

Legal Aid Services Council
Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 15 February 2023
at 5:00 p.m. in the Council Office

PRESENT

Prof. William LEUNG, GBS, JP	Chairman
Mr Bosco CHENG	Member
Mr Robin EGERTON	“
Mr Tom FU	“
Ms Serena LAU, JP	“
Mr Ronald SUM, JP	“
Miss Iris WAN	“
Mr Chris CHONG, JP	Director of Legal Aid
Mr Patrick WONG	Secretary

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Steve WONG	Deputy Director of Legal Aid (Policy & Administration)
Mr Henry CHAN	EO/LASC

ABSENT WITH APOLOGIES

Ms Rosita LEE	Member
Ms Yvonne YEUNG	“



Item

Action By

(I) INTRODUCTION

The Chairman welcomed Members and Mr Steve WONG of the Legal Aid Department (LAD) to the meeting.

(II) CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 6 DECEMBER 2022

2. The minutes were confirmed without amendment.

(III) PAPERS FOR INFORMATION/COMMENT

(A) Speeches at the Ceremonial Opening of the Legal Year 2023 - Paper No. LASC I/P 01/23

3.1 The Chairman said that the Ceremonial Opening of the Legal Year 2023 was held on 16 January 2023. A copy of the speeches delivered at the ceremony was attached to the Paper No. LASC I/P 01/23 for Members' reference. The Chairman of Hong Kong Bar Association had mentioned the importance of legal aid system in para. 15 of his speech and acknowledged the good work of DLA and his team in assisting fair access to the legal system. The Chairman invited Members to give a round of applause to the quality services delivered by LAD.

3.2 Members noted the speeches and showed appreciation for the achievement made by LAD.

(H) Monthly Statement of Income and Expenditure of LASC for the Months of November and December 2022 - Paper No. LASC I/P 08/23

10.1 The Chairman said that the expenditure for the months of November and December 2022 for the Council was controlled within budget.

10.2 Members noted the two monthly statements.

Item

Action By

(I) Chief Secretary for Administration's Office's paper on "Biennial Review of Criminal Legal Aid Fees, Prosecution Fees and Duty Lawyer Fees" - Paper No. LASC I/P 09/23

11.1 The Chairman said that the Government proposed to adjust the fees upward by 3.1% to reflect the accumulated change in Consumer Price Index (C) [CPI(C)] recorded between July 2020 and July 2022. The paper was the submission of CSO on the same matter to the AJLS of LegCo on 5 December 2022.

11.2 Members noted the Paper.

(J) Chief Secretary for Administration's Office's paper on "Annual Reviews of Financial Eligibility Limits of Legal Aid Applicants and Director of Legal Aid's First Charge" - Paper No. LASC I/P 10/23

12.1 The Chairman said that the Government completed the latest round of annual reviews of Financial Eligibility Limits and the two specified amounts of DLA's first charge upwards by 3% with reference to the CPI(C) for the same reference period (i.e. July 2019 to July 2022). The paper was the submission of CSO on the same matter to AJLS of LegCo on 5 December 2022.

12.2 Members noted the Paper.

(V) DATE OF NEXT MEETING

14. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m. The next Council Meeting would be held on Tuesday, 9 May 2023.