

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

HAB169

(Question Serial No. 1700)

Head: (95) Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (5) Public Libraries

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home Affairs

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that an additional \$200 million will be allocated to the Hong Kong Public Libraries to promote reading among children and families in the coming 5 years. Please list out the amount of annual estimates for the coming 5 years, and the breakdown of the projects involved and their estimates.

Asked by: Hon KWONG Chun-yu (Member Question No. (LegCo use): 21)

Reply:

An additional allocation of \$200 million will be provided to the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) from the 2018-19 to 2022-23 financial years to launch new initiatives to promote reading in Hong Kong. The LCSD will work with the Education Bureau, community partners, local authors and publishers in organising activities at the territory-wide and district level. Major initiatives include –

- (i) re-branding and promotion of the Hong Kong Public Libraries (HKPL) as a joyful and interesting place for reading and exploration;
- (ii) launching large-scale Reading-for-All campaigns to foster partnership with different community sectors in promoting reading culture;
- (iii) out-reaching programmes targeting young children in kindergartens and child care centres;
- (iv) community engagement programmes such as “Storytelling Ambassador Programme”;
- (v) collaboration with local authors and the publishing sector in organising reading and literary art activities; and
- (vi) launching a three-month pilot scheme in the third quarter of 2018 to extend the opening hours on Sundays and public holidays in 3 selected public libraries on Hong Kong Island, in Kowloon and in the New Territories. The 3 selected libraries will be open until 8:00 p.m. on Sundays and Public Holidays during the period.

The proposed initiatives aim to instil a reading culture across the territory. Programmes are planned on both the territory-wide and district levels involving the entire HKPL

network. In the process, the LCSD will seek to foster community partnership in order to promote shared vision, create synergy and enhance visibility and impact. Priority will be placed on attracting new readers especially young children, youth and families.

The initiatives will involve an additional allocation of about \$200 million spanning over a period of 5 years, covering programme costs of activities, procurement of children books, minor refurbishment for libraries, expenses for the engagement of design and supporting services, publicity and promotion, and time-limited manpower support for the projects. While details of the initiatives will be worked out, the estimated expenditures in the coming 5 financial years are set out below –

| Financial Year | Estimated expenditures (\$ million) |
|-----------------------|---|
| 2018-19 | 25 |
| 2019-20 | 44 |
| 2020-21 | 45 |
| 2021-22 | 45 |
| 2022-23 | 45 |
| Total | 204 (i.e. about \$200 million) |

- End -