

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)104/08-09
(These minutes have been
cleared by the Chairman)

Ref: CB1/PL/CI/1

Panel on Commerce and Industry

Minutes of meeting
held on Tuesday, 14 October 2008, at 10:40 am
in Conference Room B of the Legislative Council Building

Members present : Hon Vincent FANG Kang, SBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon WONG Ting-kwong, BBS (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, JP
Hon Mrs Sophie LEUNG LAU Yau-fun, GBS, JP
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, GBS, JP
Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung, SBS, JP
Hon Andrew LEUNG Kwan-yuen, SBS, JP
Hon CHIM Pui-chung
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king
Dr Hon LAM Tai-fai, BBS, JP
Hon Tanya CHAN
Dr Hon Samson TAM Wai-ho, JP

Member absent : Hon Ronny TONG Ka-wah, SC

Clerk in attendance : Ms YUE Tin-po
Chief Council Secretary (1)3

Staff in attendance : Mrs Constance LI
Assistant Secretary General 1

Ms Annette LAM
Senior Council Secretary (1)3

Mr KWONG Kam-fai
Council Secretary (1)3

Ms Alice CHEUNG
Senior Legislative Assistant (1)1

Miss Queenie LAM
Senior Legislative Assistant (1)2

Ms May LEUNG
Legislative Assistant (1)6

Action

I. Election of Chairman and Deputy Chairman

Election of Chairman

Mr Fred LI, member of the Panel with the highest precedence among the members present, presided over the election of the Chairman of the Panel and invited nominations for the chairmanship. Mr Vincent FANG was nominated by Mr Andrew LEUNG and the nomination was seconded by Mr WONG Ting-kwong. Mr Vincent FANG accepted the nomination.

2. As there was no other nomination, Mr Fred LI declared that Mr Vincent FANG was elected Chairman of the Panel for the 2008-2009 session.

Election of Deputy Chairman

3. The Chairman called for nominations for the deputy chairmanship. Mr WONG Ting-kwong was nominated by Mr Jeffrey LAM and the nomination was seconded by Mr Fred LI. Mr WONG Ting-kwong accepted the nomination. As there was no other nominations, the Chairman declared that Mr WONG Ting-kwong was elected Deputy Chairman of the Panel for the 2008-2009 session.

II. Schedule of meetings for the 2008-2009 session

4. Members noted the proposed meeting schedule tabled at the meeting and agreed that the regular meetings of the Panel for the 2008-2009 session would be held on the third Tuesday of each month at 2:30 pm, except January 2009 as the date was too close to the public holidays for the Lunar New Year. Members agreed that the meeting in January would be re-scheduled to be held on 13 January 2009 at 4:30 pm. The notice and agenda for the meetings will be issued to members nearer the time.

III. Items for discussion at the next meeting

Policy briefing on 21 October 2008

5. The Chairman reminded members that a meeting would be held on Tuesday, 21 October 2008 from 2:30 pm to 3:30 pm in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building to receive a briefing by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (SCED) on the relevant policy initiatives featuring in the Chief Executive's 2008-2009 Policy Address.

Special meeting on 27 October 2008

6. Mr Andrew LEUNG said that the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Hong Kong were suffering immense hardship in operating their business arising from the "global financial tsunami". He noted that SMEs had difficulties in obtaining credits and securing loans from lending institutions. Despite Government support for the banking sector, no concrete measures had been devised to alleviate SMEs' hardship amidst the financial turmoil. Mr LEUNG suggested that an urgent meeting be held as soon as possible to receive a briefing by the Administration on support measures for SMEs, in particular those Hong Kong enterprises operating in the Pearl River Delta Region.

7. Mr Jeffrey LAM shared Mr LEUNG's view and said that there were distress calls from the SMEs for the Government to raise the guarantee ceiling and extend the guarantee period of loans under the SME Loan Guarantee Scheme so as to provide them with more flexible financing terms. Ms Emily LAU agreed with Mr LEUNG and Mr LAM that there was a pressing need to provide timely assistance to SMEs to address their operational and financial difficulties arising from the global financial turmoil.

8. The Chairman suggested and members agreed that a special meeting be held on Monday, 27 October 2008 from 2:30 pm to 4:30 pm to discuss the matter. At the Panel's request, representatives from the Hong Kong Monetary Authority, the Hong Kong Association of Banks, as well as business associations/chambers of the SMEs would be invited to provide submissions and attend the meeting to present their views. To facilitate Panel's discussion, the Secretariat was requested to prepare a paper on a summary of government measures to cope with the global financial turmoil in various overseas economies.

(Post-meeting note: Relevant parties had been invited to provide submissions and to attend the special meeting on 27 October 2008. Members were informed of the meeting arrangements vide LC Paper No. CB(1)67/08-09 issued on 17 October 2008.)

Regular Panel meeting on 18 November 2008

9. Members agreed that the Panel would discuss the following items proposed by the Administration at the next regular meeting to be held on 18 November 2008:

- (a) Further Liberalization under Mainland and Hong Kong Partnership Arrangement and Deepening Economic Co-operation with Guangdong Province; and
- (b) Update on Cyberport Digital Entertainment Incubation-cum-Training Programme.

10. In response to Ms Emily LAU's enquiry, the Clerk advised that the item as stated in paragraph 9(b) was discussed by the Panel in the last term.

Work plan for the 2008-2009 session

11. Referring to the "List of issues suggested to be considered" tabled at the meeting, Mr Jeffrey LAM suggested that items 1 and 3 on "Promotion of inward investment" and "Progress report on Research and Development Centres" respectively should be brought up for discussion as early as practicable.

12. The Chairman noted Mr LAM's suggestion and said that he would hold a meeting with SCED to discuss the work plan of the Panel for the 2008-2009 session. He invited members to notify the Clerk in writing by 27 October 2008 if they had any proposed discussion items for the Panel meetings to be held from December 2008 to July 2009.

13. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 11:00 am.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
24 October 2008