

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

HAB176

(Question Serial No. 2537)

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:

In paragraph 161 of the Budget Speech, the Financial Secretary indicated that an additional \$200 million will be allocated to promote reading in the coming 5 years. The Government launched Hong Kong's first self-service library station in Sai Wan Ho at the end of last year offering round-the-clock public library services for the community, and will launch 2 more stations later this year, 1 in Tsim Sha Tsui and another in Sha Tin. Please inform this Committee of the following: (1) regarding the self-service library station in Sai Wan Ho since its launch, i) the number of loans, ii) the number of library items, iii) age groups of readers and iv) the daily peaks hours for using the service, and how the Government assesses the effectiveness of the station; and (2) the expenditure and manpower involved in the provision of self-service library stations in this year's Estimates.

Asked by: Hon LAU Ip-keung, Kenneth (Member Question No. (LegCo use): 63)

Reply:

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) has launched a pilot scheme to provide 3 self-service library stations, 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 first library station in the Eastern District was opened on 5 December 2017 while the remaining 2 in the Yau Tsim Mong District and the Sha Tin District respectively are planned to be opened by phases in the second half of 2018 tentatively. It can hold about 300 items of library materials at any one time. Up to the end of February 2018, the library station in the Eastern District had recorded a total of 7 187 loans out of a stock of 11 798 items, of which adult and junior materials accounted for 56.8% and 43.2% respectively. Majority of the loans were from the '35-44' and 'below 15' age groups, accounting for about 28% and 23% of the total number of users respectively. The daily peak hour was from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. (10%).

The LCSD has earmarked \$3.5 million for the daily operation and maintenance of the library stations in 2018-19, excluding cost of library staff redeployed from other library facilities. The LCSD will conduct a review in 2018-19 to evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot scheme taking into account the utilisation, cost effectiveness, feedback of the users,

sustainability and complementarity with other library services. Subject to the outcome of the review, the LCSD will explore the feasibility of extending the service to other locations and seek additional funding as required.

- End -