

立法會 *Legislative Council*

LC Paper No. CB(4)757/19-20

Ref: CB4/PL/PS

Report of the Panel on Public Service for submission to the Legislative Council

Purpose

This report gives an account of the work of the Panel on Public Service ("the Panel") during the 2019-2020 legislative session. It will be tabled at the Council meeting on 8 July 2020 in accordance with Rule 77(14) of the Rules of Procedure of the Legislative Council.

The Panel

2. The Panel was formed by a resolution passed by the Legislative Council on 8 July 1998 and as amended on 20 December 2000, 9 October 2002, 11 July 2007 and 2 July 2008 for the purpose of monitoring and examining government policies and issues of public concern relating to the civil service and government-funded public bodies, and other public service organizations. The terms of reference of the Panel are in **Appendix I**.

3. The Panel comprises 16 members, with Hon KWOK Wai-keung and Hon POON Siu-ping elected Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Panel respectively. The membership list of the Panel is in **Appendix II**.

Major Work

Civil service workforce

Civil service establishment

4. The Panel noted at its meeting on 16 March 2020 that 6 082 new civil service posts would be created in 2020-2021, representing a year-on-year increase of about 3.2%.

5. Members in general welcomed the Administration's decision to strengthen the civil service manpower to implement new policy initiatives and improve existing public services. However, there were diverse views on the increase of more than 2 500 new posts in the establishment of the Hong Kong Police Force ("HKPF"). While some members queried the justifications for such substantial increase, some other members expressed their support to strengthen the manpower of HKPF in order to enhance their law enforcement work. Questions were raised as to whether the Civil Service Bureau ("CSB") had examined the justifications for the proposed increase and whether any guidelines/principles were in place to assess the establishment proposals submitted by individual Bureaux/Departments ("B/Ds") in the Budget.

6. The Administration advised that when examining proposals from B/Ds for increasing manpower, the Administration would consider principles including actual operational needs, justifications and priorities of various initiatives, etc. Each application for increase in the civil service establishment would be considered carefully and individually. Additional civil service posts would be created where justified. In view of the additional workload arising from the social incidents starting from June 2019, the Administration advised that HKPF needed more manpower to handle the social unrest as well as discharging their day-to-day police duties.

Extension of the service of civil servants

7. The Panel received a briefing by the Administration on the progress on the implementation of various measures for extending the service of civil servants on 20 April 2020. Panel members noted that since the Administration launched in July 2018 the option for serving civil servants who joined the Government between 1 June 2000 and 31 May 2015 ("eligible civil servants") to choose to retire at the age of 65 (for civilian grades) or 60 (for disciplined services grades, regardless of ranks) ("the Option"), 27 421 (48.8%) of 56 209 of eligible civil servants had taken the Option as at 16 February 2020 (i.e. seven months before the end of the Option period on 16 September 2020).

8. Some members asked whether the continued employment of eligible civil servants beyond their retirement age would give rise to promotion blockage. On the other hand, some members opined that with a view to retaining experience and expertise in the civil service, the Administration should encourage more eligible directorate officers to take the Option. The Administration should also consider allowing civil servants who joined before 1 June 2000, in particular those disciplined services staff at commissioner rank, to take the Option.

9. The Administration pointed out that the Option was put forward based on the long-term population and labour force projections of Hong Kong. According to the projections, the labour force in Hong Kong would become relatively critical from 2030. Taking into account that the majority of the eligible civil servants would reach their normal retirement age starting around 2030, the Administration launched the Option in July 2018 to expand the labour force, and B/Ds should have sufficient time to make succession planning in a systematic manner. As regards civil servants who joined the Government before 1 June 2000, since most of them would reach their retirement age in the next decade or so, B/Ds would not have sufficient time to tackle the promotion blockage issue if they were allowed to extend their service by five years. Notwithstanding this, B/Ds could make use of other flexible measures (i.e. the Post-retirement Service Contract ("PRSC") Scheme, the final extension of service and further employment ("FE") mechanism) to extend the service of retiring/retired civil servants to meet the operational needs of B/Ds. The Administration would also keep in view the implementation of the flexible measures and adjust the civil service establishment as necessary in accordance with the operational needs of individual B/Ds.

10. Some members noted with concern that the rejected rate of applications for final extension of service of serving civil servants beyond the retirement age had reached 21% as at 24 February 2020. To ensure fairness in the implementation of flexible measures, there was suggestion of setting up a formal appeal mechanism for the applicants. The Administration explained that there were different criteria when considering an application for final extension of service, including the performance, conduct and physical fitness of the officers concerned and no undue promotion blockage, the reasons for the rejection varied from case to case. Rigorous mechanisms were in place to process applications for final extension of service and FE. Appeals lodged by applicants of final extension of service and FE would be handled in accordance with the established mechanism.

11. In respect of the suggestion of engaging more full-time PRSC staff to clear the backlog of work in B/Ds due to the special work arrangement arising from the Coronavirus Disease 2019 ("COVID-19"), the Administration pointed out that the number of PRSC positions was subject to the manpower demand and actual operational needs of B/Ds. B/Ds could engage retiring/retired civil servants to work on contract terms under PRSC Scheme to undertake ad hoc, time-limited, seasonal or part-time tasks that required specific civil service expertise/experience.

Employment of persons with disabilities in the civil service

12. The Panel regularly reviewed the employment of persons with disabilities ("PWDs") in the civil service and discussed the issue at its meetings on 20 January and 19 June 2020. Deputations and individual members of the public were invited to give views at the latter meeting.

13. Panel members expressed grave concern that from 2016-2017 to 2018-2019, less than 1% of the new recruits in the civil service were PWDs, and the ratio of PWDs employed in the civil service had actually dropped from 2% in 2014-2015 to 1.6% in 2018-2019. Some members questioned the Administration's efforts in promoting the employment of PWDs in the civil service. They called on the Administration to ascertain the causes of the above situation and come up with measures to tackle the problems. Some members reiterated their suggestion that the Administration should set an employment quota system for PWDs in the civil service, statutory bodies, Government-funded public bodies and public service organizations.

14. The Administration explained that since there was no requirement for government job applicants and serving civil servants to declare their disabilities, the statistics on civil servants with disabilities were known on the basis of information available to B/Ds, such as through applicants' voluntary declaration, and the figures obtained were the lowest figures known to the Administration. The number of PWDs in the civil service employed by B/Ds might fluctuate each year, depending on the number of posts available and the recruitment and wastage situation in individual B/Ds, as well as whether the job types of the vacancies were suitable for PWDs. The percentage of civil servants with disabilities remained stable at around 2% of the civil service strength in the past few years.

15. Regarding the appointment to the civil service, the Administration further advised that it had been adhering to the principle of open and fair competition. All applicants in an open recruitment exercise were assessed on the basis of their character, ability and performance, having regard to the stipulated entry requirements set according to the job requirements. It was the Government's policy to ensure that PWDs could enjoy equal opportunities as other applicants in applying for government jobs by formulating and implementing appropriate measures to facilitate their participation in the recruitment process, and give them appropriate degree of preference for appointment. The Administration considered that setting an employment quota system might create a labelling effect on PWDs and would not be conducive to their integration in the workplace.

Non-civil service employment

Non-civil service contract staff

16. In December 2019, the Administration reported to the Panel on the latest situation on the employment of non-civil service contract ("NCSC") staff by the Government. The Panel noted that the number of full-time NCSC staff had increased by 6.9% from 9 773 in June 2018 to 10 444 in June 2019. If deducting the 980 full-time NCSC staff who were engaged by three one-off large-scale tasks (i.e. the Caring and Sharing Scheme, Territory-wide Identity Card Replacement Exercise and election-related work), the number of full-time NCSC staff as at 30 June 2019 was 9 464 (a reduction by 3.2%).

17. Members noted with concern that as at 30 June 2019, 3 314 NCSC staff had continuously served the Government for five years or more, and 1 003 of them were engaged in different NCSC positions within the same B/Ds. They considered that B/Ds should regularly review the employment situation of NCSC staff and expedite the replacement of NCSC positions with established long-term operational and service needs by civil service posts. The Administration advised that B/Ds would review from time to time whether the NCSC positions were suitable to be replaced by civil service posts. In 2020-2021, 176 new civil service posts would be created to replace NCSC positions with long-term operational and service needs.

18. The issue on the remuneration and fringe benefits of NCSC staff has all along been of great concern to the Panel. Noting that starting from 1 April 2020, NCSC staff could enjoy 17 days of General Holidays with pay as other civil servants, some members suggested giving NCSC staff the same fringe benefits as enjoyed by their civil service counterparts. There was also suggestion of taking out group-based medical insurance for NCSC staff.

19. The Administration considered it inappropriate to compare the pay and conditions of service of NCSC staff with those of civil servants as they were two distinct types of employment. The Administration stressed that the employment package for NCSC staff should be no less favourable than the provisions of the Employment Ordinance (Cap. 57). Given that the remuneration offered to NCSC staff was an all-inclusive pay package, the Administration would not separately provide them with medical benefits. That said, B/Ds were given flexibility to review the salary and terms and conditions of service for NCSC staff periodically to ensure their employment package remained competitive with the employment market.

20. In view of the current economic downturn and the high unemployment rate, there was suggestion that the Administration should consider creating more temporary job opportunities to alleviate the worsening unemployment situation. The Administration pointed out that according to the mechanism in place, individual B/Ds could engage NCSC staff or agency workers to provide short-term manpower to deliver services having regard to their operational and service needs, and the Administration had recently engaged temporary manpower resources to assist in the epidemic prevention work. Separately, the Government had launched series of job retention and job creation measures under the Anti-epidemic Fund to ease the worsening unemployment situation due to the outbreak of COVID-19. Around 30 000 time-limited jobs would be created in both the public and private sectors in the coming two years.

Agency workers and T-contract staff

21. The Panel continued to follow up closely with the Administration on its use of agency workers¹ and T-contract staff² in the session. Members noted that the number of agency workers as at 30 September 2019 had increased by 595 or 58% as compared with the same period in 2018. If deducting the 547 agency workers used by two time-limited/one-off large scale tasks (i.e. the Caring and Sharing Scheme and the 2019 District Council Election), the number of agency workers as at 30 September 2019 had increased by 4.7% over the same period in 2018.

22. Panel members expressed concern about the situation on the use of agency workers by individual B/Ds and publicly funded organizations. A member was dissatisfied that the Hospital Authority had used agency workers to meet a long-term manpower gap, which had violated the guidelines set by CSB in April 2010 in procuring agency worker service.³ Some members called on the Administration to closely monitor the use of agency workers, in particular those who had been used by B/Ds for a long period of time.

¹ Agency workers are labour force supplied by employment agencies under service contracts and work under direct supervision of the procuring B/Ds.

² T-contract staff are engaged by B/Ds to provide information technology service under a term contract centrally administered by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer.

³ Under the guidelines, B/Ds may only use agency workers in one or more of the following situations: (a) to meet urgent or unforeseen operational and service needs, or unexpected surge in operational and service demands for the short-term; (b) to fill short-term manpower gap; (c) to meet operational and service needs which entail irregular work patterns or where the nature of the work involved renders it difficult to recruit and retain staff; or (d) to provide short-term manpower to deliver services the mode of which will be changed shortly.

23. The Administration responded that every proposal to procure the service of agency workers was required to be considered and approved personally by an officer at Directorate Pay Scale D2 or above of the concerned B/D. As a general guideline, the length of a contract for procurement of the service of agency workers (except term contracts) should not exceed nine months. B/Ds were also required to seek approval from CSB if an existing contract was to be renewed or re-let and the aggregate period of contract service was expected to exceed 15 months. In the past three years, CSB had not received any applications for extending the service contract for the supply of agency workers for a service period exceeding 15 months. The Administration clarified that the set of guidelines on proper use of agency workers only applied to B/Ds. Publicly funded organizations could formulate its own recruitment policies in respect of the use of agency staff.

24. On the use of T-contract staff, Panel members noted that as at end-December 2019, there were about 3 450 T-contract staff working in different B/Ds. Panel members also noted that with a view to protecting the wage level of T-contract staff, the Administration required T25 contractors to adjust the wages of T-contract staff by a percentage not lower than the service rates adjustment made by the Government with reference to the latest pay adjustment percentage applicable to civil servants in the middle salary band. T25 contractors had offered more favourable packages in various aspects to T-contract staff.

25. Whilst welcoming the Administration's measures to improve the remuneration and benefits of T-contract staff, a member expressed concern about the special work arrangement for T-contract staff during the outbreak of COVID-19 and requested the Administration to promulgate clear departmental guidelines, so that T-contract staff who were not involved in essential and emergency services could work at home.

26. The Administration advised that in order to reduce the risk of the spread of COVID-19 in the community, starting from late January 2020, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer provided B/Ds and T-contractors with updated guidelines on special work arrangement every week for T-contract staff. Except for those required to provide IT support to emergency services, essential public services as well as basic and limited-scale public services, all T-contract staff were allowed to work from home since 31 January 2020 without wage reduction.

Pay and conditions of service

2020-2021 civil service pay adjustment

27. The Panel discussed the 2020-2021 civil service pay adjustment at the meeting in June 2020. The Chief Executive-in-Council decided on 2 June 2020 that the pay for civil servants in the upper, middle and lower salary bands and the directorate should be frozen with retrospective effect from 1 April 2020.

28. Members noted that some civil servant staff associations/unions were disappointed at the above decision as the three net pay trend indicators for 2020 and the headline Composite Consumer Price Index were in the positive and expressed concern that this decision would have an impact on the morale of civil servants. The Administration explained that Hong Kong's economy and the Government's fiscal position were hit hard by the social events and COVID-19. The decision for a pay freeze was made after considering all six factors under the established mechanism, namely, the net pay trend indicators, the state of Hong Kong's economy, changes in the cost of living, the Government's fiscal position, the pay claims of the staff side, and civil service morale.

Medical and dental benefits for civil service eligible persons

29. The Panel regularly reviewed the provision of medical and dental benefits for civil service eligible persons ("CSEPs").

30. Panel members noted that as announced in the Chief Executive's 2018 Policy Address, Chinese medicine would be included in the scope of civil service medical benefits, and the Administration launched a pilot scheme in March 2020 to provide free Chinese medicine general consultation and acupuncture services to CSEPs at two Civil Service Chinese Medicine Clinics set up at the Chinese Medicine Clinics cum Training and Research Centres located respectively on Hong Kong Island (Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital) and in the New Territories (Yan Chai Hospital). The annual service quota was set at around 63 000.

31. Whilst welcoming the provision of Chinese medicine services to CSEPs, Panel members called on the Administration to further expand the provision of the services by increasing the service quota and service points so as to fulfill the foreseeable unmet demand of Chinese medicine services by CSEPs. The Administration advised that the Chinese medicine services were provided to CSEPs in the form of a pilot scheme. The annual service quota was set in accordance with the capacity of the two Chinese Medicine Clinics cum Training and Research Centres and at this

stage the quota might not be able to cater for the needs of all CSEPs. CSB would review the pilot scheme, including the scope and quality of services, mode of operation, location and service quota about one year after its commencement, and then consider the long-term arrangements of provision of Chinese medicine services to CSEPs.

32. In respect of the suggestion of taking out medical insurance for civil servants to provide them with better medical benefits and protection or even after retirement, the Administration replied that taking out medical insurance for civil servants would involve fundamental changes in the policy relating to civil service medical benefits and give rise to significant financial implications, the Administration had to make thorough and careful consideration. The Administration pointed out that medical services provided by the Hospital Authority and the Department of Health for CSEPs were free of charge and comprehensive in scope, while there were limitations in the scope of the medical services provided by the private medical sector and the insurance coverage. If any civil servants were injured on duty, under specific circumstances they might opt for medical treatment by private medical practitioners and apply for reimbursement of the medical expenses incurred, subject to the maximum daily rate.

Grade structure review for the disciplined services grades

33. Panel members noted that as announced in the 2018 Policy Agenda, the Administration would conduct a grade structure review ("GSR") for all disciplined services to ensure that their grade structure and remuneration were effective in attracting and retaining talents. In October 2018, the Chief Executive-in-Council ordered that the Standing Committee on Disciplined Services Salaries and Conditions of Service ("SCDS") be invited to conduct a GSR for the disciplined services grades, and the Standing Committee on Directorate Salaries and Conditions of Service ("SDCS") be invited to advise on the salaries and conditions of service of the heads of the seven disciplined departments/agency. The Chief Executive-in-Council also decided to conduct a GSR for the disciplined services grades once every 10 years. At the Panel meeting on 20 January 2020, four relevant staff unions/associations presented their views on the subject to the Panel.

34. Members had diverse views on the uniformity of pay scales, benefits and conditioned working hours of the disciplined services. Some members held the views that for fairness sake, the Administration should align the pay scales, benefits and conditioned working hours of all disciplined services. Some other members, however, considered it appropriate to have a separate pay scale for HKPF having regard to the

uniqueness of its work nature, job duties and workload. Question was raised on whether the Administration would collect public views on the disciplined services as part of the GSR.

35. The Administration advised that the Review Committee on Disciplined Services Pay and Conditions of Service (commonly known as the Rennie Committee) and SCDS endorsed, in 1988 and 2008 respectively, to have a separate pay scale for HKPF to recognize the uniqueness of the Police Force, in particular their role as the law-enforcement agency of first and last resort. As regards public views on the GSR, SCDS and SDCS had received a large number of relevant submissions, and the two Committees would take public opinions into consideration. In conducting the GSR, SCDS and SDCS had invited both the management and staff sides of all disciplined services to submit their views, paid visits to the disciplined services departments and met with representatives of both the management and staff sides of the disciplined services, to better understand their work and listen to their views. All comments and suggestions made by the deputations and Panel members on the GSR of the disciplined services would be relayed to SCDS and SDCS for their consideration in the course of the review.

36. Some Panel members shared the views of staff unions/associations that the Administration should conduct the GSR once every five years to catch up with the rapid changing working environment of the disciplined services. The Administration advised that after considering all relevant factors, including the time required for undertaking the review and consultation with stakeholders, the Chief Executive-in-Council decided that it was appropriate to conduct a GSR for the disciplined services once every ten years.

Training and development for civil servants

37. The Panel received a briefing by the Administration on the provision of training and development for civil servants at the special meeting in May 2020.

38. Following the occurrence of cases of civil servants participating in anti-government public activities, some members considered that the Administration should strengthen the national studies and Basic Law ("BL") training for all levels of civil servants to enhance their sense of national identity.

39. The Administration advised that under the principle of "one country, two systems", it was essential for civil servants to acquire an accurate understanding of the constitutional order established under the Constitution of the People's Republic of China and BL, as well as the systems, developments and social and economic situation on the Mainland. In this connection, the Administration had been enhancing the relevant training for civil servants. Around 10 000 civil servants receive national studies training each year by attending different Mainland and local courses arranged by various B/Ds and the Civil Service Training and Development Institute ("CSTDI"). The number of civil servants receiving BL training each year had also increased substantially to 13 000. Thematic visits to the Mainland were also organized for civil servants.

40. Members noted that since February 2020, CSTDI had postponed the training programmes for civil servants in order to reduce social contacts and the risk of the spread of COVID-19. The Administration was urged to make better use of its e-learning platforms to continue providing training to civil servants.

41. The Administration advised that CSTDI offered web-based learning tools through its e-learning portal, Cyber Learning Centre Plus ("CLC Plus"), which contained some 2 450 learning material items. CSTDI also supported B/Ds to include e-learning as part of their training and development plans. At present, some 27 B/Ds were making use of the CLC Plus to provide training information or learning materials to their staff. Despite that most of the training programmes had been postponed since February 2020 due to the epidemic situation, CSTDI continued to provide civil servants with multi-media learning resources at the CLC Plus during the period. The Administration would keep improving the user interfaces of the CLC Plus to facilitate the use of various e-learning resources.

42. During the discussion, Panel members also made various suggestions for enhancing civil service training, including equipping civil servants with the knowledge on innovation and technology application to support the development of Hong Kong as a smart city and enhancing training on stress management and media and public communication strategies for civil servants.

Implementation of five-day week in the Government

43. At the meeting on 20 April 2020 to follow up on the implementation of five-day week ("FDW") in the Government, members expressed dissatisfaction that after 14 years since the implementation of the FDW initiative, around 41 300 civil servants (i.e. around 25% of the then civil service strength) were still working on a non-FDW work pattern as at

30 September 2018. Questions were raised as to whether the Administration had assessed the financial implication and additional manpower required to fully implement the FDW initiative if the four basic principles⁴ were relaxed. Members also called on the Administration to provide adequate assistance to B/Ds to facilitate the migration of more staff to FDW.

44. The Administration pointed out that as there was no public consensus on providing additional resources only for fully implementing FDW in the civil service without enhancement to public services at the same time, the Administration had to be prudent in balancing utilization of resources and public expectation in the implementation of FDW as it might incur additional cost to taxpayers. With a view to maintaining the level of public services and adhering to the four basic principles, it was unavoidable that some civil servants might not be able to migrate to FDW. According to the 22 departments which had not fully implemented FDW, most of them provided round-the-clock services and over 80% of their staff worked on an irregular pattern. It was estimated that achieving FDW for all staff would compromise the four basic principles as substantial additional resources would be required. In this connection, B/Ds were encouraged to explore the feasibility of trial schemes for the migration of more staff to FDW in a pragmatic manner. Some B/Ds had also used information technology or other measures, such as providing drop boxes to replace counter services on Saturdays to facilitate the implementation of FDW. CSB would continue liaising with these 22 departments to explore ways to tackle the difficulties encountered for further implementation of FDW.

Political neutrality of civil servants

45. Members expressed grave concern that some civil servants expressed their political views on social media platforms or at workplaces relating to the proposed amendments to the Fugitive Offenders Ordinance (Cap. 503). Some members had raised concern that the Administration had adopted different standards in handling the above cases which involved police officers and other civil servants. Some other members were of the view that the principle of political neutrality should also be applicable to government subvented organizations. Members urged the Administration to seriously address the problems and elaborate the principle of political neutrality and relevant guidelines to civil servants and the Panel.

⁴ B/Ds are encouraged to migrate staff to FDW following the four basic principles: (a) no additional staffing resources; (b) no reduction in the conditioned hours of work of individual staff; (c) no reduction in emergency services; and (d) continued provision of some essential counter services on Saturdays/Sundays.

46. The Administration advised that the Civil Service Code ("the Code") and relevant civil service regulations/guidelines had clearly set out the standards of conduct of civil servants. Civil servants should uphold core values of the civil service as set out in the Code, including commitment to the rule of law, impartiality, dedication and political neutrality etc., and ensure that their views and behaviour would not give rise to any conflict of interest with their official duties, or might not be seen to compromise the important principle of maintaining impartiality and political neutrality when discharging their duties. Civil servants should also serve the Chief Executive and the Government of the day with total loyalty and to the best of their ability, no matter what their own political beliefs were. Apart from the Code, Heads of Departments might, in light of their operational needs, lay down further regulations for compliance by their staff, so as to serve the same purpose.

47. The Administration further pointed out that except certain groups of officers, for example directorate officers, there was no objection to individual civil servants participating in peaceful and lawful public order events in their personal capacity, as long as that did not give rise to any conflict of interest with their official duties, or might not be seen to compromise the important principle of maintaining impartiality and political neutrality when discharging their duties. The Administration adopted a zero-tolerance attitude towards civil servants who violated the law. In accordance with the established civil service disciplinary mechanism, the Administration would, upon completion of judicial proceedings, take disciplinary actions against civil servants who had been convicted of criminal offence. In determining the appropriate punishment, the Administration would examine the court judgement and sentence and take into account factors such as the nature and gravity of the criminal offence.

48. In respect of the suggestion of requiring staff of subvented organizations to adhere to the principle of political neutrality, the Administration explained that the Civil Service Regulations, the Code and other relevant regulations/guidelines were only applicable to civil servants. Subvented organizations were independent of the Government and had the autonomy to formulate their own policies on human resources management.

49. The Panel passed two motions urging the Administration to, among others, require all civil servants to swear to uphold BL and swear allegiance to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, and formulate clear guidelines that civil servants and staff of subvented organizations must not stage or take part in any

demonstrations or political rallies at workplaces or in their capacity as staff members of the civil service and subvented organizations.

50. The Administration's response to the motions was that it had issued clear guidelines on the behaviour of civil servants, and it had been reminding civil servants about the requirements of the Code through various means. All newly recruited civil servants, on appointment, were required to familiarize themselves and comply with the Code. The Code was circulated regularly by B/Ds to all staff. CSTD I also provided regular induction training programmes to explain the code of conduct to new recruits and promote the core values of the civil service. As regards the suggestion of requiring all civil servants to swear to uphold BL and swear allegiance to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, the Administration had to take into account the purpose as well as the intended outcome of introducing such a requirement and whether they could be achieved under the existing framework. If the Administration was to introduce the oath-taking requirement on civil servants, careful and thorough consideration must be given to relevant factors such as the appropriate means of introducing the oath-taking requirement, applicability of the requirement, what behaviour would constitute a breach of the oath and consequences of refusing to take the oath and breaching the oath, etc. The Administration would examine various feasible options, including whether the oath-taking arrangement should be implemented in phases (e.g. introducing the requirement on new recruits first). The Administration would consult the Department of Justice and the staff sides, and report the progress to the Panel at the Panel meeting in July 2020.

Other issues

51. During the current legislative session, the Panel also received briefings from the Administration on the policy initiatives of CSB featured in the Chief Executive's 2019 Policy Address, civil service-related matters featured in the 2020-2021 Budget, GSR for veterinary laboratory technician and medical laboratory technician grades, employment of non-ethnic Chinese in the civil service and commendation schemes for civil servants.

Panel meetings held

52. From October 2019 to June 2020, the Panel held a total of eight meetings and received views from 13 deputations/individuals at two of these meetings. Due to the outbreak of COVID-19 in early 2020, the Panel meeting originally scheduled for February 2020 was not held. The Panel has scheduled another meeting in July 2020 to discuss the progress of

the Administration's study on the proposal on oath-taking by civil servants and political neutrality of civil servants and Anti-epidemic Fund 2.0: Job Creation Scheme and Matching Grant Scheme for Skills Upgrading.

Council Business Division 4

Legislative Council Secretariat

24 June 2020

Legislative Council

Panel on Public Service

Terms of Reference

1. To monitor and examine Government policies and issues of public concern relating to the civil service and Government-funded public bodies, and other public service organizations.
2. To provide a forum for the exchange and dissemination of views on the above policy matters.
3. To receive briefings and to formulate views on any major legislative or financial proposals in respect of the above policy areas prior to their formal introduction to the Council or Finance Committee.
4. To monitor and examine, to the extent it considers necessary, the above policy matters referred to it by a member of the Panel or by the House Committee.
5. To make reports to the Council or to the House Committee as required by the Rules of Procedure.

**Legislative Council
Panel on Public Service**

Membership list for 2019-2020 session

Chairman	Hon KWOK Wai-keung, JP
Deputy Chairman	Hon POON Siu-ping, BBS, MH
Members	Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP Hon Christopher CHEUNG Wah-fung, SBS, JP Hon IP Kin-yuen Hon Elizabeth QUAT, BBS, JP Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, SBS, JP Hon CHU Hoi-dick Hon LAM Cheuk-ting Hon SHIU Ka-fai, JP Dr Hon Pierre CHAN Hon CHAN Chun-ying, JP Hon LUK Chung-hung, JP Hon Jeremy TAM Man-ho Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS

(Total : 16 members)

Clerk	Mr Anthony CHU
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Legal Adviser	Miss Joyce CHAN
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* Changes in membership are set out in Annex to Appendix II

Annex to Appendix II

Legislative Council Panel on Public Service

Changes in membership

Member	Relevant date
Hon Kenneth LAU Ip-keung, BBS, MH, JP	Up to 20 October 2019
Hon LAU Kwok-fan, MH	Up to 31 October 2019
Hon CHAN Han-pan, BBS, JP	Up to 31 October 2019
Hon CHAN Hak-kan, BBS, JP	Up to 31 October 2019
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, GBS, JP	Up to 31 October 2019
Hon CHAN Hoi-yan	Up to 31 October 2019
Hon Vincent CHENG Wing-shun, MH, JP	Up to 2 November 2019
Hon Martin LIAO Cheung-kong, GBS, JP	Up to 4 November 2019
Hon WONG Kwok-kin, SBS, JP	Up to 4 November 2019
Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen, BBS, JP	Up to 4 November 2019
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP	Up to 4 November 2019
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-kwan, JP	Up to 4 November 2019
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, SBS, MH, JP	Up to 5 November 2019
Hon WONG Ting-kwong, GBS, JP	Up to 19 November 2019
Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing, MH	Up to 19 November 2019
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, SBS, JP	Up to 21 November 2019
Hon LUK Chung-hung, JP	Since 16 December 2019
Hon Gary FAN Kwok-wai	Up to 16 December 2019
Hon YUNG Hoi-yan, JP	Up to 19 December 2019
Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS	Up to 24 May 2020
Hon HO Kai-ming	Up to 31 May 2020