

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)2108/08-09
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/PL/HA

Panel on Home Affairs

**Minutes of meeting
held on Friday, 8 May 2009, at 8:30 am
in the Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building**

- Members present** : Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon Tanya CHAN (Deputy Chairman)
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong
Dr Hon Philip WONG Yu-hong, GBS
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, SBS, JP
Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP
Hon KAM Nai-wai, MH
Dr Hon LAM Tai-fai, BBS, JP
Hon CHAN Hak-kan
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che
Hon WONG Sing-chi
Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun
- Members attending** : Hon Mrs Sophie LEUNG LAU Yau-fun, GBS, JP
Hon LEE Wing-tat
- Members absent** : Hon WONG Yung-kan, SBS, JP
Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, GBS, JP
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
Hon WONG Yuk-man
- Public Officers attending** : Item IV
Home Affairs Bureau
Ms Florence HUI Hiu-fai, JP
Under Secretary for Home Affairs

Mr SO Kam-shing, JP
Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs (3)

Ms Winnie SO Chui-ying
Principal Assistant Secretary for Home
Affairs (Culture)¹

Funding Committee for the Performing Arts

Dr Darwin CHEN, SBS
Chairman

Item V

Home Affairs Bureau

Mr Jonathan McKinley
Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs (2)

Miss Janet WONG
Principal Assistant Secretary
(Recreation and Sport)

Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Miss Olivia CHAN
Assistant Director (Leisure Services)²

Item VI

Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Mr Paul CHEUNG Kwok-kee
Assistant Director (Leisure Services)¹

Mr Harry TSANG Chin-kwong
Chief Executive Officer (Planning)¹

Architectural Services Department

Mrs Celina KWOK WONG Si-ling
Chief Project Manager 302

Mr Kennis WAN Siu-yiu
Project Manager 358

Attendance by invitation : Item IV

City Contemporary Dance Company

Miss Clementine CHAN
Managing Director

Mr Andrew Baines
Director

Hong Kong Philharmonic Society Ltd

Mr Y S LIU
Chairman

Mr Timothy Calnin
Chief Executive

Hong Kong Sinfonietta Limited

Mr SHIH Wing-ching
Chairman, Board of Governors

Ms YIP Wing-sie
Music Director

Hong Kong Dance Company

Dr SHEN Shir-ming
Vice-chairlady, Board of Directors

Ms Tracy LAU
Finance & Admin Manager

Hong Kong Repertory Theatre

Mr CHAN Kin-bun
Executive Director

Chung Ying Theatre Company

Mr David YAU
Director

Mr KO Tin-lung
Artistic Director

Zuni Icosahedron

Mr Mathias WOO
Executive Director

The Hong Kong Ballet

Mr John YING
Board Chairman

Ms Evonne TSUI
Executive Director

Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra

Ms Celina CHIN
Executive Director

Clerk in attendance : Ms Betty FONG
Chief Council Secretary (2)2

Staff in attendance : Ms Janet SHUM
Senior Council Secretary (2)2

Ms Anna CHEUNG
Legislative Assistant (2)2

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I. Confirmation of minutes
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1462/08-09]

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2009 were confirmed.

II. Information paper(s) issued since the last meeting

2. Members noted that the following papers from the Administration had been issued since the last meeting -

LC Paper No. CB(2)1379/08-09(01) -- Summary of the findings of the pilot study on Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) in Hong Kong by the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and a full list

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of Guangdong's provincial ICH items and the list of the 34 items relevant to Hong Kong provided by the Administration

LC Paper No. CB(2)1369/08-09(01) -- Further submission from the Shap Pat Heung Rural Committee (SPHRC) in addition to LC Paper No. CB(2)603/08-09(01)

LC Paper No. CB(2)1453/08-09(01) -- Administration's paper on "District Open Space in Area 37, Tseung Kwan O"

LC Paper No. CB(2)1470/08-09(01) -- Administration's paper on "Sports Centre and Community Hall in Area 101, Tin Shui Wai"

LC Paper No. CB(2)1471/08-09(01) -- Letter provided by Administration dated 4 May 2009 on the quarterly report on the progress of the re-location of public toilets, refuse collection point and the street sleepers' shelters in relation to the project on conversion of Yau Ma Tei Theatre and Red Brick Building into a Xiqu Activity Centre

LC Paper No. CB(2)1485/08-09(01) -- Administration's paper on "Redevelopment of Kwun Tong Swimming Pool Complex and Kwun Tong Recreation Ground"

3. Mr KAM Nai-wai said that the Administration's proposals relating to leisure and cultural services projects often reached members quite late and in some cases only one or two days before the Panel meeting. To enable members to scrutinize these proposals in detail prior to their submission to the Public Works Subcommittee (PWSC), Mr KAM considered that the Administration should initiate consultation with the Panel at the earliest possible time, such as in tandem with its consultation with District Councils.

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The Chairman agreed that the Administration should advance the consultation with the Panel but not necessarily in parallel with the district consultation. Prof Patrick LAU said that upon dissolution of the former Subcommittee to Follow up the Outstanding Leisure and Cultural Services Projects of the Former Municipal Councils in the third Legislative Council (LegCo), the Administration was requested to submit to the Panel regular progress reports on the implementation of the outstanding leisure and cultural services projects. He suggested that the Secretariat should re-circulate the latest report for members' information and where necessary, follow up with the relevant District Councils. The Chairman concurred with Prof LAU's suggestion and instructed that the matter be further discussed upon receipt of the Administration's response to members' concern.

(Post-meeting note: The progress report was re-circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(2)1683/08-09 on 26 May 2009. The Administration was requested on 27 May 2009 to provide a written response regarding the late submission of LCS project proposals.)

III. Items for discussion at the next meeting

[Appendices I and II to LC Paper No. CB(2)1464/08-09]

4. Members agreed to discuss the agenda item "Strengthening the software and humanware for culture and the arts" as proposed by the Administration. They further agreed that the item should cover various issues relating to the development of arts and culture, such as the research study on a new funding mechanism for performing arts groups, audience building, arts education, development of humanware and inclusive arts. The Chairman also suggested that the Administration could advance the item "Future development of museum services" for discussion at the next meeting. The Under Secretary for Home Affairs (USHA) said that the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) would revert to the Panel on the proposal.

(Post-meeting note: Members were informed vide CB(2)1596/08-09 on 19 May 2009 that the Administration had renamed the agenda item "Strengthening the software and humanware for culture and the arts" as "Strengthening the arts and cultural software of Hong Kong" and had proposed another item on "Youth development through volunteer service".)

IV. Governance of major performing arts groups

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1464/08-09(01) and (02)]

5. USHA briefed members on the funding policy and governance for the nine major performing arts groups (Big Nine) as detailed in the Administration's paper. Dr Darwin CHEN, Chairman of the Funding Committee for the Performing Arts (FCPA), introduced the role and function of

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FCPA as an advisory body to HAB on the funding policies and strategies for the major performing arts groups. He said that while the grant to the Big Nine was to enable their efficient operation and advancement in artistic standard, it was of equal importance for them to promote community participation and public interest in their respective art form. To complement the development of the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD), FCPA recommended a \$263 million Government subvention to the Big Nine in 2009-2010, which represented a 20% increase when compared with the funding for 2007-2008. Dr CHEN further briefed members on the criteria for the grant of subvention to the Big Nine and said that pending the outcome of the research study to be commissioned by HAB, a new set of assessment and funding mechanism might be proposed to ensure more efficient and fair allocation of government fund for the major arts groups.

Meeting with deputations

6. The Chairman invited representatives of the nine major arts groups to present their views.

City Contemporary Dance Company (CCDC)

7. Miss Clementine CHAN briefed members on the composition of the Governing Board of CCDC, which comprised a balanced mix of expertise in the various professional fields including arts administration. The main role of the Board was to steer strategic and financial directions of CCDC and provide professional advice for its development, while the day-to-day management of the Company was delegated to three top executives. Miss CHAN said that the Board had all along respected artistic freedom and would not interfere with the daily operation including personnel matters and the artistic direction of CCDC.

(Post-meeting note: A written submission (LC Paper No. CB(2)1532/08-09(01)) was issued to members on 12 May 2009.)

Hong Kong Philharmonic Society Limited (HKPS)

8. Mr Timothy Calnin said that the Board of Governors of the Society comprised 20 governors from a wide range of backgrounds with diverse expertise. Among the Board's major responsibilities were the appointment of the Artistic Director and the Chief Executive to whom it delegated responsibility for the programming and artistic direction of the Orchestra and administration of the Society respectively. The Board had also formed four committees for more detailed analysis and review of the Society's operations. Although the Board did not have direct involvement in artistic decisions relating to recruitment, extension or dismissal of musicians, it would ensure that a fair process was at play in all such decisions.

(Post-meeting note: A written submission (LC Paper No. CB(2)1650/08-09(01)) was issued to members on 21 May 2009.)

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Hong Kong Sinfonietta Limited (HKS)

9. Mr SHIH Wing-ching said that he was speaking in his personal capacity as HKS had yet to form a formal view. He pointed out that while board members in many arts groups were empowered to make decisions, they were not as familiar as salaried staff (such as artistic director or executive director) in the operation of the arts groups. Because of this drawback, the involvement of salaried staff in the decision making process was necessary to avoid potential conflicts over various management and personnel issues and to enhance the engagement of staff in the business of the arts groups.

Hong Kong Dance Company (HKDC)

10. Dr SHEN Shir-ming said that the Governing Board of HKDC comprised 12 Directors of diverse professional backgrounds. The main role of the Board was to set the strategic direction and policies of HKDC. The Artistic Director, who was responsible for formulating artistic strategy and enhancing artistic standard, would participate in the discussion of the Board which was the decision-maker policy-wise, whereas the Executive Director would be responsible for the daily operation of the company and programme promotion in accordance with the strategy as determined by the Board.

(Post-meeting note: A written submission (LC Paper No. CB(2)1595/08-09(01)) was issued to members on 19 May 2009.)

Chung Ying Theatre Company (CYTC)

11. Mr David YAU said that the Governing Board of CYTC had endeavoured to ensure the effective use of public fund and uphold the principles of fairness and transparency in the governance of CYTC. He hoped that the Government would enhance its support to CYTC which received the least amount of subvention and would operate at a deficit because of the economic downturn. For the promotion of performing arts, he further suggested the setting up of a matching fund to encourage public donation and sponsorship, enhanced training provision for arts administrators and relaxation of the six-year rule which had capped the appointment period of Board members to no more than six consecutive years.

(Post-meeting note: A written submission (LC Paper No. CB(2)1595/08-09(02)) was issued to members on 19 May 2009.)

Hong Kong Repertory Theatre (HKRT)
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1486/08-09(01)]

12. Mr CHAN Kin-bun said that the Governing Council of HKRT was committed to ensuring prudent use of public money and good governance in compliance with the requirement of the Funding and Services Agreement. The

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Council was responsible for the overall performance of HKRT and held accountable to the stakeholders including the Government, the public and HKRT staff. The Council considered that there should not be intervention in artistic matters and Council members should ideally be knowledgeable in the art form and capable of leading and raising fund for the Theatre. The Government, in enforcing the six-year rule, should take into account the need for a performing art company to maintain more sustainable governance.

Zuni Icosahedron (Zuni)

13. Mr Mathias WOO said that the governing structure and management culture varied among the Big Nine as they originated from two different funding systems before being consolidated under one platform. He opined that members of governing boards, in particular the Chairman, should have an in-depth knowledge of the art form of the respective art group. He further suggested that the Administration should step up efforts in (a) devising an integrated policy for the promotion of performing arts, particularly in bridging the gap between small and medium sized arts groups and the Big Nine; (b) formulating concrete plan for implementing the relevant policy; and (c) reviewing the role of the Hong Kong Academy of the Performing Art, the governance of which was lacking in transparency as illustrated in its appointment of the Dean for the Academy.

Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra (HKCO)

14. Ms Celine CHIN briefed members on the role and structure of the Governing Council of HKCO, which comprised professionals from diverse backgrounds and was responsible for steering the overall strategy, approving financial proposals and artistic direction and reviewing the performance of HKCO. Four Committees were formed under the Council to oversee matters relating to finance and audit, human resources, marketing and nominations. Ms CHIN said that under the leadership of the Council, HKCO had received awards in corporate management, achieved outstanding result in the promotion of Chinese Music to the local community and received acclaim in overseas cultural exchange programmes.

(Post-meeting note: A written submission (LC Paper No. CB(2)1532/08-09(03)) was issued to members on 12 May 2009.)

The Hong Kong Ballet (HKB)

15. Mr John YING briefed members on the substantial progress of HKB in becoming an internationally renowned ballet Company and broadening its audience base and box office revenues. He pointed out that HKB attached due importance to effective human resource management particularly in the provision of staff training and recruitment of artistic personnel of high calibre, but considered that a managed turnover of employees was healthy for the

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artistic and technical growth of the Company. Mr YING further highlighted the three directions adopted by HKB, which included : (a) partnership among the Board of Governors, artistic staff and business staff; (b) implementation of international best practices in all areas of activities; and (c) the seeking of financial support from donors of the private sector.

(Post-meeting note: A written submission tabled at the meeting (LC Paper No. CB(2)1532/08-09(02)) was issued on 12 May 2009.)

Discussion

Government funding and private sponsorship

16. Referring to the statistics on the actual income and expenditure of the major performing arts group in 2007-2008 provided in the Administration paper, Mr CHEUNG Man-Kwong expressed concern that the staff cost and other administrative expenses of HKCO, which had accounted for more than 85% of its total income, was unreasonably high in comparison with the average of 61.5% for other orchestra companies. Mr CHEUNG also noted that there was no significant reversion to such unhealthy trend in the Administration's 2008-2009 outturn forecast and 2009-2010 estimates for HKCO. He considered that the high subvention level of HKCO (which accounted for 84.4% of HKCO's total income) was attributed to the need to cover the high administrative cost of the company. Pointing out that the situation in HKCO was at variance with the corporate governance requirement as set out in paragraph 11(g) of the Administration's paper, he urged the Administration to critically review the situation. In order to ensure good governance, he further suggested that the Administration should cap the administration expenses for subvented arts groups at a reasonable ceiling and request an explanation from the groups concerned if the cap was exceeded.

17. USHA said that it was difficult to compare the expenditure among the Big Nine due to the different artistic nature and operation mode of the respective arts groups. She considered that the best way to deal with the situation was to boost the income of the respective performing art group by encouraging more private sector sponsorship so that the proportion of non-government subvented income would be raised, and said that the Administration would seriously consider the deputations' suggestion for the introduction of a matching grant in this respect. On HKCO's administrative expense, USHA advised that the number and salary level of HKCO staff was comparable to HKPS. In view of members' concern, the Administration would further review HKCO's financial position having regard to its specific circumstances, and would provide for members' information a comparison of staff cost between HKCO and HKPS.

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18. Mr Paul TSE asked whether the Administration would introduce an entry and exit mechanism to enable other arts groups to become majors. He considered it essential to encourage more arts sponsorship from the private sector to reduce the Big Nine's reliance on government subvention.

19. USHA said that it would be the Government's future direction to implement an entry and exit mechanism to enhance the competitiveness among the major arts groups. To this end, a research study would be commissioned shortly to devise a new set of common assessment criteria and new funding arrangements for these arts groups. The study would also look into the feasibility of introducing a matching fund to encourage private sponsorship, which should boost the overall resources available for performing arts groups. She assured members that the increase in private sponsorship should not reduce Government subvention for arts development.

20. Mr LEE Wing-tat expressed support for enhanced Government subvention for performing arts groups, in particular the budding arts groups, and shared the view that the Big Nine should be encouraged to seek more private sponsorship. Mr LEE acknowledged the efforts made by the major arts groups in bringing arts closer to the local community in recent years and requested HAB to provide information about the community arts programmes organised by the respective arts groups. As the seating capacity of performing venues would be increased significantly pursuant to the implementation of WKCD project, Mr LEE also invited deputations' views on how to make the use of these expanded facilities. USHA said that HAB would provide a response when the development of cultural software was discussed at the next meeting.

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Governance of major arts groups

21. Referring to the recent controversies over the lack of transparency of some arts organisations in the appointment and dismissal of senior level artistic staff, Mr LEE Wing-tat expressed concern about the effectiveness of the Administration in monitoring the governance of subvented arts groups to ensure that their operation was in compliance with the principle of fairness and transparency, and meeting the public's expectation in this regard. He also criticized the Administration for its slow response in addressing public concerns about the termination of the contract of Ms Faye LEUNG, a Principal Dancer of HKB.

22. USHA explained that whilst personnel matters were the prerogative of the management of HKB, HAB had been closely monitoring the matter, stressing the need for the HKB to observe due process and guidelines. HAB noted that the HKB could only make an announcement until the parties concerned had reached a final settlement by the end of April 2009. In response to public concern over the incident, HKB had apologised and pledged to improve its communication with the public in future.

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23. Mr John YING made the following statements on the incident -
- (a) the departure of Ms LEUNG was an operational human resource management issue at the decision of the Executive Director (ED), who was authorized to act on behalf of HKB on all personnel matters relating to artistic staff during the transition period before the appointment of the Artistic Director for HKB. ED's decision was fully supported by the Board which understood the importance of the decision in the context of the entire Company;
 - (b) HKB regretted the poor communication surrounding the departure of Ms LEUNG. However, it should be noted that at least one principal dancer had departed from the Company each year recently, and a managed turnover of artists was healthy for the growth and development of HKB; and
 - (c) HKB would endeavour to handle similar incidents with better communication and more sensitivity in future. Beyond that, the incident was considered to be entirely a private matter between HKB and Ms LEUNG. As a matter of policy, HKB did not give public comment on personnel matters so as to protect the employee's privacy.
24. The Deputy Chairman declared that she used to be an actress of Zuni. She requested the Administration to respond to the following issues relating to the governance of the major arts groups: (a) the provision of guidelines on the role and responsibilities of governing boards; (b) the reasons for maintaining an appointment system to some of these boards and the criteria for such appointment; and (c) the mechanism to assure the transparency and accountability in their appointment and dismissal of senior executives/artistic staff. Pointing out that an artistic director post of an art organisation was only recently filled after having been left vacant for three years, she considered that the Administration should be more vigilant in monitoring the appointment of senior personnel in arts organisations.
25. DSHA (3) said that -
- (a) Board members of the respective arts groups had been encouraged to attend seminars or workshops organised by the Arts Development Council to facilitate their understanding of the role and functions of the governing board and the need to meet public's expectation of good governance;
 - (b) the government had the power to appoint up to one-third of the members of governing board in some major arts groups, such as HKCO, HKRT and HKDC, as provided under their respective Memorandum and Articles of Association taking into account

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factors such as the candidate's relevant arts experience, expertise, availability and the board's existing composition; and

- (c) subvented arts groups were required to comply with the corporate governance requirements to ensure fairness and transparency in the employment of senior executives and inform HAB on their terms of employment.

26. In response to the Deputy Chairman, DSHA(3) said that the highest level of artistic or management staff referred to in paragraph 11(f) of the Administration's paper covered the top three tier positions of the art group. The Administration should be informed in case of changes such as dismissal of staff in these positions.

27. Prof Patrick LAU invited the deputations' views on measures to ensure the effectiveness of governing boards. Mr SHIH Wing-ching said that the major problem of corporate governance of developing art organisations such as HKS was the lack of zealous support from the voting Board members which in his view, would hamper the organisation's development. Mr Paul TSE sought the deputations' views as to how far an art group should be monitored to ensure their good governance and proper use of government subvention. Mr SHIH considered that the achievement of subvented arts groups should be mainly assessed by their artistic output rather than compliance with administrative requirements, and the Government should refrain from micro-managing these arts groups as this might create cumbersome administrative procedures and paperwork.

28. Mr Mathias WOO said that the unattractive monetary rewards and limited career prospects for arts professionals, the trend for non-professional leading the professional, and the Administration's failure to devise a long-term policy for the development of local arts professionals had deterred entrants to and resulted in talent drain in the performing arts sector. He envisaged that the manpower shortage would be more acute upon the commencement of operation of WKCD. USHA responded that to strengthen manpower training in the field, the Government and HKADC had administered scholarships to support overseas training for local talents.

V. Promotion and development of local football

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1464/08-09(03), (04) and CB(2)1486/08-09(02)]

29. The Chairman said that the Hong Kong Football Association (HKFA) had written to the Panel (letter issued vide CB(2)1486/08-09) advising that its representative had to take part in the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) 23rd Congress held in Malaysia from 3 to 9 May 2009 and was unable to attend the Panel meeting.

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30. Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs (2) (DSHA(2)) and Assistant Director (Leisure Services)2 (AD(LS)2) briefed members on the Government's role and involvement in the promotion and development of local football, its collaboration with HKFA in this regard, and the Government's plan to commission a consultancy study to review the current status and develop proposals and strategies to raise the standard of local football.

Development of local football

31. Dr LAM Tai-fai expressed grave concern about the future of local football in view of the continuous drop in the international ranking of the Hong Kong Team in the past two decades and decline in audience attendance and gate receipts for local football matches. He said that the situation of local football was further aggravated by problems such as insufficient funding for the First Division Teams, lack of career prospects for professional football players and coaches, and the recent incident of alleged match-fixing which had disappointed football supporters. Dr LAM urged the Administration to work in collaboration with HKFA and football clubs to review the grave situation. He further suggested the following measures for the promotion of the sport -

- (a) measures should be taken to enhance the participation of local players in professional matches. For example, each First Division team should be allowed to register six instead of nine non-resident players at the same time and engage four instead of six such players at any time during a match;
- (b) a minimum wage should be introduced to attract professional players and more bonus should be awarded to the winning teams in league and cup matches;
- (c) the HKFA Board should comprise independent members and the business of the Association should be managed by professionals;
- (d) a foundation to be administered by an independent body should be set up to provide direct funding support for development of football teams in the 18 districts, and a football academy should be set up for the nurturing of young elite football players; and
- (e) the admission fee for football matches should be reduced to make it more affordable to the public.

32. To arouse public awareness and interest in local football, Mr Paul TSE suggested that the Administration should make reference to the successful example of the Hong Kong International Rugby Sevens and consider granting honours and awards to outstanding athletes for their achievement in the sport. He considered that the engagement of non-resident players should raise instead of lower the standard of local football and more attractive remuneration rather than the minimum wage should be offered to professional players.

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33. Citing that Hong Kong had held the least number of friendly football matches in comparison with other Asian countries after the 2007 AFC Asian Cup, the Deputy Chairman expressed concern that the Hong Kong Team had not been provided with sufficient international exposure, and urged the Administration to take a proactive role in this respect.

34. In response to Mr TSE's suggestions, DSHA2 advised that the Hong Kong International Soccer Sevens tournament had been an on-going annual event organised at the end of May by the Hong Kong Football Club and there should be room for the further development of this event in the same way as the Rugby Sevens. As for the organisation of friendly football matches with overseas teams, DSHA2 said that while the matter was within the ambit of HKFA, the Administration would endeavour to facilitate these matches by providing support in venues and facilities. He further advised that dedicated funding had also been provided to HKFA from the Arts and Sport Development Fund for preparing Hong Kong representative teams for participating in major events such as the 11th National Games and 5th East Asian Games.

Funding support for football development

35. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong criticised the Administration for failing to address public concern about the worrying decline of local football. Pointing out that football was a highly popular sport in the community, he considered that the some \$7.5 million annual subvention to HKFA was unreasonably low, particularly given that \$4.44 million of the subvention would be used for organising youth development programmes for more than 48 000 youngsters. Furthermore, the financial support for professional players was inadequate for them to sustain a more decent living. He urged the Administration to enhance its support to HKFA and football players.

36. Mr Paul TSE opined that the Administration should conduct an in-depth study on the key factors attributed to the decline of local football which in his view, included the popularity of computer and internet games among young people and the accessibility to international football games through live broadcast on TV. He urged the Administration to formulate a clear position and strategy for the development of football before providing additional resources into the sport.

37. DSHA2 explained that the annual subvention for HKFA, which had increased by 80% since 2005, was among the highest as compared to the funding received by other National Sports Associations. He however assured members that pending the outcome of the consultancy study, the Administration would look into the funding issue. DSHA2 further advised that like many other places, the development of professional leagues in Hong Kong would have to rely on commercial sponsorships and proceeds from ticketing and broadcasting.

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Role of HKFA

38. Mrs Sophie LEUNG said that being the Hong Kong representative of the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), HKFA was obliged to comply with the Statutes, regulations, directives and decisions of FIFA. She considered that HKFA's primary role was to enforce FIFA's requirements for the games and provide training for coaches, instead of promoting local football, which should be the responsibility of club owners and the Administration. She opined that the former should focus on the development of professional football while the latter should step up its efforts in the promotion of youth football training programmes and development of district football teams. She further pointed out that apart from Government subvention, personal donation from Board Directors had contributed significantly to the funding of HKFA. She also urged the Administration to provide \$5 million funding support for the development of the Hong Kong Team established by HKFA in 2008 through private donation and sponsorship.

Development of district football

39. Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming declared that he was the President of the Wofoo Tai Po Football Team, which was promoted from the Third to First Division in the 2006-2007 football season and had become an icon of the local community. He said that despite the success of the team, its future was rather uncertain because of the limited funding support from the District Council and its reliance on sponsorship, which had rendered it difficult to retain outstanding players. Mr CHEUNG considered that government subvention in district football was far from adequate and urged the Administration to enhance its support. Mr CHAN Hak-kan shared similar views.

40. DSHA2 undertook to discuss with HKFA on the feasibility of channelling more funding support for district teams, in particular those that had reached the professional league level. He added that apart from regular subvention, district teams also received commercial sponsorship to support its operation.

Consultancy study

41. Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che enquired whether the Administration would study the role and future development of HKFA and take forward the consultancy study in collaboration with HKFA. Mr KAM Nai-wai asked about the scope and the cost of the study.

42. DSHA2 said that the consultancy study would review and analyse the current status of football in Hong Kong, the success factors in football development in nearby countries and cities and their application to the situation in Hong Kong, and the role and structure of the governing body that is

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responsible for the development of the sport. Key stakeholders and the community would be consulted prior to the formulation of a strategic plan for the future development of the sport. He added that HAB would report to the Panel on the cost of the consultancy study when such information was available.

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43. Mr LEE Wing-tat expressed reservations about the usefulness of the consultancy study which in his view, could not offer effective solutions to address the continuous decline of local football. He considered that the Secretary for Home Affairs (SHA) should have attended the Panel meeting to discuss this issue of wide concern which SHA should be held accountable. Mr KAM Nai-wai considered that HKFA should be strongly criticised for not sending any representative to attend the meeting to explain the use of the \$7.5 million government subvention. Members agreed that the Chairman should convey the above views and concern to SHA and HKFA on behalf of the Panel.

The Clerk

(Post-meeting note: Two letters were issued to SHA and HKFA respectively on 8 May 2009 to convey members' views.)

44. DSHA2 responded that the consultancy study was a direct response to members' suggestion raised in a motion debate relating to the promotion of local football development at the LegCo meeting on 4 June 2008.

45. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong highlighted issues which required the Administration's immediate attention, including enhancing funding support for youth football training and district football, providing \$5 million funding support for the development of the Hong Kong Team, and enhancing the provision of football pitches to facilitate matches and team training. Mrs Sophie LEUNG suggested that the development of local football should be further discussed with the participation of HKFA upon the commission of the consultancy study. DSHA2 took note of members' views.

Venue provision

46. Mr CHAN Hak-kan said that many district teams had to compete with other community groups for the use of sports venues including their home pitch. He expressed concern that inadequate venue provision would hamper the development of district football teams, and asked whether the Government would accord priority to district football teams in the booking of football pitches and the progress in the provision of new venues. Mrs Sophie LEUNG considered that the current system for booking of football venues should be reviewed to make it more convenient for hirers. The Deputy Chairman asked about the progress of the conversion of natural turf pitches into third generation artificial turf pitches and the construction plan for the 11 new pitches.

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47. AD(LS)2 responded that -
- (a) priority had been given to HKFA for the use of football venues under the management of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) to facilitate its co-ordination of training and tournament schedules. LCSD had also provided each district football team with facilities free of charge for 36 training sessions in each football season;
 - (b) in addition to the six pitches already converted since 2003, four more pitches (one at Shek Kip Mei Park and Happy Valley Recreation Ground respectively and two at Morse Park) would be converted into third generation artificial turf pitches by 2010. The construction work for 11 new football pitches, including four artificial turf pitches, one natural turf pitch and six hard-surfaced pitches, would be completed in the next two years; and
 - (c) LCSD was in liaison with HKFA to explore the feasibility of designating certain football venues for exclusive use by football teams under the new arrangement of the Hong Kong Professional Football League which was being considered by HKFA for implementation in the next football season.

VI. Redevelopment of the Victoria Park Swimming Pool Complex
[LC Paper No. CB(2) 1464/08-09(05), (06) and CB(2)1341/08-09(01)]

The new swimming complex

48. Mr KAM Nai-wai supported in principle the redevelopment of the Victoria Park Swimming Pool Complex (VPSPC), which had been built for decades and the facilities of which were old and obsolete. Noting that two new indoor swimming pools (viz. one 50m x 25m main pool and one 33m x 25m multipurpose pool) would be built to replace the five existing outdoor swimming pools, Mr KAM enquired about : (a) the number of users to be accommodated by the two new pools; (b) safety measures to be implemented for the use of the main pool, which could be flexibly segregated into three pools with a relatively deep water pool in between two shallow pools; and (c) the feasibility of providing an outdoor swimming pool at the northern swimmer entrance of the new VPSPC for the leisure of children and families.

49. Assistant Director (Leisure Services)1 (AD(LS)1) said that while the number of swimming pools would be changed from five to two, the total water surface area would be increased from about 1 700 square metre in the existing VPSPC to about 2 100 square metre in the new VPSPC. Hence, the total number of people to be admitted at any one time would be increased from about 1 100 to 1 400. Regarding the safety measures for different swimming

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zones within the main pool, AD(LS)1 said that the two movable bulkheads, which were of considerable width would segregate swimmers in the three different zones. Furthermore, the water depth of different swimming zones would be displayed at the poolside and water safety signs would be put up at conspicuous points to remind swimmers of the water depth.

50. AD(LS)1 added that due to the design limitation of the existing VPSPC, when the main pool was hired for competition or aquatic events by schools or swimming clubs, the whole Complex would not be open to the public. The new VPSPC would allow more flexibility in the use of the indoor pools. In future, the multipurpose pool could remain open to the public when the main pool was hired for other activities.

51. Regarding the provision of an outdoor swimming pool near the entrance of the existing pool, Chief Project Manager 302 of Architectural Services Department (CPM) said that the proposal was not cost-effective as the proposed pool which would be about 28 square meter could only accommodate 18 swimmers. Moreover, falling leaves from the large number of trees around the pool would cause hygienic and maintenance problems. Besides, the pool complex would be required to be re-designed with increased building height and area to accommodate the additional outdoor pool and its plant room. As the design scheme was endorsed by the Town Planning Board (TPB) in January 2009, further consultation with TPB would be required if there were material change in design.

Project estimate

52. Mr KAM Nai-wai queried the high redevelopment cost for the project. He asked the Administration to provide a breakdown of the estimated cost of \$1,074 million as well as the cost for the provision of an additional outdoor pool when submitting the proposal for the consideration of the Finance Committee and PWSC.

53. CPM explained that the project would be divided into two phase. Phase 1 works would include construction of the new swimming pool complex, the estimated construction cost of which was about \$790 million. This estimated cost was higher than those of other swimming pool projects for the following reasons -

- (a) special features and facilities/equipment would be provided for the new complex; including a curved building form to retain most of the existing trees and to minimize the mass effect of the new Complex to the public, a spectator capacity of 2 500 and other ancillary facilities to meet the standards for an international competition venue, and special pool equipment such as movable floors and bulkheads to enhance the flexibility in the use of swimming pool facilities; and

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- (b) the project necessitated the replacement of a 2m diameter underground stormwater drain. Additional structural cost was also required to overcome the constraints imposed by the future MTR North Island Line underneath the proposed Complex.

CPM added that, apart from the new swimming pool complex, other project scopes such as demolition of the existing VPSPC, reprovisioning of affected park facilities, refurbishment of the existing 4 tennis practice courts were included in phase 2 works.

54. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong asked whether the project estimate, which was based on the September 2008 price level, would be adjusted downwards taking into account the lower construction cost in the current economic downturn. CPM responded that the tender price index for the preparation of the project estimate had been adjusted downwards from 1400 to 1250. She believed that the estimated cost had factored in the fluctuation in construction cost.

Other issues

55. The Deputy Chairman supported the project but expressed concern about the compatibility of the new complex with the overall landscape of the park. She asked whether any trees would need to be removed due to the project and any green concept had been incorporated in the design. CPM advised that amongst the 87 trees at the project site of the VPSPC, nine would need to be transplanted and six unhealthy trees would need to be removed.

Conclusion

56. The Chairman concluded that members in general agreed to the Administration's submission to PWSC the proposal to redevelop VPSPC. He also requested the Administration to provide detailed response to members' concerns and full justifications on its estimated cost to facilitate PWSC's deliberation on the proposal.

VII. Any other business

57. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 11:40 am.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
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