

立法會
Legislative Council

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Establishment Subcommittee of the Finance Committee

Minutes of the 6th meeting
held in Conference Room A of Legislative Council Building
on Wednesday, 30 April 2008, at 9:00 am

Members present:

Hon LI Fung-ying, BBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon James TIEN Pei-chun, GBS, JP
Dr Hon David LI Kwok-po, GBM, GBS, JP
Hon Margaret NG
Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong
Hon WONG Yung-kan, JP
Hon Howard YOUNG, SBS, JP
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Hon WONG Ting-kwong, BBS
Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP
Hon KWONG Chi-kin

Members absent:

Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH (Deputy Chairman)
Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, SBS, S.B.St.J., JP
Hon SIN Chung-kai, JP
Dr Hon YEUNG Sum
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, SBS, JP

Public Officers attending:

Miss Amy TSE, JP

Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and
the Treasury (Treasury)

Mrs Sarah KWOK, JP

Deputy Secretary for the Civil Service

Mr Alfred FOK	Principal Executive Officer (General), Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau (The Treasury Branch)
Mr Howard LEE, JP	Deputy Director of Housing (Corporate Services)
Dr PANG Hon-wah	Chief Manager/Management (Support Services 5), Housing Department
Mr CHENG Man-yiu, JP	Deputy Secretary for Education (3)
Mrs Alice LEUNG	Principal Assistant Secretary for Education (Administration)
Mr D C CHEUNG	Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare)
Mr Stephen FISHER, JP	Director of Social Welfare
Miss Nancy LAW, JP	Deputy Director of Social Welfare (Administration)

Clerk in attendance:

Ms Debbie YAU	Senior Council Secretary (1)1
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Staff in attendance:

Mrs Constance LI	Assistant Secretary General 1
Mr Justin TAM	Council Secretary (1)3
Mr Simon CHEUNG	Council Secretary (1)1
Ms Alice CHEUNG	Senior Legislative Assistant (1)1
Mr Frankie WOO	Legislative Assistant (1)2

Action

The Chairman drew members' attention to an information paper (ECI(2008-09)1) provided by the Administration before the meeting, which set out the latest changes in the directorate establishment approved since 2002.

EC(2008-09)1 Proposed creation of one permanent post of Chief Structural Engineer (D1) in Housing Department with effect from 7 July 2008 to oversee the Comprehensive Structural Investigation Programme; and the revision and redistribution of duties and responsibilities among some other directorate posts in the department

2. The Chairman informed members that the Panel on Housing (Housing Panel) was consulted on the proposal at the meeting on 4 February 2008.

3. Mr James TIEN said that the Liberal Party was in support of the proposal.

4. Mr WONG Yung-kan said that Members of the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong supported the proposal. He expressed concern about the slow pace of the expanded Comprehensive Structural Investigation Programme (CSIP), as the investigations for some estates would not be completed until 2018. He urged the Administration to expedite the investigation work and consider outsourcing the investigation work if necessary.

5. In response, the Deputy Director of Housing (Corporate Services) said that members had raised similar concerns at the meeting of the Housing Panel. He assured members that apart from conducting in-depth structural investigations for those estates under CSIP, routine repair works would continue to be carried out under normal maintenance programmes and the Total Maintenance Scheme. The Housing Department would make adjustments to the CSIP schedule if any of the estates showed signs of structural deterioration and required earlier action.

6. The item was voted on and endorsed.

EC(2008-09)2 Proposed the followings with effect from 1 September 2008 –

- (a) creation of a new rank of Senior Primary School Master/Mistress (MPS 34 - 35) in the Primary School Master/Mistress grade as deputy heads of public sector primary schools with 12 classes or above and as heads of public sector primary schools with 11 classes or less;**
- (b) upward adjustment of the minimum pay point of the Headmaster/Headmistress II rank of the Primary School Master/Mistress grade from MPS 34 to MPS 35; and**
- (c) increase in the establishment ceiling of Head 156 – Government Secretariat: Education Bureau in 2008-09 from \$2,412,996,000 by \$3,884,160 to \$2,416,880,160 for implementing the above proposals in government primary schools**

7. The Chairman informed members that the Panel on Education (ED Panel) was consulted on the proposal at the meeting on 26 March 2008.

8. Mr Howard YOUNG sought justifications for the proposed creation of a new Senior Primary School Master/Mistress (SPSM) rank in the Primary School Master/Mistress (PSM) grade for serving as deputy heads of public sector primary schools.

9. In response, the Deputy Secretary for Education (3) (DS(ED)3) advised that at present, the deputy school head rank did not exist in public sector primary schools. The existing arrangement was that for primary schools with 12 classes or more, a senior teacher at the PSM rank (of the PSM grade) or Assistant Master/Mistress rank

(of the Certificated Master/Mistress grade) might be assigned to take up the duties of a deputy school head. These deputy heads were given a responsibility allowance at a rate equivalent to 75% of one increment above their substantive salary to recognize the additional responsibilities taken up by them. However, strong calls were made by various education bodies for the formal establishment of a deputy school head rank in primary schools, in order to give due recognition to the important role played by deputy school heads in supporting school heads and sharing the leadership responsibilities. Having considered the additional responsibilities and increasing complexity of the work of deputy school heads and in order to attract the best candidates to take up these duties, the Administration agreed that there was a case for creating a new SPSM rank in the PSM grade for deputy heads in primary schools. The Administration also proposed to pitch the new SPSM rank between the PSM rank and Headmaster/Headmistress II rank in the PSM grade. As compared with the current arrangement, incumbents of the new rank would receive a higher pay which could better recognize the heavier responsibilities shouldered by deputy school heads. In response to Mr Howard YOUNG's further enquiry, DS(ED)3 advised that the proposal to create a new SPSM rank in the PSM grade, if approved, would be implemented for both government and aided primary schools.

10. Mr James TIEN asked about the reasons for submitting the proposal, which involved non-directorate posts only, to the Establishment Subcommittee (ESC) for consideration. He was also concerned that the current proposal to create a new rank of deputy heads in public sector primary schools was not included in the forecast of changes in civil service establishment in the Administration's information paper (ECI(2007-08)8), which was circulated for reference by ESC members at the beginning of the 2007-2008 legislative session.

11. The Deputy Secretary for the Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) (DS(Tsy)) advised that in addition to creation and deletion of directorate posts, any changes to the structure of civil service ranks and grades, and changes to the approved departmental ceiling in terms of the notional annual mid-point salary (NAMS) value for all permanent non-directorate posts also required the endorsement of ESC and approval of the Finance Committee (FC). Since the present proposal sought to create a new rank in the PSM grade and make changes in the NAMS ceiling of Head 156 – Government Secretariat : Education Bureau, it had to be submitted to ESC for endorsement and FC for approval. She elaborated that the new posts, if approved, would be offset by re-ranking an equivalent number of PSM posts in the government schools. Therefore, the proposal would not result in any net increase in the total establishment in the civil service.

12. Mr James TIEN asked about the impact of the proposal on the ceiling of NAMS value in the 2008-2009 Estimate approved by the FC. DS(Tsy) responded that the proposal would involve an additional NAMS value of \$3,884,160; therefore the NAMS ceiling for non-directorate posts in the permanent establishment under Head 156 in 2008-2009 would need to be increased from \$2,412,996,000 to \$2,416,880,160.

13. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong said that the education sector had all along been concerned that unlike secondary schools, primary schools did not have a specific rank for deputy heads. To address such concern, the Government now proposed to create a new rank of deputy heads in public sector primary schools. Mr CHEUNG stated that the proposal had the support of the Democratic Party and the Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union. He added that when the proposal was discussed at the meeting of the ED Panel on 26 March 2008, all members present expressed support for the Administration to submit the proposal to ESC and FC for consideration.

14. The item was voted on and endorsed.

EC(2008-09)3 Proposed creation of one permanent post of Assistant Director of Social Welfare (D2) in Social Welfare Department to be offset by deletion of one permanent post of Principal Social Work Officer (D1) to head the Social Security Branch and to take charge of the social security portfolio

15. The Chairman informed members that the Panel on Welfare Services was consulted on the proposal at the meeting on 17 March 2008.

16. Members did not raise any questions. The item was voted on and endorsed.

17. The Subcommittee was adjourned at 9:25 am.