

LCQ7: Bringing dogs into pleasure grounds

Following is a question by the Hon Wong Yung-kan and a written reply by the Secretary for the Civil Service, Miss Denise Yue, on behalf of the Secretary for Home Affairs, Dr Patrick Ho, in the Legislative Council today (March 8):

Question:

Section 12 of the Pleasure Grounds Regulation (Cap. 132 sub. leg. BC) provides that "where in any pleasure ground there is placed a notice prohibiting dogs or prohibiting dogs except on a lead, no person shall bring any dog into or allow any dog to remain in such pleasure ground in contravention of the terms of such notice". In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (a) of the names of the public pleasure grounds with or without the above-mentioned notice in each administrative district, the specific provisions in such notices and the reasons for prohibiting the entry of dogs;
- (b) of the numbers of persons who were warned or prosecuted respectively for contravening the above provision in each of the past three years; and
- (c) whether it planned, over the past three years, for the provision of public pleasure grounds into which people are allowed to bring their dogs; if so, of the locations considered, the criteria adopted for selecting the sites and the progress of such plans?

Reply:

Madam President,

My reply to Hon Wong Yung-kan's question is as follows:

- (a) At present, members of the public are allowed to bring dogs into six designated venues managed by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD). They are: Victoria Park Garden in Central and Western District; Kowloon Tsai Park in Kowloon City District; Kwai Chung Castle Peak Road Sitting-out Area, Jockey Club Hing Shing Road Playground, Tsing Yu Street Garden and Cheung Wan Street Rest

Garden in Kwai Tsing District. A "No Dogs Allowed" notice is displayed at all other LCSD parks and playgrounds. This is consistent with the policy adopted by the former municipal councils, which aims to maintain the environmental hygiene standard of pleasure grounds and takes into account the complaints about the nuisances caused by dogs from many pleasure ground users. In recent years, LCSD received, from time to time, requests from the public to bring dogs to other parks, pleasure grounds and sitting-out areas. The Department keeps an open mind to such requests and will identify suitable venues in consultation with the concerned District Councils (DCs), Area Committees (ACs) and local communities. With their support, LCSD will designate more suitable venues where people will be allowed to bring dogs to.

(b) In the past three years, a total of 108 people were prosecuted for contravening the Pleasure Grounds Regulation, made up of 27 in 2003, 39 in 2004 and 42 in 2005. Over the same period, a total of over 25000 verbal warnings (or an average of about 8500 warnings per year) were served to members of the public who had contravened the said regulation.

(c) In the past three years, LCSD proposed to allow the public to bring dogs to some areas in Wong Nai Chung Road Rest Garden in Wan Chai District, Nam Cheong Park and Lai Chi Kok Park in Sham Sui Po District, Cherry Street Park and Yau Ma Tei Service Reservoir Rest Garden in Yau Tsim Mong District. The proposal was not implemented as it was not supported by the concerned ACs or DCs. However, with the support of the Kwai Tsing DC, LCSD has been able to allow the public to bring dogs to designated areas in Kwai Chung Castle Peak Road Sitting-out Area, Jockey Club Hing Shing Road Playground, Tsing Yu Street Garden and Cheung Wan Street Rest Garden in Kwai Tsing District. LCSD intends to designate some areas in two planned venues, i.e. Local Open Space (LOS), Sham Tseng, Area 50 in Tsuen Wan District and LOS, Area 28, Fanling/Sheung Shui in North District, where the public will be allowed to bring dogs to use the facilities. The construction of these two LOS sites is expected to commence in mid-2007 and be completed in 2008.

The general public has diverse views on the designation of venues where the public may be allowed to bring dogs to. LCSD has to balance the different needs of the public and consider carefully issues relating to environmental hygiene, public health and facility management, etc. Specifically, LCSD takes into account the following factors when considering whether or not to designate a venue where the public may be allowed to bring dogs to -

- * explicit requests from the local community have been received;
- * support from the concerned DCs/ACs is obtained;
- * the facility is passive in nature with relative low utilisation and presence of dogs will not cause any nuisance to other users of the facility;
- * no nuisance will be caused to the surrounding environment of the facility; and
- * cleansing staff and water points for daily cleansing are provided at the facility for maintaining the hygiene condition.

Ends/Wednesday, March 8, 2006

NNNN