

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

HAB246

(Question Serial No. 2065)

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:

The Government plans to provide 3 self-service library units on a trial basis. Please inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) the exact locations, expenditure and details of the 3 self-service library units;
- (b) whether there is any plan to extend the provision of self-service library units to all 18 districts in Hong Kong; if yes, please provide the details and expenditure; if no, please state the reasons;
- (c) whether the Government has conducted a study on the numbers, locations and usage of self-service library units provided in other countries or regions, especially their effectiveness in promoting the book borrowing rate?

Asked by: Hon TIEN Puk-sun, Michael (Member Question No. 15)

Reply:

- (a) The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) plans to provide on a trial basis 3 self-service library units, 1 each on Hong Kong Island, in Kowloon and in the New Territories at convenient locations with heavier pedestrian flow and far from existing libraries. The 3 identified locations are Island East Sports Centre sitting-out area in the Eastern District, an outdoor area near Tai Wai MTR Station in Sha Tin District and a suitable location near the Hong Kong Cultural Centre in Yau Tsim Mong District. The self-service units will provide round-the-clock services such as borrowing, return, payment and pickup of reserved library materials. The LCSD plans to launch the service in the second half of 2017-18. The estimated expenditure for the procurement of equipment and related IT services is about \$7.8 million, excluding the costs of site preparation. The LCSD has earmarked \$2.4 million for the daily operation and maintenance of the self-service library units in 2017-18. The full-year operating costs for the 3 library units is about \$4.8 million.

- (b) After launching the pilot scheme in 2017-18, the LCSD will conduct a review in 2018-19 to evaluate the effectiveness of the trial scheme taking into account the utilisation, cost effectiveness, feedback of the users, sustainability and complementarity with other library services. If the results are satisfactory, the LCSD will explore the feasibility of extending the service to other locations.
- (c) The LCSD has taken into account the experience of other cities in the implementation of similar service when planning for the pilot scheme. Since local conditions and user behavior vary among different places, the LCSD will evaluate the results of the pilot scheme taking into account the local context.

- End -