

**Minutes of the  
Social Welfare Advisory Committee (SWAC) Meeting**

**25 January 2018 (Thursday) at 10:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 4, G/F, Central Government Offices**

**Present**

Mr Vincent LO Wing-sang (Chairman)  
Dr Gary CHENG Faat-ting  
Dr Crystal CHENG Lai-ling  
Mr CHUGH, Manohar Thakurdas  
Dr Roy CHUNG Chi-ping  
Mr Laurence HO Hoi-ming  
Mr IP Wai-ming  
Mr Anthony KWAN Wai-ming  
Mr Armstrong LEE Hon-cheung  
Ms Christina Maisenne LEE  
Mr Laurence LI Lu-jen  
Ms Anthea LO Wing-sze  
Dr Annissa LUI Wai-ling  
Ms Cindy PUN Siu-fung  
Dr Janice TSANG Wing-hang  
Dr Loretta YAM Yin-chun  
Ms Amarantha YIP Yun-wan  
Mr Kelvin MA (Secretary)

**In Attendance**

**Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB)**

Ms CHANG King-yiu Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (PSLW)  
Miss Leonia TAI Deputy Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare)1 (DS(W)1)  
Mr Kenneth CHENG Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare)1 (PAS(W)1)

Social Welfare Department (SWD)

Ms Carol YIP                      Director of Social Welfare (DSW)

Mr KOK Chi-leung              Assistant Director (Subventions) (AD(S))  
[For discussion item 1  
only]

**Absent with apologies**

Ms Sylvia CHAN May-kuen  
Mr Daryl NG Win-kong  
Dr Gary NG Ka-wing  
Prof Steven NGAI Sek-yum

**Discussion Item 1: Progress of Implementation of the Special Scheme on Privately Owned Sites for Welfare Uses**

Members were invited to provide comments on the paper on the Progress of Implementation of the Special Scheme on Privately Owned Sites for Welfare Uses (Special Scheme). Members raised the following questions/offered the following comments –

- (a) Whether the discontinuation of the coordination service by the Policy and Project Co-ordination Unit (PPCU) of the Chief Secretary for Administration's Office would have any adverse impact on the implementation of the projects under the Special Scheme;
- (b) Whether the submission of revised proposals by the applicant non-governmental organisations (NGOs) by 31 March 2018 under the stocktaking exercise would result in a reduction in the total number of additional service places to be provided;
- (c) Whether new applications would be invited under the Special Scheme, and if there would be a chance of re-entrance to the Special Scheme for the less feasible or not yet mature projects currently in the Special Scheme;

- (d) The Government's initiative to revise the schedules of accommodation (SoAs) for some of the welfare facilities on the "Shopping List" of the Special Scheme was commendable and whether the SoAs of other facilities on the "Shopping List" would also be revised; and
- (e) The stocktaking exercise should enable the SWD to better assess the overall picture, and that there should be some flexibility in improving those services that had adopted the old SoAs;

2. The Government gave the following response –

- (a) The LWB/SWD would continue to provide the coordination service originally offered by the PPCU;
- (b) The Government would review the overall service provision under the Special Scheme upon receipt of the revised proposals from the applicant NGOs by 31 March 2018; and
- (c) For those NGOs which had adopted the old SoAs prior to the promulgation of the revised SoAs (including those which had proceeded with or were about to proceed with their respective technical feasibility studies then), there might be room for service improvement in future on a case-by-case basis. There was currently no plan to revise the SoAs of other facilities on the "Shopping List".

## **Discussion Item 2: Establishment of a Commission on Children**

3. Members were invited to provide comments on the Establishment of a Commission on Children (the Commission). Members raised the following questions/offered the following comments –

- (a) It would be advisable to create a Children's Commissioner post and focus on investment in early childhood;

- (b) An indicator reflecting the wellbeing of children in physical, emotional, cognitive and social aspects and a Child Summit could be introduced to facilitate the collection of relevant data and sharing of experience. A children database could also be set up;
- (c) The “optimal development” as stated in the vision might add pressure on parents and intensify the culture of boosting children to excel. Controls should be imposed on the extent of pre-school training in order that children could develop their potential;
- (d) It would be important to define the social values that the next generation were expected to possess against the backdrop of Hong Kong being a Chinese society;
- (e) The Commission should have decision making power, instead of merely giving advice and the upper age limit of the target group of the Commission should be raised from 14 to 18;
- (f) The Government should address the consistently high demand for long full-day kindergarten places;
- (g) Children should be taught to have a positive outlook on life and respect for their parents and teachers;
- (h) The Commission should be conferred the power to look into abuse cases involving children;
- (i) Children should be allowed to encounter failure at an early stage, learn about moral values, have sufficient time to play and take part in extra-curricular activities;
- (j) The recreational facilities managed by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department required modernisation to attract families to spend time there;
- (k) Measures should be put in place to help children with autism to develop their talents;
- (l) Child care and family-friendly initiatives should be enhanced to unleash women’s work force;

- (m) Students should be given opportunities to pursue different career paths and take pride in their choices. A paradigm shift and pay enhancements would be required to redistribute the workforce among different job types;
- (n) The Government should formulate a clear policy on parent support and education, especially that for single-parent and step parents families;
- (o) The Commission should ensure that children's voices would be heard. Engagement with parents and coordination with other advisory bodies should be a priority area of the Commission;
- (p) The Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines might require updating to facilitate the provision of adequate facilities for the development of children;
- (q) Vulnerable children and dysfunctional families were of concern, and the child perspective should guide the handling of issues concerning children;
- (r) A balance should be struck between parental rights and the need for children to be heard and protected; and
- (s) The Government should study the behaviours of children and consider any initiatives to support their healthy growth.

4. The Government gave the following response –

- (a) The views raised by Members, together with those collected in the public engagement, would be reported to the Preparatory Committee, which would then make recommendations to the Chief Executive on the establishment of the Commission. As the Commission would be chaired by the Chief Secretary for Administration, it could give steer on cross-bureaux issues and see to their implementation; and
- (b) The Commission would engage stakeholders on an ongoing basis after its establishment; and

- (c) As regards child abuse, while there were established mechanisms to enforce the laws, the Government would explore how the existing child protection regime could be enhanced.

SWAC Secretariat  
March 2018