

BFAC appreciates work of HKSTPC in Greater Bay Area Development

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

The Business Facilitation Advisory Committee held its 47th meeting today (February 22). At the meeting, members were briefed by the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC) on its latest Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) development initiatives and its role in supporting the innovation and technology (I&T) development in the area. These include the establishment of HKSTPC's Shenzhen branch in 2022 as well as the setting up of the GBA InnoAcademy and the GBA InnoExpress in the branch. The GBA InnoAcademy and the GBA InnoExpress will serve as a resource centre, a training hub and an exchange platform for talents, and will nurture start-ups and support I&T enterprises in going global and attracting foreign investment. The HKSTPC will also work with universities of Hong Kong to establish incubator networks in their GBA campuses for talent development and start-up support.

The Committee appreciated the efforts of the HKSTPC in fostering and expediting the I&T development in the GBA.

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

Wholesale and Retail Task Force (WRTF)

- The Department of Health (DH) briefed the WRTF on the Government's amendments to the Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance (Cap. 138) and its regulations to regulate Advanced Therapy Products (ATPs). Upon enactment of the amended legislation, regulatory requirements for pharmaceutical products under relevant ordinances are also applicable to ATPs, together with additional requirements on labelling and record keeping specific to ATPs that would enhance the traceability of products. The WRTF thanked the DH for their elaboration of the regulatory framework for ATPs and suggested the DH to conduct a regular review on the Ordinance to cope with the rapid development of ATPs available in the market.
- The Office of the Communications Authority (OFCA) briefed the WRTF on the Subsidy Scheme for Encouraging Early Deployment of 5G. Under the Scheme, the Government subsidises 50 per cent of the actual costs directly related to the deployment of 5G technology in an approved project, subject to a cap of \$500,000. In July 2021, the Government increased funding earmarked for the Scheme from \$50 million to \$100 million. The deadline for application has also been extended to July 31, 2022. The WRTF appreciated the OFCA for the briefing and suggested the

OFCA to set up a performance pledge on the turnaround time for application processing and approval.

Food Business and Related Services Task Force (FRSTF)

- The Labour Department (LD) responded to the FRSTF's suggestions raised at the last meeting on the "notification of workplaces" requirements under the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance (Cap. 59). The FRSTF thanked the LD's effort in addressing the trade's concerns and facilitating the trade's compliance.
- The Lands Department (LandsD) briefed the FRSTF on the arrangements to relax the requirement of applying for an offensive trades licence for General Restaurant Licence, Light Refreshment Restaurant Licence and Liquor Licence. The FRSTF welcomed the business facilitation measures and appreciated the LandsD's efforts in reducing the trade's administrative burden in complying with the licensing requirements.
- The Fire Services Department briefed the FRSTF on the proposed exempt quantity pertaining to the use or storage of carbon dioxide in pressure receptacles at food premises (i.e. pressure receptacles for making soft drinks). The FRSTF thanked the departments' briefing and welcomed the trade facilitation measure.

Task Force on Business Liaison Groups (BLGTF)

- The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) briefed the BLGTF on a series of business facilitating initiatives to better meet the needs of public market stall tenants. The BLGTF thanked the FEHD for implementing measures which help reduce tenants' burden in operating a market stall.
- The Buildings Department (BD) briefed the BLGTF on the main features of the Minor Amenity Feature Validation Scheme which came into operation on September 1, 2021, for allowing the continued use of certain low-risk unauthorised minor amenity features by the building occupants. The BLGTF thanked the BD for the initiative, which minimises the burden of the building owners or occupants in seeking rectification and avoid wastage of the facilities concerned.
- The Water Supplies Department (WSD) briefed the BLGTF on the issue of an

electronic plumber's licence by the second quarter of 2022, i.e. the provision of end-to-end e-licensing services for the licence. The BLGTF thanked the WSD for enhancing the licence application process, which will save the applicants' need of visiting the licensing offices as well as enhancing the integrity and convenience of the service for a plumber's licence.

The Committee also expressed appreciation of the commitment and achievements of the bureaux and departments in continuously enhancing their business licensing services under the "Be the Smart Regulator" Programme.

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