

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

CSTB302

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Head: (95) Leisure and Cultural Services Department

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

Programme: (5) Public Libraries

Controlling Officer: Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Vincent LIU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism

Question:

To promote reading for all, the Government has designated 23 April each year as the “Hong Kong Reading for All Day” starting from 2024. On that day, the Hong Kong Public Libraries will collaborate with different stakeholders to organise an array of large-scale territory-wide reading activities. A number of proposals have been brought up by various sectors in this regard. To follow up on the preparatory work, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. What is the expenditure to be involved in promoting this activity? What is the current manpower planning for preparation?
2. Compared with the reading activities in previous years, what is the percentage change this year in terms of the estimates and the scale of the activities?
3. What is the progress of inviting participation of other organisations from different sectors from Mainland and overseas cities?
4. The Government mentioned earlier that CreateHK would sponsor the publishing sector in Hong Kong to organise reading promotion activities during the “Hong Kong Reading for All Day”. Please set out in tabular form such details as the sponsorship applications, their approval status and the format of the approved reading activities.
5. As indicated in the target of “attendance at extension activities programmes” under the key performance measures of library services, both the actual attendance in 2023 and the estimated attendance in 2024 fall significantly short of the target attendance. What measures will be put in place to build a stronger reading culture and cultivate a reading habit among the public?

Asked by: Hon FOK Kai-kong, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)

Reply:

1. To support the “Hong Kong Reading for All Day” on 23 April, the Hong Kong Public Libraries (HKPL) under the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) will collaborate with different stakeholders to launch the first “Hong Kong Reading Week” from 20 to 28 April 2024 by holding a series of large-scale reading activities. The expenditure involved in such activities and publicity is around \$9 million. The LCSD will deploy existing manpower resources to organise the activities of the “Hong Kong Reading Week”. No additional manpower is required.

2. To support the “World Book Day” on 23 April and promote a reading culture, the HKPL organised a number of activities every year, such as creative competitions, fun days and storytelling workshops. To tie in with the first “Hong Kong Reading for All Day”, the HKPL will beef up past activities by organising additional reading promotion activities in collaboration with different stakeholders in the first “Hong Kong Reading Week”. Such activities include collaborating with the radio programme “One-minute Reading” of the Radio Television Hong Kong; holding the launching ceremony of the “Hong Kong Reading Week” at a shopping mall; participating in the “2024 Hong Kong Reading+” organised by the publishing sector; holding the reading event “Read Together for Half an Hour” at schools, in the community and at leisure and cultural venues; organising reading activities on Chinese culture at selected libraries across the 18 districts; arranging outreach activities at shopping malls with pop-up libraries and holding online reading clubs. Compared with last year, an additional 186 activities will be held this year, with the expenditure on these activities (excluding publicity expenses) increasing by \$5.3 million.

3. To tie in with the “Hong Kong Reading for All Day”, libraries in Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao will continue to jointly promote reading and create a favourable reading environment in the cities through various brand activities including the “4·23 World Book Day Creative Competition”, “Read Together for Half an Hour” and “Reading in the Greater Bay Area” 9+2 Cities Book Tour’. The “2024 Hong Kong Reading+”, organised by the Hong Kong Publishing Federation and sponsored by CreateHK, will feature the exhibition “SZ&HK Co-Reading: Shenzhen Zone”. While confirming participation in the event, the Publicity Department of the CPC Shenzhen Municipal Committee will also give full support by providing exhibits. In addition, the “2024 Hong Kong Reading+” will invite Mainland and overseas speakers to give talks during the exhibition, with a view to bringing a reading culture to the community, sharing and promoting the fun of reading, and further enriching a taste for culture and creativity among the public.

4. The reading promotion activity organised by the Hong Kong’s publishing sector and sponsored by CreateHK during the “Hong Kong Reading for All Day” is tabulated below:

Name of Activity	Application	Sponsorship Approval Status	Format of the Approved Reading Activities
2024 Hong Kong Reading+	Application submitted by the Hong Kong Publishing Federation to the “CreateSmart Initiative”	\$7,293,600 has been approved	Exhibition, book fair, cultural activities, etc.

5. The HKPL has been fostering a consistent reading habit among members of the public through quality and diversified collections and reading activities on various platforms. More than 23 000 reading promotion activities are being planned for 2024-25, with highlights including the “Hong Kong Reading Week” and “Summer Library Festival”. At the same time, social media platforms will be better utilised to further expand the reading community through interactive activities, games and promotions. The HKPL will also enhance outreach activities, including on-going visits to different communities and schools by specially designed small trucks “Library-on-Wheels”, participation in the “Hong Kong Book Fair” and setting up of reading corners at large-scale exhibitions of the LCSD’s museums to further promote extended reading on various exhibition themes such as art, science and history. To tie in with major arts festivals such as the “Hong Kong Pop Culture Festival”, “Asia+ Festival” and “Chinese Culture Festival” and the establishment of the new Chinese Culture Promotion Office, the HKPL also plans to launch reading activities on related themes, recommend thematic books and offer e-reading experiences to the public, so as to extend the reach of reading promotion and expand the readership.

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