

立法會

Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(4)898/19-20
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Ref : CB4/PL/PS

Panel on Public Service

**Minutes of meeting held on
Friday, 10 July 2020, at 10:45 am
in Conference Room 3 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 Christopher CHEUNG Wah-fung, SBS, 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 attending : Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS
Hon Holden CHOW Ho-ding
Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing, MH
Hon KWONG Chun-yu
Hon Vincent CHENG Wing-shun, MH, JP

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Public Officers attending : Agenda item II

Mr Patrick NIP, JP
Secretary for the Civil Service

Mr Brian LO, JP
Acting Permanent Secretary for the Civil Service

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

Agenda item III

Mr Patrick NIP, JP
Secretary for the Civil Service

Mr Brian LO, JP
Acting Permanent Secretary for the Civil Service

Mr Hermes CHAN
Director of General Grades
Civil Service Bureau

Clerk in attendance : Mr Colin CHUI
Chief Council Secretary (4)3

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

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I. Information papers issued since the last regular meeting on 19 June 2020

(LC Paper No. CB(4)806/19-20(01) -- Administration's response to the submissions from the Government Disciplined Services General Union and the Hong Kong Civil Servants General Union)

Members noted that the above paper had been issued since the last regular meeting of the Panel on Public Service ("this Panel").

II. Progress of the study on the proposal on oath-taking by civil servants and political neutrality of civil servants

(LC Paper No. CB(4)797/19-20(01) -- Administration's paper on progress of the study on the proposal on oath-taking by civil servants and political neutrality of civil servants

LC Paper No. CB(4)797/19-20(02) -- Paper on progress of the study on the proposal on oath-taking by civil servants and political neutrality of civil servants prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (information note)

Other relevant papers

LC Paper No. CB(4)170/19-20(01) -- Letter dated 3 December 2019 from Hon LAM Cheuk-ting on the Civil Service Bureau's policy relating to the expression of political stance of civil servants and requesting the Panel to discuss the issue at a future meeting (Chinese version only)

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- LC Paper No. CB(4)191/19-20(01) -- Administration's supplementary information on "Briefing by the Secretary for the Civil Service on the Chief Executive's 2019 Policy Address"
- LC Paper No. CB(4)483/19-20(01) -- Letter dated 17 January 2020 from Hon LAM Cheuk-ting regarding the interdiction arrangements in the civil service (Chinese version only)
- LC Paper No. CB(4)483/19-20(02) -- Administration's response to the letter dated 3 December 2019 from Hon LAM Cheuk-ting on the Civil Service Bureau's policy relating to the expression of political stance of civil servants and another letter dated 17 January 2020 from Hon LAM Cheuk-ting regarding the interdiction arrangements in the civil service)

2. At the invitation of the Chairman, the Secretary for the Civil Service ("SCS") briefed members on the progress of the study on the proposal on oath-taking by civil servants and political neutrality of civil servants as set out in the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(4)797/19-20(01)).

Oath-taking by civil servants

3. Ms Elizabeth QUAT, Mr Tony TSE, Mr LUK Chung-hung, Mrs Regina IP and Mr CHAN Chun-ying supported the Administration's proposal to introduce a requirement on civil servants to take oath/make declaration to uphold the Basic Law ("BL") and pledge allegiance to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region ("HKSAR") and the HKSAR Government ("the Requirement").

4. Ms Elizabeth QUAT and Mr Tony TSE considered that it was always the duty and obligation of civil servants to uphold BL and be allegiant to HKSAR. Mr TSE and Mr LUK Chung-hung agreed that the Requirement served the purpose of manifesting civil servants' responsibilities under BL and the Civil Service Code ("the Code"). Mrs Regina IP cited an example that

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employers of the private sector might require their employees to sign confidential undertaking to protect the interests of the employers' companies, hence she considered it reasonable to bind civil servants through the Requirement to protect the interests of HKSAR.

5. Mr IP Kin-yuen disagreed with Mrs IP's views. He opined that there were differences between signing confidential undertaking and taking oath/making declaration as the latter was in connection with legal proceedings. Mr IP and Mr KWONG Chun-yu considered it unnecessary to introduce the Requirement as civil servants of the HKSAR Government had all along been upholding BL and were allegiant to HKSAR and the HKSAR Government. Mr IP and Mr CHU Hoi-dick remarked that the Code had clearly set out the core values and standards of conduct which civil servants were required to uphold, and a civil service disciplinary mechanism was already in place for handling cases of misconduct, the Requirement was undoubtedly an additional restrictive condition imposed on civil servants. Considering that the implementation of the Requirement might give excessive power to the Administration on civil service management and undermine the mutual trust between civil servants and the Government, Mr CHU indicated that he would move a motion in this regard.

6. SCS advised that unlike employees of the private sector, civil servants had a constitutional role under BL. According to BL Article 99, public servants must be dedicated to their duties and be responsible to the HKSAR Government. In addition, it was stipulated in the Code 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; and they should support and implement policies and take actions, once decided by the Government of the day, fully and faithfully irrespective of their personal views. It had consistently been the duty of civil servants to uphold BL and be allegiant to HKSAR and the HKSAR Government under the framework of BL and the Code. The introduction of the Requirement could manifest and demonstrate civil servants' established responsibilities under BL and the Code and enhance their awareness of the responsibilities and requirements entailed by their official positions, thereby further safeguarding and promoting the core values that must be upheld by civil servants, and ensuring in turn the effective governance of the HKSAR Government.

Details of the Requirement and behaviour which might constitute a breach of the oath/declaration

7. Mr Jeremy TAM said that according to BL Article 104, the Chief Executive, principal officials, members of the Executive Council and of the Legislative Council, judges of the courts at all levels and other members of the judiciary must swear allegiance to HKSAR when assuming office, but the

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Standing Committee of the National People's Congress adopted the interpretation that the taking of the oath stipulated in BL Article 104 was a legal pledge made by the above public officers to the People's Republic of China and HKSAR. He therefore sought clarification on whether the taking of oath/making a declaration by civil servants under the Requirement would also be a legal pledge to the People's Republic of China.

8. SCS pointed out that as a special administrative region directly under the Central Government and under the principle of "One Country, Two Systems", HKSAR was part of China. While practising systems in Hong Kong were different from those of the Mainland, there should be no conflict between requiring civil servants to bear allegiance to the People's Republic of China and HKSAR.

9. Mr IP Kin-yuen expressed concern on whether civil servants were required to be allegiant to the HKSAR Government at any time (including outside office hours) and whether they were allowed to have their own political beliefs. Mr Charles Peter MOK shared Mr IP's concern and considered that the Administration should draw up clear guidelines in this regard.

10. The Deputy Chairman said that to his understanding, some civil service unions welcomed the introduction of the Requirement, yet they would like to learn more about the implementation details, including whether civil servants were allowed to participate in political processions/rallies in non-office hours and express their views on Government's policies in media interviews. To facilitate the implementation of the Requirement, the Chairman called on the Administration to list out the behaviour that would constitute a breach of the oath/declaration.

11. SCS stressed that civil servants' freedom of speech, of assembly, of demonstration, and so forth were enshrined in BL. That said, civil servants should ensure that their expressing of views in the public and their behaviour would not give rise to any conflict of interest with their official positions or duties, or be perceived as compromising the important principle of maintaining impartiality and political neutrality in the discharge of their duties.

Handling mechanism and penalties for cases of non-compliance

12. Mr CHAN Chun-ying, Mr KWONG Chun-yu, Mr Charles Peter MOK, Ms Elizabeth QUAT and the Deputy Chairman sought details of the mechanism for handling cases of non-compliance with the Requirement or cases involving breach of the oath/declaration by civil servants and the follow-up actions to be taken on such cases. Mr CHAN enquired about the handling of cases of civil servants whose conduct went against the Requirement even though they had not

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yet taken the oath/made the declaration. Mr KWONG, Mr MOK and Mr Jeremy TAM asked whether any punishment would be imposed on the civil servants who had breached the oath/declaration and whether any appeal mechanism was in place. Mr KWONG further enquired about the authority to adjudicate whether any civil servants had not complied with the Requirement or had breached the oath/declaration.

13. SCS advised that, as the Requirement manifested the established responsibilities of civil servants under BL and the Code, for serving civil servants who refused to comply with the Requirement, the Administration would communicate with them to understand the underlying reasons. The Administration would handle cases of non-compliance with the Requirement or cases involving breach of the oath/declaration by civil servants in accordance with the established mechanism for the administration of the civil service and relevant provisions in the prevailing legislation. Under the established civil service disciplinary mechanism, if a civil servant had been convicted of criminal offence by the Court, or if there was evidence that the civil servant concerned had misconducted himself/herself upon investigation, the management would institute disciplinary actions. The Administration would decide on the level of the punishment having regard to factors such as the severity of the misconduct or criminal offence concerned. In considering and implementing the proposed Requirement, the Civil Service Bureau ("CSB") would work with the Department of Justice to examine the legal issues involved and explore room in enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the mechanisms involved.

14. Expressing concern that some civil servants staged political assemblies or were involved in illegal activities last year, Ms Elizabeth QUAT opined that the Administration should come up with a mechanism for handling cases of civil servants who did not meet the Requirement, in particular those who participated in anti-government activities. Mr Holden CHOW said that a stringent disciplinary mechanism should be adopted for handling cases of non-compliance. Echoing the views of Ms QUAT and Mr CHOW, Mr LUK Chung-hung quoted an example in which a former President of the United States of America had dismissed more than 10 000 civil servants as they had staged activities against the Government of the United States of America.

15. SCS said that the Administration was gravely concerned about the suspected involvement of some civil servants in unlawful public activities. Hence, it was important to enhance civil servants' understanding of the principles of political neutrality and "One Country, Two Systems" and remind them to uphold the core values of the civil service. He said that most of the civil servants were law-abiding and dedicated to serving the public.

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16. With a view to addressing the concerns of civil servants, Mr LUK Chung-hung and Mr Holden CHOW suggested that the Administration should clearly articulate the consequences and punishment (if any) of non-compliance with the Requirement and breaching the oath/declaration. At the Chairman's request, SCS undertook to provide information about whether any disciplinary actions had been instituted against civil servants for not upholding BL or not being allegiant to HKSAR in accordance with the Code in the past five years, and if there were such disciplinary actions, the number of civil servants involved and details of the punishment imposed on them.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's response was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)839/19-20(01) on 31 July 2020.)

17. In response to the question raised by Mr LAM Cheuk-ting on whether new appointees to the civil service/serving civil servants who refused to take the oath/make the declaration would become ineligible for appointment/promotion or would be dismissed from the civil service, SCS advised that all civil servants joining the HKSAR Government on or after 1 July 2020 would be required to confirm in writing to uphold BL and pledge allegiance to HKSAR in order to continue staying in office or to assume office. Regarding serving civil servants, refusal to comply with the Requirement would have implications on their promotion/appointment under the current proposal. The Administration would communicate with officers refusing to comply with the Requirement to understand the underlying reasons.

18. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan brought up a discussion on the speaking order and said that Mr LAM Cheuk-ting was "crazy" during the discussion. Mr LAM raised a point of order that Dr CHIANG's comment on him was offensive and had breached Rule 41(4) of the Rules of Procedure ("RoP"), which rendered the use of offensive and insulting language about Members of the Council to be out of order. The Chairman reminded members to be mindful of and respectful in their use of language. At the Chairman's request, Dr CHIANG withdrew her comment on Mr LAM.

Applicability of the Requirement

19. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan and Mr LUK Chung-hung opined that while Members of the Legislative Council must, in accordance with law, swear to uphold BL and swear allegiance to HKSAR when assuming office, all civil servants should also be required to do so. Considering that Administrative Officers and Executive Officers played a key role in formulating and implementing Government policies, Mr LUK suggested including them in the first batch of civil servants for taking oath/making declaration to affirm their allegiance to HKSAR.

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20. In response to Dr CHIANG Lai-wan's question on the oath-taking arrangements for new recruits who joined the civil service on or after 1 July 2020 and before the Requirement was promulgated, SCS advised that they would also be requested to comply with the Requirement. Given that the Requirement was proposed to be one of the conditions for appointment to the civil service, Dr CHIANG called on the Administration to immediately impose the Requirement on those who joined the civil service on or after 1 July 2020.

21. Referring to paragraph 8 of the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(4)797/19-20(01)), Mr Tony TSE raised questions relating to the positions which were regarded as "responsible for discharging more sensitive duties" and the criteria for deciding the form of implementing oath-taking by civil servants, i.e. taking an oath or making a declaration.

22. SCS replied that the Administration would consider whether more civil servants should be first arranged to take an oath/make a declaration and announce details of the applicability of the Requirement as soon as possible. He further explained that requiring civil servants to take an oath or make a declaration would both serve the purpose of increasing civil servants' consciousness of the responsibilities and requirements entailed by their official positions. While most of the civil servants would be required to make a declaration, those who played a crucial role in the Government's decision-making process or of a higher rank would have to take an oath.

23. Mr Charles Peter MOK enquired whether the oath-taking requirement would cover non-civil service contract staff and agency workers. Mrs Regina IP, Ms Elizabeth QUAT and Dr CHIANG Lai-wan opined that in addition to civil servants, persons whose remuneration were paid for by public money, including staff employed by Government-funded bodies (e.g. the Hospital Authority, universities funded by the University Grants Committee and aided schools) should be obligated to swear allegiance to HKSAR. Dr CHIANG indicated that she would move a motion to that effect. Mr CHAN Chun-ying enquired whether the Administration would issue guidelines to Government-funded bodies to ensure that their staff would uphold BL and be allegiant to HKSAR.

24. SCS advised that in principle all staff who were directly employed by the Government would have the duty and responsibility to uphold BL and bear allegiance to HKSAR. As to whether the Requirement would be extended to Government-funded bodies, it would be studied and considered by the bureaux/departments/organizations concerned.

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25. In response to the questions raised by Mr CHAN Chun-ying and Mr CHU Hoi-dick regarding the definition of "public office" stated in Article 6 of "The Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region" ("the National Security Law") and the relationship between the National Security Law and the Requirement, SCS said that he was not in a position to explain or interpret the provisions of the National Security Law. Nevertheless, he stressed that the introduction of the Requirement was based on the established responsibilities and requirements of civil servants under BL and the Code. The Requirement was also in accord with the relevant provisions of the National Security Law.

26. Pointing out that the Interpretation and General Clauses Ordinance (Cap. 1) had already provided the legal definitions of "public office", "public officer" and "public body", Mrs Regina IP suggested that the Administration should seek legal advice from the Department of Justice on the interpretation of "public office" under the Chinese legal system to facilitate the implementation of the Requirement and the National Security Law.

Implementation timetable

27. The Chairman enquired why the Administration did not implement the Requirement in one go. Ms Elizabeth QUAT and Mr CHAN Chun-ying sought details about the timetable for fully implementing the Requirement in the civil service.

28. SCS advised that as there were about 180 000 civil servants, the Administration decided to implement the Requirement on new recruits to the civil service as early as possible while it was the plan to first introduce the Requirement for the civil servants mentioned in paragraph 8(a) and 8(b) of the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(4)797/19-20(01)). The Administration would review the implementation arrangements and review the way forward for introducing the Requirement on the remaining civil servants.

Consultation with civil service unions

29. Mr Tony TSE called on the Administration to gauge views from the staff side of the civil service on the oath-taking arrangements. Mr Charles Peter MOK and Mr IP Kin-yuen remarked that the piecemeal information provided by the Administration was insufficient for civil servants to fully understand the implementation of the Requirement, hence they urged the Administration to thoroughly consult the staff side in this regard.

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30. SCS advised that the Administration would consult the civil service unions on the Requirement concerning serving civil servants according to the established mechanism, explain to them the rationale for introducing the Requirement and the mechanism for handling cases of non-compliance and the related follow-up actions, and map out the way forward and implementation details as soon as possible.

Other concern

31. Regarding Mr LUK Chung-hung's suggestion on enhancing BL training for civil servants, SCS said that the Administration had been strengthening training for civil servants to enable them to better understand BL and the principle of "One Country, Two Systems", etc.

Motion proposed by members

The motion proposed by Mr Jeremy TAM

32. The Chairman advised that he had received a motion proposed by Mr Jeremy TAM. He ruled that the motion was not directly related to the agenda item under discussion. It should therefore not be dealt with at the meeting.

33. Both Mr Jeremy TAM and Mr IP Kin-yuen raised a point of order concerning the Chairman's ruling on Mr TAM's proposed motion. Mr TAM said that according to the Administration's paper, disciplined services staff would be first arranged to take oath/make declaration, hence he was unconvinced of the Chairman's ruling that his proposed motion (content mainly requiring police officers of the Hong Kong Police Force to, in addition to compliance with the Requirement, renounce their foreign nationality and give up their British National (Overseas) passports to pledge allegiance to HKSAR) was not relevant to the agenda item under deliberation. Mr IP opined that Mr TAM's proposed motion fell within the purview of this Panel as the Hong Kong Police Force was part of the civil service, and RoP had provided Members with the right to move motions, the Chairman should therefore allow the motion to be dealt with by this Panel.

34. The Chairman explained that this Panel was responsible for, among others, monitoring and examining Government policies relating to the civil service. As Mr Jeremy TAM specifically pinpointed the Hong Kong Police Force in his motion, the Chairman considered that the issue should be discussed at the Panel on Security and ruled that the motion was not directly related to the agenda item of the meeting. It should therefore not be dealt with at the meeting.

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35. Mr LAM Cheuk-ting voiced his disagreement with the Chairman's judgement although the Chairman had repeatedly warned that Mr LAM should stop interrupting the meeting. The Chairman then ordered Mr LAM to withdraw from this Panel for the remainder of the meeting under RoP 45(2). Mr LAM left the meeting venue.

36. The Chairman further informed members that he had received two motions from Mr CHU Hoi-dick and Dr CHIANG Lai-wan respectively. The Chairman ruled that the two motions were directly related to the agenda item.

The motion proposed by Mr CHU Hoi-dick

37. Mr CHU Hoi-dick read out his proposed motion:

"本委員會反對為公務員引入宣誓或聲明擁護《基本法》和效忠香港特區的要求，因為宣誓制度將給予當局過大的權力作任意的政治及思想審查，嚴重破壞公務員與政府之間的互信。"

(Translation)

"This Panel objects to the introduction of a requirement on civil servants to take oath or make a declaration to uphold the Basic Law and pledge allegiance to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, as such an oath-taking system will give excessive power to the authorities for arbitrary political and thought censorship to the great detriment of the mutual trust between the civil service and the Government."

38. The Chairman invited members to consider whether the motion moved by Mr CHU Hoi-dick should be proceeded with and put this matter to vote. Three members agreed to dealing with the motion, seven members disagreed and none abstained from voting. As the majority of the members voting were not in favour of dealing with the motion, the Chairman declared that the motion would not be proceeded with.

The motion moved by Dr CHIANG Lai-wan and seconded by Mr SHIU Ka-fai

39. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan read out her proposed motion:

"效忠特區政府及擁護《基本法》是每一位「公職人員」的基本責任和應有之義。本委員會支持政府當局提出就公務員

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宣誓的建議，及促請政府逐步擴展宣誓或簽署確認文件的適用範圍至包括所有現職的公務員，以及其他政府資助機構等公職人員。"

(Translation)

"Given that it is the duty and obligation of each and every "Public Officer" to uphold the Basic Law and pledge allegiance to the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, this Panel supports the proposal put forward by the Government on oath-taking by civil servants and urges the Government to extend by phases the application of the arrangement of such oath-taking or giving the relevant written confirmation to include all serving civil servants and public officers of other subvented organizations."

40. The Chairman invited members to consider whether the motion moved by Dr CHIANG Lai-wan should be proceeded with and put this matter to vote. Seven members agreed to dealing with the motion, three members disagreed and none abstained from voting. As the majority of the members voting were in favour of dealing with the motion, the Chairman declared that the motion would be proceeded with.

41. The Chairman put the motion to vote. Seven members voted for the motion, three members voted against it and no member abstained from voting. As the majority of the members voting were in favour of the motion, the Chairman declared that the motion was carried.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's response to the motion was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)836/19-20(01) on 30 July 2020.)

III. Anti-epidemic Fund 2.0: Job Creation Scheme and Matching Grant Scheme for Skills Upgrading

(LC Paper No. CB(4)797/19-20(03) -- Administration's paper on Anti-epidemic Fund 2.0: Job Creation Scheme and Matching Grant Scheme for Skills Upgrading)

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42. At the invitation of the Chairman, SCS briefed members on the Anti-Epidemic Fund 2.0: Job Creation Scheme and Matching Grant Scheme for Skills Upgrading set out in the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(4)797/19-20(03)).

43. Mr Charles Peter MOK appreciated the Administration's initiative for subsidizing private companies and startups involved in financial technology ("FinTech")-related business to employ additional staff. Regarding jobs created in relation to information technology ("IT") in the Job Creation Scheme, he enquired about the latest recruitment progress for the 13 500 time-limited government jobs especially for IT staff for strengthening IT support for various bureaux/departments ("B/Ds") and their new initiatives as mentioned paragraph 6(g) of the Administration's paper.

44. SCS replied that the Administration had started phasing the recruitment for 13 500 time-limited government jobs including IT staff. Among these jobs, 700 positions were filled while recruitment exercises for the other 7 000 positions were still on-going.

45. Mr CHAN Chun-ying was pleased to note that there would be 1 000 one-year FinTech-related positions provided by private companies and startups subsidized by the Administration. He noticed that the subsidized period could be up to 12 months between July 2020 and July 2021. Hence, it may not be prompt enough to help relieving the short-term unemployment of fresh graduates in 2020. He suggested that the Administration should require applicants for subsidies to create the FinTech-related positions as soon as possible in order to provide timely and short-term positions.

46. SCS replied that the application for subsidies to create FinTech-related positions, i.e. the FinTech Anti-epidemic Scheme for Talent Development, already started on 2 July 2020. He would reflect Mr CHAN Chun-ying's comments and suggestion to the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau. The Administration would closely monitor the progress of applications and the job creation situation.

47. Mr CHAN Chun-ying asked whether the Administration would accept applications from organizations not invited by Policy Bureaux under the Matching Grant Scheme for Skills Upgrading. SCS responded that each Policy Bureau would invite eligible applicants to submit applications to run training programmes not exceeding 12 months. Any organizations which were interested in providing such training programmes might contact relevant Policy Bureaux or CSB for application details.

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48. Mr Tony TSE welcomed the Administration's initiative in providing incentives for private companies to employ fresh graduates for the engineering, architecture, surveying, town planning and landscape architecture streams. He noted with appreciation that the subsidized quota for the Engineering Graduate Training Scheme had been increased to 750. He suggested that the Administration should centralize provision of recruitment information for graduates and regularize the incentive schemes for private companies in the aforesaid streams for nurturing future professionals.

49. SCS replied that the Development Bureau had launched a subsidy scheme through professional bodies for private companies to employ graduates and assistant professionals from the engineering, architecture, surveying, town planning and landscape architecture streams, with a view to providing them with necessary working experience to attain the relevant professional qualifications. He supplemented that the Engineering Graduate Training Scheme run by the Vocational Training Council had been providing regular training opportunities for engineering graduates to attain professional status.

50. Mr Vincent CHENG was concerned about the inadequate number of positions in the Administration which were suitable for the grass-root population with lower level of education. Moreover, the grass-root citizens might not be literate in accessing the Internet to obtain latest employment information on relevant Websites or the mobile application of CSB. He requested the Administration to speed up the provision of more positions with lower educational requirements and increase the user-friendliness of Websites and mobile applications to facilitate grass-root applicants to apply for jobs in the Administration.

51. SCS replied that around 8 700 time-limited positions created in the Administration under the Anti-epidemic Fund measures were suitable for grass-root candidates to apply. In addition, there were around 900 non-governmental grass-root positions. He would study and consider Mr Vincent CHENG's suggestion on the Website and mobile application of CSB.

(At 12:41 pm, the Chairman extended the meeting for 10 minutes beyond the appointed ending time to allow sufficient time for discussion.)

52. Mr SHIU Ka-fai and the Chairman requested the Administration's prompt action to start the recruitment exercises of the 13 500 time-limited government jobs to relieve the short-term unemployment situation.

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53. SCS responded that the Administration had started phasing the recruitment of time-limited positions. The Administration also sought assistance from public or quasi-government bodies, professional bodies and trade associations to create more job openings in non-governmental sector. The central recruitment exercises of Executive Service Assistants and Support Service Assistants were coordinated by CSB. Successful applicants would be deployed to the relevant B/Ds for providing necessary administrative, executive and clerical support. At the same time, the recruitment for Executive Officers II and Assistant Clerical Officers would be commenced shortly in these two months.

IV. Any other business

54. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:47 pm.

Council Business Division 4
Legislative Council Secretariat
14 September 2020