

LCQ10: Cultural, recreational and sports facilities in New Territories South East geographical constituency

â€‹Following is a question by the Hon Stanley Li and a written reply by the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Kevin Yeung, in the Legislative Council today (June 19):

Question:

â€‹Some members of the public have relayed that the cultural, recreational and sports facilities in the New Territories South East geographical constituency (NT South East GC) for the 2021 Legislative Council General Election are inadequate. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the number of cultural, recreational and sports facilities in the NT South East GC which have been planned but not yet constructed, and set out in a table the following information of such facilities: (i) planning year, (ii) facility project, (iii) construction time, (iv) expected completion time and (v) expected number of service recipients;

(2) of the respective numbers of cultural, recreational and sports facilities in shortfall in Sai Kung, Tseung Kwan O and Ma On Shan in the NT South East GC based on the relevant standards of provision in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines; whether it has formulated key performance indicators for assessing the work of town planning and development; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(3) given that there are four transitional housing projects in the NT South East GC, and among them, some have leased on a temporary basis the sites originally earmarked for cultural, recreational and sports facilities, how the Government balances the public's demand for both transitional housing as well as cultural, recreational and sports facilities in planning such transitional housing; and

(4) upon expiry of the lease for the transitional housing projects mentioned in (3) on the sites earmarked for cultural, recreational and sports facilities, of the specific indicators to be put in place by the Government to serve as reference in considering lease renewal; in the event of non-renewal, of the details of and timetable for taking forward the work on the sites concerned by the Government for their original uses that have been earmarked?

Reply:

President,

In consultation with the Development Bureau and the Housing Bureau (HB),

my consolidated reply to the questions raised by the Hon Stanley Li is as follows:

(1) and (2) The Government has all along been committed to the planning and construction of various cultural, sports and recreation facilities in the territory to meet the needs of the public.

The Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG) stipulates the Government's general guidelines for determining the scale, locations, and site requirements of various land uses, community facilities and infrastructures according to the population and other factors. Policy bureaux and departments have all along been formulating, reviewing, and revising the relevant parts of HKPSG as appropriate, taking into account their respective policies and development requirements for the concerned facilities, including cultural and sports facilities. The Government has already reserved sufficient land in the relevant areas in accordance with HKPSG and bureaux/departments' requirements for development of suitable cultural and sports facilities, so as to cater for the need of the existing and planned population.

When planning new and improving existing facilities, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), apart from making reference to the HKPSG, will consider other factors including policy objectives and priorities, utilisation rate of existing facilities, demographic changes within the districts, public demand for facilities, views of District Councils and stakeholders, land availability, and technical feasibility, etc.

South East New Territories includes Sai Kung District and Sha Tin Districts, which currently have populations of around 503 100 and 702 800 respectively. Major public works projects for cultural, recreation and sports facilities currently in progress or under planning in both districts are provided at Annex I. The comparison by district between the provision of major cultural, sports and recreation facilities under the LCSD and the provision as recommended by the HKPSG is at Annex II.

Under the fiscal consolidation programme, the Government will review the order of priority, necessity and importance of the works projects under planning, such as conducting reviews on how to use public resources more effectively and the cost effectiveness of projects. For projects that are currently under preliminary planning or at the conceptual stage, the implementation schedule will be adjusted in light of their importance and other factors. Since some projects are still at the preliminary planning stage, the construction and completion schedule are not available for the time being.

(3) The Government has been promoting the development of transitional housing in the past few years, making better use of short-term available land and premises to provide short-term accommodation to those in need, and alleviate the hardship of the inadequately housed families and individuals that have been waiting for traditional public rental housing for a long time. Transitional housing projects, including the four projects in the New

Territories South East geographical constituency (NT South East GC) mentioned in the question (i.e. "Yin Ting Terraced Home" at Tong Yin Street, Tseung Kwan O; "Yap Ting Terraced Home" at Chi Shin Street, Tseung Kwan O; "Po Ting Terraced Home" at Po Lam Road North, Tseung Kwan O; and "T-Loft@Lok Wo" at Lok Wo Sha Lane, Ma On Shan), aim at making optimal use of the "window period" of suitable lands or premises, during which the long-term development has not been taken forward yet. Therefore, the implementation of the original land use planning will not be hindered.

(4) As mentioned above, the four transitional housing projects in the NT South East GC mentioned in the question aim at making optimal use of the "window period" before the long-term planned uses of the sites concerned are implemented, in order to help those with pressing housing needs. The four government sites are currently leased under short-term tenancy, which will expire in June 2027 and thereafter be renewed quarterly.

According to the information of the Planning Department, the site of "Po Ting Terraced Home" has been reserved for village-type development, the site of "Yin Ting Terraced Home" will be developed into a civic centre, the site of "Yap Ting Terraced Home" is planned for a sports centre-cum-indoor heated swimming pool, and the site of "T-Loft@Lok Wo" is planned for a sports centre. The development of the above three sites, which are planned for cultural, recreation and sports facilities in the long term, are still at the preliminary planning stage and their schedule is not available for the time being. We will continue to maintain close communication with the HB for timely return of the sites for their long-term uses.

We have to stress that the transitional housing initiative is a short-term relief in nature. If the long-term development of the site or premises of a certain project is yet to be finalised or implemented, and the owner of the land/premises concerned agrees to renew the lease of the respective project, the HB will then, subject to the status of the project and other factors including public demand for transitional housing, consider providing policy support to the non-government organisation concerned for maintaining the operation of the project to serve those in need. If the long-term development needs to be taken forward, the land/premises concerned will be returned to the relevant bureau or department in a timely manner.