

Public Libraries Advisory Committee

Summary of Discussion of the 16th Meeting Held on 5 June 2013

Reading Habit of Hong Kong Public Libraries Users

1. Members were briefed on the findings and analysis of the study regarding reading habit of public library users for the period 2008 to 2012 and the suggested enhancement measures to cope with the changes. These included strengthening the stock of subjects with high demand, organising activities to promote reading, increasing the borrowing quota from six to eight, and reviewing the strategic development of e-books.
2. In view of the findings and analysis, Members raised the following suggestions:-
 - (i) More in-depth analysis of the e-books development on the impact of public library services.
 - (ii) Review the library collection policy in order to tap the interest of readers in light of the increase in borrowing of non-fiction books.
 - (iii) Develop marketing strategy for promoting library collections to different age groups to promote the borrowing rate.
 - (iv) Set up new reading corners for existing libraries and new libraries.
 - (v) Increase the number of picture story books and activities in promotion of reading habit from early childhood and parent-child reading.
3. The Hong Kong Public Libraries (HKPL) took note of Members' suggestions and would work out viable strategic plans to promote reading and cope with the worldwide trend in the use of e-books.

An Overview of Public Lending Right

4. Members were briefed that the Public Lending Right (PLR) was the rights for authors or copyright owners to receive payment for free public use of their works in public libraries or libraries in educational organizations, etc. Currently there were 30 countries implementing PLR and 26 of which were in Europe. At present, there was no PLR provision in the copyright legislations in Hong Kong. HKPL shared the views of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) that lending by publicly accessible libraries could assist in the marketing of copyright works and encourage sales. Through the wide range of extension activities organized by public libraries, authors and celebrities are invited to these activities which in turn promote sales of the copyright works. HKPL recommended to maintain the existing practice to provide a platform for free cultural exchange and free access to library materials.
5. The Committee unanimously agreed with HKPL's recommendation and supported the continuation of providing free public lending and a platform for free cultural exchanges and freely accessible published materials.

Meeting with the LegCo Home Affairs Panel on 22 March 2013

6. The Committee discussed briefly about the meeting of Home Affairs Panel (HA Panel) of Legislative Council (LegCo) on 22 March 2013.

Progress Report of Major Projects on Digital Libraries

7. HKCL reported progress on the following:-

- (i) The upgraded Multimedia Information System (MMIS) would start to roll out in the 3rd quarter of 2013 to all static libraries.
- (ii) A Co-operation Agreement on the Development of a Digital Library in the HKPL had been signed with the National Library of China. In addition, a Memorandum of Understanding had been signed with the Bavarian State Library of Germany for future library co-operation initiatives between the two libraries.
- (iii) The Hong Kong Memory Project developed by the University of Hong Kong as a joint project of the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust and the Leisure & Cultural Services Department was briefly reported at the meeting.

Secretariat of the Public Libraries Advisory Committee

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