

立法會
Legislative Council

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**Paper for the House Committee meeting on
19 October 2012**

**Arrangements for meeting-cum-luncheons between
Legislative Council Members and District Council members**

Purpose

This paper seeks Members' views on the arrangements for holding regular meeting-cum-luncheons with members of District Councils ("DCs"), and annual luncheons with the Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of DCs.

Meeting-cum-luncheons with members of District Councils

Background

2. Since mid 1980s, meeting-cum-luncheons have been organized for Members of the Legislative Council ("LegCo") to meet with members of DCs¹ from time to time. These meeting-cum-luncheons aim to enable LegCo Members to discuss and exchange views with DC members on matters of mutual interest.

3. Rule 32 of the House Rules ("HR") (**Appendix**) sets out the general arrangements for the meeting-cum-luncheons with DCs. In the past LegCo terms, the normal arrangement was to hold meetings with two DCs concurrently in different conference rooms on Thursday mornings, at about three-week intervals, from 10:45 am to 12:45 pm, followed by a

¹ District Councils were established on 1 January 2000 under the District Councils Ordinance (Cap. 547). They were formerly known as "District Boards" which were established in 1982 in each of the 18 districts in Hong Kong.

joint luncheon at the dining hall. LegCo Members, except the President, were divided into groups to attend the meetings with DCs on a roster basis. Members convened the meetings with DCs by turn. In the First, Third and Fourth LegCo, one cycle of meeting-cum-luncheons with all 18 DCs were held in each legislative session, except for the last session of each term during which meetings with only 10 DCs were arranged². In the Second LegCo, four cycles of meeting-cum-luncheons with all 18 DCs were held during the term.

4. Under Rule 32 of HR, a formal agenda is prepared for each meeting in consultation with the DC concerned prior to the meeting. Normally, not more than five topics are discussed at the meetings. It has been the established practice that the LegCo Secretariat will prepare an information brief for LegCo Members on the discussion topics. Where there has been no relevant discussion in LegCo in recent months on a discussion topic, the Secretariat will write to the Administration to obtain relevant up-to-date information, and the information provided by the Administration will be included in the information brief for LegCo Members. Matters raised at the meetings are referred to the relevant Panels or the Complaints Division for follow-up as appropriate. Where appropriate, the Convenor may instruct the Secretariat to write to the Administration to obtain written responses on the issues raised at the meeting.

Concerns raised by District Council members about the efficacy of meeting arrangements

5. In the 2011-2012 legislative session, some DC members had raised concerns about the efficacy of the existing meeting arrangements in facilitating discussion at the meetings and in following up the issues after the meetings. Some Members of the Fourth LegCo and DC members had suggested some enhancement measures, including providing DC members before the meetings with copies of the Administration's written replies on the discussion topics, and requesting the Administration to send relevant government officials to attend the meetings to respond to DC members' concerns directly. DC members also noted that as the business of LegCo was particularly heavy towards the end of the last legislative session, LegCo Members might have difficulty in arranging to

² The last sessions of the previous terms of LegCo coincided with the commencement of a new term of DCs. As the new term of DCs began on 1 January of the relevant year, the meetings with DCs were arranged to be held from late February to early June.

attend the meetings with DCs held during this period and there might not be sufficient time to follow up the issues raised at the meetings.

Proposed enhancement measures

6. Having regard to the concerns set out in paragraph 5 above, the following enhancement measures are proposed for Members' consideration:

- (a) instead of scheduling four complete rounds of meetings with the 18 DCs within a legislative term, three complete rounds of such meetings will be scheduled with fewer meetings scheduled for the first and the last legislative sessions. This arrangement would allow sufficient lead time for preparation of the first few meetings with DCs in the first legislative session, and could avoid scheduling meetings with DCs towards the end of the last legislative session which is usually very busy;
- (b) where available, copies of the Administration's written replies on the discussion topics will be forwarded to the DC concerned prior to the meeting;
- (c) to enhance public awareness of this area of liaison work of LegCo, a photo press release with a list of the topics discussed and a list of the attending LegCo Members will be issued after each meeting with a DC; and
- (d) in line with past practice, Members will be divided into groups to meet with DC members. With the addition of 10 Members for the Fifth LegCo, it is expected that around 16 Members will be on roster to attend each of these meetings/luncheons. On this basis, each Member will attend about 12 meetings within a legislative term. Among the roster Members, it is proposed that those returned from geographical constituencies will be designated as "Core Roster Members" in recognition of their close connection with the relevant districts. In addition, Members returned from the District Council (first) functional constituency and District Council (second) functional constituency will be consulted as to which DC meetings they would like to attend and they will then be included in the group of "Core Roster Members" for those meetings. All Members scheduled on

the roster³ will be reminded in the meeting notice, which will be issued around four weeks before the meeting, to make themselves available to attend the meeting and luncheon⁴.

7. Regarding the suggestion to invite government officials to attend the meetings with DCs, Members are invited to note that such arrangement would involve a significant change in the nature and mode of the meetings, which according to Rule 32(a) of HR are aimed to facilitate discussion and exchange of views between LegCo Members and DC members on matters of mutual interest. Should Members consider it appropriate to pursue the suggestion, the Administration's views would need to be sought.

Luncheon between LegCo Members and the Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of District Councils

8. To facilitate exchange of views and better coordination on some cross-district or territory-wide issues raised by DCs, and following consultation with all LegCo Members⁵, the House Committee agreed at its meeting on 7 January 2011 that in addition to the scheduled meeting-cum-luncheons with DC members, a luncheon with the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the 18 DCs should be organized each year to further enhance the communication between LegCo Members and DC members. Two such luncheons were held in April 2011 and February 2012. These luncheons were well received by both LegCo Members and the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of DCs⁶. It is proposed that such luncheon be continued to be organized each year in the Fifth LegCo.

³ In each legislative session, a draft roster for the meetings with DCs for the legislative session will be issued to all Members for comments before it is finalized.

⁴ Under Rule 32(g) of HR, each meeting should be attended by a minimum of five Members. Members scheduled on the roster should make themselves available to attend these meetings/luncheons.

⁵ A consultation paper was issued on 5 November 2010 to seek Members' views on the proposal to further enhance the communication between the legislature and the DCs and some suggested options to achieve the objective. Members responded favourably to the proposal and the most preferred option was holding a luncheon with the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the 18 DCs once a year.

⁶ 34 LegCo Members and 22 Chairmen/Vice-Chairmen of DCs attended the luncheon in 2011, while 19 LegCo Members and 31 DC Chairmen/Vice-Chairmen of DCs attended the luncheon in 2012.

Advice sought

9. Members' views are sought on the proposed arrangements set out in paragraphs 6 to 8 above.

10. Subject to Members' views, the Secretariat will contact the 18 DCs through the Home Affairs Department to make arrangements for the meeting-cum-luncheons as well as the luncheon with the Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of the 18 DCs.

Council Business Division 4
Legislative Council Secretariat
18 October 2012

Extract from the House Rules

32. Meetings with District Councils

- (a) Meeting-cum-luncheons are held in camera with District Council (DC) members from time to time to discuss and exchange views on matters of mutual interest.
- (b) Tentative dates of the meetings can be drawn up in advance, but the exact dates can be fixed mutually between the respective DCs and the Secretariat, subject to sufficient notice being given to members on both sides.
- (c) The meeting time is normally from 10:45 am to 12:45 pm, followed by lunch up to 2:00 pm.
- (d) Members are divided into groups to meet with DC members on a roster system.
- (e) Members convene meetings by turn.
- (f) Upon the request of DCs, individual Members may be invited to attend a particular meeting.
- (g) Each meeting should be attended by a minimum of five Members. Members scheduled on the roster should make themselves available to attend these meetings/luncheons.
- (h) If the number of Members who have signed up for a meeting is less than five, other Members approached by the Secretariat should make an effort to attend the meeting to ensure that the minimum attendance is met.
- (i) A formal agenda for the meeting should be prepared in consultation with the DC concerned prior to the meeting.
- (j) Minutes of meetings are to be issued to the DCs after the meetings.
- (k) Matters discussed at the meetings are followed up by the relevant policy Panels or the Complaints Division as appropriate.
- (l) While the Secretariat will liaise with the Administration on the issues raised and the follow-up action to be taken, the convenor of the meeting/luncheon will report back to the DC personally, on behalf of Members present.