

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. ESC17/10-11
(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

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Establishment Subcommittee of the Finance Committee

Minutes of the 2nd meeting
held in Conference Room A of Legislative Council Building
on Wednesday, 8 December 2010, at 9:00 am

Members present:

Dr Hon Margaret NG (Chairman)
Dr Hon PAN Pey-chyou (Deputy Chairman)
Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, SBS, S.B.St.J., JP
Dr Hon David LI Kwok-po, GBM, GBS, JP
Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong
Hon LAU Kong-wah, JP
Hon LI Fung-ying, SBS, JP
Hon WONG Ting-kwong, BBS, JP
Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP
Hon IP Wai-ming, MH
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yee, GBS, JP

Members absent:

Hon WONG Yung-kan, SBS, JP
Hon WONG Sing-chi
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC
Hon WONG Yuk-man

Public Officers attending:

Mrs Ingrid YEUNG, JP	Deputy Secretary for the Civil Service (1)
Ms Alice LAU, JP	Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury)1
Mrs Betty FUNG, JP	Director of Leisure and Cultural Services
Mr Ricky CHUI, JP	Assistant Director (Finance)
	Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Mr Arthur HO, JP	Deputy Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs 1
Ms Anne TENG	Principal Assistant Secretary (Constitutional and Mainland Affairs) 2
Mrs Vivian TING	Chief Electoral Officer
	Registration and Electoral Office

Clerk in attendance:

Mr Stephen LAM	Chief Council Secretary (1)4
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Staff in attendance:

Mrs Constance LI	Assistant Secretary General 1
Mr Simon CHEUNG	Senior Council Secretary (1)1
Mr Frankie WOO	Senior Legislative Assistant (1)3
Ms Christy YAU	Legislative Assistant (1)1

Action

The Chairman said that the Administration had provided two information papers, ECI(2010-11)7 and ECI(2010-11)8, which set out the overall directorate establishment position and latest changes in terms of the Administration's directorate establishment approved since 2002 and also gave advance information on proposals for creation and deletion of directorate posts in 2010-2011.

Action

EC(2010-11)10 Proposed creation of one permanent post of Chief Systems Manager (D1) in Leisure and Cultural Services Department as Head of Information Technology Office with immediate effect to replace the existing non-civil service position of Chief Information Technology Manager at the equivalent rank of D1

2. The Chairman advised that the Administration was proposing to replace an existing non-civil service position of Chief Information Technology Manager at the equivalent rank of D1 by a permanent civil service post of Chief System Manager (CSM) as head of the Information Technology (IT) Office of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) with immediate effect. The Panel on Home Affairs (HA Panel) had discussed the proposal on 12 November 2010 and raised no objection to it. At the request of the HA Panel, the Administration had provided additional information which was incorporated in Enclosure 3 of the Administration's paper EC(2010-11)10.

3. On the arrangements for filling the new post, Mrs Regina IP enquired whether open recruitment would be launched to select the most qualified person for the position.

4. Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (DLCS) advised that the existing head of the IT Office, a non-civil service officer serving on contract terms, would proceed to retirement shortly. To ensure service continuity, it was the intention of LCSD to invite the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) to deploy an experienced CSM to fill the new post. In other words, it would not be necessary to conduct open recruitment for the post.

5. Ir Dr Raymond HO supported the Administration's staffing proposal, and opined that internal deployment or promotion would help boost staff morale. Dr PAN Pey-chyou welcomed the proposal which sought to convert a non-civil service position to a permanent post. He asked whether there were qualified candidates within the civil service for this challenging post; if not, whether consideration would be given for IT professionals with adequate knowledge and exposures currently serving on non-civil service terms to apply for the post. He stressed that it was important to fill such a key post with the most suitable person irrespective of whether he/she was a civil servant.

6. DLCS thanked members for their views and agreed that the officer filling the new post should be professionally qualified and equipped with the relevant experience and exposure. She pointed out that the Analyst/Programmer (AP) Grade, which provided the pool of CSMs for

deployment to other bureaux and departments, was managed by OGCIO. She understood that there would be suitable officers in the AP Grade for deployment to LCSD to fill the new CSM post when created, and hence it would not be necessary to conduct open recruitment for the post for the time being.

7. Prof Patrick LAU said that he had received a number of email complaints from a staff member of LCSD. He asked if the creation of this new post would help improve tree management efforts of LCSD through IT means. DLCS said she was fully aware of the complaints referred to by Prof LAU from a serving LCSD officer. She advised that LCSD had an established mechanism to deal with staff's suggestions and complaints and assured that all the complaints concerned would be duly examined and properly replied. DLCS further advised that as head of LCSD's IT Office, the proposed CSM would be responsible for maintaining and upgrading all IT systems within LCSD. He/She would also explore the possibility of applying IT technologies to different facets of the department's internal operations as well as those interfacing with the general public such as the Leisure Link System and the Library Automation System.

8. The item was voted on. Members agreed that the Subcommittee should recommend the item to the Finance Committee for approval.

EC(2010-11)11 Proposed creation of one supernumerary post of Principal Executive Officer (D1) in Registration and Electoral Office from January 2011 to March 2013 for the preparation and conduct of 2011 District Council election, 2011 Election Committee Subsector elections, 2012 Chief Executive election and 2012 Legislative Council election

9. The Chairman advised that the Administration was seeking the Subcommittee's support to create a supernumerary post of Principal Executive Officer (PEO) at D1 level in the Registration and Electoral Office (REO) for 26 months from January 2011 to March 2013 for preparation and conduct of the 2011 elections of District Council, the 2012 Chief Executive election and the 2012 Legislative Council (LegCo) election. The staffing proposal had been discussed at the meeting of the Panel on Constitutional Affairs (CA Panel) on 15 November 2010. The CA Panel in principle supported the Administration's proposal, and had requested REO to implement effective measures to save the use of paper, update electoral registers in a timely manner and promote voter registration within the ethnic minority groups.

Length of the supernumerary post

10. Mrs Regina IP expressed support for the supernumerary PEO post to enable REO to cope with the heavy workload arising from the coming elections in 2011 and 2012. As the LegCo election would be completed in September 2012, she queried the need for the supernumerary PEO post up to March 2013. Deputy Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs 1 (DSCMA) advised that after the 2012 LegCo election in September 2012, the PEO post would still be required to handle election-related enquiries, election petitions and conduct reviews on the operational arrangements for the four elections held in 2011 and 2012. Chief Electoral Officer supplemented that the new PEO would oversee the post-election work including preparing reports on the elections. The PEO would also be responsible for overseeing the financial assistance scheme for candidates and conducting a critical review on operational arrangements relating to the four elections. The review would form the basis for improvements to future elections.

Filling of the post

11. Ms LI Fung-ying enquired whether the post would be filled by open recruitment. She was concerned that if an outsider with no previous exposure to electoral work was recruited to fill the post, he/she might have great difficulties to undertake this important task which was subject to a limited time-frame of only 26 months.

12. DSCMA advised that it would be difficult to find a suitable candidate with relevant experience from outside the civil service to fill this supernumerary PEO post. The Administration planned to fill the post through internal deployment in accordance with the usual practice.

Review on the elections

13. Mrs Regina IP said that she hoped REO would conduct a serious review on the electoral arrangements for candidates. In her opinion, the existing arrangements were rigid, bureaucratic and inhumane. By way of illustration, Mrs IP said she could not understand why the taxi fares of candidates' assistants incurred in late hours after the election could not be counted towards the candidate's election expenditure. Moreover, she considered that REO should allow reasonable time for candidates to prepare an accurate election return on their election expenses. She commented that due to the short time set for the return of financial report, many were interviewed by the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) officers over minor discrepancies in election expenditure.

14. While supporting the staffing request, Ir Dr Raymond HO and Dr PAN Pey-chyou also expressed concerns about the electoral procedures. They said that they had high expectations on the PEO that he would critically review the operational arrangements for the elections especially those for the 2012 LegCo election.

15. DSCMA thanked members for their suggestions and assured members that their views and concerns would be duly considered for improvement to be made to the election arrangements. The proposed PEO would definitely contribute to making a fruitful review of the operational arrangements.

16. Mr WONG Ting-kwong opined that it would be more useful for the Administration to set out clear and reasonable guidelines for the elections beforehand than conducting reviews afterwards. He said that it was unreasonable to require an uncontested candidate in a functional constituency election to submit an election return on election expenses and election donations at a date ahead of other elected candidates in a contested geographic constituency election. It was because there would be different dates of publication of the result of election in respect of a candidate who was duly elected in an uncontested election and another candidate who was duly elected in a contested election. Referring to his own experience, Mr WONG said that he had to initiate legal procedures at his own expense in order to update his election return.

17. Sharing the concern of other members, Prof Patrick LAU urged the Administration to streamline the electoral arrangements so as to make the procedures more user friendly to the candidates and their helpers in elections.

18. DSCMA thanked members for their views and commented that the Administration was aiming at a clean and open election with clear and effective procedures.

19. The Chairman agreed with members that the Administration should improve on the electoral arrangements such as those for candidates elected in an uncontested election. Referring to paragraph 8 of the Administration's paper, the Chairman remarked that the PEO post was created to "ensure a smooth conduct of the elections". The Subcommittee had high expectation on the work of the new PEO in rationalizing the electoral procedures in the light of the views and concerns expressed. She advised that issues relating to the review of electoral arrangements and investigations by ICAC into the election expenses should more appropriately be followed up by the CA Panel. She requested the Administration to provide a paper on ways to improve on the electoral arrangements for further deliberation by the CA Panel.

Action

20. The item was voted on. The Subcommittee agreed to recommend the item to the Finance Committee for approval.
21. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 9:42 am.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
10 January 2011