

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)533/06-07
(This minutes have been seen by
the Administration)

Ref : CB2/PL/HA

Panel on Home Affairs

Minutes of meeting
held on Friday, 10 November 2006, at 10:45 am
in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building

- Members present** : Hon CHOY So-yuk, JP (Chairman)
Hon Albert HO Chun-yan (Deputy Chairman)
Hon James TIEN Pei-chun, GBS, JP
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Hon LI Kwok-ying, MH, JP
Dr Hon Joseph LEE Kok-long, JP
Hon Daniel LAM Wai-keung, SBS, JP
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, SBS, JP
Hon WONG Ting-kwong, BBS
Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP
Hon TAM Heung-man
- Member attending** : Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
- Members absent** : Dr Hon Philip WONG Yu-hong, GBS
Hon LAU Wong-fat, GBM, GBS, JP
Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, GBS, JP
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip

Public Officers attending : Item IV

Mrs Carrie LAM
Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs

Mr Isaac CHOW
Deputy Director of Home Affairs (2)

Item V

Mrs Carrie LAM
Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs

Mr Alan SIU
Deputy Director of Leisure and Cultural Services
(Leisure Services)

Mr Paul CHEUNG
Assistant Director (Leisure Services) 1
Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Miss Agnes TANG
Assistant Director (Performing Arts)
Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Clerk in attendance : Miss Flora TAI
Chief Council Secretary (2)2

Staff in attendance : Ms Joanne MAK
Senior Council Secretary (2)2

Ms Anna CHEUNG
Legislative Assistant (2)2

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I. Confirmation of minutes
[LC Paper No. CB(2)207/06-07]

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2006 were confirmed.

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II. Information paper(s) issued since the last meeting
[LC Paper No. CB(2)182/06-07(01)]

2. Members noted that the Administration had provided a copy of its reply dated 18 October 2006 to the Wan Chai District Council's request for a review of the Clubs (Safety of Premises) Ordinance to this Panel for members' reference.

III. Items for discussion at the next meeting
[Appendices I & II to LC Paper No. CB(2)257/06-07]

Regular meeting on 8 December 2006

3. Members agreed to discuss the following items at the next regular meeting on Friday, 8 December 2006 at 10:45 am -

- (a) Arts and Sport Development Fund and Arts Development Fund; and
- (b) upgrading works for venues of the 2009 East Asian Games (EAG).

Regular meeting on 12 January 2007

4. Referring to a submission made by the Hong Kong Human Rights Monitor (HKHRM) [LC Paper No. CB(2)354/06-07(01)] which was tabled at the meeting, the Chairman suggested that the Panel should discuss the existing human rights protection mechanisms in Hong Kong as proposed by HKHRM. Members agreed. The Chairman further suggested that the issue should be discussed together with the concluding comments of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on the second report of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, as earlier proposed by Ms Emily LAU at the meeting on 12 October 2006. The Chairman said that, if the Administration did not propose any items for discussion at the regular meeting in January 2007, the above two issues would be discussed at the regular meeting on 12 January 2007. Otherwise, the Panel would schedule a special meeting in January 2007 for discussion of the two issues. Members agreed.

5. Ms Emily LAU said that the Panel should fix the date of meeting for discussing the concluding comments of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women as soon as possible, so that interested organisations could make plans to attend the relevant meeting for presenting their views. She further proposed that a notice for invitation of public views on the subject should be put on the website of the Legislative Council (LegCo).

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Members agreed.

[*Post-meeting note* : with the concurrence of the Chairman, discussion of the existing human rights protection mechanisms and the concluding comments of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women has been rescheduled for the regular meeting on 9 February 2007.]

6. The Chairman informed members that she had to leave at that juncture as she had to attend a meeting of the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong with the Financial Secretary. As the Deputy Chairman was absent at that point in time, she nominated Miss TAM Heung-man to be the Acting Chairman. Members agreed.

IV. Implementation of the District Council Review

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)257/06-07(01) and (02)]

Briefing by the Administration

7. Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs (PSHA) briefed members on the arrangements for implementing the recommendations of the District Council (DC) Review, including the launching of a pilot scheme in four districts, and on a revised remuneration package for DC members and the creation of a dedicated capital works block vote for district minor works which would be put to the Finance Committee of LegCo (FC) in due course.

Discussion

The Pilot Scheme

8. Mr James TIEN said that the Liberal Party (LP) supported the proposed arrangements as detailed in the Administration's paper. He said that although the Administration might intend to give the four pilot DCs more liberty in the management of district facilities, it was necessary for the Administration to provide clear guidelines to assist the pilot DCs in discharging their enhanced role in the management of district facilities. Mr TIEN was concerned that the pilot DCs might not make full use of their enhanced role which would affect the evaluation of the effectiveness of the Pilot Scheme.

9. PSHA said that the flexibility or liberty referred only to allowing individual pilot DCs to determine whether a District Facilities Management Committee should be set up to steer and oversee the work involved or such functions should be discharged by the existing committee under the respective DCs. She said that to ensure consistency and public accountability, the relevant departments were already in the course of preparing new manuals and guidelines on district minor works projects and the use of DC Funds to

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facilitate DCs' involvement in the management of district facilities, e.g., how to gauge public views on the services of district-based libraries.

10. PSHA further said that a tertiary institution would be engaged to conduct an evaluation study on the implementation of the Pilot Scheme. The evaluation team would work closely with the various stakeholders to track the progress of the Pilot Scheme, evaluate the effectiveness of the new mechanisms and identify room for improvement.

11. Mr TIEN asked whether the Administration would need to further decide on the final mode of implementation for the management of district facilities on the basis of the experience gained from the Pilot Scheme as the pilot DCs might adopt different modes of implementation.

12. PSHA responded that the Pilot Scheme was needed to test out protocols and working relationship amongst the various stakeholders in order to pave the way for a smooth and effective roll-out to all the 18 districts from the next term DCs. She said that it was expected that, at most, there might be only some fine-tuning of the proposed arrangements, e.g., the level of resource requirements. She added that the Administration intended to allow for greater innovation and district characteristics in implementing minor works in the 18 districts. In this connection, the Administration was liaising with the various professional bodies to see how the Administration could provide the necessary support.

13. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong considered that while standard procedures should be stringently applied to financial matters for DCs, there was no need for the Administration to over-emphasise uniformity amongst the four pilot DCs in the mode of management of district facilities. He said that DCs should be encouraged to come up with good ideas and, if they did, they might receive media coverage and support from the public. This would, in turn, encourage other DCs to adopt the same practice, resulting in overall improvements to the provision of district services.

14. PSHA responded that the Administration had no intention to require uniformity amongst DCs in the mode of management of district facilities, in order to allow flexibility for individual DCs to initiate proposals with district characteristics or which could better meet local needs. She assured members that it would be the direction for enhancing the role of DCs in this respect.

15. Mr Daniel LAM said that the 18 DCs had held a joint meeting to discuss the current recommendations and had come to a view that the recommendations were sound and could well serve the purpose of enhancing the role of DCs. He, however, expressed dissatisfaction with the unclear criteria for selection of the four pilot DCs and questioned whether the selection was made on the basis of the population of the districts concerned. Mr LAM considered that Islands DC should have been selected. He added that the

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Administration should not refuse to implement the recommendations to enhance DCs' role in the management of district facilities simply by claiming that the experience under the Pilot Scheme had proven to be unsuccessful.

16. PSHA stressed that the Administration had made it clear that the purpose of the Pilot Scheme was not to decide whether it should or should not involve DCs in the management of district facilities. She reiterated that all the 18 DCs would implement the recommendations from 1 January 2008, and the Administration was only of the view that a pilot approach was necessary to pave the way for full and effective implementation.

Remuneration for DC members

17. Referring to paragraph 17 of the Administration's paper, Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong considered that there was no need for the 10% increase in honorarium as well as the new non-accountable Miscellaneous Expenses Allowance (MEA) to take effect from the new DC term in January 2008. Mr CHEUNG pointed out that, unlike LegCo Members, DC members would only express views and could not approve any financial proposal for the revised remuneration package. He said that, as the revised remuneration package would be subject to the approval of LegCo, there would not be any perception that DC members were sanctioning pay rises for themselves.

18. PSHA pointed out that, during the public consultations, the public had expressed divided views on the proposal to raise DC members' monthly honorarium. The Administration considered it more prudent to propose that the 10% increase in honorarium as well as the new non-accountable MEA should take effect from the new DC term in January 2008. She added that the Administration had briefed the Chairmen and Deputy Chairmen of 18 DCs on this proposal who in general found the proposal acceptable.

19. Mr CHEUNG remarked that it was understandable that DC members would find it difficult to openly express negative view about the proposal. He maintained that, since the Administration had already concluded that the current remuneration was far from adequate and the proposed 10% increase was justified, there was no need to delay the implementation until January 2008.

20. Ms Emily LAU was of the view that an independent review, similar to the forthcoming comprehensive review of the remuneration package for the next-term LegCo by the Independent Commission on Remuneration for Members of the Executive Council and the Legislature of HKSAR, should be conducted to study whether a DC member's work should be duly recognised as a job and, if so, what adjustment should be made to DC members' level of remuneration and what employment-related benefits should be provided in order to give proper recognition to the nature of a DC member's work as a job. She considered that, without such a review, the nature of DC members' work would continue to be regarded as a form of public service only and they would

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be deprived of any retirement protection or other employment-related benefits. Ms LAU was concerned that it would be difficult to encourage the younger generation and able people to take part in the next DC elections.

21. Ms LAU considered that there was room for enhancement of DC members' functions in such fields as culture, recreation and environmental sanitation under Article 97 of the Basic Law. If DC members assumed an enhanced role as such, their work would be better recognised by the public as a job. Ms LAU further said that it was a fundamental principle that the third term DC should entirely be made up of members returned from direct elections, and ex officio and appointed membership should be abolished. She expressed disappointment at the Administration's failure to address all of these fundamental issues or to provide a timetable for conducting another review to address these issues.

22. PSHA said that she did not think that previous discussion on the composition of DCs held at relevant meetings of the Panel on Constitutional Affairs should be repeated in this forum. She said that the Administration had conducted a comprehensive review of the new remuneration package for DC members before coming up with the relevant proposals.

23. Mr Daniel LAM expressed the view that any changes to the composition of DCs should be introduced on an incremental basis, and he did not see the need to abolish appointed membership or to rigidly apply the six-year rule (i.e. a member should not serve more than six years in any one capacity).

Support for DCs

24. Ms Emily LAU considered that an independent secretariat should be provided for DCs to ensure that DCs enjoyed a degree of autonomy in performing their work. She considered that the existing arrangements, i.e. the DC secretariats being staffed by civil servants and with their work overseen by District Officers, were far from satisfactory.

25. PSHA responded that, unlike LegCo, individual DCs were not corporate bodies and enjoyed no separate legal status under the law. This was a constraint to DCs in establishing their own independent secretariat as they could not employ their own staff. The Administration, however, had decided to increase the total provision for DC funds from \$170 million to \$300 million per year when full implementation of the recommendations in all the 18 DCs commenced on 1 January 2008, in order to strengthen support for the work of DCs, e.g., in taking forward works projects and programmes/activities relating to the district facilities. Individual DCs could use DC funds to hire additional staff members. These staff members would be non-civil servants and recruited through District Offices. They would be required to work independently to support the work of DCs. She added that the chairmen and deputy chairmen of the 18 DCs had expressed support for this new measure.

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26. Ms Emily LAU expressed concern about whether the line of responsibility of the Secretariat of DCs was clear. Quoting the incident of leakage on the internet of personal data of persons who had complained against the Police as an example, Ms LAU said that while staff members of the Secretariat of the Independent Police Complaints Council were deployed by the Civil Service Bureau, the relevant investigation conducted by the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data had concluded that the administrative responsibility of the Secretariat ultimately laid with the Council. She considered that if the Administration intended for DCs to function independently, it should provide adequate resources to support DCs to independently perform their work and, where necessary, resort to legislative means to grant DCs the status as a corporate body. She further suggested that consideration could be given to establishing an independent secretariat to provide support to the 18 DCs so that its staffing establishment would be large enough to allow for staff re-deployment and career advancement. Mr Daniel LAM also considered that there was a need to strengthen allocation of resources to DC secretariats as they were expected to shoulder more responsibilities and provide greater support to assist DCs in performing their enhanced role.

27. PSHA said that it was necessary for the Administration to adopt a prudent approach for implementing the recommendations in order to ensure no disruption to the delivery of public services at the district level. Depending on the prevailing financial position of the Government, the level of additional resources requirements could be reviewed in the light of experience gained from the Pilot Scheme.

Enhancing communication with DCs

28. Professor Patrick LAU considered that the Administration should enhance DCs' coordinating role in district planning and urban renewal matters and allow DCs' views be channeled to the Town Planning Board (TPB) at the earliest possible stage, in order to facilitate the development of urban designs and community planning which could feature local characteristics.

29. PSHA responded that the Administration was in the course of reviewing the existing capital works procedures with a view to enabling DCs' views to be channeled to the Administration for consideration at an early planning stage. She said that the Administration also considered that a recreation and sport facility should be able to feature local characteristics as far as possible. For example, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department and District Officer (Southern) had been requested to seek the views of locals in the design of a waterfront promenade project which was being planned for implementation in Ap Lei Chau, with a view to maximising the benefits to local residents and shops there. She added that the Steering Committee on District Administration to be set up would also be a suitable forum to further discuss the issue raised by Professor LAU.

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Capital works improvement to district facilities and district minor works

30. Mr Daniel LAM suggested that, in order to better meet district needs, consideration should be given to increasing the annual provision of \$300 million for the dedicated capital works block vote, and allowing DCs flexibility to initiate or endorse a project even though it exceeded the cost ceiling of \$15 million.

31. PSHA explained that to utilise the proposed annual provision of \$300 million which was only the cash flow, there would be an over-commitment facility up to 200% which meant that works contracts of the value between \$500 and \$600 million could be awarded within a year. It was necessary to take into account the capacities of parties concerned in taking forward the increased minor works and facility improvements in districts, in considering whether the annual provision could be increased. As regards the suggestion of allowing DCs flexibility to initiate or endorse a project even though it exceeded the cost ceiling of \$15 million, PSHA said that the issue had to be carefully considered as it had implications on the powers of LegCo to approve public expenditure.

32. Mr Albert HO asked about the endorsement procedures for district minor works projects not exceeding \$15 million, and whether DCs would enjoy a high degree of autonomy in initiating such projects. PSHA said that each DC would have full discretion in apportioning the funds allocated to it for carrying out projects, having regard to the needs of the district. DCs could also draw up their own list of proposed district minor works projects and provided it to the Administration for assessing cost implications. DCs could then examine the priority of the projects on the list, having regard to the estimated cost and their financial constraints. After the endorsement of a proposed project by a DC, the controlling officers concerned would be responsible for the delivery of works and signing the relevant contract on behalf of the DC concerned. The works would be undertaken by works departments or contractors entrusted by the Home Affairs Department (HAD).

33. Mr HO further asked whether the Administration would intervene if it found that a DC had failed to suitably prioritise its proposed list of works projects based on the needs of its district, or failed to appropriately apportion funding allocation for carrying out projects.

34. PSHA said that, as set out in the Consultation Document, the concerned departments would follow the decisions of DCs as far as possible, provided that the decisions would not prejudice the statutory powers and obligations of the concerned departments and were in line with the financial authority of these departments, relevant international professional or safety standards, prevailing government policies on staff and resources management (including government fees and charges).

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35. PSHA further said that, taking into consideration the population size in rural areas, it had been decided that the rural public works programme would continue to be funded by the Rural Public Works Programme block allocation under the Capital Works Reserve Fund (CWRF) in the future and would fall outside the ambit of DCs. The Director of Home Affairs would be responsible for implementing relevant small-scale works projects costing up to \$15 million each to upgrade the infrastructure and improve the living environment of the rural areas in the New Territories.

36. Mr Albert HO was of the view that there was a need for DC members belonging to different political parties and affiliations to devise a system for ensuring fair allocation of resources for implementation of projects within their respective districts. He also considered that there was no need for DCs to get involved in the day-to-day operation. After DCs had agreed on a set of pre-determined assessment criteria and principles, it should be government officials to be responsible for performing the day-to-day management work of the district facilities in accordance with the criteria and principles that had been drawn up.

37. The Acting Chairman reminded members that the Administration would submit the proposed improvements to the remuneration package for DC Members (including the creation of a new non-recurrent commitment for the payment of the newly introduced Setting-up and Winding-up Allowance) to FC for approval on 1 December 2006. The Administration would also submit the proposed creation of a dedicated capital works block vote for district minor works in the 2007-2008 draft Estimates, which would be included in the Administration's CWRF block vote submission, to the Public Works Subcommittee (PWSC) in December 2006. Members raised no objection to the Administration submitting these proposals accordingly.

V. Modification of the implementation mode of projects in Kwun Tong and Tseung Kwan O originally planned as Private Sector Finance initiatives

[LC Paper No. CB(2)257/06-07(03)]

Briefing by the Administration

38. Deputy Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Leisure Services) (DDLCS(LS)) briefed members on the salient points of the Administration's paper. He said that after consulting the Panel on the proposed modification of the implementation mode for the above facilities, the Administration would consult Kwun Tong DC and Sai Kung DC in the coming weeks. The Administration would report to the Panel on the results of the consultation, and would embark on the relevant technical feasibility study and seek funding allocation for the projects to commence as soon as possible.

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39. Members noted the tentative completion dates of the relevant facilities which were as follows -

- (a) the construction of the new swimming pool in Kwun Tong was scheduled for completion around late 2011;
- (b) the new Kwun Tong Cross District Community Cultural Centre was scheduled for completion in mid 2014; and
- (c) the works for the town park and for the indoor sports centre in Tseung Kwan O were scheduled for completion in 2011 and 2012 respectively.

Discussion

40. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong and Mr Andrew CHENG expressed strong dissatisfaction with the delay in implementing the proposed leisure and cultural facilities in Kwun Tong and Tseung Kwan O as a result of wasting time in exploring the feasibility of implementing the projects through the Private Sector Finance (PSF) approach. Noting that the Administration had decided to select the two projects, i.e. a leisure and cultural centre in Kwun Tong (with a civic centre and indoor-heated pool as the core facilities); and a town park and indoor recreation centre in Tseung Kwan O (with ice sports and ten-pin bowling centres as core facilities), as pilot scheme for the PSF approach as early as in April 2003, they considered it unacceptable for the serious delay. They also expressed concern that the tentative completion dates had been set based on preliminary estimate only and there might be further delay in the implementation.

41. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong criticised the Administration for hastily deciding to implement the projects under the PSF approach in 2003 and blindly following the principle of "big market, small government" which, in his view, apparently did not apply in matters such as the provision of leisure and cultural facilities. He considered that, as the private sector would focus on the profitability of a project, the Administration should have carefully examined the nature of the public service involved before deciding whether the PSF approach should be adopted for implementing relevant projects. He said that residents concerned had been adversely affected by the serious delay. He urged the Administration to learn from the experience in its future implementation of similar projects.

42. PSHA said that the Administration would learn from the experience and avoid recurrence of similar cases. She, however, clarified that the idea of private sector involvement was not intrinsically wrong but it required detailed planning and wide consultation, and it had already been successfully applied in other areas such as the provision of quality residential care homes for the elderly. She said that although the Administration had now decided not to

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implement the above projects through the PSF approach in order to avoid further delaying their delivery, the Administration would explore the option of public-private-partnership for the future operation, management and maintenance of the facilities. DDLCS(LS) added that, other than the PSF approach, private sector involvement could be in the form of Design-Build Approach, which had been adopted for the delivery of many projects, including the Tseung Kwan O Sports Ground.

43. PSHA further said that, over the past two years, the Administration had set up an inter-departmental Task Force to examine in great detail how the two pilot PSF projects should be implemented before coming to the conclusion that, if the pilot projects were to proceed, the major problems as set out in the paper would arise. The Administration considered that, while these problems might not be totally insurmountable, the search for solutions would take considerable time at the expense of the early delivery of the facilities. She said that, in examining the PSF approach, the Administration had invited developers to submit Expression of Interest (EoI) on the pilot PSF projects in order to solicit feedback from the market. The majority of the EoIs received had indicated interest in the projects. She also invited members to note that the current plan was much better than the previous one under the PSF approach on certain key aspects as detailed in the Administration's paper.

44. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong said that the Administration must not think that it could always make up for its mistake by subsequently enhancing its original proposal which had been carelessly decided on. He did not think that the enhanced plan in the present case could make up for the time lost.

45. Mr Andrew CHENG pointed out that, when the pilot scheme was discussed at previous meetings of the Panel, members had already pointed out various possible problems they anticipated in relation to adopting the PSF approach for implementing the two pilot projects, which were almost exactly the reasons set out in paragraph 5 of the Administration's paper for not proceeding with the pilot projects. He queried whether it was the Administration's deliberate intention to prolong the implementation process of these community leisure facilities by spending time on exploring the adoption of the PSF approach.

46. Mr CHENG further said that, in enhancing sports venues, the Administration should also implement active measures to promote wide interest in sports activities, as lacking of which would render demands for sports facilities low and operating such facilities not profitable. He considered that the Administration should not only attach importance to the early implementation of the sports facilities projects for the 2009 EAG. Mr CHENG was concerned that the major sports facilities for the holding of EAG would become "a white elephant". He also expressed serious concern whether the tentative completion dates would be further deferred, since there were still many uncertain factors such as issues relating to the land use zoning.

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47. PSHA stressed that the Administration had no intention to delay the delivery of the pilot projects. She said that the Administration would try its best to expedite the implementation of the projects. She also dismissed the suggestion that the sports facilities for the 2009 EAG would be "a white elephant". She pointed out that the preparation for the 2009 EAG would not affect the implementation of the other community leisure facilities, as the bulk of the sports facilities projects for the event were for the refurbishment of existing ageing facilities, which would also benefit members of the public.

48. PSHA said that the Administration was committed to promoting and developing a strong sporting culture in the community as well as raising Hong Kong's international profile on sports. The Administration's policy objectives were promoting "sports for all", achieving sports excellence, and promoting Hong Kong as an attractive venue for hosting major sports events and as the Events Capital of Asia. She pointed out that the new Community Sports Committee of the Sports Commission (SC) would advise the Administration on the policy and funding priorities for promoting community sports. She added that the Administration would welcome an opportunity to further discuss the sports policy of Hong Kong with the Panel at its future meetings.

49. Ms Emily LAU asked why the Administration had still decided to go for the PSF approach after studying overseas experience. DDLCS(LS) said that the research conducted by the Administration covered overseas cases involving the private sector in implementing sports and recreational projects. He said that the arrangements might take different forms, such as that, while the private operator was to fully fund the design, build and operational management of the facility, the government was to provide an ongoing financial contribution to the operator. He further said that there were many examples of unsuccessful overseas cases found in the research study. He added that the Administration would learn from the overseas experience which would be useful to the Administration in its future implementation of sports and recreational projects.

50. Referring to paragraph 13 of the Administration's paper, Ms LAU expressed concern whether the Administration's decision, i.e. to explore applying the new strategy drawn up by the Community Sports Committee of SC in the proposed project of the indoor sports centre at Area 45, Tseung Kwan O, would further delay the delivery of the project as this would involve consultation with the sports sector. PSHA said that the Administration would strive to conduct any necessary consultation in the most efficient way, with a view to expediting the delivery of the project.

51. Dr Joseph LEE said that, as the facilities under discussion would not be available until as late as 2011 up to 2014, the Administration should conduct surveys in the relevant districts to ensure that the provision of the facilities would be justified by projected service demands. PSHA said that it was difficult to accurately project the service demands for certain facilities several

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years later but the facilities under discussion were the standard recreational facilities.

52. Noting that the Administration had previously decided that, subject to successful implementation of the two pilot projects, the adoption of the PSF approach for the delivery of other ex-municipal council projects, e.g., the Tai Po New Civic Centre and the Civic Centre for North District, would be explored, Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming and Ms Emily LAU expressed concern about the way forward of the two civic centres. Mr CHEUNG requested the Administration to give an undertaking that the site reserved for the Tai Po New Civic Centre would still be used for constructing leisure and cultural facilities, even if the New Civic Centre project was eventually scrapped. Ms LAU questioned why the implementation of such facilities had been so slow and whether there were ways to expedite their implementation, in order to meet urgent needs of residents. She considered that the Administration should report to the DCs concerned on the latest development concerning the two civic centres.

53. DDLCS(LS) responded that the site reserved for the Tai Po New Civic Centre was currently zoned "Government, Institution or Community" which could not be re-zoned for other use without going through the due process, including consultation with TPB and Tai Po DC. He said that the Administration was already speeding up the implementation of leisure and cultural facilities for Tai Po, such as the development of a bathing beach at Lung Mei, Tai Po, and the Leisure Centre in Area 33, Tai Po. He added that the Administration would be in close liaison with Tai Po DC to see whether any further actions would be required to meet urgent service needs of local residents.

54. PSHA pointed out that the Administration had to comply with the various prescribed government procedures for implementing public works projects. She further said that there would be a large number of leisure and cultural projects initiated by LCSD for implementation in the next five years, involving a total capital cost of over \$10 billion, which would by far exceed the total amount during the five years before the dissolution of the former municipal councils. She informed members that, in order to ensure smooth implementation of the large number of anticipated projects, she together with the Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works) would co-chair meetings, with the participation of relevant departments at the senior level, for smoothing out any difficulties envisaged in relation to the implementation work. She said that HAB would seek to establish enhanced communication with the Panel regarding funding applications for these proposed projects, with a view to facilitating their implementation.

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55. Ms Emily LAU expressed concern whether the proposal to add an ice-skating rink and tenpin bowling centre to the multi-purpose stadium complex project was really necessary and whether it would have an adverse impact on the private sector, as such facilities used to be developed by the latter. Dr Joseph LEE considered that the Administration should review its policy on the provision of leisure and cultural facilities and consider whether ice-skating rinks and tenpin bowling centres should be provided as the standard community leisure facilities. If it was concluded so, he saw no problem for the Administration to provide such facilities.

56. PSHA responded that the Administration recognised the importance of the provision of leisure and cultural facilities to the pursuance of quality living in Hong Kong and it would make sustained efforts in this area of work. Acknowledging that the Administration had never implemented public works projects of ice-skating rinks or bowling centres, PSHA explained that the Administration considered that the proposed multi-purpose stadium complex in Kai Tak Redevelopment had provided an opportunity for it to explore these other sports facilities in a holistic manner, especially whether there was a need for providing venues for international competitions in ice-skating and bowling.

57. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:45 pm.