立法會
Legislative Council

Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting

**Minutes of meeting by videoconferencing on
Monday, 8 February 2021, at 2:30 pm**

Members present	: Dr Hon Junius HO Kwan-yiu, JP (Chairman) Hon CHAN Kin-por, GBS, JP (Deputy Chairman) Hon WONG Ting-kwong, GBS, JP Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP Hon MA Fung-kwok, GBS, JP Hon CHAN Han-pan, BBS, JP Hon Elizabeth QUAT, BBS, JP Hon Martin LIAO Cheung-kong, GBS, JP Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, SBS, MH, JP Hon SHIU Ka-fai, JP Hon YUNG Hoi-yan, JP
Member absent	: Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan
Public officers attending	: <u>Agenda item IV</u> <u>Innovation and Technology Bureau</u> Mr Alfred SIT Wing-hang, JP Secretary for Innovation and Technology Ms Daisy LO Chi-yun Principal Assistant Secretary for Innovation and Technology (4)

Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Mr Victor LAM Wai-kiu, JP
Government Chief Information Officer

Mr Tony WONG Chi-kwong, JP
Deputy Government Chief Information Officer

Agenda item V

Commerce and Economic Development Bureau

Mr Clement LEUNG, JP
Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic
   Development (Communications and Creative
   Industries)

Mr Keith GIANG
Principal Assistant Secretary for Commerce and
   Economic Development (Communications and
   Creative Industries)A

Office of the Communications Authority

Mr Chaucer LEUNG, JP
Director-General of Communications

Mr Esmond CHIU
Assistant Director (Support)

Clerk in attendance **:** Mr Daniel SIN
Chief Council Secretary (1)6

Staff in attendance **:** Ms Mandy LI
Senior Council Secretary (1)6

Mr Patrick CHOI
Council Secretary (1)6

Miss Yolanda CHEUK
Legislative Assistant (1)6

Ms Yvonna HO
Clerical Assistant (1)6

Action

I. Confirmation of minutes of meeting

(LC Paper No. CB(1)543/20-21   --   Minutes of the policy briefing held on 1 December 2020)

The minutes of the policy briefing held on 1 December 2020 were confirmed.

II. Information papers issued since the last meeting

(LC Paper No. CB(1)463/20-21(01)   --   Letter dated 17 December 2020 from Hon Elizabeth QUAT suggesting that an item be put on the agenda of a Panel meeting to discuss a case of alleged misreporting in a Radio Television Hong Kong programme (Chinese version only)

LC Paper No. CB(1)470/20-21(01)   --   Administration's written response to the letter dated 17 December 2020 from Hon Elizabeth QUAT [LC Paper No. CB(1)463/20-21(01)])

2.   Members noted that the above papers had been issued since the last meeting.

3.   The Chairman referred to a letter dated 17 December 2020 from Ms Elizabeth QUAT suggesting that an item be put on the agenda of a Panel meeting to discuss a case of alleged misreporting in a Radio Television Hong Kong ("RTHK")'s programme. The Chairman informed members that the Administration had provided a written response to Ms QUAT's letter.

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III. Date of next meeting and items for discussion

(LC Paper No. CB(1)551/20-21(01)   --   List of outstanding items for discussion

LC Paper No. CB(1)551/20-21(02)   --   List of follow-up actions)

Regular meeting on 15 March 2021

4.   Members noted that the Administration had proposed to discuss two items, including (a) information security; and (b) Subsidy Scheme for Encouraging Early Deployment of 5G, at the regular meeting scheduled for 15 March 2021.

Radio Television Hong Kong

5.   Ms Elizabeth QUAT said that she had received complaints from four staff associations of the Immigration Department involving the RTHK's programme "Hong Kong Connection". The staff associations pointed out that, in one episode, detainees at the Castle Peak Bay Immigration Centre were said to have received inhumane treatment. The staff associations complained that the report was not accurate. Ms QUAT also noted with concern that the Communications Authority had found a total of seven substantiated complaint cases concerning RTHK's programmes within two years. Ms QUAT suggested that a meeting should be held as early as practicable to discuss the operations of RTHK, and that the Administration, particularly the Director of Broadcasting, should be asked to respond to the above complaints at the meeting.

6.   Mr WONG Ting-kwong and Mr Martin LIAO agreed with Ms Elizabeth QUAT that a meeting should be held to follow up with the Administration on issues related to RTHK. Mr WONG was particularly disappointed with RTHK for having mis-reported a message that President XI Jinping delivered at the World Economic Forum recently, and for having aired a biased report on the treatment of persons subject to compulsory coronavirus disease 2019 ("COVID-19") testing in the "restricted area" in Jordan. Mr WONG said that RTHK was a government department, and the Panel had the responsibility to monitor its work.

7.   Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Communications and Creative Industries) ("PS(CCI)") advised that a dedicated team established by the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau had commenced a review on RTHK's governance and management in mid-July 2020. The Administration intended to brief the Panel on the outcome of the review when ready.

8.　　Ms Elizabeth QUAT said that even if the Administration was not ready to brief members on the review report by the next regular Panel meeting in March 2021, members should still follow up with the Administration on recent controversies related to RTHK. The Chairman said that he intended to put up an agenda item related to the work of RTHK at the regular Panel meeting in April. In the light of members' concerns, the Chairman said that he was prepared to push forward the discussion to March. The Chairman commented that the discussion might cover the outcome of the Administration's review on RTHK, if ready, otherwise, the Panel should focus on the operation of RTHK and the latest issues of concern to members.

Real-name registration programme for subscriber identity module cards

9.　　PS(CCI) informed members that the Administration had launched a public consultation on the implementation of the real-name registration programme for subscriber identity module ("SIM") cards. The consultation was originally scheduled to end on 28 February 2021. The Administration would extend the public consultation period for three more weeks until 20 March to allow more time for the Panel and relevant industry and members of the public to study and discuss the proposal, and submit their views to the Administration. The Administration also proposed that the agenda item on "Subsidy Scheme for Encouraging Early Deployment of 5G" scheduled for discussion at the Panel meeting on March 2021 should be deferred and replaced by "Real-name Registration Programme for SIM cards".

> (*Post-meeting note*: The Administration announced that the public consultation period for the Real-name Registration Programme for SIM Cards would be extended to 20 March 2021.)

10.　　The Chairman said that, taking into consideration members' concerns and the Administration's suggestions, he would postpone the two items, namely "information security" and "Subsidy Scheme for Encouraging Early Deployment of 5G" originally scheduled for discussion at the Panel meeting in March 2021, to a later meeting. He would include, instead, an item on RTHK and the item on "Real-name registration programme for SIM cards" on the agenda.

> (*Post-meeting note*: At the request of the Administration and with the concurrence of the Chairman, one more item, "Knowing more about IT programme", was included for discussion at the above meeting. Members were informed of the changes on 9 March 2021 vide LC Paper No. CB(1)571/20-21.)

IV. Update on smart city development

(LC Paper No. CB(1)551/20-21(03) -- Administration's paper on update on smart city development

LC Paper No. CB(1)551/20-21(04) Paper on smart city development prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Updated background brief))

Briefing by the Administration

11. At the invitation of the Chairman, <u>Secretary for Innovation and Technology</u> ("S for IT") briefed members on the major components of the *Smart City Blueprint for Hong Kong 2.0* ("Blueprint 2.0"). <u>S for IT</u> said that the Government published in December 2017 the *Smart City Blueprint for Hong Kong*, setting out 76 initiatives under six smart areas (viz. "Smart Mobility", "Smart Living", "Smart Environment", "Smart People", "Smart Government" and "Smart Economy"). Among them, more than 40 initiatives were completed or being completed in stages. The Government released Blueprint 2.0 on 10 December 2020 setting out over 130 smart city initiatives, with a view to bringing benefits and convenience to members of the public so that they could better perceive the benefits of smart city and innovation and technologies ("I&T") in their daily lives. Details of these items were set out in the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(1)551/20-21(03)).

Discussion

"LeaveHomeSafe" mobile application and "iAM Smart"

12. <u>Mr Martin LIAO</u> said that it was important that a smart city should be able to deal with serious and unforeseen incidents through the use of information technology ("IT") solutions. In trying to contain the spread of COVID-19 in the community, the Administration had launched the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile application ("app") which would facilitate the Administration in conducting epidemiological investigations and tracing other close contacts. While the Administration had produced figures showing that many people had downloaded the app and that the "LeaveHomeSafe" venue QR code were being displayed in numerous premises, <u>Mr LIAO</u> queried whether the statistics were adequate to reflect the actual utilization of the app. <u>Mr LIAO</u> further asked whether the Administration had kept statistics on the utilization rate of the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile app, how frequent it was used, and whether the usage

of the app met the Government's expectation. Mr LIAO also enquired about the Administration's measures to promote the wider use of the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile app and how the Administration would enhance the app so that the public could use the app with ease.

13.   S for IT said that IT applications had played an important part in assisting the public in the prevention of and fight against the epidemic. Currently, the number of downloads of the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile app exceeded 520 000, with more than 69 000 public and private venues participating in the scheme to display the "LeaveHomeSafe" venue QR code for members of the public to scan and record their visits. In addition, all catering premises and scheduled premises were required to display the "LeaveHomeSafe" venue QR code at the entrance or a conspicuous position of the premises. To allow government employees and members of the public to familiarize themselves with the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile app, the Government decided to implement a new arrangement in all government buildings and offices, under which government employees and members of the public would be required to scan the "LeaveHomeSafe" QR code before entering the relevant premises. The Administration would also encourage operators to put in place more stringent health precautionary measures, such as requiring members of the public to use the app to scan the QR code at specified premises before they might enter them or eat in catering premises.

14.   S for IT and Government Chief Information Officer ("GCIO") informed the Panel that the Administration was collaborating with the Hospital Authority ("HA") to set up a booking and on-site registration system for the vaccination programme as well as a central vaccination record database. Members of the public could make online booking for the two doses of vaccines at different vaccination centers to enable a smooth vaccination process. GCIO added that members of the public could connect to the Electronic Vaccination and Testing Record System and download electronic vaccination records upon confirming their identities using the "iAM Smart" platform.

15.   Ms Elizabeth QUAT relayed the concerns raised by some members of the public that they found it inconvenient to scan "LeaveHomeSafe" venue QR code. Ms YUNG Hoi-yan pointed out that many people and the IT industry had reflected that the usage rate of the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile app was low because various government departments launched different mobile apps for different services, and the public had found them confusing. She asked if the Administration would learn from HA which designed and introduced the "HA Go" mobile app. People could access various HA services with only one mobile app. Ms YUNG suggested that the Administration should consider integrating various government apps under the "iAM Smart" platform. She also enquired

how the Administration would enhance the promotion and publicity in this regard.

16.   S for IT said that the one-stop personalized digital services platform, "iAM Smart", was launched at the end of December 2020 to facilitate the public to log in and access government and commercial online services with a single digital identity, using their mobile phones. Members of the public would be able to access online services of public bodies including HA and public utilities such as the two electricity and gas companies once they registered for "iAM Smart". Besides, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer ("OGCIO") was working with the Hong Kong Monetary Authority in assisting financial institutions to adopt "iAM Smart" in their online services. GCIO said that "iAM Smart" users currently could access 28 commonly used online services. It was expected that by mid-2021, there would be more than 110 government online services accessible through the "iAM Smart" platform. OGCIO also introduced chatbot functions to the "iAM Smart" platform to facilitate searching of and access to online services by the public. S for IT and GCIO said that the Administration would further enhance the "iAM Smart" platform to enable easy access by the public in obtaining the information and services they need. The Chairman asked the Administration to speed up the enhancement of "iAM Smart".

17.   Ms YUNG Hoi-yan further asked whether the Administration would consider setting up one-stop service centres at district level to give guidance or provide information on how to use "iAM Smart" so as to facilitate residents, particularly the elderly, to use the service. S for IT said that the mobile registration teams of "iAM Smart" would provide on-site support at the vaccination centres to facilitate in-person registration of "iAM Smart".

Smart environment

18.   Noting that Blueprint 2.0 included a "smart toilet" pilot programme, Mr Michael TIEN asked whether the Administration would consider a one-stop provision of wash hand basin, soap dispenser and hand dryer in the form of a Cabinet Wash Hand Basin System, having regard to experience and practices of the refurbishment of Tsuen Wan Multi-storey Carpark Building Public Toilet. He also called on the Administration to manage the performance of contractors to ensure that their cleansing services were up to standard.

19.   S for IT advised that the "smart toilet" pilot programme would enhance the hygiene conditions of public toilets for Hong Kong people and tourists. Specifically, it would collect statistics including usage rates, smell, temperature and humidity through Internet of Things ("IoT") sensors, and monitor the use of

the public toilets, such as toilet cubicle occupancy and odour level, through data analytics. Such information would be captured real-time by means of the IoT platform, notifying users of available washrooms nearby and their cleanliness as well as the estimated waiting time. Other smart functions included interaction between sensors and air-blow deodorizing disinfection equipment, automatic detection of the remaining amount of consumables such as toilet paper and liquid soap, etc. This would allow cleansing staff to obtain the relevant information for cleansing and timely replenishment of consumables.

20. Mr Michael TIEN was particularly concerned about the seriousness of the rodent infestation problem in Tsuen Wan. He asked if the Administration would consider his suggestion of adopting ultrasonic device to control the procreation of rodents. S for IT responded that artificial intelligence technology could be used to analyse the extent and severity of the rodent problem (e.g. the density of rodents and their movements). It would help to facilitate more effective and targeted application of rodent traps and placing of rodent baits.

Smart living

21. Mr Michael TIEN noted that the Administration had invested more than $900 million in the past three years in taking forward a number of projects to provide essential digital infrastructure, including, among others, the Next Generation Government Cloud Infrastructure and the big data analytics platform. He sought elaboration on how these projects would benefit members of the public.

22. Ms Elizabeth QUAT said that she supported the smart city development and the initiatives set out in Blueprint 2.0. She asked the Administration to expedite the implementation of smart city initiatives to improve people's daily lives. With regard to anti-epidemic measures, Ms QUAT said that members of the public were most concerned when the cross-boundary travel would be resumed and whether scheduled premises regulated under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F) (such as beauty parlours) would resume business if the general public had undergone testing and received vaccination. She considered that the Administration should step up efforts to facilitate the recovery of the local economy by incentivizing more members of the public to undergo virus testing and receive vaccination.

23. Ms Elizabeth QUAT said that the Administration should learn from the experience in Shenzhen where people, especially the elderly, were able to access multiple government services with one smart card. She suggested that the Administration should consider introducing a similar smart card for the elderly

in Hong Kong so that they could enjoy the Government Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities (commonly known as the $2 transport fare concession scheme) and other concessions or priority services offered by the government and public utilities without having to carry many cards for each of such benefits.

24. S for IT responded that the "iAM Smart" platform was launched to facilitate the public to log in and access government and commercial online services with a single digital identity. The Government would take further steps to promote bureaux and departments ("B/Ds") to adopt IT to streamline processes and provide more convenient services to the public. On the other hand, the Steering Committee on Innovation and Technology chaired by the Chief Executive had been meeting regularly to review progress of the main I&T measures, including smart city projects. The Innovation and Technology Bureau and OGCIO would also continue to strengthen co-ordination among B/Ds and provide technical support as appropriate.

Smart Government

25. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok noted that in view of the outbreak of COVID-19 epidemic, many public services such as vehicle licence applications or renewal, and visa extension for domestic helpers were suspended as government staff worked from home. Although some of these applications could be transacted electronically, people still experienced difficulties in using e-government services. Ir Dr LO asked the Administration to give a report on how the current e-government services were not delivered satisfactorily, and how the Administration would improve the situation.

26. S for IT said that under the "Be the Smart Regulator Programme" coordinated by the Efficiency Office, about 50% of licences now supported electronic submission of applications. The Administration expected that, with the "Be the Smart Regulator Programme", applications for all licences, except those with legal or practical constraints, could be submitted by electronic means by mid-2022. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok commented that, in the meantime, the Administration should leverage the experience gathered during the COVID-19 epidemic and conduct a review on the electronic licensing services to identify any deficiencies and introduce improvements as early as possible.

Multi-functional smart lampposts

27. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok said that a number of smart lampposts had been vandalized by people who believed that the infrastructure was being used for surveillance purpose. Ir Dr LO reflected on the experience of the Hangzhou

municipal government which captured and analyzed traffic information for improving urban transport management. He said that the smart lampposts could achieve a similar purpose in capturing data for improving city management in Hong Kong. He asked about the current status of the multi-functional smart lampposts pilot scheme ("the Pilot Scheme") and how the Administration would take forward the initiative.

28.   S for IT said that in the light of the concerns over the privacy protection measures of smart lampposts in the society in mid-2019, the Administration had been taking numerous follow-up actions proactively to address said concerns in an open and transparent manner. The Administration would continue to take forward the Pilot Scheme as smart lampposts were important digital infrastructure for promoting smart city development.

29.   The Chairman noted that there were public concerns on the use of cameras on smart lampposts, worrying that the personal privacy might be affected, and the Administration had henceforth used cameras to take lower resolution images. He commented that cameras installed in the smart lampposts were set to take pictures of public areas only so it had no personal privacy issue. The Chairman said that it was unreasonable to use low resolution cameras rather than high definition cameras on lampposts located in public areas.

30.   S for IT noted the Chairman's view and said that smart lampposts aimed to collect various real-time city data, enhance city and traffic management. To address public concern over privacy issues arising from the operation of smart lampposts, the Government would explore the use of other technologies such as Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) as a substitute for cameras in smart lampposts which would address the public concerns about protection of privacy. The Government considered it important to strike a good balance between privacy protection and smart city development.

Pro-innovation Government procurement policy

31.   Mr Michael TIEN noted that the Administration had introduced a new pro-innovation government procurement policy starting from April 2019. He asked about the effectiveness of the measure, including how the procurement policy in question helped create more business opportunities for local start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises ("SMEs").

32.   S for IT replied that the Government launched in April 2019 a pro-innovation procurement policy under which there were some key changes, including an upward adjustment of technical weighting in tender evaluation and "innovative suggestions" being an essential criterion for technical assessment,

which helped encourage SMEs and start-ups to participate in bidding.

V. Television broadcast frequency channel migration arrangements

    (LC Paper No. CB(1)551/20-21(05)   -- Administration's paper on television broadcast frequency channel migration arrangements

    LC Paper No. CB(1)551/20-21(06)   -- Paper on television broadcast frequency channel migration arrangements prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Background brief))

Briefing by the Administration

33.   At the invitation of the Chairman, PS(CCI) and Assistant Director (Support) of the Office of the Communications Authority ("OFCA") informed members that analogue television ("TV") services were successfully and smoothly switched off on 30 November 2020, without causing any noticeable inconvenience to viewers. Following the implementation of full digital TV broadcast since 1 December 2020, OFCA had formulated a multi-stage work plan on migrating the existing digital terrestrial TV ("DTT") frequency channels operating in the 614 – 806 MHz band ("600/700 MHz bands") between April and November 2021, and on the relevant publicity activities.

34.   PS(CCI) advised that the relevant broadcasters and industry stakeholders were ready for the channel migration, in which the operating DTT frequency channels currently scattered in the 600/700 MHz bands would be consolidated into the 500 MHz band, thereby vacating spectrum in the 600/700 MHz bands for high value-added mobile telecommunications services (such as the fifth generation ("5G") mobile telecommunications services) to support Hong Kong's overall telecommunications services and smart city development. Details of the briefing were set out in the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(1)551/20-21(05)).

> (*Post-meeting note*: A soft copy of the powerpoint presentation materials (Chinese version only) was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)560/20-21(01) by email on 8 February 2021.)

Discussion

Coverage of the fifth generation mobile telecommunications services

35.   Mr Martin LIAO noted that one of the objectives of the channel migration was to vacate spectrum in the 600/700 MHz bands for mobile telecommunications services.   He expected that 5G service would, like the previous generation upgrades of mobile telecommunications services, require a transitional period to achieve maturity in terms of coverage, speed and capacity. Noting that mobile network operators ("MNOs") targeted to extend the outdoor coverage of 5G networks to 90% of the population by end-2020, Mr LIAO asked what the current coverage of 5G network was and how far MNOs were meeting their intended target.   Mr LIAO also queried how the Administration would ensure that MNOs extend their 5G networks to remote areas, instead of focusing their resources on building networks only within the commercial areas.

36.   Director-General of Communications ("DGC") of OFCA informed members that at present four MNOs were providing 5G services, and they were able to achieve at least 70% to 90% coverage of the population.   Considering that these operators had only launched 5G services in April 2020, the progress was satisfactory.   DGC added that the spectrum that would be made available for 5G services after the channel migration was in the lower frequency band.   Such spectrum had better penetration and wider coverage capability than those currently deployed for 5G services, and would therefore enable MNOs to further improve 5G coverage.   DGC said that, in auctioning off the spectrum later in 2021, MNOs acquiring the spectrum would be required to achieve 90% or more of population coverage.   It was expected that the overall 5G network coverage, and particularly the coverage in remote areas, would then be enhanced.

37.   DGC said that, at present, the demand for 5G service at indoor hotspots, such as the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, shopping malls and confined areas in the MTR system was high as there were many users sharing the bandwidth at the same time.   The Administration would address the issue by allocating half of the spectrum in the 600/700 MHz bands to enhancing the capacity and speed of indoor public mobile services.

Support to "three-nil buildings" in their preparation for the channel migration

38.   Ms Elizabeth QUAT noted that for buildings using common antenna broadcast distribution ("CABD") systems, building management offices and incorporated owners/owners' committees ("BMOs/IOs") would have to engage system contractors to reconfigure the systems (by, for example, installing new

channel amplifiers/filters, retuning the receiving frequency channels of the existing channel amplifiers) so that residents could continue to receive TV broadcasts from the programme channels affected by the migration. She asked whether the Administration would coordinate the relevant system reconfiguration works and cost-sharing arrangements for residents of those buildings without BMOs/IOs or any form of resident organizations (commonly referred to as "three-nil buildings"). The Chairman further enquired whether on-site support could be arranged to help residents rescan the programme channels on their digital TV equipment after the channel migration.

39.   PS(CCI) explained that viewers, such as those living in "three-nil buildings", who did not share a CABD system but set up their own TV aerials, did not need to replace their equipment to continue to receive the free TV programme channels concerned after the channel migration, and there would not be any additional expenses. OFCA would offer advice and assistance to residents, including the methods to rescan TV programme channels, through its hotline and thematic webpage. Drawing on the experience of the analogue switch-off, OFCA would also carry out its publicity work of channel migration through District Offices ("DOs") under the Home Affairs Department and relevant local organizations to enhance support to residents of "three-nil buildings". Subject to availability of resources, additional measures might be introduced to assist viewers in preparation of the channel migration.

40.   As to the majority (about 85%) of buildings relying on CABD systems and/or in-building coaxial cable distribution systems for distributing and relaying TV broadcasting signals, PS(CCI) advised that BMOs/IOs of these buildings would have to arrange system reconfiguration. PS(CCI) anticipated that OFCA and DOs could draw on their experience of working with relevant resident organizations, as in the previous exercises when free TV broadcasters launched new programme channels, in handling the publicity related to the channel migration. Members of the public could contact OFCA for any enquiry. Advice could also be sought from DOs on matters related to building management.

VI.   Any other business

41.   There being no other business, the meeting ended at 3:51 pm.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
26 March 2021