

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**HAB480**

**(Question Serial No. 4852)**

Head: (95) Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (5) Public Libraries

Controlling Officer: Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Ms Michelle LI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home Affairs

Question:

Did the Government conduct timely review of the usage rates of the public libraries in all the 18 districts in the past five years? If so, what were the details and the expenditures involved? Did the Government conduct public consultations in all the 18 districts in the past five years on the provision of additional libraries? If so, what were the details and the expenditures involved? Does the Government have any plans to review the usage rates of the public libraries in all the 18 districts in 2016-17? If so, what are the details and the estimated expenditures involved? Does the Government have any plans to conduct public consultations in all the 18 districts in 2016-17 on the provision of additional public libraries? If so, what are the details and the estimated expenditures involved?

Asked by: Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki (Member Question No. 7)

Reply:

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) is committed to enhancing the quality, accessibility and cost-effectiveness of public library services on a continuous basis. Apart from monitoring patronage and usage statistics, the Hong Kong Public Libraries (HKPL) also conducts regular public opinion surveys, customer liaison group meetings, meetings with focus groups such as teacher-librarians to gauge the public's views on its services, facilities and collection.

A survey was conducted in 2014-15 to gauge public's opinions on the prevailing public library services and their future needs. The cost of the survey was about \$0.9 million. The findings showed that 85.6% of library users were satisfied with the services and facilities of public libraries. The LCSD will further study and analyse the data obtained from the survey to further enhance the library services to meet the rising expectations of users and also to attract non-users to use public library services and facilities.

In considering the provision of new public libraries, the relevant District Council will be consulted. The Government will take into account a host of factors including the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines, the geographical location, transport facilities and

demographic characteristics of the district/community, the development of the infrastructure and community facilities of the district, the changing needs (including demographic changes) of the community, the utilisation of the existing libraries as well as the cost-effectiveness of the services. In 2016-17, the LCSD plans to open 2 new libraries, namely Yuen Chau Kok Public Library (district library) and Fanling (South) Public Library (small library).

Apart from planning new libraries or reprovisioning/upgrading existing ones, the LCSD will continue to adopt a multi-pronged approach in enhancing library services including leveraging on information technology (e.g. the “library without walls” service) to increase the accessibility and user-friendliness of library services beyond the confines of time and space as well as expanding the network of community libraries in suitable locations in collaboration with non-government organisations and district groups.

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