

**Speaking Note of the Secretary for Home Affairs
at the Special Meeting of the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council
on 18 April 2018**

Chairman,

I would like to brief Members on the key areas of our work in 2018-19 in the light of additional resources for home affairs.

Arts and Culture

2. The Government will increase the amount of funding for arts groups of various sizes from 2018-19 onwards, including the increase in recurrent subvention for nine major performing arts groups by around 10% and in funding support for the Hong Kong Arts Development Council by around 30%. The Government will also inject an additional \$500 million into the Art Development Matching Grants Pilot Scheme (the Scheme) and consider relaxing its matching parameters, such as the matching ratio, floor and ceiling requirements, etc., to encourage donations. We plan to adopt the new parameters for the third launch of the Scheme around mid-2018.

3. Starting from 2018-19, we will progressively increase the recurrent provision to \$50 million to support exchanges outside Hong Kong by local arts groups, and to organise Hong Kong Week in the Mainland to showcase the arts and culture of Hong Kong. We will also allocate a total of \$140 million to the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) in the coming five years to support performances by local arts groups and artists in the Bay Area.

4. The Government will allocate an amount of \$300 million for the LCSD to approve funding applications from community organisations and bearers of Hong Kong intangible cultural heritage (ICH) items, and to step up its efforts in the protection, promotion and transmission of the ICH through partnerships. Furthermore, we will inject \$70 million into the Cantonese Opera Development Fund to strengthen the support for the production and performances of local Cantonese opera troupes. We will also allocate \$500 million to the LCSD for the acquisition of museum collections and commissioning of exhibition projects.

5. To help develop an interest in reading among the general public is essential for the promotion of culture. To this end, the Government will allocate about \$200 million in the coming five years for the Hong Kong Public Libraries (HKPL) to promote a city-wide reading culture through a wide array of activities and initiatives. The HKPL plans to launch a three-month pilot scheme in the third quarter of 2018 to extend the opening hours on Sundays and public holidays in three selected public libraries with a view to assessing the demand for such extension services among the public.

6. In order to sustain the efforts to upgrade our cultural hardware, the Government will set aside \$20 billion for the improvement and development of cultural facilities in the coming ten years. The West Kowloon Cultural District is gradually progressing from the planning phase to the operation phase. The construction of the Xiqu Centre will be completed this year while the Art Park will be completed in phases. All these facilities will be conducive to the long-term and sustainable development of arts and culture in Hong Kong.

Sports

Injection into the Elite Athletes Development Fund

7. The Government will inject a total of \$6 billion into the Elite Athletes Development Fund to provide greater support for elite athletes.

District Sports Programmes Funding Scheme

8. To encourage district sports associations to organise more sports programmes using their local network, the Government will allocate \$100 million to launch the five-year District Sports Programmes Funding Scheme to encourage wider participation in sports so as to facilitate the promotion of sports in the community.

Injection into the Arts and Sport Development Fund (Sports Portion)

9. The sports portion of the Arts and Sport Development Fund (ASDF) has long been an important source of funding for the development of sports in Hong Kong. A total amount of about \$717 million has been approved under the ASDF since the last funding injection in 2010. Given the expansion in scale of various sports events and the steady improvement in the performance of our athletes, the Government will inject \$1 billion into the ASDF to strengthen the funding support for sports organisations to train athletes and host competitions.

Major Sports Events Matching Grants Scheme

10. To further enhance its support for the organisation of major sports events in Hong Kong, the Government will allocate \$500 million to launch the “Major Sports Events Matching Grants Scheme” to encourage more support and sponsorship from the business sector for large-scale sports events. Under the Scheme, Hong Kong athletes will have more opportunities to compete on home ground. The general public and our overseas visitors can also enjoy more high-level sports events.

Five-Year Plan for Sports and Recreation Facilities

11. The Government is actively taking forward the Five-Year Plan for Sports and Recreation Facilities and plans to seek funding approval from the Legislative Council (LegCo) for 10 projects in the current legislative session. Among others, the Station Square at Kai Tak and the Swimming Pool Complex and Open Space in Area 107 of Tin Shui Wai are the two larger projects. We hope that LegCo members will give their support for these projects.

Kai Tak Sports Park

12. The Government is now inviting tenders for the “Design-Build-Operate” contract of the Kai Tak Sports Park. The tendering exercise will be closed at the end of June this year. We hope to complete the assessment procedures and award the contract within this year.

Comprehensive review of the Sports Subvention Scheme

13. The LCSD currently provides subvention to 60 “national sports associations” through the Sports Subvention Scheme. We will conduct a comprehensive review of the Scheme this year and will provide the necessary resources in the light of the review findings.

Youth Development

14. The Youth Development Commission (YDC), chaired by the Chief Secretary for Administration, has been established on 1 April 2018 to promote cross-bureau co-ordination and enable more holistic and effective implementation of youth development work. The YDC will work closely with young people and stakeholders to formulate measures to address young people’s concerns about education, career pursuit and home ownership, and encourage their participation in politics as well as public policy discussions and debates. It will also make the proper use of the \$1 billion earmarked in the Budget for the promotion of youth development.

15. The Government will also continue to provide resources for our young people to do an internship and conduct exchanges in the Mainland and overseas in order to help them broaden their horizons.

16. To further encourage our young people to participate in policy discussions and debates, the Pilot Member Self-recommendation Scheme for Youth (Scheme) was launched earlier to invite young people, aged between 18 and 35 with a commitment to serving the community, to nominate themselves to five specified committees. During the one-month application period, we received a total of 1 179 applications competing for eleven vacancies. In the light of the overwhelming response from the community, the Chief Secretary for Administration announced earlier that the Government has decided to regularise the Scheme and extend it to cover more committees.

17. At present, we plan to conduct the recruitment exercise twice a year. The next round of the exercise will be open for application in June this year, involving 10 participating committees which cover a wider spectrum of policy areas. We believe that, by opening up these committees, more and more young people aspiring to serve the community can be attracted to participate in public affairs. The Home Affairs Bureau will announce the details of the recruitment exercise and begin to invite applications in June this year.

District facilities

18. The Government will set aside an amount of \$8 billion for the construction of or improvement to a facility long awaited by the community in each district. The relevant bureaux and departments will take forward the identified projects in accordance with established procedures and mechanisms, including a timely consultation with District Councils and an application for funding approval from the LegCo.

19. Chairman, my colleagues and I will be happy to answer any questions from Members. Thank you.