

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. ESC144/16-17
(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

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Establishment Subcommittee of the Finance Committee

Minutes of the 14th meeting
held in Conference Room 1 of Legislative Council Complex
on Wednesday, 24 May 2017, at 8:30 am

Members present:

Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yee, GBS, JP (Chairman)

Hon Alvin YEUNG (Deputy Chairman)

Hon James TO Kun-sun

Hon WONG Ting-kwong, SBS, JP

Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun, JP

Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung

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 KWOK Ka-ki

Hon KWOK Wai-keung

Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung

Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan

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 CHU Hoi-dick

Hon Jimmy NG Wing-ka, JP

Hon HO Kai-ming

Hon LAM Cheuk-ting

Hon Holden CHOW Ho-ding
Hon SHIU Ka-fai
Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing, MH
Hon YUNG Hoi-yan
Hon CHAN Chun-ying
Hon Tanya CHAN
Hon LAU Kwok-fan, MH
Hon Jeremy TAM Man-ho
Dr Hon YIU Chung-yim

Members absent:

Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP
Hon WONG Kwok-kin, SBS, JP
Hon IP Kin-yuen
Hon SHIU Ka-chun
Hon LUK Chung-hung
Hon KWONG Chun-yu
Hon Nathan LAW Kwun-chung

Public Officers attending:

Ms Carol YUEN Siu-wai, JP	Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) 1
Mr Eddie MAK Tak-wai, JP	Deputy Secretary for the Civil Service 1
Mr HON Chi-keung, JP	Permanent Secretary for Development (Works)
Mr Vincent MAK	Deputy Secretary for Development (Works) 2
Mr LAM Sai-hung, JP	Director of Civil Engineering and Development
Mr Robin LEE, JP	Project Manager (Hong Kong Island and Islands), Civil Engineering and Development Department

Clerk in attendance:

Ms Connie SZETO	Chief Council Secretary (1)4
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Staff in attendance:

Mr Keith WONG	Council Secretary (1)4
Ms Alice CHEUNG	Senior Legislative Assistant (1)1
Miss Yannes HO	Legislative Assistant (1)6
Ms Haley CHEUNG	Legislative Assistant (1)9

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The Chairman drew members' attention to the information paper ECI(2017-18)2, which set out the latest changes in the directorate establishment approved since 2002 and the changes to the directorate establishment in relation to the five 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 proposal under discussion at the meeting before they spoke on the item. She also drew members' attention to RoP 84 on voting in case of direct pecuniary interest.

EC(2016-17)29 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 Sustainable Lantau Office (SLO) up to 31 March 2021; and redeployment of three D3, five D2 and 13 D1 directorate posts within CEDD arising from the establishment of SLO and re-organization of the existing Development Offices in CEDD with immediate effect upon approval by the Finance Committee

2. The Chairman remarked that the staffing proposal was to create four supernumerary posts of one Principal Government Engineer (D3), one Government Town Planner ("GTP") (D2) and two Chief Engineers (D1) in the Civil Engineering and Development Department ("CEDD") to lead a new Sustainable Lantau Office ("SLO") up to 31 March 2021; and redeploy three D3, five D2 and 13 D1 directorate posts within CEDD arising from the establishment of SLO and re-organization of the existing Development Offices in CEDD with immediate effect upon approval by the Finance Committee ("FC"). She pointed out that discussion of the item was carried over from the meeting on 26 April 2017.

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3. The Chairman advised that the Secretariat had received a letter from Mr CHU Hoi-dick requesting supplementary information from the Administration, which would be referred to the Administration for follow-up. Besides, the Secretariat had also received six submissions from members of the public opposing the staffing proposal. The submissions had been distributed to members at the meeting.

[Post-meeting note: Mr CHU Hoi-dick's letter and the Administration's reply were circulated to members on 7 June 2017 vide LC Papers No. ESC116/16-17(01) and (02). Relevant public submissions were issued to members on 24 May 2017 vide Lotus Notes e-mail.]

Setting up of the Sustainable Lantau Office

4. Dr YIU Chung-yim expressed agreement with the Administration's initiative to rename the proposed office as "Sustainable Lantau Office" to indicate SLO's emphasis on Lantau's sustainable development. He pointed out that only one of the four proposed directorate posts at SLO was of the TP grade whereas the other three were of the Government Engineer ("GE") grade. He was worried that under such arrangement, the work of developing Lantau would be more about project development at the expense of conservational elements. He proposed adding the directorate posts of architect or landscape architect in SLO.

5. Mr LAU Kwok-fan expressed support for the staffing proposal, and commented that the setting up of SLO would facilitate effective coordination of various development and conservation initiatives for Lantau. Expressing concern that GE accounted for the majority of the proposed directorate officers at SLO, he was worried that the conservation work for Lantau would thus be affected.

6. Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) ("PSD/W") advised that the Government would pursue the principle of "Development at the North; Conservation for the South" in developing Lantau, and a GTP would serve as Deputy Head (SLO) 2 ("DH(SLO)2") to lead the planning and conservation initiatives for Lantau. He pointed out that SLO was a dedicated multi-disciplinary office comprising officers of such grades as architect, surveyor and town planner coupled with a team dedicated to conservation initiatives. Each of the posts would place equal emphasis on development and conservation rather than merely focus on project development for Lantau.

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7. Mr WU Chi-wai opined that in line with the strategy of "Development at the North; Conservation for the South", the Government should consider an arrangement where both Deputy Heads ("DHs") of SLO would be respectively in charge of development and conservation for Lantau, with the work nature of both DHs stated in their post titles to clarify their responsibilities.

8. PSD/W replied that under the proposed work arrangement, both DHs would be responsible for development and conservation concurrently. In the light of the member's concern, the Government would consider re-designating the two DHs from DH1 and DH2 to DH(Works) and DH(Planning and Conservation) respectively as well as reassigning the leadership of SLO's conservation team to DH(Planning and Conservation). Mr WU Chi-wai requested the Administration to provide supplementary information on the details of such changes.

[Post-meeting note: The supplementary information provided by the Administration was circulated to members on 5 June 2017 vide LC Paper No. ESC114/16-17(01).]

9. Mr Martin LIAO pointed out that the staffing proposal had been endorsed by the Subcommittee during the last term of the Legislative Council ("LegCo") but FC eventually had no time to consider the item before the end of the term. He enquired about the impact of failure to set up SLO on Lantau's development.

10. PSD/W advised that without SLO's coordination and its handling of various Lantau development projects in a one-stop manner, progress of various initiatives had been delayed and effectiveness undermined. A lot of projects, including a study on overall transport facilities in North Lantau, could not commence due to manpower shortage. Also, the Sustainable Lantau Blueprint was yet to be completed and promulgated.

11. Noting from Enclosure 4 of the Government's paper that the work of Head(SLO) covered development and conservation projects in Lantau and other outlying islands, Mr CHAN Chi-chuen enquired whether SLO was responsible for the development issues of all outlying islands. And noting from Enclosure 7 of the Government's paper that Chief Engineer/Lantau 1 ("CE/L1") under SLO would lead a team of staff with knowledge and experience in nature conservation to be responsible for all the conservation initiatives and environmental issues, he enquired about the staffing establishment for conservation initiatives at SLO.

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12. Director of Civil Engineering and Development ("DCED") replied that as shown on the map in Enclosure 15 of the Government's paper, SLO's purview included the outlying islands near Lantau to allow for more effective coordination of the development initiatives for various outlying islands. In addition, CE/L1 would lead a three-member conservation team comprising professional officers seconded from the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department. CE/L1 would also need to liaise with other policy bureaux for the coordination of various conservation policies and initiatives for Lantau.

Work of the Sustainable Lantau Office

13. Mr Holden CHOW expressed concern that upon completion of the new reclamation areas in Tung Chung, a large number of residents would move in from 2023 onwards, but the Tung Chung East MTR Station was not expected to commence operation until 2026. He was worried about the acute shortage of transport facilities in the new reclamation areas in Tung Chung. In addition, he was concerned about the shortage of parking spaces at the Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities ("HKBCF") of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge ("HZMB"). People who drove to HKBCF would need to park their cars in Tung Chung, thus aggravating the traffic condition there. He urged the Administration to put in effort to look into ways to solve the aforesaid problems upon the establishment of SLO, including the development of a new public transport system connecting Tung Chung and the airport for the convenience of Tung Chung residents working at the airport.

14. PSD/W replied that the Government was all along concerned about the transport facilities in areas surrounding Tung Chung, including the number of parking spaces at HZMB HKBCF as well as planning for the transport system connecting Tung Chung and the airport. Upon establishment of SLO, the Office would be able to focus on studies to improve the inadequacy of various transport facilities in Lantau.

15. Mr YIU Si-wing expressed support for the staffing proposal. He pointed out that given the rapid development of the Pearl River Delta ("PRD") region, Hong Kong's overall development would become stagnant if Lantau's development was not pursued in due course. He enquired how the Lantau development would tie in with the development of cities in PRD region, including planning for such facilities as hotel and car park, such that the cities would complement and forge partnership with each other.

16. PSD/W said that situated in the western part of Hong Kong, Lantau enjoyed a geographical edge in forging partnership with PRD cities.

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Therefore, strategically speaking, the Government would consider how the planning for Lantau development would tie in with the development of PRD region. In the current preliminary planning of the Government at present, the East Lantau Metropolis would be developed in East Lantau to become a strategic growth area of Hong Kong while North Lantau would be positioned as an international transport, logistics and trade hub in tandem with the construction of the airport's third runway and HZMB. SLO would also conduct studies on the planning for Lantau's hotel and car park facilities and would maintain liaison with the Airport Authority Hong Kong to look into how synergy could be created together with the development of the land around the airport.

17. Ms Tanya CHAN said that she did not fully support the staffing proposal. She hoped the Administration would devise a mechanism to properly manage the areas with conservation value in South Lantau, including considering the establishment of a permit system to limit the number of visitors to conservation areas.

18. Project Manager (Hong Kong Island and Islands), Civil Engineering and Development Department advised that SLO would endeavour to strike a balance between development and conservation in Lantau. By way of illustration, in developing North Lantau, the Government would consider constructing an eco-shoreline in the Tung Chung reclamation site and planting mangroves where ecologically appropriate. He added that the Government would endeavour to conserve South Lantau and avoid pursuing massive construction of road links or supporting facilities in ecologically sensitive areas in promoting leisure and recreation activities so as to avoid damage to the nature.

19. Mr WU Chi-wai commented that it was the Government's expectation to develop and conserve Lantau concurrently, but there would inevitably be clash when it came to implementation. He enquired how SLO would deal with such problems.

20. PSD/W pointed out that various sectors of the community would offer different views on the development and conservation initiatives for Lantau. It was SLO's responsibility to strike a balance among the views in a professional manner and consider the various development and conservation initiatives for Lantau having regard to resources.

21. Dr Fernando CHEUNG commented that the Government's paper merely stated SLO's concept on conservation without offering any concrete plan on conservation for South Lantau, and it would be difficult for the public to monitor SLO's effectiveness in promoting conservation. He

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enquired whether the Administration would set out baselines for conservation initiatives to quantify the work progress and facilitate comparison of the outcomes.

22. PSD/W replied that the Government currently did not have in place any indicator for quantifying conservation initiatives. He supplemented that the Sustainable Development Subcommittee under the Lantau Development Advisory Committee had set up a taskforce to gauge the views of green groups and various stakeholders on how to take conservation initiatives forward in areas with conservation value in Lantau, including Tai O, Pui O, Shui Hau, etc. In addition, \$30 million had been earmarked in the Environment and Conservation Fund for 2017-18 for conservation of South Lantau.

23. Pointing out that there were only two months or so left in the current term of the Government, Dr KWOK Ka-ki enquired whether the new-term Government supported the current development plan for Lantau.

24. PSD/W pointed out that the Government's Lantau development plan had been proposed for more than two years, and its work to take Lantau's development forward would not come to a halt due to the change of its term. He undertook to provide information after the meeting on the new-term Government's view and position on the Lantau development.

[Post-meeting note: The supplementary information provided by the Administration was circulated to members on 5 June 2017 vide LC Paper No. ESC114/16-17(01).]

25. Quoting the Government's supplementary paper (LC Paper No. ESC102/16-17(02)), Mr CHU Hoi-dick pointed out that the Administration had yet to complete various studies relating to Lantau development, including the "Technical Study on Transport Infrastructure at Kennedy Town for Connecting to East Lantau Metropolis". He queried that the Administration refused to provide relevant study reports on the ground that SLO was yet to set up. He urged the Administration to expeditiously provide such reports for members' reference in their consideration of the staffing proposal.

26. PSD/W advised that the studies mentioned by Mr CHU were yet to complete. Upon their completion, the Government could provide the outcomes to LegCo. DCED added that the "Technical Study on Transport Infrastructure at Kennedy Town for Connecting to East Lantau Metropolis" was already at an advance stage and was expected to complete by the middle of this year.

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27. Mr CHU Hoi-dick pointed out that the Government spent a huge amount of public money on Lantau development to address future population development, but the Government's paper did not give an account of Hong Kong's future population policy. Given that the Government had projected that Hong Kong's population would begin to drop after reaching the peak of 8.22 million in 2043, he was worried that the Lantau development plan could not tie in with Hong Kong's actual population development in the future, resulting in a waste of public money. He urged the Administration to explain Hong Kong's population policy for the future.

28. The Chairman pointed out that Mr CHU Hoi-dick's query on population policy involved a broad policy issue. She reminded Mr CHU that he should raise the issue at relevant Panel meetings.

29. PSD/W pointed out that the Government was concerned about population growth and was also aware of the declining trend in household size. Coupled with the fact that the current average living space per person in Hong Kong had lagged behind that of other advanced cities and that a large number of buildings would show signs of ageing, Hong Kong would need more land to cope with the increasing demand for housing. Therefore, there was an imminent need to develop Lantau to provide the land needed.

Conservation of areas not covered by Development Permission Area plans

30. Mr CHU Hoi-dick pointed out that as some areas in South Lantau, including Pui O, etc., were currently not covered by Development Permission Area ("DPA") plans, the Government could not stop land owners from dumping on the sites. As a result, the sites of ecological value were damaged. Mr CHU, Mr James TO and Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung enquired about the Administration's initiatives to tackle the problem of land owners damaging their land intentionally.

31. PSD/W replied that upon establishment of SLO, the Office would expeditiously discuss with the local communities of Lantau and green groups on how improvement could be made regarding the problems. He added that conservation of South Lantau was the Government's policy direction all along, so there was no incentive for land owners to damage their land.

32. Dr YIU Chung-yim, Dr KWOK Ka-ki and Dr Fernando CHEUNG urged the Administration to consider including the areas currently not

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covered by DPA plans in the plans so as to resort to legal means to stop land owners from making continuous damage to their land.

33. PSD/W pointed out that the Government's preliminary legal advice was that the prevailing Town Planning Ordinance (Cap. 131) did not allow designating an area already covered by a statutory outline zoning plan as DPA. He undertook to seek further legal advice from the Government on this issue to provide supplementary information to the Subcommittee.

[Post-meeting note: The supplementary information provided by the Administration was circulated to members on 5 June 2017 vide LC Paper No. ESC114/16-17(01).]

Quality issues of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge

34. Ms Tanya CHAN said that the recently revealed incident of falsified concrete tests for the HZMB project had aroused public concern about the quality issues of HZMB. She enquired about the remedial measures to be taken by SLO to ensure the safety of HZMB. Mr YIU Si-wing also enquired the Administration how SLO would strengthen safety supervision for infrastructure projects in Lantau.

35. PSD/W replied that upon discovery of possible irregularities in the course of the concrete cube tests for the HZMB project in 2016, relevant departments had notified law enforcement agencies to follow it up. While he understood members' concern about the incident, he could not provide details to members as the case was still under investigation by the Independent Commission Against Corruption. The Government would report further details in the press conference to be held tomorrow. He stressed that the Government accorded priority to the safety of HZMB and would not tolerate false or fraud conducts. The Highways Department had commenced non-destructive concrete quality tests on HZMB as well as conducted visual inspections on it. No abnormalities were observed in preliminary outcomes. Relevant departments would continue to study how safety inspection for HZMB should be conducted and would review the Government's safety supervision for infrastructure projects.

36. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen expressed worries that it was inadequate for the Administration to rely solely on visual inspections to ensure the safety of HZMB.

37. PSD/W advised that given the limited timeframe after the revelation of the incident, relevant departments first conducted visual inspections on HZMB and would continue to carry out non-destructive concrete tests at

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the same time to ensure its safety. He supplemented that major civil works for HZMB had been completed, and the bridge and its abutment were already bearing huge loads. Should there be any serious shortfall in concrete quality, there would be cracks which could be identified by visual inspections.

38. The Chairman said that the Subcommittee would continue to discuss this item at the next meeting.

39. The meeting ended at 10:30 am.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
6 July 2017