and cons of different modes of operation but generally agreed that various modes could be applied to cater for different considerations.

2.3 Members noted that the consultants planned to roll out a three-month public consultation in later part of 2018 to gather views of the public on the enhancement proposals. Given the significance of this final round of public consultation, they advised the consultants to widely publicise it and encourage greater public participation.

3. Enhancement of Hiking Trails For Promoting Green Tourism

3.1 AFCD briefed members on the plan to enhance ten selected hiking trails and their associated facilities in the country parks for the purpose of promoting green tourism. Members noted that the trail enhancement works would be carried out in phases and the first phase of enhancement works on three hiking trails, namely Peak Trail, MacLehose Trail Section 1 and the trail from Wu Kau Tang to Lai Chi Wo, have already commenced. To minimise the impact of the works on hikers, AFCD would expedite the progress and carry out the works during weekdays and off-seasons as far as possible.

3.2 Members supported the enhancement of hiking trails and suggested AFCD to ensure the trails were clearly waymarked and improve the accessibility of the trails in conjunction with the Transport Department and transport companies. Members also suggested AFCD to enhance hiking trail networks so that there would be more options for the visitors to explore various hiking routes without the need to retrace their steps to the starting point.

4. Any Other Business

4.1 AFCD reported on the condition of country parks after Typhoon Mangkhut and the progress of cleaning up the parks and restoring the damaged park facilities. After the passage of typhoon, AFCD had been clearing fallen trees, repairing damaged facilities and carrying out inspection of various country park areas with a view to reopening the affected facilities for the public to use as soon as possible. In addition, volunteers mainly from hiking groups also assisted in cleaning up the parks and trails.

4.2 Members expressed gratitude to the AFCD frontline staff for their hard work and advised AFCD to prepare for more frequent occurrence of extreme weather events due to global warming.

5. Advice Sought

5.1 Members are invited to note the content of this paper.

Country and Marine Parks Authority
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