

LCQ15: Taking forward public housing projects

Following is a question by the Hon Kwok Wai-keung and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (February 26):

Question:

On taking forward public housing projects, will the Government inform this Council:

1. of the number of housing projects in each of the past five financial years which could not be completed in the year concerned as originally planned, and set out, by project name in a table, (i) the number of residential units, (ii) the causes for the delay, and (iii) the number of days of delay in respect of the various projects;
2. whether it has set up a mechanism for reviewing the causes for the delay in housing projects and for formulating improvement measures; if it has set up such a mechanism, whether it has reviewed its effectiveness; if it has not set up such a mechanism, whether it will do so expeditiously;
3. whether it will consider publishing annually the information about the housing projects under construction which have experienced delay, including the name of projects and the causes for the delay, as well as giving an account of the impact of such delays on the supply of public housing; if so, of the details; and
4. of the specific measures in place to ensure that housing projects will be completed on schedule?

Reply:

President,

Our consolidated reply to the Hon Kwok Wai-keung's question is as follows:

According to the Long Term Housing Strategy, the Government updates the long term housing demand projection annually and presents a rolling ten-year housing supply target. This annual updating exercise enables the Government to continually plan ahead the development of land and housing, in order to meet the housing needs of the community over the long term. The Government also takes forward public housing development projects through a five-year public housing construction programme, which rolls forward on a yearly basis.

Although the forecast of flat production in the five-year public housing construction programme is subject to adjustments due to various factors (such

as design enhancement, progress of individual projects, etc.), the Government and relevant organisations, including the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA), have been attaching great importance to the progress of public housing construction and have put in place stringent monitoring mechanism. Based on the mechanism, the Housing Department monitors the progress of each project closely through regular reviews. Monthly progress reports are submitted to the Building Committee of HA, which discusses and monitors the progress and gives suggestions on project enhancement. In terms of information publication, we will upload the five-year public housing production forecast onto the websites of the Transport and Housing Bureau (THB) and relevant organisations (including HA and the Hong Kong Housing Society) on a quarterly basis for public perusal. THB reports the five-year public housing construction programme to the Panel on Housing of the Legislative Council (the Panel) on an annual basis. The relevant papers are available on the Legislative Council's website. The Government and relevant organisations will actively consider providing information on projects that were unable to be completed as scheduled compared to the previous year at the future annual reports to the Panel.

According to past records, major reasons for public housing projects not completed as scheduled include inclement weather, progress of contractor, labour supply of the construction industry, external factors and compliance with the latest buildings requirements, etc. To mitigate project delay, measures such as requesting constructors to increase manpower and expedite construction progress; conducting site checks more frequently; convening site meetings; carrying out site supervision and inspection, etc., are performed. These measures help address the challenges encountered at on-site construction works, with a view to facilitating the early completion of the projects according to the schedule.

Regarding the Hon Kwok's enquiry on the individual information of public housing projects that were unable to be completed as scheduled in the past five years, including project name, number of residential units involved, etc., since compilation of such data involves reviewing a substantial number of files, we will review these files and provide written supplementary information to Members as soon as possible after the termination of the prevailing special work arrangements of the Government in response to the COVID-19 virus.

LCQ21: Operation of West Kowloon Station of Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link

Following is a question by the Hon Jeremy Tam and a written reply by the

Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (February 26):

Question:

Regarding the operation of the West Kowloon Station (WKS) of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it knows, since the commencement of operation of WKS, if incidents of unauthorised entry into railway tracks and tunnels have occurred; if such incidents have occurred, of the following details of the incidents: (i) nature (such as falling onto the railway track by accident, committing suicide, deliberate entry (if the motives are known, please specify), and others (please specify)), (ii) the locations where and the ways in which the persons concerned entered and left, and (iii) whether the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) has made public such incidents (if not, of the reasons for that), and set out such information by the identities of such persons;

(2) since the commencement of operation of WKS, whether incidents of passengers entering Hong Kong without undergoing immigration clearance procedure have occurred; if so, of the details, including the reasons and whether the authorities have made public such incidents (if not, of the reasons for that); and

(3) whether it knows the reasons why platform screen doors have not been fitted at WKS, and whether the Government will request MTRCL to retrofit the screen doors?

Reply:

President,

Passenger clearance for the West Kowloon Station (WKS) and security work of the Hong Kong Port Area within the WKS fall within the policy areas of the Security Bureau (SB). Having consulted the SB, I set out my reply below to the question raised by the Honorable Member.

With the implementation of the co-location arrangement at the WKS of the Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (XRL), passengers can complete clearance procedures of both Hong Kong and the Mainland at the WKS in one go. Given that journeys will not be constrained by whether a Mainland station has clearance facilities, passengers can travel conveniently between different places in the Mainland. Since the commissioning of the XRL in September 2018, its operation along with the co-location arrangement have been running smoothly. As at the end of last year, the XRL has a total patronage of over 22 million, with the average daily patronage being over 47 000 and the highest patronage for a day (February 7, 2019) over 104 000. Passengers are getting used to using XRL as a cross-boundary transport mode.

With the grant of the service concession of the XRL to the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL), the Government has signed an amendment agreement to the Operating Agreement (AOA) with the MTRCL to specify the requirements imposed by the relevant policy and regulatory bureaux/departments on the MTRCL in relation to the operation of the XRL. As for the requirements on security, with due regard to the co-location arrangement, the MTRCL has to assist the enforcement agencies of the Government to preserve the security and integrity of Hong Kong's boundary and prevent unauthorised access to and exit from the Mainland Port Area. The MTRCL is required to ensure the security and safety of the operation of the XRL, the WKS and the related facilities including tunnels, ventilation buildings and Shek Kong Stabling Sidings, etc. In this regard, the Government and the MTRCL have established a security committee under the AOA, chaired by the Secretary for Security or his representative, to formulate and review the security arrangements for the XRL. The MTRCL has to observe the security requirements specified by the Government from time to time.

(1) and (2) Since the commissioning of the XRL, which has carried more than 22 million passengers so far, there have been two incidents involving unauthorised entry into railway track areas.

The first incident occurred in late March last year, when a platform assistant of the MTRCL fell onto the railway track by accident while working on a platform of the WKS. Pursuant to the Liaison and Coordination Mechanism and the Mechanism for Handling Emergencies under the co-location arrangement, staff of the Fire Services Department of the Hong Kong side were granted permission by the Mainland side to pass through the Mainland Port Area to render assistance to the platform assistant.

The second incident occurred on an evening in early December last year. A Mainland passenger boarded a southbound train at Changsha South station. As far as we know, the passenger intended to travel to Shenzhen North station, only to forget to alight from the train when it called at that station. When the train continued its journey and finally arrived at the WKS in Hong Kong, the passenger alighted from the train but, instead of completing clearance procedures, entered the railway track area and walked along the tracks for a period of time. The passenger eventually left the railway premises from an emergency exit of one of the ventilation buildings beside the railway, and turned himself in to the Police. Subsequently, the passenger was sent back to the Mainland in accordance with the established mechanism. The Government and MTRCL were highly concerned about the implications of the incident for the operation and security of the XRL, and the MTRCL is continuing with its in-depth investigation into the incident. On the security front, the MTRCL will, in conjunction with the SB and law enforcement agencies, carefully review the incident under the security committee, after which the MTRCL and law enforcement agencies will adopt appropriate follow-up measures to ensure the integrity of the boundary and prevent recurrence of similar incidents. On the operation front, our Bureau is currently following up on the incident with the MTRCL to ensure the safety and service quality of XRL operation.

Except for the second incident above, which involved trespassing onto

the track, no case of entry into Hong Kong at the WKS without undergoing clearance procedures has been received.

(3) The railway tracks of the XRL lie within the Hong Kong Port Area and are therefore subject to the jurisdiction of Hong Kong. To ensure the safety of passengers and prevent them from trespassing onto tracks, the MTRCL has adopted appropriate management measures for passengers boarding departing trains and passengers alighting from arrived trains. All passengers, be they departing or arriving, are not allowed to stay on the platform. Departing passengers will first wait at the waiting hall for departing passengers upon completing clearance procedures, and will only be directed by the MTRCL to the platform for boarding after the train has arrived and the compartment has been cleared up. Arriving passengers must leave the compartment immediately upon arrival and then leave the platform as promptly as possible. The MTRCL will ensure that all passengers have left the platform before their train departs from the platform.

As the XRL is a cross-boundary railway, trains of different models will arrive at the WKS. Since the positions of doors on high-speed rail trains vary from model to model, it is not viable to install screen doors matching the doors of all models at the WKS platforms. Nonetheless, all platforms of the WKS are fitted with fixed panels at both ends to block the gap between the train's nose or rear and the platform. When a train arrives, the MTRCL will deploy staff to guard both ends of the platform to prevent passengers from accessing the tracks from the ends. The Government will also review issues relating to platform security and safety in conjunction with the MTRCL from time to time.

LCQ17: Physical activities for students

Following is a question by the Hon Ma Fung-kwok and a written reply by the Secretary for Education, Mr Kevin Yeung, in the Legislative Council today (February 26):

Question:

It has been reported that the findings of a survey conducted in the middle of last year by the Hong Kong Elite Athletes Association have shown that school children on average were engaged in physical activities for only some 30 minutes each day at school, which was far less than the level of physical activities of 60 minutes each day as recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO). Furthermore, less than half of the school children surveyed were interested in taking a double-period lesson of physical education (PE). In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it will review and improve the contents (including aspects of the types and forms of activities) of PE lessons in primary and secondary schools, with a view to making PE lessons more enjoyable and thereby increasing the interest of school children in physical activities; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) whether it will consider increasing the number of hours of PE lessons in primary and secondary schools, in order to increase the time spent by school children on physical activities each day; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(3) of the details and effectiveness of the measures implemented by the Government this year to encourage and support schools and sports organisations to organise extracurricular sports programmes; whether it will consider introducing more of such measures next year to encourage schools and sports organisations to organise more extracurricular sports programmes; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(4) of the number of sports programmes, since the introduction of the Opening up School Facilities for Promotion of Sports Development Scheme in the 2017-2018 school year, organised by sports organisations using the facilities opened up by participating schools, as well as the number of school children participating in those programmes; the measures to be implemented by the Government next year to encourage more schools and sports organisations to participate in the Scheme and organise more extracurricular sports programmes; and

(5) whether the Government will, in the long run, formulate a work plan and set phased targets for increasing the time spent by school children on physical activities each day to 60 minutes as recommended by WHO; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

It is the World Health Organization (WHO)'s recommendation for children and adolescents to have around 60 minutes of physical activities every day. We understand that in accordance with WHO's definition, physical activity covers any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that requires energy expenditure, including playing, engaging in recreational pursuits, exercising, as well as commuting (such as walking and cycling) and carrying out household chores. Therefore, children and adolescents can engage in physical activities through a wide range of activities to develop a habit of regular exercise and build a healthy body.

Our reply to the Hon Ma Fung-kwok's question is as follows:

(1) and (2) It takes the concerted efforts of schools, families and society to enhance students' interest in sports and further encourage them to

participate in physical activities. For schools, in addition to Physical Education (PE) lessons, other learning experiences and extra-curricular activities, as well as the support and engagement of various stakeholders are also of great importance. PE is one of the eight Key Learning Areas of our school curriculum. Primary and secondary schools are required to arrange PE lessons for students to develop their physical competence, deepen their knowledge of physical activities and safety, and nurture positive values and attitudes. To increase the level of physical activities of students, schools usually provide opportunities for students to take part in physical activities before and after morning assemblies, during recess or lunch break, and after school. In collaboration with various organisations, schools also engage, with existing resources, professional coaches/instructors of different sports activities to hold interest classes for their students in schools. These classes cover a number of featured sports activities such as rope skipping, floorcurling, and Wushu. Moreover, sports days, swimming galas and school team training, etc. are organised to enhance students' interest in different sports activities. Also, the Education Bureau (EDB) has all along been supporting different organisations to collaborate with schools in helping students develop a habit of having physical exercises and actively participate in physical activities for health promotion. For example, under the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust's "Fun to Move@JC" project and the "Active School Programme", an array of fun physical activities have been held in partnership with various organisations for enhancing the interest of students, parents and teaching staff in engaging in physical activities.

As regards the school PE curriculum, the Curriculum Development Council revised the Physical Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 to Secondary 6) in 2017 and included the relevant recommendation of WHO (i.e. students should accumulate at least 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activities daily) as a direction for the development of the PE curriculum. The EDB organises training courses/sharing sessions on various themes for teachers every year to enhance their understanding of the updated curriculum and relevant teaching strategies, and enable them to keep abreast of the latest development of different sports and new sports (such as tchoukball and freestyle football) so as to introduce various types of activities in PE lessons and make the lessons more enjoyable. There were over 500 participating teachers in each of the past two school years. We have also set up learning communities on various topics and built professional exchange platforms for teachers to explore learning and teaching strategies which are effective and with an element of fun, such as conducting PE lessons in the form of games more often, in order to enhance students' interest in participating in physical activities and increase their motivations for engaging in and time spent on physical activities.

The support and involvement of parents is highly instrumental in fostering students' interest in exercising and promoting their active participation in physical activities after school. Hence, the EDB will strengthen parent education to raise parents' awareness by, among others, making available at the "Smart Parent Net" a video clip that encourages parents to do exercise together with their children. We hope parents and schools will work together to help children develop an active and healthy

lifestyle.

Apart from giving time for students to engage in physical activities through PE lessons, it is more important for schools to develop students' interest in sports and help students understand various sports and how to participate in sports activities safely. Students' engagement in physical activities should not confine to PE lessons. Under the prevailing school curriculum framework, which is open and flexible, schools are allowed to make adjustments appropriate to the needs of their students, such as increasing the number of PE lessons, provided that such adjustments do not deviate from the requirements of relevant curriculum guides. Schools should make multifarious efforts to foster students' interest in sports and provide students with opportunities to participate in sports rather than relying solely on PE lessons.

(3) Relevant bureaux, including the EDB and the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB), have been working with various non-governmental organisations such as the Physical Fitness Association of Hong Kong, China, Hong Kong Schools Sports Federation (HKSSF) and Hong Kong Schools Dance Association (HKSDA) to organise a variety of activities/projects to provide students with choices and opportunities to participate in physical activities. The activities/projects organised include the School Physical Fitness Award Scheme, Inter-school Sports Competitions, Schools Dance Festival and Jump Rope for Heart Scheme. Since 2001, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) has implemented the School Sports Programme (SSP) for students of primary and secondary schools. SSP is subvented and co-ordinated by the LCSD with the programmes organised by different National Sports Associations (NSAs). It aims to develop the interests of students in sports, encourage them to participate in sports regularly, raise the standard of sport performance among students and identify potential student athletes for further training. SSP is comprised of seven subsidiary programmes/schemes, namely Sport Education Programme, Easy Sport Programme, Outreach Coaching Programme, Joint Schools Sports Training Programme, Badges Award Scheme, Sports Award Scheme and Sport Captain Programme. In the 2018/19 school year, about 90 per cent of schools in Hong Kong took part in the Scheme and over 8 500 programmes were organised for about 635 000 students. In addition, since 2016, the HAB has launched the Retired Athletes Transformation Programme to subsidise eligible schools and sports organisations to employ retired athletes for promoting sports in schools, identifying and nurturing potential sports talent. The programme also aims to help the retired athletes develop long-term careers upon retirement from training and competitions. At present, 55 retired athletes are employed by 39 schools and 16 sports organisations under this programme. Concurrently, EDB has been co-operating with and providing funding support for HKSSF and HKSDA to organise large-scale sports and dancing competitions/activities in order to enhance students' interest in taking part in physical activities as well as to develop their potential. HKSSF organised over 20 000 inter-school competitions with about 126 000 participating students in each of the past three years. Dance competitions organised by HKSDA attracted about 22 000 participating students in each of the past three years. In addition, the EDB has provided public sector schools and schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) with the recurrent Life-

wide Learning Grant, with an annual provision of about \$900 million, from the 2019/20 school year for organising more diversified experiential learning activities for students to facilitate learning beyond the classroom. These activities include sports related co-curricular activities organised for enhancing students' exposure to different sports.

(4) The EDB and the HAB jointly implemented the Opening up School Facilities for Promotion of Sports Development Scheme (the Scheme) starting from the 2017/18 school year to encourage schools to open up their facilities, with a view to enhancing the sporting culture in schools. Under the Scheme, sports organisations are encouraged to hold sports activities in schools to provide students with more opportunities to participate in sports and develop a healthy habit of exercising. Since its launch in the 2017/18 school year, the Scheme has recorded a gradual increase in the number of participating schools and sports organisations, sports programmes and participants. Details are set out in the table below:

	2017/18 school year	2018/19 school year	2019/20 school year
No. of schools opening up their facilities to sports organisations	12	27	60
No. of sports organisations hiring schools facilities	15	20	37
No. of sports programmes organised	38	162	276
No. of participants	1 300	3 400	10 300 (Estimated)

To facilitate schools to cultivate a sporting culture and provide more opportunities for students to participate in sports activities, sports organisations hiring school facilities are required to reserve one-fourth of the places in each sports programme for priority enrolment by students, teachers and/or parents of the participating schools who have met the technical requirement(s) of the activity, if any, under the Scheme. Since its launch, the Scheme has been well-received by stakeholders. Taking into account the views collected from participating schools and sports organisations, the EDB and the HAB have reviewed and enhanced the Scheme. The enhancement measures implemented include extending the Scheme from public sector schools to schools under the DSS in the 2018/19 school year; increasing the upper limit of subsidy for each participating school from \$80,000 to \$130,000 a year; and expanding the list of eligible sports organisations. In the 2019/20 school year, we allowed non-profit-making organisations with ability, experience and a track record of organising

sports programmes in schools and the community to join the Scheme on a pilot basis. Participating schools are eligible to apply for a grant ranging from \$0.7 million to \$4 million from the Sir David Trench Fund for Recreation for improving or upgrading their sports facilities. The EDB and the HAB will continue to collect views from participating schools and sports organisations for on-going enhancements of the Scheme, with a view to organising more sports programmes by using school facilities.

(5) To strengthen our efforts to combat the threat posed by non-communicable diseases and align with WHO's recommendations, the Government launched the "Towards 2025: Strategy and Action Plan to Prevent and Control Non-Communicable Diseases in Hong Kong" in 2018. The strategy sets out nine local targets to be achieved by 2025, one being a 10 per cent relative reduction in the prevalence of insufficient physical activities among adolescents. Teachers are important stakeholders who play a vital role in motivating students to participate in physical activities. The EDB has established a PE teachers' professional network since the 2017/18 school year. So far, over 120 schools have joined the network. We will continue to actively encourage schools to join the network and provide a series of support measures through the network, including organising workshops and sharing sessions for participating teachers on a regular basis. The network aims at strengthening teachers' understanding of and capacity for designing PE lessons with fun elements; supporting schools to formulate the "Policy for Developing an Active and Healthy School Campus"; promoting doing physical activities during recess and between lessons through sharing of good practices; and encouraging students to increase the time spent on physical activities and do more simplified physical fitness exercises at home with their family members by making good use of the EDB's and other organisations' online learning and teaching resources. The HAB and the LCSD will conduct a Territory-wide Physical Fitness Survey for the community in 2020. Through fitness tests and questionnaires, we aim at developing a database of fitness level of our residents, which allows for tracking of relevant changes and sporting patterns. The survey will facilitate the setting of long-term goals and policies in the promotion of sports for all, which would in turn allow us to put in place appropriate measures to encourage the public (including students) to participate in sports regularly. We will continue to co-operate with different organisations towards the goal of increasing the time spent by students on daily physical activity, organise more sports-related activities/programmes for students to participate in physical activities every day, and enjoy the fun and benefits of sports.

LCQ1: Police's work on fostering police-community relations

Following is a question by the Hon Kwong Chun-yu and a written reply by

the Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee, in the Legislative Council today (February 26):

Question:

The results of an opinion poll, conducted in November last year on members of the public's satisfaction with the disciplinary forces, have shown that 40 per cent of the respondents gave zero mark when asked to give scores to the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF). On the other hand, it has been reported that in January this year, a large outdoor billboard located next to the Hong Kong Island entrance of the Cross-Harbour Tunnel displayed an advertisement of the Police which invited members of the public to join the Police Force. It is learnt that the relevant advertising costs amounted to as high as several hundred thousand dollars per month. Regarding the advertisements placed by HKPF, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the total expenditure of the aforesaid advertisement, together with a breakdown, including the rent of the advertising station, advertisement design fee, works costs, and (if an advertising agency was engaged) the name of the advertising agency and the fees charged by it;

(2) of the criteria adopted by HKPF for engaging advertising agencies;

(3) of the estimated and actual expenditures spent on publicity and promotion activities by the Police Public Relations Branch in each of the past two financial years; among such expenditures, the amount of those involving advertising, and set out, by name of publicity programme, the theme of the advertisement, the expenditure involved and the name of the advertising agencies engaged (if any); and

(4) whether HKPF has formulated a mechanism to evaluate the effectiveness of its advertisements; if so, whether HKPF has evaluated if the relevant publicity work in the past 12 months could effectively improve the image of the department?

Reply:

President,

The Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF) attaches great importance to police-community relations and has been adopting a proactive and extensive public relations strategy to strengthen the communication with the media and the general public, so that the public may better understand and support the Police's work.

With regard to the various parts of the question raised by Hon Kwong Chun-yu, our reply is as follows:

(1) The Police have been adopting a proactive recruitment strategy to attract high calibre candidates who possess the required competencies to serve, including encouraging members of the public to join the Police through multiple advertising channels (e.g. Police webpage, posters, etc.). In respect of the outdoor billboard on the Police's recruitment located at the

entrance of the Cross-Harbour Tunnel mentioned in the Member's question, upon the Police's checking of the relevant records, the relevant expenditure was about \$0.45 million. The advertising agency being engaged was the sole supplier in the market that provided advertising service at the tunnels.

(2) The procurement policy of the government is, through clear, open, fair and competitive procedures, to obtain qualifying and competitive tenders from which the most advantageous proposal is selected. As stipulated in the Stores and Procurement Regulations (SPR), government procurement exceeding \$1.4 million (for goods and general services), \$3 million (for consultancy services) and \$7 million (for services for construction and engineering works) in value is normally done by the use of open and competitive tendering procedures so as to obtain the best value for money. Limited tendering (i.e. single or restricted tendering) are, in line with the Agreement on Government Procurement of the World Trade Organization, only permissible under specified exceptional circumstances, for example, on grounds of extreme urgency or security, for protection of patents, copyrights or other exclusive rights or for reasons such as requirements of interchangeability or interoperability with the existing equipment, software, services or installations procured under the initial procurement. Where the nature of the contract (such as a contract that is time critical or one that requires particularly high levels of skills and proven reliability) dictates that tenders have to be invited from qualified suppliers/contractors, selective tendering or prequalified tendering may be used.

The Police will, based on actual needs, engage outsourced advertising agencies in accordance with the government's established procedures and the SPR. According to the SPR, departments will generally adopt the marking scheme approach for the procurement of services contracts (such as advertising services), and award contracts having considered both the technical and fee aspects.

(3) Overall speaking, the main expenditures of the Police Public Relations Branch (PPRB) include the expenses for implementing the Junior Police Call (JPC) and Senior Police Call, operating the JPC Permanent Activity Centre at Pat Heung, developing the social media platforms, coordinating TV and films production, daily administration and other miscellaneous items, etc.

The estimated expenditure and actual expenditure of the PPRB in the 2018-19 financial year were \$56.50 million and \$54.80 million respectively; the estimated expenditure and actual expenditure (as at December 31, 2019) in the 2019-20 financial year were \$69.60 million and \$41.20 million respectively. HKPF does not have the statistics on the detailed breakdown of expenditure items with regard to advertisements.

(4) The Police conduct the Police Service Satisfaction Survey and the Public Opinion Survey roughly every three years to gauge public satisfaction with police service, assess public perception of police officer and the Police, and identify areas of improvement. The surveys are conducted by the Public Opinion Programme, the University of Hong Kong to ensure impartiality, independence and credibility of the surveys. The last surveys were conducted in 2018, where 84 per cent of respondents were either "Very Satisfied" or

"Quite Satisfied" with the overall service performance of the Police, and 79 per cent of respondents were either "Very Confident" or "Quite Confident" of the Police, being the highest since the inception of the surveys.

The Police will continue to co-operate with different organisations through various channels as appropriate, making use of different platforms to broaden the engagement with the public, provide the public with the Police's latest information, demonstrate the Police's positive image and strengthen the public's confidence in the Police, with a view to fostering police-community relations.

Healthcare, environmental protection and housing highlight Budget's liveable city focus

In announcing the 2020-21 Budget today (February 26), the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, highlighted the importance of creating a liveable city, with particular focus on measures targeting healthcare, environmental protection and housing.

Beyond the immediate need to control the coronavirus epidemic, Mr Chan said it was essential to plan ahead to enhance Hong Kong's healthcare system by "building additional medical and quarantine facilities, increasing stock of medical supplies, as well as strengthening scientific research on infectious disease prevention and control, pathology and medication."

Equally important, he said, was providing sufficient healthcare professionals. Mr Chan said that the Hospital Authority (HA) would encourage retiring experienced doctors to continue to work, on contract terms, until 65. In addition, the HA will consider creating opportunities for promoting about 200 Associate Consultants to Consultants over the next five years, while providing additional allowances to registered nurses with specialty qualifications. It is estimated that the additional expenditure for these three initiatives would expand to about \$1.2 billion in 2025-26 from \$160 million in 2021-22.

Mr Chan also announced that the HA's recurrent funding would increase by \$3 billion. An additional \$600 million will be provided to boost staffing and enhance existing services. The HA's recurrent funding this fiscal year will rise to \$75 billion, up 35 per cent from 2017-18 funding.

Mr Chan said that Hong Kong's first District Health Centre (DHC), which opened last year in Kwai Tsing District, will be joined by six additional District Health Centres in the coming two years, with \$650 million set aside to meet their recurrent expenditure. An additional \$600 million will be

allocated to establish interim "DHC Express" by non-governmental organisations for the remaining 11 districts.

A variety of environmental-protection measures were also announced by the Financial Secretary. They include the launching of a \$2 billion pilot scheme to subsidise the installation of charging-enabling infrastructure for electric vehicles in car parks of private residential buildings, with a view to facilitating the installation of chargers by owners of individual parking spaces.

In addition, the Government will update its Clean Air Plan, giving consideration, among other things, to the further promotion of electric vehicles.

Mr Chan added that \$80 million will be earmarked to fuel a pilot plan for electric public light buses. A \$350 million pilot programme for electric ferries is also planned.

Underlining the Government's commitment to non-polluting vehicles, Mr Chan said about 40 000 Euro IV diesel commercial vehicles would be phased out, beginning in the second half of this year, with \$7.1 billion earmarked as ex-gratia payment for affected vehicle owners.

To promote recycling, it is proposed that a sum of not less than \$300 million will be set aside annually, beginning 2020-21, to develop a waste-paper recycling scheme.

An additional \$300 million will be provided to extend the Cleaner Production Partnership Programme, which encourages Hong Kong-owned factories to adopt cleaner production technologies, for five years.

Moreover, a \$200 million Green Tech Fund will be established to support research and development and the application of decarbonisation and green technologies.

Mr Chan underlined the Government's continuing commitment to resolving Hong Kong's land and housing challenges, noting that various new development area projects would add more than 210 000 housing units in the medium to long term.

He said that 135 sites had been rezoned for housing, providing more than 147 000 public housing units and about 44 000 private housing units over the past six years. Another dozen sites are now being rezoned and will add 11 000 housing units, more than 90 per cent of which will be public housing. Another 25 sites will be rezoned in the coming year. They will yield nearly 85 000 units, over 90 per cent of which will be public housing.

Mr Chan said that total public housing production for the five-year period from 2019-20 to 2023-24 is expected to provide about 100 400 units, including about 74 400 public rental housing and Green Form Subsidised Home Ownership Scheme units.

As for private housing, Mr Chan said that about 19 600 residential units

would be completed annually from this year to 2024, up some 25 per cent over the annual average of the previous five years.

He added that the 2020-21 Land Sale Programme will feature 15 residential sites, providing about 7 500 residential units. The Programme also includes six commercial sites, offering about 830 000 square metres of floor area.

Mr Chan said that infrastructure investment was central to building a better city and improving Hong Kong people's quality of life.

The annual capital works expenditure is expected to reach \$100 billion, on average, in the next few years, with total construction output increasing to about \$300 billion a year.

The Government has also allocated \$6.5 billion for a number of harbourfront development initiatives, including expanding the promenades along both sides of the Victoria Harbour to 24 kilometres.

Cultural initiatives include an additional \$900 million allocated to the Art Development Matching Grants Scheme to promote the sponsorship of culture and arts from all sectors.

A liveable city, said Mr Chan, means a caring society.

"The current-term Government spares no effort to enhance social welfare services," he added, noting that recurrent expenditure in social welfare reached \$82.3 billion in 2019-20, up 26 per cent from 2017-18.

Mr Chan noted that the Chief Executive, last month, had announced a variety of recurrent measures created to benefit the elderly, as well as workers, low-income families, the unemployed, underemployed and underprivileged people.