

**Summary of the views expressed at the Workshop  
for the Committee on Governance and Political Development  
of the Commission on Strategic Development  
held on 27 June 2006**

The purpose of the workshop was to provide a forum for Members to exchange views on the consultation document on “Review on the Role, Functions and Composition of District Councils”.

2. The following speakers gave presentations on the topics concerned:

Mrs LAM CHENG Yuet Ngor, Carrie, JP, Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs	Consultation Document on “Review on the Role, Functions and Composition of District Councils”
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Professor Wong Chack-kie, Professor of the Department of Social Work, The Chinese University of Hong Kong	“District Council Review: Consideration of Second Best Option”
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Dr Shih Tai-cho, Chairman of SynergyNet and Dr Ray Yep, Research Director of SynergyNet	“District Council Review”
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Copies of powerpoint presentation prepared by the speakers have been uploaded to the webpage of the Commission on Strategic Development.

3. Salient points of discussion following the presentations are summarized in the ensuing paragraphs.

**Overall**

4. Members generally agreed with the broad direction of the review, particularly on the proposal to enable District Councils (DCs) to have greater involvement in the management of some district facilities. They

considered that the proposed changes would improve the functioning of the DC under the existing framework. While some Members supported the adoption of a gradual approach in enhancing DC's role and functions, other Members opined that the pace of reform could be faster.

### **Role of DCs**

5. Although there was a view advocating a more radical reform of DCs with features similar to a “local government”, some Members pointed out that it was against the Basic Law for DCs to become organs of political power.

6. Some Members took the view that the Government should consult DCs on territory-wide issues in addition to local issues. It should also use the DCs as a platform to groom and nurture political talents.

7. Some Members opined that the Government should attach greater importance to engaging DCs at an early stage in the course of policy formulation. It would help enhance DC members' sense of ownership of the public policies and they would then be more willing to support and explain to the public the rationale behind such policies.

8. A few Members had reservation on the proposed establishment of a Steering Committee on District Administration. They took the view that it might not be consistent with the objective of enhancing the role of DCs in district management if district issues could only be resolved at the level of head of bureaux or departments.

### **Functions**

9. Members supported the proposal to allow DCs to participate in the management of selected district facilities as it would further enhance DC's functions in district administration and ensure that local issues were promptly addressed. Some Members added that the staffing support for DC Secretariats should be strengthened correspondingly. Some Members also considered it necessary for the DC Secretariats to provide research support to DCs. There was a suggestion to set up independent secretariats

for DCs in order to facilitate the discharge of the new role and responsibilities by the DCs.

10. Members had mixed views on whether to fill the posts of District Officers by political appointees. Some considered that it would enhance the accountability of the district offices. Others considered that it was premature to do so as there might not be sufficient talents who were capable of handling both political and management issues and they preferred to retain the existing system whereby District Officers were civil servants.

11. Some Members suggested upgrading the ranking of District Officers so as to enhance their effectiveness in dealing with issues involving several bureaux and departments.

### **Composition**

12. Some Members considered that the existing appointment system of DCs should be retained. They considered that the appointment system would provide a channel for talents from the business and professional sectors to contribute their expertise and knowledge to the work of DCs.

13. A Member opined that the present size of DC constituencies was too small. As a result, many DC members had been putting too much emphasis on narrow parochial interests, therefore limiting their horizons in territory-wide issues. He suggested that consideration should be given to merging several DC constituencies into a bigger one while maintaining the same number of seats.

### **Other Views**

#### **Remuneration of DC Members**

14. Members generally considered the proposal to increase the remuneration and allowances of DC members a step in the right direction and should be supported. They considered that the current remuneration package of DC members was unattractive and might even discourage

district personalities from serving the community on a full time basis. A Member also suggested adding an element of retirement protection to the remuneration package for DC members.

### **Concluding Remarks**

15. The Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs remarked that the Government was determined to strengthen the role and functions of DCs in district administration. Substantial amount of new resources would be provided to this end.

16. Regarding the suggestion of some Members that the posts of District Officers should be filled by political appointees, Deputy Secretary for Constitutional Affairs said that the Government was separately examining the possibility of further developing the existing political appointment system. Issues relating to the political appointment system would be addressed in that exercise and a public consultation document would be released later this year.

17. Head of CPU expressed gratitude to the speakers and all Members for their comments. The Secretariat would prepare a summary of views expressed at the workshop for Members' reference.

18. The attendance list of participants is at Annex.

Secretariat to the Commission on Strategic Development  
July 2006

策略發展委員會  
管治及政治發展委員會工作坊  
2006年6月27日

Workshop for  
the Committee on Governance and Political Development  
of the Commission on Strategic Development  
27 June 2006

出席名單

Attendance List

主持人

Convener

Head, Central Policy Unit

中央政策組首席顧問

列席

In Attendance

Mrs LAM CHENG Yuet-ngor, Carrie, J.P.  
Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs

民政事務局常任秘書長  
林鄭月娥女士, J.P.

Mr LAI Yee-tak, Joseph  
Deputy Secretary for Constitutional Affairs (1)

政制事務局副秘書長(1)  
黎以德先生

委員

Members

Mr CHAN Chung-bun, Bunny, B.B.S., J.P.  
Mr CHAU How-chen, S.B.S., J.P.  
Prof CHENG Kwok-hon, Leonard  
Mr CHEUNG Chi-kong  
Ms FONG, Janie  
Ms KO Po-ling, M.H.  
Mr LAU Nai-keung  
The Hon LEE Wing-tat

陳振彬先生, B.B.S., J.P.  
周厚澄先生, S.B.S., J.P.  
鄭國漢教授  
張志剛先生  
方文靜女士  
高寶齡女士, M.H.  
劉迺強先生  
李永達議員

Mr LIE-A-CHEONG Tai-chong, David  
Dr LO Chi-kin, J.P.  
Mr LUI Tim-leung, Tim, J.P.  
Mr NG Sze-fuk, George, B.B.S., J.P.  
Mr SZE Chin-hung, Jerome, J.P.  
Mr TAM Kwok-kiu, M.H.  
Miss TAM Wai-chu, Maria, G.B.S., J.P.  
Mr WONG Wai-yin, Zachary  
Mr YU Kwok-chun, S.B.S., J.P.  
Dr ZHOU Ba-jun

李大壯先生  
盧子健博士, J.P.  
雷添良先生  
吳仕福先生, B.B.S., J.P.  
施展熊先生, J.P.  
譚國僑先生, M.H.  
譚惠珠女士, G.B.S., J.P.  
黃偉賢先生  
余國春先生, S.B.S., J.P.  
周八駿博士

### 因事未能出席

#### Apologies

Mr CHAN Tak-lam, Norman, S.B.S., J.P.  
Prof CHEN Hung-ye, Albert, J.P.  
Mr CHEN Nan-lok, Philip, S.B.S., J.P.  
The Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, S.B.S., J.P.  
Mr CHOW Charn-ki, Kenneth  
Ms CHOW, Wendy  
Mr CHOW Yick-hay, B.B.S., J.P.  
Mr CHOW Yung, Robert  
Mr FUNG, Daniel R., S.B.S., J.P.  
Mr HOO, Alan, S.B.S., J.P.  
Prof KUAN Hsin-chi  
Prof Lee Chack-fan, SBS, J.P.  
The Hon LEE Cheuk-yan  
Dr LEUNG Mei-fun, Priscilla  
The Hon MA Lik, G.B.S., J.P.  
Mr MOK Hon-fai  
The Hon SHEK Lai-him, Abraham, J.P.  
The Hon TIEN Pei-chun, James, G.B.S., J.P.  
Dr WANG Xiao-qiang  
Mr WONG Kong-hon, S.B.S., J.P.  
Mr WONG Ying-ho, Kennedy, B.B.S., J.P.

陳德霖先生, S.B.S., J.P.  
陳弘毅教授, J.P.  
陳南祿先生, S.B.S., J.P.  
張學明議員, S.B.S., J.P.  
鄒燦基先生  
周君倩女士  
周奕希先生, B.B.S., J.P.  
周融先生  
馮華健先生, S.B.S., J.P.  
胡漢清先生, S.B.S., J.P.  
關信基教授  
李焯芬教授  
李卓人議員  
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莫漢輝先生  
石禮謙議員, J.P.  
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