

Legislative Council Panel on Constitutional Affairs

Publicity for the 2011 District Council Election

Purpose

This paper sets out the main features of the proposed publicity programme to promote the fourth District Council (DC) election to be held on 6 November 2011.

Objectives of the Proposed Programme

2. The overall objective of the publicity programme is to encourage voter participation in the DC election by putting across the message that the work of DC is closely related to the daily life and well-being of the people of Hong Kong, and that each vote can make a difference. A separate plank of the proposed programme is to publicise the importance of honest and clean elections.

Proposed Programme

3. The publicity programme will last from August until the polling day on 6 November 2011. We will adopt a phased approach in building up the intensity of the publicity. Some publicity items and activities will start as early as in August to promote clean election. From early September onwards, a series of publicity items and activities will be launched to tie in with the nomination and canvassing period, with intensified activities in the last week before the polling day.

Phase One (clean election)

4. We expect prospective candidates will make preparations for the election well before the nomination period commences. The experience of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) is that it is important for prospective candidates and their agents to be made aware from early days of what constitute lawful or unlawful electioneering activities. Therefore, we intend to start the first phase of publicity as early as August. We will focus on reminding prospective candidates, their agents and the public of the importance of clean elections. This message will be promulgated through posters and

Announcements in the Public Interest (APIs) on TV and radio. A series of short filmlets will also be screened on infotainment channels and other media platforms to educate the public on some of the major provisions in the Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Conduct) Ordinance.

5. To complement the clean elections message and as a prelude to Phase Two, we will also launch some promotional activities mainly through posters and APIs, to remind people of the importance of DCs and the election. An early start will allow more time for the message to slowly sink into people's minds.

Phase Two (nomination and canvassing)

6. The second phase of the programme will be launched in early September to tie in with the commencement of the nomination period of candidates. The launch will be marked by a public ceremony. The bulk of the promotional activities will be conducted within this phase. There will be new versions of posters and APIs to reinforce our message, and we will make use of a wide variety of channels to maximize publicity. The publicity channels to be used will include TV, radio, government websites, and major public transportation networks. Election forums in selected constituencies will be arranged. At the district level, banners and buntings will be put up at prominent locations. During this period, an API to call for nominations from prospective candidates and an API to drive home proper voting procedures will also be screened.

Phase Three (voting)

7. The final phase of the publicity programme will commence one week before the polling day. On top of the initiatives mentioned in paragraph 6 above, there will be daily count-downs to heighten the atmosphere for the election. Special TV programmes will be screened. On the polling day, VIP visits to polling stations will be arranged.

Financial Implications

8. We estimate that the publicity programme described in paragraphs 3 to 7 above will cost about \$7 million. REO has earmarked sufficient provision for this purpose in their expenditure for 2011-12.

Advice Sought

9. Members' comments on our proposed publicity programme are sought. Subject to any comments Members may have, we will seek the endorsement of the Electoral Affairs Commission on the proposals set out in this paper.

Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau
Registration and Electoral Office
June 2011