

For Information
20 October 2010

LegCo Panel on Home Affairs
Policy Initiatives of Home Affairs Bureau

Introduction

This paper highlights the main tasks to be carried out by Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) in the coming year, including the further promotion of arts, cultural and sports development, enhancing youth development, support for new arrivals and ethnic minorities, and improving support in building management matters.

Culture and the Arts

West Kowloon Cultural District

2. The West Kowloon Cultural District is an important project for the development of the arts and culture in Hong Kong. The West Kowloon Cultural District Authority (WKCDA) is conducting the Stage 2 Public Engagement exercise to seek feedback from the public and stakeholders on the three Conceptual Plan Options. Taking into account the views collected, WKCDA will select one of the Conceptual Plan Options to form the basis for the preparation of a detailed Development Plan. WKCDA is also starting to plan performing arts and museum related activities for the WKCD, with a view to nurturing talents, bringing arts to the public, building audiences for WKCD, and developing its connection with local and overseas related arts and cultural groups.

Cultural Exchange

3. The Government has been promoting cultural exchanges with the Mainland and beyond. To provide a conducive environment for such exchanges, we have set up or are in the process of drawing up respective cultural cooperation frameworks with various countries/territories. With the Greater Pearl River Delta Cultural Cooperation Meeting as a platform, we have accomplished substantial progress in cultural collaboration in the Pearl River Delta region, including brand building of new arts programmes and co-organising major cultural exhibitions. The Hong

Kong-Taiwan Cultural Cooperation Committee was established in August 2010 and has been in discussion with its Taiwan counterpart on ways to foster exchanges for deepening and broadening the collaboration between the two places. In parallel, we will continue to support local arts groups to engage in outbound cultural exchanges. In addition to subventing cultural exchange activities of the nine major performing arts groups, we also welcome applications for funding support under the Arts Development Fund from arts groups and artists to facilitate their participation in representative cultural exchange events outside Hong Kong.

Cultural Software

4. To promote our arts and cultural development and in tandem with the progress of the West Kowloon Cultural District, we would continue to invest resources and adopt a multi-pronged approach in strengthening our cultural software through arts programme development, manpower training, promotion of arts education and audience building.

5. Small and medium-sized arts groups as well as budding artists are instrumental in the development of the arts scene. To step up our support for small and medium-sized arts groups and encourage sponsorship supportive of arts development, we will earmark part of the investment returns of the Arts and Sport Development Fund as matching grants for arts groups with good potential so that eligible arts groups will receive matching grants for private donation raised. We are drawing up the details of the scheme and will consult the Advisory Committee on Arts Development which will be established soon. It is expected that the matching grants will be open for application next year.

Public Art

6. We will continue to promote public arts and provide the public with more opportunities to appreciate arts so that arts will become part of our everyday life. We will organise several public and community arts schemes, including ArtAlive@Park, Park Déco and Art@Government Buildings. We will display visual art pieces created by budding artists and students in these premises and install artistic daily facilities.

Public Museums

7. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) has formulated a series of measures to improve public museum services. These include setting up a Museum Advisory Panel for each of the three

major streams (namely arts, history and science) comprising professionals and members of the community; establishing more distinct image for each public museum and enhancing their characteristics; broadening the existing audience base and attracting more young audiences; providing more creative and quality services in museum shops and catering; engaging marketing specialists to undertake promotion work; adopting a more dynamic approach in marketing to promote museum exhibitions and activities; and forming partnership with local tourist organizations and attractions in launching promotional and publicity campaigns.

Intangible Cultural Heritage and Cantonese Opera

8. We will continue to support the preservation of Hong Kong's intangible cultural heritage, in particular the development of Cantonese opera. In the financial year 2010-11, the Government has injected \$69 million into the Cantonese Opera Development Fund to support more projects on the preservation, promotion and development of Cantonese opera. We are also developing venues of different scales to meet the development needs of Cantonese opera, including the conversion of Yau Ma Tei Theatre and Red Brick Building into a Xiqu Activity Centre, the construction of the Ko Shan Theatre Annex with a medium-sized theatre and a planned Xiqu Centre in the West Kowloon Cultural District.

9. We are currently conducting a territory-wide survey on Hong Kong's intangible cultural heritage. The work is expected to be completed in the first half of 2012. Last year, we have submitted an application to the Mainland authorities for inscription of the Jiao-festival of Cheung Chau, the dragon boat water parade of Tai O, the fire dragon dance of Tai Hang, and the Yu Lan Ghost Festival of the Hong Kong Chiu Chow Community onto the third national list of intangible cultural heritage in China. We will enhance our support to safeguard intangible cultural heritage, including their identification, documentation, research, preservation and promotion. The findings of the territory-wide survey will assist us in formulating more detailed measures. We will also encourage the participation of the community and local residents in supporting the safeguarding, continuation and development of local culture and tradition.

Library Services

10. LCSD will continue to promote the culture of reading and instill the habit of reading among the public. In order to make the public library services more accessible, we will, on a trial basis, provide book drops at three major MTR interchange stations, which are preliminarily

proposed to be Central, Kowloon Tong and Nam Cheong. If preparatory work goes smoothly, the trial scheme will be implemented in 2011. The experience gained from the trial scheme will provide useful reference for the planning of library services in the future. We will also actively explore the application of new technologies in order to enhance library services.

Sports Development

11. This year, we will continue to promote sports development in Hong Kong in accordance with the three strategic directions, i.e., to promote “sport for all”, to develop elite sport, and to make Hong Kong a leading location for international sports events.

12. In July this year, the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved an injection of \$3 billion into the Arts and Sport Development Fund as seed money for supporting the long-term development of the arts and sport. For sports development, the additional resources will allow us to increase funding for current programmes, such as supporting elite athletes’ participation in major international sports events – we have already allocated about \$28 million to support athletes’ preparation for and participation in the 2010 Asian Games and Asian Para Games in Guangzhou.

13. Moreover, we will use the additional resources to give more support to team sports, organise more school and district-level sports programmes. On football development, we will help the Hong Kong Football Association (HKFA) to improve its governance, increase the availability of football pitches and strengthen training support for football players. The HKFA has appointed a “change agent” to help establish a strategic direction and devise a detailed business plan for long-term development. LCSD aims to provide 22 new or converted artificial turf pitches in the next few years. We are working with the HKFA to identify ways to support the development of district football teams.

14. To promote “sport for all”, we will follow up on the research recommendations of the study on “Sport for All – Participation Patterns of Hong Kong People in Physical Activities”. We are implementing the recommendations of the study in two stages, first by publicising widely the benefits of regular participation in physical activity. In this connection, we organised the “Sport for All Day” on 8 August. For the second stage, we will review the provision of recreation and sports programmes and facilities with a view to enhancing participation. We will work with district councils and all “national sports associations”

(NSAs) to promote the 3rd Hong Kong Games to be held in May next year. LCSD will provide sports information and training to students of over 1000 schools through the School Sports Programme to encourage student participation in sport.

15. We will continue to provide resources for nurturing and supporting elite athletes. The redevelopment of the Hong Kong Sports Institute is making good progress. We estimate that the project will be completed in 2013.

16. Over the past two years, Hong Kong has gained extensive experience in organising major events by hosting the equestrian events of the Beijing Olympics and the East Asian Games. We aim to reinforce Hong Kong's status as a centre for international sports events by helping NSAs organise major sports events through the "M" Mark system.

17. We understand that the community is very concerned about how the Government would monitor subvented NSAs more effectively. LCSD has completed a comprehensive review in response to the Director of Audit's Report published last year on the Sports Subvention Scheme, and has come up with a number of preliminary recommendations to improve NSAs' corporate governance and compliance with accounting and reporting requirements. We will consult NSAs on these recommendations and report to the Public Accounts Committee of the Legislative Council early next year.

Other Leisure Facilities

18. Since the implementation of the Harbour Area Treatment Scheme, there is a noticeable improvement in the water quality of the seven beaches in Tsuen Wan that were closed years ago due to poor water quality. LCSD plans to re-open these beaches for the use of the general public gradually from 2011 onwards.

19. To cater for the needs of dog owners, LCSD plans to open up more suitable leisure venues as pet gardens, and to build more of such gardens as well.

Asian Games

20. In late September, the Home Affairs Bureau launched a consultation exercise to gauge the public's views on whether Hong Kong should bid to host the 2023 Asian Games. In the light of the views of Legislative Council Members and the public that the original six-week

consultation period was too short, we have extended the consultation period for four weeks until 1 December 2010. In other words, the consultation exercise will now run for two and a half months. We look forward to hearing the views of different sectors during the consultation period.

21. Over the past five years, the Government has completed over \$3.5 billion worth of construction or upgrading works on sports venues. In the next decade or so, we will continue to provide considerable funding in this area, including the planning of the proposed Multi-purpose Stadium Complex at Kai Tak, new sports centres and sports grounds.

22. We see the proposal by the Sports Federation and Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China (SF&OC) to bid for the right to host the 2023 Asian Games as an opportunity to step up the implementation of our long-term policy objectives for sport. Drawing on overseas experience and our experience in organising the East Asian Games last year, we recognise that the successful hosting of major international sports events such as the Asian Games would bring significant benefits to Hong Kong, including: providing improved facilities for public participation in sport, promoting a healthy life style, raising athletes' levels of performance, enhancing social cohesion and reinforcing Hong Kong's position as Asia's World City and a centre for major international sports events. That said, as the hosting of the Asian Games requires significant resources, community support for such a venture is essential. We therefore need to gauge the level of support in the community before deciding whether or not to support the submission of a formal bid by the SF&OC.

Youth Development

23. Young people are our most valuable assets. It has always been our objective to encourage young people to actively participate in community affairs. HAB in conjunction with the Commission on Youth (COY), will continue to develop Youth Exchange Sessions as a platform for direct communication between young people and government officials.

24. In addition to territory-wide youth development activities, the COY will strengthen co-operation with youth district organisations to implement various types of youth development activities in the district level. This serves to further develop the potential of young people, to promote positive core values among them and instill a positive outlook on life as well as to enhance their whole person development.

Service Corps

25. We plan to set up a “Service Corps” programme under which senior secondary school leavers, tertiary students and working youth aged 18 to 29 will be subsidized to serve in underprivileged areas in the Mainland for six to twelve months in the form of knowledge training on hygiene, language, environmental protection, etc, with a view to developing themselves while they are serving others.

26. Participants will receive a series of basic training on different aspects before commencement of service. During the period of service in the Mainland, the Government will subsidise their transport, accommodation, medical insurance, etc and they will be provided with a token of stipend. In addition, we will provide participants upon their satisfactory completion of service with award and commendation.

Promotion of National Education

27. Shanghai is the host city of the World Expo 2010. To enable the youth to learn more about our country’s latest development, we have organised and sponsored study tours and a volunteer team for them to attend this mega event. On top of this, we will sponsor youth groups to provide services including recruitment, training and management of volunteers for the Asian Games in Guangzhou this year and the Universiade in Shenzhen next year. Some 1 000 volunteers from Hong Kong will serve at these two major games.

28. It is our established policy of the Government to promote national education. We will continue to work with the Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education, the COY, the 18 District Councils, community organisations, national education bodies and youth organisations, etc and to provide them with funding for launching more promotional activities on national education. Moreover, we will organise national education exhibitions, seminars, sharing sessions and other activities at the Civic Education Resource Centre at Youth Square in Chai Wan for focusing the efforts of various sectors in promoting national education and enhancing public understanding of our country.

Assist New Arrivals and Ethnic Minorities

29. The Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs will lead a

dedicated team to co-ordinate services offered by different departments in order to provide support services for new arrivals and ethnic minorities in a more effective manner. The dedicated team will, in collaboration with non-governmental organizations and district organizations, monitor the service needs of new arrivals during the adaptation period and the difficulties faced by ethnic minorities in daily life, so as to ensure that the support services provided by the relevant Government departments could meet their needs. In districts where a large number of new arrivals and ethnic minorities reside, the dedicated team will enhance cooperation with the above organizations to organize more activities specifically for the needs of new arrivals and ethnic minorities, including mutual help groups, community education programmes and retraining courses, to assist them in integrating into the society as soon as possible.

Building Management

30. Private buildings are the assets of owners, and it is the responsibility of property owners to manage and maintain their properties. Besides providing a legal framework for the formation of owners' corporations (OCs) in order to facilitate effective building management, HAB provides advice and support to owners to better enable them to handle building management matters.

31. We are especially concerned about some owners of aged buildings, who understand but feel helpless about carrying out their responsibilities on building management and maintenance. We plan to form a dedicated working group with the property management industry and take a proactive approach to provide one-stop professional building management services to owners and OCs of dilapidated buildings. Through such services, we hope to encourage building owners to form OCs and improve the management of old buildings. We will also launch a package of new public engagement activities in order to promote and promulgate the message of building care throughout the entire society.

32. We understand the property management industry, in general, acknowledges the need to introduce licensing for the industry. As a licensing regime involves numerous implementation details and building management is linked to people's welfare and livelihood, we will conduct a public consultation exercise shortly to address the concerns of stakeholders.

Home Affairs Bureau
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