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For discussion on 8 October 2018

**Progress Report on the Promotion of
Charter on External Lighting**

PURPOSE

This paper briefs Members on the progress of implementing the Charter on External Lighting (the Charter).

BACKGROUND

2. At the meeting of the Advisory Council on the Environment (ACE) on 3 July 2017, we reported the following:

- (a) the recruitment of Charter participants by working closely with the Working Group on the Promotion of the Charter on External Lighting (the Working Group), liaising with the relevant trade bodies and organisations, and inviting owners of external lighting installations which have attracted complaints to join the Charter;
- (b) the arrangement of site visits to check if Charter participants were in compliance with the switch-off requirement under the Charter;
- (c) the organisation of the first award ceremony on 15 June 2017, during which over 3,000 properties and shops that fulfilled the pledge to switch off external lighting from 11pm to 7am the following day were awarded the Platinum Award, and more than 1,200 properties and shops that switched off external lighting from midnight to 7am the following day were awarded the Gold Award;
- (d) the launch of the Partnership Scheme to invite advertising companies, trade / professional bodies or associations to encourage through their network other companies, business contacts and partners, and clients, etc., to sign up their

premises with external lighting installations to the Charter;

- (e) the promotion of the Guidelines on Industry Best Practices for External Lighting Installations (the Guidelines) by organising a series of seminars on good practice for external lighting installations; and
- (f) the handling of complaints towards nuisance caused by external lighting.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS OF THE CHARTER

3. The Environment Bureau (ENB) continues to proactively implement and promote the Charter. Progress made since July 2017 is set out in paragraphs 4 to 17 below.

Recruitment of Charter Participants

4. ENB continued to actively promote the Charter. As at end-September 2018, there were nearly 5,000 participants to the Charter. Participants include premises from different sectors, including building management, property development, hotels and catering, retail, laundry, banking, telecommunications and real estate agencies, as well as schools, public utilities and public/non-governmental organisations. The updated list of participants is available at the Charter's dedicated website (www.charteronexternallighting.gov.hk).

Compliance check

5. As reported to the Committee, we conducted the first round of unannounced site visits before the first award ceremony which was held in June 2017 to check if Charter participants were acting in compliance with the switch-off requirement. Another round of visits was conducted before the second award ceremony held in June 2018. In both exercises, over 99% of the Charter participants were found to be in compliance. Those participants who were found to be non-compliant and failed to rectify the situation in our follow-up site visits have been removed from the participant list.

Award Ceremony

6. The second award ceremony of the Charter was held on 28 June 2018 to recognise Charter participants which had acted in accordance with the switch-off requirement in the past year. Over 3,300 participants fulfilling the pledge to switch off external lighting from 11pm to 7am the following morning were awarded the Platinum Award, while some 1,200 participants were awarded the Gold Award for switching off external lighting from midnight to 7am the following morning. In addition, more than 200 participants newly signed up to the Charter in 2018 were

granted certificates.

7. Apart from publicising the updated list of participants on the website, ENB also published the list of the above-mentioned awardees in newspaper supplements. Stickers and certificates have been distributed to participants for display at their properties to show their participation and to raise public awareness of the Charter.

8. The ceremony also recognised the contributions made by three Partners of the Charter (viz. Hong Yip Service Company Limited, Nan Fung Property Management, and Hong Kong Retail Management) under the Partnership Scheme (see details in paragraphs 9 and 10 below).

Partnership Scheme

9. To better promote the Charter, we launched in June 2017 a new Partnership Scheme to invite advertising companies, trade/professional bodies or associations to become Charter Partners. The Partners undertake to encourage through their network other companies, business contacts and partners, and clients, etc., to sign up their premises with external lighting installations to the Charter. Merit, gold and platinum prize will be awarded to Partners who have recruited over 10, 50 and 100 participants. So far, 13 organisations have signed up to the Partnership Scheme. They are –

- (a) Business Environment Council Limited
- (b) Convey Advertising Company Limited
- (c) Federation of Hong Kong Industries
- (d) Hip Shing Hong (Holdings) Company Limited
- (e) Hong Kong (SME) Economic and Trade Promotional Association
- (f) Hong Kong Federation of Restaurants & Related Trades Limited
- (g) Hong Kong Green Building Council
- (h) Hong Kong Retail Management Association
- (i) Hong Kong SME Development Federation Limited
- (j) Hong Yip Service Company Limited
- (k) Lan Kwai Fong Association
- (l) Nan Fung Property Management
- (m) The Hong Kong General Chamber of Small and Medium Business

10. As at end-September 2018, Hong Yip Service Company Limited, Nan Fung Property Management, Hong Kong Retail Management and Hip Shing Hong (Holdings) Company Limited have recruited about 100, 20, 17 and 6 participants respectively. We will continue to approach suitable candidates to enrol them into the Partnership Scheme.

The Guidelines

11. ENB has engaged a consultant to organise a series of seminars on Good

Practice for External Lighting Installations. So far, 30 seminars have been held since May 2016 to appeal to about 100 public and private organisations to observe the Guidelines and to adopt the good practice in the Guidelines when planning or managing their external lighting installations. Issues covered at the seminars include operating hours for external lighting, control for lighting, light nuisance control measures, energy efficiency measures, lighting project design planning and prevention of glare impact.

COMPLAINTS AGAINST EXTERNAL LIGHTING

12. The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) continues to take proactive actions to handle complaints against external lighting. Upon receipt of complaints about light nuisance caused by external lighting, EPD had relayed the complainants' concerns to the persons responsible for the lighting installations in question, invited them to sign up to the Charter, and advised them to refer to the Guidelines and take appropriate measures to minimise the impact of the lighting installations on the residents in the vicinity. Our experience indicates that most of the persons responsible for the lighting installations would, upon receipt of complaints, adopt measures to minimise light nuisance as far as practicable.

REVIEW OF THE CHARTER

13. As previously reported to the Committee, the Task Force on External Lighting recommended in its report to the Government in 2015 that the effectiveness of the Charter should be reviewed two years after its implementation. To follow up on this recommendation, the Government has reorganised the Working Group as the Working Group on External Lighting (WGEL). Apart from promoting the Charter, the WGEL will also review the effectiveness of the Charter and advise the Government on more options to effectively manage external lighting.

WAY FORWARD

14. The WGEL decided at its first meeting held on 27 September 2018 that, to take forward the review, a survey should be conducted on a range of issues, including the response to the Charter, the impact of switching off requirement on the business sector, public perception of external lighting, possible improvement measures, etc. Apart from telephone and face to face interview, public consultation fora and focus group meetings will be organised in 2019. Besides, the new WG will also study overseas regimes and experience in regulating external lighting, and to assess whether they can be applied to Hong Kong. The WGEL would then formulate recommendations on the proposed way forward to the Government.

15. Meanwhile, the WGEL will continue to promote the Charter and another award ceremony will be organised in 2019 to recognise the efforts made by participants in adhering to the switch-off requirement under the Charter.

ADVICE SOUGHT

16. Members are invited to note the latest development on implementation of the Charter and the review being undertaken by WGEL.

Environment Bureau
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