

LCQ11: Progress of leisure and cultural services projects of the former Municipal Councils

Following is a question by the Hon Abraham Shek Lai-him and a written reply by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Tsang Tak-sing, in the Legislative Council today (May 19):

Question:

Regarding the outstanding leisure and cultural services projects of the former Municipal Councils, will the Government inform this Council:

(a) according to the latest progress of the aforesaid projects, which projects the estimated project costs of which are at variance with the initial estimates, and of the variations;

(b) of the estimated number of jobs to be created in the construction industry by each of the aforesaid projects yet to be commenced;

(c) whether there are measures in place at present to expedite the implementation of such projects; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(d) given that the authorities advised in a paper submitted recently that they were further processing 51 of the aforesaid projects, and quite a number of such projects are still under review, whether the authorities have formulated any timetable for the review of such projects; and

(e) given that as revealed by the information provided by the authorities, Kwai Tsing District Council has supported the deletion of the "Indoor Recreation Centre Area 9H, Kwai Chung" project, and the site is reserved for public housing development by the Hong Kong Housing Authority, of the details of the public housing to be developed at the site, including the estimated project costs, dates of commencement and completion of the works, as well as the number of public housing units to be provided?

Reply:

President,

(a) Of the 139 outstanding leisure and cultural services projects of the former Municipal Councils (MCs), the latest approved project estimates of 13 projects are at variance with the initial project estimates approved by the Finance Committee. Please refer to the Annex for details.

(b) Construction of the public library and indoor recreation centre in Area 3, Yuen Long is planned to start in July 2010. We estimate that this project will involve the creation of about 445 jobs (including 400 for labourers and 45 for professional/technical staff). For the remaining projects, the detailed designs are still being finalised, and at this stage we are unable to estimate the number of jobs to be created.

(c) We will take forward the outstanding leisure and cultural services projects of the former MCs in consultation with the District Councils (DCs), taking account of the relative priorities of the projects with reference to district needs. We will liaise with other departments to speed up planning work so that the projects can be implemented according to schedule.

(d) Initial planning for some of the 51 projects in question is underway while others are being reviewed. To ensure the timely implementation of projects, we have already developed some of the subject sites using District Minor Works funding approved by the DCs. Progress in implementing projects is affected by various factors. For example, some of the sites originally earmarked for projects are no longer available, and some projects are no longer required by the local community. We continue to consult the DCs regularly on the priorities of the projects with reference to district needs.

(e) The public housing development project at Tai Pak Tin Street, Kwai Chung Area 9H, involves the construction of a 41-storey housing block to provide some 830 rental flats, a covered multi-purpose sports venue, open space, and two footbridges and a lift tower to connect with Shek Lei Estate and On Yam Estate. The cost of the project is approximately \$370 million. Construction started on November 30, 2009 and is expected to be completed by early 2013.

Ends/Wednesday, May 19, 2010

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