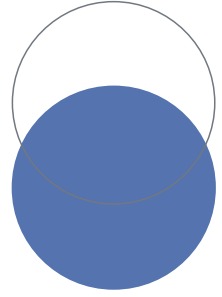


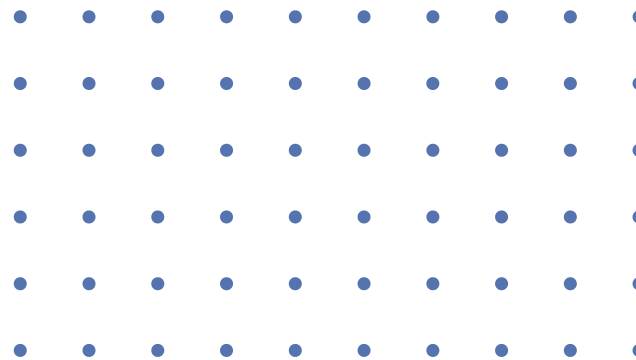


THE
LAW SOCIETY
OF HONG KONG
香港律師會



2023

Standing Committee on Policy and Resources



STANDING COMMITTEE ON POLICY AND RESOURCES



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 seven 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, staff medical insurance and salary reviews.

In addition, the Standing Committee considered matters relating to nominations of representatives to external organisations, invitations to sponsor or support events and functions organised by external organisations, unclaimed money in client accounts, and the arrangements for claims status under section 25 of the *Legal Practitioners Ordinance* (Cap.159). Further, the Standing Committee reviewed the initiative of organising a ceremony for solicitors admitted from 2022 to 2023, proposed amendments to the young lawyer sponsorship guidelines and application form, the practice of intellectual property agents, law verification in the Greater Bay Area, signing of Memoranda of Understanding with external organisations, the extension of the Pilot Sit-In Programme for members of the Young Solicitors Group, cyber security issues, updates to the overseas travel policy, conflict of interest policy matters, the publication format of The Law Society's official journal *Hong Kong Lawyer*, as well as the Professional Indemnity Scheme. The Standing Committee made recommendations on the composition and chairmanship of other Standing Committees for the Council's consideration. The Standing Committee also reviewed memberships of committees and working parties under it.

HONG KONG LAWYER EDITORIAL BOARD

The Law Society publishes a monthly journal, *Hong Kong Lawyer* ("the Journal"), which contains analysis of recent law and legal practice-specific advice, with priority given to matters affecting legal practitioners in Hong Kong. In line with the emerging global trend of digital publication, the Journal has published in a digital-only version since 2021. The digital Journal is published monthly and available in both the Law Society App and the official *Hong Kong Lawyer* website. Members as well as other legal professionals can read the digital Journal online via computer, smart phone, tablet or other mobile devices. The digital Journal is also hyperlinked to internal and external references which are easily accessible and therefore also serves as a good source of reference and research materials. Individual stories (or the entire digital Journal) can be conveniently shared via social media and email. Readers may subscribe to the free E-newsletter offered by the publisher to be kept posted on the release of the latest issues of the digital Journal.

Members of the *Hong Kong Lawyer* Editorial Board meet at least once a month to discuss and identify topics of interest to the profession. The Editorial Board, comprising members from private practice, government agencies, in-house and the academia, many of whom possess a wealth of knowledge and experience in IT, journalism and linguistics, works closely with the publisher of the Journal to monitor the overall quality and standard of the publication and the official *Hong Kong Lawyer* website.

WORKING PARTY ON CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The Standing Committee set up the Working Party on Conflict of Interest in December to review issues relating to conflict of interest between a Council member's professional interests and his or her role as a Council member and to formulate a policy for consideration by the Standing Committee.

The Working Party held one meeting during the year. It settled the relevant instructions to counsel, reviewed the legal advice and submitted an interim report on specific issues to the Council. It will proceed to work on formulating a policy on the basis of the legal advice.

WORKING PARTY ON LAW SOCIETY PREMISES

The Working Party on Law Society Premises had one meeting during the year.

The Working Party reviewed the office space requirement of The Law Society and considered various options to meet the needs. Discussion will continue and recommendations will be submitted to the Standing Committee for consideration in due course.

WORKING PARTY ON THE LAW SOCIETY IT SYSTEMS

The Working Party on The Law Society IT Systems has overseen the development of the Membership Database System and Website System Revamp Project ("Revamp Project") since 2020. The new Website and Membership Database System were successfully launched in July 2021 and July 2023 respectively.

With a view to improving members' experience, the Working Party reviewed and guided the implementation of new online forms to replace paper applications forms. A new payment gateway with Visa/Master, FPS and UnionPay for course enrolment had been deployed. The payment gateway will be extended to other online forms or applications with payment in the near future.

With the support and recommendations from the Working Party, The Law Society replaced the hardware storage of our Document Management System and also enhanced the security of our Wi-Fi network. The Law Society implemented additional security measurement to ensure comprehensive protection of our organisation’s data against malware and cybersecurity threats.

The Revamp Project and the various system upgrades will help streamline work, improve the operational efficiency of the Secretariat and increase the stability and robustness of the IT systems for the benefit of all concerned, including internal users, general members and members of the public.

The Working Party will continue to keep the Law Society IT Systems under review.

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, which involved various aspects, aimed at modernising The Law Society’s existing M&A so as to align it with the requirements of the new Companies Ordinance (Cap.622), streamlining the M&A to increase the administrative efficacy of The Law Society, and removing identified anomalies in the existing provisions.

The original review exercise of the draft new Articles of Association (“AA”) in place of the existing M&A under section 105(2) of the Companies Ordinance was completed in 2019 and The Law Society obtained the written approval of the Registrar of Companies for adoption in 2020. Pending improvement to the public health condition between 2020 to 2022 when a general meeting of members of The Law Society could be convened to consider the adoption of the draft new AA, some new issues had arisen. The Council invited the Working Party to review those new issues and consider further changes to the draft new AA. The Working Party has been working towards introducing those new changes when the meeting is convened.

WORKING PARTY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

With the growing significance of social media in this era of big data, most people tend to receive and share information through various platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube. To facilitate interactive and instant communication with our members and the general public, The Law Society launched official social media accounts (on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube) on 8 April 2022 (the 115th birthday of The Law Society). These accounts serve as accessible and interactive communication channels for members and the general public.

Our social media platforms publish a wide variety of contents, including news of The Law Society, promotion of member and community events, post-event highlights, announcements from the Judiciary, member benefits, professional support, highlights from *Hong Kong Lawyer*, pro bono programmes, and legal educational content. We utilise various visual formats such as photos, short videos, animated graphics and infographics to engage and connect with our target audiences.

The number of followers and visitors on all social media platforms has steadily increased. As of 31 December 2023, we had 2,535 followers on Facebook, 1,280 followers on Instagram, 5,015 followers on LinkedIn, and 373 subscribers on YouTube. In 2023, we reached 94,847 unique visitors on Facebook, 12,611 unique visitors on Instagram and 5,013 unique visitors on LinkedIn, and accumulated 15,635 views on YouTube.

The Working Party on Social Media was formed in 2022 to oversee social media strategies and contents. It makes recommendations on planning, creation and implementation of contents on various social media platforms, with a view to improving the performance of platforms, enhancing posts engagement and reaching out to more followers and visitors.