

Budget Speech by the Financial Secretary (9)

Smart City

134. The Innovation and Technology Bureau (ITB) will announce the Smart City Blueprint for Hong Kong 2.0 this year to further promote smart city development.

Digital Infrastructure

135. The world enters the 5G era, with major telecommunications operators launching 5G services in Hong Kong during the year. The Government will adopt a multi-pronged approach in facilitating the development and application of 5G network. This includes the implementation of a subsidy scheme for mobile network operators to expand optical fiber network to remote villages. We will also open up more suitable government properties, sheltered bus stops and telephone kiosks for the setting up of radio base stations by operators to support the development of 5G network.

“iAM Smart”

136. ITB will launch the “iAM Smart” one-stop personalised digital service platform in the fourth quarter of 2020. By the middle of next year, members of the public can gain access to more than 100 online government services through “iAM Smart”.

Smart Traffic Fund

137. I have earmarked \$1 billion for the Smart Traffic Fund to provide funding support for enterprises or organisations to conduct research and application on vehicle-related I&T. The Fund is expected to commence operation in 2020-21.

Geospatial Data

138. Last year, I earmarked \$300 million to promote greater use of spatial data in the community. We will launch the high-quality territory-wide 3D digital map in phases starting from this year, and roll out the Common Spatial Data Infrastructure Portal for full operation by end-2022. This year I will further earmark \$60 million for the establishment of the first Geospatial Lab to encourage the public to make use of spatial data in developing mobile applications.

Digitisation of the Works Supervision System

139. The DEVB has actively promoted the digitisation of the works supervision system. Starting from the second quarter of this year, all public works projects will adopt the digital works supervision system in phases. I will allocate \$100 million to develop an integrated digital platform for data

integration and information exchange in order to strengthen project supervision.

Sports Development

140. This year is the Olympic year. We will give Hong Kong athletes our strongest support to enable them to achieve outstanding results at the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games.

141. To further promote sports development in Hong Kong, the Government will substantially increase the total subvention for the Sports Federation and Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China and 60 national sports associations from about \$300 million to more than \$500 million a year over the next four years. We will continue to take forward the new facilities building project of the Hong Kong Sports Institute so as to provide our athletes with world-class training and support facilities.

City Development

142. The Government will continue to invest in infrastructure projects with a view to building a better city and improving quality of life. In the next few years, the annual capital works expenditure is expected to reach \$100 billion on average, and the annual total construction output will increase to around \$300 billion.

Harbourfront Enhancement

143. The Government has earmarked \$6.5 billion for implementing a number of harbourfront development initiatives. Taking the example of the highly popular harbourfront promenades, our target this year is to open up another kilometre or so of new promenades, further extending the total length of the promenades along both sides of the Victoria Harbour to 24 kilometres.

Making Good Use of Government Land

144. In last year's Budget, I set aside \$22 billion to take forward the projects under the "single site, multiple use" initiative. The six projects in the first batch comprise the redevelopment of Tuen Mun Clinic, development of a proposed ambulance depot near Sheung Wan Fire Station, consolidation of several government sites in Tsuen Wan town centre, as well as the construction of joint-user buildings for community facilities at the former Anderson Road Quarry site, Tseung Kwan O town centre and Shan Mei Street in Shatin. We will finalise the mix of community facilities in the relevant projects.

Railway Development

145. Railway has always been the backbone of the passenger transportation system in Hong Kong which facilitates daily commuting and promotes district development. Two weeks ago, Tuen Ma Line Phase 1 was smoothly commissioned. We expect the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) to complete the remaining works of the Tuen Ma Line and the Hung Hom to Admiralty Section of the Shatin to Central Link as soon as possible, with target commissioning in end-2021 and

the first quarter of 2022 respectively.

146. We will progressively implement the new railway projects recommended under the Railway Development Strategy 2014, and invite the MTRCL to commence detailed planning and design for the Tung Chung Line Extension, the Tuen Mun South Extension and the Northern Link in the coming year. We will consult the public on these new railway schemes after they are finalised.

Caring Society

147. The current-term Government spares no effort to enhance social welfare services. The recurrent expenditure in this area has increased by 26 per cent, from \$65.3 billion in 2017-18 to \$82.3 billion in 2019-20. In January, the Chief Executive also announced a number of new recurrent measures to benefit the elderly, workers, low-income families, the unemployed or underemployed, and underprivileged people.

148. I will continue to allocate resources to strengthen elderly services. A total of 3 000 additional home care service quotas will be provided for frail elderly persons in the two years, while an additional 1 000 community care service vouchers will be issued to elderly persons with moderate or severe impairment in 2020-21. The annual recurrent expenditure for 2020-21 will exceed \$300 million. In addition, I will allocate an additional \$75 million to subsidised elderly service units for providing soft meals to elderly persons with swallowing difficulties.

149. As for child welfare, to enhance the service quality of the Neighbourhood Support Child Care Project, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) has allocated an additional provision of about \$24 million to service operators under the Project since January this year, enabling them to increase manpower to strengthen training for home-based child carers.

150. For early identification of and provision of assistance to pre-primary children and their families with welfare needs, the Government has allocated \$990 million from the Lotteries Fund to provide social work services in phases in subsidised/aided child care centres, kindergartens and kindergarten-cum-child care centres for about 150 000 pre-primary children and their families. The first two phases have provided services to 485 eligible pre-primary institutions in total. The third phase will commence in August this year.

151. Starting from 2020-21, I will provide additional funding to SWD-subvented NGOs operating day service units to meet the electricity costs of providing air conditioning for their activity areas, involving an annual recurrent expenditure of about \$46 million. It is expected that over 1 100 subvented service units and more than one million service users will benefit from this initiative.

(To be continued.)