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Panel on Home Affairs

**Background brief prepared by Legislative Council Secretariat
for the meeting on 13 April 2007**

Sports development in Hong Kong

Purpose

This paper gives an account of the past discussions held by the Panel on Home Affairs on sports development in Hong Kong since the first Legislative Council (LegCo).

Background

Sporting scene after the abolition of the Provisional Municipal Councils

2. Since the abolition of the Provisional Municipal Councils on 31 December 1999, the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) has been responsible for the allocation of funding for sports development as well as coordinating overall sports development. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) was set up under HAB on 1 January 2000 to provide recreational, sports and cultural facilities and services. The Hong Kong Sports Development Board (SDB), which was established in 1990 under the Hong Kong Sports Development Board Ordinance (Cap. 1149), had been responsible for the promotion and development of sport and physical recreation until its dissolution in June 2004.

3. According to the Administration, measures had been taken since the setting up of LCSD to delineate more clearly the respective roles of the three key organisations in sports development, namely, SDB, LCSD and the Sports Federation and Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China (SF&OC). However, there was a need to ensure that the overall administrative set-up could provide for a focused and integrated approach to long-term sports development. It was also important to have a clear policy direction in this area.

Sports Policy Review

4. On 17 April 2001, HAB established a Sports Policy Review Team to conduct a comprehensive review of the sports policy. In May 2002, the Review Team published its Report entitled “Towards a More Sporting Future” outlining the direction of future sports policy. A summary of the recommendations made by the Review Team is in **Appendix I**. The areas for change suggested in the Report could be summarised as follows-

- (a) promoting an active sporting culture;
- (b) encouraging more sport for every student;
- (c) maintaining support for disabled athletes;
- (d) adopting a more strategic approach to the planning and delivery of new public sports venues;
- (e) betterment of the prospects of high performance sport;
- (f) creating a more clearly defined and effective administrative structure for sport; and
- (g) reviewing public funding for sport.

New administrative structure for sports development

5. On 8 July 2003, the Government announced its decision to establish a new administrative structure to promote a sustainable and community-wide sporting culture in Hong Kong. The Government decided that –

- (a) SDB would be dissolved;
- (b) the Hong Kong Sports Institute (HKSI) would be re-constituted to become an incorporated body to undertake matters pertaining to high performance sports training currently under the auspices of SDB;
- (c) a new Sports Commission (SC) under the chairmanship of the Secretary for Home Affairs (SHA) would be established to advise Government on all matters pertaining to sports development.

6. With the passage of the Hong Kong Sports Development Board (Repeal) Bill, SDB was dissolved on 9 June 2004.

7. The Hong Kong Sports Institute Limited was set up on 1 October 2004. According to the Administration, HKSI working under the endorsed policy direction of SC will be a delivery agent for high performance sports services. Its aim is to provide an environment in which sporting talent can be identified, nurtured and developed to pursue excellence in sport.

8. The SC was set up on 1 January 2005 to advise the Government on the policies, strategies implementation framework of sports development, and the provision of funding and resources in support of sports development. The SC is underpinned by three committees, namely, the Community Sports Committee (CSC), the Elite Sports Committee (ESC), and the Major Sports Events Committee (MSEC).

9. The CSC is to advise SHA through SC on wider participation sports and funding priorities supporting community sports programme and initiatives. The ESC is to advise SHA through SC on matters including funding priorities pertaining to high performance sports and to provide policy direction to HKSI. The MSEC is to advise SHA through SC on strategies, initiatives and funding priorities for major sports events.

Past discussions held by the Panel on Home Affairs on issues relating to sports development

Meetings held

10. The Panel on Home Affairs held three meetings on 23 May, 22 June and 9 July 2002 to discuss the Report of the Sports Policy Review Team and received views from 55 deputations including National Sports Associations (NSAs) and District Councils (DCs). A summary of the views received has been issued vide LC Paper No. CB(2)2442/01-02. Interested members may wish to approach the LegCo Secretariat for a copy of the summary.

11. The Panel also held two meetings on 14 and 29 July 2003 to consider the Administration's plan to dissolve SDB and the proposed new administrative structure for sports development respectively.

12. Members also raised various issues and concerns relating to sports development in Hong Kong on the following occasions when the Panel discussed: the Administration's funding proposal on hosting the 2009 East Asian Games (EAG) on 9 December 2005, the operational problems of NSAs on 3 July 2006, the 2006-2007 policy initiatives of HAB on 16 October 2006, the Arts and Sport Development Fund on 8 December 2006, and the upgrading works for venues of the 2009 EAG on 12 January 2007.

13. The issues and concerns raised by members at these meetings are summarised in paragraphs 14 to 26 below. Members may wish to refer to the minutes of these meetings for details of the discussion.

The new administrative structure for sport and resource allocation

14. Some members expressed reservation about the establishment of SC. They considered that the major problem in the sports sector was unfair allocation of resources, and SC being an advisory body with no executive powers or any power in the allocation of resources could not help resolve conflicts among NSAs in their intense competition for limited fund. These members also urged the Administration to take measures to ensure fair allocation of resources for sports development.

15. Some other members were supportive of the new administrative structure. Nevertheless, they were of the view that SC should possess policy and decision-making powers in order to expedite the implementation of sports policies. They also suggested that at least half of the SC members should come from the sports community.

16. The Administration pointed out that, according to the Sports Policy Review Team, the absence of a single organisation responsible for overall policy, planning, co-ordination and monitoring of sports development, and a perceived overlap and lack of clarity in the delineation of responsibilities between LCSD and SDB were the two major problem areas in sports administration. The Administration considered it necessary for HAB to bring together experts from the sports community and related professions to coordinate the planning and implementation of sports policy. The Administration hoped that the broad representation of SC and its three committees would be able to pool expertise and experience in sports from different sectors of the community. It was also more appropriate for a separate body to discharge executive responsibilities in order to avoid overloading SC with such responsibilities.

17. On the funding mechanism under the new administrative structure, the Administration advised that SC's three committees would, in line with their advisory role, provide input to SC on funding priorities for the programmes and initiatives under their respective purview. The Administration, having regard to the recommendations and advice of SC, would make policy decisions on the appropriation of resources to major sport-related programmes and initiatives and to sports bodies such as NSAs, SF&OC and HKSI. LCSD would take up the executive responsibility for administering the funding support to the relevant bodies. Moreover, funding resources would be allocated to NSAs in accordance with the criteria and guidelines laid down by the Administration on the advice of SC to ensure fair allocation of resources. Each year, NSAs were required to draw up detailed annual plans of sports programmes to be organised

and the estimated budget. LCSD would discuss with NSAs their plans and agree on the amount of subvention to be made. The performance of NSAs would be evaluated at the end of each financial year.

Lack of specific proposals and measures to promote the long-term active development of the sporting culture

18. Members in general considered that the Report of the Sports Policy Review Team failed to recommend specific policy initiatives for the development of an active sporting culture in the long term.

19. The Administration explained that the three policy objectives in respect of sports development were promoting "Sports for All", achieving sports excellence, and promoting Hong Kong as an attractive venue for hosting major sports events. With the advice of CSC through SC, the Administration sought to establish close partnership with schools, DCs, district sports associations and clubs, and NSAs.

20. Some members criticised that the Administration only placed emphasis in organising and implementing venue improvement works for major sports events, but had done little to promote the interest and participation of the community, particularly young people and students, in sports. They also considered the funding allocation for sports development unbalanced, given that funds had been allocated mainly to major NSAs with very limited resources remaining for LCSD to implement initiatives and programmes to promote a sporting culture in the community. While members supported the Administration's efforts in enhancing sports venues which would be beneficial to the public and foster sports development in the long term, they considered that measures should be implemented concurrently to promote a sporting culture in Hong Kong.

21. The Administration explained that SC was responsible for advising on resources allocation to support the various facets of sports development and considerable recurrent resources had been invested in this respect. The Administration would further increase investment in sports and work with all sectors to promote sports development. The "School Sports Programme" (SSP) would be enhanced to cultivate the younger generation's interest in sport, and increase the school participation rate of SSP from 70% to over 90%. LCSD had launched a Recreation Facilities Free Use Scheme under which schools could apply for free use of the sports facilities at nearby LCSD sports centres on weekdays. The Sports Award Scheme had also been launched to give recognition by means of awards to schools which promoted sports development and to give encouragement to students who participated actively in sports.

Training support for and development of elite sports

22. Some members considered that the Administration had to devote adequate resources including training facilities and equipment to enhance training for athletes in order to prepare them for participating in major international sporting events. They were concerned that the future of elite athletes in Hong Kong appeared dim, and some had encountered difficulties in making a living after retirement from sports. These members considered that the Administration should take measures to support the vocational development and livelihood of elite athletes.

23. The Administration informed members that an annual recurrent subvention of some \$90 million had been provided to HKSI, which covered expenses on its training programmes and purchases of necessary facilities and equipment. There were funding schemes to provide financial assistance to athletes with demonstrated performance and potential. An additional allocation of \$9 million had been earmarked by HAB to boost the support for athletes to participate in the 2008 Olympic Games and 2009 EAG. The Administration would provide additional funding of \$40 million annually, from 2007-2008, to enhance the support to elite athletes in key areas, including education opportunities, career development, financial assistance, and athlete training and coaching support.

Operational problems of NSAs

24. Hon Albert CHAN expressed the view that, due to serious shortcomings of the administrative structure for sport and various malpractices of NSAs, Hong Kong athletes' achievements in major sporting events and competitions were not commensurate with the level of investments in sports made by the Administration. He considered that the development of sports could not be enhanced because some NSAs did not have professional leadership and there was a lack of transparency and accountability in their operation, including the selection of athletes for participation in international competitions.

25. Hon Tommy CHEUNG was of the view that the Administration should consider revamping the election system of NSAs and their membership, such as requiring them to appoint professionals, including accountants or legal practitioners, as their office bearers, and encouraging NSAs to adopt the best practices of corporate governance to enhance their management and achieve optimal use of public funding.

26. The Administration had undertaken to take active measures to enhance the corporate governance and management standard of NSAs.

Motion/questions relating to sports development moved/raised at Council meetings since the first LegCo

27. A list of motions/questions relating to sports development moved/raised by Members at Council meetings since the first LegCo is in **Appendix II**. The Official Records of Proceedings of relevant Council meetings are available on the LegCo website at <http://www.legco.gov.hk>.

Relevant papers

28. A list of relevant papers, minutes of meetings and reports is in **Appendix III**. Soft copies of these documents are also available on the LegCo website.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
12 April 2007

CHAPTER XI

Summary of Recommendations

11.1 As noted in the introduction to this review, the main focus of the Sports Policy Review Team's work has been to identify the key issues that need to be addressed in drawing up a strategic policy for Hong Kong's future sporting development. This review report is not a strategic plan, nor does it set out in detail the steps that need to be taken to resolve the problems currently faced by the sports community. Rather, the aim of the Review Team has been to lay the foundation for a discussion of the major initiatives that should form the basis of a strategic policy for sport.

11.2 The suggestions for change which are set out in Chapters III to IX of this report are intended as guidelines for the direction of the future sports policy. We have made every attempt to propose changes that represent a practical response to the concerns expressed by people in the sports community. The extent to which these proposals will be implemented will depend to a large extent on the public response to this report.

11.3 We consider that in developing a strategic sports development policy, the responsible organisations should take an integrated approach, rather than address specific areas of concern in isolation. For example, policy on the planning of new venues should take careful account of the nature of measures to promote sport in the wider community as well as initiatives aimed at better supporting high performance athletes. In taking forward proposals to encourage student sport, policy-makers will need to have regard to the role that enhanced LCSD programmes and a more widespread community sports club network might be able to play.

11.4 Although the Review Team favours an integrated approach, for the sake of clarity, and in order not to prejudice the future strategic planning process, we have organised this review under distinct headings related to different aspects of the sports scene. Accordingly, the suggested areas for change are also under separate headings, and may be summarised as follows-

Promoting an Active Sporting Culture

- (1) To take a more pro-active approach to promoting public sports programmes
- (2) To design and manage venues in a more user-friendly manner
- (3) To intensify the programme for establishing community sports clubs together with the NSAs
- (4) To have greater emphasis on local-level participation in sport
- (5) To organise more major international sporting events in Hong Kong so as to develop a strong local sporting culture
- (6) To establish a Sports Promotion Task Force in the LCSD to co-ordinate sports development initiatives in a strategic manner.

(Chapter III: paragraph 3.23)

More Sport for Every Student

- (1) To establish a Student Sport Co-ordinating Committee to set out a framework for student participation in sport
- (2) To further expand the scope of the School Sports Programme
- (3) To adopt a more focussed approach to the promotion of school sport

- (4) To improve the planning and management of sports facilities in schools and public venues for use by students
- (5) To provide greater recognition to student athletes who have excelled in sport

(Chapter IV: paragraph 4.22)

Maintaining Support for Disabled Athletes

- (1) To allow for better accessibility for disabled athletes' training when designing public sports venues
- (2) To provide more diverse public venues to support athlete training
- (3) To explore the need for full-time coaching for disabled sportsmen and women
- (4) To give continued recognition to disabled athletes' achievements
- (5) To make greater efforts to integrate disabled young athletes into mainstream school sports programmes and high level training of relevant NSAs

(Chapter V: paragraph 5.12)

Building for a Sporting Future - the Planning, Design and Management of Public Sports Venues

- (1) To adopt a more strategic approach to the planning and delivery of new public sports venues
- (2) To consider more flexible forms of design for new facilities

- (3) To consider building temporary venues on unused sites designated for future development of sports facilities
- (4) To seek greater involvement of the private sector in venue planning and management
- (5) To adopt more responsive and client-oriented policies in the management of our public sports venues

(Chapter VI: paragraph 6.13)

- (6) To carry out feasibility studies in 2002, for the development of a major new sports complex in South East Kowloon and an indoor arena in West Kowloon, with a view to completing such studies in 2003
- (7) To study how best to deliver other major venues for "X-Games", ice sports, motorsports and water-based sports

(Chapter VI: paragraph 6.33)

Better Prospects for High Performance Sport

- (1) To provide better and more facilities to support the training of high performance athletes
- (2) To reprioritise resource allocation in respect of sports science and medicine
- (3) To draw up an "Athlete's Plan" in order to provide better support for full-time athletes with regard to financial, educational and career guidance
- (4) To strengthen the coaching infrastructure
- (5) To establish formal co-ordination and communication channels between the NSAs and the elite programme coaches at the HKSI

- (6) To invest more resources in developing team sports
- (7) To increase links with the Mainland authorities, and sports organisations and professionals
- (8) To encourage sports organisations to develop more attractive packages for the sponsorship of high performance sport

(Chapter VII: paragraph 7.27)

Creating a More Clearly Defined and Effective Administrative Structure for Sport

- (1) To establish a Sports Commission in order to draw up and co-ordinate the implementation of a strategic plan for sports development
- (2) To clearly delineate the responsibilities for individual stakeholders in the sports community
- (3) To enhance the role of the SF&OC, in particular, to take on a greater role in the marketing and promotion of sport
- (4) To enhance the role and development of NSAs to enable them to become more professionally run and independent

(Chapter VIII: paragraphs 8.12 to 8.15)

Review of Public Funding for Sport

- (1) To review the choice and number of focus sports for the elite training programmes at the HKSI
- (2) To review the criteria in subventing the NSAs
- (3) To simplify the funding procedures to NSAs

- (4) To have one funding body for sport
- (5) To establish a fund to support the hosting of international sports events in Hong Kong

(Chapter IX: paragraphs 9.33 to 9.35)

List of questions and motions raised/moved at Council meetings

Meeting date	Motion/Question
14.10.1998	Written question on "Improving the design of primary and secondary school premises for promoting students' physical development" raised by Hon Emily LAU
11.11.1998	Written question on "Funding provided by the Hong Kong Sports Development Board" raised by Hon Andrew CHENG
20.1.1999	Written question on "Development of young people's potentials in culture, arts and sports" raised by Hon MA Fung-kwok
3.2.1999	Oral question on "Promotion of football" raised by Hon HO Sai-chu
21.4.1999	Oral question on "Consultant's Report on Culture, the Arts, Recreation and Sports Services" raised by Hon Cyd HO
30.6.1999	Motion on "Providing major venues for sporting events" moved by Hon Timothy FOK. The motion was passed.
1.3.2000	Written question on "Work of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department" raised by Hon Ambrose LAU
13.12.2000	Written question on "Plan to bid for staging all China Games in Hong Kong" raised by Hon Eric LI
25.4.2001	Oral question on "Source of financial funding for sports activities" raised by Hon Timothy FOK
2.5.2001	Written question on "Subsidies for disabled athletes" raised by Hon Eric LI
23.5.2001	Written question on "Supprt to Hong Kong representatives participating in international cultural and sports activities" raised by Hon Eric LI
6.6.2001	Oral question on "Provision of sufficient cultural, leisure and sports facilities in new towns" raised by Hon TAM Yiu-chung
17.10.2001	Written question on "Encouraging middle-aged and elderly persons to participate in sports training" raised by Hon CHOY So-yuk

Meeting date	Motion/Question
3.7.2002	Motion on "Report of the Sports Policy Review Team" moved by Hon IP Kwok-him. The motion was passed.
6.11.2002	Written question on "Holding territory-wide sports competitions at LCSD venues" raised by Hon CHOY So-yuk
11.12.2002	Written question on "Land leases granted at nominal premium for developing sports and recreational facilities" raised by Hon CHOY So-yuk
14.5.2003	Written question on "Planning work for projects on cultural, recreational and sports facilities" raised by Hon TAM Yiu-chung
21.5.2003	Written question on "Community sports clubs movement" raised by Hon Henry WU
29.10.2003	Written question on "Funding development of football game" raised by Hon Frederick FUNG
3.12.2003	Written question on "Public funding for National Sports Associations" raised by Hon Albert CHAN
19.5.2004	Written question on "Use of football betting duty to sponsor development of local football" raised by Hon Frederick FUNG
7.2.2007	Written question on "Livelihood protection for full-time athletes" raised by Hon CHOY So-yuk

Relevant papers and minutes of meetings on sports development in Hong Kong

Meeting	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Home Affairs	23.5.2002 (Item IV : Sports Policy Review)	Minutes Agenda
Panel on Home Affairs	22.6.2002 (Item I : Sports Policy Review)	Minutes Agenda
Panel on Home Affairs	9.7.2002 (Item I : Follow-up discussion on the Sports Policy Review)	Minutes Agenda
Panel on Home Affairs	14.7.2003 (Item III : Sports policy review - future sports administrative structure)	Minutes Agenda
Panel on Home Affairs	29.7.2003 (Item I : New administrative structure for sports development)	Minutes Agenda
Panel on Home Affairs	9.12.2005 (Item IV : Funding proposal on hosting the 2009 East Asian Games)	Minutes Agenda
Panel on Home Affairs	3.7.2006 (Item II : Operational problems of National Sports Associations (NSAs))	Minutes Agenda
Panel on Home Affairs	16.10.2006 (Item I : Briefing by the Secretary for Home Affairs on the Chief Executive's Policy Address 2006-2007)	Minutes Agenda
Panel on Home Affairs	8.12.2006 (Item IV : Arts and Sport Development Fund and Arts Development Fund)	Minutes Agenda
Panel on Home Affairs	12.1.2007 (Item IV : Further discussion on the upgrading works for venues of the 2009 East Asian Games)	Minutes Agenda