

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. FC4/10-11
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/F/1/2

Finance Committee of the Legislative Council

Minutes of the 30th meeting
held at the Legislative Council Chamber
on Friday, 18 June 2010, at 3:00 pm

Members present:

Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP (Chairman)
Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, SBS, JP
Dr Hon Margaret NG
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong
Hon CHAN Kam-lam, SBS, JP
Hon Mrs Sophie LEUNG LAU Yau-fun, GBS, JP
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon WONG Yung-kan, SBS, JP
Dr Hon Philip WONG Yu-hong, GBS
Hon LAU Kong-wah, JP
Hon Miriam LAU Kin-ye, GBS, JP
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, GBS, JP
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, SBS, JP
Hon LI Fung-ying, BBS, JP
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, SBS, JP
Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP
Hon Audrey EU Yuet-mee, SC, JP
Hon Vincent FANG Kang, SBS, JP
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH
Hon LEE Wing-tat
Dr Hon Joseph LEE Kok-long, SBS, JP
Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung, SBS, JP
Hon Andrew LEUNG Kwan-yuen, SBS, JP

Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, GBS, JP
Hon WONG Ting-kwong, BBS, JP
Hon Ronny TONG Ka-wah, SC
Hon KAM Nai-wai, MH
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king
Dr Hon LAM Tai-fai, BBS, JP
Hon CHAN Hak-kan
Hon CHAN Kin-por, JP
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun
Dr Hon LEUNG Ka-lau
Hon WONG Sing-chi
Hon WONG Kwok-kin, BBS
Hon IP Wai-ming, MH
Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP
Dr Hon PAN Pey-chyau
Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun
Dr Hon Samson TAM Wai-ho, JP
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
Hon Tanya CHAN
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon WONG Yuk-man

Members absent:

Hon Albert HO Chun-yan
Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, SBS, S.B.St.J., JP
Hon LEE Cheuk-yan
Dr Hon David LI Kwok-po, GBM, GBS, JP
Hon LAU Wong-fat, GBM, GBS, JP
Hon CHIM Pui-chung
Hon Paul CHAN Mo-po, MH, JP
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che

Public officers attending:

Ms Julia LEUNG Fung-ye, JP	Acting Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
Mr Stanley YING, JP	Permanent Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury)
Ms Alice LAU, JP	Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) ¹

Ms Elsie YUEN	Principal Executive Officer (General), Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau (The Treasury Branch)
Miss Salina YAN Mei-mei, JP	Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs (3)
Mrs Avia LAI WONG Shuk-han	Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs (Culture) 2
Mr CHUNG Ling-hoi, JP	Deputy Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Culture)
Mr Kenneth CHEN, JP	Under Secretary for Education
Ms Amy WONG	Principal Assistant Secretary for Education (Higher Education)
Mr Steve LEE Yuk-fai	Principal Assistant Secretary for Education (School Development)
Mr Jack M F CHAN	Chief Executive Officer (Higher Education), Education Bureau
Dr Edward FUNG	Chairman, Project Yi Jin Programme Management Committee

Clerk in attendance:

Mrs Constance LI	Assistant Secretary General 1
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Staff in attendance:

Ms Anita SIT	Chief Council Secretary (1)5
Miss Joanne FONG	Senior Council Secretary (1)7
Mr Frankie WOO	Senior Legislative Assistant (1)3
Ms Christy YAU	Legislative Assistant (1)1

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Item No. 1 - FCR(2010-11)26

**RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PUBLIC WORKS SUBCOMMITTEE
MADE ON 2 JUNE 2010**

The Chairman put FCR(2010-11)26 to vote. The Committee approved the proposal.

Item No. 2 - FCR(2010-11)28

**HEAD 53 – GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT:
HOME AFFAIRS BUREAU**

Subhead 700 General non-recurrent

New item “Injection into the Cantonese Opera Development Fund”

2. The Chairman said that the proposal sought the approval of the Finance Committee (FC) for a new commitment of \$69 million for injection into the Cantonese Opera Development Fund (CODF) to continue sponsoring projects and activities relating to the study, promotion and sustainable development of Cantonese opera.
3. Mr IP Kwok-him, Chairman of the Panel on Home Affairs (HA Panel), reported that HA Panel discussed the proposed injection into CODF at its meeting on 14 May 2010. Panel members in general were supportive of the proposal, but urged the Administration to step up promotion of Cantonese opera among young people, and increase funding support for those programmes and activities aimed at cultivating students’ interest in this traditional art form and nurturing talented young people into a new generation of Cantonese opera artists. The Administration undertook to consider and follow up members’ suggestions.
4. The Chairman advised that the Administration had provided a note, which was tabled at the meeting, setting out the membership of the Cantonese Opera Advisory Committee (COAC), the CODF Advisory Committee and the CODF Executive Committee, and the background of individual members of these committees. She appreciated the Administration’s efforts and requested the Administration to consider providing membership details of the related advisory bodies where relevant in future funding proposals submitted to FC and discussion papers for other committees of the Legislative Council. Such details should include the background of individual members, whether the six-year rule and six-board rule were complied with, as well as the gender ratio of the advisory bodies.

Exhibiting the art of Cantonese opera

5. Mr WONG Kwok-hing expressed support for the funding proposal. Pointing out that Cantonese opera had been inscribed onto the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, he considered that the Government should step up its efforts in promoting Cantonese opera by giving active consideration to setting up a dedicated museum on Cantonese opera. He considered the existing Cantonese Opera Heritage Hall in the Hong Kong Heritage Museum (HKHM) too small to display all the important artefacts, and that a dedicated museum on Cantonese opera would serve to pay tribute to those artists and playwrights who had made significant contributions to and achievements in the development of Cantonese opera and attract more young people to understand and participate in this traditional art form.

6. DSHA(3) said that Mr WONG Kwok-hing's suggestion was in line with the prevailing government policy on Cantonese opera development. Currently, the Cantonese Opera Heritage Hall in HKHM hosted permanent display of Cantonese opera artefacts. Moreover, thematic exhibitions, such as the "Splendour of Cantonese Opera: Masters Tong Tik Sang and Yam Kim Fai", were held from time to time. The Administration would consider the need for a dedicated museum on Cantonese opera. Mr WONG welcomed the Administration's positive response. The Chairman asked the Administration to report to the HA Panel the outcome of its consideration of the matter.

7. Prof Patrick LAU suggested that authentic Cantonese opera artefacts, such as costumes, stage properties and scripts, should be exhibited in the main foyer of the Ko Shan Theatre (KST), which was an important venue for Cantonese opera. Miss Tanya CHAN supported Prof LAU's suggestion, as the arrangement would provide more opportunities for Cantonese opera audience to appreciate this performing art form. The Deputy Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Culture) advised that Prof LAU's suggestion was in line with the design concepts for the proposed annex building of KST (the funding proposal for which had been approved by FC under the first item FCR(2010-11)26 of this meeting), and extra space would be available at the main foyer of the annex building for exhibition purposes. He also advised that recently, showcases had been installed at the existing KST for display of Cantonese opera artefacts.

Developing talents for non-performing work

8. Miss Tanya CHAN said that it was important to develop talents for non-performing work such as script-writing, and asked whether resources were available for this area of development. Ms Cyd HO concurred that nurturing new blood on Cantonese opera script-writing was important as it would inject creativity into the traditional art form. She suggested that the Administration should consider setting up scholarships to encourage young people to engage in creating new Cantonese opera scripts.

9. DSHA(3) responded that there were Cantonese opera practitioners dedicated to script creation, and subsidized programmes were run to groom Cantonese opera playwrights. In the past, CODF had sponsored some research projects of local universities on Cantonese opera scripts. The proposed funding injection into CODF would provide the necessary resources for promoting creativity in Cantonese opera script development.

10. In response to Miss Tanya CHAN's enquiry about the respective numbers of new talents joining the Cantonese opera field on full-time and part-time basis in recent years, DSHA(3) said the Administration did not have comprehensive statistics on this aspect, but she understood that there were a considerable number of Cantonese opera artists practicing on a part-time basis. The two-year professional training

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programmes on Cantonese opera organized by The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts could train some 20 talents each year. The Chinese Artists Association of Hong Kong also contributed to nurturing new talents.

11. Miss Tanya CHAN enquired about the Administration's position on the establishment of a Hong Kong Cantonese Opera Troupe. DSHA(3) said that COAC had discussed the issue but had not reached a conclusion. There were concerns that well-established Cantonese opera troupes already existed in the market, and establishing such a troupe might have great impacts on the existing troupes. However, the Administration recognized that there was room for nurturing local budding artists in Cantonese opera through supporting the establishment of more Cantonese opera troupes that embraced the objective of nurturing young talents.

Audience building

12. The Chairman sought information about the audience base of Cantonese opera performances in terms of age distribution and expressed concerns about the practice of providing free tickets by some organizers to boost the attendance of sponsored performances.

13. DSHA(3) advised that, according to a recent survey conducted by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council, the audience of xiqu performances accounted for one-third of the total audience of art performances, and among the audience of xiqu performances, most were Cantonese opera patrons. The Administration was aware of the concern about the provision of free tickets in some sponsored Cantonese opera performances, but the situation was not serious. For most of the performances sponsored by CODF, less than 10% of the tickets were free of charge. In this regard, the Administration would consider fine-tuning the grant mechanism, such as by capping the number of free tickets that could be distributed for a sponsored performance.

14. Mr James TO expressed concerns about the provision of enticements, such as cash or free meals, by grantees to participants of the performances/activities sponsored by CODF, and asked the Administration to provide relevant figures on the situation in the past, and advise whether there were any rules regulating such practice.

15. Mr LEE Wing-tat said that he supported the funding proposal. He noticed that in organizing Cantonese opera performances, some District Councils would offer free meals to attendees using their own funding sources. Some organizations would start giving away tickets when they remained unsold at the time of the performances. He commented that such practices could not genuinely sustain the expansion of the audience base of Cantonese opera.

16. DSHA(3) replied that all grants from CODF were meant to be used for purposes directly related to production and performances; CODF would not support the provision of any form of enticements to attendees. The Chairman requested the

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Administration to provide supplementary information after the meeting on whether there were indeed cases in the past where CODF grantees had given away free tickets and/or cash or free meals, etc., to attendees of CODF-sponsored performances/projects. If there were such cases, the Administration should explain how prevalent the practice was among grantees, and whether there were any rules prohibiting/regulating such a practice.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration subsequently provided the requested information to members vide LC Paper No. FC137/09-10 on 12 July 2010.)

Admin 17. As regards the audience base of Cantonese opera, DSHA(3) said that she did not have information about the age distribution of the audience base in hand, but the Administration recognized the need to widen the audience base, which was also a major concern reflected by the sector in a recent seminar. She assured members that the Administration would strengthen its efforts in promoting Cantonese opera at schools to arouse young people's interest and understanding of the art form. The Chairman requested the Administration to provide statistics on the audience base of Cantonese opera when the subject was discussed at the HA Panel.

Promoting management standard and sustainable development

18. Mr LEE Wing-tat said that some practitioners reflected to him that many Cantonese opera troupes lacked the awareness of modern management systems and practices. Without proper management, troupes would not be able to build up an audience base and sustain their long-term operation. He opined that assistance should be provided to help troupes improve their management so that in the long term, they could become self-sustaining without relying on public subsidies. The Chairman asked whether COAC, CODF Advisory Committee and/or CODF Executive Committee were in a position to give advice in this respect.

19. DSHA(3) responded that those committee members with relevant backgrounds might be able to give advice on the application of modern management concepts and practices. For example, in supporting the Hong Kong Young Talent Cantonese Opera Troupe, CODF had imposed specific requirements in respect of management practices, record and document administration, training and so on. She concurred with Mr LEE's views that where necessary, the Administration should assist troupes in enhancing their management capability. The Chairman requested the Administration to provide information on the management effectiveness of Cantonese opera troupes and relevant improvement measures, when the subject was discussed by the HA Panel.

20. Mr LEE Wing-tat asked if the Administration had made any assessment of the required timeframe for the top most Cantonese opera troupes to become self-sustaining financially. DSHA(3) replied that quite a number of troupes were already operating without government funding. While the Administration could not

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predict how long it would take for budding troupes to become financially independent, it remained the Administration's objective to help these troupes develop an audience base and achieve long term sustainability.

Preserving Cantonese opera by legislation

21. Pointing out that the Secretary for Home Affairs had, on a previous occasion, undertaken to consider introducing legislation to preserve Cantonese opera as an intangible cultural heritage, Miss Tanya CHAN asked if the Administration had a work plan for introducing such legislation and, if so, what the timetable would be.

22. DSHA(3) responded that the Administration was in the process of gathering information, including the scope of work involved and the need for legislation to preserve intangible cultural heritage. Reference would also be made to the relevant practices in the Mainland. Pointing out that relevant legislation had been introduced in Macao, Miss Tanya CHAN urged the Administration to take up the matter without further delay. The Chairman requested the Administration to revert to HA Panel on this matter.

23. The Chairman put the item to vote. The Committee approved the proposal.

Item No. 3 - FCR(2010-11)29

**HEAD 156 – GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT :
EDUCATION BUREAU**

Subhead 700 General non-recurrent

Item 027 Project Yi Jin

24. The Chairman said that the proposal sought FC's approval for increasing the commitment for Project Yi Jin (PYJ) from \$790 million by \$280 million to \$1,070 million to provide continued financial support for eligible students up to the 2011/12 academic year.

25. Ms Cyd HO, Chairman of the Panel on Education, reported that the Panel on Education discussed the proposal at its meeting on 13 May 2010. Panel members in general were supportive of the proposal, but were concerned whether the proposed increase in financial commitment was adequate to meet the projected increase in demand for PYJ places. Panel members also suggested that with the implementation of the New Senior Secondary (NSS) academic structure in September 2009, a new PYJ programme should be put in place and the qualification awarded for completion of the new programme should be on par with Secondary 6 under the NSS academic structure. Bridging courses should also be provided for PYJ graduates so that they could attain an academic level equivalent to Secondary 6 under the NSS academic structure.

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26. Ms Cyd HO said that Panel members were also concerned that, while a full PYJ certificate was equivalent to having five subjects passed in the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE), it was not clear whether the Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics were considered to have been passed. Ms HO explained that passes in these three subjects were the prerequisites for certain employment, including many civil service positions. Although the Administration subsequently clarified that holders of a full PYJ certificate would be deemed to have obtained passes in English language and Chinese language at the HKCEE level, whether Mathematics was also considered to have been passed remained unanswered. Panel members were concerned that similar ambiguities might arise for the new PYJ programme. Some Panel members also suggested that since there were insufficient places for HKCEE repeaters, Secondary 5 classes should be provided under the PYJ to enable these students to retake the last HKCEE in 2011. The Administration had informed the Panel at its meeting on 14 June 2010 that 15 000 places would be provided for Secondary 5 repeaters in the 2010/11 academic year.

27. The Chairman advised that in response to her request, the Administration had provided a supplementary information note, which was tabled at the meeting, to explain the basis for estimating a 40% increase in enrolment for the PYJ programme in the 2009/10 academic year and provided information on the appointment of PYJ graduates in the civil service.

New Project Yi Jin programme to be developed

28. Noting that the Administration was considering the development of a new PYJ programme to tie in with the implementation of the NSS academic structure, Mr WONG Kwok-hing enquired about the progress of the work and the subjects that the new programme would cover. The Under Secretary for Education (US(Ed)) replied that in collaboration with the Federation for Continuing Education in Tertiary Institutions (FCE), the Administration was studying the introduction of a new programme in the 2012/13 academic year, following the first Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) Examination to be held in 2012, to cater for students who had completed six years' secondary education under the NSS academic structure with unsatisfactory HKDSE results. The first stage of the study had been completed. The Administration was working with FCE on the preliminary design of the new programme.

29. In reply to Dr LAM Tai-fai's enquiry, US(Ed) responded that the future demand for places for the new PYJ programme under study would be determined by a number of factors, including student population (which was declining) and the availability of career and further study options, such as sub-degree programmes and vocational training opportunities, which were on the increase. These factors would be taken into due consideration in the planning and design of the new programme.

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30. Dr LAM Tai-fai expressed concern about the availability of qualified PYJ instructors for the new PYJ programme, given that the new programme would pitch at a higher academic level than the current PYJ programme. He was particularly concerned whether suitable upgrading courses would be available for incumbent PYJ instructors.

31. US(Ed) said that he was confident that PYJ instructors would be able to cope with the enhanced level of the new programme under planning. The Chairman, Project Yi Jin Programme Management Committee said that there should be no problem in securing sufficient qualified instructors for the new programme under design. At present, around 70% of the incumbent PYJ instructors had master's degrees. As far as the design of the new programme was concerned, student-oriented pedagogy, which was used in the existing PYJ programme, would continue to be adopted. Under the current PYJ programme, instructors who did not have a post-graduate diploma or post-graduate certificate in education would be required to attend a series of training courses mandated by the PYJ Programme Management Committee. Similar requirements would apply to the instructors of the new PYJ programme in order to maintain a high teaching quality.

Provision of Project Yi Jin places

32. Mr WONG Sing-chi asked why the Administration anticipated a drastic drop of demand for PYJ places from 21 000 in 2010/11 to 9 000 in 2011/12, and how the projected reduction would impact on the revenue of the PYJ programme. US(Ed) explained that most new entrants of the PYJ programme were Secondary 5 school leavers. With the implementation of the NSS academic structure in 2009, there would not be any Secondary 5 school leavers in 2011. However, there would still be some students who retook the last HKCEE in 2011, and some of them might opt to enrol in the PYJ programme after the release of the HKCEE results. The Administration projected that there would be a demand for some 9 000 PYJ places in 2011/12 from these students and some adult learners. He added that the PYJ programme was run by member institutions of FCE on a self-financing basis and these institutions would maintain flexibility in the number of PYJ places they offered having regard to changing market demand.

33. Mr WONG Sing-chi said that certain tertiary institutions running the PYJ programme were considering cutting the number of PYJ places or discontinuing the programme. For example, the City University of Hong Kong had a capacity of 2 000 PYJ places, but planned to offer only 750 places in the coming academic year. He asked if the Administration was aware of the situation and what measures it would take to ensure sufficient PYJ places to meet the demand. US(Ed) said that while individual institutions intended to adjust downwards the PYJ places to offer, other institutions, such as the Hong Kong College of Technology and The Open University of Hong Kong, were planning to increase the number of PYJ places. The Principal Assistant Secretary for Education (Higher Education) said that based on the returns from PYJ programme providers to the Education Bureau, there would be a total

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supply of 21 000 PYJ programme places for the 2010/11 academic year, which should be sufficient to meet the demand.

34. Mr WONG Sing-chi said that the Administration should co-ordinate the dissemination of information about the number of PYJ places to be offered by individual institutions, so as to enable prospective students to make informed choices in filing applications. US(Ed) said that the Education Bureau would publicize the respective enrolment targets of all PYJ programme providers around August 2010 following the announcement of HKCEE results. He noted that from time to time, individual PYJ programme providers would promote their PYJ programmes through different channels.

Employment situation and articulation pathways for PYJ students

35. Dr LAM Tai-fai noted that 1 744 PYJ graduates had joined the civil service in the past five financial years from 2005-2006 to 2009-2010. He asked how many PYJ graduates had applied for civil service positions, what the success rate was, and how that compared with graduates of other qualifications.

36. US(Ed) said that he would follow up with the Civil Service Bureau on the provision of relevant statistics for members. Based on the information in hand, about half of the PYJ graduates were taking up employment and 38% were pursuing further studies, and among those who were pursuing further studies, 88% were engaged in full-time study programmes. Dr LAM Tai-fai reiterated that it was important to gather relevant statistics to allow better evaluation of the effectiveness of the PYJ programme.

37. Dr PAN Pey-chyou noted that the PYJ programme was popular as illustrated by the increasing enrolment over the years. He was, however, concerned whether the PYJ programme was able to meet young people's career needs. Dr PAN opined that the PYJ programme should be fine-tuned regularly to meet changing market conditions and to complement Government economic policies, such as fostering the development of the six priority industries as announced by the Chief Executive in the 2009 Policy Address.

38. US(Ed) advised that the PYJ programme comprised core modules which focused on training generic skills like the use of Chinese and English languages and numeracy, and a range of elective subjects which focused on practical application of knowledge and skills to cater for individual students' vocational needs. Most PYJ graduates were able to find employment after graduation and among those who were in employment, over 80% were working in the private sector. There were also some graduates who pursued further studies after working for a few years. At the request of Dr PAN, the Administration undertook to provide information on the employment situation and articulation pathways for PYJ programme graduates.

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(Post-meeting note: The information provided by the Administration in response to the requests of Dr LAM Tai-fai and Dr PAN Pey-chyou was issued to members vide LC Paper No. FC133/09-10 on 30 June 2010.)

39. The Chairman put the item to vote. The Committee approved the proposal.
40. The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
14 October 2010