

## 24<sup>th</sup> Business Liaison Group Meeting with the Hotel Trade

Date: 16 August 2017 (Wednesday)  
Time: 2:30 p.m.  
Venue: Conference Room 1, G/F, Tamar Central Government Offices, Admiralty  
Convenor: Mr Andrew KWOK Head, Business Facilitation Division,  
Economic Analysis and Business Facilitation Unit

### **Trade Attendees:**

#### Federation of Hong Kong Hotel Owners (FHKHO)

Mr Michael LI Executive Director  
Miss Stephenie FUNG Assistant to Executive Director

#### Acesite Knutsford Hotel

Mr Jeff MA Sales Manager

#### Chinachem Group

Mr Chris CHAN Building Services Manager  
Ms Amanda LAU Group Hotel Project & Development Manager,  
L'Hotel Group

#### King's Hotel

Mr Ken KWAN Director

#### Oriental Lander Hotel

Mr K.C. LAI Managing Director

### **Government Representatives:**

#### Home Affairs Department (HAD)

Mr Paul HEUNG Building Surveyor (Licensing Authority)  
Miss Angela TANG Building Surveyor (Licensing Authority)<sup>3</sup>

#### Buildings Department (BD)

Mr Kim NG Building Surveyor /Licensing(Special Duty)

#### Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD)

Mr Eric CHEUNG Senior Superintendent (Licensing)  
Mr CHOW Kim Wa Senior Treasury Accountant (Management Accounting)  
Ms Jacqueline HO Superintendent (Licensing)<sup>2</sup>  
Ms Nora LAW Chief Health Inspector (Liquor Licensing)

#### Economic Analysis and Business Facilitation Unit (EABFU)

Miss Eunice LEUNG Chief Management Services Officer (Business Facilitation)<sup>2</sup> (*Secretary*)  
Miss Jenny YEUNG Business Facilitation Officer

**Action**

The **Convenor** welcomed all to the meeting. He said that the notes of the last meeting had been posted to the Business Facilitation Initiatives website ([https://www.gov.hk/tc/theme/bf/pdf/H\\_BLG\\_23\\_Notes.pdf](https://www.gov.hk/tc/theme/bf/pdf/H_BLG_23_Notes.pdf) ) for the trade's reference.

**Agenda Item 1 – Briefing**

*Introductory guide on greening in buildings*

2. **Mr Kim NG** gave a briefing on the subject with the presentation slides at Annex 1. He said that the above guide was published to provide a reference for safe provision of greening in buildings.

3. The **Convenor** enquired under what circumstances the trade should submit a greening proposal for BD's approval. **Mr NG** replied that trade operators should consult qualified professionals and apply for BD's approval if building works were involved. They should also engage qualified contractors to carry out building works approved by BD.

4. In response to the Convenor's enquiry, **Mr NG** advised that in respect of existing greening for which BD's prior approval had not been sought, trade operators should consult qualified professionals to assess the greening provisions and take rectification actions as appropriate. While unauthorised building works should be removed, a proposal could be submitted to BD for approval if necessary.

5. **Mr Chris CHAN** enquired whether there were any measures to expedite processing of application for approval of greening proposals specifically. **Mr NG** replied that there would not be a separate channel for processing such applications, but construction works for the provisions of greening of smaller scale might be carried out under the Minor Works Control System.

6. **Mr Michael LI** thanked BD for the briefing and said that he would remind FHKHO's member hotels to apply for BD's approval where building works were involved. The **Convenor** suggested and **Mr LI** agreed to post the said guide on FHKHO's website for easy access by the member hotels.

*(Post meeting notes: BLG secretariat sent the said guide on 31 August to FHKHO for posting on its website.)*

**Agenda Item 2 – Discussion items**

*2.1 Implementation progress of the Reserve Licensee Scheme*

7. **Ms Jacqueline HO** informed the meeting that the implementation of the Reserve Licensee Scheme had been smooth so far. Since its implementation on 28 March 2017 and up to 31 July 2017, a total of 684 applications for nomination of reserve licensee had been received. Among these applications, 159 cases had been

**Action**

approved, 48 had been withdrawn by the applicant, and the remaining cases were under processing. No applications had been rejected so far.

8. **Ms HO** supplemented that before the implementation of the Reserve Licensee Scheme, a letter was issued to inform all the liquor licensees of the implementation details. In response to the suggestion made by the trade at the last hotel BLG meeting, the letter was copied to the concerned restaurant licensees for information.

*2.2 Mechanism for transfer of liquor licence under the Reserve Licensee Scheme*

9. **Ms HO** gave a briefing on the subject with the presentation slides at Annex 2. Under the mechanism, the business owner / company of the premises could apply for transfer of liquor licence (LL) without the consent of the existing licensee. Business owner should submit supporting documents for consideration by the Liquor Licensing Board (LLB), and LLB would also contact the existing licensee to see if he/she was aware of such application and whether there was any reason for not giving consent.

10. **Mr LI** welcomed the mechanism and opined that as long as the business owner could provide proof showing that he/she owned the business and the existing licensee was his/her employee, LLB should start processing the application. Moreover, he was concerned that where the existing licensee refused to give up the licence because of a labour dispute with the business owner, the transfer application might be held up. As the dispute might drag on for a long period of time, there would be serious disruption to the business operation.

11. **Ms HO** responded that the mechanism was implemented to cater for transfer application without the consent of the existing licensee. As such, under the scenario mentioned by Mr LI, LLB would process the application upon receipt of relevant documents without the need to wait until the dispute was resolved. However, as it was necessary for LLB to understand the existing licensee's reason of disagreement on the transfer application, time should be allowed for LLB to contact him/her.

12. The **Convenor** supplemented that under the above mechanism, should the existing licensee request in writing cancellation of LL while the business owner had applied for the transfer, both the application for transfer and the request for cancellation would be considered by LLB at the open hearing. This could prevent cancellation of the LL before the transfer application was approved, thus avoiding disruption to business operation.

**Agenda Item 3 – Consultation**

*Review of fees for liquor licensing services*

13. **Mr Eric CHEUNG** introduced the background of the subject review. **Ms**

**Action**

**HO** then briefed the meeting on the details of the review with the presentation slides at Annex 3.

14. **Mr LI** said that FHKHO members did not object to the proposed rationalization of fee structure and adjustment for liquor licensing services in general. In particular, FHKHO members found the proposed fees for renewal application reasonable and acceptable, but they considered the percentage rise of the fees for new and transfer application too high, especially that for transfer application. He questioned whether it was necessary to recover the full cost for these applications. He said that it was more common for hotel operators to apply for transfer of LL and he suggested adjusting downwards the proposed fee for transfer application.

15. **Mr CHAN** said that he shared Mr Li's views, and he added that the trade would expect a better licensing service should there be a fee rise.

16. **Mr CHEUNG** responded that in the past few years, a number of measures were implemented to improve the liquor licensing services, e.g. extension of the duration of LL from one year to two years and introduction of the reserve licensee mechanism recently. In the coming years, FEHD would explore further development of e-service to LL through an online service system. To gauge the views of the trade on the review of fees for liquor licensing services, FEHD had put on table the cost and the proposed fees which were compiled based on the full-cost recovery principle. At present, FEHD was consulting different stakeholders before finalising the fee revision proposal for submission to the LegCo Panel in late 2017. **Mr CHEUNG** thanked the hotel trade for expressing their views, in particular their concern of the significant percentage rise in the proposed fee for transfer application, and he would convey the trade's views to the senior management. The **Convenor** also thanked Mr LI for gathering views from FHKHO members.

**Agenda Item 4 – Date of the next meeting**

17. The **Convenor** said that the secretariat would inform the trade of the date of the next meeting in due course.

**Economic Analysis and Business Facilitation Unit**

**September 2017**