

Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs

Meeting on 10 April 2000

Work of the new Leisure and Cultural Services Department

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) was set up on 1 January 2000 to provide recreational, sports and cultural facilities and services in Hong Kong. The Department reports to the Secretary for Home Affairs. An organization chart is at Annex A. Some basic information about the Department is at Annex B. During the past few months, we have focussed on the following areas of work.

New esprit de corps

2. To provide a common goal for its 9,500 plus staff who have previously worked in the former Urban Services Department and Regional Services Department, the Department is promulgating a statement on its **Vision, Mission and Values**. Our objective is to enrich the quality of life through the provision and promotion of cultural and recreational facilities and activities. In so doing, we will be mindful of the community's aspirations as well as the need to maximize the cost-effectiveness of our resources.

3. To improve communication with all our staff scattered over 3000 venues in the territory, we have introduced a new bi-monthly **staff newsletter**.

The publication will help to explain departmental policy and objectives, publicize our new initiatives and to promote good *esprit de corps* amongst our staff.

Strengthen links with District Councils and National Sports Associations

4. To foster a closer working relationship with the District Councils, the Director and his senior staff met the Chairmen of District Councils in February. Visits to individual District Councils are being arranged to acquire a better understanding of the needs of the local community and to discuss matters of mutual concern. The opportunity will be taken to explain the two subsidy schemes. The **District Festivals Subsidy Scheme** is to give financial assistance to district bodies for organizing district festivals and other large-scale festival events in celebration of traditional festivals such as the Dragon Boat Festival and the Mid-Autumn Festival. The **Sports Subsidy Scheme** is established to finance national sports associations for organizing sports training, local sports competitions and international sports competitions held locally. The allocations for the two schemes in 2000-01 are \$18.7 million and \$40.4 million respectively.

Customer Liaison Groups

5. To strengthen direct communication with our customers and to seek their views on how our services could be improved, Customer Liaison Groups (CLGs) or meetings will be set up at popular venues, including libraries, major

parks, swimming pool complexes and indoor games halls. Recruitment of members of the public who are regular users of our facilities to join the CLGs started in early March. It is intended that the first round of CLG meetings will be held on Saturday afternoons at regular intervals. The first one will be held at Victoria Park on 8 April 2000.

Customer Service Training

6. In line with our objective of developing a new culture of customer service, we have launched a series of **customer service workshops** called “Image in My Hands” to train our frontline staff. So far about 600 staff in our Indoor Games Halls have been trained. We are also about to launch the second phase of our customer service training for 150 of our library staff. At the same time, plans are in hand to provide customer service training for our staff in ticketing offices, which will include both counter staff and those handling telephone bookings.

LCSD Newsletter

7. The Department will publish a quarterly newsletter. The objective is to increase transparency of the operation of the Department and to publicize our major activities. The first issue will be distributed in late April. It will be available to all members of LegCo and District Councils, organizations we have regular contact with, the media as well as members of the public.

Leisure Services

8. The Department manages a wide range of **recreation and sports facilities**. These include 78 indoor recreation centres/leisure centres, 36 swimming beaches, 34 public swimming pools, 24 sports grounds, 4 water sports centres, 4 holiday camps and 2 outdoor stadia. Other facilities include 606 children's playgrounds, 322 squash courts, 273 tennis courts, 224 hard-surface pitches, 71 natural and artificial turf pitches, and over 1,350 parks and gardens.

9. We have continued to plan and provide new sports and recreation facilities. We have just completed construction of a leisure centre and have under construction 14 new facilities. Five major facilities (4 in the urban area and 1 in NT) will be commissioned in 2000-01, namely the Sam Ka Tsuen Leisure Centre (Kwun Tong), Ping Shek Playground, Lai Chi Kok Park (Stage III), Leisure Centre on Sai Wan Ho Reclamation, and Tseung Kwan O Swimming Pool.

10. For 2000-01, some 22,000 recreation and sports programmes will be organized. The total budget for organizing these activities is \$102 million for a target participation of 1,250,000 people. These programmes include sports training classes, swimming classes, aquatic activities, fitness activities, dance activities etc. In addition, we will be organizing territory-wide projects and major events such as masters games, corporate games, a 'healthy exercise

for all' campaign etc.

11. **Healthy Exercise For All** is a major campaign to be launched with the Department of Health to encourage our citizens to exercise regularly. The aim is to develop a healthier community and improve the quality of life. Large-scale promotional events with seasonal themes will be organized. These include a "Physical Fitness Exercise Gala" on 30 April 2000 to launch the Campaign, as well as other seasonal themes such as water sports in Summer, hiking in Autumn and indoor sports in Winter. A series of leaflets will be printed on the type of physical fitness exercises recommended for different age groups, over-weight children and persons with a disability.

12. **District Football/Basketball Teams** to promote district identity and community spirit and develop a sports culture. A total of 540 youths aged 13 to 15 (30 from each district) will be selected to form 18 district basketball teams. Training will be provided from July to October 2000 with inter-district competitions to be held from November 2000 to January 2001. Similar arrangements will be adopted for setting up of district football teams. Enrolment will start in July 2000 to select 1,000 youths aged 15 to 17. The estimated cost of setting up 18 district football and basketball teams is \$1.6 million and \$1.3 million respectively.

13. **Age Group Competitions** will be held amongst the popular community sports such as swimming, table tennis, tennis and badminton and

will cost \$4.1 million. Eight to nine age groupings will be set up for youth, adults and masters. The objective is to sustain their interest in sport and provide more opportunities for them to compete with the same age group. The first events will start in June 2000. It is expected that about 35,000 will participate.

14. Starting from April **Evening Camps** will be organized to attract about 40,000 campers to enjoy the excellent holiday camp facilities after work. It will cost \$0.76 million.

15. A **Technical Library** will be set up in the Department with reference books and technical publications on horticulture and sports subjects. This will enable staff to be kept abreast of the latest developments in these fields. We intend to allow the public similar access to these materials for the benefit of students, teachers, sportsmen and leisure managers alike.

16. To facilitate bookings of our sports facilities, we are planning to integrate and enhance the booking system in the urban area (SPORTIX) with that in the New Territories (RCCBS), and to extend advance bookings from 10 days at present to 30 days.

17. We are also tasked to provide a green environment for the public. A large-scale flower show was successfully held in March with some 490,000 visitors. In order to promote public awareness of greening, 590 greening

activities and 350 horticulture activities will be organized in 2000-01. Our **Tree Planting Programme** includes planting 60,000 trees during the year, which is three times that of last year, at an estimated cost of \$13 million. Our strategy is to intensify planting with emphasis on density and making an impact with colourful flowering trees.

Cultural Services

18. Year 2000 marks the formation of the new **Culture and Heritage Commission**, with which the Department will work closely. This year is also significant to us in that we plan to open the **Yuen Long Theatre**, the **Hong Kong Heritage Museum**, the **Hong Kong Central Library**, the **Museum of Coastal Defence** and the **Hong Kong Film Archive**. We also plan to open the new **Hong Kong Museum of History** in early 2001.

Performing Arts

19. The Department manages 15 **performance venues** with over 130 hiring units for public hiring at reasonable and affordable fee levels and for our own cultural presentations, joint presentations or sponsored events with other non-profit making and/or district cultural organizations. A new performing arts venue – **Yuen Long Theatre** – is scheduled to open this May. As a means to encourage private sector initiative in promoting arts and culture, a **rental subsidy/reduction scheme** with 50% to 80% reduction in hire charges is

offered to non-profit making organizations.

20. We organize **cultural programmes** on a year-round basis, featuring local as well as visiting artists in different types of performing arts events. In order to promote different types of programmes, arts appreciation activities are organized from time to time. To facilitate the development of the arts in Hong Kong, we present upcoming as well as established artists and groups, thus providing performance opportunities for artists to showcase their work. We also provide, under our **Programme Sponsorship Scheme**, non-profit-making cultural organizations with the free use of venues, ticketing service and assistance with publicity.

21. We manage three **Performing Companies**, namely the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, the Hong Kong Repertory Theatre and the Hong Kong Dance Company. Among them, an average of over 150 performances are staged every year. Corporatisation of these performing companies is making good progress. Our aim is to allow them to pursue their artistic vision with a greater degree of autonomy and more administrative flexibility, as well as to encourage more community involvement.

22. We present a number of large-scale **territory-wide arts festivals** every year. In 2000, there will be the summer International Arts Carnival, "Celebration of Hong Kong Performing Arts: A Tribute to the New Millennium". Stage performances, outdoor carnivals, free foyer performances,

lectures and demonstrations, forums and talks, outreach educational and promotional activities are planned for all our major venues for general participation as well as that of targeted sectors of the population.

23. We organize **free entertainment programmes and carnivals** annually. Some notable examples are the Spring Lantern Festival, Mid-Autumn Festival and New Year Eve Festival. In 2000, 708 such free entertainment programmes and 15 territory-wide carnivals will be organized.

Heritage and Museums

24. Through the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO), we play an active role in the **preservation and conservation of the archaeological and built heritage** of Hong Kong. We commission archaeologists to carry out field surveys to ascertain the archaeological potential of areas affected by development and, where appropriate, rescue excavations to salvage archaeological remains prior to development works will be conducted.

25. We record and identify historical buildings and monuments for declaration in accordance with the recommendation of the Antiquities Advisory Board. We also organize the **restoration and maintenance of historical buildings**. Moreover, through the Environmental Impact Assessment mechanism, we assess the impact of proposed developments on heritage, and request and monitor remedial actions if necessary.

26. **Major heritage projects for the current year** include the restoration of the two historical buildings, namely Lik Wing Tong Study Hall in Kam Tin, Yuen Long and Fan Sin Kung in Wun Yiu, Tai Po, the provision of visitor facilities in Wun Yiu, Tai Po, the opening of the final phase of the first urban heritage trail in Central and Western District on Hong Kong Island and the computerization of records of heritage sites in Hong Kong.

27. In order to **promote public awareness of Hong Kong's heritage**, we organize a wide range of publicity and educational activities such as exhibitions, lectures, workshops and guided tours. We are working closely with the Heritage Tourism Task Force of the Hong Kong Tourist Association to promote Hong Kong's heritage. Through the "Friends of Heritage" scheme, we will continue to enlist the participation and support of members of the public in heritage conservation work.

28. We operate four **museums** and six branch museums, namely, the Hong Kong Museum of Art, the Hong Kong Museum of History, the Hong Kong Science Museum, and the Hong Kong Space Museum, the Flagstaff House Museum of Teaware, the Lei Cheng Uk Han Tomb Museum, the Law Uk Folk Museum, the Sam Tung Uk Museum, the Hong Kong Railway Museum and the Sheung Yiu Folk Museum. Later this year, we will see the opening of the Hong Kong Heritage Museum, the Hong Kong Film Archive and the Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence.

29. These museums combined strive to deepen the understanding and

appreciation of Chinese and Hong Kong's art, culture and history among local citizens and tourists on the one hand, and promote the awareness of modern science and technology, astronomy and space science among our community on the other. The Hong Kong Film Archive, when it is opened to the public in late 2000 will enable scholars and researchers to have access to its collection of local films and materials, through the filmographic database stored in the multi-media computerized cataloguing system. Regular thematic film shows and exhibitions will be held at the Arhive.

30. Since January, the **opening hours** of museums have been extended, i.e. the Hong Kong Museum of Art now opens from 10 a.m. (instead of 1 p.m.) to 6 p.m. on Sundays and public holidays (except the first two days of Lunar New Year). The Hong Kong Heritage Museum and the Museum of History, when opened, are expected to follow.

Library Service

31. We operate a **Public Libraries System** which provides a network of 66 public libraries, including 8 mobile libraries. The library collection consists of 7.03 million books and 0.57 million audio-visual materials. At present, there are a total of 2.3 million registered borrowers, and 30.4 million items of library materials were borrowed from the libraries last year.

32. In addition, three **new public libraries** will be opened in 2000-01,

viz. the Hong Kong Central Library, the Sam Ka Tsuen Public Library and the Tseung Kwan O Public Library.

33. **The new Hong Kong Central Library** at Moreton Terrace, Causeway Bay, has recently been completed. Internal fitting out works, including the wiring of an advanced ATM network for transmission of multimedia information, are well under way. The new library with a gross floor area of 33 800 square metres is scheduled for opening in December 2000. It will be the largest purpose-built public library and information centre in Hong Kong offering full digital library services. New library facilities include Multimedia Digital Library, expanded reference services in 6 subject departments, Map Library, Language Learning Centre, Music Practice Room, Multi-media Production Studio, Young Adults Library, Toys Library, Lecture Theatre, Exhibition Gallery, etc.

34. The public libraries system has been designated as the depository library in Hong Kong for nine international organizations, including Asian Development Bank, European Commission, International Labour Organization, International Maritime Organization, United Nations, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, World Bank, World Trade Organization and World Food Programme.

35. **Outreach programmes** form an integral part of our library services. Educational and recreational programmes such as reading programmes, children's hours, book displays and exhibitions, subject talks and

interest clubs are regularly organised at the libraries to promote the use of library facilities, inculcate life-long reading habits and enhance public appreciation of the importance of free access to up-to-date information.

36. The libraries also play an active role in **promoting literary arts** in Hong Kong. The libraries present a number of literary competitions, including the Creative Writing Awards in Chinese, Poetry Writing Competition, the Hong Kong Biennial Awards for Chinese Literature, and the Competition on Story Writing in Chinese for Students, as well as the Writer-in-Residence Programme which provides writers with an opportunity to pursue literary research or creative writing in Chinese. The “Hong Kong Literature Festival” has been held annually since 1997. The election of “Good Books of the Millennium” has been jointly organized with Radio Television Hong Kong in association with Sing Tao Daily.

37. Year 2000 also witnesses several significant developments in the provision of library services in Hong Kong. These include :

- **Territory-wide Library Cards** have been issued from January this year to new applicants who have not yet applied for library cards. With this new library card, readers can borrow books from the public libraries in the urban area or in the New Territories. In addition, when the new library computer system comes into operation at

the end of this year, readers will be able to return books in any library in the territory.

- **Bulk Registration of Library Cards in Schools** was launched in February this year in conjunction with the Education Department to promote the use of library services among our young people.

- **New Library Computer System** - replacing the existing two systems in the Urban and N.T. libraries will be ready at the end of this year to provide readers with quicker and more convenient services as well as 24-hour Internet services for catalogue search, renewal and reservation of library materials.

- **Digital Library Service** - will be provided to tie in with the opening of the Hong Kong **Central Library** in December 2000. It will include audio and video on demand services, CD-ROM and on-line database search, and document viewing services. This service will be extended to all branch libraries and made available for remote access by the general public.

- **Enhanced Information and Reference Services** will be

provided in the Hong Kong Central Library with six subject departments. A Business and Industry Reference Library and an Education Resource Centre will be provided at the City Hall Public Library and the Kowloon Public Library respectively.

- **Libraries over 10 years old will be renovated** and upgraded in phases. In the meantime, our major libraries will be provided with a more pleasant reading environment through the provision of plants, paintings and a coffee corner.

- **Opening Hours** of study rooms in public libraries will be extended to 10 p.m. with effect from April 2000.

Music Office

38. Through the Music Office, we **promote general music education** in the local community, especially among the young people, develop future audiences for music, and foster international youth music exchange. The services that we provide include:

- (a) running an Instrumental Music Training Scheme in Chinese and western musical instruments for 3,800

children and young people;

- (b) managing the training of 14 youth orchestras and bands and two choirs;
- (c) running an Outreach Interest Class Programme for persons of all ages;
- (d) organizing outreach educational activities in the districts. Around 300 activities have been organized in 1999/2000 for over 150 000 audiences; and
- (e) presenting territory-wide events, including the Hong Kong Youth Music Camp.

Review of Fees and Charges

39. We have started a review of the 700 types of fees and charges for various leisure and cultural services. We need to align the policies and fee levels adopted in the urban area and NT, which were based on different pricing policies, different subsidy levels, and different costing bases. The review will take into account Government's general policy of full cost recovery in fee setting as well as other considerations such as the affordability of the public.

Contracting-Out

40. We will continue to explore opportunities for contracting-out of services to achieve greater cost-effectiveness and better value for money. A trial scheme has been launched since February this year to contract out the management of Tuen Mun Butterfly Beach Indoor Recreation Centre, and a review will be conducted later this year.

41. We are also studying the feasibility of contracting out our ticketing services (URBTIX), and giving the hirers of our performance venues the option of using alternative ticketing services available on the market.

Capital Works

42. We have reported to the Legislative Council Sub-Committee on the outstanding capital works projects of the two Provisional Municipal Councils. Of the 12 projects which have received funding approval of the PMCs, the position is as follows:

- (a) eight of the projects have received approval from PWSC and FC on 16.2.2000 and 10.3.2000 for injection into Category A;
- (b) another project is ready for inclusion into Category A of the PWP; and
- (c) the progress made on the remaining three projects was reported to

the LegCo Sub-Committee on 3.4.2000.

43. As for the 169 projects which are still in a very preliminary stage of planning, we have reported to the LegCo Sub-Committee on the views of the Administration at its meeting on 3.4.2000.

Enhanced Productivity Programme

44. In line with all government departments, LCSD is required to deliver 5% savings by 2002/03 under the Enhanced Productivity Programme. In the re-organisation of municipal services, about \$604 million of the \$700 million savings was derived from restructuring, economies of scale, streamlining and other EPP initiatives. LCSD is deemed to have achieved the 1% savings required under the EPP. A further saving of 4% (about \$408 million) will have to be delivered by 2002-03. We hope to achieve this by streamlining procedures, increasing productivity, reducing operating costs and contracting out services.

Leisure and Cultural Services Department

1 April 2000

Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Some Basic Facts

(As at 1.4.2000)

<u>Establishment</u>	9,572
Directorate	12
Non-Directorate	9,560
<u>Strength</u>	8,994
<u>Contract Staff</u> (Non Civil Servants)	1,653
<u>Recreation and Sports facilities Managed by LCSD</u>	
Existing (See Attachment 1)	3,042
Under construction (See Attachment 2)	22
Construction works to start soon (See Attachment 2)	6
No. to be commissioned in 2000/01 (See Attachment 2)	16
<u>Culture Venues Managed by LCSD</u>	
Existing (See Attachment 1)	91
Under construction (See Attachment 2)	9
Construction works to start soon (See Attachment 2)	2
No. to be commissioned in 2000/01 (See Attachment 2)	7
<u>Recreation and Sports Programmes</u>	
No. Planned for 2000	22,000
Estimated Participants	1,250,000
<u>Culture Programmes</u>	
No. Planned for 2000	31,138
Estimated Participants	13,954,000
<u>Budget</u>	
Recurrent	\$5,050 Million
Plant, Equipment and Works	\$38 Million
Other Non-Recurrent	\$5 Million

Facilities Managed by LCSD
(As at 1.4.2000)

Recreation and sports facilities :

Beaches	36
Children's playgrounds	606
Natural and artificial turf pitches	71
Hockey pitches	2
Rugby pitches	2
Hard surfaced pitches	224
Holiday camps	4
Major parks	22
Small parks	1328
Indoor games halls/leisure centres / indoor recreation centres	78
Sports grounds	24
Squash courts	322
Outdoor stadia	2
Swimming pool complexes	34
Tennis courts	273
Water sports centres	4
Bowling greens	7
Golf driving ranges	3

Cultural facilities :

Museums	10
Libraries	66
Performance venues (Hong Kong Cultural Centre, Hong Kong Coliseum)	15

Progress on Category A Capital Works Projects (as at 1.4.2000)

A : Projects under construction

	<u>Scheduled Commissioning Date</u>	
1	Provision of Air-conditioning to Wong Chuk Hang IGH	May-00
2	Provision of Air-conditioning to Choi Hung Road IGH & Badminton Centre	May-00
3	Provision of Air-conditioning to Kowloon City Complex IGH	May-00
4	Resurfacing with colour coating system to Outdoor Hard-Surfaced Ball Courts	May-00
5	Jordan Valley Playground (Phase II)(Stage I)	Jun-00
6	Hong Ning Road Park (Phase II)	Jul-00
7	Improvement to So Kon Po Recreation Ground	Jun-00
8	Sheung Lok Street Rest Garden (Site A)	Jun-00
9	Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence	Jun-00
10	Sai Kung Swimming Pool Phase II	Jun-00
11	Sam Ka Tsuen Complex	Jun-00
12	Film Archive and Leisure Centre on Sai Wan Ho Reclamation	Nov-00
13	Hong Kong Central Library	Dec-00
14	LO Development at Fung Tak Road	Jun-00
15	Ping Shek Playground	Aug-00
16	Lai Chi Kok Park Stage III (Landscape portion Phase Ia)	Jul-00
17	Redevelopment of Sai Kung Tang Shiu Kin Sports Ground	Sep-00
18	Chai Wan Complex	Nov-00
19	Hong Kong Heritage Museum	Dec-00
20	Swimming Pool Complex, Library, Indoor Recreation Centre and District Open Space Area 24 Tseung Kwan O	Feb-01
21	Recreation Development of the 'DO' Site at North Ap Lei Chau Reclamation	Mar-01
22	Refuse Collection Point and Transit Nursery at Baptist University Road	Apr-01
23	Quary Bay Park Phase II (Stage I)	May-01
24	Promenade and adjoining District Open Space at Siu Sai Wan	May-01
25	Improvement to Aberdeen Sports Ground	Aug-01
26	Luen Wo Hui Complex Area 19 Fanling/Sheung Shui	mid 2002
27	Tai Po Complex	mid 2003

B : Projects with construction works to commence soon

	<u>Target Start Date</u>	
1	Improvement to the Victoria Park in Causeway Bay	Apr-00
2	Renovation to external walls of Sha Tin and Tuen Mun Town Hall Complexes	Aug-00
3	Water Sports Centre at Stanley Main Beach	Aug-00
4	Indoor Recreation Centre cum Library in Area 100, Ma On Shan	Oct-00
5	Local Open Space in Area 44 Tuen Mun	Oct-00
6	Jordan Valley Playground, phase II stage 2	Oct-00
7	Improvement Works to Lady Maclehole Holiday village and Sai Kung Outdoor Recreation Centre	Nov-00