

House Committee of the Legislative Council

**Extract of minutes of the 7th meeting
held in the Legislative Council Chamber
at 3:50 pm on Friday, 17 November 2000**

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(c) Government motions

- (i) Resolution under section 9 of the Criminal Procedure Ordinance (Cap. 221) - to be moved by the Secretary for the Treasury**
(LC Paper No. LS 25/00-01)
- (ii) Resolution under section 134(1) of the Magistrates Ordinance (Cap. 227) - to be moved by the Secretary for the Treasury**
(LC Paper No. LS 24/00-01)
- (iii) Resolution under section 54 of the Matrimonial Causes Ordinance (Cap. 179) - to be moved by the Secretary for the Treasury**
(LC Paper No. LS 22/00-01)

11. The Legal Adviser said that the three motions sought to increase the fees payable for various services provided by the courts in relation to legal proceedings, and that the Panel on Financial Affairs had been consulted on 15 June 2000. The Legal Adviser added that upon approval by the Council, the proposed fee increases would take effect on 12 January 2001.

12. Miss Margaret NG said that although the proposed levels of increase did not seem significant, it was necessary to discuss the more fundamental issue of how the fee levels had been determined in the first place. Referring to the charge of \$17 for one page of a copy of a court document, Miss NG informed Members that she had received complaints that some of the fees were too high. She expressed concern that the fees for court services might constitute a heavy financial commitment and could deter a person from seeking justice through legal proceedings.

Action

13. Mrs Miriam LAU concurred with Miss NG that the principles for setting fee levels for court services should be examined.

14. Mr James TO said that there was no urgency for the Administration to seek the fee increases. He suggested that the Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services should first discuss the principles for determining the fee levels as well as the proposed fee increases. Miss Margaret NG concurred.

15. The Chairman proposed that the Administration should be requested to withdraw the notices for the proposed resolutions, pending discussion of the matter by the Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services. Members agreed.

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Legislative Council Secretariat
22 November 2000