

LCQ8: Parks, zoological and botanical gardens and children's playgrounds

Following is a question by the Hon Leung Che-cheung and a written reply by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Lau Kong-wah, in the Legislative Council today (November 13):

Question:

Regarding the parks, zoological and botanical gardens and children's playgrounds under the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of (i) the population of children aged below 12, (ii) the total number of parks as well as zoological and botanical gardens, (iii) the total area of these two types of parks/gardens, and (iv) the number of inclusive play equipment provided therein, in each of the years 2015, 2017 and 2019, together with a breakdown by District Council (DC) district in the following table;

District	2015				2017				2019			
	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)
Total												

(2) of the respective annual expenditure incurred by the LCSD on designing, building and repairing play equipment for children in 2014-2015, 2016-2017 and 2018-2019 financial years, together with a breakdown by DC district; and

(3) whether the LCSD has regularly reviewed the criteria for the provision of play equipment for children; if so, of the details; if not, whether it will conduct regular reviews?

Reply:

President,

The reply to the three-part question raised by Hon Leung Che-cheung is as follows:

(1) The number and total site area of parks and playgrounds of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) (including the Hong Kong Zoological and Botanical Gardens) and the number of venues provided with children's playground and inclusive play equipment in 2015, 2017 and 2019 with breakdown by District Council district are set out at Annex 1. The LCSD does not

maintain information on the population under 12 in each district.

(2) Children's play equipment forms part of the facilities of parks and playgrounds. The LCSD does not have separate figures on the costs for the design and construction of children's play equipment. The maintenance costs of children's play equipment under the LCSD (including replacement of play equipment) in 2014-15, 2016-17 and 2018-19 with breakdown by District Council district are set out at Annex 2.

(3) The LCSD adopts a "universal play" concept in planning for play equipment with a view to providing inclusive, interesting and innovative play equipment to cater for the needs of children of different ages and abilities, as well as their parents. In designing facilities for individual venues, the LCSD and the relevant works department(s) will consider topographic features, site area and circumstances and views of the District Councils concerned, etc., and review the utilisation of children's play equipment in due course for improvement works.

The consultancy study on the design of children's play spaces commissioned by the Architectural Services Department was completed. The consultancy study aimed at devising new design guidelines for children's play space, thereby providing challenging and interesting facilities in future children's play space in a safe environment for public enjoyment.

The Government plans to transform more than 170 public play spaces managed by the LCSD across the territory over the next five years. The primary objective of the initiative is to enhance the facilities of children's playgrounds, providing children with more innovative and interesting play spaces. In the process of transforming the facilities, besides making reference to the consultancy study findings concerned, the LCSD will also encourage and promote community participation and engagement by adopting different means, such as workshops and opinion surveys to engage stakeholders, including pupils and parents of nearby schools, members of District Councils and relevant organisations, etc., and invite them to offer opinions. The LCSD will take note of and consolidate the opinions collected, and incorporate feasible and suitable designs and facilities into the play spaces. The LCSD will also offer different degrees of challenges and fun, introduce more natural elements in order to provide more innovative, challenging and interesting play spaces.