

LCQ4: Provision of parks admitting dogs

Following is a question by the Hon Daniel Lam Wai-keung and a reply by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Tsang Tak-sing, in the Legislative Council today (April 30):

Question:

It is noted that since its commissioning in April last year, the dog park at the Wan Chai waterfront has been very popular among dog owners within and outside the district. On the other hand, dog walking activities in other areas of Wan Chai have decreased, resulting in improved sanitation conditions and less nuisance caused to the public. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(a) whether the Government has drawn experience from the provision of this dog park; if it has, of the experience;

(b) whether, with its strong financial position at present, the Government will provide a dog park in each district throughout the territory; and

(c) given that keeping dogs has become a trend nowadays but dogs are not allowed in most of the parks under the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, and some dog owners walk their dogs stealthily in those parks late at night, whether the Government will designate parts of larger parks as activity areas for dogs so as to provide convenience to dog owners on the one hand, and to reduce the sanitation problems arising from individual dog owners walking their dogs in parks unlawfully on the other hand?

Reply:

Madam President,

My reply to the questions is as follows:

(a) The Wan Chai Waterfront Promenade (the Promenade) was planned and built by the Civil Engineering and Development Department while

the cleansing, horticultural and security services for the Promenade are provided by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD). The Promenade has been well patronised by dog owners since its opening in April last year. The utilisation rate of the venue is very high.

(b) and (c) Regarding the subject on the opening of more parks and leisure venues which will allow dogs to have activities there, LCSD has on the one hand received from time to time requests from the public for the opening of more venues to allow the public to bring dogs while on the other hand, the Department has also received complaints from many venue users about the nuisance caused by dogs. LCSD has adopted an open-minded approach towards these requests. After consulting the District Councils (DCs), Area Committees and members of the community and with their support, LCSD will open more suitable venues which will allow members of the public to bring their dogs in. We will seek to strike a balance between the needs of animal lovers and those of other venue users. In considering the opening of leisure venues which allow members of the public to bring their dogs in, LCSD will consider factors including the support from members of the community and DCs, the nuisance which may be caused to other venue users and the surrounding environment, and the availability of adequate facilities and manpower to keep the venues in good sanitation conditions.

At present, there are seven parks under the management of LCSD throughout the territory which allow members of the public to bring their dogs in. These venues include Victoria Peak Garden in Central & Western District, Kowloon Tsai Park in Kowloon City District, Yau Tsim Mong Pet Garden in Yau Tsim Mong District as well as Cheung Wan Street Rest Garden, Kwai Chung Castle Peak Road Sitting-out Area, Jockey Club Hing Shing Road Playground and Tsing Yu Street Garden in Kwai Tsing District. Moreover, LCSD is planning to open parts of six open spaces under planning for admission of members of the public with their dogs. These six sites include the Local Open Space, Area 50, Sham Tseng in Tsuen Wan District, the Local Open Space in Area 28, Fanling/Sheung Shui in North District, the vacant site at the junction of Sai Sha Road and Hang Fai Street, Ma On Shan in Sha Tin District, the landscape area under the Drainage Services Department's Sheung Wan Stormwater Pumping Station project in Central & Western District, the

District Open Space in Area 18, Tung Chung, Lantau in Islands District and the District Open Space at the junction of Hing Wah Street West, Lai Hong Street and Tung Chau Street in Sham Shui Po District. It is anticipated that the first three projects will be completed this year while the last three projects will be completed one after another from 2009 onwards.

Ends/Wednesday, April 30, 2008