

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)1128/15-16(03)

Ref : CB2/PL/HA

Panel on Home Affairs

**Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat
for the meeting on 24 March 2016**

Sports development programme for young people

Purpose

This paper summarizes past discussions of the Panel on Home Affairs ("the Panel") on issues relating to sports development programme for young people.

Background

2. According to the Administration, its strategic policy for developing sport in Hong Kong is threefold, namely to promote sport in the community, to support elite sport, and to make Hong Kong a centre for international sports events. Sport is promoted for young people through school sports and community sports programmes. The Government strives to nurture potential young athletes by providing them with a high-quality training environment.

Relevant issues of concern raised by Panel

3. When the Panel discussed "Educational and career development support for elite athletes" and "An update on Sports Policy" on 10 April and 12 June 2015 respectively, concerns were raised on promoting sports for young people. The major issues raised at these meetings are summarized in the following paragraphs.

Collaboration of bureaux and departments in promoting sport for young people

4. Some members expressed the view that the Education Bureau ("EDB") should play a more active role in developing sports activities for young people. The Administration explained that EDB was also represented on the Community

Sports Committee ("CSC") under the Sports Commission¹ ("SC") to advise on matters relating to the development of school sports. Many CSC members were from the education sector and had provided valuable views on how to make Physical Education ("PE") an important and integral part of the school curriculum.

5. The Administration further advised that with a view to strengthening the promotion of sports in schools, the Home Affairs Bureau, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, EDB and the Hong Kong Sports Institute ("HKSI") had jointly launched the three-year School Sports Programme Coordinator Pilot Scheme in the 2012-2013 school year. The Pilot Scheme had provided more opportunities for students to participate in sports, and offered a career and development platform for retired athletes. The Administration had reviewed the effectiveness of the Pilot Scheme and received positive feedback from schools, students and retired athletes concerned. The Administration would consider expanding the Pilot Scheme to benefit more students.

Review of curriculum and admission criteria to promote PE

6. Some members considered that to raise students' interest in sport and promote among schools a sporting culture, a more effective measure was to make PE a "core subject" for academic study and increase the time of PE lessons. Some members suggested that tertiary institutions should be encouraged to review their admission criteria to avoid over-emphasis on students' academic achievements and to admit students who excelled in non-academic subjects, including PE. They also called on the Administration to nominate eligible student athletes to study at overseas universities if no suitable programmes were available at local universities.

7. The Administration advised that PE was one of the eight Key Learning Areas of the school curriculum for primary and secondary levels. At present, the curriculum for primary schools and Forms 1 to 3 of secondary schools typically provided for two 30 to 40-minute sessions of PE lesson per week, so as to help students develop a healthy life style. In addition, EDB organized through schools' parent-child physical activities and collaborated with non-government bodies in organizing sports activities, such as the Inter-school Sports, the School Sports Programme Coordinator Pilot Scheme and the School Physical Fitness Award Scheme, to cultivate students' interest in physical

¹ Under the chairmanship of the Secretary for Home Affairs, SC was established in 2005 to advise the Government on the policies, strategies and implementation framework for sports development and the provision of funding and resources in support of sports development. SC is underpinned by three committees, namely CSC, the Elite Sports Committee and the Major Sport Events Committee, with the objectives to help develop and promote sport in the community, elite sport and major sports events in Hong Kong respectively.

activities. The Administration advised that given the divergent views in the community, the suggestion of making PE a core subject in public examination should be considered prudently.

8. Regarding the review of admission criteria, the Administration advised that the eight University Grants Committee-funded tertiary institutions had accepted athletes nominated for admission by HKSI and the Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China. In mid-2014, HKSI signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Hong Kong Institute of Education to facilitate the admission of elite athletes into the Institute's undergraduate programmes through a special scheme. Currently, the Hong Kong Athletes Fund also provided grants to elite athletes to support their pursuit of studies at approved overseas colleges or universities if no comparable courses were offered in Hong Kong.

9. Responding to members' concerns about education support for elite athletes, the Administration advised that in June 2014, HKSI launched the Elite Athlete-friendly School Network which created a partnership between HKSI and secondary schools to provide a curriculum that catered specifically for the training and competition needs of student athletes. HKSI also planned to partner with local institutions to provide a professional accreditation programme at diploma level to elite athletes aged 15 or above, whereby their sports training would be the core of the programme and recognized for credit points. It would continue to work with local tertiary institutions to improve support for elite athletes by arranging for flexible study and examination timetables, extension of years of study and targeted tutoring and mentoring.

Initiatives to nurture junior athletes and support students in need

10. Some members enquired about measures to facilitate students from different backgrounds (e.g. the grassroots level) would be able to participate in sports training programmes to realize their sporting potential. The Administration advised that the Pilot Scheme for Student Athlete Support introduced in the 2013-2014 school year aimed to provide support (including funding for personal sports equipment, transportation costs and school squad coaching fees) to needy students for participating in events organized by the Hong Kong Schools Sports Federation. The Pilot Scheme for Student Athlete Support supported 363 schools and benefited over 8 500 students from low-income families in the first year of its launch. The number of participating schools rose to 488 in the 2014-2015 school year. As announced in the 2016 Policy Address, the Administration would continue to implement the Pilot Scheme for Student Athlete Support to promote sport for young people.

11. The Administration further advised that the Feeder System Scheme ("FSS") launched in 2009-2010 aimed to help national sports associations identify and nurture potential young athletes and provide them with opportunities to participate in training and competitions. As at December 2014, FSS had identified 1 250 athletes for promotion to higher level squads for further training, and among them many had advanced to "train with elite squad teams" supported by HKSI.

Latest development

12. The Panel will discuss "Sports development programme for young people" at the next meeting on 24 March 2016.

Relevant papers

13. A list of the relevant papers on the Legislative Council website is in the **Appendix**.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
21 March 2016

**Relevant papers on
Sports development programme for young people**

Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Home Affairs	10.4.2015 (Item IV)	<u>Agenda</u> <u>Minutes</u>
	12.6.2015 (Item IV)	<u>Agenda</u> <u>Minutes</u>

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