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6 July 2020

Mr Lemuel WOO
Clerk to Panel on
Administration of Justice and Legal Services
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Mr Woo,

**Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services
("AJLS Panel")
Correspondence from Hon Elizabeth QUAT and Hon CHU Hoi-dick**

I refer to your letter dated 24 June 2020. The Judiciary is asked to provide responses to correspondence from Hon Elizabeth QUAT and Hon CHU Hoi-dick for Members' reference. The information is provided as follows.

Handling of complaints against judicial conduct¹

2. The matters raised in Hon Elizabeth QUAT's letter concern a court case of which an application for review pursuant to section 81A of the Criminal Procedure Ordinance (Cap 221) has been lodged. The Judiciary will handle complaints against judicial conduct upon completion of all relevant judicial proceedings, in accordance with the established mechanism.

¹ Appendix I of your letter dated 24 June 2020 refers.

Matters relating to live broadcast facilities for court proceedings in Magistrates' Courts and the District Court²

----- 3. Regarding the matters raised in the email from Hon CHU Hoi-dick, the Judiciary has prepared an information paper at Annex on enhancement of broadcasting facilities at court buildings for Members' reference.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Winnie Wong', written in black ink.

(Miss Winnie Wong)
for Judiciary Administrator

² Appendix II of your letter dated 24 June 2020 refers.

For information

Legislative Council Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services

Enhancement of Broadcasting Facilities at Court Buildings

Introduction

This note seeks to update Members on the Judiciary's plan to enhance the broadcasting facilities within court buildings so that more court users may be able to observe court proceedings.

Background

2. There have been an increasing number of court cases at various levels of courts which may attract a large number of court users, including litigants, legal representatives, family members of the litigants, media and members of the public. In response, the Judiciary has been providing broadcasting facilities at various levels of courts, including the Court of Final Appeal, High Court, District Court ("DC") and the West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts ("WKM"). By using such facilities, a court hearing at a main courtroom is

broadcast to court extension(s)¹ which may include one or more courtroom(s) and/or court lobbies on the same floor or otherwise in the same court building. This has enabled more court users to observe court hearings in general.

3. Separately, because of the prevailing public health situation, the Judiciary has been maintaining appropriate preventive measures to protect the health of all people who enter and remain in Judiciary premises. These measures include requiring all people entering Judiciary premises to undergo body temperature checks and wear surgical masks (unless otherwise directed or allowed by the relevant Judge or Judicial Officer).

4. Besides, to maintain social distancing, capacity limits have been in force for various areas in court buildings, including courtrooms, court lobbies, court registries and accounts offices, to avoid crowding. Because of general reduction in courtroom capacity, the Judiciary has been making more arrangements for broadcasting of hearings to court extension(s) on a need basis whenever practicable.

¹ Court extension(s) is part of a courtroom. As such, court users in the extension(s) are required to observe the restrictions imposed inside a courtroom during court hearings. For example, they are required to keep quiet during the court hearings. Eating or drinking, photography, audio or video recording as well as the use of mobile devices for verbal communication are not allowed.

Latest Developments

5. The Judiciary notes that there has been a growing number of court cases with many court users, particularly for those relating to the recent social events. Coupled with the need for social distancing which will continue to be subject to the prevailing public health situation, there is now a general greater demand for courtrooms with larger capacities.

6. While the Judiciary has been listing cases with a large number of court users to suitable court premises, such as the larger courtrooms at the WKM, the Judiciary has also been exploring other possible means. For example, some DC cases will start to be listed at other suitable court buildings (such as the High Court Building and West Kowloon Law Courts Building) so as to release some of the more suitable courtrooms of the DC at Wan Chai Law Courts Building for DC cases with more court users.

Enhancement of Broadcasting Facilities

7. Another measure that the Judiciary has been adopting is to enhance the broadcasting facilities at various levels of courts, subject to any physical constraints of individual court buildings/floors such as the layout and size of the relevant court lobbies etc. Given the time needed for procurement and installation of the necessary facilities, the Judiciary is enhancing the facilities by phases according to the actual needs of different court buildings, primarily focusing on High Court, District Court and Magistrates' Courts ("MCs").

8. More specifically, for MCs, the Judiciary is taking incremental steps to make available broadcasting facilities in all the seven MCs in the coming few months. Depending on the developments and actual needs, further enhancements may also be done in respect of selected MCs as appropriate. In the meantime, the Judiciary will continue to monitor the situation closely and list cases with a large number of court users to suitable MC buildings as necessary.

Way Forward

9. The Judiciary will continue to monitor the situation closely and see if there is any need to further enhance the broadcasting facilities after completion of the present round of enhancements.

Judiciary Administration

July 2020