

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0056)**

Head: (95) Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (2) Horticulture and Amenities

Controlling Officer: Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Vincent LIU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism

Question:

The Department will “maintain trees in landscaped areas along roadside in their best and healthy form to enhance the streetscape” in the coming year.

1. What are the manpower and expenditure to be involved in such tree maintenance? Will the Department collaborate with other organisations? If yes, what organisations will be involved? How much funding will need to be earmarked for such collaboration?
2. What are the specific details and plans of such tree maintenance work?
3. What are the recruitment criteria for tree maintenance staff? When will the recruitment exercise commence? What are their salaries?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

1. There are 263 staff members specifically tasked with tree management in the Leisure and Culture Services Department (LCSD).

In addition to deploying Regional Tree Teams, the LCSD will outsource some of the tree maintenance and horticulture work to contractors. The LCSD anticipates to commit about \$250 million to engage outsourced horticultural contractors<sup>Note</sup> to assist with the daily horticulture maintenance including tree maintenance in 2023-24.

2. The LCSD's staff members and outsourced contractors will conduct regular inspections on the growth of those trees under its purview, examining whether there are such signs of abnormality as obvious natural wounds or diseases, man-induced injuries, and damage caused by works, for their proper management. When necessary, personnel will be deployed as appropriate by the Department to conduct such work as further inspections of trees, pruning, fertilising, pest and disease control with pesticides, planting and transplanting, as well as removal of branches obstructing traffic and causing inconvenience to the public.

<sup>Note</sup> The contracts mostly involve the daily horticulture maintenance covering shrubs, groundcovers, lawns and trees. Such being the case, we are unable to provide the breakdown of the expenditure on tree maintenance.

On another front, the LCSD will, in line with the guidelines issued by the Development Bureau, carry out inspections no less than once a year on those trees located in areas of heavy pedestrian flow and high vehicular traffic and, in the case of those old and valuable trees listed in the Register of Old and Valuable Trees, inspections will be conducted at least twice a year. In inspecting trees, the Department will focus on examining signs of abnormality in their appearance. Immediate maintenance work including pruning of dieback twigs, weak branches or overgrown tree crown, as well as pest and disease control will be carried out as and when required. In addition, a detailed inspection on the health of the trees concerned will be conducted by the Department in light of the circumstances, with the aid of equipment such as sonic tomograph instruments. In case trees with risks of failure are identified, the LCSD will have them removed as early as possible to safeguard public safety.

3. The entry requirements and salaries of the recruiting grade staff members specifically tasked with management of trees are as follows:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Entry Requirement</b>	<b>Salary</b>
Assistant Leisure Services Manager II	Candidates must hold a full-time teacher certificate, with Physical Education as an elective subject or an Associate Degree/Higher Diploma (majoring in Recreation, Sports, Gardening Management or related subject; or a Diploma in tree management, arboriculture or related subject), or equivalent; and have Level 2 or equivalent or above in Chinese Language and English Language in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSEE).	Master Pay Scale (MPS) Points 13 to 23
Amenities Assistant III	Candidates must have Level 2 or equivalent or above in five subjects in the HKDSEE; have obtained 2 years' work experience; and have Level 2 or equivalent or above in Chinese Language and English Language in the HKDSEE.	MPS Points 7 to 11
Senior Artisan (General Duties)	Candidates must have completed Primary 6 education; have obtained 5 years' work experience in gardening and arboriculture; have demonstrated the potential or ability to supervise staff; and have attained a level of proficiency in Chinese and English languages equivalent to Primary 6 standard.	MPS Points 8 to 10
Artisan (General Duties)	Candidates must have completed Primary 6 education; have obtained 3 years' work experience in gardening and arboriculture; have demonstrated the potential or ability to supervise staff; and have attained a level of proficiency in Chinese or English language equivalent to Primary 6 standard.	MPS Points 5 to 8

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Entry Requirement</b>	<b>Salary</b>
Workman I	Candidates must have either horticulture or arboriculture skills for discharge of leisure and amenities duties; and have basic proficiency in Chinese and English.	Model Scale 1 Pay Scale Points 3 to 13

Meanwhile, in addition to having a pass result in the Basic Law and National Security Law Test, candidates must also pass the selection interview and trade test.

The LCSD's recruitment exercise of Artisan (General Duties) and Workman I was completed in 2022-23, while a new round of recruitment for Assistant Leisure Services Manager II, Amenities Assistant III and Senior Artisan (General Duties) is anticipated to commence within 2023-24.

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