

First meeting of Football Task Force (with photo)

The Football Task Force today (May 19) held its first meeting to discuss how to take forward the recommendations of the consultancy report on football development in Hong Kong.

At the meeting the task force noted that the HKFA has received proposals from applicants to act as the association's "change agent", and that the HKFA will shortly convene a panel, comprising representatives of the task force to select a candidate to help the association with its restructuring.

The Chairman of the task force and Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Raymond Young said : "In launching the recruitment of a 'change agent', the HKFA has taken a key first step towards restructuring the association, as recommended in the consultancy report. Members of the task force noted that the HKFA will implement measures to ensure that the selection process is fair and impartial, and that the 'change agent' chosen will be the most suitable candidate for the job."

The task force also discussed a programme drawn up by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) to increase the number of artificial pitches in Hong Kong. Under the programme, 18 new or converted artificial pitches will open within the next few years, thereby increasing the number of user sessions on such pitches from fewer than 2 000 to nearly 5 000 per month. This substantial increase in user sessions will help address the growing venue demand by representative teams, football clubs and members of the public for competition, training and recreational uses.

Mr Young said that the implementation of the pitch development programme would help take forward the recommendations in the consultancy report, in particular with regard to the development of junior teams and the formulation of a long-term venue strategy.

"Another key recommendation of the consultancy report discussed at the meeting was the establishment of the proposed Football Training Centre in Tseung Kwan O, which will be the leading training venue for Hong Kong's representative teams at all levels", Mr Young said.

"The HKFA agreed that it is important to have the centre established as soon as

possible. In this regard, both the Government and the association consider it appropriate for the Hong Kong Jockey Club to build and take the lead in the centre's management, with participation and input from the HKFA and other stakeholders in designing and implementing the development programmes to be run at the centre. This view is shared by other task force members," he said.

The Football Task Force includes representatives from the HKFA, the LCSD, the Sports Commission and other stakeholders. A list of the full membership is as follows:

Chairman:

Mr Raymond Young

Members:

Mr Victor Hui Chun-fui (Member of the Sports Commission)

Mr Albert Hung Chao-hong (Member of the Sports Commission)

Mr Brian Leung Hung Tak (The Chairman of the HKFA)

Mr Li Tak-nang

Professor Lui Tai-lok

Mr Tang Kwai-nang

Mrs Betty Fung (Director of Leisure and Cultural Services)

The task force was appointed by the Secretary for Home Affairs to take forward the recommendations of the report on football development, in particular to identify priority areas for the long-term development of football and to monitor progress with the related initiatives.

Ends/Wednesday, May 19, 2010

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