

立法會

Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(4)856/19-20
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Ref : CB4/PL/PS

Panel on Public Service

**Minutes of special meeting held on
Monday, 4 May 2020, at 10:45 am
in Conference Room 2 of the Legislative Council Complex**

- Members present** : Hon KWOK Wai-keung, JP (Chairman)
Hon POON Siu-ping, BBS, MH (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP
Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP
Hon IP Kin-yuen
Hon Elizabeth QUAT, BBS, JP
Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, SBS, JP
Hon CHU Hoi-dick
Hon LAM Cheuk-ting
Hon SHIU Ka-fai, JP
Dr Hon Pierre CHAN
Hon CHAN Chun-ying, JP
Hon LUK Chung-hung, JP
Hon Jeremy TAM Man-ho
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS
- Members absent** : Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS
Hon Christopher CHEUNG Wah-fung, SBS, JP
Hon HO Kai-ming
- Member attending** : Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki

**Public Officers
attending**

: **Agenda item II**

Mr Patrick NIP, JP
Secretary for the Civil Service

Mr Thomas CHOW, JP
Permanent Secretary for the Civil Service

Mr Brian LO, JP
Deputy Secretary for the Civil Service 1

Agenda item III

Mr Patrick NIP, JP
Secretary for the Civil Service

Mr Thomas CHOW, JP
Permanent Secretary for the Civil Service

Mr Gary POON, JP
Deputy Secretary for the Civil Service 3

Ms Betsy LAI
Principal Assistant Secretary for the Civil Service
(Training and Development)

Agenda item IV

Mr Patrick NIP, JP
Secretary for the Civil Service

Mr Thomas CHOW, JP
Permanent Secretary for the Civil Service

Mr Gary POON, JP
Deputy Secretary for the Civil Service 3

Ms Betsy LAI
Principal Assistant Secretary for the Civil Service
(Training and Development)

Clerk in attendance : Mr Anthony CHU
Chief Council Secretary (4)1

Staff in attendance : Ms Maggie CHUNG
Senior Council Secretary (4)1

Miss Carol WONG
Council Secretary (4)1

Mr Griffin FUNG
Legislative Assistant (4)7

Ms Karin TSOI
Clerical Assistant (4)1

I. Date of next meeting and items for discussion

(LC Paper No. CB(4)506/19-20(01) -- List of outstanding items for discussion

LC Paper No. CB(4)506/19-20(02) -- List of follow-up actions)

The Chairman welcomed Secretary for Civil Service ("SCS") who first attended the meeting of the Panel on Public Service ("the Panel").

2. The Chairman reminded members that pursuant to the decision at the meeting of the Panel on 20 April 2020, the Administration would brief the Panel on "Commendation schemes for civil servants" at this meeting, and the meeting with deputations/individuals on "Employment of persons with disabilities in the civil service" would be postponed to the regular meeting in June 2020. As such, the regular meeting in May 2020 had been cancelled. The next regular meeting would be held on 19 June 2020 (Friday) at 8:45 am to discuss the following items:

(a) 2020-2021 Civil Service Pay Adjustment; and

(b) Employment of persons with disabilities in the civil service.

3. In respect of item (b) above, the Chairman proposed and members agreed to invite members of the Panel on Welfare Services to attend the discussion of this item. The Chairman informed members that depending on the number of attendees who would give views at the meeting, the end time of

the meeting might be suitably adjusted, and members would be informed in due course.

4. Mr LAM Cheuk-ting asked the Administration for a timetable to brief the Panel on the principle of political neutrality of the civil service. He emphasized that members had repeatedly requested the Administration to schedule early discussion of this subject matter, such as at the regular meeting in May. Mrs Regina IP considered that if the principle of political neutrality was to be discussed, the Administration should also bring up the discussion on requesting all civil servants to swear to uphold the Basic Law ("BL") and swear allegiance to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. The Chairman pointed out that according to the former SCS, the Civil Service Bureau ("CSB") aimed to report to the Panel the progress of the study on oath-taking by civil servants by the end of the 2019-2020 session.

5. SCS assured members that CSB would take into account members' views when deciding the priority of the items for discussion. The Chairman also urged SCS to follow up the progress of the Administration's study on the enactment of legislation to prohibit acts of insulting public officers and the issues mentioned in paragraph 4 above, and report to the Panel in due course.

6. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan expressed concern about the provision of fringe benefits under the terms of appointment to the civil service and considered that a thorough review on such benefits was called for. She requested the Administration to brief the Panel on the subject in the 2019-2020 session. Mr LAM Cheuk-ting remarked that enhancing the fringe benefits for civil servants might discourage them from taking up outside work without the Administration's approval, and he agreed that the Panel should discuss the subject matter. The Chairman advised Dr CHIANG to set out her views in writing, so that the Panel could seek further information from the Administration.

(Post-meeting note: On the instruction of the Chairman, Dr CHIANG's letter dated 7 May 2020 on the subject and the Administration's response were respectively circulated to members vide LC Paper Nos. CB(4)553/19-20(01) and CB(4)664/19-20(01) on 12 May and 2 June 2020. The subject matter was included in the "List of outstanding items for discussion".)

7. The Chairman concluded and members agreed that the next regular meeting would be held on 19 June 2020 to discuss the items mentioned in paragraph 2 above.

8. The Chairman also informed the meeting that upon obtaining the consent from Mr Jeremy TAM, the item "Review of the structure of operations inspector post in the Civil Aviation Department" had been deleted from the "List of outstanding items for discussion" of the Panel.

II. Employment of non-ethnic Chinese in the civil service

(LC Paper No. CB(4)506/19-20(03) -- Administration's paper on the employment of non-ethnic Chinese in the civil service

LC Paper No. CB(4)506/19-20(04) -- Paper on the employment of non-ethnic Chinese in the civil service prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (updated background brief))

9. At the invitation of the Chairman, SCS briefed members on the employment of non-ethnic Chinese ("NECs") in the civil service, as set out in the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(4)506/19-20(03)).

Racial profile of the civil service

10. Ms Elizabeth QUAT enquired about the number and proportion of NECs in the civil service, and the total number of posts under the 53 grades with lower Chinese language proficiency requirements ("LPRs") after the 2018 review as mentioned in paragraph 4 of Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(4)506/19-20(03)). Mr Jeremy TAM also sought information on the number of NECs, as well as the rank of the highest-ranking NEC civil servant in the civil service.

11. SCS replied that the Administration had conducted a voluntary anonymous survey on the racial profile of the civil service in 2013. Out of 24 690 civil servants who responded to the survey, 470 (or 1.9%) of them were NECs. He emphasized that all candidates would be assessed on the basis of their ability, performance and character, and having regard to the entry requirements set according to the job requirements of the grade concerned. Race was not a relevant consideration in the selection process of civil service recruitment. Given that neither job applicants or serving civil servants were required to declare their ethnic origins, the statistical information requested by members was not available. However, based on the information available through informal channels such as face-to-face contact during interviews, the

Administration was able to gather some information on the employment of NECs in the civil service. It was noted that NECs were appointed to fill vacancies in various grades such as Administration Officer, Electrical and Mechanical Engineer, Officer in the Correctional Services Department, Assistant Primary School Master/Mistress, and Artisan, etc. Besides, promotion of civil servants was based on the criteria of character, ability, experience and any qualifications prescribed for the higher rank. Race was also not a relevant consideration.

12. Permanent Secretary for the Civil Service ("PSCS") supplemented that the 53 grades with lowered Chinese LPRs involved around 18 000 civil service posts. He clarified that NECs could apply for any positions in the civil service, and not just those 53 grades with lowered Chinese LPRs, as long as they could meet the entry requirements. According to information gathered through informal means such as face-to-face contact during selection interviews, PSCS said that 76 NEC candidates were appointed to the civil service in the past three years. Among the 76 NEC candidates, some of them were appointed to grades other than the 53 grades with Chinese LPRs lowered, for example, Inspector of Police and Police Constable grades.

13. Mr Jeremy TAM urged the Administration to regularly update the racial profile of the civil service in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the measures adopted by the Administration in facilitating the employment of NECs in the civil service. Without such information, he believed that it would be hard to assess the employment situation of NECs in the civil service and whether additional support for them was necessary.

Dissemination of recruitment information to NECs

14. Mr CHAN Chun-ying asked whether CSB had provided any guidelines for Bureaux/Departments ("B/Ds") to follow in deciding whether it would be suitable to recruit NEC candidates or place recruitment advertisements at the Home Affairs Department ("HAD")'s support service centres for ethnic minorities. The Deputy Chairman asked whether all B/Ds were required to place recruitment advertisements for civil service vacancies suitable for NECs at HAD's support service centres for ethnic minorities.

15. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan said that due to cultural and language differences, some NECs found it difficult to integrate into the community. She commented that by recruiting more NECs into the civil service, NEC civil servants could help explain the Government's initiatives and policies to their fellow NECs in Hong Kong, thus assisting them to assimilate into the local community. The Chairman and Mr SHIU Ka-fai also shared a similar view with Dr CHIANG

that NEC civil servants could act as a bridge between the Administration and NECs.

16. SCS responded that B/Ds could decide which positions were suitable for recruiting NECs according to the operational requirements of the civil service post concerned. B/Ds were also encouraged to place job advertisements for civil service vacancies with lowered Chinese LPRs at the HAD's support service centres for ethnic minorities. Other promotion efforts included the "Cross-disciplined Forces Training Programme for Ethnic Minority Youth" and school talks to share with NEC secondary school students about the job nature of the relevant civil service posts.

Employment of NECs as Police Constable

17. Referring to paragraph 10 of the background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (LC Paper No. CB(4)506/19-20(04)), Mr CHAN Chun-ying inquired whether the Administration had studied the reasons for the higher success rates of NEC applicants comparing to those of other applicants in the recruitment of Police Constable in 2015-2016, 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 (as at end December 2017). He also asked whether a higher success rate of NEC applicants for Police Constable had also been observed in the past two years.

18. PSCS responded that the success rates of NEC candidates in the recruitment of Police Constable in 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 were about 30% and over 20% respectively. As the 2019-2020 recruitment exercise for Police Constable was still in progress, the success rate in 2019-2020 was not yet available. He further explained that as the number of NEC candidates was far lower than that of the other candidates (for instance, not more than 70 NEC candidates as compared to over 10 000 other candidates in 2016-2017), therefore with a smaller base figure, the success rates of NEC candidates would be higher.

Support to NECs and NEC civil servants

19. In respond to Mr CHAN Chun-ying's question on whether the Administration would organize or had organized any other courses apart from Chinese language training for NEC civil servants to facilitate their integration into the civil service, SCS said that team building activities for enhancing teamwork and synergy among civil servants had been organized by B/Ds.

20. The Deputy Chairman enquired about the recruitment situation of NECs for those 53 grades with lowered Chinese LPRs after the review in February 2018. He also asked if the Administration would consider further

relaxing the Chinese LPRs of civil service grades. SCS said that CSB would keep in view the recruitment situation of those grades with lowered Chinese LPRs. B/Ds could also adjust the method of selection (e.g. tests or interviews) which could better assess NEC applicants' job-related communication ability.

21. The Deputy Chairman inquired about the estimated number of ethnic minority job seekers that would be covered by the three-year pilot programme to be launched by the Labour Department ("LD") in 2020 to provide one-stop employment services for ethnic minority job seekers. He also asked about the manpower deployed by LD in running this pilot programme and whether extra manpower had been/would be deployed. PSCS responded that the Administration had earlier earmarked \$500 million to strengthen support for ethnic minorities. The details of LD's pilot programme would be provided to the Panel after the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's response was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)589/19-20(01) on 20 May 2020.)

22. The Chairman pointed out that the proportion of NECs among civil servants (around 1 to 2% according to his understanding) was lower than that of the overall population (i.e. 3.6% excluding domestic helpers). In his view, as most of the NEC civil servants were employed for NEC oriented services, e.g. interpretation and various support services, the lower proportion of NEC civil servants employed reflected the inadequacy of the Administration's support for NECs.

23. Ms Elizabeth QUAT considered that the Administration had not done enough in facilitating NECs to be employed as civil servants. Noting that many NECs in Hong Kong were able to speak Chinese fluently, and yet unable to join the civil service because they failed to meet the Chinese LPRs for civil service appointments, she supported imposing a lower level of Chinese LPRs for more grades. Mr SHIU Ka-fai also supported the Administration's initiative in reviewing Chinese LPRs for all civil service grades.

24. SCS advised that the Administration had all along been committed to building a caring and inclusive society and providing a wide range of support for NECs, including introducing the Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework in schools and the launching of LD's three-year pilot programme to provide employment support services for NECs. Regarding appointment to the civil service, it should be based on the principle of open and fair competition. Besides, B/Ds would conduct regular review to ensure that the Chinese LPRs of civil service grades were no more than necessary for performance of the job on the basis of maintaining satisfactory public services.

Internship programme for NEC university students

25. In response to the enquiries of the Deputy Chairman and Dr CHIANG Lai-wan regarding internship placements for NEC students in the summer 2020, SCS replied that the internship places for NEC students in 2020 would be doubled to around 30, being part of the around 5 000 short-term internship places as mentioned in the 2020-2021 Budget.

Other concerns

26. As South and Southeast Asian countries were important partners in the Belt and Road Initiative ("B&RI"), Mr SHIU Ka-fai suggested that NECs in Hong Kong could be nurtured to contribute in trade, tourism promotion and business activities between Hong Kong and these countries given their language capability. SCS agreed with Mr SHIU's suggestion and said that in view of the ongoing development of B&RI, there would be a higher demand for talents who could speak the native languages of these countries. He believed that NECs in Hong Kong would enjoy more job opportunities in public and private sectors due to B&RI.

27. Dr KWOK Ka-ki expressed concern on three NEC senior police officers suspected of breaching the land and building statutory requirements. He also described the Commissioner of Police "deliberately breaking the law" for allowing some unauthorized building works at a property he rented previously.

28. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan, Mr LUK Chung-hung and Ms Elizabeth QUAT considered that Dr KWOK Ka-ki's accusation about the Commissioner of Police groundless. Mr LUK Chung-hung requested Dr KWOK to withdraw his remarks against the Commissioner of Police and described Dr KWOK "no ivory would come off a dog's mouth".

29. Mr Jeremy TAM raised a point of order and asked the Chairman to rule according to Rule 41(4) of the Rules of Procedure as to whether Mr LUK Chung-hung's expression against Dr KWOK Kai-ki was offensive and insulting.

30. The Chairman asked Mr LUK Chung-hung to withdraw his remarks against Dr KWOK Ka-ki. He also stressed that if Dr KWOK's speech was irrelevant to the subject matter, he would not invite SCS for response. The Chairman also reminded members to be mindful of and respectful in their language.

31. Mr LUK Chung-hung agreed to withdraw his remarks against Dr KWOK Ka-ki, as in his view, describing Dr KWOK as dogs was an insult to dogs ("second remark").

32. Mr LAM Cheuk-ting raised a point of order that Mr LUK Chung-hung's second remark was more insulting than the first one. The Chairman asked Mr LAM to discontinue his speech as he had already made his point. Mr LAM said that the Chairman acted in excess of his authority and described the Chairman "ridiculous". The Chairman warned Mr LAM several times to stop his speech but in vain. The Chairman then ordered Mr LAM to withdraw from the Panel for the remainder of the meeting under Rule 45(2) of the Rules of Procedure. Mr LAM left the conference room on his own.

33. Mr LUK Chung-hung withdrew his second remark against Dr KWOK Ka-ki.

34. Dr KWOK Ka-ki asked if the Administration would take any follow-up action on the three NEC police officers suspected of breaking the law. SCS replied that it would not be appropriate to comment on individual cases before completion of investigation. The Administration would follow up complaints against civil servants in accordance with the established mechanism.

35. Mr Jeremy TAM expressed concern on any oath-taking arrangement for NEC civil servants as most of the NECs were not Chinese nationals according to the Nationality Law of the People's Republic of China. SCS advised that civil servants must be permanent residents of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region according to Article 99 of the Basic Law. The ethnic origin of civil servants was not contradictory to the responsibility and requirement of civil servants to uphold the Basic Law and bear allegiance to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

III. An overview of training and development for civil servants

(LC Paper No. CB(4)506/19-20(05) -- Administration's paper on an overview of training and development for civil servants

LC Paper No. CB(4)506/19-20(06) -- Paper on training and development for civil servants prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (updated background brief))

36. At the invitation of the Chairman, SCS briefed members on the overview of the provision of training and development for civil servants by CSB, details of which were set out in the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(4)506/19-20(05)).

National studies and Basic Law training

37. Citing that some civil servants were arrested by the Police for suspected involvement in unlawful public activities relating to the proposed amendments to the Fugitive Offenders Ordinance, as well as cases of narrators in museums and teachers disseminating incorrect historical information, Ms Elizabeth QUAT highlighted that the Administration should deepen civil servants' sense of the rule of law and their understanding of the history of the Mainland and Hong Kong.

38. Sharing the views of Ms Elizabeth QUAT, Mr LUK Chung-hung stressed that Hong Kong had been inextricably tied in with the development of the Mainland, hence the Administration should enhance civil servants' sense of national identity and their knowledge of national affairs and BL. Given that Administrative Officers and Executive Officers ("EOs") played an important role in implementing Government policies, he urged the Administration to extend the national studies programmes organized by Mainland institutions to EO II, the entry rank of EO grade. The Chairman and the Deputy Chairman also commented that the latest number of training places in BL at around 13 000 and national studies at around 9 000 per year for civil servants were insufficient.

39. Referring to the recent controversies on the roles of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Dr CHIANG Lai-wan considered that the Administration should arrange training programmes for civil servants, in particular those at the senior level and with potential for advancement, to enrich their understanding of the Mainland constitutional law and government structure. She suggested that the Administration could refer to books such as "Introduction to the Basic Law of HKSAR" as part of the BL teaching materials.

40. SCS advised that under the principle of "one country, two systems", it was essential for civil servants to acquire an accurate understanding of the constitutional order established under the Constitution of the People's Republic of China and BL, as well as the systems, developments and social and economic situation on the Mainland. The Administration had been enhancing relevant training for all civil servants subject to resources availability and the prevailing training policy. The Civil Service Training and Development Institute ("CSTDI") arranged Mainland and local programmes/seminars on national

studies for around 9 000 civil servants each year, and the target number of civil servants receiving BL training had already increased to 13 000 per year.

41. Concerning that civil servants in professional grades might need to work closely with the Mainland counterparts in planning Hong Kong's development to align with that of the Mainland, Mr Tony TSE suggested the Administration arranging more relevant thematic visits to the Greater Bay Area to cater for their job-specific requirements and granting them with paid study leave to attend such kind of training.

42. SCS noted Mr TSE's views and advised that various B/Ds had participated in the development of the Greater Bay Area, and the Administration would arrange thematic visits to cities in the Greater Bay Area to facilitate civil servants' understanding of the latest development in the Area.

Leadership and management development

Management and communication courses

43. In view of the fast-changing international and local political and economic conditions, the Chairman was concerned whether civil servants were well-equipped to support efficient and effective operation of the Government under such challenging circumstances. He opined that the Administration should broaden the international perspectives of civil servants.

44. Mr Tony TSE considered that the Administration should enhance civil servants' training on media and public communication strategies, so that they would not compromise their impartiality and professionalism and firmly explained the Administration's policies when facing groundless accusations and verbal abuse from some members of the public. The Deputy Chairman sought information about the training on handling verbal violence and stress at work.

45. SCS agreed that it was crucial to strengthen the communication between the Government and the public under the tough and fast-changing social circumstances, and the Administration noted the difficulties encountered by front-line civil servants at work. In this connection, the Administration provided courses for civil servants in enhancing customer service, handling public complaints, managing conflicts and verbal violence, coping with stress and maintaining physical and psychological well-being.

46. Mr IP Kin-yuen raised concern on how the Administration would enhance civil servants' awareness of the core values of the civil service via training, so that they would safeguard the core values, in particular the principle of political neutrality, under a changing political landscape. He considered

that the requirements for civil servants to be loyal to the Government and the Chief Executive might not sit well with the principle of political neutrality under certain circumstances.

47. SCS advised that the core values of the civil service were the cornerstone of good governance, and the Administration had been reminding civil servants of the importance of the core values through various means. For example, CSTDI provided new recruits with regular induction training which covered civil service core values and major regulations. Regarding the principle of political neutrality, he stressed that according to the Civil Service Code, this meant that civil servants should 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 were.

Training on innovation and technology application

48. Ms Elizabeth QUAT pointed out that many civil servants were less receptive to innovation and technology ("I&T") applications as they were not equipped with relevant knowledge. With a view to supporting the development of Hong Kong as a world-class smart city, she called on the Administration to provide all civil servants with mandatory in-depth training on I&T applications such as artificial intelligence and big data analytics.

49. SCS stressed that the Administration attached great importance to enhancing civil servants' knowledge on I&T applications and creative thinking. In this connection, CSTDI and B/Ds organized I&T training programmes for about 60 000 officers each year, and CSTDI planned to provide relevant training to around 18 700 civil servants at various levels in the five years from 2019 to 2024.

E-learning resources

50. In response to the question raised by the Deputy Chairman about the impact on the provision of training for civil servants brought about by the outbreak of the Coronavirus Disease 2019, SCS said that since February 2020, most of the local and overseas training programmes had been postponed due to the epidemic. During the period, CSTDI offered web-based learning tools through its e-learning portal, Cyber Learning Centre Plus ("CLC Plus"). CSTDI would keep in view the development of the epidemic and try to resume its training courses in the second half of the year once the situation became stable.

51. The Chairman was of the view that the Administration should make better use of its e-learning platforms to maximize the training opportunities for

civil servants. SCS advised that some 27 B/Ds were using CLC Plus to provide training information or learning materials to their staff, and there were some 2 450 learning resources available on CLC Plus. In 2019, CLC Plus attracted about 627 000 visits and the number of page views had reached 4.73 million. The Administration would continue to encourage civil servants to use CLC Plus to access more learning resources.

Procurement of training service

52. The Chairman noted that in addition to in-house trainers, CSTDI would outsource some training programmes to outside providers, and he enquired about the criteria adopted by CSTDI in procuring these services. SCS advised that there were established procedures in procuring training services. When selecting the course providers, CSTDI would take into account both service quality and price of the course providers.

New civil service college

53. In reply to the Deputy Chairman's question about the latest progress of the civil service college, SCS replied that the Administration's plan to complete the civil service college in 2026 remained unchanged.

IV. Commendation schemes for civil servants

(LC Paper No. CB(4)506/19-20(07) -- Administration's paper on commendation schemes for civil servants

LC Paper No. CB(4)506/19-20(08) -- Paper on commendation schemes for civil servants prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (updated background brief)

54. At the invitation of the Chairman, PSCS briefed members on the Civil Service Outstanding Service Award Scheme ("CSOSAS") and other commendation schemes for civil servants, details of which were set out in the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(4)506/19-20(07)).

55. The Deputy Chairman, Mr Tony TSE, Mr IP Kin-yuen and Mr SHIU Ka-fai indicated their support for various commendation schemes for civil servants as a recognition of quality services provided by civil servants.

56. Mr SHIU Ka-fai expressed his gratitude for the contributions made by civil servants to society and asked whether the commendation schemes included any cash rewards for the awardees. PSCS cited that under CSOSAS, for instance, departments winning Inter-departmental Partnership Award and Departmental Awards would be awarded with cash rewards for staff welfare use; teams winning Gold, Silver and Bronze prizes and Meritorious Awards of Team Awards and winners of Special Citation Awards would be awarded with supermarket coupons of \$20,000, \$10,000, \$6,000 and \$3,000 and \$2,000 respectively. Mr SHIU called on the Administration to increase the incentives to further motivate civil servants to provide quality public service.

Civil Service Outstanding Service Award Scheme

57. Mr IP Kin-yuen remarked that many civil servants discharged their duties in a proactive and timely manner. Noting that the Fire Services Department and the Hongkong Post were respectively awarded the Golden Prize and Silver Prize of the Team Awards (Crisis Support) under CSOSAS, he expressed his appreciation for the efforts made by the Fire Services Department in cleaning up fallen trees outside a school in Cheung Chau after the onslaught of the super typhoon Mangkhut in 2018, and those made by the Hongkong Post in making special arrangements to speed up the delivery of United Kingdom student visas in 2017.

58. The Deputy Chairman opined that CSOSAS was an important channel through which the public could better understand the services provided by different B/Ds. Mr Tony TSE shared the Deputy Chairman's views and said that with a view to enhancing the public's recognition of the civil service, the Administration should consider introducing the work of individual civil servants with outstanding performance through social media.

59. SCS noted members' views and advised that the Administration had been using different channels to promote the public awareness of the outstanding services provided by winning B/Ds. CSB would encourage B/Ds to further step up their efforts in showcasing their services to the public on social media platforms.

The Commendation Letter Scheme

60. In response to the questions raised by the Deputy Chairman regarding the number of commendation letters issued under the Scheme, PSCS advised that CSB would collate the number of commendation letters issued by B/Ds each year, and a copy of the commendation letters would be kept in the personal files of the recipients for record and future reference. Although there was no limit on the number of commendation letters issued by B/Ds, Permanent

Secretaries/Heads of Departments would only issue commendation letters to civil servants whose performance warranted special recognition. SCS added that the Administration's paper had set out the criteria for issuing the commendation letters to civil servants. B/Ds would abide by these criteria in nominating and selecting recipients.

Other supporting measures for civil servants

61. Concerning that frontline civil servants might encounter verbal abuse by members of the public when discharging duties, Mr SHIU Ka-fai called on the Administration to strengthen the psychological support to them. Mr Tony TSE suggested arranging experience sharing sessions for civil servants who had skilfully handled conflicts with members of the public with other civil servants. Mr IP Kin-yuen was of the view that in addition to motivating the civil servants through the commendation schemes, the Administration should provide them with adequate training to deliver quality public service.

62. SCS reiterated that the Administration was mindful of the changing challenges faced by frontline civil servants. Departmental management would provide their staff with necessary and adequate support to help them perform their duties.

V. Any other business

63. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 1:06 pm.