

13th meeting of Chief Executive's Council of Advisers on Innovation and Strategic Development held

The Chief Executive's Council of Advisers on Innovation and Strategic Development (the Council) held its 13th meeting today (December 7) during which members' advice was sought on the Northern Metropolis Development Strategy (the Development Strategy) announced by the Chief Executive in the 2021 Policy Address and the future of Hong Kong's re-industrialisation based on a research project commissioned by the Federation of Hong Kong Industries (FHKI). The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam also hosted a lunch before the meeting for members.

At the meeting, Professor KK Ling, the Chief Executive's Strategic Planning Advisor for Hong Kong/Shenzhen Co-operation, gave a presentation on the Development Strategy. Members noted that the Northern Metropolis upon full development would be home to 2.5 million people with a total of over 900 000 residential units, as compared to its current housing units of 390 000 and a population of 960 000. Within the Northern Metropolis, the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park occupying 87 hectares in the Lok Ma Chau Loop for which construction is underway and surrounding areas would be consolidated to form the San Tin Technopole, providing 150 hectares of additional land for innovation and technology (I&T) development to serve as the growth engine of the Metropolis. To build self-contained and liveable communities, the Development Strategy put emphasis on job creation with an estimated 650 000 jobs including 150 000 in I&T, and advocated adoption of planning principles comprising urban-rural integration and co-existence of development and conservation.

Mrs Lam shared with members that the Development Strategy is strategically planned to provide the spatial capacity and policy direction for Hong Kong to continue to flourish both socially and economically, especially in integrating into the national development. She remarked that the Northern Metropolis with its focus on I&T, together with the Harbour Metropolis which supports our international financial and business centre, will be the twin engines for Hong Kong's economic growth in future. Adopting a transport infrastructure-led approach, the Development Strategy has proposed five additional new railway projects, three of which are cross-boundary, to improve local transport infrastructure connectivity and facilitate passenger flow between Hong Kong and the Mainland.

Members unanimously welcomed the Development Strategy as a visionary plan driving Hong Kong's future development. They appreciated that the Development Strategy, being the first strategic plan with a spatial concept going beyond the Shenzhen River, would facilitate close collaboration between the governments of Hong Kong and Shenzhen in areas such as economic development, infrastructure, I&T, people's livelihood and ecological development. Members suggested establishing an institutional mechanism to

strengthen liaison and cooperation with Shenzhen to assure smooth implementation of the Development Strategy. With the vision of developing the Northern Metropolis as an international I&T hub, they recommended that the Government should proactively nurture local talents as well as devise suitable programmes to attract more Mainland and overseas talents.

Members were also briefed by Dr Sunny Chai, FHKI Chairman, and his team on the findings of FHKI's research project "Made by Hong Kong – The Way Forward for Hong Kong Industries" and relevant policy recommendations for the future industrial development of Hong Kong.

Members noted FHKI's three major advocacies to the Government, which included developing local "re-industrialisation" of selected industries to build core technological competence; strengthening producer services to become the hub of regional manufacturing development; and reviewing economic data to reflect industrial development. They echoed the importance for Hong Kong to develop high value-added manufacturing through "re-industrialisation" and agreed that proper recognition should be given to the significant contributions of producer services in pushing forward Hong Kong's industrial development.

Mrs Lam expressed appreciation to FHKI for the research which provided invaluable sights for the Government's industrial policy formulation. She agreed to the need for building a more complete I&T ecosystem by allowing smart and technology-driven manufacturing activities to take root in Hong Kong. The construction of Advanced Manufacturing Centre in Tseung Kwan O and Microelectronics Centre in Yuen Long, together with the recent strategic move of the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (of which Dr Chai is also the chairman) to reposition existing three industrial estates as "InnoParks", are part of Hong Kong's broader drive to move in that direction. The Development Strategy has further boosted these efforts by earmarking more land for advanced manufacturing in the San Tin Technopole and recommended new land disposal approach to help lure overseas and Mainland firms to set up manufacturing base in Hong Kong that would be conducive to the growth of priority I&T areas. She looked forward to working closely with FHKI and other stakeholders to put in place the necessary enabling policy measures to invigorate our industrial development.

The Council is a high-level body to give advice on Hong Kong's strategic positioning in the global and regional contexts and directions of economic development, provide guidance on evidence-based research and studies on related issues, and advise on stakeholder engagement and public participation in the policy formulation and consensus building process.