

Improving Governance at the District Level

A Summary of Public Views Received on the Proposals on Improving Governance at the District Level

Background

On 2 May 2023, the Government announced the proposals on improving governance at the district level. The proposals are to reform the District Councils (DCs) and to strengthen the district governance structure. Members of the public were invited to express their views on the proposals between 2 and 16 May 2023.

Invitation of Views

2. Information related to the proposals on improving governance at the district level was uploaded to the website of the Home Affairs Department on 2 May 2023. Such information included the Legislative Council Brief, the presentation used at the Joint Press Conference on 2 May 2023, as well as publicity materials including infographics, leaflet and announcement in the public interest for television and radio. A press release was also issued on 2 May 2023 to invite members of the public to submit their views in writing by email, fax or post on or before 16 May 2023.

Summary of Views Received

3. During the period between 2 May and 16 May, a total of 25 105 written submissions were received via email, fax or post. The majority (24 795 or 98.8%) of these submissions was by individuals, while the rest (310 or 1.2%) was submitted by organisations.

4. Over 99% of the views received supported the proposals on improving governance at the district level. Specifically, the following recommendations in the proposals were supported –

- (a) to enhance the functions of DCs;
- (b) to revamp the compositions of DCs and the corresponding methods of formation;
- (c) to revise the nomination requirements for election candidates;
- (d) to introduce an eligibility review mechanism;
- (e) to designate District Officers (DOs) as DC Chairmen;
- (f) to maintain the remuneration package for DC members at the current level;
- (g) to introduce a performance monitoring mechanism for DC members; and
- (h) to strengthen the district governance structure.

5. Of the remaining less than 1% of the views received, only 10 were non-supportive views. The concerns were raised over the reduced number of members returned through the DC geographical constituencies; insufficient resources for DC members to serve the enlarged DC geographical constituencies; the nomination requirements being too stringent; the performance monitoring mechanism undermining the role of DC members; the impartiality of DOs serving as DC Chairmen, etc. There were also a few submissions that did not express clear stances on the proposals.

Way Forward

6. The Government shall take the public views received into account when taking forward the proposals. Through the improved district governance, we can build a better community together.

Home Affairs Department
May 2023

(Addendum on 14 June 2023: since the publication of this Summary on

30 May 2023, the Home Affairs Department received another 355 written submissions by individuals submitted between 2 May and 16 May. All of the views supported the proposals on improving governance at the district level.)