

COMMUNITY SPORTS COMMITTEE

Strategies for Promoting Community Sports

PURPOSE

This paper aims to seek Members' advice on the proposals and the way forward for the strategies to further promote community sports.

BACKGROUND

2. Set up in October 2003 as one of the committees under the Sports Commission, the Community Sports Committee (CSC) was tasked with advising the Government on strategies and initiatives in relation to the promotion of community participation in sports, development of student sports, development of community sports clubs, administration of the sports subvention scheme and the provision and management of community sports facilities.

3. Since the establishment of the CSC, a total of nine meetings, two brainstorming sessions and a special meeting have been held for in-depth examination and discussion of various issues. They include the use and management of the leisure facilities provided by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) and other Government departments to promote community sports programmes; the enhancement of the role of school sports in the development of community sports; the implementation of the Physical Fitness Test for the Community; the LCSD's planning strategies for developing community sports programmes and criteria for allocation of sports subvention to national sports associations (NSAs) and sports organisations, as well as review on sports policy.

4. To promote sporting culture in schools, the CSC set up the Student Sports Activities Co-ordinating Sub-committee in May 2004 to strengthen its cooperation with schools, community organisations and the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) to formulate a framework and clear strategies on the promotion of

sports to students of primary all through to tertiary. Moreover, in order to build a database of the physical fitness of Hong Kong citizens, the CSC established an advisory committee in May 2005 to implement the Physical Fitness Test for the Community project to lay the foundation for improving the physical fitness of Hong Kong people. The CSC also set up the Working Group on the Monitoring of Performance of Management Service Contractors at LCSD Sports Centres and Swimming Pools in November 2005 to monitor the performance of contractors of sports centres and swimming pools so as to ensure service quality is maintained at the above facilities.

DIRECTION OF COMMUNITY SPORTS DEVELOPMENT

5. In his Policy Address of 2005-2006, the Chief Executive proposed to enhance the functions of District Councils. The Home Affairs Bureau published a consultation document entitled "Review on the Role, Functions and Composition of District Councils" in April 2006, in which it was proposed to allow District Councils to participate in the management of district cultural and leisure facilities. The consultation was completed at the end of July. The review on the role and functions of the District Councils offers a good opportunity to deepen the development of community sports. As more resources will be allocated to the district level and the District Councils have a good grasp of the needs of the local community, they will be able to coordinate the sports promotion work carried out in the districts by various parties, including schools, NSAs, community sports clubs and other district sports organisations, and contribute to the effective promotion of sports at the community level.

6. Having reviewed the efforts we have made and looking forward to opportunities for the development of community sports in the future, we propose that the CSC should, in its efforts to continue the promotion of "Sports for All", formulate its development strategies for the promotion of community sports in the direction of the six key areas set out below:

- (a) Formulation of systematic and objective indicators to measure the effectiveness of the "Sports for All" policy;
- (b) Coordinating and strengthening liaison and collaboration between the major partners involved in promoting community sports;
- (c) Staging the Hong Kong Games (HKG) to promote public participation and a sense of belonging to their community;

- (d) Intensifying the scope of School Sports Programme and better utilising the school sports facilities
- (e) Development of district sports activities with local characteristics; and
- (f) Introducing suitable sports activities to people of different age groups in order to encourage them to participate in sports suitable for them.

SPECIFIC STRATEGIES AND INITIATIVES FOR PROMOTING COMMUNITY SPORTS

7. Based on the above direction, we propose to formulate the following six specific strategies and related initiatives to promote community sports:

Strategy 1 : Formulation of Indicators to Measure the Effectiveness of Strategies for Promoting Community Sports

8. All along, the LCSD and the sports sector have been committed to providing diversified community sports services for the public and encouraging active involvement of different sectors of the community in sports activities to promote a “Sports for All” culture. These services have been introduced for years and it is now an opportune time to put in place a systematic and objective mechanism to gauge the level of public participation in sports. Hence, it is proposed that through conducting surveys of different scales, data such as the extent and frequency of public participation in community sports will be collected to devise a set of systematic and objective indicators to objectively measure the level of penetration of “Sports for All” in Hong Kong society. This will facilitate an effective assessment of the effectiveness of the strategies for promoting community sports, while the findings can also be used as reference for setting objectives for the future.

9. As the formulation of indicators will involve a wide spectrum of issues, it is proposed that a working group should be set up under the CSC. Apart from the CSC members, representatives from the academic sector and professionals from the relevant fields can also be invited to join the working group to provide professional advice as well as to study and examine in detail such matters as the formulation of indicators and the conduct of surveys.

Strategy 2: Coordinating and Strengthening Liaison and Collaboration between Major Partners Involved in Promoting Community Sports

10. At present, there are many groups organising sports programmes for the community. While the review on the functions of District Councils will bring new resources to community sports, it will also lead to keener competition among the groups, such as allocation of sports facilities. Hence, we need to strengthen liaison and collaboration between the major partners involved in the promotion of community sports so that they together can popularise sports in the community more systematically and that existing and new resources can be efficiently utilized for maximum benefits.

11. In order to strengthen liaison and collaboration between the major partners, it is proposed that the following options be considered--

- (a) In order to maintain systematic and sustainable development of sports, NSAs and schools should continue to get priority treatment in hiring district sports venues. The LCSD will brief the District Councils on the current policy and principles of venue allocation, and propose to the District Councils that the arrangement should continue be adopted when they take part in managing district sports facilities.
- (b) A single District Sports Association (DSA) should be recognized by each District Council to represent the district so that the allocation of district resources can be coordinated to promote sports development in the community more effectively. The LCSD will reflect the opinions concerned to the Home Affairs Department and the District Councils.
- (c) A permanent information platform should be established to provide access to authoritative information about the NSAs through the Sports Federation and Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China (SF&OC). In addition, regular meetings or seminars between SF&OC and the 18 District Councils should be held with a view to strengthening communication and collaboration between NSAs, District Councils and DSAs. The LCSD will perform the coordinating role.
- (d) As for the future role of the LCSD in organising district sports activities after the functions of District Councils have been enhanced, the

Department will take into account the preferred approaches of the District Councils and decide the need for the Department to continue organising sport training programmes and recreational activities and their respective numbers.

- (e) It is proposed that the SF&OC should liaise with the District Councils to strive for funding from the increased provision of \$300 million to NSAs in the promotion of some popular sports programmes in the districts.
- (f) It is proposed that the Hong Kong Games (HKG) be held once every two years starting from 2007 to showcase the strengthened collaboration between the major partners for promotion of sports in districts.

Strategy 3 : Organisation of the Hong Kong Games (HKG)

12. At present, through its 18 district leisure services offices, the LCSD cooperates closely with various District Councils and DSAs to promote and develop sports at the community level and organise a number of sports competitions for community participation. To further promote the culture of “Sports for All” in the community and to strengthen residents’ sense of belonging to their communities, we propose that the Sports Commission/CSC organise the HKG, a territory-wide sporting platform on which more opportunities of community participation, exchange and cooperation in sports will be offered. It will also serve to enhance communication and cultivate friendship among the 18 districts in Hong Kong so that partnership of various units concerned can be further realized and carried through, with community cohesion being strengthened.

13. It is proposed that the HKG be held once every two years starting from 2007, initially for the following sports: athletics, basketball, badminton and table tennis. The Games will be held with 18 districts competing for individual, group and territory championships. It is estimated that a total of 2 000 athletes will participate in the Games and the cost will be around \$5 million.

14. On organizational structure, it is proposed that the HKG be organized by the Sports Commission and co-ordinated by the CSC, with the 18 District Councils, SF&OC, the LCSD and related NSAs to be invited as “co-organisers”. Operationally speaking, it is proposed that an HKG Organising Committee be set up under the CSC. The Organising Committee will comprise members who are representatives of the CSC and various co-organizers, and will take up a coordinating and organizing role.

District teams will be formed with members selected by the 18 District Councils in conjunction with various DSAs for participating in the Games. SF&OC and related NSAs will give technical advice on the Games, while the LCSD will provide secretarial support, carry out the actual work for the organization of the Games and assist districts in forming district teams.

Strategy 4 : Intensifying the Scope of School Sports Programme and Better Utilising the School Sports Facilities

15. Given that school sports is the cornerstone of community sports development, we should cultivate students' interest in participating in sports activities from their childhood so that sports will become their lifelong habit. In view of this, the LCSD cooperates with the NSAs and the EMB in the organisation of the School Sports Programme (SSP) to bring sports into school campus, whereby students can make use of their school sports facilities to learn various kinds of sports knowledge and skills. It serves to stimulate students' interest in different kinds of sports, encourage them to take active participation in sports and enhance their sporting skills continuously. In 2005/06, about 7 000 sports programmes were successfully organised under the SSP with a total of 500 000 participants from over 900 schools.

16. To further enhance the SSP, the Student Sports Activities Co-ordinating Sub-committee under the CSC proposes that "One Student, One Sport" be the ultimate objective of the SSP. In this connection, LCSD will take the initiative to contact the schools currently not participating in the SSP. It is to find out why they are not participating and in line with their needs, we will offer assistance to those schools to enable more of them to take part in the SSP, with a view to increasing the school participation rate from the current one of about 70% to over 90%. Moreover, the Sports Award Scheme will be launched in the school year of 2006/07 to encourage schools and students to participate in sports actively. The idea is to compare the schools' participation rate, students' sports standards, the assessment indicators for their physical fitness and the progress in their continuous participation in physical training, so that recognition can be given by means of awards to schools that have promoted sports development in schools and encouragement given to students who have participated in sports actively. Furthermore, the schools can, taking into account their existing sports facilities, students' interest in participating in sports, and the past achievements of sports competitions, etc, select one to two focus sports for intensive training, thereby raising their sporting skills and identifying potential sports talents for recommendation to relevant NSAs for further training.

17. At present, most schools are equipped with various sports facilities, including soccer pitches, outdoor or indoor basketball courts, badminton courts, table tennis facilities etc., for conducting a wide range of sports activities. All these are valuable social resources. It is recommended that such facilities be open to community organisations and members of the public after school hours in order to help meet the shortfall of community facilities and for better utilisation of resources. The LCSD will liaise with the EMB, the Hong Kong Schools Sports Federation (HKSSF) and various Schools Councils to further explore the feasibility of hiring out school facilities to district organisations. (For example, LCSD has already made use of school facilities in Tin Shui Wai and Tung Chung for organization of sports activities. Similar arrangement will be adopted in Ma On Shan in the near future.)

Strategy 5 : Development of District Sports Activities with Local Characteristics in Various Districts

18. Each district has its own characteristic facilities. To better utilize resources, it is proposed that each district cooperate with related NSAs to promote and develop specialized sports programmes at the community level according to age distribution of the population, geographical environment, community features and existing facilities. For example, since there are a number of beaches in the Southern District, Sai Kung, Tuen Mun and the Islands, promotion of water sports programmes can be considered. In Sham Shui Po district, the specially designed skateboard park is suitable for promoting skating, in-line skating activities, etc. Through developing these specialized programmes, it is hoped that the public will be more interested in participating in sports, and the culture of “Sports for All” can be cultivated.

19. It is proposed that each of the 18 District Councils consider and find out the sports for promotion in their own district, so as to ensure that the sports proposed will suit the needs of the district and achieve the best promotion results.

Strategy 6 : Provision of suitable sports for different age groups

20. According to the Report for the Study of “The Physical Fitness Test for the Community” compiled by the Department of Sports Science and Physical Education of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, respondents of whatever age groups will only have to engage in moderate sports activities or fitness training for no less than three times a week to achieve better physical fitness than their inactive counterparts. The report also shows that the sports activities most popular among children are cycling, ball games, swimming, dancing and running; while those most

popular among adolescents include ball games, swimming, athletics, rope skipping and cycling. As for adults, they like walking, running, ball games, hiking and swimming most. The Department of Sports Science and Physical Education of the Chinese University of Hong Kong also points out in its report that the above sports activities are all suitable for the physical conditions of the corresponding age groups and therefore proposes that they keep on participating in those sports activities.

21. To encourage the people of Hong Kong to build a regular exercise habit for overall health improvement, the 18 district leisure services offices of the LCSD will take note of the above sports suggested to be suitable for the people of Hong Kong and allocate resources according to the specific conditions of each district, so that more sports activities that are in line with public interests and needs will be provided and neighbourhood participation will be facilitated. Besides, we will continue to cooperate with the Department of Health in the “Healthy Exercise for All” campaign, a territory-wide sports promotion activity, making use of different publicity channels such as television announcements of public interest, radio programmes, roving exhibitions and performances, web pages, pamphlets, posters, promotional VCDs and banners to spread the message of sports and health to all members of the public. To promote further the “Healthy Exercise for All” campaign and the sports activities suitable for people of different age groups mentioned above, the LCSD and the Department of Health plan to join hands in carrying out a project entitled “My Exercise” (“我的動感日誌”) from December this year to March next year, through which members of the public will be encouraged to sign a charter promising to participate actively in sports activities and adopt a healthy lifestyle.

ADVICE SOUGHT

22. Members are invited to comment on the strategies and initiatives on promoting community sports proposed in paragraphs 7 to 21 above. Upon collection and collation of Members’ views, we will report to the Sports Commission. It is also planned that starting from September, the 18 District Councils will be briefed on the strategies and approaches concerned while relevant work will be carried out step by step.