

Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services
List of outstanding items for discussion
(position as at 8 January 2020)

**Proposed
timing for
discussion**

1. 2019-2020 Judicial Service Pay Adjustment

Proposed by the Chief Secretary for Administration's Office ("CSO"). CSO proposes to consult members on its proposal to increase the pay for judges and judicial officers before seeking funding approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council.

February 2020

2. Opportunities and challenges for young legal practitioners in professional development

Proposed by the Department of Justice ("DoJ"). DoJ plans to discuss opportunities available to and challenges faced by young legal practitioners and what can be done to facilitate them in accessing the opportunities.

Q1 2020

3. Latest developments in international arbitration for Hong Kong

Proposed by DoJ. DoJ plans to brief the Panel on the latest developments in international arbitration for Hong Kong. DoJ will update members about the feedback of the arbitration community on the implementation of the Arrangement Concerning Mutual Assistance in Court-ordered Interim Measures in Aid of Arbitral Proceedings by the Courts of the Mainland and of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region ("HKSAR"); the challenges faced by and opportunities available to international arbitral institutions in Hong Kong and some recent initiatives undertaken by them as well as other relevant developments.

Q1 2020

Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG proposed to discuss impact of globalization on arbitration in Hong Kong at the work plan meeting on 30 October 2018. Hon Dennis KWOK considered that HKIAC should be invited to give views on the subject.

**Proposed
timing for
discussion**

4. Recent developments on Hong Kong's legal and dispute resolution services in the Greater Bay Area

Proposed by DoJ. DoJ plans to provide information for discussion on the recent developments on Hong Kong's legal and dispute resolution services in the Greater Bay Area.

March/April/
May 2020

5. Recent developments on the online dispute resolution and deal-making platform supported by the Government

Proposed by DoJ. DoJ plans to provide information for discussion on the recent developments on the online dispute resolution and deal-making platform supported by the Government.

March/April/
May 2020

6. Mediation initiatives of DoJ

Proposed by DoJ. As part of its continuous efforts to enhance Hong Kong's role as a leading centre for international legal and dispute resolution services in the Asia Pacific Region, DoJ has been undertaking a number of mediation initiatives to further develop and enhance the use of mediation in Hong Kong and to promote the mediation services of Hong Kong. DoJ will brief the Panel on the progress of the relevant initiatives.

June/ July
2020

7. 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.

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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.

**Proposed
timing 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. The Information paper on death investigations and inquests by the Coroner's Court (LC Paper CB(4)44/19-20(01)) had been circulated to Panel members for their reference on 25 October 2019.

8. Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2019

Proposed by DoJ. DoJ plans to seek members' views on the proposed amendments in the above Bill, which are largely minor, technical and non-controversial. One group of amendments seek to take forward the Judiciary's proposals to amend the High Court Ordinance (Cap. 4) to streamline certain court procedures to facilitate the more efficient handling of certain judicial review appeal cases. The Judiciary consulted the Panel on this group of proposed amendments at its meeting in June 2019.

To be advised
by DoJ

A paper by DoJ on the Administration's proposal to introduce the Bill (LC Paper CB(4)139/19-20(01)) had been circulated to Panel members for their reference on 25 November 2019. The Secretary for Justice has given notice to present the Bill for first reading at the Council meeting of 15 January 2020.

9. Proposed upgrading of one permanent post of Senior Government Counsel to Assistant Principal Government Counsel (DL1) in the Mediation Team under the Planning, Environment, Lands and Housing Unit, Civil Division of DoJ

Proposed by DoJ. DoJ proposed to upgrade one permanent post of Senior Government Counsel to Assistant Principal Government Counsel (DL1) in the Mediation Team under the Planning, Environment, Lands and Housing Unit, Civil Division of DoJ for strengthening legal support at the directorate level for implementation of mediation initiatives and related administrative duties.

To be advised
by DoJ

**Proposed
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10. 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.

To be advised
by DoJ

11. Implementation of the Law Reform Commission of Hong Kong ("LRC")'s 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

12. LRC 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.

13. 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. Following the issuance of the Code of Practice for Third Party Funding of Arbitration by the Secretary for Justice in her capacity as the statutory authorized body on 7 December 2018, those provisions of the Ordinance which govern third party funding of arbitration have come into effect on 1 February 2019. The remaining provisions on third party funding of mediation will commence on a future date to be decided following further consultation with the relevant stakeholders.

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

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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*.

14. 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.

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

To be advised
by DEVB

The Development Bureau ("DEVB") advised the Secretariat on 17 November 2015 that it planned 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 was available.

To enable early implementation of title registration system in Hong Kong, DEVB is actively pursuing the proposal of implementing title registration on newly granted land first ("new land first" proposal). DEVB has been engaging major stakeholders through meetings of the LTO Steering Committee and the LTO Review Committee, briefing sessions and discussion meetings, etc. for seeking a consensus on the major issues for implementing the "new land first" proposal. The full package of necessary legislative amendments would only be

available subject to a consensus on these major issues 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, 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.

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

To be advised
by CSO

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.

17. 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

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.

**Proposed
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18. 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 April 2019, a meticulous count has revealed that, during the consultation period, IWG in fact received about 18 800 responses to the consultation paper from a wide range of perspectives. IWG is in the process of collating and analysing the responses received. IWG will brief the Panel on the results of the consultation as well as the proposed way forward on a date to be advised.

19. 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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20. Arrangement between Hong Kong and the Mainland for reciprocal recognition and enforcement of judgments in civil and commercial matters

Proposed by Hon Dennis KWOK at the Panel meeting on 28 January 2019. He suggested the Panel discussed the issues relating to the information paper on Arrangement on Reciprocal Recognition and Enforcement of Judgments in Civil and Commercial Matters by the Courts of the Mainland and of the HKSAR provided by DoJ (LC Paper No. CB(4)433/18-19(01)).

To be advised
by DoJ

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