

Public Libraries Advisory Committee
Summary of Discussion of the 32nd Meeting Held on 5 June 2018

Briefing on the Implementation of the Strategic Plan of Hong Kong Public Libraries 2009-2018 (PLAC 6/2018)

1. Members noted the progress of the implementation of the Strategic Plan of Hong Kong Public Libraries (HKPL) 2009-2018 (Strategic Plan) as well as the mission and key tasks as stated in the Strategic Plan. Members made the following comments:

- (a) To cultivate a lifelong reading habit among school children at an early age, in addition to promoting local literature by acquiring collections of local literature, consideration might be given to acquiring books related to the STEM subjects in support of the promotion of STEM education which had become popular in recent years.
- (b) To attract visitors to the libraries and promote reading culture, the HKPL should plan a greater variety of activities. Specific examples were as follows:
 - (i) Allowing winners of literary competitions or rising writers to conduct new book sharing sessions at public libraries;
 - (ii) Enhancing promotion of the foreign language learning service of public libraries;
 - (iii) Inviting principal officials to interact with the public on social media, recommending good books and exchanging reading experiences under the theme of “Discover and Share the Joy of Reading”, so as to create talking points in the community.
- (c) To arouse a stronger sense of participation among young library patrons, opportunities might be provided for them to engage in the development and

affairs of the libraries.

- (d) While the use of resources should be focused on promoting library services among school children and the youth, the needs of career starters should not be neglected.
- (e) Communication with schools should be strengthened in order to ensure that the resources of public libraries and those of school libraries would be effectively utilised and complementary to each other.
- (f) To polish the strategy for future development of the libraries, data related to activities organised in the past should be collated for assessment of the effectiveness and correlation of the activities, so as to formulate the development direction for the libraries in the coming five to ten years, with a view to promoting reading culture in the community in a more effective manner.
- (g) The increasing use of e-books and decreasing circulation of physical books tallied with the global trend of electronic transformation and proportion of resources allocated. If information were to be presented to the public, the performance data should be duly explained/included so as to give a more comprehensive picture of the operational effectiveness of the HKPL.

Report on the “Feasibility Study on Redevelopment of Hong Kong Public Libraries Information Systems” (PLAC 7/2018)

2. Members noted the progress as well as results of the Feasibility Study on Redevelopment of Hong Kong Public Libraries Information Systems, and made the following comments:

- (a) Integrated platforms had become increasingly popular overseas, where English e-books published by different publishers were accessible to

readers on a single platform. To promote a wider use of integrated platforms in Hong Kong, such platforms would have to cover Chinese e-books published by different publishers.

- (b) Considering the potential impact on eyesight to be borne by regular e-book users, the HKPL should not neglect the importance of promoting physical books while developing e-reading platforms, and technology should be applied in promoting physical books.
- (c) In developing the services of digitised libraries and mobile application, the needs of different users should be considered, so as to ensure that these services could be widely used in society. Moreover, as smart phones require regular system updates, the HKPL should be alert to the compatibility of the applications with different phone models in developing mobile applications for the libraries.
- (d) Considering the flourishing e-book industry in the USA, the HKPL might consider sending officers on study visits to the USA to learn more about the development and application of integrated platforms.
- (e) To draw on the Mainland's experience in using robots to facilitate the delivery of library services such as in the search of library materials and interactive library services.

Progress Report on Promotion of Reading Culture in the Community (PLAC 8/2018)

3. Members noted the progress of promoting reading culture in the community, and made the following comments:

- (a) Apart from strengthening collaboration with mainstream schools, attention

should be paid to students with special educational needs or of ethnic minority for the purpose of social inclusion.

- (b) To enhance the current reading award programme for the youth and inject freshness into the programme with reference to the idea of “Reading Passbook” in Japan, with a view to enticing more young people to read.
- (c) To consider allocating resources to publicise library services on social media, so as to extend the reach of publicity efforts.
- (d) To consider inviting non-governmental organisations to participate in the publicity and promotion of extension activities of the libraries through outsourcing. While these organisations will be provided with resources and opportunities, they might in return bring in new ideas for the libraries.
- (e) To continue organising the Reading KOL activity, and consider introducing the senior category in addition to the primary, secondary and open categories.
- (f) As online book purchase had become increasingly popular and convenient, young people were less inclined to read at libraries. It would be necessary to kindle their desire to visit libraries in a more strategic manner, and consider organising more extension activities targeted at secondary and tertiary school students.
- (g) To rebrand the HKPL, it would be necessary to ponder over the role of libraries in a society with abundant material resources, so as to determine an effective way of promoting reading in the long run. Apart from organising a series of extension activities, the HKPL should devise a more effective method of assessing the outcome of the activities.

Secretariat of Public Libraries Advisory Committee

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