

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. FC76/15-16

(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

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Finance Committee of the Legislative Council

Minutes of the 65th meeting
held at Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex
on Wednesday, 15 July 2015, at 4:45 pm

Members present:

Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, GBS, JP (Chairman)

Hon CHAN Kin-por, BBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)

Hon Albert HO Chun-yan

Hon LEE Cheuk-yan

Hon James TO Kun-sun

Hon CHAN Kam-lam, SBS, JP

Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung

Dr Hon LAU Wong-fat, GBM, GBS, JP

Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP

Hon Vincent FANG Kang, SBS, JP

Hon WONG Kwok-hing, BBS, MH

Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung, GBS, JP

Hon Andrew LEUNG Kwan-yuen, GBS, JP

Hon WONG Ting-kwong, SBS, JP

Hon CHAN Hak-kan, JP

Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP

Hon WONG Kwok-kin, SBS

Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP

Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yee, GBS, JP

Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun, JP

Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC

Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung

Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip

Hon WONG Yuk-man

Hon Claudia MO
Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP
Hon NG Leung-sing, SBS, JP
Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, JP
Hon WU Chi-wai, MH
Hon YIU Si-wing, BBS
Hon Gary FAN Kwok-wai
Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP
Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen
Hon CHAN Han-pan, JP
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, SBS, JP
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, BBS, MH, JP
Hon KWOK Wai-keung
Hon Dennis KWOK
Hon Christopher CHEUNG Wah-fung, SBS, JP
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Hon SIN Chung-kai, SBS, JP
Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan
Hon IP Kin-yuen
Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, JP
Hon Martin LIAO Cheung-kong, SBS, JP
Hon POON Siu-ping, BBS, MH
Hon TANG Ka-piu, JP
Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, JP
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, SBS, MH, JP
Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun, BBS, MH, JP
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS

Members absent:

Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP
Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP
Prof Hon Joseph LEE Kok-long, SBS, JP, PhD, RN
Hon Ronny TONG Ka-wah, SC
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan, JP
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, JP
Dr Hon LAM Tai-fai, SBS, JP
Dr Hon LEUNG Ka-lau

Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che
Hon James TIEN Pei-chun, GBS, JP
Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok
Hon Kenneth LEUNG
Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen, BBS, JP
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan

Public officers attending:

Ms Elizabeth TSE Man-yee, JP	Permanent Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury)
Ms Esther LEUNG, JP	Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury)1
Mr Alfred ZHI Jian-hong	Principal Executive Officer (General), Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau (The Treasury Branch)
Ms Angela LEE Chung-yan	Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs (3)
Ms Michelle LI Mei-sheung, JP	Director of Leisure and Cultural Services
Ms Elaine YEUNG Chi-lan	Assistant Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Performing Arts)
Mr LEUNG Koon-kee, JP	Director of Architectural Services
Mrs Alice YU NG Ka-chun	Project Director (3), Architectural Services Department

Clerk in attendance:

Ms Anita SIT	Assistant Secretary General 1
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Staff in attendance:

Mr Derek LO	Chief Council Secretary (1)5
Mr Daniel SIN	Senior Council Secretary (1)7
Mr Raymond SZETO	Council Secretary (1)5
Mr Frankie WOO	Senior Legislative Assistant (1)3
Ms Michelle NIEN	Legislative Assistant (1)5
Miss Yannes HO	Legislative Assistant (1)6

Special meeting scheduled for 16 July 2015

The Chairman advised that a special meeting would be held on 16 July 2015 from 2:30 pm to 4:00 pm for the Committee to consider Dr Kenneth CHAN's suggestion in his letter dated 9 July 2015 that Mr Nicholas W. YANG, Advisor to the Chief Executive on Innovation and Technology and non-official Member of the Executive Council, be invited to attend the meetings of the Committee for the deliberation of the proposals related to the setting up of the Innovation and Technology Bureau ("ITB"). The Secretariat had issued a circular FC223/14-15 on 15 July 2015 informing members of the meeting arrangement.

2. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen enquired when Mr YANG could attend the Committee's meetings if the Committee decided at the special meeting that Mr YANG should be invited, and what the Chairman would do if Mr YANG declined the invitation. The Chairman advised that he could not tell when Mr YANG could attend the meetings as he was uncertain when the Committee would commence discussion on the ITB proposals. Should the Committee decide to invite Mr YANG, the Secretariat would first inform the Administration of the decision.

[Post-meeting note: Dr Kenneth CHAN wrote to the Chairman on the morning of 16 July 2015 to withdraw his request for inviting Mr YANG to attend the meetings of the Committee. Upon receiving no dissenting view from members, the Chairman directed that the special meeting on 16 July 2015 be cancelled. Members were informed of the cancellation of meeting vide LC Paper No. FC227/14-15 dated 16 July 2015.]

**Item No. 1 – FCR(2015-16)29
RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
PUBLIC WORKS SUBCOMMITTEE MADE
ON 16, 24 AND 30 JUNE 2015**

3. The Chairman said that the item FCR(2015-16)29 sought the Committee's approval for the recommendations of the Public Works Subcommittee ("PWSC") made at its meetings held on 16, 24 and 30 June 2015. The Committee had approved 17 of the recommended items, including eight items voted on separately, and would continue to consider the remaining three items which were to be voted on separately as per members' request. The Committee would continue the deliberation on PWSC(2015-16)9, which was carried over from the previous meeting. The item invited the Committee to

approve the upgrading of project 60RE to Category A at an estimated cost of \$4,175.7 million in money-of-the-day prices for the construction of the East Kowloon Cultural Centre ("EKCC").

Justification for the proposed East Kowloon Cultural Centre

4. Mr Paul TSE said that residents of East Kowloon were keen to see the construction of the proposed EKCC since the population in East Kowloon would exceed two million by 2020 and there was only a small multi-purpose venue, i.e. Ngau Chi Wan Civic Centre, for holding performing arts events in the region. He opined that to address the doubt of some other members about the need for EKCC in East Kowloon, the Administration should make clear to them whether the shortfall of performing arts facilities in East Kowloon was currently more severe than those in other regions, and whether the provision of such facilities in East Kowloon was commensurate with its population size.

5. Director of Leisure and Cultural Services ("DLCS") replied that the Administration planned the provision of performing arts facilities on a territory-wide basis, and did not have a breakdown of the shortfall of such facilities by region or district. The fact that 70% of the applications for using performing arts venues of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department ("LCSD") in 2013-2014 were unsuccessful had shown that there was an overall shortage of such venues in the territory. She said that the Administration was all along aware that the East Kowloon region lacked performing arts facilities. The utilization rate of Ngau Chi Wan Civic Centre was about 98% which was higher than those of Tuen Mun Town Hall and Yuen Long Theatre. In view of the increasing demand for venues for staging arts and cultural performances in future, the Administration anticipated that upon the commissioning of EKCC, there would still be a shortfall in performing arts venues in the territory but the rejection rate for applications for use of such venues might be lowered. In response to the enquiries of Mr TSE and the Chairman about the projected unsuccessful booking rate after the commissioning of the proposed centre, DLCS advised that the overall demand for performing arts venues would continue to rise as the art sector became more vibrant. The Administration had not made an estimate on the unsuccessful booking rate.

6. Mr WONG Yuk-man enquired whether the performing arts groups in East Kowloon would be accorded priority to use the EKCC performing arts facilities. DLCS replied that EKCC was intended to be a cross-district cultural venue provided in the East Kowloon region for use by the local communities and arts groups of the districts in the region. While people from all districts in the territory were welcome to apply for use of the EKCC performing arts

facilities, the communities and arts groups in East Kowloon holding arts-related activities would be accorded priority.

7. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen and Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung opined that the EKCC project should provide the type of performing arts venues most needed by the society at large to ensure its cost-effectiveness. Mr CHAN said that performing arts venues were in greater demand especially for those in prime locations. When planning a new venue serving the territory, the Administration should not only take into account the population of the region where the venue was located, but also the anticipated demand for use of the facilities in the venue by communities and arts groups from all districts. Mr CHAN enquired whether there were any major LCSD's performing arts venues in urban districts which were under planning other than EKCC. DLCS advised in the negative.

8. Mr CHAN Kam-lam and Mr MA Fung-kwok said that the local communities had been urging the Administration to provide a well-equipped cultural centre in East Kowloon for a few decades. They considered it imminent for the Administration to take forward the EKCC project. Mr CHAN opined that the project site had been left idle since the clearance of the ex-Lower Ngau Tau Kok Estate site for redevelopment, and the Kwun Tong District Council ("DC") would like to see the early implementation of the proposal. As the EKCC comprised five facilities including an auditorium, a theatre and three music/dance/drama studios, it would help ease the demand for performing arts venues. He called upon members to make a timely decision on whether to approve the proposal.

Unsuccessful applications for using performing arts venues

9. Mr James TO said that to facilitate members to understand the type and capacity of performing arts venues that were most needed by the society, the Administration should provide information on the number of unsuccessful applications for use of LCSD's performing arts venues broken down by facilities in each venue. DLCS responded that the Administration did not have the breakdown as requested by Mr TO. She advised that the utilization rates of the 14 performing arts venues under the management of LCSD were all close to 100%. The 14 venues were of different sizes and the unsuccessful booking rates for these venues ranged from about 20% to 88% in 2014-2015.

10. In response to Ms Claudia MO's enquiry whether the unsuccessful applications for use of the LCSD's performing arts venues mentioned in the Administration's paper had included the applications for using the venues for carrying out school-related activities such as inter-school debates, dancing

performances, etc., DLCS advised that the applications included those received from schools for carrying out their activities in the venues concerned.

Utilization of existing performing arts venues

11. Mr Gary FAN declared that he was a member of Sai Kung DC and said that the Administration had declined his request for the provision of a civic centre in Tseung Kwan O on the ground that the Ngau Chi Wan Civic Centre in Wong Tai Sin District could serve the district. He opined that to facilitate members' consideration of the EKCC proposal, the Administration should provide relevant information such as the utilization of individual existing performing arts venues of LCSD, details about the unsuccessful applications for use of these venues, etc.

12. Mr Gary FAN and Ms Claudia MO requested the Administration to provide details of LCSD's 14 performing arts venues, including the type of facility, seating capacity, and unsuccessful booking rate.

[*Post-meeting note:* The Administration's response was issued to members vide LC Paper No. FC236/14-15(01) on 12 August 2015.]

Capacity of the performing arts facilities in the East Kowloon Cultural Centre

13. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung expressed concern that there were too few performing arts facilities in the EKCC to meet the needs of the communities and performing arts sector. Considering that the existing venues for Cantonese Opera such as community halls could usually accommodate 300 to 400 persons, he opined that the Administration should increase the seating capacity of the music/dance/drama studios in the EKCC which had 120 to 250 seats. DLCS replied that the EKCC proposal had taken into account views and suggestions by various arts groups or organizations including Kwun Tong DC. EKCC would be one of the LCSD's performing arts venues that had the largest number of performing arts facilities with varied sizes and shapes. The size and design of the proposed studios were tailor-made for artists who were in need of venues that provided audience with an interactive experience in viewing performances. Mr LEUNG remained of the view that the development of a larger studio could provide more seats to host a wider range of events/activities.

Positioning the East Kowloon Cultural Centre to complement facilities in the West Kowloon Cultural District

14. Mr WONG Yuk-man queried whether EKCC could complement the new performing arts facilities being planned for the West Kowloon Cultural

District ("WKCD"), as claimed in the Administration's paper, since the EKCC project was much smaller in scale than the WKCD project. He commented that the Administration had all along lacked a policy direction in planning performing arts venues in the territory, and failed in making good use of the existing public open spaces such as the pedestrian precinct at Sai Yeung Choi Street South in supporting the development of performing arts activities.

15. DLCS replied that EKCC would provide open spaces of about 11 000 square metres to cater for different types of activities. She explained that at present, the utilization rate of small performing arts facilities such as Black Box Theatre of Kwai Tsing Theatre was very high. The unsuccessful booking rates for Yau Ma Tei Theatre and the Theatre of Sai Wan Ho Civic Centre were more than 60%. It was envisaged that demand for performing arts venues could not be fully met by the venues in WKCD alone. The construction of EKCC could complement the WKCD venues in terms of positioning, location, size, nature, target audience and hirers.

16. Mr James TO and Mr CHAN Chi-chuen expressed concern that the WKCD project might be adversely affected by the delays in the works of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link project and most WKCD facilities were still under planning. The Administration should take this into account when planning the facilities for EKCC. Mr CHAN opined that the seating capacity of the EKCC performing arts facilities should be increased. DLCS replied that the project site had been fully utilized under the present proposal in light of the relevant planning restrictions on the site. In planning the project, the Administration had taken into account the development plan for WKCD and the demand for venues capable of accommodating small- to medium-scale performances.

Facilities in the East Kowloon Cultural Centre

17. Mr Albert CHAN expressed support for the EKCC project as it could help alleviate the shortage of performing arts venues in urban districts. He opined that instead of replicating the design of other LCSD's performing arts venues, the Administration should bring in state-of-the-art technologies and facilities to EKCC. DLCS replied that the installations and equipment of EKCC would be on a par with international standards as far as possible. She cited the three music/dance/drama studios as examples and advised that the facilities would offer high flexibility in staging and seating configurations to suit a variety of performance events.

18. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen noted that the auditorium to be provided under the project was suitable for sophisticated productions. He enquired how the auditorium differed from other EKCC performing arts facilities and whether sophisticated productions would be given priority in using the auditorium. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung enquired whether the auditorium was suitable for holding rock concerts. DLCS replied that the auditorium would be equipped with professional stage facilities suitable for a wide range of activities and events such as music, dance, drama, opera performances, large-scale ceremonies, etc. All the EKCC performing arts facilities were multi-purpose. Applications for use of the facilities would be assessed in accordance with the relevant marking schemes.

Facilities for persons with disabilities

19. Dr Fernando CHEUNG expressed concern on whether the facilities in EKCC were easily accessible to members of the public in particular wheelchair users. In response to Dr CHEUNG's enquiries, Director of Architectural Services ("DArchS") referred members to the enclosures of the paper and explained how visitors including wheelchair users might enter the building and reach Theatre T2. DArchS further said that the seats for people with disabilities would be located at different parts of the performing arts facilities and the seats would be easily reachable by wheelchair users.

Car parking facilities

20. Ms Claudia MO commented that the proposed provision of 30 car parking spaces was insufficient to meet the needs of users of EKCC as a major performing arts venue. She expressed disappointment that the project site would not provide an underground car park. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok recalled the Administration's earlier advice that it could not provide an underground car park at the project site due to budgetary constraints, but the Administration might free up space on ground floor for more parking spaces. He enquired whether the Administration had now refined the proposal accordingly. Dr Fernando CHEUNG asked about the number of car parking spaces reserved for persons with disabilities.

21. DArchS replied that due to site constraints, the Administration had to strike a balance among demands for different EKCC facilities to be provided on the ground floor including car parking spaces, loading/unloading area for scenery and other goods items, drop off area for taxis and coaches, front-of-house/backstage facilities, public open spaces, etc. Of the 30 car parking spaces, one would be reserved for persons with disabilities. He advised that the Administration would continue to explore feasibility to provide

more car parking spaces at the project site. In response to Dr CHEUNG's comment about the inadequacy of car parking space for persons with disabilities, DArchS said that the 30 car parking spaces would be reserved for use by hirers of venues and performers. The Administration would consider appropriate contingent measures to deal with sudden increase in the demand for parking spaces for persons with disabilities. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok said that for ease of moving equipment and materials to be used in stage performances, the car parking spaces and loading/unloading areas should be provided as close to the performing arts facilities as possible.

Energy conservation and green features

22. Referring to the provision for the energy conservation, green and recycled features in the project estimate for the proposal, Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung enquired about the depreciation and maintenance charges arising from these features within 10 years after the commissioning of EKCC. DArchS replied that the project would adopt various forms of energy efficient features and renewable energy technologies. The payback period of the energy efficient features which were listed in paragraph 29(a) to (f) of the Administration's paper ranged from two to seven years.

23. Noting that the Administration would use Kowloon East as a pilot area to explore the "Smart City" concept featuring low carbon green community and intelligent systems in city planning, Mr Tony TSE enquired whether it was part of the EKCC project to implement the "Smart City" initiative. DArchS replied that to consider whether the initiative could be implemented under the proposed project, relevant departments might need to further discuss with the Development Bureau and the Energizing Kowloon East ("EKE") Office. Mr TSE considered that the Administration should incorporate the "Smart City" concept into the design of its future public works projects where appropriate.

24. In response to Mr Gary FAN's enquiry, DLCS said that the Administration planned to provide five arts booths in EKCC where local artists might display their artworks. The tender exercise for the operation of the booths would be conducted in due course.

Connectivity of the East Kowloon Cultural Centre with nearby areas

25. Dr Fernando CHEUNG said that members of the public might in future use the footbridge west of the project site to reach EKCC. He enquired whether the footbridge was provided with barrier-free facilities. DArchS replied that the Highways Department had a plan to add suitable barrier-free

facilities to the footbridge. Dr CHEUNG urged the Administration to take forward the plan in a timely manner.

26. Mr Paul TSE was concerned whether the project could help enhance the pedestrian connectivity between the Kowloon Bay MTR Station and the nearby residential developments. He asked whether the Administration would provide 24-hour access from the MTR Station to the podium of EKCC for public use. DLCS replied that the proposed project had taken into account the need to enhance the accessibility of EKCC and its connectivity with the Kowloon Bay MTR station. There was currently a footbridge connecting the Exit B of the MTR station. The EKE Office was exploring the provision of a new footbridge connecting EKCC and the MTR Station. 24-hour access would be provided in future to facilitate pedestrians/residents to travel between the MTR Station and the nearby residential developments through footbridges and the podium of EKCC. In response to Mr TSE's enquiry about a footbridge connection between Amoy Gardens and the podium of EKCC, DLCS advised that space had been reserved for the purpose should residents of Amoy Gardens decide to fund and build the connecting footbridge.

27. Miss CHAN Yuen-han recalled having requested the Administration at the relevant PWSC meeting to improve the pedestrian connections among different areas in Kowloon East to facilitate public access to the arts and cultural facilities that would be provided underneath the Kwun Tong Bypass as part of the EKE initiative. She enquired whether the relevant government departments would pursue the matter. DLCS replied that LCSD would continue to liaise with the Development Bureau and EKE Office in light of Miss CHAN's view.

Project cost estimate and implementation timetable

28. Ms Claudia MO enquired how confident the Administration was in completing the EKCC project within its cost estimate. Mr Gary FAN enquired about the Administration's measures to prevent cost overrun of the project, the provision made for project contingencies, and timing of the relevant tendering exercise. Mr Albert HO said that many projects to repair and maintain residential buildings had been recently deferred due to shortage of construction workers. He cast doubt on whether the Administration could deliver the EKCC project as scheduled. He opined that as many infrastructure projects were under planning, the Administration should carefully prioritize its public works projects.

29. DArchS replied that the proposed project consisted of foundation and building works, which would take 15 months and 39 months to complete respectively. Upon obtaining funding approval for the proposed project, the Administration would commence the tendering exercise for the foundation works. The tendering exercise for building works would start about four to five months before the anticipated completion of the foundation works. To control the project cost, the Administration would draw up detailed project requirements for tendering, and would strive to avoid making substantial changes to the requirements during the project implementation stage in order to minimize the chances of claims by project contractors in future. The Administration had carried out site investigations to factor ground conditions at the site concerned in the project cost and time. Regarding the provision for contingencies, it was about 10% of the total project cost.

30. DArchS continued that the project timetable had taken into account the overall labour market situation. The cost estimate had included a provision for price adjustment to cater for the fluctuations in labour and material costs during contract periods based on assumptions made by the Government Economist in respect of the trend of changes. If the range of fluctuations in labour and material costs in the relevant period was within the range assumed, the Administration was confident that the project could be completed within the proposed project estimate.

31. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung said that to control the project cost, the Administration should proceed with the tendering for the works contracts as early as possible and take appropriate measures to mitigate possible project risks. The Chairman sought clarification on whether after a contract for the project had been tendered out, the Administration would still have to bear the difference between the actual cost and the target cost of the contract. DArchS replied that the contractor would be paid the tendered rate together with the price fluctuation adjustment at the time of payment certification. The price fluctuation provision in works contracts would enable the Administration and the contractor to share the risk due to changes in cost of labour and material.

Consultant fees

32. Mr Gary FAN enquired whether the estimate of \$90 million for consultants' fees under the proposed project was comparable to those of other public works projects. DArchS replied that the provision for consultants' fees for design represented about two percent of the total project estimate and had taken into account the time and resources to be required by the consultants to perform the tasks to be assigned to them. In response to Mr FAN's enquiry, DArchS advised that the Administration had put in place an established

mechanism for engaging consultants in public works projects and had maintained an approved list of consultants for consultancy services. When selecting a consultant for a project, the Administration would take into account various factors such as the project scale.

Venue Partnership Scheme

33. Mr Albert CHAN enquired whether, to develop a unique character for different performing arts venues and help foster the development of the local performing arts sector, the Administration would introduce some sort of artist-in-residence scheme under which local performing artists would conduct performing arts programmes at selected venues for a certain period. DLCS replied that the Administration had been implementing a Venue Partnership Scheme since 2009 to foster partnership between venues and performing arts groups to make the best use of venues. Support to the Venue Partners had been given in various forms, including priority use of venue facilities. Mr CHAN remained of the view that apart from according priority use of venues to them, Venue Partners should be allowed to conduct longer term performing arts programmes at these venues so that they could build up their audience base.

34. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung enquired whether the Administration would select those rock-and-roll bands which had been forced to move out of the industrial buildings in Ngau Tau Kok as Venue Partners. DLCS replied that there were procedures in place for selecting performing arts groups as Venue Partners, and 22 Venue Partners had been selected to organize activities at 12 performing arts venues currently. The Administration would adopt the prevailing mechanism in selecting suitable performing arts groups as Venue Partners.

Management of performing arts venues

35. Mr MA Fung-kwok opined that instead of putting all performing arts venues under the management of LCSD, the Administration might consider engaging non-government community organizations to manage the newly constructed performing arts facilities such as the proposed EKCC. DLCS replied that while the Home Affairs Bureau and LCSD did not have plans to change the existing approach in managing the performing arts venues, the Administration would continue to make reference to the practices adopted by other organizations such as the Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts and local universities in managing their performing arts facilities and was open to the views on the matter.

Complaint case about venue booking

36. Dr Fernando CHEUNG said that in its response to a complaint referred by The Ombudsman regarding booking of performing arts venues, LCSD had advised that where more than one applicant applied for hiring a performing arts facility for the same time slot, the Department would consider a set of factors such as the lapse of time since the applicant's last successful booking of the facility, the attendance at the last function held by the applicant at the facility, etc. Dr CHEUNG asked about the relative weighting of these factors, and commented that applicants who were budding artists or new arts groups might find it difficult to book a facility if the attendance at the last function held by them at the facility was a key factor for consideration.

37. DLCS replied that in response to The Ombudsman's comments on the case mentioned by Dr CHEUNG, LCSD had made clear the procedures for processing applications for booking performing arts venues under its management and the marking scheme adopted by the department for assessing the applications. The details had also been posted on the relevant website for public reference. She said that LCSD would continue to handle the applications for use of its venues according to the procedures.

38. Dr Fernando CHEUNG enquired about the finding by The Ombudsman that there were many vacant time slots for the concerned venue in the programme schedule on LCSD's website when at the same time there was a very high rate of unsuccessful booking. DLCS replied that the programme schedule did not include events which were not open for public viewing and sessions which were reserved for rehearsals, set-up/move-out, etc. Moreover, individual hirers of venues might cancel their bookings at a very late stage.

39. The Chairman announced that the meeting be adjourned and the Committee would continue deliberation on the item at the next meeting.

40. The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 pm.