

立法會
Legislative Council

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LC Paper No. CB(4)1734/20-21
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Panel on Home Affairs

**Minutes of special meeting
held on Wednesday, 20 October 2021, at 10:00 am
in Conference Room 2A of the Legislative Council Complex**

- Members present** : Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, SBS, MH, JP (Chairman)
Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP
Hon YIU Si-wing, SBS
Hon MA Fung-kwok, GBS, JP
Hon KWOK Wai-keung, JP
Hon Jimmy NG Wing-ka, BBS, JP
Dr Hon Junius HO Kwan-yiu, JP
Hon Holden CHOW Ho-ding
Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing, MH
Hon YUNG Hoi-yan, JP
Hon LUK Chung-hung, JP
Hon LAU Kwok-fan, MH, JP
Hon Kenneth LAU Ip-keung, BBS, MH, JP
Hon Vincent CHENG Wing-shun, MH, JP
- Members absent** : Hon WONG Kwok-kin, GBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon SHIU Ka-fai, JP
Dr Hon Pierre CHAN
- Public Officers attending** : Item I
Mr Caspar TSUI Ying-wai, JP
Secretary for Home Affairs

Mr Joe WONG Chi-cho, JP
Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs

Miss Janice TSE Siu-wa, JP
Director of Home Affairs

Ms Eureka CHEUNG-yi, JP
Deputy Director of Home Affairs (1)

Miss Vega WONG Sau-wai, JP
Deputy Director of Home Affairs (2)

Ms Eugenia CHUNG Nga-chi, JP
Assistant Director of Home Affairs (2)

Mr Howard YAM, JP
Assistant Director of Home Affairs (3)

Clerk in attendance : Ms Joanne MAK
Chief Council Secretary (4) 7

Staff in attendance : Mr Raymond SZETO
Senior Council Secretary (4) 6

Miss Vivian YUEN
Legislative Assistant (4) 8

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I. Revising the arrangements for implementing Community Involvement Programme and District Minor Works Programme
[LC Paper No. CB(4)1655/20-21(01)]

At the invitation of the Chairman, the Secretary for Home Affairs ("SHA") briefed members on the salient points of the Administration's paper [LC Paper No. CB(4)1655/20-21(01)].

Discussion

2. Members expressed support for the Administration's proposal to suspend the role of District Councils ("DCs") in implementing projects under the Community Involvement Programme ("CIP") and the District Minor Works Programme ("DMWP") in light of the latest situation of the Sixth Term DC. Members noted that as at 4 October 2021, the total number of serving DC members had reduced to

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189 and 14 DCs had their membership size more than halved. SHA pointed out that some DCs did not have sufficient members to proceed with the election of Council Chairman and thus were unable to convene DC meetings. He explained that with a significant proportion of DC seats remaining vacant, the current arrangement of having to seek DCs' endorsement for projects under CIP and DMWP had become untenable. Members also took the view that with so few DC members remaining, the representativeness of the current-term DCs had become questionable. The public might consider it unfair and unreasonable to leave the interests of their community to a very small minority of DC members.

3. Mr YIU Si-wing enquired about the extent of the impact of the current-term DCs' loss of function on the operation of CIP and DMWP. SHA said that the current-term DCs were characterized by their indulgence in politicizing district issues, which had substantial impact on the efficiency of district administration. This was demonstrated by a significant decline in the amount of expenditures approved across different categories of district funding, including sports (78% decline), culture (72% decline), and community building (50% decline) in FY 2020-2021 vis-à-vis the previous year. For CIP, the number of projects/programmes approved in 2020 was about 3 600, which was 2 100 fewer projects/programmes than in 2019. Also, the processing of projects under DMWP had suffered significant delay in the hands of the current-term DCs. The total number of DMWP projects approved by the current-term DCs in the first 18-month period since it commenced in January 2020 were around 440 with about \$300 million in funding, which was a significant decline vis-à-vis the Fifth Term DC at over 740 projects with more than \$600 million in funding for an 18-month period.

4. SHA further said that the politically-motivated decisions of the current-term DCs deviated from community needs, as illustrated by some of the proposals put forth, such as the building of "Lennon Wall". Meanwhile, projects that were beneficial to districts, such as sitting-out area in the Yuen Long District and walkway cover in the North District, were halted or scrapped.

5. Referring to the Administration's proposal in paragraph 14 of the Administration's paper, Mr YIU Si-wing asked whether the proposed new arrangement for the Home Affairs Department ("HAD")/District Offices ("DOs") and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department ("LCSD") to propose initiatives for funding under CIP and DMWP might lead to a loss in flexibility in operation. Assuming endorsement of the current proposal by the Finance Committee ("FC"), the Chairman enquired whether projects that had already been approved by DCs for implementation would still be pursued.

6. SHA said that tasking HAD/DOs and LCSD to propose worthwhile initiatives for funding under CIP and DMWP would allow projects under both programmes to

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be processed more efficiently and ensure that the proposed projects were for the benefit of the local community. SHA further said that the current proposal would come into effect upon obtaining approval from FC on revising the ambit of 7016CX. Unless considered inappropriate by the Administration, projects that had already been endorsed by DCs would still be pursued. Meanwhile, provision of government funding for community services and activities would continue to ensure that on-going district services and activities would not be affected.

7. Pointing out that members serving on the Area Committees ("ACs"), District Fight Crime Committees ("DFCCs") and District Fire Safety Committees ("DFSCs") were committed to serving the community, Ms YUNG Hoi-yan asked whether the Administration would collect their views on district matters and enlist their assistance in implementing district activities and publicity work.

8. In response, SHA said that ACs, DFSCs and DFCCs were representative and were valued partners of the Government in district administration, and funding allocation to them to carry out initiatives under their purview would not be affected under the current proposal. SHA further said that under the revised arrangement, HAD/DOs and LCSD would proactively collect views from the community through different channels such as consultation with ACs, DFSCs and DFCCs and other district organizations, with a view to identifying worthwhile projects for the benefit of the local community. He added that Government officials would also reach out to listen to the views of citizens in the community.

9. Members enquired whether the proposed revised arrangements were only applicable to the Sixth Term DCs. SHA advised that the proposed revised arrangements would apply to the current-term DCs. As for the arrangement afterwards, SHA said that it would be decided after the Administration had conducted review of district administration. SHA added that the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau would focus on the two important elections to be conducted in the near future.

10. The Chairman sought the Administration's response to the two submissions made to the Panel on this agenda item (LC Paper Nos. CB(4)1629/20-21(01) and CB(4)1667/20-21(01)). SHA said that notwithstanding the proposed revised arrangements, the Administration would continue to consult DC members and other district organizations as and when appropriate. Although the power of a DC to transact business was not affected by a vacancy in the membership of DC as stipulated under the District Councils Ordinance (Cap.547), the present situation of DCs had made the existing operational arrangements untenable, and thus it was necessary for the Government to implement the proposed revised arrangements, so as to ensure that projects in the districts could continue to be taken forward for the benefit of the community.

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11. In concluding the discussion, the Chairman said that the Panel supported the submission of the current proposal to FC for consideration.

II. Any other business

12. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 10:31 am.

Council Business Division 4
Legislative Council Secretariat
10 November 2021