

# 立法會

## *Legislative Council*

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### **Panel on Home Affairs**

#### **Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat for the meeting on 10 February 2012**

#### **Monthly ticket scheme for the use of public swimming pools**

#### **Purpose**

This paper provides background information on the Government's proposed initiative to introduce a monthly ticket scheme for the use of public swimming pools and summarizes the views and concerns of members of the Panel on Home Affairs ("the Panel").

#### **Background**

2. According to the Administration, to develop a strong sporting culture in the community has been one of the Government's three strategic directions<sup>1</sup> for the long-term sports development in Hong Kong following the completion of the Sports Policy Review by the Home Affairs Bureau ("HAB") in May 2002. In promoting sports for all, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department ("LCSD") has made reference to the results and recommendations of a consultancy study entitled "Sport for All – the Participation Patterns of Hong Kong People in Physical Activities" ("the Study") commissioned by the Community Sports Committee of the Sports Commission in 2008. The study found that swimming was one of the three most popular sports<sup>2</sup> in Hong Kong. The Thematic Household Survey (THS) commissioned by HAB and conducted by the Census and Statistics Department in early 2010 also revealed that swimming was one of

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<sup>1</sup> The other two strategic directions are achieving greater excellence in sport by providing more support for elite athletes and raising Hong Kong's profile as a centre for international sports events.

<sup>2</sup> The other two most popular sports were jogging and badminton.

the most popular sports among the general population and swimming pools were among the most popular sports venues.

3. In his 2011-2012 Policy Address, the Chief Executive stated that the Government would introduce a monthly ticket scheme for the use of public swimming pools with a view to encouraging more members of the public to take part in sports. According to the Administration, concessionary rates would be made available for the elderly, persons with disabilities, students and children under the scheme.

#### Use of public swimming pools

4. At present, LCSD manages a total of 41 public swimming pool complexes in Hong Kong, of which nine are on the Hong Kong Island, 12 in Kowloon and 20 in the New Territories. As shown in **Appendix I**, the admission fee for public swimming pools on Hong Kong Island and in Kowloon is \$19 per person, while that for public swimming pools in the New Territories ranges from \$17 to \$20 per person. Concessionary rates, which are set at about 50% of the admission fees, are being offered to children aged below 14, senior citizens aged 60 or above, persons with disabilities and their minders (on a one-to-one basis), as well as full-time students. According to LCSD's statistics on recreation and sports activities, the public swimming pools in Hong Kong recorded a total attendance of about 8.5 million in 2010-2011.

#### Monthly tickets for other leisure facilities

5. LCSD has introduced monthly tickets for all registered users of LCSD fitness rooms. Individuals aged 15 or above who have passed the assessment or completed the fitness training course organized by LCSD, or possess equivalent qualifications recognized by the Physical Fitness Association of Hong Kong, China, may register as users of such fitness rooms. As detailed in **Appendix II**, while the fitness equipment at LCSD fitness rooms may be hired at an hourly charge of \$13-\$17, users may purchase a monthly ticket at \$180. A 50% discount is offered to full-time students, senior citizens aged 60 or above, persons with disabilities and their minders. Monthly ticket holders are entitled to unlimited use of the facilities at LCSD fitness rooms in 19 designated venues and 47 non-designated venues (provided that there are no organized programmes at the non-designated venues) within the validity period of the ticket.

#### **Members' views and concerns**

6. The Government's proposed initiative to introduce a monthly ticket scheme for the use of public swimming pools was briefly discussed at the

Panel meeting on 14 October 2011. Members' views and concerns are summarized below.

### Scope

7. Members generally expressed support for the proposed initiative. There was a suggestion that the initiative might be extended to the use of LCSD-managed facilities for other popular sports (e.g. football), with a view to encouraging non-swimmers to take part in sports.

### Concessionary rates

8. Members raised enquiries about whether concessionary rates would be offered to the elderly, people with disabilities, students and children under the monthly ticket scheme and the commencement date of the scheme. According to the Administration, a 50% discount on the admission fees of LCSD-managed swimming pools was currently available to these groups of users. It was the Administration's plan that they would enjoy the same concessionary rate under the monthly ticket scheme. The Administration would brief the Panel on the details of the scheme before submitting the legislative proposal to the Legislative Council ("LegCo") for negative vetting within the 2011-2012 session.

### Alignment of fees

9. Another concern of members was about the alignment of the fees for using LCSD facilities and services in urban areas and the New Territories. There was a view that if the fee for using a public LCSD facility in urban areas was higher than that in the New Territories or vice versa, it should be adjusted downward. The Administration advised that the objective of its exercise was to align fees for the same types of facilities and services in urban areas and the New Territories to the same level.

### **Relevant papers**

10. A list of the relevant papers with their hyperlinks at LegCo's website is in **Appendix III**.

### Admission fees of public swimming pools in Hong Kong

	Public swimming pools on Hong Kong Island and in Kowloon	Public swimming pools in the New Territories	
		Monday to Friday	Saturday, Sunday and public holiday
<b>Normal rate (per person)</b>	\$19	\$17	\$20
<b>Concessionary rate (per person)</b>	\$9	\$8	\$9

**Note 1:** Concessionary rates are applicable to children aged below 14, senior citizens aged 60 or above, persons with disabilities and their minders, (on a one-to-one basis) and full-time students.

**Note 2:** Toddlers aged below three are admitted for free.

*Source: Website of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department*

**Hire charge for the use of facilities at fitness rooms  
managed by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department ("LCSD")**

	Fitness rooms in urban areas		Fitness rooms in the New Territories			
	Normal rate	Concessionary rate	Normal rate		Concessionary rate	
			Peak hours	Non-peak hours	Peak hours	Non-peak hours
<b>Charge per hour (per person)</b>	\$17	\$8.5	\$14	\$13	\$7	\$7
<b>Monthly ticket (per person)</b>	\$180	\$90	\$180		\$90	

**Note 1:** Concessionary rates are applicable to schools, subvented non-governmental organizations, full-time students, senior citizens aged 60 or above, persons with disabilities and their minders (on a one-to-one basis) during specified period. Persons with disabilities and their minders can enjoy concessionary rates at all times, while other eligible persons can enjoy them during non-peak hours.

**Note 2:** The definition of peak and non-peak hours are as follows –

Fitness rooms in urban areas

Non-peak hours : from opening to 5:00 pm from Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays)

Peak hours : from 5:00 pm to 11:00 pm from Monday to Friday, and whole day on Saturday, Sunday and public holidays

Fitness rooms in the New Territories

Non-peak hours : from opening to 6:00 pm from Monday to Friday and from opening to 1:00 pm on Saturday (excluding public holidays)

Peak hours : from 6:00 pm to 11:00 pm from Monday to Friday, from 1:00pm to 11:00pm on Saturday, and whole day on Sunday and public holidays

## Appendix III

### Relevant papers on Monthly ticket scheme for the use of public swimming pools

Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Home Affairs	10.6.2011 (Item III(a))	<a href="#">Agenda</a> <a href="#">LC Paper No. CB(2)1973/10-11(01)</a>
Panel on Home Affairs	14.10.2011 (Item III)	<a href="#">Agenda</a> <a href="#">2011-12 Policy Address</a> <a href="#">Administration's paper on policy initiatives of Home Affairs Bureau in 2011-12</a> <a href="#">Minutes</a>

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