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Establishment Subcommittee of the Finance Committee

Minutes of the 10th meeting
held in Conference Room 1 of Legislative Council Complex
on Friday, 23 July 2021 at 2:47 pm

Members present:

Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBM, GBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon YIU Si-wing, SBS (Deputy Chairman)
Hon WONG Ting-kwong, GBS, JP
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, SBS, JP
Hon CHAN Hak-kan, SBS, JP
Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS, JP
Hon KWOK Wai-keung, JP
Hon Christopher CHEUNG Wah-fung, SBS, JP
Hon Elizabeth QUAT, BBS, JP
Hon Martin LIAO Cheung-kong, GBS, JP
Hon POON Siu-ping, BBS, MH
Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, SBS, JP
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, GBS, MH, JP
Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan
Hon Jimmy NG Wing-ka, BBS, JP
Hon Holden CHOW Ho-ding
Hon SHIU Ka-fai, JP
Hon YUNG Hoi-yan, JP
Dr Hon Pierre CHAN
Hon CHAN Chun-ying, JP
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS, JP

Member absent:

Hon WONG Kwok-kin, GBS, JP

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establishment in relation to the two items on the agenda. She then reminded members that in accordance with Rule 83A of the Rules of Procedure ("RoP"), they should disclose the nature of any direct or indirect pecuniary interest relating to the items under discussion at the meeting before they spoke on the items. She also drew members' attention to RoP 84 on voting in case of direct pecuniary interest.

EC(2021-22)10 Proposed regrading of two one-rank grade permanent directorate posts of one Head of Greening, Landscape and Tree Management Section (D2) and one Head of Tree Management Office (D1) to multi-disciplinary directorate posts in the Works Branch of the Development Bureau with immediate effect upon approval of the Finance Committee to meet operational needs and implement the greening, landscape and tree management initiatives more effectively

2. The Chairman remarked that the establishment proposal was to regrade two one-rank grade permanent directorate posts of one Head of Greening, Landscape and Tree Management Section ("GLTMS") ("H/GLTMS") (D2) and one Head of Tree Management Office ("TMO") ("H/TMO") (D1) to multi-disciplinary directorate posts in the Works Branch of the Development Bureau ("DevB") with immediate effect upon approval of the Finance Committee ("FC") to meet operational needs and implement the greening, landscape and tree management initiatives more effectively.

3. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok, Chairman of the Panel on Development, remarked that the Panel had discussed the proposal at its meeting on 25 May 2021. Members of the Panel generally supported submission of the proposal to the Establishment Subcommittee ("ESC") for consideration. They noted the high turnover rate of the posts over the past 10 years and the difficulties encountered by the authorities in identifying suitable candidates from outside the civil service. Some members were concerned that whether the proposal of appointing civil servants to take up the posts could solve the turnover problem, whether the proposed arrangement would lead to "non-professionals leading professionals", and whether the proposal could promote professionalization of the Government's tree management work. Referring to the recent creation of a non-civil service post of Head of Invigorating Island South Office under the "Invigorating Island South" initiative, some members enquired whether relevant recruitment policy were in place to determine the circumstances under which government posts could be filled by civil servants or by outside candidates. Some members asked about details of the recognized professional qualifications the candidates for

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the posts should possess and whether their duties would include introduction of ordinance(s) in relation to tree management. Ir Dr LO advised that the Administration had responded to the questions and concerns raised by members at the Panel meeting.

Discussions

Justifications for having civil servants to take up the two multi-disciplinary directorate posts

4. Ms Elizabeth QUAT remarked that she did not oppose the establishment proposal in principle. She pointed out that frontline efforts relating to the territory's greening and tree management initiatives were currently undertaken by different departments. It would be difficult for TMO to carry out its duties if TMO was positioned just as an advisory body and compliance of its tree management policies and standards by government departments were not mandatory.

5. Mr YIU Si-wing opined that GLTMS had found it difficult to carry out its duties given the lack of sufficient authority and support from the Government to the two directorate posts in the past, and the resulting lack of support from bureaux and departments ("B/Ds") to the incumbent officers. Mr YIU was concerned that having civil servants taking up the post might not necessarily address the issue of lack of sufficient authority.

6. In response, Deputy Secretary for Development (Works) 1 ("DS(W)1") remarked that GLTMS and TMO had a crucial role for central coordination of policies on greening and tree management and preparation of internal documents such as practices and technical notes for departments responsible for management of trees. The Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) would also oversee relevant departments for compliance of guidelines prepared by GLTMS through related steering committees.

7. Noting that the post of H/GLTMS had been left vacant on three occasions over the past 10 years, the Chairman was concerned that whether the incumbent officers had problems with the structure of the civil service, or whether there were other underlying reasons.

8. Ms Elizabeth QUAT and Dr CHIANG Lai-wan were concerned that whether there were suitable candidates from within the Government with relevant expertise capable of taking up the two multi-disciplinary directorate posts. Mr YIU Si-wing asked whether the departments responsible for tree management were required to have a specific number of registered tree management personnel.

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9. DS(W)1 advised that several personnel had left the post of H/GLTMS for personal reasons. The establishment proposal was made on account of the experience accumulated over the past 10 years, the job nature of GLTMS, and the Administration's endeavor to strengthen cooperation between GLTMS and related B/Ds. Given that the pool of potential qualified candidates for the two directorate posts were now enlarged to cover five grades, coupled with a substantial increase in the number of civil servants with professional qualification in arboriculture over the past 10 years, the Administration was confident that suitable candidates from within the civil service could be identified for the posts. She pointed out that the manpower of departments responsible for tree management had increased from around 300 at the time when GLTMS was established some 10 years ago to 550 at present, among them the ratio of staff with professional qualification in arboriculture had increased from 40% to 90%. Continued efforts through different measures would be made by the Administration to facilitate staff in tree management related departments in acquiring relevant qualifications.

10. DS(W)1 stressed that it would be more expedient to have civil servants to take up the two posts because, in addition to having multi-disciplinary leadership, management capability and experience in managing landscape and trees, potential candidates for the posts had to be familiar with local situations as well as the rules, procedures and practices of the Government, have good communications skills, the ability to communicate with stakeholders in the society and work with professionals and experts from various disciplines both inside and outside the Government effectively, in order to head GLTMS and TMO to accomplish their missions and carry out their duties.

Responsibilities and selection mechanism of the two multi-disciplinary directorate posts

11. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan requested the Administration to illustrate the purview of the two multi-disciplinary directorate posts. Mr POON Siu-ping said that he did not oppose the establishment proposal. He asked whether GLTMS would be responsible for the planning of roadside tree and plant planting in new development areas ("NDAs").

12. On the purview of the two posts of H/GLTMS and H/TMO, DS(W)1 explained that:

- (a) GLTMS, with the support of two offices, namely the Greening and Landscape Office ("GLO") and TMO, was responsible for the Government's overall policy regarding greening, landscape and tree management matters in Hong

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Kong. H/GLTMS would oversee the work of GLTMS, including formulating policy strategies on a green urban environment, preparing internal documents such as those setting out the requirements on planting in new government infrastructure projects for all departments, and spearheading the formulation of tree management regimes;

- (b) regarding green planning in NDAs, GLTMA was responsible for developing policy guidelines; the related projects would be carried out by individual works departments. For large scale projects or projects involving removal of valuable trees, GLTMS would review the cases according to established mechanisms; and
- (c) TMO under GLTMS was responsible for central coordination and leadership for tree management with the adoption of an "integrated approach", under which departments were responsible for managing the trees in the facilities and areas within their purview as part and parcel of their daily work. As for H/TMO, the post holder was responsible for tasks relating to tree management including formulation of overall policy, standard-setting and strategic planning work.

13. Noting the proposal of the Administration that the two multi-disciplinary directorate posts would be filled by officers identified from within five grades, the Chairman asked about details of the selection mechanism, whether candidates from Landscape Architect grade would have a competitive edge, and the grades where the incumbent officers of the two posts belonged.

14. DS(W)1 advised that suitable officers recommended by the respective Heads of Grades would enter a selection process in accordance with the established mechanism for filling the multi-disciplinary directorate posts. After that, a selection committee comprising DevB and Heads of Grades who had put forward their recommendations would select the most suitable officers on basis of character, ability, experience as well as other relevant selection criteria commensurate with the job requirements of the two posts. The selection outcome would be confirmed subject to the review of the Civil Service Bureau. The incumbent H/GLTMS came from Engineer grade, while the incumbent Head of GLO ("H/GLO") and H/TMO were Landscape Architects.

15. Mr Steven HO pointed out that as stated in the discussion paper provided by the Administration, as "a stop-gap measure", the post of H/GLTMS was currently taken up by an Engineer grade officer. He asked

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whether the Administration had illustrated this arrangement clearly when the proposal for creation of the post was made.

16. DS(W)1 explained that over the past 10 years, there had been multiple occasions when the post of H/GLTMS were left vacant. Given the time needed for recruitment exercises, and pending completion of the review of GLTMS's setup, H/GLTMS was currently filled by an officer from the Engineer grade on a temporary basis to avoid disruption in the daily work of GLTMS. Having reviewed the setup of GLTMS, and in light of the experience gained over the past 10 years, the Administration had come up with the establishment proposal for the two posts, namely H/GLTMS and H/TMO, to be re-graded to multi-disciplinary directorate posts with a view to thoroughly addressing the relevant recruitment problems.

17. Mr YIU Si-wing asked how the Administration would handle redeployment requests, if any, from the two civil service post-holders.

18. In response, DS(W)1 said that the officers selected for the two directorate posts would take up the posts on secondment for a typical term of three years. On return to their original posts, the directorate post-holders could promote the philosophy and related knowledge of GLTMS in their respective departments, which would facilitate smoother implementation of greening and tree management policies across all relevant departments in the long run.

19. Given that the total number of non-directorate civil service posts would remain unchanged, Mr POON Siu-ping was concerned that whether GLTMS would be able to handle the workload in the future.

20. DS(W)1 advised that GLTMS had set up a dedicated Inspection Squad with 12 members in 2019 to conduct random check on audit tree inspection reports completed by tree management departments, and proactively inspect trees in high risk areas. As different departments were responsible for the frontline efforts for managing the trees in the facilities and areas within their purview, GLTMS had sufficient manpower of non-directorate civil servants at present. The Administration would closely monitor the human resources of GLTMS and make appropriate adjustments if necessary.

Ameliorating tree management of relevant governmental departments

21. Noting that GLTMS would promulgate internal guidelines on greening policies of new government infrastructure projects, Mr Steven HO asked whether the purview of TMO also included promulgation of similar guidelines on existing government infrastructure and giving advice on the

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greening arrangement of public structures such as noise barriers. Mr HO pointed out that the plants had withered at the noise barriers outside Chi Lok Fa Yuen in Tuen Mun. He opined that for the purpose of taking a lesson from the incident, follow up actions should be taken to clarify the party responsible for the matter, and a written response should be provided to the Legislative Council ("LegCo") in due course.

22. DS(W)1 advised that since the establishment of GLTMS, it had promulgated a total of over 40 internal documents covering a wide spectrum of issues including provision of space and minimum requirements on planting in new government infrastructure projects. H/GLO advised that GLTMS had promulgated guidelines which encouraged departments to consider the feasibility of day-to-day management and maintenance when greening works such as noise barriers were carried out on structures. GLTMS and the relevant departments would follow up on the planting condition at the noise barriers outside Chi Lok Fa Yuen in Tuen Mun, with a view to addressing the problem in an expeditious manner.

23. Referring to a news report on the statistics of cases of tree failure across the territory over the past three years, Mr POON Siu-ping asked whether GLTMS would take heed of the recommendations put forth in the report and arrange for distribution of trees on the basis of their height to ensure public safety. Ms Elizabeth QUAT suggested that in preparing greening master plans, the Administration could include more ornamental planting and avoid planting of roadside tree species susceptible to having falling branches or fruits.

24. DS(W)1 noted Ms QUAT's suggestion. She pointed out that GLTMS had promulgated internal guidelines on the choice of species for tree-lined streets and introduced various types of trees that had traits, such as tolerance to heat, drought and waterlogging, which enabled them to adapt to the urban streetwise environment for the consideration of departments. When greening works on roads were under planning, reference would be made to the principle advocated by GLTMS, taking into account factors like condition of sites and space constraints in a holistic manner, to ensure public safety in the course of environment greening.

25. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan asked for details of the registration scheme for tree management personnel ("the Registration Scheme") and the average salary levels of the registered personnel. She suggested that measures should be formulated to attract more youngsters to join the tree management industry.

26. DS(W)1 advised that, implemented since December 2020, the Registration Scheme had been promoting registration of five types of

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qualified in-service arboricultural practitioners on a voluntary basis. More than 300 applications, mainly from practitioners in the private market, had been received in around half year since the introduction of the registration scheme. Continued efforts would be made by the Administration to enhance the Registration Scheme, e.g. requiring registered persons to submit records showing fulfillment of continuing education requirement of a relevant discipline in arboriculture upon application for registration renewal, with a view to enhancing the core capability of registered persons. H/TMO added that the five types of arboricultural practitioners under the Registration Scheme were arborists, tree risk assessors, tree work supervisors, tree climbers and chainsaw operators. Their salary levels varied depending on the types of work; among them, the salary of arborists could reach \$60,000 per month.

27. Mr YIU Si-wing suggested that consideration should be given to introducing a marking system not involving reward or punishment under which the performance of nine major departments on tree management would be appraised by TMO with a view to incentivizing departments for enhanced cooperation with TMO. DS(W)1 advised that consideration would be given to Mr YIU's suggestions to facilities efforts on tree management from relevant departments.

28. The Chairman advised that in the past the Government had inclined towards engaging overseas experts as greening and tree management consultants for the government, but the performance of TMO in the past 10 years had been unsatisfactory. Given the many similarities between Hong Kong and Guangdong province in the areas of climate, geology and tree species, she opined that consideration should be given to engaging more experts from the Mainland as consultants. In response, DS(W)1 remarked that the Administration had regular contact with the authorities in Guangdong province, and studies would be conducted to strengthen cooperation for taking professional advice.

Voting on the item

29. There being no further questions from members, the Chairman put the item to vote. All the members present were in favour of the proposal. The Chairman declared that the Subcommittee agreed to recommend the item to FC for approval. No member requested that the item be voted on separately at the relevant FC meeting.

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EC(2021-22)11 Proposed creation of a new one-rank grade and one permanent post of Head of the Civil Service College (D6) in the Civil Service Bureau with immediate effect upon approval of the Finance Committee to lead the Civil Service College to take forward its mission in enhancing civil service training

30. The Chairman remarked that the establishment proposal was to create a new one-rank grade and one post of Head of the Civil Service College ("H/CSC") (D6) in the Civil Service Bureau ("CSB") with immediate effect upon approval of FC to lead the Civil Service College ("CSC") to take forward its mission in enhancing civil service training.

31. Mr KWOK Wai-keung, Chairman of the Panel on Public Service, remarked that the Panel had discussed the proposal at its meeting on 21 June 2021, and members of the Panel had expressed support for the proposal. Members were mainly concerned about the requirements of the candidate for the post of H/CSC, whether the terms and form of employment could attract suitable talents for the post, and the scope of responsibilities of H/CSC. The Administration had advised that the proposed creation of H/CSC would be a new one-rank grade post and offer would be made on contract terms. An open recruitment exercise would be conducted, so that serving and retired civil servants or candidates from outside the civil service could apply for the post. The candidate for the post would report to the Secretary for the Civil Service ("SCS") through Permanent Secretary for the Civil Service ("PSCS"). With strong leadership being required, H/CSC would strengthen leadership at the helm of CSC from its commissioning, steer further planning and development of CSC, and drive the efforts of developing CSC and pushing ahead with civil service training. Furthermore, H/CSC would serve as a point of contact with government officials of Hong Kong, the Mainland and other places, professionals in academic institutions at senior levels and experts in exploring room for collaboration. Given the qualifications and expertise required of the candidate, the Administration had considered it appropriate for the post to be pitched at D6 level. The Administration targeted at identifying a suitable candidate for appointment as H/CSC by the first quarter of 2022.

Discussions

Grade structure of the Civil Service College

32. Expressing support for the staffing proposal, Dr CHIANG Lai-wan opined that, given the wide span and complexity of the business of CSC, it was appropriate for the post of H/CSC to be pitched at D6 level and to report

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to SCS through PSCS. She asked whether the existing staff at the Civil Service Training and Development Institute ("CSTDI") would be automatically transferred to CSC in the future.

33. Mr Tony TSE and Mr CHAN Chun-ying expressed support for the establishment proposal. Mr TSE asked whether the establishment of CSC would replace the existing CSTDI. Moreover, he expressed concern over the proposal for creation of a new one-rank grade post of H/CSC with support from Principal Training Officers ("PTOs") (D2). Mr CHAN noted that it was incumbent upon H/CSC to review and map out new modus operandi, planning and development direction of CSC, as well as its structure and manpower/resource requirements. He asked whether H/CSC would also review the title of the two supporting PTOs and whether the policy initiatives formulated by H/CSC for CSC were subject to the approval of SCS or the Chief Executive ("CE").

34. In response, SCS remarked that civil service training would remain within the purview of CSB. CSC would replace the existing CSTDI and be responsible for developing and taking forward various training programmes for the civil service. He added that at present the Training Officer ("TO") Grade had an establishment of 100 posts, and 69 of them (including one D1 post and one D2 post) were in CSTDI, whereas the remaining 31 were in other B/Ds. With the establishment of CSC, the existing TOs in CSTDI would become staff of CSC in the future. The inaugural H/CSC would review the organization structure (including staff titles) and map out a full-fledged plan on the manpower/resource requirement (including that of directorate staff) of CSC, which would enable a healthy and on-going development of CSC. In setting the aforesaid initiatives, H/CSC would maintain close contact with SCS and PSCS to ensure that those initiatives would support the overall directives and priorities of CE and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region ("HKSAR") Government. If the need for additional directorate staff members arose in the future, the Administration would submit proposals for LegCo's approval according to the established mechanism.

Suitable candidates for and role of Head of the Civil Service College

35. Mr Christopher CHEUNG and Mr WONG Ting-kwong expressed support for the staffing proposal. In addition to the need for having professional background, they asked whether the Administration would require H/CSC to be familiar with national affairs and have a thorough understanding on how the development of the country would have a bearing on Hong Kong, as well as understanding and supporting the principles of "One Country, Two Systems" and "patriots administering Hong Kong". Mr CHEUNG opined that CSC should enhance training on the civil service's

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understanding of national affairs, national development and the ruling party. He asked whether H/CSC would review regularly the effectiveness of the training programmes and continue to improve and optimize various programmes to ensure that CSC's programmes could achieve the expected results of enhancing the level and quality of service of civil servants.

36. Mr POON Siu-ping expressed support for the establishment proposal. He noted that it was the target of the Administration to identify a suitable candidate from within or outside the civil service for appointment as H/CSC by the first quarter of 2022. He asked about the impact on the work of CSC if FC's approval was not given on the proposal as scheduled and whether suitable candidates for the post of H/CSC were available from within the civil service. As heading CSC to enhance civil service training was a long-term task, he questioned whether it was appropriate to appoint H/CSC on contract terms. Mr Tony TSE expressed similar concern over appointment to the post of H/CSC on contract terms.

37. Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan expressed support in principle for the establishment proposal. He noted that besides requirements on professional background and experience, H/CSC had to be familiar with the structure and operation of the civil service, possess global vision, and understand innovation and technology applications, etc. He expressed concern about the practicability for the Administration to identify eligible candidates with such a wide span of talents and experience, and opined that candidates with experience as Vice Chancellor of a university could be more suitable for the post of H/CSC. Furthermore, he asked whether the media report that a senior officer of the disciplined services would take up the post of H/CSC was correct.

38. SCS advised that CSC would strive to deepen civil servants' understanding of national development, constitutional order, the relationship between the Central Authorities and the HKSAR Government, and to enhance civil service training in various areas including national affairs, the Basic Law, leadership development, innovation and technology applications, awareness of international affairs, etc. Therefore, it was imperative that H/CSC should have professional background and experience, stay on top of the latest global developments, understand national affairs and international relations and their implications to Hong Kong and a thorough understanding of the "One Country, Two Systems" policy and the constitutional order established under the Constitution and the Basic Law, for the purpose of leading CSC staff in mapping out and implementing training strategies and adjusting the contents of training courses from time to time to meet the needs for the future development of the Government. At the helm of CSC, it was important for H/CSC to have leadership and vision to steer training development and drive civil service training in various areas. While both

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CSC and tertiary institutions could provide education and nurture talents, CSC placed emphasis on practical application of knowledge and skills instead of academic discussions. Regarding appointment to the post of H/CSC on contract terms for a tentative term of three years, SCS advised that the arrangement allowed more flexibility for the post to be filled by a serving civil servant or by an outside candidate, so that the Administration could benefit from identifying the right person from a wider pool of potential candidates with the necessary qualifications and expertise. He emphasized that the post of H/CSC would be selected through an open recruitment exercise, and he looked forward to FC's approval of the proposal in the current legislative session, with a view to identifying a suitable candidate for appointment to the post by the first quarter of 2022. That would expedite the planning and implementation of various measures and initiatives of CSC to strengthen, widen and deepen civil service training. If a suitable candidate could not be identified for appointment to the post of H/CSC as scheduled, temporary arrangements would have to be made by CSB, such as by having a Deputy Secretary and senior officers of TO Grade to take up the relevant duties on a temporary basis.

39. Mr KWOK Wai-keung expressed support for the establishment proposal. He stressed that CSC should deepen civil servants' understanding of the country and constitutional order to ensure that they embraced the Basic Law and pledged allegiance to the HKSAR Government. He believed that appointment to the post of H/CSC on contract terms for three years was an appropriate arrangement. Mr KWOK asked whether H/CSC had the same remuneration package compared to the counterpart taking up a permanent position in the civil service, and whether it would be more difficult to recruit local or international talents with appointment on contract terms. In addition, noting that H/CSC would be responsible for mapping out training strategies, which might involve setting up key performance indicators ("KPIs"), he opined that it would be more desirable for the task to be coordinated by CSB to ensure that the strategies would be able to tie in with the overall Government directives and priorities.

40. In response, PSCS remarked that H/CSC had the same remuneration package compared to that of a directorate officer taking up a permanent D6 post in the civil service. There were cases of suitable outside candidates being recruited for directorate posts on contract terms in the past, e.g. the Secretary-General of the University Grants Committee Secretariat. Regarding the strategies on civil service training, SCS advised that the Civil Service Training Advisory Board ("the Advisory Board") was established to give guidance on training programmes for the civil service and the long-term development strategy of CSC, and to prepare for the development of CSC. The Advisory Board had also set up working groups to examine four key areas of training for civil servants in a focused manner, namely, national

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studies and the Basic Law, leadership development, innovation and technology applications, and international collaboration. The working groups would finish their work shortly and map out the way forward for enhancing training in the respective areas. Based on the recommendations of the Advisory Board, H/CSC, once in office, would review and formulate training policy and key principles for service-wide application, and implement various training-related initiatives.

Duties and functions of the Civil Service College

41. Mr YIU Si-wing noted that the Government had first proposed the establishment of CSC in the 2017 Policy Address and CE had announced in the 2018 Policy Address that a site had been identified for construction of CSC. He asked why the proposal for creation of the post of H/CSC had not been made until now, and how the training to be provided by CSC in terms of scope and direction differed from those proposed by CE in the past. He further asked whether civil servants would be subject to any assessment on the training they received, whether CSC would consider recruiting outside candidates as teaching staff and the relevant estimated expenditures, and how CSC could provide a balanced programme, one that could deepen the civil service's understanding of national affairs without overlooking training with international outlook and collaboration.

42. Mr CHAN Chun-ying and Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan asked whether the Administration would continue to arrange training programmes and exchange activities in the Mainland and overseas for civil servants, including arrangements for civil servants to take up further studies in overseas universities. Mr CHUNG asked about the construction costs of CSC and whether CSC would continue to use the existing programmes of CSTDI for training, or whether it would design their new programmes, particularly programmes relating to national development, constitutional order and the relationship between the Central Authorities and the HKSAR Government. He also asked about the details of various training programmes (e.g. course outlines, hours of study programmes, etc.). He opined that in addition to having instructors appointed from within the civil service, CSC should also appoint outside instructors with relevant knowledge and experience for trainees to enable the latter to acquire in-depth understanding of the prevailing conditions of the society.

43. In addition to providing the civil service with training programmes, Mr WONG Ting-kwong and Ms Starry LEE asked whether CSC would consider allowing prospective civil servants, staff of non-governmental/statutory bodies or Members and principal officials to enrol in the relevant programmes in order to deepen their understanding of the structure and operation of the civil service and facilitate their communication

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and exchanges with the civil service. Furthermore, Mr WONG asked whether the Administration would provide long-term accommodation for CSC. Ms LEE suggested that CSC should provide training programmes on change management for civil servants.

44. Mr SHIU Ka-fai expressed support for the establishment proposal. Given that different missions and requirements applied to civil servants at various levels, he was of the view that CSC should devise individual training strategies and programmes for civil servants at different levels.

45. Regarding the site for CSC, SCS pointed out that CE had announced in the 2018 Policy Address that a site in Kwun Tong had been identified for a composite development project, including the construction of the long-term accommodation for CSC. The Administration had been taking forward the Kwun Tong Composite Development ("KTCD") project and relevant preparatory works in accordance with established procedures for public works with a view to seeking funding approval for the project from LegCo expeditiously for commencing the construction works in 2022 and completing the project by phases starting from end of 2026. The estimates of expenditures of the project would be made available at the time when funding approval was sought from LegCo. As construction of the long-term accommodation for CSC took time to complete, to expedite the progress, the Administration planned to upgrade CSTDI's existing facilities in North Point Government Offices with a view to using the premises as CSC's interim accommodation and early commissioning of CSC in 2021 so that it would commence work and fulfil its mission on enhancement of civil service training in an expeditious manner.

46. Regarding the contents of training programmes for the civil service, SCS advised that CE and the HKSAR Government had stressed on several occasions that it was imperative to strengthen civil service training, especially on deepening their understanding in areas like national development, constitutional order and the relationship between the Central Authorities and the HKSAR Government. In addition to the above, CSC would also enhance civil service training in various areas including leadership development, interaction and communication with the public, innovation and technology applications, etc. Meanwhile, CSC would have to enhance civil servants' awareness of international affairs and reform mindset. CSC would build on and make improvement to the existing programmes of CSTDI to address the needs of civil servants at various levels. CSC would design training programmes for civil servants at various levels, including directorate levels. He agreed that some form of assessment mechanism should be in place and used as a reference when staff members were considered for promotion. He added that CSTDI had been organizing national studies programmes for the civil service, and it was expected that,

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upon its establishment, CSC would maintain close contact with relevant institutes and Central bodies (such as the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council) on the Mainland to ensure the quality and effectiveness of the programmes. Meanwhile, CSC would maintain liaison with external training/academic institutions as well as government officials of the Mainland to explore room for collaboration and to arrange training programmes, thematic visits and exchange activities in the Mainland and overseas for civil servants. Arrangements would be made for eligible civil servants to take up further studies in overseas universities.

47. Regarding the qualifications of the teaching staff of the civil service training programmes, SCS pointed out that having regard to the various needs of the programmes, CSTDI had recruited outside instructors with relevant expertise and experience as teaching staff for programmes in areas such as innovation and technology applications, crisis management, public relations skills. Regarding the candidates of the training programmes, SCS advised that when recruiting civil servants, the Administration attached great importance to the knowledge and experience of applicants, including the understanding of the Basic Law. He stressed that strengthening civil service training would be the most important task of CSC upon its initial commissioning. The Administration was open to the idea of providing training to staff member of non-governmental/statutory bodies, Members and principal officials.

48. In response to the follow-up question made by Mr SHIU Ka-fai regarding the performance and political mindset of civil servants, SCS said that in addition to strengthening training, the arrangement for oath taking and declaration allowed civil servants to understand more clearly and accept their consistent duties and responsibilities as a public officer and enhance their awareness on their responsibilities toward the HKSAR Government. In addition, the Administration would review and enhance the current human resources management regime to ensure that civil servants would be dedicated to their duties, had a sense of responsibility and commitment under a reward and penalty system.

49. In response to the follow-up question made by Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan, SCS advised that CSTDI had provided advisory services for B/Ds on human resources management matters, and CSC could continue to provide such services upon its establishment.

Voting on the item

50. There being no further questions from members, the Deputy Chairman put the item to vote. All the members present were in favour of the proposal. The Deputy Chairman declared that the Subcommittee

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agreed to recommend the item to FC for approval. No member requested that the item be voted on separately at the relevant FC meeting.

51. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:36 pm.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
12 August 2021