

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

There are three types of governments in Malaysia. There is the Federal Government at the national level; State Government at the state level and the third one is the Local Government at the district level.

Malaysia is a multi-ethnic society with a federal system of government founded on the principles of *parliamentary democracy and constitution monarchy*. The Federal delineates the division of *functions* and *powers* between the central government and the thirteen state governments. It is a remarkable feature of Malaysian federalism that the balance of political and economic power is overwhelmingly tilted in favour of the Federal Government.

Local Government as a subject falls into the jurisdiction of respective State Government. However, the Federal Government can exert indirect influence through the *National Council for Local Government* (a consultative body consisting of all the chief ministers of the states and equal number of federal ministers) to ensure that the State and Local Authorities follow national policy.

Although the power of the Federal Government are limited to research, advice and technical assistance, the provision and control of finance for capital development projects give the Federal Government power to asserting its will over the Local Authorities.

In the federal system, Local Government is essentially *infra sovereign*. It can only perform those functions expressly enumerated in their statutes. In other words, the State Governments are in the position of "*superior government*" to Local Authorities (Phang and Chee, 1992).

The Modern concept of Local Government in Malaysia had its origins during British colonial rule. Therefore the pattern of Local Government is classified under the British pattern. The initial forms of Local Authorities introduced by British in Malaysia were transplants of their own institutions. The laws governing the Local Authorities were based on English laws.

In this thesis, I only focus on the planning and organisation structure perspectives of the MBKS. It covers the area like planning, budgeting, vision, missions, type of organisation structure and the problems and issues related to them.

1.1 The reasons for the selection of the MBKS

I select MBKS as my study project because it is a historical organisation with about forty-six years of history. It was the first local authority formed in Sarawak and its set-up is quite similar to Simunjan District Council, which I have serviced for fifteen years. Being a big and sophisticated organisation, I am sure that the MBKS will have a lot of planning and organisation structure-issues/problems, which is useful and interesting to study.

Furthermore the city council still faces poor performance in certain area like unlicensed hawkers problems, unsanitary food premises, public complaint about dumping ground nuisance, unnecessary waste of public fund and no co-ordination in the implementation of project with other government agencies or privatised companies. At the same time, I can learn from their inability and weaknesses.

1.2 Objectives of the Project

The objectives of the projects are as follow:

- (i) To identify and analyst the planning and organisation structure issues and problems of MBKS.
- (ii) To have an in-depth study and understanding of the planning and organisation structure issues and problems of the MBKS.
- (iii) To develop detailed and feasible recommendation to be suggested for consideration by the management of the MBKS.

1.3 Scope of the study

The study is the case study of MBKS. This study will only focused on the planning and organisation structure- issues /problems especially at the Administrative , Public Work, Building and Landscaping and Public Health division.

Through this study , we cannot generally concluded that all the other Local Authorities will face the same issues/problems that MBKS is facing. However, it is useful in uncovering the issues/ problems that may be useful for the other councils to learn. The MBKS and the other councils may consider the recommendations suggested for improvement in the future.

1.4 Research Design and Methodology

In designing of the research, I choose the exploratory research. The exploratory research includes experience survey and secondary data analysis. The exploratory research conducted is to diagnose a situation, to screen alternatives, or to discover new ideas.

The study was conducted by personal interview with Mr. Shariman Faizal Abdullah, Administrative Oficer of MBKS. The Personal interview lasted for three

hours and the questionnaire designed will be an open-ended questions (please refers to Appendix H). The additional information was collected from him through telephone interview. Beside that, I also obtained the information from my friends who are working in MBKS, from the reference books, pamphlets, journals ,newspapers and did some observations myself.

1.5 Limitation of the study

The information gathered from the administrative officer, Mr. Shariman and my friends from the MBKS may not be accurate. They might cover some weaknesses of the Council of the MBKS to protect the good name of the MBKS. Some of the information might be confidential in nature that they could not review.