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Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting

Meeting on 11 June 2012

Updated background brief on e-Government development

Purpose

This paper gives an account of the development of the e-Government programmes and also a summary of views and concerns expressed by Members in previous discussions.

Development of the e-Government programmes

2.   Following the publication of the 2008 Digital 21 Strategy, the Government has further developed, in consultation with the Digital 21 Strategy Advisory Committee, the following statement of desired outcomes for developing the next generation of public services –

> *"The Government provides people with the services they need, in an efficient, convenient manner, which is as pleasurable and straightforward as dealing with the most customer-friendly organizations in the commercial and voluntary sectors. Government policy priorities such as healthcare reform are enabled by appropriate and world-leading use of information and communications technology (ICT).   The internal efficiency of Government approaches that of the most efficient commercial organizations.   Transparency and public engagement are enhanced through leveraging ICT."*

3.   In order to determine whether the service delivery objective is being met, the Government has begun to measure user satisfaction with the channels used to deliver government services and is benchmarking this with

the satisfaction level achieved by leading commercial organizations. The Administration will adopt this as the Key Performance Indicator for this objective.

Progress of the implementation of e-Government programmes

4.   According to the Administration[1], good progress has been made in the year 2010-2011 on the implementation of e-Government programmes as highlighted below:

      (a)   provision of central information technology (IT) services in Government based on the cloud computing model;

      (b)   mobile e-Government services;

      (c)   electronic submission of commonly filed statutory returns for companies;

      (d)   Customs and Excise Department's projects;

      (e)   integrated licensing, fire safety and prosecution system for Fire Services Department; and

      (f)   Hong Kong public libraries services.

Previous discussions

5.   Members generally supported the development of e-Government in Hong Kong when they discussed the implementation of the e-Government programmes at the Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting (the Panel) and the Council meetings.

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Lead time required for system enhancement and challenges from online social media

6.   At the special Panel meeting on 20 October 2011, members discussed the funding requirements for 2012-2013 for the implementation of computerization projects under the Capital works Reserve Fund Head 710 Computerization Subhead A007GX – New administration computer systems.

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[1]   Paper provided by the Administration for the meeting of the Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting on 11 June 2012 (LC Paper No. CB(1)2064/11-12(05)).

Some Panel members considered that in general, the lead time currently required for enhancing Government IT systems to enable the implementation of new policy initiatives such as additional social security payments was unreasonably long, sometimes as long as six months. They urged the Administration to expedite the process for the benefit of the needy. The Administration assured the Panel that it would strive to shorten the total duration as far as practicable. As regards bureaux/departments which had IT Management Units (ITMUs), the ITMU staff would work very closely with the business side in aligning the plans for the IT enhancements with the business changes.

7.　　　Noting the changing trend of political landscape arising from the popularization of online social media, Panel members urged the Administration to put in place measures to meet such an unprecedented political challenge. The Administration advised that it had been promoting to bureaux/departments (B/Ds) the wider use of social networking to reach out to the public. Three IT toolkits had been developed for use by government departments in conducting online public consultation and live content streaming. The Government was also taking measures to enhance its websites in accordance with the latest international standards of the World Wide Web Consortium to facilitate access of online information and services by the elderly and people with disability, including the visually-impaired.

Pilot e-Procurement programme and implementation of the Government Cloud Platform

8.　　　At the Panel meeting on 12 April 2012, the Administration briefed members on the progress of the pilot e-Procurement programme. Noting that e-Procurement was one of the priority initiatives announced in the 2005 Policy Agenda, and that the pilot programme had been implemented since 2007, some members opined that the Administration had taken too long to implement the system and queried why full system functionality would not be made available for use by all B/Ds until the end of 2013.

9.　　　The Administration advised that in order to achieve economy of scale, the wider rollout of the e-Procurement would be in the form of a shared service riding on the Government Cloud Platform (GovCloud). If funding was approved by the Finance Committee, the tendering exercise could start by July 2012 with a view to commencing the development of the GovCloud by end of 2012. The Administration expected that the necessary system functions could be made available for use by all B/Ds by end of 2013.

10.   At the Panel meeting on 14 May 2012, the Administration briefed the members on the proposal for the implementation of GovCloud.   In response to some members' concern about how to ensure the quality of the outsourced service, the Administration advised that a team of IT professionals, including 1 Senior Systems Manager, 1 Systems Manager and 2 Analysts/Programmers would be responsible for coordinating and managing the initiative and related procurement and contract management.

11.   The funding proposal for the implementation of GovCloud will be submitted to the Finance Committee for consideration on 8 June 2012.

Council meeting

12.   At the Council meeting on 8 February 2012, Dr Hon Samson TAM raised a question on e-engagement and e-Government.   He urged the Administration to make use of tools on the Internet such as social media web sites to enhance communication with members of the public, in particular young people, and to enhance the use of mobile telecommunications channels to improve service quality.   The Administration advised that 12 Government departments and 14 Government officials were using social media to connect with the public.   Up to early February 2012, Government departments had launched a total of 26 mobile applications and 28 mobile websites.

Latest position

13.   The Administration will update the Panel on 11 June 2012 on the latest progress on e-Government development.

Relevant papers

14.   A list of the relevant papers with their hyperlinks is at http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr11-12/english/panels/itb/papers/itb_eb.htm.

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