

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(4)108/13-14
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by the Administration)

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Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting

Minutes of meeting
held on Monday, 10 June 2013, at 2:30 pm
in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex

- Members present** : Hon WONG Yuk-man (Chairman)
Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon WONG Ting-kwong, SBS, JP
Hon Ronny TONG Ka-wah, SC
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon Claudia MO
Hon Steven HO Chun-yin
Hon YIU Si-wing
Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP
Hon Charles Peter MOK
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen
Hon SIN Chung-kai, SBS, JP
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, BBS, MH, JP
Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun, BBS, MH, JP
- Member attending** : Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
- Member absent** : Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun, JP

**Public officers
attending**

: Agenda item III

Miss Susie HO, JP
Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic
Development (Communications and Technology)

Mr Daniel LAI, BBS, JP
Government Chief Information Officer

Miss Joey LAM, JP
Deputy Government Chief Information Officer
(Policy and Community)

Mr Kingsley WONG
Chief Systems Manager (Digital Inclusion)

Mr Alex YEUNG
Senior Systems Manager (Digital Inclusion)1

Mr Sam NG
Senior Systems Manager (Digital Inclusion)3
(Atg.)

Agenda Item IV

Miss Susie HO, JP
Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic
Development (Communications and Technology)

Mr Daniel LAI, BBS, JP
Government Chief Information Officer

Mr Victor LAM
Deputy Government Chief Information Officer
(Consulting and Operations)

Miss Joey LAM, JP
Deputy Government Chief Information Officer
(Policy and Community)

Mr PANG Hon-chi
Assistant Government Chief Information Officer
(Business Transformation)

Clerk in attendance : Ms YUE Tin-po
Chief Council Secretary (4)3

Staff in attendance : Ms Anki NG
Council Secretary (4)3

Miss Mandy LAM
Legislative Assistant (4)2

Action

I. Information paper issued since the last meeting

(LC Paper No. CB(4)762/12-13(01) -- Submission from a member
(*Chinese version only*) of the public regarding
issues on the broadcasting
of mega international sports
events)

Members noted that the above paper had been issued for the Panel's information.

II. Date of next meeting and items for discussion

(LC Paper No. CB(4)711/12-13(01) -- List of outstanding items
for discussion
LC Paper No. CB(4)711/12-13(02) -- List of follow-up actions)

Special meeting on 25 June 2013

2 Members noted that a special Panel meeting would be held on Tuesday, 25 June 2013 at 8:30 am to discuss issues relating to the editorial independence of Radio Television Hong Kong and to receive public views on the issue.

Regular meeting on 8 July 2013

3 Members noted that the next regular Panel meeting would be held on Monday, 8 July 2013, at 2:30 pm to discuss the following items:

- (a) Facilitating a digital economy under the Digital 21 Strategy;
- (b) Information security; and

- (c) Review of the Telecommunications Engineer grade in the Office of the Communications Authority.

III. Progress report on digital inclusion

(LC Paper No. CB(4)711/12-13(04) -- Administration's paper on progress report on digital inclusion

LC Paper No. CB(4)711/12-13(05) -- Paper on digital inclusion prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (updated background brief)

LC Paper No. CB(4)743/12-13(01) -- Administration's paper on progress report on digital inclusion (power-point presentation material))
(*Chinese version only*)
(*tabled at the meeting and subsequently issued via email on 10 June 2013*)

Presentation by the Administration

4 At the invitation of the Chairman, Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Communications and Technology) ("PSCED(CT)") briefed members on the latest development of the Government's digital inclusion initiatives and updated members on the progress of implementation of the Internet Learning Support Programme ("ILSP"). Chief Systems Manager (Digital Inclusion) then gave a power-point presentation on the subject. Details of the briefing and presentation were set out in the Administration's papers (LC Papers Nos. CB(4)711/12-13(04) and CB(4)743/12-13(01)).

Discussion

Implementation of the Internet Learning Support Programme

5. Dr Fernando CHEUNG expressed dissatisfaction with the implementation of the ILSP, the selection process of which had undermined the Administration's objective to assist students from low-income families to acquire affordable computers and Internet access service and to provide them with technical and social support. He said that apart from the allegation from the former Government Chief Information Officer, Mr Jeremy GODFREY, that there had been political pressure from senior Government officials to select a designated

party as the ILSP Implementer, there was also difficulty in reaching agreement on a collaboration model to co-found an implementation agent to take forward the programme.

6. Dr Fernando CHEUNG further said that although the Administration had eventually engaged eInclusion Foundation Limited ("eInclusion"), jointly formed by the Boys' & Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong ("BGCA") and the Internet Professional Association ("iProA"), and WebOrganic ("the Implementers") to implement the ILSP in the eastern and western parts of Hong Kong respectively, there were media reports on eInclusion's chaotic internal and financial controls. Recently, an investigation on iProA was being conducted by the Commercial Crimes Bureau.

7. Ms Emily LAU also expressed concern about recent media reports on the development and progress of implementation of the ILSP, and the termination of the Funding and Operation Agreement ("F&OA") with eInclusion by the Government. Ms Claudia MO and Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung shared the same concern. PSCED(CT) advised that the Administration considered that there was scope for fine-tuning ILSP by focusing on services that were not readily available in the market, trimming services that had abundant alternative providers and adopting a more on-demand model of service delivery. The Administration was mindful of its undertaking to the Finance Committee that the services should be made available to the target families in a cost-effective manner.

8. PSCED(CT) further advised that the Administration had terminated the F&OA with eInclusion with effect from 19 May 2013, and appointed BGCA to take over the implementation of the ILSP in the eastern part of Hong Kong as guarantor of eInclusion in accordance with the F&OA. BGCA had been delivering frontline services under the ILSP. With well-established social networks and expertise to provide support to students from low-income families and their parents, it took over the implementation of the ILSP with minimal disruption to the service recipients.

Mid-term review of the Internet Learning Support Programme

9. As regards the mid-term review on the ILSP ("the Review"), Dr Fernando CHEUNG noted that Internet adoption of students from low-income families had increased significantly from 87% in 2010 to 96% in 2012, and one of the Implementers had pointed out that it required extra efforts and investments to engage the last 4% of eligible families who had not yet connected to the Internet. Dr CHEUNG urged the Administration to continue its efforts to identify and assist the last 4% of eligible families which could be the most needy families. Mr Charles Peter MOK shared the view of Dr CHEUNG.

10. Noting that some 30 000 low-income families would become eligible for the ILSP every year when their children started primary education, Dr Fernando CHEUNG queried whether the Administration would consider improving the baseline services undertaken by the Implementers under the ILSP, including improvement on reselling computers to the target beneficiaries on hire purchase. PSCED(CT) advised that under the current scheme, target beneficiaries could acquire computers through hire purchase and this arrangement would continue.

11. Mr Charles Peter MOK said that due to personal data privacy concerns and to avoid any labelling effect, the Student Financial Assistance Agency, the Social Welfare Department and the schools had declined to provide information on eligible students to the Implementers. This would affect the cost-effectiveness of the ILSP. As such, Mr MOK asked about the measures to be taken by the Administration to increase service take-up by the recipients and to reduce the unit cost for reselling computers and Internet services to the recipients. Sharing a similar view, the Deputy Chairman urged the Administration to consult and continue to work with the Implementers with a view to catching up with the performance for the ILSP.

12. PSCED(CT) advised that the Administration had no plan to terminate the ILSP or to reduce the scope of services provided. The Administration would undertake ILSP promotion in collaboration with the Implementers and other Government Departments. To avoid any possible confusion over the different brand names, the Administration would use a single brand name to sharpen the public image of the ILSP. It would continue to source discounted offers of computers and Internet services for the target beneficiaries, and would re-visit the service of reselling computers by exploring whether there were more cost-effective means of providing this service. The same applied to Internet services which also entailed a relatively high unit cost (or investment).

13. Mr SIN Chung-kai urged the Administration to continue its efforts to identify and assist the last 4% of eligible families, despite that this might lead to an increase in the cost for implementation of the ILSP. He considered that the Administration should continue its efforts and to use a single brand name to assist the students from low-income families to undertake web-based learning. He also urged the Administration to consult the Implementers in fine-tuning the ILSP and to provide the Panel with the views, comments, feedbacks and relevant statistics received from the Implementers during the Review. PSCED(CT) advised that the Administration was in consultation with the Implementers on the measures taken to improve the services provided by the ILSP, and would update the Panel in due course.

14. Ms Cyd HO opined that the ILSP was a form of educational subsidy in electronic media and its effectiveness should therefore be assessed by the Education Bureau instead of the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau. Referring to the six services that the Administration recommended to fine-tune the ILSP under paragraph 17(a) to (f) of Annex B to the Administration's paper (LC paper No. CB(4)711/12-13(04)), Ms HO enquired about how the recommendations had been drawn up. PSCED(CT) advised that the Administration had drawn up the conclusions and recommendations based on services provided by the Implementers and the results of the Review. The Administration would implement the recommendations in the 2013/2014 school year and the Implementers would refine their business plans accordingly.

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15. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen noted that sourcing products from computer and Internet services suppliers through bulk purchase and reselling to the target beneficiaries with flexible payment options were currently undertaken by the Implementers under the ILSP. He also noted that such an arrangement had resulted in delinquent instalment payments with potential cumulative write-off of about \$672,000, which had added to operational overheads. In addition, the service of reselling computers carried a relatively high unit cost (or investment) of around \$1,500. Mr CHAN urged the Administration to provide the Panel with the distribution of the potential cumulative write-off between the Implementers and the derivation method of the unit costs for the service of reselling computers by the Implementers. PSCED(CT) referred to Footnote 7 of paragraph 15 of the Administration's paper (LC paper No. CB(4)711/12-13(04)) and advised that each of the Implementers had its own strengths and weaknesses and the Administration would continue to work with the Implementers with a view to improving Programme performance for the remaining term of the ILSP.

16. Mr Albert CHAN urged the Administration to co-ordinate with relevant Government Bureaux and Departments ("B/Ds"), including the Education Bureau, the Social Welfare Department and the Home Affairs Department, to arrange for district-oriented promotion to identify needy families for the ILSP. PSCED(CT) advised that the Administration had been sourcing the information from relevant B/Ds to identify needy families for the ILSP.

17. The Deputy Chairman declared that she was the President of iProA from 2001 to 2006 but had not taken part in the implementation or management of the ILSP. Regarding the Administration's conclusion that there was scope for fine-tuning the ILSP by focusing on "services which were not readily available in the market", she enquired about the type of services being referred to. Government Chief Information Officer ("GCIO") advised that these services included training services on Internet use, counselling and technical support services. The Administration would also consider setting up a common product

repertoire to make available more discounted choices for target beneficiaries.

Support for the elderly and persons with disabilities in the adoption of information and communications technology

18. The Deputy Chairman enquired about the target set and measures taken to encourage use and enhance awareness of information and communications technology ("ICT") by the elderly and people beset with impairment. GCIO advised that the target set for the use of computers by the elderly was 25% in 2014. The Administration had not set any target on use of ICT for people beset with impairment, including those beset with visual, physical, hearing or cognitive impairment, which covered a very wide scope. Instead, the Administration had set targets on Web Accessibility and had been working towards having all government websites to conform to Level AA standard of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines Version 2.0 ("WCAG 2.0") promulgated by the World Wide Web Consortium ("W3C") by 2013. About 40% of the websites commonly used by people beset with impairment had incorporated with key accessibility features. The Administration would continue to appeal for their support on this meaningful cause.

IV. Progress update on e-Government development

(LC Paper No. CB(4)711/12-13(06) -- Administration's paper on progress update on e-Government development

LC Paper No. CB(4)711/12-13(07) -- Paper on e-Government development prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (updated background brief)

Presentation by the Administration

19. At the invitation of the Chairman, Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Communications and Technology) ("PSCED(CT)") briefed members on the latest progress on e-Government development, and the plans and measures to support B/Ds to achieve their policy objectives and initiatives through wider and better adoption of ICT. Details of the briefing were set out in the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(4)711/12-13(06)).

Discussion

Government Wi-Fi coverage and business facilitation e-services

20. Noting that the mobile subscriber penetration rate stood at over 200% as at February 2013, the Deputy Chairman enquired about the measures taken by the Administration to increase Government Wi-Fi ("GovWiFi") coverage. GCIO advised that currently GovWiFi service was provided at about 440 government premises. The Administration would consider extending the service to more government premises such as outdoor areas, and explore co-operation with the private sector to provide Wi-Fi service at more locations, e.g. hospitals.

21. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung expressed concern about the efficiency and coverage of the GovWiFi service. PSCED(CT) advised that the Government was adopting a market-oriented Wi-Fi service policy and GovWiFi service would only be provided at government premises so as to avoid competition with the commercial sector in providing Wi-Fi service. Mr LEUNG enquired about the provision of GovWiFi service in the areas of public housing estates. Sharing a similar view, Mr Christopher CHUNG opined that the public areas surrounding public housing estates should have GovWiFi coverage. GCIO advised that currently no GovWiFi service was provided in such areas but the Housing Authority had provided Wi-Fi service at some public areas of public housing estates. On the other hand, GovWiFi service was provided at government premises including some outdoor recreational facilities as well as major tourist spots.

22. The Deputy Chairman enquired about the Administration's plan to promote the adoption of ICT in small and medium enterprises ("SMEs"). GCIO advised that to enhance Hong Kong's overall competitiveness, the Government had been implementing various programmes since 2004 to encourage SMEs to take advantage of ICT to increase efficiency and productivity. The Administration had completed over the years, a number of sponsorship projects, including electronic business applications, websites and training, benefiting over 14 000 SME practitioners from various sectors. The project "Consumer Connect", sponsored under the Sector-Specific Programme for SMEs and completed in early January 2013, provided wholesalers and retailers with a cloud-enabled platform and application to promote their products and make available product information to consumers.

E-Government infrastructure service (EGIS) platform

23. Mr Charles Peter MOK opined that both the internal ICT systems and e-Government services of some B/Ds were outdated. He urged the

Administration to expedite the process of enhancements to these systems and services, and to provide survey results on the internal systems used by B/Ds to further the development of e-Government services. GCIO advised that the Administration had started to develop and implement, using cloud technologies, a new e-government infrastructure service ("EGIS") platform for B/Ds to provide e-Government services in order to adjust the hosting capacity in response to actual demands. Under the private cloud EGIS platform, shared components such as e-payment gateway and messaging firewalls would be made available to reduce the lead time for development of e-Government services.

24. GCIO further advised that the Government Cloud Platform, which comprised a core infrastructure and a shared pool of computing resources that could be dynamically provided to the common shared services on demand, was used for supporting the hosting of common shared services for shared use by B/Ds. A study on the development of an "Enterprise Architecture" for the Government would be conducted so as to better assess the priorities for enhancements of the internal systems used by B/Ds.

25. Mr Christopher CHUNG expressed concern about the submission of tax returns on the Government webpage. GCIO advised that many technical considerations were involved in the submission of tax returns on the Government webpage, including the suitability of the browsers used in submitting the returns. The Administration would refer the issue to the relevant department to follow-up and review the matter.

Government data centre service arrangements

26. Noting that the Administration had completed a consultancy study on the long term arrangement of government data centre service, and a technical feasibility study was being conducted with a view to ascertain the resources required to establish a new and consolidated data centre complex to address the long-term requirements of hosting services within the Government, Mr WONG Ting-kyong enquired about the target date for completion of the feasibility study and the timeframe for completing the consolidated data centre complex.

27. GCIO advised that the Administration was conducting a technical feasibility study and formulating the requirement specification of the complex, which would accommodate six existing data centres, with a view to assessing in more details the resources and timeframe required in taking forward the planning and implementation of the complex. The technical feasibility study was expected to complete in six months' time.

Web accessibility campaign

28. Ms Emily LAU expressed concern about the Government's strategy to drive the adoption of barrier-free designs in public and private websites, as it appeared that some government websites had not adopted the relevant designs. GCIO advised that all government websites, which were over 400, had attained the basic requirements for barrier-free designs. The Administration was working towards having all government websites to conform to Level AA standard of WCAG 2.0 promulgated by W3C. As at March 2013, about 80% of government websites had achieved this requirement. The remaining websites, which were generally accessible though not yet up to the latest standard, were undergoing major redevelopment scheduled for completion later this year or within 2014.

Internet of Things

29. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok urged the Administration to advise on its plans and strategy for developing Internet of Things ("IOT"). GCIO advised that IOT would enable new forms of communication between people and things, and among things themselves. It would bring benefit to numerous social and business processes. Hong Kong, as a well-connected city with advanced telecommunications infrastructure offering a wide range of high-speed and secure services at competitive prices, could be an early adopter of IOT. The Government was conducting a review on its Digital 21 Strategy, and considered that developing IOT for Hong Kong, among others, could be its next strategic step forward, including daily life applications of IOT.

V. Any other business

30. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:25 pm.