

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

HAB367

(Question Serial No. 5655)

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:

1. Did the Government conduct timely review of the usage rates of the public libraries in all the 18 districts in the past 5 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 5 years on the provision of additional libraries? If so, what were the details and the expenditures involved? Does the Government have any plan to review the usage rates of the public libraries in all the 18 districts in 2018-19? If so, what are the details and the estimated expenditures involved? Does the Government have any plan to provide additional public libraries in all the 18 districts in 2018-19? If so, what are the details and the estimated expenditures involved?
2. Did the Government conduct timely review of the usage rates of the mobile library vans in all the 18 districts in the past 5 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 5 years on the provision of additional mobile library vans? If so, what were the details and the expenditures involved? Does the Government have any plan to review the usage rates of the mobile library vans in all the 18 districts in 2018-19? If so, what are the details and the estimated expenditures involved? Does the Government have any plan to provide additional mobile library vans in all the 18 districts in 2018-19? If so, what are the details and the estimated expenditures involved?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Tanya (Member Question No. (LegCo use): 186)

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 the patronage and usage statistics, the Hong Kong Public Libraries (HKPL) also conducts periodic public opinion surveys at the territory-wide level, and holds annual customer liaison group meetings, focus group meetings with teacher-librarians,

community bodies/non-profit making organisations, etc. at the district level to gauge public views on its services, facilities and collections as well as their future needs.

The latest territory-wide “Opinion Survey on Hong Kong Public Libraries” was conducted in 2014-15 to collect public 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. An Executive Summary of the survey report is available at the HKPL’s web-site.

In considering the provision of new public libraries, the Government will take into account a host of factors including the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines, current provision and utilisation of existing libraries at the territory-wide and district levels, demographic characteristics and changes, changing needs of the community, views of District Councils (DCs), site availability and technical feasibility.

The LCSD has no plan to open additional static library in 2018-19. Library projects under construction are set out below –

Project		Progress
1	Reconstruction of North Lamma Public Library under “Yung Shue Wan Library cum Heritage and Cultural Showroom, Lamma Island”	The works are expected to be completed by the end of 2018.
2	Reprovisioning of Sau Mau Ping Public Library to Public Rental Housing Development at Sau Ming Road, Kwun Tong	The works are expected to be completed in 2019.
3	Provision of a new library under “Sports Centre, 5-a-side soccer pitch and public library facilities at Northwest Kowloon Reclamation Site 6, Sham Shui Po”	The works are expected to be completed in 2020.

In addition, the 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. 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.

Apart from planning new libraries or reprovisioning/upgrading existing ones, the LCSD will continue to adopt a multi-pronged approach in strengthening library services, including developing the electronic library resources for public enjoyment at their own time and their own place, and expanding the network of community libraries in suitable locations in collaboration with non-government organisations and district groups so as to extend public library services to different segments of the community.

Regarding mobile library services, the above survey recorded an overall satisfaction rate of 78.6%. Apart from conducting surveys, the LCSD regularly monitors and reviews its mobile library services and maintains an on-going dialogue with the DCs on the provision of services and service stops. Having regard to the views of the DCs and the findings of the reviews, the LCSD has enhanced the mobile library service progressively since July 2014 by introducing 2 new mobile library vans and reshuffling the routes of the existing mobile library vans. Since then, 18 mobile library stops have been added or are being arranged. The cost of conducting the above reviews on mobile library services was absorbed by the existing manpower resources.

The LCSD will continue to monitor and review the usage of its static and mobile library services having regard to the public views collected through various channels, for the effective utilisation of resources to better serve the public.

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