

Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services
List of outstanding items for discussion
(position as at 20 November 2018)

**Proposed
timing for
discussion**

1. **Proposed creation of one Permanent Post of Principal Government Counsel, one Permanent Post of Deputy Principal Government Counsel, one supernumerary post of Deputy Principal Government Counsel and upgrading of one Assistant Principal Government Counsel to Deputy Principal Government Counsel Post in the Department of Justice ("DoJ")**

Proposed by DoJ. DoJ proposes to invite members' views on the following staff proposals:

December 2018

- (a) creation of one permanent post of Principal Government Counsel in the Secretary for Justice's Office to enhance the oversight and coordination of the work in relation to the development and promotion of Hong Kong's dispute resolution services;
- (b) creation of one permanent post of Deputy Principal Government Counsel ("DPGC") in the Legal Policy Division ("LPD") to strengthen the directorate support in the Law Reform Commission ("LRC") Secretariat;
- (c) creation of one supernumerary post of DPGC for a period of five years in LPD to more effectively cope with the increased demand on the Policy Affairs Sub-division as a result of the increasing complexity, scope and volume of its work; and
- (d) upgrading of one Assistant Principal Government Counsel post to one DPGC post in LPD to more effectively cope with the increased demand on the Policy Affairs Sub-division arising from increasing complexity, scope and volume of its work.

**Proposed
timing for
discussion**

2. Employment opportunities and system in the Judiciary for law students and legal practitioners

Proposed by Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG at the Panel meeting on 29 October 2018.

December 2018

3. Review of duty lawyer fees

Proposed by the Chief Secretary for Administration's Office ("CSO"). The Administration will brief members on the outcome of the review of duty lawyer fees.

January 2019

4. Biennial review of criminal legal aid fees, prosecution fees and duty lawyer fees

Proposed by CSO. The Administration will brief members on the outcome of the 2018 biennial review of criminal legal aid fees, prosecution fees and duty lawyer fees.

January 2019

5. Mainland Judgments in Matrimonial and Family Cases (Reciprocal Recognition and Enforcement) Bill

Proposed by DoJ. Members were consulted on the key features of the proposed Mainland Judgments in Matrimonial and Family Cases (Reciprocal Recognition and Enforcement) Bill ("Bill") as well as the proposed way forward on 26 March 2018. DoJ is revising the Bill in light of comments from the major stakeholders, with a view to issuing the Bill for public consultation in January 2019. DoJ proposes to consult members on the Bill in due course.

Q1 2019

6. Implementation of the recommendations made by LRC

Proposed by DoJ. LRC will provide its seventh annual report to the Panel on the Administration's progress in implementing the recommendations of LRC. This seventh report is made

May/June/July
2019

**Proposed
timing for
discussion**

pursuant to the reporting mechanism introduced by the Panel in 2012 to follow up on progress of implementation of the LRC's recommendations by the relevant bureaux and departments.

7. Legal education and training in Hong Kong

Proposed by Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG and Hon Dennis KWOK at the work plan meeting on 30 October 2018. Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG considered that law schools should be invited to give views on the subject.

June 2019

8. Further expansion of Hong Kong's international legal and dispute resolution services market and branding Hong Kong's dual role as deal maker and dispute resolver

Proposed by DoJ. As part of its continuous efforts to promote Hong Kong's position as a leading centre for international legal and dispute resolution services in the Asia-Pacific region, DoJ has been actively branding Hong Kong's dual role as deal maker and dispute resolver and would brief the Panel on the progress and relevant plans.

Q2/Q3 2019

9. Implementation of LRC Report on Enduring Powers of Attorney: Personal Care – Continuing Powers of Attorney Bill

On 22 January 2018, DoJ briefed the Panel on the launch of a consultation on the Continuing Powers of Attorney Bill which commenced on 28 December 2017. The Bill seeks to implement the LRC Report on Enduring Powers of Attorney: Personal Care. The consultation period ended on 28 April 2018. The Administration is now considering the responses received and will take them into account in refining the Bill. DoJ will brief the Panel on the result of the consultation as well as the proposed way forward on a date to be advised.

To be advised
by DoJ

**Proposed
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discussion**

10. Proposed legislative amendments for the implementation of the Information Technology Strategy Plan ("ITSP") of the Judiciary

Proposed by the Judiciary. The Judiciary has been developing by phases a major information technology project called ITSP to provide an electronic option for the handling of court-related documents. Legislative amendments are needed. The Government and the Judiciary Administration intend to consult the Panel on the proposed legislative amendments for the first phase of implementation when ready.

To be advised
by the Judiciary

11. LRC's Report on Class Actions

Hon Holden CHOW proposed to discuss the work progress of introducing a class action regime in Hong Kong (LC Paper No. CB(4)255/17-18(01)).

To be advised
by DoJ

At the Panel meeting on 27 November 2017, members agreed that the issue should be included in the Panel's List of outstanding items for discussion.

12. Abolition of the common law offence of champerty

At the Panel meeting on 25 March 2014, members were briefed by DoJ on the recent developments of the common law offences of maintenance and champerty in Hong Kong and the Administration's position in relation to the item. Members were generally of the views that the common law offences of maintenance and champerty were outdated and should be reviewed to better suit the present day circumstances. DoJ was urged to adopt a liberal approach in addressing the issue and come up with ways to enhance access to justice for the middle-income group.

To be advised
by DoJ

On 1 September 2014, a member requested the Panel to discuss the issue of abolition of the common law offence of champerty again.

In June 2017, the *Arbitration and Mediation Legislation (Third Party Funding) (Amendment) Ordinance 2017* was enacted to clarify that third-party funding for arbitration and mediation is not prohibited by the common law doctrines of maintenance and champerty, and to provide for related measures and safeguards. This Ordinance will come into effect after the issue by the statutory authorized body of a code of practice (the public consultation of which ended at the end of October 2018).

In view of the complexity of the issues involved in the proposed abolition of the common law offences of champerty and maintenance in Hong Kong, including those regarding the practice of recovery agents and litigation funding companies, and given the fundamental difference between litigation and consensual dispute resolution (arbitration and mediation), DoJ considers that a cautious approach should be adopted in respect of third party funding for litigation, which should only be considered after experience is gained from the operation of the *Arbitration and Mediation Legislation (Third Party Funding) (Amendment) Ordinance 2017*.

13. Recovery of costs in pro bono cases

Hon Dennis KWOK proposed to discuss the issue of "Recovery of costs in pro bono cases".

To be advised
by DoJ

At the Panel meeting on 24 November 2014, members agreed that the issue should be included in the Panel's List of outstanding items for discussion.

14. Implementation of Land Titles Ordinance (Cap. 585)

During the discussion of the item on "LRC Report on Adverse Possession" at the Panel meeting on 22 December 2014, Hon Dennis KWOK proposed that the Administration should be invited to brief members on the implementation progress of

To be advised
by DEVB

the Land Titles Ordinance (Cap. 585) ("LTO") enacted in 2004.

The Development Bureau ("DEVB") advised the Secretariat on 17 November 2015 that it plans to report the progress of the post-enactment review of the LTO to this Panel and the Panel on Development when the full package of necessary legislative proposed amendments to LTO is available.

DEVB is still engaging with major stakeholders on various proposed changes to the rectification, indemnity and conversion arrangements under the LTO for bringing existing land under the new title registration system as well as the proposal of implementing title registration on new land first ("new land first" proposal). With a view to enabling early implementation of the title registration system in Hong Kong, DEVB is actively forging consensus amongst the major stakeholders on the "new land first" proposal. The full package of necessary legislative amendments would only be available subject to a broad consensus being reached with the major stakeholders and in consultation with the LTO Steering Committee and the LTO Review Committee.

In view of the complexity of the issues involved and that consensus amongst stakeholders is yet to be reached, it would be difficult for DEVB to commit to a definite timeframe for report to members on the package of necessary legislative amendments at this stage; but DEVB and the Panel Clerk will keep in touch with each other should there be any update to such timeframe.

15. Financial Eligibility Limits for legal aid

The Hong Kong Bar Association Standing Committee on Legal Aid Reform submitted a submission relating to the Financial Eligibility Limits for legal aid (LC Paper No. CB(4)41/17-18(01)). At the request of the Panel, the Administration has provided its response to the submission

To be advised
by CSO

**Proposed
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and the response was circulated to members on 30 October 2017 (LC Paper No. CB(4)130/17-18(01)).

At the Panel meeting on 30 October 2017, members agreed that the issue should be included in the Panel's List of outstanding items for discussion.

16. Prosecution policy and the relationship between DoJ and the Independent Commission Against Corruption on criminal cases involving corruption

Dr Hon Junius HO proposed to discuss the prosecution policy and the relationship between DoJ and the Independent Commission Against Corruption on criminal cases involving corruption (LC Paper No. CB(4)661/17-18(01)).

To be advised
by DoJ

At the Panel meeting on 26 February 2018, members agreed that the issue should be included in the Panel's List of outstanding items for discussion.

17. Work of the Coroner's Court

Hon HUI Chi-fung proposed to discuss the work of the Coroner's Court (LC Paper No. CB(4)952/17-18(02)). He was concerned that there was a big difference between the number of death inquests held and the number of further death investigation reports ordered, and that the average waiting time of cases from the date of listing to hearing was too long.

To be advised
by the Judiciary

At the Panel meeting on 30 April 2018, members agreed that the issue should be included in the Panel's List of outstanding items for discussion.

At the work plan meeting on 30 October 2018, the Judiciary Administration advised that it would provide an information paper on this subject for members' reference.

18. Mutual legal assistance and arrangement on surrender of fugitive offenders between Hong Kong and Taiwan

Due to a murder case in Taiwan which involved Hong Kong residents, Hon Holden CHOW and Hon Starry LEE proposed to discuss mutual legal assistance and arrangement on surrender of fugitive offenders between Hong Kong and Taiwan (LC Paper No. CB(4)1165/17-18(01)).

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(Note)

At the Panel meeting on 28 May 2018, members agreed that the issue should be included in the Panel's List of outstanding items for discussion.

(Note: On 15 June 2018, DoJ advised that the item on "Cooperation between Hong Kong and other places on juridical assistance in criminal matters" included in the list of outstanding items for discussion of the Panel on Security (LC Paper No. CB(2)1480/17-18(01)) was broad enough to cover "Mutual legal assistance and agreement on surrender of fugitive offenders between Hong Kong and Taiwan" proposed by Hon Holden CHOW and Hon Starry LEE. At the Panel meeting on 25 June 2018, members agreed to request the Panel on Security to invite members of the Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services to join its discussion when the above subject was discussed. At the Panel meeting on 11 October 2018, some members urged for early discussion of this item. The Chairman will explore with the Chairman of the Panel on Security on the feasibility of holding a joint Panel meeting to discuss the matter.)

19. Introducing codes of conduct for counsel and solicitors providing services to incorporated owners of buildings

Members noted that several submissions were received from property owners urging that the Hong Kong Bar Association and the Law Society of Hong Kong should introduce codes of conduct for counsel and solicitors providing services to incorporated owners of buildings.

To be
confirmed

**Proposed
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At the Panel meeting on 28 May 2018, members agreed that the issue should be included in the Panel's List of outstanding items for discussion.

20. Outcome of consultation on gender recognition by the Inter-departmental Working Group on Gender Recognition

The Inter-departmental Working Group on Gender Recognition ("IWG") reported to the Panel the progress of IWG's work on 18 July 2017. The Panel held a public hearing on 20 November 2017 to listen to stakeholders' views on the Consultation Paper on Gender Recognition issued by IWG in June 2017. At the Panel meeting on 11 October 2018, Hon CHAN Chi-chuen proposed to discuss the outcome of consultation on gender recognition by IWG.

To be advised
by DoJ

According to DoJ in November 2018, IWG received over 17 500 responses to the consultation paper from a wide range of perspectives. IWG is in the process of collating and analysing the responses received. The IWG will brief the Panel on the results of the consultation as well as the proposed way forward on a date to be advised.

21. Length of remands

The Hong Kong Bar Association submitted a submission urging the Panel to examine whether a system could be devised to maintain records relating to the length of remands (LC Paper No. CB(4)1592/17-18(01)).

To be confirmed

At the Panel meeting on 29 October 2018, members agreed that the issue should be included in the Panel's List of outstanding items for discussion.

**Proposed
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22. Impact of globalization on arbitration in Hong Kong

Proposed by Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG at the work plan meeting on 30 October 2018. Hon Dennis KWOK considered that the Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre should be invited to give views on the subject.

To be advised
by DoJ

Council Business Division 4
Legislative Council Secretariat
20 November 2018