

Standing Committee on Policy and Resources



THE
LAW SOCIETY
OF HONG KONG
香港律師會

2019

The Standing Committee on Policy and Resources is responsible for overseeing the finance and administration of The Law Society, as well as formulating policy strategies for consideration by the Council.

During the year, the Standing Committee convened on 11 occasions. It reviewed and monitored the annual budget, income and expenditure as well as the registration and compliance statistics of The Law Society. It also oversaw the human resources and personnel aspects of The Law Society including staff employment matters and salary review. The Standing Committee also considered matters relating to applications for funding of projects undertaken by The Law Society, nominations of representatives on external organisations, invitations to sponsor or support events and functions organised by external organisations and the selection of service providers for The Law Society. The Standing Committee also made recommendations on the composition and chairmanship of other Standing Committees for the Council’s consideration and on amendments to the Standing Orders in relation to appointment and attendance record. The Standing Committee also monitored the progress of the revamp of the Law Society’s membership database system and website and trademark registration in Mainland China.

HONG KONG LAWYER EDITORIAL BOARD

The Law Society publishes a monthly journal, *Hong Kong Lawyer*, which contains analysis of recent law and legal practice-specific advice, with priority given to matters affecting legal practitioners in Hong Kong.

Members of the *Hong Kong Lawyer* Editorial Board (“the Editorial Board”) meet at least once a month to discuss and identify topics of interest to the profession. The Editorial Board has continued to work closely with the publisher of *Hong Kong Lawyer* (“the Journal”) to monitor the overall quality and standard of the publication and the official website.

With the digital version of *Hong Kong Lawyer* available on both the Law Society App and the Hong Kong Lawyer website, members as well as other legal professionals can read it online via a computer, smart phone, tablet or other mobile device. Not only does it contain the same content as the print journal, it also contains additional insights, legal news and articles that are exclusive online. The online version is also searchable with hyperlinked sources. The e-Journal thus provides a good source of reference for research purposes. Individual stories (or the entire journal) can also be conveniently shared via social media and email.

Given the upward trend of digital reading, the online readership of the Journal has been steadily increasing. From November 2018 onwards, The Law Society ceased distributing print copies to our members residing outside Hong Kong and individual members of the

Hong Kong Bar Association. Instead, they are notified of the journal's publication by email every month with the provision of a link to the online version.

The print copies of the Journal are distributed to members of The Law Society with local addresses, judges, government departments, law related organisations, as well as China/overseas law societies/barrister associations. It is also available at the major airport lounges in Hong Kong to reach out to international readers so that they may have better understanding of the legal environment in Hong Kong.

WORKING PARTY ON THE LAW SOCIETY IT SYSTEMS

This year, the Working Party continued to monitor the contractor appointment process for The Law Society's project ("Revamp Project") to revamp the Membership Database System and Website System; and to make recommendations to the Standing Committee on Policy & Resources ("SCPR") in this regard. The Revamp Project aims, inter alia, to include new features in a revamped system with enhanced functionalities and user-friendliness to better meet with The Law Society's operational needs and improve operational performance. It is also hoped that the new system will improve members' experience in using The Law Society services.

Members of the Working Party made recommendations on the choice of contractors to the SCPR for consideration and assisted in the contractual negotiation process with various shortlisted vendors including reviewing the contents of the contract prepared by the Law Society's external advisors and the counter-proposed amendments by shortlisted vendors.

The Working Party will continue to assist in the contractor appointment process in 2020 and monitor the project development after the contractor appointment.

WORKING PARTY ON REVIEW OF THE LAW SOCIETY'S MEMORANDUM AND ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION

The Working Party was tasked by the Council to review and update the Memorandum and Articles of Association ("M&A") of The Law Society.

The review and updating exercise involved various aspects, including to modernise The Law Society's existing M&A so as to align it with the requirements of the new *Companies Ordinance*, Cap. 622, to streamline it to increase the administrative efficacy of the Law Society; and to remove identified anomalies in the existing provisions.

Members met and exchanged views by email circulation throughout the year to continue the effort in the review exercise. Among other things, they reviewed the proposed

amendments to The Law Society's M&A article-by-article and the legal advice obtained from The Law Society's external legal advisor. The Working Party has completed the review work and submitted the draft new Articles of Association ("draft new AA") of the Law Society and the draft consultation documents for the Council's consideration. With the Council's endorsement, a 90-day consultation was conducted on 30 September to solicit views from solicitor members, trainee solicitors and registered foreign lawyers on the draft new AA.

The 90-day consultation ended on 31 December. As further tasked by the Council, the Working Party will continue its effort in 2020 to consider the responses received from the consultation with a view to make further recommendations to the Council.