

Tourism Strategy Committee holds second meeting (with photos)

The Tourism Strategy Committee, chaired by the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Kevin Yeung, held its second meeting today (September 16). At the meeting, Mr Yeung discussed with members the changes in travel patterns and visitor habits. He encouraged the tourism and related trade to understand the changes, respond to the changes and embrace them, introduce tourism, catering and retail products with Hong Kong characteristics to attract visitors as well as join hands with the Government to promote Hong Kong's tourism development and boost the economy. Views on the proposed directions of the Development Blueprint for Hong Kong's Tourism Industry 2.0 (Blueprint 2.0) and how to further promote the theme of "tourism is everywhere in Hong Kong" were exchanged at the meeting as well. Besides, representatives from the Hong Kong Tourism Board briefed members about Hong Kong's latest tourism performance and the relevant statistics.

Mr Yeung said, "The provisional visitor arrival figure for August this year was close to 4.5 million, representing a year-on-year increase of over 9 per cent and reaching a record high for a single month since the full opening of the borders in February 2023. We are encouraged to note that in the first eight months of this year, more than 29.5 million visitor arrivals were recorded, representing a year-on-year increase of 45 per cent. Of them, about 23 million were Mainland visitors and over 6.5 million were non-Mainland visitors, representing year-on-year increase of about 39 per cent and 63 per cent respectively."

He added, "With the strong recovery in visitor arrivals, the Government will continue to work with different sectors of the community to enhance the competitiveness of Hong Kong's tourism industry and strive to pursue 'tourism is everywhere in Hong Kong'. At the meeting, members expressed their endorsement and support for the Government's continued policy direction of making good use of Hong Kong's rich tourism resources to actively motivate the trade to develop characteristic tourism products to promote Hong Kong's unique appeal to the world and attract more visitors to Hong Kong. The Government also encourages the trade to seize the business opportunities arising from the Central Government's gifting of two giant pandas to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) and the two giant panda cubs born in Hong Kong, exercise creativity and introduce giant panda products with local characteristics to offer special giant panda experience to visitors."

He further said, "The Government has completed 27 consultation sessions with the trade on Blueprint 2.0, met with more than 110 trade organisations and received over 1 000 recommendations. The Government is now pressing ahead with the formulation of various strategies and initiatives for the Blueprint 2.0 with a view to promoting speedy and quality development of the tourism industry. Our plan is to finalise and publish the contents of the Blueprint 2.0 within this year."

At the meeting, members put forward different suggestions for promoting the theme of "tourism is everywhere in Hong Kong", such as stepping up effort in developing island tourism, green tourism and continuing to make good use of technology to enhance visitor experience. Furthermore, Mr Yeung briefed members about the latest updates regarding the Central Government's gifting of another two giant pandas to the HKSAR, the birth of two giant panda cubs by giant panda Ying Ying on August 15 this year as well as a series of territory-wide publicity and promotional activities being actively arranged by the Government together with Ocean Park and various sectors of the community. Members offered advice on how to further drive the giant panda popularity across the whole city and grasp the business opportunities thus brought about. Additionally, the Tourism Commission briefed the committee about two creative tourism projects, namely the Sai Kung Hoi Arts Festival and the Design District Hong Kong, which will be launched again in November and December this year respectively.

The Tourism Strategy Committee is tasked to provide the Government with strategic advice and foster collaboration among different stakeholders in tourism and related sectors for further promoting the long-term and sustainable development of Hong Kong's tourism industry. Members include prominent figures and key leaders from the tourism and other related sectors such as culture, sports, retail and catering, etc.

