

DIGITAL 21 STRATEGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**Minutes of the Meeting held
on 29 April 2010 at 2:30 p.m.
in Conference Room, Murray Building**

Present

Mrs Rita Lau, JP	Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Chairman)
Mr Gregory So, JP	Under Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development
Miss Elizabeth Tse, JP	Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Communications and Technology)
Mr Jeremy Godfrey	Government Chief Information Officer
Mr Y K Ha	Director-General of Telecommunications (Acting)
Miss Janet Wong, JP	Commissioner for Innovation and Technology
Prof David Cheung	Member
Mr John Chiu	Member
Dr Chih-lin I	Member
Mr Herman Lam	Member
Mr Sunny Lee	Member
Mr Joe Locandro	Member
Prof Helen Meng	Member
Mr Charles Mok	Member
Mr Daniel Ng	Member
Mr Edward Nicol	Member
Dr Elizabeth Quat	Member
Mr Eli Sinyak	Member
Dr Hon Samson Tam, JP	Member
Dr Winnie Tang	Member
Prof Wong Kam-fai	Member
Mr Peter Yeung	Member

In attendance

Mr Bassanio So	Deputy Government Chief Information Officer (Policy and Customer Service)
Mr Stephen Mak, JP	Deputy Government Chief Information Officer (Consulting and Operations)
Mr Kenneth Cheng	Assistant Government Chief Information Officer (E-government Service Delivery)
Mr David Leung	Senior Administrative Officer (E-government Service Delivery), OGCIO (Secretary)
Mr KW Chan	Manager (Digital Economy Facilitation), OGCIO
Dr M W Chan	Vice President (Projects and Facilities), Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation
Mr Patrick Siu	Senior Development Manager, Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation
Mr Christopher Lau	Assistant Secretary (Energy)2, Environment Bureau

Absent with apologies

Ms Christine Fang, JP	Member
Ms Anna Lin	Member
Prof Vincent Shen	Member

The Chairman welcomed Members to the meeting and introduced Miss Elizabeth Tse, the new Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Communications and Technology), and Mr Y K Ha, Acting Director-General of Telecommunications.

Agenda Item I: Confirmation of Minutes

2. The draft minutes of the 17th D21SAC meeting held on 10 December 2009 were confirmed. **The Chairman** advised that a new format was adopted for the minutes of the last meeting and would continue to be adopted for future meetings. Under the new format, the minutes would record the gist of discussions and conclusions instead of “who said what”. The new format of the minutes would be uploaded to the Digital 21 website to enhance transparency. Members agreed with the new approach.

Agenda Item II: Briefing on the Use of the Trial Paper-less Meeting Solution

3. **The Chairman** advised that, as decided in the last meeting, the meeting would adopt the “paper-less” solution. **The Secretary** gave a brief demonstration on the use of the trial paper-less meeting solution.

4. **The Chairman** requested that, due to security concerns, Members should refrain from plugging into the LAN with their own devices. USB flash drives would be provided to Members who wanted to offload relevant files for subsequent use.

Agenda Item III: Development of Data Centres in Hong Kong

5. **The Chairman** welcomed representatives from the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTP) for this agenda item - Dr M W Chan, Vice President (Projects and Facilities), and Mr Patrick Siu, Senior Development Manager.

6. **Mr Jeremy Godfrey** said that government policy was to attract large-scale next generation data centres to Hong Kong. Hong Kong was a very attractive location to set up data centres, but land availability was an issue. He reminded Members to declare any conflict of interest on this topic as appropriate.

7. **Mr KW Chan** gave a presentation on data centre development (the presentation slides are attached at the **Annex A**). **Dr M W Chan** and **Mr Patrick Siu** of HKSTP gave a presentation on how HKSTP provided support to the industry (the presentation slides are attached at the **Annex B**).

8. **Members** noted that the Government had been promoting Hong Kong as a regional data centre hub. Government would conduct a study to assess the wider economic benefits that data centres might bring to Hong Kong, and the needs and forms of measures to facilitate the development should the first stage of the study conclude that there would be significant benefits.

9. **Members** made the following comments and suggestions:

- (a) This initiative should be expedited. There should be a roadmap showing the target timeline for the study.
- (b) The Government should understand the industry requirements, international standards, business requirements etc, when developing a policy on data centres.
- (c) The study should cover various aspects including power supply, telecommunications, accessibility, submarine cables, etc.
- (d) In order to sustain Hong Kong's competitiveness, the study should cover not just Hong Kong, but the strengths and weaknesses of other locations as well.

10. In response to Members' enquiries, Government officials said that:

- (a) The study would look into the catalytic effect of data centres, not just the direct economic benefits.

- (b) Experts in this area would be consulted. At this stage, the focus was not on the challenges in establishing data centres. Instead, we would study how strong the case would be for the Government to take more actions to help pursue this initiative.
- (c) Hong Kong's major challenge was in availability of sites that would meet international standards. Otherwise, Hong Kong was an attractive location due to rule of law and freedom of speech. Another attractive aspect was the possibility of serving Mainland clients.

11. **The Chairman** advised that the Government would take into account Members' comments when performing the study.

Agenda Item IV: Development of a Mobile Platform for the Next Generation of Online Public Services

12. **Mr Kenneth Cheng** made a presentation on the topic (the presentation slides are attached at the **Annex C**) and advised that comments of the Task Force on E-government Service Delivery had been incorporated where appropriate.

13. **Dr Winnie Tang** declared interest that she was working for a Geographic Information System (GIS) company which provided mapping software for the Lands Department (LandsD).

14. **Members** supported the initiative and made the following comments and suggestions:

- (a) Developing and strengthening mobile services under the GovHK umbrella was supported.
- (b) A joined-up approach was supported because it would achieve economies of scale.

- (c) Government should adopt a progressive approach and might begin by providing more information with mobile devices. Transactional capability (e.g. online booking of sports facilities) is important, but could be done at a later stage.
- (d) Data ownership should rest with the relevant business department.
- (e) Government should lay down a policy direction on whether the Government would provide a payment gateway or rely on third parties.
- (f) Instead of developing front-end applications, the Government should consider utilizing existing services available in the market. This would not only help the Government reach the public, but also benefit third parties, e.g. the commercial sector.
- (g) The Government should provide the industry with legal and technology standards, and Government could consider whether it should do so on a free-of-charge basis or not.
- (h) Supporting every mobile device and every type of browser would be impractical. Instead, the Government should focus on the most popular devices.
- (i) The Government should consider including location-based traffic information in the first release of the service. As LandsD already provided the geospatial information hub and services (GIHS) to serve government departments internally, OGCIO should collaborate with LandsD, add traffic information onto the GIHS and share it with the public.
- (j) OGCIO should give more guidance to other bureaux/departments (B/Ds).

15. In response to some of Members' comments, Government officials replied that:

- (a) OGCIO would be happy to support other B/Ds on this initiative.
- (b) As discussed at the last D21SAC meeting, the Government was considering opening up public sector information for wider use.
- (c) Putting forward this initiative would require a lot of resources and would be done on an incremental basis. We would need buy-in from B/Ds, end users and service providers.

Agenda Item V: Green ICT

16. **The Chairman** welcomed Mr Christopher Lau, representative from the Environment Bureau, to join the discussions of this agenda item.

17. **Mr Jeremy Godfrey** introduced the paper.

18. **Members** made the following comments and suggestions:

- (a) In addition to the Innovation and Technology Fund, the University Grants Committee was running a Theme-based Research Scheme, of which the second theme was "Developing a sustainable environment". It was expected that there would be lots of ideas relating to green ICT for consideration by D21SAC. The table on Annex A to D21SAC Paper No. 2/2010 should cover activities on sustainability research.
- (b) Due to the importance of SMEs in Hong Kong, the Government should consider how we could support SMEs on the adoption of green ICT.

- (c) A standard or certification programme for ICT products was suggested.

19. **Miss Janet Wong** informed Members that the Report of the Hong Kong Council for Testing and Certification, published on 31 March 2010, was saved in CDs and tabled for members' information.

20. **Members** endorsed the suggested changes to the existing wording of the SDOs in Annex B to D21SAC Paper No. 2/2010.

Agenda Item VI: Internet Learning

21. **Mr Jeremy Godfrey** introduced the paper.

22. **Dr Winnie Tang** declared interest that the Internet Professional Association (iProA) had publicly expressed that it had interest in bidding for this project. **Mr Charles Mok** also declared interest that the Internet Society Hong Kong would probably be a supporting organization to work with the NGO in this project.

23. **Members** made the following comments and suggestions:

- (a) As providing internet access to disadvantaged groups involved many complicated issues, it was necessary to arrange an NGO to help deliver the services.

- (b) Support from other government departments, especially Social Welfare Department (SWD) and Education Bureau (EDB), was important to ensure success. For example, SWD should encourage potential service users to connect to the NGO, while EDB should steer and update the learning needs of children in terms of the ICT tools required.

- (c) We should uphold and strengthen the tripartite relationship

among government, industry and the community and encourage more public-private partnership for the success of this project.

- (d) On the issue of disbursement vs reimbursement, there was a concern about potential backlash if the media found out that some parents had used the money for other unintended purposes.
- (e) The Government should take a holistic approach, looking at not only reimbursing people for their broadband connectivity costs, but also the provision of hardware, software and services.
- (f) Apart from providing affordable hardware and Internet access, the Government may consider providing some basic learning software for students.
- (g) The Government should ask the NGO to provide guidelines to help children of low-income families on how to use the Internet properly. The Government should review how the NGO could help ensure that the users were properly trained.
- (h) Suitable computer should be selected. For example, if the programme was extended to secondary school students, a laptop might be needed because a netbook would probably not be sufficient for their use.

24. In response to Members' concerns, the **Government** replied that:

- (a) This scheme was meant to support the Internet learning needs of children from low-income families. It involves making available to them economical Internet access service, affordable options to acquire suitable computers and software for learning as well as relevant education and technical support services to both the children and their

parents on safe and healthy use of Internet.

- (b) There would be pros and cons for both reimbursement and direct payment, and the Government had to strike a balance.
- (c) In respect of the promotion and education on safe and healthy use of the Internet, we would draw on the experience from the current “BeNetwise” Internet education campaign. We envisaged that the programme would actively partner with NGOs to leverage their district and community service networks in delivering the education and technical support service.

Agenda Item VII: Progress Update on Task Forces and Stocktaking of D21SAC and Task Forces Initiatives

25. **Mr Jeremy Godfrey** introduced the paper. **Members** noted the progress update on the task forces, their major conclusions and the way forward.

Agenda Item VIII: Any Other Business

26. **A Member** asked if it would be possible to have remote access to the “paper-less” system in the future. It was noted that OGCIO was pursuing this possibility, but security issues had to be resolved before it could be implemented.

27. **A Member** suggested that the next D21SAC meeting might want to discuss trans-boundary infrastructure as part of the Framework Agreement on Hong Kong/Guangdong Co-operation.

**Office of the Government Chief Information Officer
Commerce and Economic Development Bureau
June 2010**