

BFAC appreciates Tourism Commission and MPFA's committed efforts in outlining long-term development for Hong Kong's tourism industry and operating eMPF Platform

The following is issued on behalf of the Business Facilitation Advisory Committee Secretariat:

The Business Facilitation Advisory Committee held its 56th meeting today (March 19). At the meeting, the Tourism Commission briefed members on the Development Blueprint for Hong Kong's Tourism Industry 2.0 (Blueprint 2.0) promulgated at the end of last year. The Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Authority (MPFA) and eMPF Outreach Team also briefed members on the eMPF Platform.

Blueprint 2.0 proposes four positions, four development strategies and 133 measures for Hong Kong's tourism development in the coming five years. The four positions of Hong Kong's tourism industry are (i) reinforcing the role of an international tourism hub and a core demonstration zone for multi-destination tourism; (ii) highlighting the unique elements of Hong Kong's local cultural characteristics that are irreplaceable and unrepeatable and making good use of its positioning as the East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange, with a view to achieving "shaping tourism with cultural activities and promoting culture through tourism"; (iii) upholding Hong Kong's positioning as a city with high-quality tourism experiences; and (iv) stressing the importance of quality over quantity in development to build Hong Kong into a demonstration point for sustainable tourism.

Based on the four positions, Blueprint 2.0 proposes four development strategies of Hong Kong's tourism industry, namely (i) nurture and develop tourism products – to nurture and develop tourism products and initiatives with local and international characteristics; (ii) visitors from all parts of the world gather in Hong Kong – to develop a diversified portfolio of visitor source markets for Hong Kong, with a focus on attracting high value-added overnight visitors; (iii) intelligent and convenient travel to Hong Kong – to promote smart tourism; and (iv) quality services for visitors – to enhance the service quality and support of the tourism industry on all fronts and to cultivate talent.

The Committee appreciated the Commission's committed efforts in outlining a visionary plan for the future development of Hong Kong's tourism industry in the long term to further advocate the healthy and sustainable development of tourism-related industries, thereby promoting economic development.

The eMPF Platform was launched in June 2024 to centralise the administrative tasks dispersed across various trustees' platforms by providing one-stop services, and facilitate the standardisation, streamlining and automation of the Mandatory Provident Fund (MPF) scheme administration processes, thereby enhancing operational efficiency of the MPF System and reducing administration costs. The MPFA anticipated that all MPF trustees will complete onboarding the Platform by 2025.

The Committee appreciated the MPFA's ongoing efforts in building and operating the eMPF Platform to reshape the administrative ecosystem of the MPF System through innovative digital solutions.

The Committee also received the work reports of its three task forces:

Wholesale and Retail Task Force (WRTF)

- The MPFA and eMPF Outreach Team briefed the WRTF on the eMPF Platform. The WRTF welcomed the eMPF Platform, and appreciated the MPFA and the eMPF Outreach Team in providing support measures through various channels to facilitate stakeholders in using the eMPF Platform.
- The Hong Kong Productivity Council briefed the WRTF on E-commerce Easy under the Dedicated Fund on Branding, Upgrading and Domestic Sales (BUD Fund). The Government launched E-commerce Easy on July 15, 2024, with a view to assisting enterprises in opening up the Mainland market through developing electronic commerce (e-commerce) business. Following the announcements in the 2024 Policy Address and the 2025-26 Budget, a total of \$1.75 billion will be injected into the BUD Fund, and the geographical scope of E-commerce Easy will be expanded to the 10 countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. The WRTF welcomed E-commerce Easy and considered it conducive to assisting small and medium-sized enterprises in entering the Mainland market through digitalisation.

Food Business and Related Services Task Force (FRSTF)

- The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) briefed the FRSTF on the initiative of Recommendation on Food Manufacturer Registration (Applicable to Export of the Specified 18 Categories of Food Products to the Mainland), introduced under the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China Decree No. 248 "Regulations of the People's Republic of China on the Registration and Administration of Overseas Manufacturers of Imported Food" and the Advance Release Arrangement for Hong Kong-manufactured food products entering the Mainland market, under the framework of the Cooperation Agreement on the Supervision of Safety and Facilitation of Customs Clearance of Food

Products Manufactured in Hong Kong Exported to the Mainland. The FRSTF welcomed the facilitation measures.

- The FEHD also briefed the FRSTF on e-services of Food Business Licences and Permits, including digitally transmitting and processing licence application information with 11 bureaux/departments, issuance of electronic licences/permits, and accepting electronic applications for alteration to the approved plan of licensed food premises, licence amendments, transfer and cancellation as well as electronic payment of application fees. The FRSTF welcomed the e-services provided by the FEHD and suggested the FEHD enhance the user-friendliness of its website to encourage more trades to use the e-service.

Task Force on Business Liaison Groups (BLGTF)

- The Labour Department (LD) briefed the BLGTF on the abolition of using the accrued benefits of employers' mandatory contributions under the Mandatory Provident Fund (MPF) System to offset severance payment (SP) and long service payment (LSP) payable to employees, and the Subsidy Scheme for Abolition of MPF Offsetting Arrangement (SSA), which would share employers' SP/LSP expenses after the abolition to help employers adapt to the policy change. The abolition of the offsetting arrangement and the SSA will be effective on May 1, 2025. The BLGTF thanked the LD for briefing on the above initiatives, and suggested the LD simplify the content of the promotional materials of the abolition of the offsetting arrangement to facilitate publicity and education to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. The LD undertook to consider the suggestion.

The Committee also expressed appreciation of the commitment and achievements of the bureaux and departments in continuously implementing the business facilitation measures under the Be the Smart Regulator Programme to enhance their business licensing services.

Papers for the Committee meeting are available at www.gov.hk/en/business/supportenterprises/bf/advisory/index.htm for public access.