立法會
Legislative Council

Ref : CB1/PL/ITB

Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting

**Minutes of meeting
held on Monday, 8 June 2020, at 2:30 pm
in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex**

Members present	: Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP (Chairman) Hon Elizabeth QUAT, BBS, JP (Deputy Chairman) Hon James TO Kun-sun Hon WONG Ting-kwong, GBS, JP Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yee, GBS, JP Hon Claudia MO Hon YIU Si-wing, BBS Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP Hon CHAN Chi-chuen Hon CHAN Han-pan, BBS, JP Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, SBS, MH, JP Hon Alvin YEUNG Hon CHU Hoi-dick Hon SHIU Ka-fai, JP Hon YUNG Hoi-yan, JP Hon CHAN Chun-ying, JP Hon HUI Chi-fung
Member absent	: Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan
Member attending	: Hon KWONG Chun-yu

Public officers attending : Agenda item III

Innovation and Technology Bureau

Mr Alfred SIT Wing-hang, JP
Secretary for Innovation and Technology

Mr Davey CHUNG Pui-hong, JP
Deputy Secretary for Innovation and Technology (2)

Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Mr Victor LAM Wai-kiu, JP
Government Chief Information Officer

Mr Tong WONG Chi-kwong, JP
Deputy Government Chief Information Officer

Agenda item IV

Innovation and Technology Bureau

Mr Alfred SIT Wing-hang, JP
Secretary for Innovation and Technology

Mr Davey CHUNG Pui-hong, JP
Deputy Secretary for Innovation and Technology (2)

Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Mr Victor LAM Wai-kiu, JP
Government Chief Information Officer

Mr Jason PUN Si-keung
Assistant Government Chief Information Officer
   (Cyber Security and Digital Identity)

Agenda item V

Commerce and Economic Development Bureau

Mr Clement LEUNG, JP
Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Communications and Creative Industries)
Mr Keith GIANG
Principal Assistant Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Communications and Creative Industries)A

Office of the Communications Authority

Mr Sanda CHEUK
Deputy Director-General (Telecommunications)

Ms Helen LAI
Assistant Director (Market & Competition)

Clerk in attendance	:	Mr Daniel SIN Chief Council Secretary (1)6
Staff in attendance	:	Ms Mandy LI Senior Council Secretary (1)6
		Mr Patrick CHOI Council Secretary (1)6
		Miss Yolanda CHEUK Legislative Assistant (1)6

Action

I.   Confirmation of minutes of meeting and matters arising

(LC Paper No. CB(1)717/19-20   -- Minutes of meeting held on 20 April 2020

LC Paper No. CB(1)710/19-20(01)   -- List of follow-up actions)

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2020 were confirmed.

II. Information papers issued since the last meeting

(LC Paper No. CB(1)633/19-20(01) (Chinese version only)	--	Letter dated 13 May 2020 from Hon Alvin YEUNG regarding the return of the Education Television Centre to the Education Bureau, and the development of the new Broadcasting House of Radio Television Hong Kong
LC Paper No. CB(1)644/19-20(01)	--	Administration's paper on update on data centre development in Hong Kong
LC Paper No. CB(1)694/19-20(01)	--	Administration's response to the letter dated 13 May 2020 from Hon Alvin YEUNG regarding the return of the Education Television Centre to the Education Bureau, and the development of the new Broadcasting House of Radio Television Hong Kong [LC Paper No. CB(1)633/19-20(01)]
LC Paper No. CB(1)709/19-20(01) (Chinese version only)	--	Letter dated 29 May 2020 from Hon Alvin YEUNG regarding the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau's recent announcement that a dedicated team would be established to review the governance and management of Radio Television Hong Kong)

LC Paper No. CB(1)736/19-20(01) -- Administration's response to the letter dated 29 May 2020 from Hon Alvin YEUNG regarding the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau's recent announcement that a dedicated team would be established to review the governance and management of Radio Television Hong Kong [LC Paper No. CB(1)709/19-20(01)])

2.   Members noted that the above papers had been issued after the last meeting.

Radio Television Hong Kong

3.   The Chairman said that Mr Alvin YEUNG had written to him over two issues related to Radio Television Hong Kong ("RTHK") and requested for discussion with the Administration at the earliest opportunity within the current Legislative Council ("LegCo") session. Members noted that (a) a letter dated 13 May 2020 from Mr YEUNG regarding the return of the Education Television Centre ("ETC") to the Education Bureau ("EDB"), and the development of the new Broadcasting House of RTHK; and (b) another letter dated 29 May 2020 from Mr YEUNG expressing concerns about Commerce and Economic Development Bureau's recent announcement that a dedicated team would be established to review the governance and management of RTHK.

4.   Mr Alvin YEUNG took the view that the resumption of ETC by EDB would invariably affect the operation of RTHK as well as its role as the sole public service broadcaster in Hong Kong. He considered that the matter deserved the attention of the Panel.

5.   Ms Claudia MO criticized that the Administration had hastily sought to establish a dedicated team to review the irregularities of RTHK amidst the controversies surrounding the territory. In her view, the Administration's motive was dubious. Ms MO also criticized the Administration for targeting against RTHK; by contrast, the Administration had not set up similar task forces to follow up, for example, findings of Audit Reports on malpractices of other government departments. Ms MO was particularly concerned as to whether the establishment of the dedicated team would put pressure on RTHK on editorial matters, and agreed that a discussion should be arranged at a meeting of the

Panel. <u>Mr YIU Si-wing</u> did not subscribe to the view that the establishment of a dedicated team would put pressure on RTHK. He however considered that the Panel would likewise put pressure on the Administration if the Panel discussed this issue without taking into account the report to be submitted by the dedicated team.

6. <u>Ms Claudia MO</u> considered that the decision to resume ETC by EDB was taken too hastily. She queried the Administration's argument that RTHK had sufficient office accommodation for re-provisioning offices and production facilities. She suggested that the Administration should consult RTHK's staff associations whether staff could cope with the reduction in space and facilities after the return of ETC to EDB. <u>Mr WONG Ting-kwong</u> considered it unnecessary to consult RTHK's staff associations as he did not think they had a say over matters relating to the allocation of government resources. He also commented that it was not appropriate for the Panel to discuss this issue.

7. <u>The Deputy Chairman</u> pointed out that there was no need to hold a special meeting to discuss issues related to RTHK. She considered it inappropriate for the Panel to interfere with the resumption of ETC by EDB as it was an internal administrative matter of the Government. Indeed, the Director of Audit's Report No. 71 ("Report No. 71") had identified a number of areas for improvement by RTHK to, among other things, handle other management and governance issues. Besides, as the programme contents of RTHK had aroused wide public concern, it was understandable that the Administration should establish a dedicated team to review the governance and management of RTHK. <u>The Deputy Chairman</u> commented that the Panel should follow up any matter of interest after the publication of the review team's report, instead of holding a meeting to discuss the issue at this juncture. <u>Mr YIU Si-wing</u> echoed the Deputy Chairman's view. <u>The Deputy Chairman</u> further said that members could obtain relevant information, such as the composition of the dedicated team, through other channels.

8. <u>Mr WONG Ting-kwong</u> noted that the Director of Audit had made a number of key recommendations on RTHK, in the value for money report, regarding its low TV ratings and public awareness. Following the change in the mode of production of ETV programmes, and in the light of the recommendations made in the Report No. 71, there seemed little service need for RTHK staff to use ETC. It was reasonable for EDB to resume ETC. On the other hand, RTHK had been given enough time to make arrangement to move out from ETC.

9. <u>Mr KWONG Chun-yu</u> was concerned that while RTHK had to produce a considerable number of TV and radio programmes, the existing buildings

located at the Broadcast Drive were unable to cope with operational needs. The existing RTHK premises also required very frequent maintenance and repair. He was worried that the resumption of ETC by EDB would make it more difficult for RTHK to operate and produce programmes. Mr KWONG suggested that the Administration should address members' queries at a meeting to be scheduled.

10.   Mr YIU Si-wing mentioned that some members of public had considered that some of the programmes produced by RTHK appeared to be partial and biased. As the community had divergent views on the performance of RTHK, it seemed reasonable that the Administration should evaluate the work of RTHK in a partial manner. Mr YIU further said that the high production cost for school ETV programmes had revealed that improvement should be made on some of the working procedures, such as procurement process. In view of the above, Mr YIU agreed that the Administration should conduct a review on RTHK's production of school ETV programmes to determine the way forward and the improvement measures to be taken.

11.   Mr CHAN Chun-ying commented that the Panel should concern itself with high level oversight of the Administration's policy matters. He considered that members' queries were mainly related to on-going operational issues, and agreed that the Panel should discuss with the Administration on broad policy issues arising from the report of the dedicated team.

12.   The Chairman concluded that, taking into consideration members' views, he would ask the Administration to consider members' views and advise whether it would agree that a meeting should be held at which the Administration would address members' concerns directly, or whether it would provide a more detailed written response to the issues raised without prejudice to the review to be conducted.

> (*Post-meeting note*: The Administration provided a written response on 17 June 2020 to address the matters of concern regarding RTHK raised by members at the meeting. Having considered members' views and the Administration's response, the Chairman directed that a special meeting would not be held at this stage to further discuss the issues. The Administration's response was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)784/19-20(01) on 19 June 2020.)

Data centre development in Hong Kong

13.   The Chairman informed members that the Administration had provided an information paper for the Panel in response to Mrs Regina IP's earlier concerns

and suggestion that an item be put on the agenda of a Panel meeting to discuss the data centre development in Hong Kong. Members agreed that no further action would be required.

III. Update on smart city development

    (LC Paper No. CB(1)710/19-20(02)   --   Administration's paper on the update on smart city development

    LC Paper No. CB(1)710/19-20(03)   --   Paper on the smart city development prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Updated background brief))

Briefing by the Administration

14. At the invitation of the Chairman, Secretary for Innovation and Technology ("S for IT") briefed members on the latest position of smart city development. S for IT said that relevant government bureaux and departments ("B/Ds") as well as and public bodies had been actively taking forward initiatives under the *Smart City Blueprint for Hong Kong* ("the Blueprint") over the last two years. To provide essential digital infrastructure for smart city development, the next generation government cloud platform and big data analytics platform would be launched in the third quarter of 2020. Moreover, the one-stop personalized digital government services platform, "iAM Smart", would be launched in the fourth quarter of 2020, enabling the public to conduct authentication and transactions online with a single digital identity. S for IT said that the Administration would release the *Smart City Blueprint for Hong Kong 2.0* ("Blueprint 2.0") this year to report on the progress of existing initiatives and new proposals. More than 100 initiatives would be set out under six smart areas in Blueprint 2.0. Details of these items were set out in the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(1)710/19-20(02)).

Discussion

Multi-functional smart lampposts pilot scheme

15. Ms Claudia MO noted that the Smart Lampposts Technical Advisory Ad Hoc Committee ("the Ad Hoc Committee") established by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer ("OGCIO") had agreed that the Government should adopt more privacy-friendly technology solutions, and

enhance information security as well as privacy protection measures. She pointed out that, facial recognition function aside, the smart lampposts had aroused wide public concern over privacy matters, including whether the collected personal data would be transferred to the Mainland authorities for surveillance purpose.

16.   S for IT said that the Administration was aware of the public concern over potential privacy issues arising from the operation of smart lampposts, and had been taking follow-up actions proactively to address the concerns in an open and transparent manner. S for IT said that smart lampposts were key infrastructure for promoting smart city development in Hong Kong as they could collect real-time city data such as air quality, traffic flow, etc. and accommodate base stations to support the fifth generation mobile communications ("5G") services. The Administration had also established the Ad Hoc Committee to review privacy preserving technologies and measures of relevant applications. Government Chief Information Officer ("GCIO") said that the Ad Hoc Committee had reviewed comprehensively the design and operation of smart lampposts as well as the functions and technologies employed in the applications, such as light emitting diode ("LED") lighting, meteorological sensor, bluetooth beacon. The Ad Hoc Committee concluded that the smart lampposts had no personal data privacy issue. Meanwhile, the Administration had published the Committee's report through the smart lamppost thematic website.

17.   In response to Ms Claudia MO's further enquiry on whether the smart lampposts had installed any software from the Mainland such that the collected data would be transferred to the Mainland authorities, S for IT replied in the negative. S for IT said that the Administration had briefed the Kwun Tong District Council ("KTDC") in March and May 2020 on the latest position of the multi-functional smart lampposts pilot scheme ("the pilot scheme") and the views and recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee. To step up publicity of the scheme and public engagement, the Administration was planning to organize public exhibitions in Kwun Tong district in the third quarter of 2020 to explain the details of the devices, so as to enhance greater transparency of the smart lamppost initiative. GCIO said that OGCIO had engaged independent third-party parties to conduct privacy impact assessments before the implementation of the pilot scheme and confirmed that the smart lampposts would not infringe upon personal privacy.

18.   Mr Alvin YEUNG remarked that the controversy over the smart lampposts reflected the public's distrust of the Administration; many people were concerned whether the smart lampposts would leave a backdoor through which personal data might be leaked. Mr YEUNG expressed reservation

towards the proposed installation of smart lampposts and suggested that the Administration should review critically whether the initiative should continue. Noting that OGCIO together with the Highways Department had briefed KTDC in March and May 2020 on the latest position of the pilot scheme, Mr YEUNG further sought elaboration on KTDC's comments, and asked whether the Administration would take into account KTDC's views.

19.   GCIO said that he attended the meeting of KTDC held on 17 March 2020 to report on views and suggestions made by the Ad Hoc Committee after its review on related privacy protection technology and measures applied. KTDC had agreed in principle that the implementation of pilot scheme in Kwun Tong district could continue to be followed up at the Housing, Planning and Lands Committee under KTDC.   Although members of KTDC did not support immediate re-activation of the pilot scheme, they agreed that the Administration should continue to promote innovation and technology ("I&T") development in Hong Kong. GCIO said that KTDC had also suggested that the Administration should step up publicity so as to allay public concerns towards smart lampposts. To this end, OGCIO would organize public exhibitions in Kwun Tong district in the third quarter of 2020 to explain the purpose of the scheme, showcase the devices on and applications of smart lampposts with demonstrations so as to facilitate public understanding of the smart devices and their applications. The Administration would decide the way forward having regard to the views of KTDC and members of the public.

20.   Mr Alvin YEUNG commented that while some members of KTDC were supportive of I&T development in Hong Kong, it did not mean that KTDC had agreed that the Administration should continue to implement the pilot scheme. He sought confirmation on whether the KTDC's decision would be duly taken into account in case that KTDC held different stance from that of the Administration.

21.   S for IT said that as smart lampposts were key infrastructure for promoting I&T development in Hong Kong, the Administration should, having regard to the overall interest of Hong Kong, continue with the pilot scheme. The Administration would step up publicity to facilitate public understanding of the design and operation of smart lampposts. S for IT said that due consideration would be given to the overall views of the public, while a balance would be struck between protecting personal data privacy and facilitating smart city development. Mr Alvin YEUNG remained concern if the Administration would insist on implementing the pilot scheme despite the objection raised by KTDC or other District Councils.

22.   Mr MA Fung-kwok supported the smart lampposts initiative. He was especially concerned what measures the Administration would take to enhance the quality of smart lampposts so as to support the roll out of the 5G services in the near future.

23.   Mr CHAN Chi-chuen suggested that the Administration should learn from the experience of implementing the pilot scheme, and further elucidate the relevant policies and measures so as to garner public support on smart city development in a progressive manner. Mr HUI Chi-fung pointed out that members of the public in general did not trust the Government and preferred the Administration using equipment with low technology content rather than adopting surveillance technology.

24.   In response to members' views and questions above, S for IT said that the Administration would continue to support the protection of data security and personal data privacy as well as promote smart city development in Hong Kong, and dedicate efforts to instill public confidence in the pilot scheme.

25.   Given that there were public concerns on the use of cameras on lampposts, worrying that the identities of citizens could be captured from the recorded videos and personal privacy might be leaked, Mr YIU Si-wing suggested that the Administration should consider exploring other options to replace smart lampposts. Mr YIU also commented that the Administration might, for example, use cameras to take low-resolution images only, and should have stated clearly to the public about the major functions of smart lampposts, particularly the data being collected by the smart lampposts would be limited to big data analytics.

26.   S for IT said that smart lampposts could provide a suitable infrastructure for collecting city data and installing radio base stations for provision of 5G services. The Administration would also assist mobile network operators to use suitable government venues and public facilities (e.g. public telephone kiosks) for the installation of small cell base stations. S for IT said that efforts would be made to facilitate public understanding of the smart devices and their applications.

Wi-Fi Connected City Programme

27.   Noting that the number of free public Wi-Fi hotspots had been increased to about 36 300 by end-2019, Mr MA Fung-kwok said that many feedback received indicated that the connection speed of free Wi-Fi hotspots in many areas was less stable. He enquired about the Administration's concrete measures to improve the connection speed of free Wi-Fi hotspots.

28.   S for IT said that the Administration had all along attached great importance to ensuring both quality and quantity of free Wi-Fi hotspots. For example, the average connection speed of the "Wi-Fi.HK" hotspots exceeded 20 megabits per second ("Mbps") which was sufficient for downloading and watching videos smoothly. Moreover, the Administration had provided high-speed Wi-Fi access points at popular tourist attractions with connection speed of over 100 Mbps. S for IT further said that the connection speed and stability of Wi-Fi services were affected by various factors such as the number of concurrent users and the network traffic, etc. The Administration would regularly review the connection speed of hotspots under the "Wi-Fi.HK" brand and liaise with the participating organizations to ensure the quality of the Wi-Fi service.

29.   GCIO said that the Administration had completed various enhancements to the Wi-Fi service at government venues, including adopting contemporary technology standard (IEEE 802.11ac) and replacing copper wires with optic fibres to provide faster and more stable Wi-Fi service. Since the completion of the service enhancement works, surveys had revealed that users' satisfaction with the Wi-Fi service at government venues had continuously improved and risen from 2.6 points in mid-2018 to around 3.1 points (out of a 4-point scale) at present. The Administration would continue to monitor the transmission speed and usage of the Wi-Fi hotspots at government venues regularly so as to ensure service quality and cost-effectiveness.

30.   In response to the Chairman's query, GCIO said that the Administration had already completed various enhancement works on the Wi-Fi service provided at government venues. The slow connection speed at a few venues might be due to the fact that many people were using the service at the same time.   The Administration would monitor the bandwidth usage at each government venue and adjust the bandwidth at the venues wherever feasible to provide the public with faster and more stable Wi-Fi services.

"iAM Smart" platform

31.   The Deputy Chairman asked about the implementation progress of the "iAM Smart" platform, including the number of B/Ds that would adopt "iAM Smart" and the number of public services that would be supported by the system when it was launched.

32.   S for IT said that the Administration would launch the "iAM Smart" platform in the fourth quarter of 2020. 23 commonly used online government services would be accessible through the platform by then. It was expected that by mid-2021, residents could access about 110 online government services

through the platform. The remaining e-government services would adopt "iAM Smart" progressively when the major upgrades of the relevant systems were completed. The Administration would continue to drive B/Ds in adopting "iAM Smart" for e-Government services.

Development of common spatial data infrastructure

33.   The Deputy Chairman remarked that the public expected the early implementation of smart city initiatives so that more convenient services could be provided. When the Administration was pressing ahead in full steam with the implementation of essential digital infrastructure for smart city development, which included "iAM Smart" and the Common Spatial Data Infrastructure ("CSDI"), the Deputy Chairman expressed concern about the readiness of various departments, particularly Hong Kong Observatory ("HKO") and Hospital Authority, for providing their services through the CSDI portal. The Deputy Chairman pointed out that data in the CSDI portal should be organized in the form of layers using Geographic Information System. Given that some featured locations needed to be tagged, concerted efforts of B/Ds were crucial in developing CSDI. The Deputy Chairman asked if B/Ds had made available the information relating to a particular address location of ground features, e.g. lampposts, trees, refuse collection bins, bus stops.

34.   S for IT said that the Lands Department ("LandsD") had been working closely with B/Ds to deliver up-to-date map services and spatial data to the public via GeoInfo Map. Separately, B/Ds would be encouraged to make their data available for sharing through the CSDI portal. For example, the Administration had introduced the "COVID-19 Infection Local Situation Interactive Map Dashboard" in February 2020 to keep the public abreast of the latest situation of the epidemic. GCIO said that a Common Spatial Data Steering Committee co-chaired by the Development Bureau and the Innovation and Technology Bureau ("IT&B") had been set up to provide strategic directions for the CSDI development so as to enable various B/Ds to share their data in geospatial format collaboratively. The Deputy Chairman requested the Administration to provide, after the meeting, a list of government departments which would make their data available for sharing through CSDI and supplementary information on how the Administration would plan to promote CSDI.

>   (*Post-meeting note*: The Administration's response was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)918/19-20(01) on 3 August 2020.)

Smart environment

35.   Mr CHAN Chi-chuen sought information on (a) how the installation of LED lamps in public lighting systems would help foster the development of smart environment; (b) the practical effect of retro-commissioning in promoting green buildings; and (c) the Administration's progress of introducing smart litter containers in rural areas.

36.   S for IT said that the Administration had been actively promoting the adoption of technologies for energy efficiency and energy saving.   The Administration had been installing LED lamps in public lighting systems progressively with a view to achieving energy saving.   On the promotion of retro-commissioning in major government buildings, S for IT said that buildings underwent operational and occupancy changes over time which hindered optimal performance of the building systems.   Retro-commissioning was a systematic process to check the energy-consuming equipment of buildings, such as air conditioning system, and to identify potential areas to improve energy efficiency.   Retro-commissioning generally could contribute to some energy saving without the need to replace or upgrade the existing equipment.   As regards the implementation progress of smart litter containers, the Administration would consider adopting internet of things technology to promote the use of smart litter bins in future.

37.   In response to Mr YIU Si-wing's query as to whether LED public lighting were maintained by IT&B, S for IT said that the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department was responsible for the maintenance of LED public lighting.   Indeed, B/Ds had been actively pursuing the initiatives under the six smart areas of the Blueprint.   Overall, B/Ds would endeavour to adopt technology applications in efficient power consumption and energy conservation.

Smart mobility

38.   Mr HUI Chi-fung pointed out that there were criticisms about the information disseminated by the "HKeMobility" mobile application ("app") and the Government's public sector information ("PSI") portal (data.gov.hk).   Many people had commented that the real-time parking vacancy information and traffic and transport information was inadequate, the interfaces of both "HKeMobility" app and PSI portal were not user friendly, the response of the app was slow and the app closed unexpectedly.   He sought details of the development costs and the recurrent maintenance expenses of "HKeMobility" mobile application.   He also asked how the Administration would improve readability of relevant data.   GCIO undertook to provide relevant information after the meeting.

(*Post-meeting note*: The Administration's response was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)918/19-20(01) on 3 August 2020.)

39.   Mr HUI Chi-fung noted that LandsD had since June 2018 imposed conditions in the new tenancy agreements for short-term tenancy public fee-paying car parks, requiring operators to provide parking vacancy information and data to the Government. As at end May 2020, real-time parking vacancy information of about 360 public car parks was disseminated via "HKeMobility" app. Mr HUI requested the Administration to provide the details of parking vacancy information of about 360 public car parks provided by government departments and non-government operators, the number of non-government car parks in which their operators did not open up their parking vacancy information, and when the Administration expected parking vacancy information of all car parks would be made available.

40.   GCIO said that the "Citymapper" app was very popular and the developer of the Citymapper app welcomed the Administration's initiative to open up real-time arrival information related to public transport for use by the app to facilitate commuting and trip planning. Meanwhile, the Transport Department ("TD") had made continued efforts to promote dissemination of parking vacancy information of public car parks. TD would also open up real-time vacancy data of on-street metered parking spaces. GCIO further said that "HKeMobility" app had provided real-time parking vacancy information of about 300 non-government public car parks. TD would provide further information after the meeting.

(*Post-meeting note*: The Administration's response was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)918/19-20(01) on 3 August 2020.)

41.   Mr YIU Si-wing enquired about the Administration's target, if any, on the dissemination of parking vacancy information of public car parks, and whether and how the Administration would overcome the difficulties encountered so as to ensure that more than 90% of parking vacancy data of car parks would be made available. S for IT said that the Administration would continue to encourage commercial car park operators to provide and disseminate information and real-time parking vacancy data of their car parks.

42.   Mr CHAN Chun-ying noted that the Hong Kong International Airport ("HKIA") had been applying technology to provide passengers with a unique experience and to enhance the airport's operational efficiency. Nevertheless, the Administration did not specify the implementation timetable for the proposed initiatives, such as increasing automation and use of robotics, expanding mobile

smart check-in services to off-airport locations, and using autonomous electric tractor for carrying baggage containers, etc. He asked if the Administration would enhance Hong Kong's capability in combating the epidemic by using I&T solutions, such as disinfecting passenger baggages and cargoes when the services of HKIA resumed in near future. He commented that it was opportune to carry out the enhancement work at HKIA.

43. S for IT said that HKIA had adopted robotic technology for indoor disinfection in order to maintain environmental hygiene and minimize cleaning staff's exposure to viruses and germs. Moreover, the Administration had recently launched a special call for trial projects under the Public Sector Trial Scheme to support product development and application of technologies for the prevention and control of the pandemic. The target funding recipients were local research and development ("R&D") centres, universities and other designated public research institutes, as well as all technology companies conducting R&D activities in Hong Kong. The Administration had received a total of 332 applications, most of which were related to the prevention and control of the epidemic, such as reduction of the infection risks and its spread.

Smart economy

44. Mr CHAN Chun-ying noted that among the tax returns received for the 2018-2019 assessment year, the Inland Revenue Department had only received 110 claims for tax deduction relating to R&D expenditures, and the relevant expenditures for claiming tax deduction were about $1.82 billion. He enquired about the Administration's measures to encourage more enterprises to conduct R&D work amid the severe economic recession, including whether the Administration would consider expanding the scope of application of the tax deduction measures or providing additional tax concessions for R&D related activities.

45. S for IT said that as the legislation for enhanced tax deduction for expenditures incurred on "qualifying R&D activities" by enterprises was only enacted in October 2018, we did not expect a large number of claims for R&D tax deduction within such a short time for the 2018-2019 financial year. The Administration would keep a close watch on the relevant situation, and introduce suitable measures as and when appropriate for encouraging R&D investment by private enterprises. In terms of nurturing talent, the funding scope of the Researcher Programme and Postdoctoral Hub under the Innovation and Technology Fund had been expanded to all technology companies conducting R&D activities in Hong Kong since March 2020. S for IT further said that the Administration also funded the operating expenditures of R&D Centres, which worked closely with the industry to encourage private

investment in R&D in Hong Kong. In addition, a number of new initiatives had been introduced to support R&D work by universities and public research institutes.

Other issues

46.   Mr CHU Hoi-dick noted with concern that HKO had recently issued general forecasts and warnings on hazardous weather regarding a wider area in the territory without considering the fact that some districts (e.g. Tai Po) experienced a heavy rainstorm. HKO had not issued the black rainstorm warning signal as the specified rainfall levels were not reached in average. Mr CHU asked whether and how the Administration would explore possible means to help HKO issue early alert to the public regarding the forecast of natural disasters for some locations including villages which were prone to weather-related threats, so as to alleviate the impact on local residents in these locations.

47.   S for IT said that the smart lampposts would be used to collect meteorological and related city data and better assess weather conditions in different districts. In response to the Chairman's enquiry on whether the Administration would convey Mr CHU's view to HKO for consideration, S for IT said that HKO already had a plan in this regard.

IV.   Launching of "iAM Smart" platform and other digital government service initiatives

(LC Paper No. CB(1)710/19-20(04)	--	Administration's paper on the launching of "iAM Smart" platform and other digital government service initiatives
LC Paper No. CB(1)710/19-20(05)	--	Paper on the e-Government and iAM smart prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Updated background brief))

Briefing by the Administration

48.   At the invitation of the Chairman, Assistant Government Chief Information Officer (Cyber Security and Digital Identity) briefed members on the preparatory work for launching the "iAM Smart" platform. The target was

to launch the platform in the fourth quarter of 2020 to provide one-stop personalized digital government services. Details of the briefing were set out in the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(1)710/19-20(04)).

> (*Post-meeting note*: A soft copy of the powerpoint presentation (Chinese version only) was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)711/19-20(01) by email on 8 June 2020.)

Discussion

"iAM Smart" registration and usage

49.   The Deputy Chairman expressed that the smart city initiatives including "iAM Smart" were long-awaited by members of the public as it was expected that the Administration would provide the public with more convenient services. She said that she did not subscribe to the view held by Mr HUI Chi-fung earlier at the meeting (see paragraph 23 above) that members of the public in general were reluctant to support the development and the application of technologies. She was however concerned whether the public would be active in using "iAM Smart". Noting that members of the public could register "iAM Smart" at self-service kiosk in specified government premises and public locations or via mobile registration team, the Deputy Chairman questioned what measures would be taken if queuing people therein took photographs of other users' personal data during the registration process. S for IT said that the Administration had considered how best to enhance the protection of personal data during user registration of "iAM Smart" at self-service kiosks.

50.   Mr CHAN Chun-ying noted that when the "iAM Smart" platform was launched in the fourth quarter of 2020, 23 commonly used online government services would be accessible through the platform. He was of the view that as some e-government services (e.g. eTAX, renewal of full driving licence) had already accepted applications by post, there might be no significant difference between using "iAM Smart" and existing e-government services, especially at the initial stage of launching "iAM Smart".

51.   Pointing out that members of the public were still required to access some government services in person, such as submitting applications for marriage record or legal aid, Mr CHU Hoi-dick sought information on the details of public services would/or would not adopt "iAM Smart".

52.   S for IT said that the public services of all government departments were expected to support "iAM Smart" where possible. GCIO said that even with the launch of the "iAM Smart" platform, some government services might not be

able to accept electronic signature or support electronic submission under the exemption provisions of the Electronic Transactions Ordinance (Cap. 553). In addition, there might be services which required the processing by a party outside the Government (e.g. banks), procedures requiring face-to-face verification of applicant's identity, etc. In reply to Mr CHU Hoi-dick's further enquiry about a list setting out the types of public services would not adopt "iAM Smart", S for IT said that the relevant information was not available at this juncture. The Administration would, however, endeavour to promote a wider adoption of "iAM Smart" in the public services.

53.   The Chairman noted that OGCIO would provide two versions of "iAM Smart", namely "iAM Smart Lite" and "iAM Smart", while the latter would provide the additional function of digital signing. He asked the Administration to explain, with examples, what kinds of government services would require digital signing, thus providing an impetus for adopting "iAM Smart" by the public.

54.   GCIO said that currently, members of the public could submit applications for renewal of vehicle licences either in person or online using digital certificates. Upon registration at designated self-service kiosks or registration service counters, users would then be able to access those government services which required digital signing, including the renewal of vehicle licences, through the "iAM Smart" platform. The Chairman suggested that the Administration should encourage B/Ds to provide an additional function in their apps or services, for example, issuing personalized notifications like renewal of vehicle licences. GCIO noted the Chairman's suggestion.

55.   Mr CHAN Chun-ying noted that the Administration would start the promotion and publicity of "iAM Smart" in the third quarter of 2020 through different channels such as television and social media to announce details of the "iAM Smart" registration methods and other relevant information. He suggested that the Administration should accord priority to encourage civil servants to use "iAM Smart" in order to facilitate wider adoption of "iAM Smart" among the community. Citing the caring arrangement for the smart identity card replacement exercise as an example, Mr CHAN called on the Administration to provide priority registration for specific groups, such as young people. The Deputy Chairman shared a similar view.

56.   S for IT said that the registration process of "iAM Smart" would be relatively convenient as compared to the territory-wide identity card replacement exercise. To encourage wider use of "iAM Smart", the Administration would continue with the on-going efforts of promoting the adoption of "iAM Smart" in different public services, such as electricity, gas and water. Furthermore, the

Administration would actively promote "iAM Smart" to the public, including civil servants. S for IT anticipated that "iAM Smart" would be well received by the public.

57.   The Deputy Chairman was concerned that many elderly persons were not familiar with registration and usage of "iAM Smart". She asked if any measures would be introduced to facilitate the registration by elderly persons, such as conducting door-to-door registration for them.

58.   S for IT said that the Administration currently did not have any plan to arrange priority registration for the elderly. Rather, the Administration intended to promote the use of "iAM Smart" among the young people who were familiar with the use of digital technology. The Administration expected that these young users would recommend "iAM Smart" to their elderly relatives thereafter.

59.   The Deputy Chairman held the view that the digital government service initiatives would bring more convenience to the public, particularly elders who seldom used smart phones or digital technology for online shopping. To narrow the digital divide, the Deputy Chairman called on the Administration to encourage wider adoption of "iAM Smart" among the elderly. The Chairman suggested that the Administration could target at elderly persons who were learning computer skills at district elderly community centres so as to assist them in using "iAM Smart" more effectively.

Protection of privacy

60.   The Chairman noted that the Administration would introduce an "e-ME" service when the "iAM Smart" platform was launched. The data provided by users would be encrypted and stored in government data centres. He was concerned whether the biometric data, such as a photograph of Hong Kong Identity Card ("HKID") and a self-portrait digital photograph, would be uploaded onto the server during user registration.

61.   GCIO said that the use of "iAM Smart" was voluntary. In the registration process, the system would verify the applicant's identity against the records of the Immigration Department. The HKID photo provided and the self-portrait digital photograph taken by applicant during registration for "iAM Smart" would be deleted immediately after verification of user identity. Other personal information provided during registration would only be used for "iAM Smart" account management. User data would be encrypted and stored in government data centre facilities to protect data security and personal privacy.

Electronic signing

62.   Mr CHAN Chun-ying noted that residents could use "iAM Smart" to perform digital signing in accordance with Cap. 553 for handling statutory documents and procedures. He queried whether the Administration would enact legislation or, by way of subsidiary legislation, propose a legislative amendment to the existing statutory provisions on digital signing.

63.   GCIO said that "iAM Smart" would provide an additional function of digital signing, which was supported by digital certificate. Given that a signature requirement under the law could be satisfied by a digital signature supported by a recognized digital certificate as provided by Cap. 553, no legislative amendment would be required.

Faster payment system and the common QR code standard

64.   Mr SHIU Ka-fai enquired about the implementation progress and the way forward of the faster payment system ("FPS") as well as the common QR code standard. S for IT said that FPS had been very well-received by the public and recorded over 4.86 million registrations since its launch. GCIO said that FPS was associated with the common QR code standard such that stored-value facility ("SVF") could use single QR code to accept payments from different payment schemes. The Administration was working with the Hong Kong Monetary Authority to explore collaboration opportunities between FPS and "iAM Smart" platform.

65.   In response to Mr SHIU Ka-fai's enquiry as to the percentage of retailers adopting SVF services, GCIO said that large retailers in general could use SVFs for accepting payments. Mr SHIU urged the Administration to encourage wider adoption of SVF among micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. S for IT noted Mr SHIU's view.

V.   Latest progress of the implementation of the Subsidy Scheme to Extend Fibre-based Networks to Villages in Remote Areas

(LC Paper No. CB(1)710/19-20(06) -- Administration's paper on the latest progress of the implementation of the Subsidy Scheme to Extend Fibre-based Networks to Villages in Remote Areas

LC Paper No. CB(1)710/19-20(07)   --   Paper on the implementation of the Subsidy Scheme to Extend Fibre-based Networks to Villages in Remote Areas prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Background brief))

Briefing by the Administration

66. At the invitation of the Chairman, <u>Assistant Director (Market & Competition) of the Office of the Communications Authority ("OFCA")</u> briefed members on the latest progress of the implementation of the Subsidy Scheme to Extend Fibre-based Networks to Villages in Remote Areas ("Subsidy Scheme").

Discussion

Timetable and other implementation details

67. <u>Members</u> noted that the fibre-based networks would be rolled out in phases from 2021 onwards, and the fixed network operators ("FNOs") had made additional service commitments for some of the villages, including providing broadband services at speed of 1 000Mbps or above, installing Wi-Fi hotspots at common areas of villages for provision of free Wi-Fi services and providing broadband services to the villages concerned at the prevailing market prices during the first three years upon project completion. <u>Ms YUNG Hoi-yan</u> sought further information from the Administration on, specifically, how the service charges of the broadband services in villages would compare to those in urban areas, when the subsidized fibre-based networks would be rolled out to each of the villages concerned, and which of the service commitments would apply to each village. <u>Mr CHU Hoi-dick</u> requested similar information as well as the exact location of village entrances at which the fibre-based lead-in connections would terminate.

> (*Post-meeting note*: The Administration's response was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)842/19-20(01) on 3 July 2020.)

68. <u>Deputy Director-General (Telecommunications), OFCA</u> said that some FNOs had committed to providing broadband services to the villages concerned at a price level not higher than the prevailing market prices in urban areas. <u>Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Communications and Creative Industries) ("PS(CCI)")</u> explained that the

service commitments were made for certain portion of villages covered under the individual tender projects, while the relevant details (for example the list of applicable villages) would only be available later when the selected FNOs carry out the implementation works. Regarding the location of the terminating points of the fibre-based lead-in connections, PS(CCI) responded that the Rural Committees concerned had been consulted and informed of the relevant location information. PS(CCI) undertook to provide the updated information to the relevant stakeholders when available.

69. The Chairman queried whether there had been slippage in the implementation of the Subsidy Scheme. The Deputy Chairman also commented that it had taken too long to implement the Subsidy Scheme. PS(CCI) said that there had been a delay of a few months as the time taken for seeking legal advice on tender documents was longer than expected. Moreover, there was no tender proposal received for one of the six tender projects and the project concerned had to be re-tendered after making technical adjustments. PS(CCI) further explained that it would take time for the selected FNOs to apply for various statutory permits and approvals for excavation works and submarine fibre cables. The Administration would closely monitor the implementation progress of the Subsidy Scheme.

Benefits to the villagers

70. Drawing on his personal experience, Mr CHU Hoi-dick commented that even if fibre-based networks were extended to village entrances, many villagers might not be able to benefit as they had scant information on how to proceed with reaching agreement with the respective FNOs to allow the latter to roll out fibre-based networks within the village, and on where exactly the fibre-based networks were installed at the village entrances. Mr CHU and the Deputy Chairman asked how the Administration would make sure that villagers could truly benefit from the Subsidy Scheme. As the implementation of the Subsidy Scheme took time, Mr CHU and Ms YUNG Hoi-yan enquired whether the Administration would consider mobile data services as an alternative to fixed broadband services.

71. PS(CCI) responded that once the fibre-based networks were extended to the village entrances, villagers would be able to enjoy an instant increase in broadband speed from the current 10 Mbps or below to at least 25 Mbps without having to upgrade the existing copper-based networks within the villages. Besides, the selected FNOs were required to open up at least half of the capacity of the network facilities and submarine fibre-based cables subsidized under the Subsidy Scheme for use by other FNOs for free to provide broadband services to the villages concerned. This would introduce competition and offer more

choices to the villagers. Regarding the suggestion of mobile data services as an alternative, PS(CCI) explained that wireless connection might not be able to match the speed of fibre-based connection.

72. PS(CCI) added that the newly-built fibre-based networks would also provide the necessary infrastructure for development of other telecommunications services (e.g. 5G mobile and Wi-Fi services) in the remote areas covered under the Subsidy Scheme.

73. Mr CHU Hoi-dick reiterated that in some villages where fibre-based networks were rolled out to the village entrances only, villagers had experienced difficulties in connecting to the networks. He suggested the Administration to conduct a survey to assess the circumstances of the villagers who were still unable to connect to the fibre-based networks and to identify possible solutions. The Deputy Chairman put forward a similar suggestion that the Administration should monitor the effectiveness of the Subsidy Scheme through a survey. PS(CCI) responded that the status of fibre-based network coverage in villages was fast changing and the Administration expected that the Subsidy Scheme and market competition would provide impetus for operators to roll out fibre-based networks in remote areas.

74. At 4:26 pm, the Chairman extended the meeting for 15 minutes.

Introduction of competition

75. The Chairman asked the Administration to take precaution as necessary to ensure that the arrangements under the Subsidy Scheme, which allowed the selected FNOs to roll out fibre-based networks and to offer service commitments to the villages concerned, would not create unfair advantages to those FNOs and that other operators would not have difficulties in entering the market. The Chairman doubted whether the Subsidy Scheme could eventually introduce competition in the market and was concerned that the villages might be dominated by the respective selected FNOs.

76. PS(CCI) responded that the Administration had conducted tender exercises for the six tender projects under the Subsidy Scheme. Proposals from FNOs had been assessed in terms of the service commitments made by the tenderers, and the amount of subsidies proposed by the tenderers, etc. Together with the requirement for the selected FNOs to open up at least half of the capacity of the network facilities and submarine fibre-based cables subsidized under the Subsidy Scheme for use by other FNOs for free, the Administration considered that the Subsidy Scheme would introduce market competition and benefit villagers by offering more choices at competitive prices. The Subsidy

Scheme focused on the existence of effective competition, rather than the market shares of individual FNOs.

77.　The Chairman remarked that some smaller FNOs might not be financially viable to compete for the tender projects in the first place.　PS(CCI) said that the Administration would continue to monitor the implementation of the Subsidy Scheme so that villagers in remote areas would truly benefit from the Subsidy Scheme.

VI.　Any other business

78.　The Chairman said that if no special meeting would be held to further discuss the issues relating to RTHK, this would be the last meeting of the Panel for this legislative session.　The Chairman thanked members for their participation on and contribution to the work of the Panel.

79.　There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:43 pm.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
3 August 2020