

For discussion on  
26 November 2018

**Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs**  
**Participation in Sports by People with Disabilities**

**Purpose**

This paper reports to Members on the implementation progress of various measures for supporting athletes with disabilities (AWDs) and promoting participation in sports by persons with disabilities (PWDs).

**Background**

2. It was announced in the 2015 Policy Address that the Government would commission a consultancy study on how to support AWDs and promote sports participation by PWDs in a more comprehensive manner. The Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) subsequently established a Working Committee to advise on the consultancy study and commissioned a consultant to conduct the study on “Sport for People with Disabilities in Hong Kong”. Upon completion of the consultancy report in mid-2016, the HAB launched a three-month public consultation from August to November 2016. At the meeting of the Panel on Home Affairs on 11 November 2016, the HAB reported major findings of the consultancy study and sought Members’ views.

3. During the three-month public consultation, the HAB received a total of 28 written submissions and conducted six briefings for over 100 representatives from 22 groups on the consultancy report and sought their comments. Based on the recommendations made in the consultancy report and comments received from the public consultation, the HAB developed a detailed work plan (at **Annex**) in collaboration with the stakeholders, which was endorsed by the Working Committee. The HAB and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) have been implementing various measures by phases in accordance with the work plan. The implementation progress is summarised in the ensuing paragraphs.

**Implementation Progress of the Work Plan**

4. The key measures in the work plan can be broadly categorised into several areas, namely developing elite sports, promoting sports participation by PWDs, updating the structure of sports organisations for PWDs and capacity building.

(I) Developing Elite Sports

(a) Launching a Full-time Athlete System and Pilot Scheme for Elite Vote Support System

5. The HAB introduced a full-time athlete system and implemented a Pilot Scheme for Elite Vote Support System (EVSS) for disability sports (the Pilot Scheme) in December 2017, with the 2018 Asian Para Games as the testing ground. At present, there are 50 athletes under the Pilot Scheme, including 28 full-time athletes. The Hong Kong Sports Institute (HKSI) provides direct financial subsidy and other support services, including support in sports science and sports medicine, accommodation and meals for athletes under the Pilot Scheme. In addition, the HKSI provides programme funding to respective “national sports associations” (NSAs) to support athlete training of the individual sports.

6. In the 2018 Asian Para Games, Hong Kong sent a delegation of 101 athletes to participate in the Games, including 46 Pilot Scheme athletes<sup>1</sup>. The Hong Kong Representative Teams have achieved brilliant results in the Games, winning a record-breaking total of 48 medals (including 11 gold, 16 silver and 21 bronze). The performance of Pilot Scheme athletes is summarised as follows:

Category of athletes		Number of members in the Hong Kong Representative Teams	Number of medalists	Medals by type
Elite A	(Full-time)	15	14	6 gold, 7 silver, 5 bronze
	(Part-time)	8	6	2 gold, 4 silver, 3 bronze
Elite B	(Full-time)	9	5	1 gold, 2 silver, 2 bronze
	(Part-time)	9	7	1 gold, 2 silver, 3 bronze
Elite C	(Full-time)	1	0	-
	(Part-time)	4	2	1 gold, 1 silver, 2 bronze
<b>Total:</b>		<b>46</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>9 gold, 12 silver, 15 bronze<sup>2</sup></b>

<sup>1</sup> Originally, Hong Kong would be represented by a delegation of 103 athletes. As the Table Tennis Mixed Double TT11 event was cancelled prior to the departure of the delegation, the two qualified athletes did not have the opportunity to take part in the Games. Both of them are participants of the Pilot Scheme.

<sup>2</sup> Some pairs and teams consisted of Pilot Scheme athletes of different athlete categories. The related medals attained would appear more than once in the above table.

7. Pilot Scheme athletes have won a total of 36 medals (namely, 9 gold, 12 silver, 15 bronze)<sup>2</sup> in the Games, which accounted for 75% of the total medals won by the Hong Kong Representative Teams. This appears to show that the Pilot Scheme has covered most of the outstanding athletes and supported them to become medal hopefuls for Hong Kong in international competitions of disability sports.

8. When implementing the Pilot Scheme, we have devised the evaluation criteria under the EVSS for disability sports. Based on the criteria, we have identified five Tier A sports and three Tier B sports. Comprehensive support has been provided for Tier A sports, including coaching team and the HKSI training facilities. Performance results of these sports in the Asian Para Games this year are summarised below:

Sport events	Medals by type	Number of medals (percentage as compared with the total number of medals)
<i>Tier A</i>		
1. Swimming (for athletes with intellectual disability)	3 gold, 2 silver, 1 bronze	6 ( 12.5% )
2. Table tennis (for athletes with intellectual disability)	2 gold, 1 silver, 1 bronze	4 ( 8.3% )
3. Wheelchair fencing (for athletes with physical disability)	1 gold, 3 silver, 7 bronze	11 ( 22.9% )
4. Boccia (for athletes with physical disability)	1 gold, 1 silver, 2 bronze	4 ( 8.3% )
5. Table tennis (for athletes with physical disability)	2 silver, 4 bronze	6 ( 12.5% )
<i>All Tier A sports</i>	<i>7 gold, 9 silver, 15 bronze</i>	<i>31 ( 64.5% )</i>
<i>Tier B</i>		
6. Lawn bowls (for athletes with physical disability)	3 gold, 4 silver, 2 bronze	9 ( 18.8% )
7. Badminton (for athletes with physical disability)	1 gold, 1 silver, 2 bronze	4 ( 8.3% )
8. Tenpin bowling (for athletes with physical disability)	1 silver, 1 bronze	2 ( 4.2% )
<i>All Tier B sports</i>	<i>4 gold, 6 silver, 5 bronze</i>	<i>15 ( 31.3% )</i>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>11 gold, 15 silver, 20 bronze</b>	<b>46 ( 95.8% )</b>

9. Based on the above preliminary observations, the Pilot Scheme appears to be effective and well received by athletes and there is an expectation that the Government should make the EVSS a long-term measure for disability sports. The Pilot Scheme is now under review and we will consult the relevant sports organisations/groups, including the Hong Kong Paralympic Committee & Sports Association for the Physically Disabled (HKPC&SAPD), the Hong Kong Sports Association for Persons with Intellectual Disability (HKSAPID) and the HKSI with a view to developing a long-term EVSS for elite disability sports as well as the implementation plan. We will also closely examine the specific needs of the elite disability sports in training facilities.

(b) Considering the Introduction of Career Programme for AWDs

10. Among the views received from the public consultation, there is a suggestion of setting up an internship programme for AWDs which allows them to work on a flexi-time basis in order to match their training and competition schedules, and also to equip them with practical work experience for their career development after retirement. Currently, the Hong Kong Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China provides education and career counselling services to athletes who are about to retire or have retired through the “Hong Kong Athletes Career & Education Programme”. The services are mainly delivered through seminars, workshops, job placement and case follow-up after counselling service or job placement is provided. The HKPC&SAPD will examine whether there is a need for such services by AWDs and consider how to provide them with the appropriate support.

(II) Promoting Sports Participation by PWDs

(a) Launching Dedicated Webpage on Recreation and Sports Activities for PWDs

11. To facilitate PWDs to search for community recreation and sports activities suitable for them, the LCS D launched a dedicated webpage of “Information for Persons with Disabilities (Recreation & Sports Programmes/Facilities) on its website in September 2017, offering a one-stop information platform for PWDs. Apart from providing enhanced search functions for information on ancillary facilities available at various venues of the LCS D, recreation and sports programmes suitable for persons with different types of disability as well as related service programmes and information, the webpage also provides answers to some “Frequently Asked Questions”. Through this handy access to information on recreation and sports activities offered by the LCS D, we hope to encourage PWDs to participate more actively in such activities. Besides,

the LCSD has added a dedicated column in the monthly “Community Recreation and Sports Programme” booklet, listing out all the activities which are suitable for PWDs in 18 districts.

(b) *Launching Priority Venue Booking Arrangements for Activities for PWDs*

12. In response to the recommendations in the consultancy report, the LCSD has set up a focus group with representatives from relevant organisations of PWDs to formulate the priority booking arrangements and facility enhancement proposals for the designated sports centres. The LCSD then launched a pilot scheme on priority venue booking arrangements in February 2018 to allow participating organisations to make priority bookings of facilities in four designated sports centres for non-peak slots to organise sports activities suitable for PWDs. The four designated sports centres namely, Chai Wan Sports Centre, Shun Lee Tsuen Sports Centre, Yuen Chau Kok Sports Centre and Yuen Long Sports Centre, are located at different districts in the territory. The pilot scheme runs from February 2018 to March 2019 and details are available at the LCSD’s dedicated webpage for PWDs. A total of 88 organisations have been approved by the focus group to be eligible for joining the pilot scheme. Since the implementation of the pilot scheme, the LCSD has approved 23 booking applications for activities with participation of about 450 persons. The LCSD will conduct a comprehensive review of the pilot scheme after it ends next year.

13. Moreover, the LCSD has invited members of the focus group to pay site visits to the four designated venues under pilot scheme to gauge their views on the facility enhancement proposals. In addition to the existing barrier-free access and relevant facilities, the LCSD has further enhanced the ancillary facilities at its venues to cater for the needs of PWDs. Examples include the provision of lockers with larger storage capacity for PWDs to keep their personal aids (such as crutches), installation of numbers in braille on lockers to facilitate PWDs with visual impairment, and procurement of inclusive fitness equipment in fitness rooms.

(c) *Optimising the Planning of Recreation and Sports Activities for PWDs*

14. To encourage PWDs’ participation in recreation and sports activities and to help identify their potential in sports, the LCSD takes an active role in planning diversified activities that suit their needs and interests. In 2018-19, the LCSD will additionally organise about 70 activities especially for PWDs with an expected participation of over 10 000 PWDs. Furthermore, in collaboration with relevant NSA<sup>3</sup>, the LCSD launched a series of sports training programmes for PWDs from

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<sup>3</sup> Including the HKPC&SAPD, the HKSAPID, the Hong Kong Sports Association of the Deaf (HKSAD), the Physical Fitness Association of Hong Kong, China, etc.

November 2018 to March 2019 on a pilot basis in the seven districts with a larger population of PWDs (namely, Southern District, Eastern District, Sham Shui Po, Kwun Tong, Sha Tin, Kwai Tsing and Tuen Mun). The programmes are offered at no charge to PWDs with physical disability, intellectual disability, and hearing or visual impairment, including 24 training courses which are suitable for PWDs with different types of disability. These training courses covered a variety of sports such as badminton, bocce, floor hockey, body-mind stretching, table tennis and fitness exercise. The LCSD will carry out an in-depth review upon conclusion of the pilot programmes next year.

(d) Introducing Cross-district Enrolment Arrangements for PWDs

15. Since 2017, the LCSD has introduced cross-district enrolment arrangements for PWDs to allow them to enrol at any District Leisure Services Offices for recreation and sports activities to be held in all 18 districts in the territory. The LCSD is actively considering further enhancements to the arrangements, such as extending the cross-district enrolment arrangements for PWDs to its 100 sports centres and studying the feasibility of providing on-line enrolment services.

16. In addition, the LCSD has secured funding approval of the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council for the development of a new intelligent sports and recreation services booking and information system. The new system will facilitate members of the public (including PWDs) in booking venues and enrolling in sports and recreation activities, thereby encouraging them to exercise more regularly and lead a more healthy lifestyle. The design of the new system will also cater for the special needs of PWDs to facilitate their use of the system. The new system is planned to be rolled out by two phases, by the end of 2021 and mid-2023 respectively.

(e) Providing More Opportunities for PWDs to Participate in Sports Competitions

17. To further promote the “Sport for All” culture in the community, the Sports Commission has been organising the Hong Kong Games (HKG) on a biennial basis since 2007. The HKG is a territory-wide multi-sport event with the 18 District Councils as supporting organisations. The HKG aims to provide more opportunities for participation, exchanges and co-operation in sports at district level, thereby encouraging members of the public to participate in sports. In the 6<sup>th</sup> HKG held in 2017, two new events specifically for PWDs were introduced, namely, the Wheelchair Basketball Challenge and the Swimming Invitation Competition for People with Intellectual Disabilities, which were well received by PWDs. For the coming 7<sup>th</sup> HKG to be held in 2019, the Sports Commission will

continue organising events suitable for PWDs, providing them with more opportunities to participate in sports competitions.

(f) *Strengthening the Training for Young PWDs*

18. The LCSD currently provides subvention to 60 NSAs (including the three disability NSAs, namely the HKPC&SAPD, the HKSAPID and the HKSAD) through the Sports Subvention Scheme. The subvention is to cover the personnel expenses, office expenditures and programme expenses of NSAs. From 2018-19 onwards, the LCSD provides an additional funding of \$1 million per year in total for the three disability NSAs to support the promotion and development of disability sports, including the provision of sports training and competition opportunities for PWDs and young AWDs so as to foster the sustainable promotion and development of sports suitable for them, thereby enabling them to gain more experience in competition and enhance their skills.

19. Furthermore, in collaboration with relevant disability NSAs, the LCSD has developed a series of sports promotion programmes for special schools, and co-operates with the Hong Kong Special Schools Council in taking forward these initiatives to provide students with disabilities with more opportunities to participate in and have hands-on experience of various kinds of sports. In 2018-19, the sports activities organised by the LCSD include sport demonstrations (for sports such as bocce, floor hockey and long-distance running), guided tours of sports venues, Sports Fun Day and Sport Challenge Day with expected participation of some 5 300 students from special schools. For the coming year, the LCSD plans to introduce a series of easy sports programmes for students with visual impairment, hearing impairment, intellectual disability or physical disability, such as bocce, floor hockey, long-distance running, fitness exercise and stretching exercise which are played with modified techniques and equipment.

(g) *Launching Outreach Services on Recreation and Sports*

20. In collaboration with relevant disability NSAs and organisations, the HAB has launched the outreach services by sending coaches or tutors to workshops or centres for PWDs. The outreach programmes will introduce sports activities that can be easily conducted in the physical setting of the workshops or centres for PWDs with the aim of helping PWDs develop a healthy sporting habit. This obviates the need to transport them to the sports venues and saves time. In addition, through the programmes, we hope that staff of the workshops or centres can also learn the basic techniques of healthy exercise so that they can continue to exercise regularly together with their PWDs members in future. For the initial phase, the programme will run from November 2018 to February 2019 targeting about 100 persons with intellectual disability in five workshops or centres and

providing them with training on bocce and long-distance running. The programmes will be extended to PWDs with physical disability, visual impairment or hearing impairment in workshops or centres in 2019-20.

(III) Updating the Structure of Sport Organisations for PWDs

21. At present, the HKPC&SAPD plays the dual role of being an NSA which organises and promotes sports for PWDs with physical disability, as well as the sole organisation in Hong Kong recognised as a “National Paralympic Committee” by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) and authorised to select athletes (including those with intellectual disability) for the Hong Kong representative team to participate in the Paralympic Games and other world and regional events sanctioned by the IPC. The HKPC&SAPD is also the sole member of the International Blind Sport Association in Hong Kong, however, deaf sports are not covered by the IPC.

22. Based on the recommendations in the consultancy report, the HKPC&SAPD should consider updating its organisational structure so as to allaying the concerns of some PWDs and organisations over its dual role. In this connection, the HAB has embarked on discussions with the HKPC&SAPD on how to re-organise the organisation into two independent bodies. The Government will provide additional subvention for the segregation and the new Hong Kong Paralympic Committee (HKPC). After becoming an independent body, we believe that the HKPC can support AWDs in a more focused and systematic manner, including the handling of matters relating to the classification of para-sports, promotion and development of different kinds of para-sports of the Paralympic Games, etc. The HKPC&SAPD’s target is to complete the re-organisation by 2020.

(IV) Capacity building

(a) Enhancing the Training for Coaches

23. The HAB will work with relevant disability NSAs to roll out a comprehensive and systemic training programme for coaches to strengthen their basic knowledge and practical skills so as to enable them to provide training for PWDs on sports activities in a safe and appropriate manner. The training programmes will cover the skills in communicating with PWDs, behavioural management, methods of coaching PWDs, professional knowledge such as classification of disabilities.



(b) Organising Thematic Seminars for Support Groups

24. In co-operation with relevant disability NSAs and organisations, the HAB will organise seminars or experience sharing sessions for persons/groups closely related to PWDs, such as parents, friends, caregivers and volunteers of PWDs on topics relating to sports. Through the sharing of knowledge, practical skills or experience, we hope to better equip the participants with the techniques in supporting the PWDs around them and knowledge of the needs of different PWDs, which will in turn encourage PWDs, especially the young ones, to participate more in sports activities.

**The Way Forward**

25. The Government will continue to proactively promote the development of sports for PWDs, encourage sports participation by PWDs in different age groups and of different ability levels, and help them develop a habit of exercising regularly. We will continue to support the development of disability sports through collaboration with relevant disability sports organisations/groups and the HKSI, and the provision of resources.

**Advice Sought**

26. Members are invited to note the content of this paper and comment on the way forward for the development of sports for PWDs.

**Home Affairs Bureau**

**November 2018**

**Consultancy Study on  
Sport for People with Disabilities in Hong Kong**

**Work Plan**

<b>Recommended Measures</b>	<b>Details</b>
<b>1. Short-term measures</b>	
<b>Promoting Sports Participation by Persons with Disabilities (PWDs)</b>	
(a) Launching a dedicated webpage on recreation and sports programmes for PWDs	The webpage will provide enhanced search functions and include a section on “Frequently Asked Questions” with an aim to providing a one-stop information platform for PWDs to search for ancillary facilities at various venues of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) and recreation and sports programmes suitable for them.
(b) Including a dedicated column on recreation and sports activities for PWDs in programme booklet	LCSD will include a dedicated column in the monthly “Community Recreation and Sports Programme” booklet, listing out all the activities which are suitable for PWDs in 18 districts.
(c) Launching priority venue booking arrangements	LCSD will launch a pilot scheme on priority venue booking arrangements to allow relevant organisations to make priority bookings of facilities at designated sports centres during non-peak slots for organising sports activities suitable for PWDs. LCSD will set up a focus group to gauge views on the pilot scheme.
(d) Introducing cross-district enrolment arrangements for PWDs	LCSD will introduce cross-district enrolment arrangements for PWDs to allow them to enrol for recreation and sports programmes at any District Leisure Services Offices in order to obviate the need to transport.

<b>Recommended Measures</b>	<b>Details</b>
(e) Optimising the planning of recreation and sports activities for PWDs	Apart from representative disability organisations in various districts, LCSD will expand its liaison network to other relevant “national sports associations” and representatives of special schools and optimise the planning and organisation of recreation and sports activities suitable for PWDs.
(f) Providing more opportunities for PWDs to participate in sports competitions	Since the 5 <sup>th</sup> Hong Kong Games, the event “Vitality Run” was available for participation by PWDs. In the 6 <sup>th</sup> HKG held in 2017, two new events especially for PWDs were introduced, namely the Wheelchair Basketball Challenge and the Swimming Invitation Competition for People with Intellectual Disabilities. The same arrangement will be considered in the coming Games.
<b>Developing Elite Sports</b>	
(g) Launching a full-time athlete system and Pilot Scheme for Elite Vote Support System (EVSS)	Suggest taking the 2018 Asian Para Games as a pilot run for introducing a full-time athlete system and EVSS for disability sports.
<b>Capacity Building</b>	
(h) Organising thematic seminars for support groups	Organising thematic seminars and experience sharing sessions on sports for support groups of PWDs such as parents, friends, caregivers and volunteers.

<b>Recommended Measures</b>	<b>Details</b>
<b>2. Medium and long-term measures</b>	
<b>Promoting Sports Participation by PWDs</b>	
(a) Launching outreach recreation and sports services	Launching outreach services by sending coaches or tutors to workshops or centres for PWDs to provide workshop or centre-based sports activities, saving the transport time and arrangement to and from the sports venue.
(b) Strengthening the training for young PWDs	Considering launching a pilot scheme on training programmes for young PWDs by drawing reference from the existing feeder system for young athletes, with an aim to identify young athletes with good potential through systematic and progressive training.
(c) Developing a customer-oriented sports and recreation services booking and information system	Developing a new intelligent venue booking and enrolment system which provides functions on venues allocation, personalised search services, and personal settings, etc. in a more effective manner. The new system will facilitate members of the public (including PWDs) in booking LCSD's sports and recreational facilities and enrolling for activities.
<b>Developing Elite Sports</b>	
(d) Launching a full-time athlete system and EVSS for disability sports	As mentioned in Item 1(g) above, devising a full-time athlete system and EVSS for disability sports in light of the experience of the Pilot Scheme.

<b>Recommended Measures</b>	<b>Details</b>
(e) Considering the introduction of career programme for athletes with disabilities (AWDs)	Considering setting up an internship programme for AWDs to allow them to work on a flexi-time basis in order to match their training and competition schedules, and at the same time to equip them with practical work experience for career development after retirement.
<b>Structure of Sports Organisations for PWDs</b>	
(f) Assisting the Hong Kong Paralympic Committee in becoming an independent body	The proposal was supported by the Hong Kong Paralympic Committee & Sports Association for the Physically Disabled and also the Hong Kong Sports Association for Persons with Intellectual Disability. They consider that the proposed arrangement can provide support to AWDs in a more focused and systematic manner.
<b>Capacity Building</b>	
(g) Enhancing training for coaches	To strengthen the training programmes for coaches with focus on the special needs of PWDs when providing training PWDs on sports activities at the community level.