

# **Motion Debate on “Promoting Sports Development in Hong Kong” at the Meeting of the Legislative Council on 6 January 2010**

## **Progress Report**

### **Purpose**

At its meeting on 6 January 2010, the Legislative Council (LegCo) carried the motion moved by Hon. IP Kwok-him, as amended by Hon. Paul CHAN Mo-po and Hon. LEE Wing-tat, on “Promoting sports development in Hong Kong”. The wording of the motion is at the **Annex**. This report briefs Members on the follow-up action that the Government is taking with regard to the issues raised in the motion.

### **Government’s policy on sports development**

2. The Government formulates policy objectives for sports development in consultation with the sports sector and other stakeholders, in particular working with the Sports Commission (SC) and its committees. In this connection, the SC has set down three strategic directions for the development of sport in Hong Kong, namely: to help elite athletes achieve excellence; to develop a strong sporting culture in the community; and to raise Hong Kong’s profile as a centre for international sports events.

### **Support for the development of sport in Hong Kong**

#### *Public funding and facilities*

3. The Government provides financial support and a wide range of sports facilities to facilitate the development of sport in Hong Kong. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) allocates funding to National Sports Associations (NSAs) and other sports organisations, which has steadily increased from about \$128 million in 2004-05 to approximately \$186 million in 2009-10. Some \$120 million has also been used for organising community sports activities in 2009-10. As regards elite sport, the number of elite athletes receiving direct subsidies from the Hong Kong Sports Institute (HKSI) has increased from 510 in 2007 to over 580 today.

4. In late 2009 and early 2010, the LCSD held meetings with the NSAs to review the effectiveness of subvented sports programmes. Taking account of the availability of resources and the planned programmes of the NSAs, LCSD will consider increasing the amount of funding for NSAs to help them establish more training programmes, strengthen training for representative squads, support athletes’ participation in more overseas competitions, and promote team sports

and sport at the community level.

5. In his 2010-2011 Budget announced on 24 February 2010, the Financial Secretary proposed to inject \$3 billion into the Arts and Sport Development Fund as seed money and to use the annual investment return of the Fund to provide sustainable additional resources for subsidising the long-term development of sport, culture and the arts. In respect of sport, we plan to deploy the additional resources to launch new programmes as well as enhance support for existing programmes.

#### *Support from the business sector*

6. The business sector has been an important source of funding support for sports development, in particular through its support for incentive awards for athletes and sponsorship of major sports events. Events receiving commercial sponsorship such as the Hong Kong Marathon, Hong Kong Rugby Sevens, and Hong Kong Cricket Sixes have become landmark events not just in Hong Kong, but also internationally. Companies have found that they can build a positive corporate image through their support for major events and other sports programmes, and we believe that with the experience gained from the Hong Kong 2009 East Asian Games, the business sector will continue to play a positive role in supporting sports development.

7. To raise the profile of major international sports events held in Hong Kong, we will consider making more resources available to NSAs to allow them to host more attractive major sports events. In this connection, we will review the “M” Mark system, with a view to increasing the impact of “M” Mark events and enabling them to secure more commercial sponsorship.

#### **Elite training programme and team sports**

8. The mechanism for the selection of elite sports was endorsed by the SC in 2005 after consultation with stakeholders from the sports community. The HKSI is responsible for implementing the mechanism. In the four-year funding cycle from 2009 to 2013, 14 sports achieved sufficiently good results to qualify for elite sports subvention from the HKSI. The selection mechanism adopts clearly-defined selection criteria for elite sports, which are widely understood by the sports community. Now that the mechanism is in its second funding cycle, we shall observe the effectiveness of current process in improving overall elite sports performance before considering whether a review is needed.

9. The motion urged the Government to give greater support to team sports that have strong public appeal and development potential. We will consider proposals to allocate additional resources to NSAs concerned to allow them to engage high-level coaching support, organise more training programmes, arrange for athletes to participate in more international competitions and provide

more support in respect of sports science and sports medicine, with a view to raising the level of performance of team sports.

## **Supporting the long-term development of local football**

### *Additional resources*

10. In collaboration with the Hong Kong Football Association (HKFA), LCSD provides football training programmes for young people aged 5 to 19 through the Sports Subvention Scheme (SSS). In 2010-11, LCSD will provide additional resources to allow the HKFA to strengthen the training of its regional squads, as well as junior and national squads, with the aim of developing more players capable of representing Hong Kong at different age group levels. LCSD will also flexibly deploy existing resources to support more youth training programmes and will encourage the HKFA to seek more commercial sponsorship to help expedite the implementation of football development programmes.

11. In order to identify ways of effectively promoting the long term development of football in Hong Kong, the Government has engaged a consultant to study the current position of football in Hong Kong and to make recommendations on measures to improve it. The consultant has put forward a series of recommendations with the broad aims of improving the governance of the sport, elevating the professionalism of local football, creating more development pathways for players, coaches and officials, and upgrading the provision of facilities. The consultant also advised that there should be proportional and coordinated support from the Government to help implement the necessary changes. On 17 March 2010, details of the consultant's recommendations and the Government's proposed follow up actions were presented to and had the general support of the LegCo Panel on Home Affairs. The Government is working closely with the HKFA to implement the recommendations.

### *Football Training Centre*

12. To help raise playing standards, we support in principle the building of an elite "Football Training Centre" for Hong Kong. The Government has taken account of the consultant's recommendations and begun discussions with the Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC) on arrangements for building and managing the Centre, with an appropriate level of involvement from the HKFA.

### *Venues for First Division football teams*

13. Upon the request of the HKFA, since the start of the current football season in September 2009, LCSD has implemented a home-and-away scheme for the ten First Division football teams. Under the scheme, the teams are

provided with a total of eight football pitches (namely: Siu Sai Wan Sports Ground, Hong Kong Stadium, Sham Shui Po Sports Ground, Kowloon Bay Sports Ground, Tsing Yi Sports Ground, Sha Tin Sports Ground, Tai Po Sports Ground, and Yuen Long Stadium) for holding First Division matches and conducting training. Providing First Division teams with designated “home” pitches in various districts can help arouse the interest of the local community concerned in football and encourage support for their respective “local” First Division team. The scheme is at an early stage and LCSD will liaise with the HKFA and review the detailed arrangements of the scheme, with a view to making improvements where appropriate. As regards the proposed waiver of venue rental for First Division teams, given the already high level of public subsidy for the use of sports facilities, we will need to consider carefully the wider implications of such a proposal.

### **Provision of sports facilities**

14. We continue to plan and to provide new sports venues at suitable sites throughout Hong Kong. Currently, over 30 sports and leisure capital works projects are under planning, and new venues such as the Tin Shui Wai Public Library cum Indoor Recreation Centre and Swimming Pool Complex in Tung Chung are already under construction.

15. We are planning to build a multi-purpose stadium complex in Kai Tak, which will comprise a main stadium, a secondary stadium and an indoor arena. These facilities will be built to international standards so as to attract more high-level events to Hong Kong and help promote the development of sport.

16. In addition, LCSD will continue to improve existing sports facilities. Examples include the redevelopment of the Victoria Park swimming pool and the improvement project to bring Mong Kok Stadium up to a standard suitable for holding high-level football matches.

### **Improving the treatment of athletes and their career development after retirement**

17. We attach great importance to providing appropriate levels of support for athletes and to helping them develop their career options following retirement from full-time training and competition. Since 2007, the HKSI has provided athletes with direct subsidies and the number of athletes receiving subsidies is growing. In 2009, the SC endorsed proposals to increase incentive awards for medalists at major competitions, and these awards will come into effect in time for this year’s Guangzhou Asian Games and Asian Para Games.

18. As regards the educational and vocational needs of athletes, since 2008 the Government has provided subsidies to the HKSI to implement enhanced programmes to support educational and vocational development for athletes.

The HKSI also offers tailor-made coach training programmes for elite athletes who plan to take up coaching jobs after retirement. In July 2008, the Government allocated \$8.5 million to the Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China (SF&OC) so that it could introduce the Hong Kong Athletes Career and Education Programme with the aim of providing comprehensive educational and career development support for serving and retired athletes. To date, 10 corporations have agreed to offer vocational opportunities to retired athletes, and some athletes have secured long-term employment under the Programme.

19. We also plan to help outstanding athletes who wish to pursue further studies after retirement. University Grants Committee-funded institutions have indicated that they will recognise applications for admission from elite athletes nominated by the SF&OC or HKSI and introduce a system similar to that of the Principal Recommendation Scheme under the Joint University Programmes Admissions System in vetting the applications. The HKSI and Beijing Sport University have jointly offered the Bachelor of Education in Sports Training Programme for Hong Kong athletes since 1999.

### **Promoting sport for all to increase public participation and community cohesion**

#### *Encouraging schools to attach more importance to sport*

20. LCSD manages seven subsidiary programmes under the School Sports Programme (SSP), such as the Sport Captain Programme, which trains coaches, sports administrators, and sports coordinators to provide voluntary services during sports events organised by schools or NSAs. Besides, LCSD is now discussing with NSAs the launching of a new “SportTAG” Award Scheme in 2010-11, under which students will be encouraged to challenge themselves and identify their own goals in various sports for upgrading their technical skills progressively in order to acquire awards. The scheme will contribute to the development of a feeder system for school sports, under which students with the right potential may become members of the youth squads in their chosen sports.

21. LCSD will continue to encourage schools not currently in the SPP to join the programme, and will help them join the SSP. It will also conduct talks at the Hong Kong Institute of Education to brief prospective teachers on the importance and benefits of sports to students so as to deepen their understanding of the SSP, thereby equipping them to arrange suitable sports for their students and to participate in the SSP.

22. LCSD and the Education Bureau will further study how to enhance the training of kindergarten teachers so as to extend regular physical activity to the kindergarten level and achieve the aim of “one student, one sport”.

### *Sport in the community*

23. LCSD has begun to follow up on the recommendations set out in the consultancy study: “Sport for All – the Participation Patterns of Hong Kong People in Physical Activities”. Between October 2009 and February 2010, LCSD has begun implementing Phase I of the study recommendations, by introducing the findings of the study and its recommended action plan to each of the 18 District Councils (DCs). LCSD has also disseminated the findings of the study and the follow-up actions to schools, government departments, NSAs, District Sports Associations and district organisations. LCSD is producing materials such as APIs, leaflets, brochures, and posters to give wider publicity to the outcome of the study.

24. Under Phase II, which commences in April 2010, LCSD will develop a promotional strategy focusing on “service”. LCSD is discussing with NSAs the provision of a wider range of sports and other physical activities and the associated facilities needed with a view to encouraging wider community participation.

### *Community level competitions*

25. LCSD, the SC, and the Community Sports Committee under the SC will organise - in partnership with the 18 DCs, the SF&OC, and the relevant NSAs - the 3rd Hong Kong Games (HKG) in 2011. Staging the HKG not only provide opportunities for exchanges for athletes in 18 districts through competition, but also promote sport and strengthen the cohesion in the community.

26. From June to December 2010, the Corporate Games 2010 aimed at employers and employees of the industrial, commercial, and public sectors will take place. The games will feature 13 competition events, including badminton, basketball, football, swimming, table tennis and volleyball. The Masters Games 2010-11, aimed at providing competitive sport for people aged 35 or above, will be held from June 2010 to January 2011 with a total of six competition events, including badminton, swimming and tennis.

### **Collaboration and exchanges with the Mainland**

27. We engage in frequent exchanges and collaboration with sports authorities on the Mainland. The Home Affairs Bureau has signed several agreements on sports exchange and co-operation with the State Sport General Administration and relevant authorities in Mainland provinces and cities. Areas covered by these agreements include competitive sport; community sport; exchange and training of sports personnel; scientific studies and academic exchange on sport. The signing of these agreements has enabled Hong Kong and the Mainland to launch a number of sports exchange and co-operation programmes. For example, in 2009-10, Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macao

co-organised three sports exchange programmes.

28. In 2009-10, the HKSI signed a Memorandum of Collaboration with five major sports institutes from the Mainland, providing Hong Kong elite athletes with the opportunity to receive enhanced scientific sports training support.

### **Bidding to host the 18th Asian Games in 2019**

29. We understand that the SF&OC has set up a working group to study issues relating to a possible bid to host the Asian Games (AG). If, after taking into account the availability of sports venues and other relevant factors the SF&OC considers that Hong Kong possesses the necessary conditions for hosting the AG and requests the SAR Government to support an initial expression of intent to bid to host the games, we will consider this positively.

### **Assisting NSAs in enhancing their discipline in corporate governance, accounting, and compliance with rules and regulations**

30. In January 2010, LCSD set up a steering committee underpinned by three working groups to conduct a comprehensive review of the current SSS with a view to improving its overall effectiveness and efficiency, enhancing the internal controls of NSAs and LCSD's own monitoring of the subvention, and increasing the transparency of the funding policy and approval process. LCSD expects to complete the review in 2010-11.

31. During annual meetings held with NSAs in late 2009 and early 2010, LCSD has reminded NSAs of the importance of strict compliance with their Subventions Agreements and the relevant guidelines. LCSD has invited the Independent Commission Against Corruption and audit professionals to organise two workshops for the administrative staff of NSAs to share with them common weaknesses in NSAs' internal controls and compliance with requirements, and advise them on ways to improve their governance.

**Home Affairs Bureau**  
**April 2010**

**Motion on “Promoting Sports Development in Hong Kong”  
moved by Hon IP Kwok-him and amended by Hon LEE Wing-tat and Hon  
Paul CHAN Mo-po at the Legislative Council meeting  
of Wednesday, 6 January 2010**

That the sports development in Hong Kong has long been neglected, but the East Asian Games has been successfully completed, and with the support of the community as well as the strenuous effort of the athletes, Hong Kong players have still achieved outstanding performance and won high praise; in order to further enhance the standard of local sports and promote the sports development in Hong Kong, this Council urges the Government to:

(a) review the existing scoring mechanism for elite sports, and actively consider including team sports which are popular among the public and have development potentials in such programmes;

(b) take the lead in providing additional funding and encourage the Hong Kong Jockey Club to put in more resources to support the development of local football;

(c) allocate funding to directly support the football academy at Tseung Kwan O, and provide adequate funding to maintain and develop football representative teams of different age groups;

(d) provide sufficient training venues for various First Division football clubs and consider waiving their venue rental;

(e) examine the effectiveness of the various existing funding schemes, and increase the funding amounts according to actual needs;

(f) improve the hardware facilities for various sports activities and expeditiously carry out the multi-purpose stadium complex project in the Kai Tak Development Area, so as to provide better support for sports development;

(g) formulate a specific policy to improve the treatment of athletes and their career development after retirement;

(h) draw reference from the Mainland and overseas experience to encourage the business sector to take part in the funding of sports;

(i) step up effort in motivating schools, the general public and enterprises to attach importance to sports, promote sports for all, and create a competition atmosphere among district sports teams, so as to increase public participation and community cohesion;

(j) strengthen collaboration and exchanges with the Mainland to enhance the standard of local sports; and

(k) actively consider bidding to host the 18th Asian Games in 2019;

(l) review the adequacy of resources currently allocated to sports, and enhance the transparency of the funding policy and the funding approval process; and

(m) assist various national sports associations in enhancing their discipline in corporate governance, accounting and compliance with rules and regulations, so as to ensure that the resources allocated to them are utilized in a proper and effective manner.