

(Translation)

Minutes of Special Meeting of Islands District Council

Date : 20 January 2020 (Monday)
Time : 2:00 p.m.
Venue : Islands District Council Conference Room,
14/F, Harbour Building, 38 Pier Road, Central, Hong Kong.

Present

Chairman

Mr YU Hon-kwan, Randy, MH, JP

Vice-Chairman

Mr WONG Man-hon

Members

Mr CHOW Yuk-tong, SBS, MH
Mr CHAN Lin-wai, MH
Mr WONG Hon-kuen, Ken
Mr HO Chun-fai
Mr HO Siu-kei
Ms WONG Chau-ping
Ms YUNG Wing-sheung, Amy
Ms TSANG Sau-ho, Josephine
Mr KWOK Ping, Eric
Mr TSUI Sang-hung, Sammy
Mr FONG Lung-fei
Ms LAU Shun-ting
Mr LEE Ka-ho
Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho
Mr WONG Chun-yeung

In Attendance

Mr LI Ping-wai, Anthony, JP	District Officer (Islands), Islands District Office
Mr AU Sheung-man, Benjamin	Assistant District Officer (Islands)1, Islands District Office
Ms LEUNG Tin-yee, Christy	Assistant District Officer (Islands)2, Islands District Office
Mr MOK Sui-hung	Senior Liaison Officer (1), Islands District Office
Mr CHAN Yat-kin, Kaiser	Senior Liaison Officer (2), Islands District Office

Secretary

Ms Dora CHENG Senior Executive Officer (District Council), Islands District Office

Absent with Apology

Mr YUNG Chi-ming, BBS, MH

Welcoming Remarks

The Chairman expressed gratitude to Members for attending the special meeting.

2. Members noted that Mr YUNG Chi-ming was unable to attend the meeting due to other commitments.

I. Islands District Council Standing Orders (Paper IDC 12/2020)

3. The Chairman said that Islands District Council Standing Orders (Standing Orders) were not discussed in detail at the last meeting due to insufficient time. The Secretariat had amended Section 32 of the Standing Orders (please refer to Annex for details) according to the proposal endorsed by Members by open ballot on that day. He asked Members to discuss the proposed amendments by the Home Affairs Department set out in Paper IDC 1/2020 of the last meeting.

4. The Secretary said that basing on a “simple majority” vote specified in Sections 6(3) and 35(3) of the Standing Orders, the first proposed amendment concerned including in Section 1(7) the definition of “simple majority” vote. The term of a simple majority vote meant the highest number of valid votes exceeded the second-highest number of valid votes, excluding abstentions.

5. The Chairman asked Members to vote by a show of hands.

6. Members voted by a show of hands and unanimously agreed to the above proposal.

7. The Secretary said that regarding the second proposed amendment, Section 40(4) stated that members of a “standing working group” shall either be members of the Council or co-opted members appointed under Section 34(1), at least half of them shall be members of the Council, yet there was no mention of the composition of a “non-standing working group”. In view of this, it was proposed to include in Section 41(1) a provision for “non-standing working group”, i.e. members of a “non-standing working group” shall either be members of the Council or co-opted members appointed under Section 34(1), at least half of them shall be members of the Council.

8. Mr Eric KWOK said that the amendment involved co-opted members and asked the Secretary to give a recapitulation.

9. The Secretary recapitulated the second proposed amendment.

10. Mr Eric KWOK said that since the proposed amendment involved co-opted members and a discussion would be held on the arrangement for co-opting members later, he proposed to discuss whether to co-opt members before voting on the above

proposed amendment, and if co-option was vetoed, there would then be no need to vote on the proposed amendment.

11. Mr Ken WONG concurred with Mr Eric KWOK. Since the discussion on voting of co-opted members was not completed at the last meeting, he proposed to first discuss whether to co-opt members.

12. The Chairman proposed to discuss first whether co-opted members had the right to vote. Section 71(4) of the District Councils Ordinance (Cap. 547) stipulated that a member appointed under subsection (2) might vote at a meeting of the committee and was to be counted for the purpose of constituting a quorum. Therefore, there would be a breach of the Ordinance if co-opted members were not allowed to vote, and the decision endorsed at the meeting on 17 January would be invalid.

13. Mr Ken WONG proposed that the amendment be changed to not co-opting members because on the one hand, 18 Members were returned by election and thus received recognition while on the other hand, it could avoid co-opted members showing favouritism towards anyone in the future.

14. Mr LEE Ka-ho shared the same view. While Section 71 of the District Councils Ordinance stated that co-opted members might be appointed by the District Council (DC) according to the Ordinance, there would be no violation of the Ordinance if no co-opted members were appointed, so he proposed not to appoint co-opted members in this term of DC to avoid problems that might be brought about.

15. Ms Josephine TSANG concurred with Mr Ken WONG. Given the representativeness of 18 Members and discussion could be held at the meetings, the four committees needed not have co-opted members.

16. Ms LAU Shun-ting agreed to the proposal of Mr Ken WONG and Ms Josephine TSANG.

17. Mr HO Chun-fai concurred with the views of the Members.

18. The Chairman said that the proposal received majority support and there was no opposition at the moment.

19. Mr Sammy TSUI enquired whether a vote could be taken.

20. The Chairman said that after discussion on financial issues at the last meeting, it was decided that all financial arrangements would be resolved by 18 Members rather than by a committee set up for handling financial matters.

21. The Chairman enquired of Mr Anthony LI and the Secretary whether it would contravene the Ordinance if Members did not nominate co-opted members since co-opted members had the right to vote under the Ordinance. He would ask Members to take a vote if it did not constitute a breach of the Ordinance.

22. The Secretary said that it would not contravene the Ordinance if no co-opted members were nominated since the Ordinance only stated that they “might be appointed”, which meant Members had the right not to appoint co-opted members.

23. The Chairman said that since the provision was clearly understood by Members, he asked Members to vote on the proposal of not appointing co-opted members to all committees according to the result of the discussion at the last meeting and as required in this term of DC.

24. The Chairman asked Members to vote by a show of hands.

25. Members voted by a show of hands and unanimously agreed to the above proposal.

26. The Chairman said that the Standing Orders set out the arrangements concerning co-opted members of working groups, non-standing working groups and committees, and refinement could be made to the existing Standing Orders via administrative means. Since no co-opted member was appointed in this term of DC, there would be no breach of the Ordinance.

27. Mr WONG Chun-yeung said that as co-opted members may still be appointed under the law, he proposed to change the wording from “elimination of co-opted members” to “18 Islands District Council members unanimously agree not to appoint co-opted members”. He opined that since DC was only an advisory body, if the voting result was submitted to the Legislative Council (LegCo) or Executive Council and not accepted, it might cause embarrassment.

28. Mr Ken WONG concurred with Mr WONG Chun-yeung. As DC could not vote on matters beyond the scope of its terms of reference, he considered it more appropriate to amend the phrase to read “18 Members of this term do not agree to the appointment of co-opted members”.

29. Mr Sammy TSUI expressed his views as follows:

(a) He was not worried about the appointment of co-opted members because although it was stated that Members had the right to nominate co-opted members, they might refrain from exercising such right.

(b) He enquired whether the quorum of a working group would be decided by the respective working groups or at the meeting that day.

30. The Secretary advised that the quorum should be equivalent to one half of the Members.

(Post-meeting note: The quorum of a committee shall be half the number of Members, whereas the quorum of a standing working group shall be no less than one-third of the total number of members.)

31. The Chairman said that if the wording “18 Members of this term of DC will not nominate any co-opted member” is adopted, the resolution passed at the last meeting that “all changes to resources will be monitored and approved by 18 Members” would not contravene the District Councils Ordinance. He asked Members to vote on the wording “18 Members will not nominate any co-opted member in this term of DC”.

32. Mr WONG Chun-yeung opined that since Members had reached a consensus, there was no need to vote by a show of hands, and the Secretary might rephrase the provision after the meeting to avoid a contravention of the District Councils Ordinance and hence embarrassment.

33. The Chairman did not think that the provision should be rephrased after the meeting and that an amendment should be made if agreed by Members and recorded in the minutes.

34. Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho considered Mr WONG Chun-yeung too aggressive. As he had failed to vote in time, he hoped the Chairman would hold a vote again formally.

35. The Chairman asked Members to vote on “no co-opted member will be nominated and office of co-opted members would not be established in this term of DC”.

36. The Chairman asked Members to vote by a show of hands.

37. Members voted by a show of hands and unanimously agreed to the proposal.

38. The Chairman asked the Secretary to introduce the next proposed amendment.

39. The Secretary said that the third proposed amendment concerned the provisions on declaration of interests set out in Section 48. In response to the recommendations on community involvement projects in the Director of Audit’s report issued in April 2017, it was proposed that “working groups” be included where declaration of interests at the meetings were concerned to ensure that the process for handling conflict of interests was also applicable to working group meetings. Moreover, as required by the Manual on the Use of District Council Funds, it was proposed that Section 48(16) be amended in that, in addition to recording all cases of declaration of interests in the minutes of the meeting, the nature of interest declared, the decision made and the rationale behind the decision should be recorded where appropriate.

40. The Chairman indicated that this amendment was made to meet the demand of today’s society for openness and transparency in the declaration of interests. He asked Members to vote on the proposed amendment to the provisions of Section 48 regarding declaration of interests.

41. The Chairman asked Members to vote by a show of hands.
42. Members voted by a show of hands and unanimously agreed to the above proposal.
43. The Chairman asked the Secretary to introduce the next proposed amendment.
44. The Secretary said that the fourth proposed amendment concerned Sections 49 and 50, which suggested that the arrangement for members of the public observing the meetings of DC or committees be applicable to the working group meetings.
45. The Chairman asked whether Members agreed to the amendment.
46. Mr Eric KWOK said that matters had been raised at the last meeting relating to organisations and observers voicing opinions. He proposed that organisations and persons invited to the meetings of DC, the four committees and working groups be allowed to comment on individual topics.
47. The Chairman suggested to first deal with the proposed amendment regarding observers before studying the proposal of Mr Eric KWOK. As briefed by the Secretary, the proposed amendment concerning members of the public observing the meetings would be extended to cover observers of working group meetings. He asked Members to vote on the proposed amendment to Sections 49 and 50, which suggested that the arrangement for members of the public observing the meetings of DC or committees be applicable to the working group meetings.
48. The Chairman asked Members to vote by a show of hands.
49. Members voted by a show of hands and unanimously agreed to the proposal.
50. The Chairman asked the Secretary to introduce the next proposed amendment.
51. The Secretary said that the fifth proposed amendment concerned Annex to Appendix III, which required the nominees of co-opted members of committees under DC to provide their detailed particulars. Since DC had voted against nominating co-opted members, the amendment needed not be dealt with.
52. The Chairman agreed that the amendment needed not be dealt with and asked the Secretary to introduce the next amendment.
53. Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho said that although this term of DC decided against nominating co-opted members, there might be nomination for co-opted members in the next term of DC or two years later. Therefore, he considered it necessary to deal with the amendment relating to co-opted members.
54. The Chairman asked whether Members agreed with the suggestion of

Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho, and if Members had no comment, they needed not vote by a show of hands. He asked them to vote on the proposed amendment of requiring the nominees of co-opted members of committees under DC to provide their detailed particulars.

55. The Chairman asked Members to vote by a show of hands.

56. Members voted by a show of hands and unanimously endorsed the amendment concerning co-opted members.

57. The Chairman asked the Secretary to introduce the next proposed amendment.

58. The Secretary said that the sixth proposed amendment concerned the inclusion of a disclaimer in the Registration Form on Personal Interests of Members of District Council or its Committees at Appendix IV, similar to that in the application form for reimbursement of operating expenses for DC members, because the record in the register did not imply that the content thereof had been approved or endorsed by the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region or its officers and DC, and the Government or its officers and DC would assume no responsibility for such content.

59. The Chairman asked whether Members agreed to the amendment or had any other comments.

60. The Chairman asked Members to vote on the proposed amendment to Appendix IV.

61. The Chairman asked Members to vote by a show of hands.

62. Members voted by a show of hands. There were 15 voted for and two abstaining. The proposed amendment was endorsed.

(Members voted for included the Chairman Mr Randy YU, the Vice-Chairman Mr WONG Man-hon, Mr CHOW Yuk-tong, Mr CHAN Lin-wai, Mr Ken WONG, Mr HO Chun-fai, Mr HO Siu-kei, Ms WONG Chau-ping, Ms Amy YUNG, Ms Josephine TSANG, Mr Eric KWOK, Mr Sammy TSUI, Mr FONG Lung-fei, Ms LAU Shun-ting and Mr LEE Ka-ho. Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho and Mr WONG Chun-yeung abstained.)

63. The Chairman enquired of the Secretary whether there were any outstanding proposed amendments.

64. The Secretary said that there was no more proposed amendment.

65. The Chairman asked Mr Eric KWOK to briefly introduce his proposal.

66. Mr Eric KWOK proposed that apart from observers and attendees in the

meetings of DC, its four committees and working groups, organisations and individuals might be invited to the meetings and to give opinions.

67. Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho supported the proposal of Mr Eric KWOK. If an organisation just submitted a petition letter, Members would be unable to know the contents of the letter instantly. If an organisation applied for attendance at the meeting in advance, he suggested that the organisation be permitted to speak at the meeting and that the number of times of speaking might be discussed later. If an organisation could only observe the meeting after submitting a petition letter, Members might not have an opportunity to know the contents of the letter instantly, hence a delay in addressing the matter.

68. Mr LEE Ka-ho concurred with Mr Eric KWOK and Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho. He opined that since the organisations were in attendance, they could be invited to express their views on specific topics, with the number of speaking times to be considered later.

69. The Chairman said that Mr Eric KWOK proposed that the organisations relevant to the agenda items under discussion by the committees or working groups be invited to the meeting and to give opinions, whereas Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho and Mr LEE Ka-ho suggested that persons submitting petition letters be given an opportunity to voice their demands, which he considered two separate matters. He proposed to discuss first whether the organisations concerned should be invited at the end of the meetings of the committees, working groups or non-standing working groups or upon endorsement by Members by circulation of papers as and when the Convenor/Chairman deemed necessary.

70. Mr HO Chun-fai reckoned that there might be problems with inviting organisations to speak at the meetings since Members might be unclear about what the organisations would say.

71. The Chairman said that the opinion of Mr HO Chun-fai could be considered later. Meanwhile, the issue under discussion concerned whether the organisations were introduced at the beginning of the meeting and, upon consent of Members, invited to attend the next meeting; or alternatively, if the Chairman considered that the attendance of an organisation would be of use and informed Members of his/her wish to invite the organisation to attend the next meeting more than 10 working days prior to the date of the meeting, the organisation would be invited to the meeting subject to the consent of Members.

72. Mr Sammy TSUI expressed his views as follows:

- (a) He agreed with the Chairman that the proposals be dealt with and discussed separately. He noted Mr Eric KWOK's proposal of inviting organisations concerned to attend and speak at the meeting if they were involved in the discussion items of the working groups or committees, and he considered it acceptable.

- (b) He also noted Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho's proposal of allowing people submitting petition letters to voice their opinions. He opined that consideration might be given for the above two proposals to be put to vote separately.

73. The Chairman suggested to first deal with Mr Eric KWOK's proposal that Members would decide by voting whether an organisation would be invited to speak at the meeting. He enquired whether Members had any comment in this regard.

74. Ms Josephine TSANG supported Mr Eric KWOK's proposal. Since an interval of 10 working days was allowed, she agreed that a decision could be made on whether an organisation was permitted to attend or speak at the meeting by circulation of papers.

75. The Chairman asked Members to vote on inviting organisations **other than those in attendance** or non-governmental organisations to attend and speak at the meeting given Mr Eric KWOK proposed that DC, committees, standing working groups or non-standing working groups could vote on inviting organisations to give briefings on a particular topic.

76. The Chairman asked Members to vote by a show of hands.

77. Members voted by a show of hands and unanimously agreed to the proposal.

78. The Chairman said that Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho and Mr LEE Ka-ho proposed that organisations submitting petition letters be allowed to speak and express their views, and he asked Members to give opinions on whether organisations should be allowed to voice opinions or the number of times of speaking.

79. Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho expressed his views as follows:

- (a) It was discussed earlier that prior notice was required for individuals, organisations or groups wishing to submit petition letters, and, in his opinion, the requirement for prior notice was just an application in disguise. He proposed to include a column "whether speaking time is given" in the application form, specifying 1) submission of petition letter and 2) expressing opinions. The length of speaking time and number of speaking times might be discussed later.
- (b) He found it very strange that individuals, organisations or groups were allowed to submit petition letters but not to voice opinions, which was similar to depriving of their freedom of speech while allowing them to submit petition letters.

80. Ms Amy YUNG said that if prior notice was not given by persons submitting petition letters, it would be hard for Members to understand their demands. Therefore, notice should be given to allow Members to decide whether they would be given time to voice opinions.

81. Ms Josephine TSANG concurred with Ms Amy YUNG as Members should at least had an idea about the demands the persons submitting petition letters sought.

82. Mr Ken WONG concurred with Mr Eric KWOK and Ms Amy YUNG. Since the persons concerned had sufficient time to write petition letters in advance, they should find time to inform DC that they wanted to speak up at the meeting.

83. Mr HO Chun-fai also concurred because if the persons only requested for speaking at the meeting when submitting the petition letters, Members might be unable to know right away what they wanted to say, thus causing embarrassment.

84. Ms LAU Shun-ting concurred with Ms Amy YUNG.

85. Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho considered it ridiculous that Members did not know what the persons submitting petition letters would say. He believed that one should know the agenda item before submitting letters. If the persons or organisations concerned were permitted to submit petition letters, the contents of their speeches should certainly relate to the agenda item.

86. Mr WONG Chun-yeung proposed that the Secretariat prepare a petition request form so that members of the public not keeping abreast of news about DC might know the rules and procedures of filing petitions to DC. He hoped that multiple channels would be available for people from all walks of life to express their views to avoid the feeling of isolation and helplessness.

87. Ms Josephine TSANG said that DC might not be able to handle the requests of petitioners. DC members were not professionals but could invite experts to the meetings. If residents considered it necessary to raise certain issues for discussion by DC, Members should be ready to offer assistance.

88. Mr FONG Lung-fei enquired whether the Secretariat would screen the contents of petitions and, when the contents were not agreeable with the meeting agenda, whether the persons concerned would be advised to file the petitions at some other time or the petition letters be referred to other departments for follow-up upon receipt.

89. Mr Eric KWOK did not think a petition request form should be prepared by the Secretariat for fear that speech would be restricted. He pointed out that any speech relating to unlawful acts was regulated by the law. He considered it an effective mechanism for referral of petition letters received by DC to relevant departments for follow-up. Petitioners might read out their letters at the meeting and express their views. He proposed that DC allocate several minutes before the start of the meeting for petitioners to express their views, and petitioners who wished to speak should inform the Secretariat in advance.

90. Mr CHOW Yuk-tong did not oppose the proposal of Mr Eric KWOK but was worried that there would be too many petitioners filing petitions and voicing their

views, hence the risk of paralysing the meeting.

91. Mr HO Chun-fai concurred with Mr CHOW Yuk-tong and Mr Eric KWOK. However, he remarked that the order of speaking for petitioners should be arranged by the Chairman or Secretariat according to urgency. He considered it more appropriate to arrange a petition be filed at the next meeting when related agenda item was discussed as the petitioner might observe the meeting to have better understanding of the contents and background of the petition.

92. Mr WONG Chun-yeung was afraid that some petitioners might attend the meeting and submit petition letters without following the normal procedures, although the matters raised were not non-constructive. In view of this, he proposed that a petition request form be drawn up to assist the petitioners expressing their views.

93. Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho said that the discussion had focused on the arrangement details. He reckoned that Members should first focus on whether local groups could request permission to express views when petitioning.

94. Ms WONG Chau-ping concurred with Mr Eric KWOK and Ms Josephine TSANG. In the past, petition letters were submitted before the meetings in a well-organised manner. Any organisation that wished to make a demand would inform Members who would convey the request at the meeting.

95. The Chairman expressed his views as follows:

- (a) He noted that Members hoped more channels would be provided for residents to make their voice heard, but the efficiency of DC should be maintained. At present, organisations were given 10 minutes for submission of petition letter to the Chairman or relevant departments and some organisations, as pointed out by Mr Eric KWOK, only held up banners and chanted slogans after submitting petition letters. He considered the existing arrangement would suffice.
- (b) For speaking up, he opined that if petitioners could speak up at meetings without prior arrangement by DC, the situation might get out of control. It was endorsed just now that the Chairmen of DC and its committees and Convenors of working groups and non-standing working groups had, upon request, the right to invite people to express their opinions, which might make the meeting longer. Therefore, it would be more appropriate if the people wishing to voice their demands approached the relevant Members or the Convenors or Chairmen of relevant working group or committee first, and a voting took place before they were permitted to speak up, instead of requesting to speak up on the spot. Regarding Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho's proposal of allowing organisations submitting petition letters to speak up, he asked Members to vote.

96. The Chairman asked Members to vote by a show of hands.

97. Members voted by a show of hands. There were four voted for, 10 against and three abstaining. The proposed amendment was vetoed.

(Members voted for included Mr FONG Lung-fei, Mr LEE Ka-ho, Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho and Mr WONG Chun-yeung. Members voted against included the Chairman Mr Randy YU, the Vice-Chairman Mr WONG Man-hon, Mr CHOW Yuk-tong, Mr CHAN Lin-wai, Mr Ken WONG, Mr HO Chun-fai, Mr HO Siu-kei, Ms WONG Chau-ping, Ms Josephine TSANG and Ms LAU Shun-ting. Ms Amy YUNG, Mr Eric KWOK and Mr Sammy TSUI abstained.)

98. The Chairman enquired whether Members had other questions concerning the Standing Orders.

99. Mr Ken WONG said that Section 28 of the Standing Orders only stipulated that a member might speak three times without stating the speaking time. It was learnt that a time limit was imposed by other DCs.

100. The Chairman asked Members to discuss the matter.

101. Mr WONG Chun-yeung said that according to Section 28(G) of the Standing Orders, unless with the consent of the Chairman, a member could only ask questions on an issue three times, including presentation of paper, raising supplementary questions and voicing opinions. A member could raise at the meeting not more than three supplementary questions, which had to relate to the contents of the original question. At the urgent meeting convened last time on 17 January for discussion of coronavirus disease, he noticed that many Members spoke more than three times and were reminded of that by the Chairman. He found that owing to inadequate discussion, it had difficulty in reaching a consensus on the three times Members could speak. He proposed that instead of restricting the times for speaking or raising supplementary questions to three, Member raising the question could speak seven times and those seconding or responding could speak five times.

102. Ms Amy YUNG said that a Member giving a presentation on the question raised by him or her was considered speaking once. If the Government departments or the organisations concerned did not respond to the question directly, the Member raising the question would then use the remaining speaking times he or she had to remind them to give a reply and could then speak no more. She opined that the Member raising a question should have more speaking times but seven times were too many and would make the meeting longer. She preferred five times and other Members raising questions in reply should be allowed to speak three times.

103. Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho said restricting the speaking time would make it impossible for Members to express themselves fully and if they could not finish, other people could not understand the content of their speech at all. He did not think there should be a limit on the speaking time.

104. Mr Ken WONG said that the LegCo set the speaking time at three minutes. He agreed with Ms Amy YUNG that with Members presenting a question being

considered speaking once, it would be reasonable to be allowed speaking four times. Many councils now limited the speaking times to two, but he opined that three speaking times each limited to two minutes would be reasonable. In fact it would be meaningless to spend two minutes away reading out a paper in a funny way.

105. Mr WONG Chun-yeung expressed his views as follows:

- (a) He proposed that the speaking time for presenting questions and delivering speeches should be calculated separately from now on.
- (b) He objected to placing a limit on speaking times and opined that Members could exercise self-discipline. On speaking times, speaking five times on livelihood issues should not be considered too many. He invited Mr Ken WONG to join the Urban Council Alliance.

106. Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho expressed his views as follows:

- (a) He hoped that Mr Ken WONG would retract what he said earlier about Members playing jokes.
- (b) He objected to limiting Members' speaking time and that Members speaking up for residents should not be inhibited in terms of amount of time and number of times of speaking, resulting in failure to reflect residents' views.

107. The Chairman reminded a few Members that they had spoken more than three times.

108. Ms Josephine TSANG expressed her views as follows:

- (a) As a district representative, a Member should be clear about the residents' aspirations before the meeting and could therefore make his or her speech concise.
- (b) She agreed with Ms Amy YUNG that the time taken for presenting questions should not be counted and Members should be allowed to speak three times after presentation. She reiterated that Members should be well-prepared beforehand so as to make use of the three speaking times to reflect residents' views clearly. She did not believe that anyone would consider Members making a joke.

109. Ms WONG Chau-ping expressed her views as follows:

- (a) She agreed with Ms Amy YUNG that the time taken for presenting questions should not be counted and that Members should be allowed to speak four times, including the time for presenting paper. She also shared the view of Ms Josephine TSANG.

- (b) Regarding the proposal of Mr Ken WONG for limiting the speaking time to two or three minutes, she supported that Members should keep their speeches concise.

110. Mr Sammy TSUI expressed his views as follows:

- (a) With two meetings convened to date, he noticed that most Members spoke and addressed questions at great length and the three speaking times allowed would not be enough. He understood that some Members were afraid that the meeting would be lengthened if Members spoke too many times, but some issues had to be addressed up to seven times to be clearly understood.
- (b) He proposed extending the limit on the number of speaking times for review a year later. Before taking office, he had received many requests from residents to reflect their views at the meeting and queried whether three speaking times allowed would suffice.

111. Ms Amy YUNG said that the time of Members was very valuable and should not be wasted. She was worried that the limit on speaking time would increase the workload on the Secretariat. She opined that placing a limit on the speaking time of Members was open to question.

112. Mr Ken WONG expressed his views as follows:

- (a) He retracted what he said earlier about Members not serious enough. He just did not understand why the paper was read out once at the meeting as Members had received it before the meeting.
- (b) He expressed interest in accepting the invitation of Mr WONG Chun-yeung to join the Urban Council Alliance.

113. Mr WONG Chun-yeung said that regarding reading out the terms of reference of the working groups and committees at the meeting on 17 January, he was just afraid that there would be problems over grey areas if the wording was incorrect. He said he would not read from scripts in the future to avoid suspicions of filibustering. He objected to limit the speeches to two minutes and believed Members would exercise self-discipline. He expressed objection to the two-minute limit.

114. The Chairman expressed his views as follows:

- (a) Mr Sammy TSUI needed not worry over the number of speaking times. No matter how many times Members were allowed to speak, say five or seven times, the time would probably not be enough. If all 18 Members used up their three speaking times, each time three minutes, the discussion of a topic would take a long time. If the coronavirus disease outbreak required weekly follow up, a working group should be formed. Other topics requiring in-depth discussion could be followed up by

committees, non-standing working groups or more working groups.

- (b) He summarised Members' suggestions with two resolutions: the number of speaking times and amount of speaking time. For the resolution on the number of speaking times, option 1 proposed by Ms Amy YUNG was that Members raising the questions presenting the questions was not counted as making a speech and would be allowed to give speeches three times, whereas option 2 was that Members raising the questions would have seven times giving speeches and other Members five times. The limit on speaking time would be discussed later.

115. The Chairman put option 1 which allowed Members to give speeches three times besides presenting the questions to vote.

116. The Chairman asked Members to vote by a show of hands.

117. There were 13 votes for after voting by a show of hands.

(Members voted in favour included: the Chairman Mr Randy YU, the Vice-chairman Mr WONG Man-hon, Mr CHOW Yuk-tong, Mr CHAN Lin-wai, Mr Ken WONG, Mr HO Chun-fai, Mr HO Siu-kei, Ms WONG Chau-ping, Ms Amy YUNG, Ms Josephine TSANG, Mr Eric KWOK, Ms LAU Shun-ting and Mr LEE Ka-ho.)

118. The Chairman put option 2 which allowed Members raising questions to give speeches seven times and other Members five times to vote.

119. The Chairman asked Members to vote by a show of hands.

120. There were four votes for after voting by a show of hands.

(Members voted in favour included: Mr Sammy TSUI, Mr FONG Lung-fei, Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho and Mr WONG Chun-yeung.)

121. The amended proposal of option 1 was endorsed after voting by a show of hands.

122. The Chairman put the option on the amount of speaking time to vote.

123. The Chairman asked Members to vote by a show of hands.

124. There were nine votes for, seven against and one abstention after voting by a show of hands. The amended proposal was endorsed.

(Members voted in favour included: the Vice-chairman Mr WONG Man-hon, Mr CHOW Yuk-tong, Mr CHAN Lin-wai, Mr Ken WONG, Mr HO Chun-fai, Mr HO Siu-kei, Ms WONG Chau-ping, Ms Josephine TSANG and Ms LAU Shun-ting; Members voted against included: Ms Amy YUNG, Mr Eric KWOK, Mr Sammy TSUI, Mr FONG Lung-fei, Mr LEE Ka-ho, Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho and Mr WONG Chun-yeung; and the Chairman Mr Randy YU abstained.)

125. The Chairman asked Members whether they had other comments on limiting the speaking time to three minutes.

126. Mr Eric KWOK said that to his understanding, the three-minute limit set by LegCo would not give enough time and he suggested four minutes which he believed would not have too much impact on the operation of the council.

127. The Chairman asked Members to vote on placing a three-minute limit on the speaking time.

128. The Chairman asked Members to vote by a show of hands.

129. The proposal got no support after a vote by a show of hands.

130. The Chairman asked Members to vote on placing a four-minute limit on the speaking time.

131. The Chairman asked Members to vote by a show of hands.

132. There were 11 votes for, five against and one abstention after voting by a show of hands. The amended proposal was endorsed.

(Members voted in favour included: the Vice-chairman Mr WONG Man-hon, Mr CHOW Yuk-tong, Mr CHAN Lin-wai, Mr Ken WONG, Mr HO Chun-fai, Mr HO Siu-kei, Ms WONG Chau-ping, Ms Amy YUNG, Ms Josephine TSANG, Mr Eric KWOK and Ms LAU Shun-ting; Members voted against included: Mr Sammy TSUI, Mr FONG Lung-fei, Mr LEE Ka-ho, Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho and Mr WONG Chun-yeung; and the Chairman Mr Randy YU abstained.)

133. The Chairman said that the Chairmen and Vice-chairmen of the District Council and its committees would conduct meetings according to the Standing Orders, and he believed that if Members requested to have more time to discuss a topic, the Chairman would handle the request flexibly. He stressed that the Council had to observe the rules to improve the efficiency of meetings.

134. Mr Sammy TSUI was dissatisfied with the handling procedure. Although voting was taken in a democratic manner, the four-minute limit proposed by Mr Eric KWOK was passed only when there were no other alternatives. The limit on four minutes was illogical as each person spoke three times and each time four minutes, making 12 minutes the total speaking time for each Member on each topic. He had never seen any Members speak at the meeting for three or four minutes continuously. The speaking time limit existed in name only. It would be more desirable to allow Members to speak two more times. If the replies of departmental representatives were not clear enough, Members could enquire further to enhance interactivity. If each person could speak a total of 12 minutes, why not allow them more time to raise questions? He found the voting results disappointing.

135. The Chairman expressed his views as follows:
- (a) He noted Mr Sammy TSUI's views. It was the third time he chaired a meeting and he believed Members would become more accustomed later. He expected that Members would follow the Standing Orders after their formulation as agreed upon by a democratic voting.
 - (b) He agreed to what Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho said and that a review could be conducted two years later. He suggested that the meeting be conducted by roll call and Members could speak in turn for smooth running of the meeting.
136. Mr Eric KWOK said that regarding the query of Mr Sammy TSUI, according to his experience, departmental representatives might not always give a reply on spot, so he proposed setting up a task force to follow up on important issues that could not be responded on spot. Task forces were set up previously for implementation of projects.
137. Mr WONG Chun-yeung said that the voting result was acceptable. If Members could speak three minutes and each time four minutes, each could then speak a total of 12 minutes. Assuming a Member did not use up four minutes each time he spoke, could he or she speak one more time with the remaining minutes?
138. Mr LEE Ka-ho said that he did not object to the amount of speaking time but disagreed to other provisions of the Standing Orders.
139. The Chairman said the Standing Orders provided three times for speaking and Members should think over the content of speech themselves. He believed they could have a good grasp of the technique as time went on.
140. Mr HO Siu-kei agreed to what Mr Eric KWOK said.
141. The Chairman asked whether Mr LEE Ka-ho had any other views about the Standing Orders.
142. Mr LEE Ka-ho said he wanted to discuss the issue of vote by proxy under Section 31(2). The provision stated that any member who was not present but wished to vote could appoint another Member in writing to vote on his or her behalf according to Section 31(1). He opined that it was extremely absurd to authorise another Member to represent him or her when he or she was authorised by members of the public. The proxy would have no idea at all about the issue. He hoped that the provision would be scrapped.
143. The Chairman asked the Members' views over the scrapping of proxy votes.
144. Mr WONG Chun-yeung shared Mr LEE Ka-ho's view and opined that a district council member should manage his time properly and should not appoint a proxy at short notice or in advance to attend the meeting on his or her behalf.

145. Mr FONG Lung-fei also agreed with Mr LEE Ka-ho and said that it would be meaningless if a Member representing members of the public did not attend the meeting and appointed a proxy to vote on his or her behalf.

146. Ms Josephine TSANG shared the view of Mr WONG Chun-yeung and opined that one should not appoint a proxy to attend the meeting and vote on his or her behalf.

147. Mr Ken WONG agreed and said it was not right to appoint a proxy to vote on one's behalf.

148. Mr Eric KWOK supported the scrapping of proxy vote. If the Member moving a motion was not present and just appointed a proxy, the proxy might be unable to respond to other Members' question or explain the motion clearly and then the motion was put to a vote, which would be unfair to all people. He opined that the Member moving the motion had to be present, otherwise the motion should be invalid.

149. Ms WONG Chau-ping agreed with Mr LEE Ka-ho and said that Members should not appoint a proxy when they were absent.

150. Mr FONG Lung-fei raised objection to Section 23 and enquired if a Member moving a motion left early, how the motion would be dealt with

151. Mr Ken WONG expressed his views as follows:

- (a) If the Member proposing a motion was hospitalised, could the seconder act as the proposer?
- (b) He agreed with Mr FONG Lung-fei that a Member should not leave without waiting for the discussion of the motion he proposed except for health reason.
- (c) Regarding Mr Eric KWOK's question as to whether the seconder could act as the proposer, the seconder had to know the content of the motion well.

152. The Chairman said that for a motion being put down in black and white, it would be more appropriate if other Members or the seconder read it out as the proposer, and someone else acted as the seconder. Under such circumstances, there were two options. Section 23 could not be repealed. If the proposer was not present, whether the seconder acted as the proposer depending on any other Members seconded the motion.

153. Mr Eric KWOK said that there were cases where the proposer might need to explain the issue during the discussion and if he or she was unable to attend the meeting for health reason and there was no urgency with the motion, a vote could be taken at the next meeting. He believed the Chairman had discretionary power.

154. Mr WONG Chun-yeung agreed with Mr Eric KWOK. He believed that if the proposer was unable to attend the meeting due to health reason as Mr Ken WONG said earlier, Members would deal with it flexibly. He was concerned that the seconder appointed by the proposer to make a speech on his or her behalf might not fully meet the latter's requirement. He suggested that Section 23 should indicate when a vote should or should not be taken if the proposer was not present.

155. Ms Amy YUNG said that a motion might need to be amended after discussion and asked if the seconder so authorised could represent the proposer to do so.

156. The Chairman said that regarding the passing of an amended motion, the seconder was basically not empowered to make decisions in the absence of the proposer. He suggested that Members could first have a discussion on Section 23 to amend the existing provision "with the consent of the Chairman, the proposer, if absent, can appoint another Member in writing to move the motion on his or her behalf" as "with the consent of the Chairman, the proposer, if absent due to ill health, can appoint another Member in writing to move the motion on his or her behalf". He stressed that a motion would be deferred to a later date unless in the absence of proposer on health ground.

157. Mr Sammy TSUI opined that Members' right should not be curtailed as they might not have time to attend the meeting due to district affairs or other commitments. He disagreed that Members could only be excused due to ill health. He understood that there were concerns over the absence of a proposer but he believed Members would do their best to fulfill their duties and explain clearly to the proxies the contents of the motions for the latter to express opinions and vote on their behalf.

158. Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho said that at the start of the meeting, Members were told by the Chairman that Mr Yung Chi-ming was unable to attend the meeting due to other commitments. He asked whether a record would be made with the reason for absence stated.

159. Mr WONG Chun-yeung proposed that the words "such as unexpected incidents" should be added to "if the proposer is absent due to ill health" in Section 23.

160. The Chairman said that at present Members unable to attend the meetings simply applied for leave. While some Members would specify the reasons such as sickness, no medical proof was required. Due to privacy concerns, Members did not have to specify the reasons for leave.

161. The Chairman asked the Secretary to provide further details on application for absence from DC meetings.

162. The Secretary said that the Chairman understood correctly the application procedures for absence but there was no strict compliance by IDC. Members could refer to Section 51 of the Standing Orders for the procedures of applying for absence from meetings.

163. The Chairman said that there were two proposals for the moment. Mr Sammy TSUI considered amendment to Section 23 of the Standing Orders unnecessary. However, some Members proposed to make amendments and opined that a Member should only be allowed to apply for leave and appoint another Member to move the motion(s) on his or her behalf in case of ill health or accident.

164. Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho enquired of the Secretariat why IDC did not strictly adhere to the procedures for Members to apply for absence under Section 51 of the Standing Orders. As for the provision that a Member would be disqualified from holding office if he or she did not attend DC meetings for four consecutive months, he opined that discretion could only be exercised when the reasons for absence from the meetings were known. For example, Mr YUNG Chi-ming who was absent today due to sickness could appoint another Member to move the motion(s) on his behalf if Section 23 was amended.

165. The Secretary said that the Secretariat would remind the Member after his absence that he had not attended a meeting before the next meeting. As absence from meetings would affect the qualifications of Members, the Chairman would be notified after receipt of applications for absence from Members.

166. The Chairman said that it was clearly set out in Section 51 that a Member applying for absence from DC meetings was required to submit medical proof, and opined that the Member concerned could appoint another Member in writing to move the motion(s) on his or her behalf under such circumstances. He said that application for absence from meetings or appointment of another Member to move the motion(s) on one's behalf for reasons other than ill health or accidents (such as company affairs) would not be accepted. He pointed out that Members were accountable to voters and should notify DC of the reasons for not attending the meetings. In addition, the procedures for Members to apply for absence from meetings had been clearly stated in Section 51.

167. Ms WONG Chau-ping agreed that amendment to Section 23 was unnecessary, but considered it too strict that a Members could only appoint another Member to move the motion(s) on his or her behalf in case of ill health. She said that unexpected incidents occurred in the district very often and as such a Member failed to attend the meeting should be allowed to appoint another Member to move the motions.

168. Mr HO Chun-fai agreed to the views of Mr Sammy TSUI, and pointed out that Members might be unable to attend meetings due to unexpected incidents, attendance of more important meetings and busy handling the problems of villagers or residents. The rule would be too strict if they were deprived of the right to move the motions for such reasons, though he considered depriving absentees of the right to vote acceptable.

169. The Chairman asked Members to vote on the proposal of not amending Section 23 of the Standing Orders by a show of hands. The result was 11 votes in favour and six against. The proposal was endorsed.

(Members voted in favour included: the Chairman Mr Randy YU, the Vice-chairman Mr WONG Man-hon, Mr CHOW Yuk-tong, Mr CHAN Lin-wai, Mr Ken WONG, Mr HO Chun-fai, Mr HO Siu-kei, Ms WONG Chau-ping, Ms Josephine TSANG, Mr Sammy TSUI and Ms LAU Shun-ting; Members voted against included: Ms Amy YUNG, Mr Eric KWOK, Mr FONG Lung-fei, Mr LEE Ka-ho, Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho and Mr WONG Chun-yeung.)

170. The Chairman said that some Members proposed amending Section 31 of the Standing Orders to prevent Members not attending the meeting from appointing in writing another Members to vote on their behalf. He asked Members to vote on the proposal of amendment. The proposal was endorsed unanimously.

171. The Chairman said that the proposed amendment to Section 32 of the Standing Orders so that Members had to vote by open ballot was raised and endorsed unanimously at the DC meeting on 6 January 2020.

172. Mr FONG Lung-fei enquired if all items could be put to a vote by circulation of papers.

173. Mr Eric KWOK said that according to Section 7(5) of the Standing Orders, the Secretary should prepare an annual member attendance register and upload the updated attendance rate to the homepage of DC on a quarterly basis. However, late arrival and early departure of Members were only recorded in the minutes. A number of residents reflected to him last year that some Members achieved nearly 100% attendance in a tricky manner since the time of arrival and departure of the Members were not clearly shown in the minutes unless one read the minutes carefully. He proposed that the Secretariat should specify the time of arrival and departure of Members on the first page of the minutes so that Members attending only part of the meeting would not be regarded as present. In addition, he hoped that amendment could be made to Section 31(3) of the Standing Orders to abolish the Chairman's casting vote if the votes were equal.

174. Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho proposed amending Section 27 of the Standing Orders to change the period for submitting questions to the Secretary from 10 to five clear working days before the date of the meeting. He said that in recent years, Members had to propose items in great haste. Taking the item on the coronavirus disease raised on 10 January 2020 as an example, the number of infected cases and relevant information set out in the papers concerned had been outdated when the item was discussed at the meeting on 17 January, which rendered an effective discussion difficult.

175. Mr WONG Chun-yeung pointed out that as stated in Section 27, a shorter notice might be approved by the Chairman under exceptional circumstances. He enquired what exceptional circumstances were and whether there were precedents.

176. Mr LEE Ka-ho proposed amending Section 30 of the Standing Orders so that a Member who was unable to attend a meeting but wished to ask a question in his or her name could not appoint in writing another Member to do so on his or her behalf. He opined that the Member asking the question should have best understanding of it so

it was inappropriate to follow the approach to moving motions set out in Section 23, except for questions raised jointly with other Members.

177. Mr Eric KWOK was concerned that if the period for raising questions was changed from 10 to five clear working days before the date of the meeting, the Secretariat might not have sufficient time to invite representatives of government departments and organisations to attend the meeting to respond to Members' questions, which might give the representatives a good excuse for refusing to attend the meeting and only providing a written reply, hence affecting the effectiveness of the Council.

178. The Chairman said that Members had proposed voting by circulation of papers, changing the method of recording attendance, abolishing the casting vote of the Chairman and amending Sections 23, 27 and 30. He enquired if Members had any other suggestions.

179. Mr WONG Chun-yeung enquired if examples of the exceptional circumstances under Section 27 could be given to avoid different interpretations.

180. Ms Amy YUNG proposed providing live webcast of meetings of DC and all its committees and working groups as well as detaching the Secretariat from government departments to become independent, with the remuneration of its staff paid by public funds subject to DC's approval. In addition, the Chairman had pointed out that DC meetings would suspend at 6 p.m. as the venue had to be returned. She wished to know what arrangement for the venue had been made by the Secretariat to avoid voting in a rush when some items were not yet fully discussed due to limited time. She enquired whether a follow-up meeting would be convened for discussion of the outstanding items.

181. The Chairman opined that the three proposals of Ms Amy YUNG were worth discussing but there was no relevant provisions in the Standing Orders. Members should ask questions about live webcast of the meetings and enquire of relevant government departments the feasibility of the proposal and resources available as well as other Members' views on it. He considered the proposal of detaching the Secretariat from government departments beyond the existing mechanism so Members should ask questions at the meetings for relevant departments to respond. As for the venue, the meeting convened on 17 January 2020 was a special meeting and the meeting venue had to be returned to the Central and Western DC Secretariat by 1 p.m. that day. He had earlier proposed advancing the starting time of future meetings to 10:30 a.m. to extend the duration. But in this case, the meeting would be conducted without air-conditioning. Regarding adjournment and follow-up meeting arrangement, he said that it depended on the mental condition of Members and voting result. He opined that the two proposals should not be discussed under this item but could be raised at future meetings, and that the issue concerning venue could definitely be resolved.

182. Mr LEE Ka-ho enquired whether amendment could be made to Section 7(4) of the Standing Orders so that the Secretariat should provide live webcast instead of audio recording of the meetings, and whether the proposed amendment could be dealt with under this item.

183. The Chairman said that Members, despite their different political views, were very concerned about the workload of the Secretariat. He opined that with the resources and staffing available, it would be difficult for the Secretariat to provide live webcast of the proceedings of meetings. It would also be unfair to the staff of the Secretariat if the proposal was endorsed through amendments to the Standing Orders. As such, he hoped that Members could ask questions and request relevant policy bureaux to respond whether resources would be allocated for live webcast of DC meetings. As for amendment to Section 27, which was changing the deadline for Members to raise questions from 10 to five clear working days before the date of the meeting, he opined that government departments were used to the practice of 10 clear working days' notice. If the deadline was changed to five clear working days before the date of the meeting, he was concerned that more departments would provide only written reply, thus eroding the interactivity of the meeting.

184. Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho said that the proposed amendment only involved deadline extension in emergencies. He agreed that amending the section would mean increasing difficulty for arranging relevant government departments and organisations to attend the meetings, but opined that most questions submitted right before the deadline were urgent ones which should be accorded priority. Therefore, the point should be how the questions would be handled but not the length of submission period.

185. Mr Eric KWOK said that the setting a deadline was to enable the Secretariat to decide which departments should be invited to attend the meeting to give response after receiving questions from Members. He opined that relevant departments would have an excuse for not attending the meeting if the deadline was set at five clear working days in advance.

186. Mr WONG Chun-yeung hoped that the Chairman could clarify the exceptional circumstances under Section 27 so that Members would have an idea under what circumstances they could raise questions at a shorter notice.

187. Ms Amy YUNG said that some veteran Members had pointed out that the Secretariat and government departments had to prepare for the questions received so she thought Section 27 should not be amended. She said that it was difficult to set down all exceptional circumstances but opined that the Chairman could exercise discretion as necessary, such as allowing a three-day notice for submission of papers regarding urgent matters including the coronavirus disease for discussion at the meeting. She proposed that in the event of exceptional circumstances in future, Members should submit questions in writing first. The Chairman would then decide whether the questions should be accepted.

188. Mr Sammy TSUI enquired if the notice period of 10 clear working days was applicable to regular meetings, and whether a special meeting could be convened at the request of a specific number of Members in the event of exceptional circumstances (such as flooding).

189. Mr Ken WONG agreed that the Chairman could allow Members to raise

questions at short notice in emergencies. Members who would like to raise questions at regular meetings should submit the questions to the Secretariat 10 clear working days before the date of the meeting.

190. Ms WONG Chau-ping agreed to maintain the arrangement of submitting questions to the Secretariat 10 clear working days before the date of the meeting to allow sufficient time for the Secretariat and relevant departments to process the questions.

191. The Chairman expressed his views as follows:

- (a) In response to the question of Mr Sammy TSUI, the Chairman should convene a DC meeting at least once every two months or where a request for a meeting was received from half or more than half of the Members according to Section 8 of the Standing Orders. If the request was made by less than half of the Members, the responsibility to convene a meeting would rest with the Chairman. He supplemented that in addition to the 18 DC Members, a number of Secretariat staff providing service were involved whenever a meeting was convened. Therefore, factors including the venue and staffing had to be taken into consideration.
- (b) As for the question of Mr WONG Chun-yeung on the exceptional circumstances, he thanked the veteran Members for giving response, and said that in the event of exceptional circumstances (such as coronavirus disease outbreak or passage of typhoon which seriously affected the residents), Members could rest assured that he would allow submission of relevant questions for discussion at the meeting even one day in advance, convene emergency meetings as necessary and arrange inter-departmental operations to handle urgent situations related to people's livelihood.

192. Mr WONG Chun-yeung noted that the Chairman would not reject certain items for discussion at the meetings due to personal reasons. To avoid misunderstanding, he gave an example of an incident in which residents of Tung Chung had to return home by Discovery Bay ferries due to traffic congestion bringing Tsing Ma Bridge to a standstill a few years ago. Assuming that a traffic accident occurred after a vessel crashed into Tsing Ma Bridge and the entire bridge was shut down, he enquired of the Chairman whether Members could submit questions and papers to the Secretary and notify other Members just one or two clear working days before the meeting, and call an emergency meeting for the incident.

193. The Chairman responded as follows:

- (a) As far as he could recall, a similar incident occurred less than 10 clear days of the meeting and the item concerned was included for discussion at the meeting. He said that an emergency meeting must be convened if Tsing Ma Bridge collapsed. But in the event of an isolated traffic accident, discussion at the next meeting and inviting relevant

departments to attend and give response would suffice. He emphasised that decision would be made having regard to the actual situation. While emergency meetings would be convened as necessary, an item could be discussed at the next meeting if it was not urgent or there was time before the next meeting.

- (b) He asked Members to vote by a show of hands on the proposal of amending Section 27, which allowed Members to submit questions to the Secretary five clear working days before the date of the meeting. The result was four votes in favour, 12 against and one abstained. The proposal was not endorsed.

(Members voted in favour included: Mr FONG Lung-fei, Mr LEE Ka-ho, Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho and Mr WONG Chun-yeung; Members voted against included: the Chairman Mr Randy YU, the Vice-chairman Mr WONG Man-hon, Mr CHOW Yuk-tong, Mr CHAN Lin-wai, Mr Ken WONG, Mr HO Chun-fai, Mr HO Siu-kei, Ms WONG Chau-ping, Ms Amy YUNG, Ms Josephine TSANG, Mr Eric KWOK and Ms LAU Shun-ting; Mr Sammy TSUI abstained.)

- (c) As for endorsement by circulation of papers, he said that some papers would be distributed to Members the day after meeting. Given that a DC meeting was convened once every two months, if Members received the circulation papers the day after meeting, the matters would only be discussed at the meeting held two months later. According to Section 8 of the Standing Orders, a meeting could be convened for discussion of important matters if it was requested by half or more than half of the Members. He enquired if Members had any views on the endorsement by circulation of papers.

194. Mr FONG Lung-fei enquired whether it was inappropriate to consider options and give comments by circulation of papers if fund allocation was involved, and opined that decisions should not be made in a rush by circulation of papers.

195. Mr Eric KWOK said that some matters involving large-scale works were processed urgently by circulation of papers without full discussion. As large-scale works involved a considerable amount of allocation, he opined that they should either be endorsed unanimously or by way of an absolute majority of votes by 18 Members to ensure fairness.

196. The Chairman expressed his views as follows:

- (a) According to Section 47(2) of the Standing Orders, in the case of an application for financial subsidy, or any other matters associated with the DC Funds, approval obtained by circulation of papers must be received from not less than two-thirds of the Members of the Council or the relevant committee, excluding those who had abstained from expressing views on the matter in writing. Members could rest assured that that

prudent decisions would be made on matters associated with fund allocation.

- (b) He said that Members could jointly request in writing to convene a meeting for relevant matters where necessary, such as after the passage of typhoon for discussion of an allocation of \$1 million for repair of damaged road sections. Members could rest assured that approval for funding applications was granted after detailed discussion at the meetings of the Community Affairs, Culture and Recreation Committee and District Facilities Management Committee.

197. Mr Sammy TSUI agreed that endorsement by circulation of papers was essential but a flexible approach should be adopted. Members should have the right to oppose rushing to decisions by circulation of papers.

198. The Chairman expressed his views as follows:

- (a) He asked Members to vote on the proposal of deleting or amending the section on endorsement by circulation of papers by a show of hands. The result was four votes in favour, 11 against and one abstained. The proposal was not endorsed.

(Members voted in favour included: Mr FONG Lung-fei, Mr LEE Ka-ho, Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho and Mr WONG Chun-yeung; Members voted against included: the Chairman Mr Randy YU, the Vice-chairman Mr WONG Man-hon, Mr CHOW Yuk-tong, Mr CHAN Lin-wai, Mr Ken WONG, Mr HO Siu-kei, Ms WONG Chau-ping, Ms Amy YUNG, Ms Josephine TSANG, Mr Sammy TSUI and Ms LAU Shun-ting; Mr Eric KWOK abstained.)

- (b) As for the issue of attendance, he said that it was stipulated that the attendance rate of Members should be uploaded to the homepage. He asked Members, if they had no other comments, to vote by a show of hands on taking down the time of arrival and departure of Members on the first page of the minutes as suggested by Mr Eric KWOK. There were no other comments and the proposal was endorsed unanimously.

199. The Secretary said that the time of arrival and departure of Members was entered in all previous minutes and enquired if it had to be shown on the first page separately.

200. Mr Anthony LI proposed that the Secretariat should only specify on the first page the time of arrival and departure of Members who arrived late or left early, and the time of arrival and departure of Members present for the entire meeting would not be recorded.

201. The Chairman expressed his views as follows:

- (a) He agreed to specify the time of arrival and departure of Members who arrived late or left early on the first page of the minutes.
- (b) Regarding the proposed abolishment of the casting vote of the Chairman, according to the District Councils Ordinance, the Chairman had a casting vote if the votes were equal, which had never happened in IDC to his understanding. In addition, he pointed out that the Chairman of LegCo usually presided meetings in an impartial and fair manner. The stipulation was laid down in the District Councils Ordinance and not subjected to casual change. However, he promised to avoid using his casting vote as far as practicable.
- (c) In response to Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho's questions on Sections 23 to 30 of the Standing Orders, he said that it was endorsed just now that a Member could appoint another Member to move motions but not vote on his or her behalf, and Section 30 stated that a Member who was unable to attend a meeting but wished to ask a question or make a statement in his or her name might appoint in writing another member to do so on his or her behalf with the approval of the Chairman.

202. Mr LEE Ka-ho said that as he mentioned during the discussion on amending Section 23 of the Standing Orders, the seconder(s) should be clear about the content of the motion. Section 30 related to statements and questions raised and the member drafting a question should have the best understanding of it. The member appointed to ask the question could neither make additions nor ask relevant departmental representatives follow-up questions. He was concerned that other problems would crop up and proposed amending Section 30. He opined that if the member concerned could not attend the meeting, the question could be raised at the next meeting, so the way that questions were handled should be different from that of motions.

203. Ms LAU Shun-ting said that she had asked questions on behalf of a then member at a meeting and pointed out that the appointed member should fully understand the question.

204. Ms Amy YUNG expressed her views as follows:

- (a) She agreed with Mr LEE Ka-ho, and pointed out that the objective of holding a meeting was to discuss the questions in an interactive manner. She questioned if the appointed member and the member raising the question would interpret in the same way the comments or information provided by other members.
- (b) She disagreed with the views of Ms LAU Shun-ting. Although the appointed member might have understood the question before asking, the problems would arise as Mr LEE Ka-ho said if other members expressed views or the officials gave response at the meeting.

205. Mr Sammy TSUI said that the practice of allowing a member not attending the meeting to appoint another member to ask a question or make statements on his or her behalf would provide certain flexibility for members. If the section was removed, the member concerned could only ask the question at the next meeting (i.e. two months later), and the problems might have been tackled by then or not be effectively addressed so he considered it necessary to retain Section 30. If a member was, for example, handling a traffic accident and could not attend the meeting, he or she should appoint another member to ask the question on his or her behalf, and after obtaining preliminary response from departmental representatives, the member could take follow-up actions. Otherwise, the matters would be pending until the meeting held two months later.

206. Mr FONG Lung-fei said that if he was appointed by Mr Eric KWOK to ask a question on his behalf, he could not guarantee having a full understanding of the question even if his constituency was adjacent to that of Mr Eric KWOK. Therefore, he agreed with Mr LEE Ka-ho that the appointed member might be unable to express clearly the original meaning of the question.

207. Ms WONG Chau-ping agreed with the views of Mr Sammy TSUI, and opined that the member being appointed to move a motion should bear some responsibility while the absent member should ensure the member appointed were well informed for moving the motion.

208. The Chairman reiterated that the discussion on Section 23 of the Standing Orders had been completed. Members should discuss matters regarding raising questions and making statements under Section 30.

209. Ms WONG Chau-ping agreed that a member absent from a meeting could appoint another member to ask the question on his or her behalf under exceptional circumstances.

210. Mr Ken WONG opined that Section 30 should be retained and proposed that the Secretariat should enquire of the members who could not attend the meeting whether they preferred leaving the questions to the next meeting or appointing another member to ask the questions on their behalf. He opined that the absent members should take the responsibility if the questions were not left in good hands. However, it would be unfair if members were not allowed to ask questions on behalf of the absentees as the matters concerned might become outdated when the questions were discussed at the next meeting.

211. Mr Eric KWOK expressed his views as follows:

- (a) In case of emergency, the member could raise the question to the relevant officials and departments directly to address the matter in time if he or she could not attend the meeting, instead of leaving it for discussion at the meeting.
- (b) He opined that the member who had raised the question had the obligation to attend relevant meetings. Absence from the meetings was

disrespect for the Council and officials who were present. He said that members should understand the problems in their constituency the most. If the appointed member asked the question without a thorough understanding of its content, confusion would be caused when the question was put to representatives of relevant departments or organisations at the meeting. He understood the purposes of appointing another member to ask the questions on behalf of the absentees but opined that it would be counter-productive if the questions were not left in good hands so care should be exercised.

- (c) He did not budge about repealing Section 30, since members should ask questions and make statements themselves.

212. Mr HO Chun-fai supported retaining Section 30. He said that if a member could not attend the meeting after submitting a motion which required urgent attention, he or she should appoint another member to move the motion on his or her behalf. If the matter was not urgent, the member could leave it to the next meeting. He believed this would allow more flexibility.

213. Mr WONG Chun-yeung proposed to specify in Section 23 that a motion could only be put to a vote after discussion to avoid a voting being taken immediately after the motion was moved by the appointed member.

214. The Chairman asked the Secretariat to put the views of Mr WONG Chun-yeung on record and said that the final round of discussion on amending the Standing Orders (including Section 23) would be conducted.

215. Ms Josephine TSANG reminded Mr HO Chun-fai that the current discussion was on matters regarding statements and questions under Section 30 but not motions. She considered it necessary to amend Section 30 and supported the proposal of Mr WONG Chun-yeung.

216. Mr FONG Lung-fei said that he had attended a meeting of the last term IDC, at which a member left early and appointed another member to ask a question on his or her behalf. Unfortunately, the appointed member could not explain the question to the members present, rendering the question meaningless.

217. The Chairman expressed his views as follows:

- (a) He opined that thorough discussion had been conducted on the item and asked Members to vote on the proposals by a show of hands.
- (b) He asked Members to vote by a show of hands on the proposed amendment to Section 30 raised by Mr FONG Lung-fei and Mr LEE Ka-ho that members who could not attend the meeting were not allowed to appoint another member to ask questions and make statements on their behalf. The result was five votes in favour and 10 against. The proposal was not endorsed.

(Members voted in favour included: Ms Amy YUNG, Mr Eric KWOK, Mr FONG Lung-fei, Mr LEE Ka-ho and Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho; Members voted against included: the Chairman Mr Randy YU, the Vice-chairman Mr WONG Man-hon, Mr CHOW Yuk-tong, Mr CHAN Lin-wai, Mr Ken WONG, Mr HO Chun-fai, Mr HO Siu-kei, Ms WONG Chau-ping, Mr Sammy TSUI and Ms LAU Shun-ting.)

- (c) As for the proposed amendment to Section 23 raised by Mr WONG Chun-yeung that a vote could only be taken on a motion moved by the appointed member after thorough discussion, he said that Members could move any motions for discussion and make amendments to the motions. A vote would generally be taken after thorough discussion. He enquired if Members agreed to amend Section 23 so that a vote could only be taken on a motion after thorough discussion. He asked Members to express views on the proposal and if none, vote by a show of hands. The result was five votes in favour and 11 against. The proposal was not endorsed.

(Members voted in favour included: Ms Amy YUNG, Mr Eric KWOK, Mr FONG Lung-fei, Mr LEE Ka-ho and Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho; Members voted against included: the Chairman Mr Randy YU, the Vice-chairman Mr WONG Man-hon, Mr CHOW Yuk-tong, Mr CHAN Lin-wai, Mr Ken WONG, Mr HO Chun-fai, Mr HO Siu-kei, Ms WONG Chau-ping, Ms Josephine TSANG, Mr Sammy TSUI and Ms LAU Shun-ting.)

- (d) He said that discussion on the item about amending the Standing Orders had been completed unless other important matters were raised. Members were welcome to give comments if they had any one to two years later.

II. Proposed Schedule for Islands District Council meetings in 2020 (Paper IDC 13/2020)

218. The Chairman asked Members to consider endorsing the proposed schedule for meetings set out in the paper and a vote was taken on it by a show of hands.

219. Members endorsed the proposed schedule for meetings set out in the paper unanimously.

III. Date of Next Meeting

220. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m. The next meeting would be held on 17 February 2020 (Monday) at 10:30 a.m.

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