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30 July 2020

Clerk to Panel on Public Service Legislative Council Legislative Council Complex 1 Legislative Council Road Central, Hong Kong (Attn: Miss Carol WONG)

Dear Miss WONG,

Panel on Public Service Follow-up to meeting on 10 July 2020

At the meeting of the Legislative Council Panel on Public Service on 10 July 2020, the Panel discussed the item of Progress of the Study on the Proposal of Oath-taking by Civil Servants and Political Neutrality of Civil Servants (LC Paper No. CB(4)797/19-20(01)). The following provides supplementary information on civil service disciplinary matters in the light of enquiries raised at the meeting.

According to Article 99 of the Basic Law, public servants must be dedicated to their duties and be responsible to the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. All civil servants are required to uphold the core values and standards of conduct as set out in the Civil Service Code ("the Code"), which include commitment to the rule of law, dedication to their duties, impartiality and political neutrality. According to the Code, civil servants shall exercise executive powers in compliance with the Basic Law and the Laws of Hong Kong. Civil servants shall serve the Chief Executive and the Government of the day with total loyalty and to the best of their ability, no matter what their own political beliefs are. Civil servants shall also comply with the Civil Service Regulations, Civil Service Bureau Circulars and Circular Memoranda that are relevant to the core values and standards of conduct of the Civil Service.

The Government attaches great importance to the conduct of civil servants, and has all along been handling civil service disciplinary matters in accordance with the established mechanism. For civil servants who are convicted of criminal offence or have misconducted themselves, the Government would take appropriate follow-up actions against the officers in accordance with the established procedures, including disciplinary action. In overall terms, in the past 5 years from 2015 to 2019, there were 3 308 cases involving civil servants who were punished as they were convicted of criminal offence or found guilty of misconduct.

Yours sincerely,

(Ms Christina Chong)

for Secretary for the Civil Service