

## Committee on Rules of Procedure

### List of issues studied during the period from October 2015 to July 2016

Item	Issue	Relevant rule(s)	Progress/remarks
1	<b>Presentation of petitions to the Council under Rule 20 of the Rules of Procedure</b>	Rule 20 of the Rules of Procedure	<p>The Committee agrees that a review should be conducted by the Sixth Legislative Council on Rule 20 of the Rules of Procedure after the Select Committee to Inquire into the Background of and Reasons for the Delay of the Construction of the Hong Kong section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link has concluded its work.</p> <p>The Committee agrees that for the efficient operation of the Council, and until any review of Rule 20 of the Rules of Procedure was conducted and amendments made to the relevant Rules, the following procedures should be adopted for dealing with situations where more than one petition on similar or related subject matters have been presented:</p> <p>(a) in forming a preparatory subcommittee, the House Committee would consider</p>

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			<p>whether any of the petitions presented but awaiting activation of a select committee, may be similar or concerned with related subject matters. If the House Committee is satisfied that some of these petitions are similar or the subject matters of the petitions are related, the House Committee may invite the preparatory subcommittee to draw up recommendations on the terms of reference that encompass the subject matters of the petitions involved; and</p> <p>(b) if the House Committee decides that the petitions under consideration should be referred to different select committees or if the preparatory subcommittee could not agree on the terms of reference, the current practice of activating one select committee only at any one time</p>

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			should remain in force.
2	<b>Quorum at Council meetings</b>	Rule 17 of the Rules of Procedure	<p>The Committee notes that business of the Legislative Council is transacted on the presumption that a quorum is present unless and until the attention of the President is drawn to the fact that a quorum is not present. Rule 17(2) of the Rules of Procedure provides a mechanism for Members to draw the President's attention to the absence of a quorum. The legality of the Council meeting should be intact as the meeting is presumed to be quorate unless and until the President's attention is drawn to the fact that there is an absence of a quorum.</p> <p>The Committee is of the view that it is not viable at present to conduct a further review regarding the application of Rule 17 of the Rules of Procedure, due to a lack of consensus among Members.</p>

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3	<b>Speaking time of Members in the Motion of Thanks debate in respect of the Chief Executive's Policy Address</b>	Rule 36(5) and Rule 37 of the Rules of Procedure  Rule 17 of the House Rules	The Committee studied the proposal of shortening the total speaking time of each Member in the debate from 30 minutes to 25 minutes and had invited members to consult other Members belonging to the same political parties/groupings on the proposal.  Following members' reports of the outcome of their consultations, the Committee concludes that no change should be made to the total speaking time available for each Member in the debate on the Motion of Thanks.
4	<b>Amendments to the Handbooks for Chairmen of Panels, Bills Committees and Subcommittees on Subsidiary Legislation/ Other Instruments</b>	Rule 83A of the Rules of Procedure  Rules 22(p), 24A and 25(c) of the House Rules	The Committee examined proposals to amend the Handbook for Chairmen of Panels, the Handbook for Chairmen of Bills Committees and the Handbook for Chairmen of Subcommittees on Subsidiary Legislation/Other Instruments (collectively known as "the Handbooks for Chairmen"). The proposals had the following aims:  (a) spelling out clearly the arrangement relating to amendments to a

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			<p data-bbox="1046 241 1358 577">motion proposed during the period of extension or the continuation of meeting beyond the appointed ending time of a committee meeting;</p> <p data-bbox="975 613 1334 949">(b) specifying the principles for the disclosure of pecuniary interests by Members in a matter under consideration by a committee;</p> <p data-bbox="975 985 1369 1321">(c) providing guidelines to facilitate chairmen of committees in handling requests from groups/ organizations to submit views to a committee; and</p> <p data-bbox="975 1357 1369 1953">(d) providing guidelines on the number of oral representations that a member of the public (whether as a representative of an organization/group or in his/her personal capacity) may make at committee meetings held for the purpose of receiving public views on a subject.</p> <p data-bbox="975 1989 1270 2020">Amendments to the</p>

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			Handbooks for Chairmen on (a), (b) and (d) above were proposed to the House Committee and were endorsed at its meeting on 13 November 2015.
5	<b>Rationalization of terms of reference of Panels following the establishment of the Innovation and Technology Bureau</b>	Rule 77(2) of the Rules of Procedure	<p>In the light of the changes in the organizational structure of the Government Secretariat and their possible effects on the work of the relevant Panels, the Committee studied the following proposals to rationalize the terms of reference of three Panels:</p> <p>(a) issues related to "innovation and technology" be transferred from the Panel on Commerce and Industry to the Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting;</p> <p>(b) issues related to "consumer protection" and "competition policy" be transferred from the Panel on Economic Development to the Panel on Commerce and Industry; and</p> <p>(c) the Panel on Information</p>

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			<p>Technology and Broadcasting be renamed to reflect the changes in the terms of reference of the Panel.</p> <p>Members in general support the proposed changes to the terms of reference. The Committee notes the suggestion that the Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting could either retain its existing name, or be renamed as "Panel on Broadcasting, Innovation and Technology" ("廣播、創新及科技事務委員會").</p> <p>The Committee agrees that the proposals to rationalize the terms of reference of Panels and the renaming of the Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting should be submitted for consideration by this Committee again at the beginning of the next term of the Legislative Council.</p>
6	<b>Amendment to Rule 83 of the Rules of Procedure</b>	Rule 83 of the Rules of Procedure	Members are required under the Rules of Procedure to register the election donations received

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	<p><b>proposed by the Committee on Members' Interests</b></p>		<p>by them well before the deadline for lodging election returns under the Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Conduct) Ordinance (Cap. 554). In view of this, the Committee on Members' Interests proposed that Rule 83 of the Rules of Procedure be amended so as to align the deadlines for Members to register election donations under the Rules of Procedure with the 60-day deadline for lodging election returns under Cap. 554.</p> <p>Members' views on the proposal of the Committee on Members' Interests to amend Rule 83 of the Rules of Procedure were sought by circulation of paper on 2 June 2016. All members have signified agreement to the proposal. With the support of the House Committee at its meeting on 17 June 2016, the Chairman of the Committee on Members' Interests proposes to move a motion to amend Rule 83 of the Rules of Procedure at the Council meeting of 6 July 2016.</p>