

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

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**Establishment Subcommittee of the Finance Committee**

**Minutes of the 19<sup>th</sup> meeting**  
**held in Conference Room 1 of Legislative Council Complex**  
**on Tuesday, 21 June 2016, at 2:30 am**

**Members present:**

Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yee, GBS, JP (Chairman)  
Hon WONG Kwok-kin, SBS (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon Albert HO Chun-yan  
Hon James TO Kun-sun  
Hon CHAN Kam-lam, SBS, JP  
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung  
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP  
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, BBS, MH  
Prof Hon Joseph LEE Kok-long, SBS, JP, PhD, RN  
Hon WONG Ting-kwong, SBS, JP  
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, JP  
Hon CHAN Hak-kan, JP  
Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP  
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung  
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip  
Hon NG Leung-sing, SBS, JP  
Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS  
Hon WU Chi-wai, MH  
Hon YIU Si-wing, BBS  
Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP  
Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP  
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen  
Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok

Hon Kenneth LEUNG  
Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen, BBS, JP  
Hon KWOK Wai-keung  
Hon Christopher CHEUNG Wah-fung, SBS, JP  
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung  
Hon SIN Chung-kai, SBS, JP  
Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan  
Hon IP Kin-yuen  
Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, JP  
Hon Martin LIAO Cheung-kong, SBS, JP  
Hon POON Siu-ping, BBS, MH  
Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, JP  
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, SBS, MH, JP  
Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan  
Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun, BBS, MH, JP  
Hon Alvin YEUNG Ngok-kiu

**Members absent:**

Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP  
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC  
Hon CHAN Han-pan, JP  
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, BBS, MH, JP  
Hon TANG Ka-piu, JP

**Public Officers attending:**

Ms Esther LEUNG, JP	Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury)1
Mr Eddie MAK Tak-wai, JP	Deputy Secretary for the Civil Service1
Mr HON Chi-keung, JP	Permanent Secretary for Development (Works)
Mr CHAN Chi-ming, JP	Deputy Secretary for Development (Works)2
Mr Daniel CHUNG, JP	Director of Civil Engineering and Development
Mr LAM Sai-hung, JP	Project Manager (Hong Kong Island and Islands), Civil Engineering and Development Department
Ms Amy CHEUNG	Assistant Director of Planning (Territorial)
Mr Kevin YEUNG, JP	Under Secretary for Education
Mrs Michelle WONG, JP	Deputy Secretary for Education (3)

Mr WOO Chun-sing

Principal Assistant Secretary for  
Education (Special Education and  
Kindergarten Education)

**Clerk in attendance:**

Ms Connie SZETO

Chief Council Secretary (1)4

**Staff in attendance:**

Mr Jason KONG

Council Secretary (1)4

Ms Alice CHEUNG

Senior Legislative Assistant (1)1

Ms Haley CHEUNG

Legislative Assistant (1)9

Miss Yannes HO

Legislative Assistant (1)6

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The Chairman said that there were a total of eight items on the agenda of the meeting. She drew members' attention to the information paper ECI(2016-17)5 which set out the latest changes in the directorate establishment approved since 2002 and the changes to the directorate establishment in relation to the eight items on the agenda. She then reminded members that in accordance with Rule 83A of the Rules of Procedure ("RoP"), they should disclose the nature of any direct or indirect pecuniary interest relating to the funding proposals under discussion at the meeting before they spoke on the items. She further drew members' attention to RoP 84 on voting in case of direct pecuniary interest.

**EC(2016-17)11**

**Proposed creation of four supernumerary posts of one Principal Government Engineer (D3), one Government Town Planner (D2) and two Chief Engineers (D1) in the Civil Engineering and Development Department ("CEDD") to lead a new Lantau Development Office ("LDO") up to 31 March 2021; and redeployment of three D3, five D2 and 13 D1 directorate posts within CEDD arising from the establishment of LDO and re-organisation of the existing Development Offices in CEDD with immediate effect upon approval by the Finance Committee**

2. The Chairman remarked that the establishment proposal was to create four supernumerary posts of one Principal Government Engineer (D3),

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one Government Town Planner (D2) and two Chief Engineers (D1) respectively upon the establishment of LDO in CEDD so as to lead the new LDO; and to redeploy a number of directorate posts within CEDD arising from the establishment of LDO. She pointed out that today's meeting would continue deliberation on the agenda item that was carried over from the meetings on 8 June and 14 June 2016. The Chairman also mentioned that members had handed in proposed motions pursuant to paragraph 31A of the Establishment Subcommittee Procedure ("ESC Procedure") before the meeting.

Justification for creation of the proposed posts and establishment of the Lantau Development Office

3. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen opposed to the establishment proposal. He enquired about the impact on the work of CEDD if the proposal was not approved by the Finance Committee ("FC") within the current term of the Legislative Council ("LegCo"). He also said that some of the tasks stated in paragraph 10 of EC(2016-17)11 (such as Planning and Engineering Study for Sunny Bay Reclamation and Strategic Studies for Artificial Islands in the Central Waters) were still pending approval from FC. As such, the impact on CEDD might be limited even the staffing proposal was not approved by FC. Mr CHAN also noted that the Administration had conducted a public engagement exercise from January to April 2016 on the Work Report submitted by the Lantau Development Advisory Committee ("LanDAC"), and its plan to release further details of Lantau development in the second half of 2016 upon consolidating the views collected. He opined that the staffing proposal should be submitted to the Subcommittee then.

4. Dr Kenneth CHAN said that the meeting minutes of LanDAC revealed that its members had different views regarding whether more emphasis should be placed on the development or conservation of Lantau. But in general, LanDAC was more inclined towards proactive development of Lantau. He opined that the Administration should undertake that after the establishment of LDO, the country parks and the ecologically sensitive coastal areas, which together made up around 70% of the land in Lantau, would not be affected by the development of Lantau. Given the precedents that certain development projects carried out by the Administration had adopted a "destruction prior to development" approach, some members of the public were concerned that the development and conservation of Lantau would not be given due regard in the development of Lantau. If the Administration merely said that it would act in accordance with the established mechanism without giving any undertaking that there would not be any over-development in Lantau, he would oppose to the staffing proposal. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung agreed to Dr CHAN's views.

5. Mr Albert CHAN said that in the past the Administration rarely established a dedicated office for the development of major infrastructure projects before obtaining public consensus. He pointed out that some proposed developments in Lantau (such as the construction of Artificial Islands in the Central Water) had not been fully discussed by the community. He also criticized that by establishing LDO, the Administration might implement some development projects for which public consensus had not been reached. He requested the Administration to withdraw the staffing proposal.

6. Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) ("PSD/W") advised that if the staffing proposal was not approved by FC, there would be inadequate manpower and directorate officers to handle and steer the tasks mentioned in paragraph 10 of EC(2016-17)11. He said that the Administration was analysing the views on Lantau Development collected in the public engagement exercise. In general, the public supported the proposed major directions of development and the principle of balancing and enhancing development and conservation of Lantau as recommended by LanDAC. PSD/W explained that for certain projects that were pending the approval of FC (including Planning and Engineering Study for Sunny Bay Reclamation and Strategic Studies for Artificial Islands in the Central Waters), many advance preparatory works had to be carried out. He stressed that the Government had to establish a dedicated "cross-sectoral, multi-disciplinary" office to take forward the development and conservation works for Lantau. If the staffing proposal was not approved, most of the work could not be carried out due to the lack of manpower.

7. As regards conservation matters, PSD/W pointed out that the development of country parks was subject to the regulation of relevant legislation, and the Government could not develop country parks arbitrarily. Currently, no consensus had been reached in the community on whether the relevant legislation should be amended to facilitate the development of country parks. Thus, the public need not worry that the Lantau development would adversely affect country parks there. He reiterated that in developing Lantau Island, the Government would place equal emphasis on both development and conservation.

8. In response to Mr WU Chi-wai's enquiry, PSD/W confirmed that, unlike the proposed LDO, some of the existing Development Offices ("DevOs") (including the New Territories East Development Office and New Territories West Development Office) in CEDD had not established any dedicated "cross-sectoral, multi-disciplinary" office. He explained that LDO had a much wider work portfolio than other DevOs, and there were precedents that multi-disciplinary DevOs were established for taking forward the development of new towns.

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Works of the proposed Lantau Development Office

9. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung said that while the Administration had repeatedly stressed that in developing Lantau, equal emphasis would be placed on both development and conservation, it had not given due regard to conservation nor paid heed to the views of the public in implementing a number of works projects recently. For instance, in taking forward the improvement works at Tai O which was currently under deliberation by the Public Works Subcommittee, the Government had failed to address the concerns of local residents adequately (such as potential damages to the existing landscape of Tai O). He enquired how LDO would collect public opinions, and was concerned whether the Office would accord importance to such opinions.

10. PSD/W responded that the Government attached great importance to public opinions, and had conducted a public engagement exercise from January to April 2016 regarding the major preliminary proposals for development of Lantau. Director of Civil Engineering and Development added that the improvement works at Tai O aimed to enhance traffic and pedestrian circulation, and resolve the traffic problems of Tai O during public holidays. He emphasized that the works would not affect the existing landscape of Tai O.

Direction of the Lantau Development Strategy

11. Dr Fernando CHEUNG noted that the Administration would study the development of the East Lantau Metropolis ("ELM") as a potential strategic growth area and a new core business district, and planned to develop Lantau into an area with a population of up to one million in the long term. He queried whether it was necessary for Hong Kong to develop Lantau to accommodate such a huge population.

12. PSD/W responded that ELM was a long-term development plan, the implementation of which would not be materialized before 2030, and the Government would undertake timely overall strategic planning on the population distribution of Hong Kong. He also said that according to Government's projections, Hong Kong's population would increase by approximately one million by 2043; and the projected number of households would have a 20% increase to over 2.90 million in 2044. Hence it was necessary for the Government to develop new land to meet the public need for housing and improving the living environment.

13. At the request of Dr Fernando CHEUNG, the Administration was required to provide supplementary information on the anticipated increase in

the population of Hong Kong in the coming 20 to 30 years, and the number of housing units to be provided in various developed areas and new development areas (including new development projects at Kwu Tung North, Fanling North, New Territories North, Hung Shui Kiu and Yuen Long South, etc).

*(Post-meeting note: The supplementary information provided by the Administration was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. ESC135/15-16(01) on 5 July 2016.)*

14. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung opined that the Administration should implement short term projects on improving Lantau (such as projects for alleviating the existing problems of Tung Chung) instead of medium to long-term development projects.

15. In response to Dr Fernando CHEUNG's enquiry, PSD/W advised that the proposed strategic traffic and transport infrastructure in the First-term Work Report titled "Space for All" released by LanDAC in January 2016 was just a preliminary concept, and specific details were not available at the moment.

Motion that further proceedings of the Subcommittee be now adjourned

16. At 3:01 pm, Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung moved that further proceedings of the Subcommittee be now adjourned pursuant to paragraph 32 of the ESC Procedure.

17. The Chairman said that the Subcommittee would proceed to deal with the motion moved by Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung. She advised that each member could speak once on the motion for not more than three minutes.

18. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung said that a number of development projects in Lantau involving medium to long-term planning had been taken forward by the incumbent Chief Executive ("CE"). Since the next term (i.e. the fifth-term) CE Election would be held in 2017, should there be any changes in the holder of CE post, the current Lantau development programmes might not be continued. He opined that discussion on the establishment of LDO should be held after the next term of LegCo and SAR Government had begun.

19. Mr WU Chi-wai, Dr Fernando CHEUNG, Mr CHAN Chi-chuen, Dr Kenneth CHAN, Mr Albert CHAN and Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung spoke in support of the motion. They were concerned that the establishment of LDO might accelerate the pace of development of Lantau (including reclamation involving up to 3 600 hectares of land) and cause irreversible damages to the environment of Lantau. They also considered that the Administration should

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step up efforts in collecting public opinion and implement the relevant development projects only after a consensus had been reached in the community.

20. Ir Dr LO Wai-kiwok and Mr TAM Yiu-chung spoke against the motion. They opined that development and conservation could go hand-in-hand, and it was necessary to establish LDO given the large number of projects to be implemented in Lantau. They further said that the Subcommittee should deal with the outstanding agenda items as soon as practicable.

21. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung spoke in reply on his motion. He criticized the Administration for not having conducted adequate consultation with regard to the development of Lantau.

22. The Chairman put the motion to vote. At the request of Mr Albert CHAN, the Chairman ordered a division and the division bell rang for five minutes. Eleven members voted for and 14 members voted against the motion. The Chairman declared that the motion was negatived. The votes of individual members were as follows –

*For*

Mr James TO	Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung
Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung	Mr Albert CHAN
Mr WU Chi-wai	Mr CHAN Chi-chuen
Dr Kenneth CHAN	Dr Fernando CHEUNG
Mr SIN Chung-kai	Mr IP Kin-yuen
Mr Alvin YEUNG	
(11 members)	

*Against*

Mr CHAN Kam-lam	Mr TAM Yiu-chung
Mr WONG Ting-kwong	Ms Starry LEE
Mr CHAN Hak-kan	Mr NG Leung-sing
Mr Steven HO	Miss Alice MAK
Mr KWOK Wai-keung	Mr Christopher CHEUNG
Dr Elizabeth QUAT	Mr POON Siu-ping
Dr CHIANG Lai-wan	Ir Dr LO Wai-kiwok
(14 members)	

Motions proposed by members pursuant to paragraph 31A of the Establishment Subcommittee Procedure

23. At 3:37 pm, the Chairman remarked that the Subcommittee had been discussing item EC(2016-17)11 for over five hours. As there were still



a number of outstanding agenda items to be dealt with by the Subcommittee, she said that the Subcommittee would begin handling the motions proposed by members pursuant to paragraph 31A of the ESC Procedure. Since some members had handed in a number of proposed motions at the meeting, the Chairman ordered that the meeting be suspended for consideration of the motions.

*(The meeting was resumed at 4:08 pm.)*

24. The Chairman remarked that she had received a total of 20 proposed motions (five of them were handed in before the meeting; and the remaining 15 motions were received during the meeting). Having studied the proposed motions, she considered that they were directly related to the agenda item. However, three proposed motions were duplicated. The Chairman said that she had decided to rule out of order those motions that were repetitive, and to put forth the remaining 17 motions (four of them were submitted by Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung, seven by Mr Albert CHAN, one by Dr Fernando CHEUNG, and the remaining five by Mr CHAN Chi-chuen) to the Subcommittee for deciding whether they should be proceeded forthwith.

25. At 4:11 pm, the Chairman put to vote the question that Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung's [proposed motion numbered 1](#) be proceeded forthwith. At the request of Mr LEUNG, the Chairman ordered a division and the division bell rang for five minutes. Mr LEUNG read out the content of the proposed motion. The question was voted down by a majority of members.

26. At 4:17 pm, Mr CHAN Kam-lam moved that, pursuant to paragraph 39A of the ESC Procedure, in the event of further divisions being claimed in respect of any motions or questions under the item EC(2016-17)11, the duration of the division bell be shortened to one minute. The Chairman said that the Subcommittee would proceed to deal with Mr CHAN's motion, and each member could speak once for not more than three minutes.

27. Mr Albert CHAN, Mr CHAN Chi-chuen, Dr Fernando CHEUNG and Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung raised objection to Mr CHAN Kam-lam's motion. They said that as a number of Committees were holding meetings simultaneously, sufficient time should be given to members to come back to the meeting venue for voting. They further opined that more time should be given to members to consider whether each of the members' proposed motions should be dealt with by the Subcommittee before the Chairman put the question to vote. Some of these members reiterated their opposition to the establishment of LDO.

28. Mr CHAN Kam-lam said that the Subcommittee had been discussing item EC(2016-17)11 for more than six hours. He opined that it

was necessary to establish LDO to help alleviate the existing problems in Lautau and take forward the relevant projects. Furthermore, there were a number of outstanding agenda items to be dealt with by the Subcommittee. He called on members to support his motion.

29. The Chairman put Mr CHAN Kam-lam's motion to vote. At the request of Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung, the Chairman ordered a division and the division bell rang for five minutes. The majority of members voted for the motion. The Chairman declared that the motion was carried.

30. At 4:39 pm, the Chairman put to vote, one by one, the questions that Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung's [proposed motions numbered 2 to 4](#) be proceeded forthwith. At the request of Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung, the Chairman ordered a division and the division bell rang for one minute before members' voting on each question. Mr LEUNG read out the content of each proposed motion during the one-minute time. All questions were voted down.

31. The Chairman then put to vote, one by one, the questions that Mr Albert CHAN's [proposed motions numbered 5 to 11](#) be proceeded forthwith. At the request of Mr Albert CHAN, the Chairman ordered a division and the division bell rang for one minute before members' voting on each question. Mr CHAN read out the content of each proposed motion during the one-minute time. All questions were voted down.

32. The Chairman then put to vote respectively, one by one, the questions that Dr Fernando CHEUNG's [proposed motion numbered 12](#) and Mr CHAN Chi-chuen's [proposed motions numbered 13 to 17](#) be proceeded forthwith. At the request of Dr Fernando CHEUNG and Mr CHAN Chi-chuen, the Chairman ordered a division and the division bell rang for one minute before members' voting on each question. Dr CHEUNG and Mr CHAN read out the content of each proposed motion submitted by them during the one-minute time. All questions were voted down.

#### Voting on the item

33. The Chairman put item EC(2016-17)11 to vote. At the request of Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung, the Chairman ordered a division and the division bell rang for one minute. Fourteen members voted for and seven members voted against the item. The Chairman declared that the Subcommittee agreed to recommend the item to FC for approval. The votes of individual members were as follows —

*For*

Mr CHAN Kam-lam  
Mr WONG Kwok-hing  
Mr WONG Kwok-kin  
Mr NG Leung-sing  
Mr YIU Si-wing  
Miss Alice MAK  
Dr CHIANG Lai-wan  
(14 members)

Mr TAM Yiu-chung  
Ms Starry LEE  
Mr IP Kwok-him  
Mr Steven HO  
Mr MA Fung-kwok  
Mr POON Siu-ping  
Mr Christopher CHUNG

*Against*

Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung  
Mr WU Chi-wai  
Dr Kenneth CHAN  
Mr Alvin YEUNG  
(7 members)

Mr Albert CHAN  
Mr CHAN Chi-chuen  
Dr Fernando CHEUNG

Mr Albert CHAN requested that the item be voted on separately at the relevant FC meeting.

**EC(2016-17)12      Proposed creation of one supernumerary post of Assistant Director of Education (D2) for about three years to 31 March 2019 and one permanent post of Principal Education Officer (D1) in the new Kindergarten Education Division in the Professional Development and Special Education Branch of the Education Bureau with immediate effect upon approval by the Finance Committee to devise an overall strategy for the implementation of the new free quality kindergarten education policy, provide steer in the formulation of specific details of the measures, oversee the implementation of the new policy and monitor the progress of the relevant measures**

34.      The Chairman remarked that the Administration's proposal was to create one supernumerary post of Assistant Director of Education (designated as Principal Assistant Secretary (Kindergarten Education) ("PAS(KGE)")) for about three years to 31 March 2019 and one permanent post of Principal Education Officer (designated as Principal Education Officer (Kindergarten Education) ("PEO(KGE)")) in the new Kindergarten Education Division in the Professional Development and Special Education Branch of the Education Bureau with immediate effect upon approval by FC to devise an overall strategy for the implementation of the new free quality kindergarten education

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policy, provide steer in the formulation of specific details of the measures, oversee the implementation of the new policy and monitor the progress of the relevant measures.

35. The Chairman remarked that the Administration had consulted the Panel on Education on the proposal on 1 February 2016. Members of the Panel noted that in implementing the new free quality kindergarten ("KG") education policy, the Administration would set up a new Kindergarten Education ("KGE") Division and proposed to create one supernumerary post of Assistant Director of Education for about three years to steer the work of the Division and one permanent post of Principal Education Officer to oversee the smooth operation of the Division. Some members considered that the creation of the additional posts might facilitate the implementation of the new and important free KG education policy; but some other members considered it unnecessary to create the posts as there were existing staff administering the Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme ("PEVS"), and the Administration should provide better justification for creation of these posts. Some other members expressed that they did not support the proposal, as the Administration would very often convert supernumerary posts into permanent posts on the ground of operational need when those posts were about to expire. The Panel requested the Administration to fully consider the views and concerns raised by members.

Free quality kindergarten education policy and Government subsidy under the policy

36. Mr IP Kin-yuen noted that the tuition fee threshold for half-day ("HD") KG classes under the current PEVS was \$33,770 per student per annum; however, the basic HD unit subsidy under the new free quality KG education policy would be about \$32,900 in the 2017-2018 school year. He expressed concern about how KGs could provide quality KGE with less resources. He pointed out that, according to the information provided by the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau, out of the 135 HD KGs, there were approximately 40 KGs with annual tuition fees ranging between \$30,000 to \$33,000, which would have operational difficulties in the future and might have to lay off long-serving teachers to reduce manpower or cut their salary. He enquired whether the Administration would re-examine the level of subsidy, or the use of price level as the calculation basis for future adjustment of the amount of subsidy.

37. Mr WU Chi-wai asked the Administration to explain the basis for calculation of subsidy. He was concerned that with provision of subsidy, the Administration would regulate the teaching content of KGs and their arrangement in teaching management.

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38. In response, Under Secretary for Education ("US(Ed) ") explained that currently there were only a small number of HD KGs whose tuition fees reached the threshold of \$33,770 per year. The Government estimated that, after the implementation of the new policy, about 70% to 80% of HD KG places would be free, whereas some KGs would still need to charge tuition fees to cover their operating expenses (e.g. rental cost). He pointed out that the subsidies under the new KG policy could be categorized into two major types, namely the basic HD unit subsidy calculated on a per student unit cost basis, and school-specific grants. In calculating the basic HD unit subsidy, teacher-pupil ratio of 1:11 and the recommended mid-point salary of KG teaching staff, which was around \$25,000 per month (the prevailing mid-point salary received by KG teaching staff was around \$18,500 per month) would be used by the Education Bureau ("EDB") as part of the basis for calculation. School-specific grants included rental subsidy and additional grants for kindergartens admitting non-Chinese speaking students etc. The Government believed that under the new policy, KGs would be able to use resources more effectively to provide free/affordable quality KG education. He remarked that the Government would pro-actively study other viable options for adjusting the amount of subsidy apart from price level as appropriate. Regarding regulation, US(Ed) said that KGs needed to develop an appropriate curriculum in compliance with the KG curriculum guidelines published by EDB, the main requirements of which were the use of play-based teaching strategy to nurture children with an inquisitive mind and an interest in learning and exploration, etc. EDB would not regulate on teaching approaches, teaching content and materials.

39. Ms Starry LEE was concerned about the percentage of KG students who would not be required to pay tuition fee after the implementation of the 15-year free education. She enquired how the Administration would oversee KGs regarding imposition of miscellaneous charges on students in the future, as well as how the establishment proposal could implement the long-term goal of providing more whole-day ("WD") and long whole-day ("LWD") KG places.

40. US(Ed) reiterated that the Government estimated that, after the implementation of the new policy, about 70% to 80% of HD KG places would be free. The new KGE Division would have a dedicated team responsible for discussing and studying with related bureaux/departments for improvement of premises and facilities of KGs and planning of WD places and so on, with a view to providing more space for children activities, as well as increasing WD/LWD KG places. Deputy Secretary for Education (3) (DS(Ed)3) added that collection of miscellaneous charges by KGs should comply with three principles, including necessity, options for parents and transparency. EDB was drawing up guidelines on collection of charges for KGs' compliance.

41. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung indicated that the new free KG education policy aimed at providing free HD KG places, and he considered this long-term goal unsatisfactory, in particular it failed to meet the keen demand of working parents for WD/LWD KG places. He asked whether the Administration would consider collecting the opinions of parents extensively, and converting HD places into WD/LWD KG places gradually. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung raised the same concern.

42. Dr Helena WONG was concerned that, currently in some areas, especially in newly built housing estates, there was serious shortage of WD KG places. She asked whether the Administration would consider re-adjusting the planning standards regarding provision of KG places with a view to increasing WD places in each district. She also suggested the Administration to conduct public survey for the purpose of obtaining more in-depth understanding of the needs of parents for WD places.

43. In response, US(Ed) said that quality of teaching was largely dependent on curriculum design and teaching methods and so on, and that the Government considered HD KGs could achieve the goal of providing quality KGE for children. While the Government had no plan to provide fully subsidized WD/LWD KG places for the time being, additional subsidy for WD/LWD places would be provided. In addition, fee remission would be provided to needy families. In the long run, the Government's goal was to gradually revise the planning standards on provision of KG places from the present 250 WD and 730 HD places to 500 WD and 500 HD places respectively for every 1,000 children aged between three and six to cope with the keen demand and support working parents as appropriate. The Government would review the planning standards on provision of KG places and conduct in-depth study and discuss with different stakeholders and relevant bureaux/departments (such as the Lands Department, Planning Department) as and when appropriate. He stressed that KGs could adjust the ratio of WD and HD places to be provided as appropriate for the purpose of coping with actual demand. EDB had all along been communicating with parents, KGs, teachers and operators to understand their views and needs on KGE. EDB would also consider to further collect views from parents where necessary.

44. Dr Kenneth CHAN said that the Civic Party had always been advocating a 15-year free education. He was concerned that implementation of a new KG education policy would cause a substantial increase in the administrative work of schools, particularly administrative work involving compliance of the rules and guidelines promulgated by EDB. He urged the Administration to reduce the administrative work of KGs, so that they could focus on education. He requested the Administration to take note of his views.

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45. Mr IP Kin-yuen also expressed concern about the administrative work KGs needed to handle under the new policy. He pointed out that KGs were generally in shortage of clerical staff, and the existing administrative work and regular inspections had already added considerable work pressure to teachers of KGs. He hoped that the Administration could implement the new policy without increasing the administrative work of KGs. He also reminded the Administration against applying the mode of regulation of primary and secondary education on KGE.

46. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung expressed concern about the work of the Kindergarten Inspection Section and requested the Administration to elaborate on the details of the work of the Section. He also asked if the Section would study and compare the quality of education between HD and WD/LWD places.

47. US(Ed) and DS(Ed)3 advised that, as government subsidies for KGs would be substantially increased under the new policy, a greater degree of accountability would be required. EDB would request KGs to maintain records and submit audited accounts to EDB annually. They explained that the jobs of the Kindergarten Inspection Section included regular quality assurance inspections to assess whether the teaching of KGs had met the established standards; and focus inspections on individual disciplines (such as child development) to enhance understanding of various types of KGs in various aspects of operations, identify successful experiences for reference of the industry, and enhance support to KGs with needs (for example, provision of training for teachers). The Inspection Section aimed to promoting the sustainable development of KGs, and it would not compare the quality of teaching between HD and WD/LWD places. They further remarked that EDB planned to enhance the quality assurance framework and conduct more focus inspections under the new policy. Nevertheless, the Government would endeavour to strike a balance between enhancing accountability and not increasing the administrative work of KGs.

48. Dr Fernando CHEUNG noted that under the new policy, KGs would continue to be privately operated and subject to the influence of market factors. He pointed out that in the past, some KGs had encountered financial difficulties and were on the brink of closing down due to sharp increase in rentals in the private property market. He urged the Administration to consider subjecting KGs to regulation under relevant codes and providing subsidies to KGs as it currently did to aided primary and secondary schools.

49. US(Ed) pointed out that the new KGE policy were introduced on the basis of the existing KGE, with the objectives of providing affordable good quality KGE to parents, and enhancing the accessibility of students to different

modes of KG services to suit their specific needs. Regarding the issue of premises for KGs, as a long-term strategy, adequate space would be earmarked for premises for KGs in new public housing estates and major construction projects. On the other hand, the Government would also explore the feasibility of co-location of KGs and primary schools. He remarked that since the mode of operations and supervision between primary and secondary schools and kindergartens were different, it was not appropriate to subject KGE to regulation under relevant codes.

50. Mr WU Chi-wai requested the Administration to provide detailed information on the implementation details of free quality KGE policy (such as calculation of rental subsidy, mode of supervision, etc.), and the factors to be taken into account by the Administration in formulating the relevant policy. He also enquired whether it was necessary for the Administration to submit separate funding application to FC with regard to the implementation of the new policy.

51. US(Ed) responded that specific implementation details of free quality KGE policy were yet to be confirmed. As regards rental subsidy, KGs operating at government premises (such as public housing estates) would be eligible for full rental subsidy; KGs located in privately leased premises would have rental subsidy fixed at approximately 50% of the market rents; whereas KGs operating in self-acquired premises would receive maintenance grant. The Government expected that the basic details of the new policy would be finalized in July-August 2016. He added that additional resources necessary for the implementation of the free quality KGE policy would be incorporated into the 2017-2018 Budget.

52. Mr Albert CHAN requested the Administration to further elaborate on quality KGE, in particular whether the amount of homework and the number of teaching hours etc. would be taken as indicators of "quality". In his view, quality KGE should allow children to stay close to nature and be able to think freely.

53. US(Ed) reiterated that the goal of quality KGE was to let children learn through games and nurture them with an inquisitive mind, an interest in exploration as well as self-care skills. He said that the Government was pro-actively studying the feasibility of establishing regional resource centres in areas adjacent to country parks, with a view to giving children more opportunities to stay close to nature.

#### Establishment of the new Kindergarten Education Division

54. Mr YIU Si-wing expressed support for this establishment proposal. He enquired that, apart from the proposed creation of two directorate posts,



whether existing staff in EDB responsible for KGE would be transferred to the new KGE Division. In view of similar mode of operation for free primary and KG education, Mr YIU queried whether consideration would be given to merging the divisions responsible for primary and KG education after the implementation of the free quality KGE policy, with a view to reducing manpower and expenses.

55. US(Ed) responded that the Government proposed to create two directorate posts, namely one supernumerary post of Assistant Director of Education and one permanent post of Principal Education Officer in the new KGE Division. As the next three years was crucial for the preparation, execution and monitoring of the implementation of the free quality KGE policy, dedicated steer and support would be needed at the directorate level for effective achievement of the intended policy objectives. Apart from directorate officers, a total of 59 non-directorate posts would be created in EDB and Rating and Valuation Department (the majority of which were existing positions) to perform additional work arising from the new policy. He pointed out that the current subventions to primary schools were generally in the form of grants and was subject to regulation under relevant codes; whereas for KGE, which was basically privately operated, the Government would provide subsidies on a per student and school-specific basis. Since the mode of operations and supervision between primary schools and kindergartens were markedly different, merging the divisions responsible for primary and KG education could not reduce the required manpower.

56. Mr Martin LIAO enquired whether the work of the KGE Division would be steered by Principal Assistant Secretary (Special Education) ("PAS(SE)") or PEO(KGE) when the post of PAS(KGE) lapsed on 31 March 2019.

57. US(Ed) remarked that when the post of PAS(KGE) lapsed, PEO(KGE) would continue to implement the free quality KGE policy. Whether PEO(KGE) would have to report to PAS(SE) or directly to DS(Ed)3 in the future had not yet been finalized.

58. Mr IP Kin-yuen noted that from 2013 to 2015, the approved establishment of primary and secondary school teachers had been slashed by 0.64%; on the contrary, the establishment of EDB had kept expanding. He enquired whether consideration would be given to reviewing and re-distributing the work and manpower within various divisions of EDB, with a view to reducing the need for increasing manpower. US(Ed) responded that proposals of EDB to increase manpower were submitted after thorough and careful consideration and was subject to stringent procedure for approval by relevant departments.

Matters relating to teachers' profession

59. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung expressed concern about the loss of talents resulting from unsatisfactory remuneration for KG teachers. He asked whether the new KGE Division would draw up a pay mechanism for KG teachers.

60. US(Ed) responded that the Kindergarten Administration Section under the new KGE Division would be tasked to review on matters relating to remuneration and career ladder for teachers and formulation of specific guidelines.

61. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen was concerned about the lack of adequate safeguard to KG teachers (especially long-serving teachers) regarding their remuneration packages, given the mechanism for calculation of subsidy was based on the mid-point salary of teachers under the new policy. Although the Administration would introduce a one-off time-limited tide-over grant (ToG) for eligible KGs for two years upon the implementation of the new policy to provide additional financial support to eligible KGs with a large number of long-serving teachers, after the tide-over period, KGs might reduce the number of the long-serving teachers or slash their salary due to reduction in resources. He asked how the Administration would deal with these problems, and whether consideration would be given to introducing a pay scale for KG teachers.

62. Mr IP Kin-yuen expressed concern about the arrangement of the two-year tide-over period. He asked whether the Administration would consider providing ToG for more than two years to alleviate the financial difficulties of KGs with a large number of long-serving teachers.

63. US(Ed) remarked that the Government suggested drawing up a pay range for each position with a view to assisting KGs to come up with a reasonable salary for their staff. Compared to a mandatory pay scale in which teachers salaries were determined solely in accordance with seniority, the use of a reference salary range would be more appropriate and fit for purpose, because it could ensure competitiveness and at the same time allow flexibility for the KG management to decide on the remuneration of their staff, taking into account their teaching experience and performance, etc. The Government believed that after the two-year tide-over period, KGs with a large number of long-serving teachers could also tide over smoothly to the new policy. That said, the Government would review the operation of KGs in due course after the implementation of the new policy (including the need for ToG and its effectiveness), and formulate supporting measures for KGs when necessary.

Support for kindergarten students with special needs

64. Dr Fernando CHEUNG expressed support for free KGE. He pointed out that currently EDB was implementing an integrated education policy only in primary and secondary schools, and there was no support for integrated education in KGs. At present, children with special needs could queue up for services like special child care centres, early education and training services or kindergarten-cum-child care centres; but due to serious shortage of places for such services, the waiting time was usually very long. He expressed concern that more than 6,800 children aged between two to six in Hong Kong who were assessed to be children with special needs had been waiting for a long time for those services. He enquired how the proposed new KGE Division could help children with special needs to receive appropriate services and shorten the waiting time for the services, and facilitate the Social Welfare Department to give support to children with special needs. He further enquired whether the six staff members under the Special Education Division were knowledgeable on special education. Ms Starry LEE also expressed concern about how EDB would help children with special needs.

65. US(Ed) explained that at present, the Social Welfare Department was responsible for following up cases relating to children aged below six and with special needs. Under the new policy, the teacher-pupil ratio would be improved to 1:11, which could strengthen KG teachers' support for students with different learning needs, including students with special needs. EDB would coordinate with the Labour and Welfare Bureau pro-actively in launching a pilot scheme through the Lotteries Fund to provide on-site rehabilitation services to children with special needs. In addition, EDB would strengthen the support given to schools by a professional team consisting of educational psychologists, in particular the development of appropriate resources for KG teachers to help them taking care of children with special needs. DS(Ed)3 added that all the six staff members under the Special Education Division were knowledgeable in special education, and they would work with the existing special education team in EDB to give further support to KGs in teacher training and use of resources.

66. Dr Fernando CHEUNG disagreed that improving teacher-pupil ratio to 1:11 would help taking care of children with special needs, because those children required specialized assistance from professionals (such as therapists) and teachers with training in special education. He urged the Administration to include in the regulatory ambit of EDB the services required to support children with special needs. He also urged the Administration to seriously deal with the existing problem of lack of timely support with a view to addressing the learning needs of children with special needs. Mr IP Kin-yuen agreed that EDB should strengthen support for children with special needs, in

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particular with regard to training for teacher. He also urged EDB to strengthen support for non-Chinese speaking students and coordination with child care centres.

*(At 6:18 pm, the Chairman announced that the meeting be extended for 15 minutes. Members did not raise any objection.)*

67. The Chairman put the item to vote. Members agreed that the Subcommittee should recommend the item to FC for approval. The Chairman consulted members on whether the item would require separate voting at the relevant FC meeting. Dr Helena WONG requested separate voting for the item at the relevant FC meeting.

*(Post-meeting note: On 24 June 2016, Dr Helena WONG informed the Secretariat to withdraw her request raised for separate voting on the item at the relevant FC meeting.)*

68. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 6:43 pm.

Council Business Division 1  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
7 July 2016