

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)2869/05-06
(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/PS/1/04

Panel on Welfare Services

**Subcommittee on Review of the
Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme**

**Minutes of the 13th meeting
held on Monday, 22 May 2006 at 2:30 pm
in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building**

- Members present** : Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung (Chairman)
Hon LEE Cheuk-yan
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon LI Fung-ying, BBS, JP
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC
- Members absent** : Hon CHAN Yuen-han, JP
Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, JP
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
- Public Officers attending** : Mr D C CHEUNG
Principal Assistant Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food
(Elderly Services and Social Security) 2
- Miss Cherie YEUNG
Assistant Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food
(Elderly Services and Social Security) 4
- Miss Nancy LAW, JP
Deputy Director of Social Welfare (Administration)

Mrs Kathy NG
Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Elderly)

Mr CHENG Chok-man
Chief Social Security Officer (Social Security) 1
Social Welfare Department

Mr NG Wai-kuen
Chief Social Security Officer (Social Security) 2
Social Welfare Department

Mr YEUNG Shun-kui
Assistant Director (Operations) 2
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Dr HAU Kong-lung
Consultant Forensic Pathologist i/c
Department of Health

**Deputations
by invitation** : The Comfort Care Concern Group

Mr Eddie CHAN Ho-chuen
Centre Director

Miss Cynthia LAM Pui-man
Project Coordinator

Funeral Business Association

Mr NG Yiu-tong
Chairman

Mr LAU Kit-yan
Secretary

The Against Elderly Abuse of Hong Kong

Ms Kennex YUE
Chief Executive Director

Caritas Elderly Service

Ms YU Mei-yuk
Supervisor

Ms HUI Sau-ping
Activity Assistant

Society for Community Organization

Ms FOK Tin-man
Community Organizer

Mr NG Siu-wing
Resident

Mr NG Chi-yue
Resident

Volunteer Group of the Paraclete-Care-And-Comfort Angel
of Holy Carpenter Church

Miss Amy TAM Yuen-chun
Social Worker of Promotion Project

Mr LAM Chi-kim
Chairman

St. James' Settlement

Mr Gary SHAM Chi-wing
Funeral Navigation Service Manager

Ms LEUNG Wai-ping
Funeral Navigation Service Entrant

Clerk in attendance : Ms Doris CHAN
Chief Council Secretary (2) 4

Staff in attendance : Ms Amy YU
Senior Council Secretary (2) 3

Mr Ken WONG
Legislative Assistant (2) 8

I. Burial Grant under the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme and services for the deceased

(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)2024/05-06(01) to (07) and CB(2)2057/05-06(01))

At the invitation of the Chairman, Principal Assistant Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Elderly Services and Social Security) 2 (PASHWF(ES&SS)2) introduced the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(2)2024/05-06(01)) on the burial grant under the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme and services for the deceased.

2. The Chairman then invited deputations to give their views on the matter.

Views of deputations

The Comfort Care Concern Group

3. Mr Eddie CHAN Ho-chuen presented the views of the Comfort Care Concern Group as detailed in its submission (LC Paper No. CB(2)2024/05-06(02)). In particular, he stressed that the burial grant, currently \$10,430, was not adequate for meeting all the basic burial expenses, as shown in the price list provided by a non-profit organization, which was attached to the submission.

Funeral Business Association

4. Mr NG Yiu-tong and Mr LAU Kit-yan presented the submission (LC Paper No. CB(2)2024/05-06(04)) of the Funeral Business Association and highlighted the following points -

- (a) after deducting the government charges for the death certificate (\$140) and cremation (\$1,300), what remained of the burial grant (about \$9,000) was only sufficient for covering some of the basic funeral expenses, including coffin, shroud, quilt and transportation of coffin, but not other basic items such as rental of a funeral hall (the lowest rental charge was about \$800), purchase of a niche at a government columbarium (a niche at the columbaria under the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) cost \$3,295);

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- (b) for CSSA recipients, the Administration should consider waiving the government charges concerned, such as the charges for the death certificate, cremation and purchase of a niche for ashes; and
- (c) the Administration should monitor how the funeral service providers used the burial grant.

The Against Elderly Abuse of Hong Kong

5. Ms Kennex YUE introduced the submission (LC Paper No. CB(2)2024/05-06(05)) of the Against Elderly Abuse of Hong Kong and made the following points –

- (a) the burial grant under the CSSA Scheme was inadequate to meet the necessary burial expenses. The deceased recipient's family or relative/friend often had to borrow money or apply for charity funds to supplement the burial grant before they could arrange for cremation. For deceased recipients who wished for coffin burials or funeral services with religious rituals, the burial grant was inadequate to meet the relevant expenses. To show due respect for the wish of the deceased in respect of funeral arrangements, it was suggested that the burial grant for cremation be increased to \$17,000, and that for coffin burial to \$30,000; and
- (b) under the CSSA Scheme, non-Hong Kong residents were not eligible to apply for the burial grant for deceased CSSA recipients. With a view to facilitating early arrangement of funeral services for deceased recipients with no relatives in Hong Kong, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) should consider applications for burial grant from non-Hong Kong residents on a case-by-case basis, and approval should be granted on production of documentary proof of their direct family relationship with the deceased CSSA recipients.

Caritas Elderly Service

6. Ms YU Mei-yuk told members that Caritas had launched a "Ning An" Scheme in July 2005 to provide hospice services to elders who lived alone or elderly childless couples. So far, some 70 elders had registered for this service.

7. Ms YU further said that Caritas had conducted a survey among 427 target service users of the scheme during the period from November 2005 to March 2006, to ascertain whether they were worried that nobody would take care of their funeral arrangements after they had passed away. 31.8% of the respondents explicitly indicated that they had such a worry. As for the respondents who

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replied otherwise, Ms YU said that it was uncertain whether they really had no such worry, as their response might just be a form of protest against the hardship of life.

8. Ms YU further made the following suggestions –

- (a) while the burial grant might be able to provide for the bare minimum of funeral expenses, it was not sufficient to cover both the expenses for holding a funeral ceremony in a funeral parlour and purchase of a niche for ashes, both of which were basic funeral arrangements;
- (b) there was an acute shortage of niches at government columbaria, and a long waiting period for cremation service. In the light of the growing elderly population, the Administration should make forward-looking plans to accommodate the service needs associated with funeral arrangements;
- (c) in order to cater for the needs of bereaved families who would not hold mourning ceremonies in funeral parlours but would take the dead bodies directly from public hospitals or mortuaries to crematoria or cemeteries, the Administration should ensure the provision of proper facilities in public hospitals and mortuaries for holding simple yet dignified ceremonies of last rites for the deceased; and
- (d) currently, there was on average one to one-and-a-half counsellor in each service centre for the elderly, which was not adequate for meeting the needs for hospice and counselling services among the elderly. The Administration should address this problem having regard to the growing ageing population and the needs of the elderly.

Society for Community Organization

9. Ms FOK Tin-man made the following points –

- (a) the results of the two surveys conducted by the Society for Community Organization (SOCO) in mid 2005 and early 2006 respectively showed that some 80% of the elders were worried that there was nobody to take care of their funeral affairs after death. Also, according to data from FEHD, there were 800-odd unclaimed bodies each year, half of whom were elders aged 60 or above. These figures demonstrated the inadequacy in the provision of end

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of life services to elders with weak social network. The Administration should consider providing funding support to NGOs for provision of such service on a long-term basis, instead of NGOs having to rely on donations to do that;

- (b) the burial grant should be increased such that it could cover both the expenses for renting a funeral hall and getting a niche for ashes, which were just basic funeral arrangements; and
- (c) the Sandy Ridge Cemetery, where the unclaimed bodies were buried, was situated in a closed area, making it difficult for relatives/friends to visit the grave of the deceased. Also, the deceased who were buried in that Cemetery were only assigned a number for identification purpose, rather than have their name inscribed onto the plaques. These were not dignified ways of handling the bodies of the deceased.

10. Mr NG Siu-wing said that when he arranged for the funeral of his uncle a few years ago, he found that the burial grant was inadequate for covering the basic expenses involved. Arranging the funeral was an arduous task for an old man like him, who was already 80 years old. He further said that a staff of the SWD Office in Kowloon City had told him that any money given by relatives and friends who attended his uncle's funeral had to be deducted from the amount of the burial grant.

11. Mr NG Chi-yue told members that he was 70 years old and had no relatives in Hong Kong. He had therefore solicited the help of SOCO in making funeral arrangements for him upon his death. He urged the Administration to provide funding to NGOs like SOCO for provision of end of life services.

Volunteer Group of the Paraclete-Care-And-Comfort Angel of Holy Carpenter Church

12. Mr LAM Chi-kim told members that the Volunteer Group of the Paraclete-Care-And-Comfort Angel of Holy Carpenter Church (the Volunteer Group) was funded by the Community Investment and Inclusion Fund (CIIF) to provide care and support services to persons approaching end of life and their family members. Since its inception in April 2004, the Volunteer Group had provided one-stop funeral support services to 120 service users, over 40% of whom were on CSSA. It had also recruited and trained 170 volunteers to provide funeral support services, involving over 1 200 service hours in total.

13. Mr LAM further made the following recommendations as detailed in the submission (LC Paper No. CB(2)2057/05-06(01)) of the Volunteer Group –

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- (a) as SWD had neither specified the basic funeral expenses included under the burial grant, nor exercised due supervision on how funeral service providers used the burial grant for the deceased CSSA recipients, there had been cases whereby the bereaved families were dissatisfied with the funeral service provided and felt cheated or misled by the service providers concerned. There were also cases whereby the funeral services of the deceased with neither next of kin nor relatives were performed only perfunctorily. In the light of the above, the Administration should standardise the content of the funeral service for burial grant recipients, and have in place a mechanism for monitoring the burial service provided by funeral service providers to burial grant recipients; and
- (b) given the increasing needs of elders for end of life services, the Administration should provide financial support to NGOs and volunteer groups for provision of such service.

14. Ms Amy TAM Yuen-chun highlighted the shortage in manpower resources for the provision of hospice services. She informed the meeting that there were now a total of some 600 social workers providing elderly services to 740 000 elders aged 65 or above (data as of 2001), meaning that on average a social worker had to serve about 1 100 elders. In each service centre for the elderly, there was usually only one social worker providing end of life services and related counselling services to the elders. Ms TAM called on the Administration to allocate adequate resources for provision of such elderly services.

St. James' Settlement

15. Mr Gary SHAM Chi-wing told members that, with funding support from the Board of Management of the Chinese Permanent Cemeteries and the Community Chest, the St. James Settlement (SJS) had started the "Funeral Navigation Service" in April 2004, with the aims of (i) assisting elders having nobody to depend on to make prior arrangements for their funeral affairs, and (ii) changing the taboo of the general public towards death. Already registered into this programme were some 300 senior citizens. Apart from organising seminars for elders on funeral arrangements and related matters, SJS had also organised a "Funeral exploratory tour" involving visits to shroud shop, funeral parlour and cemetery to help the elders plan ahead for their funeral arrangements.

16. Mr SHAM further proposed that the Administration should –

- (a) provide more resources to assist the elders with weak social network in planning after-death arrangements;

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- (b) enhance education on life and death; and
- (c) provide appropriate facilities in public hospitals and public mortuaries for holding simple yet dignified funeral ceremonies for the deceased.

17. Mr SHAM further told the meeting of a recent case whereby a 59-year-old woman, whose spouse had just passed away, was told by SWD, during her application for the burial grant, that she had to participate in the Support for Self-Reliance (SFS) Scheme right away. He said that for special cases such as this, the Administration should consider granting a grace period in respect of commencement of participation in the SFS Scheme.

18. Ms LEUNG Wai-ping, a participant of the “Funeral Navigation Service”, told members how joining the Service had relieved her of the worry of not having anybody to look after her funeral arrangements after she had passed away.

Discussion

Current level of burial grant

19. PASHWF(ES&SS)2 said that the burial grant under the CSSA Scheme was payable to the deceased recipient’s family or relative/friend to meet the basic burial expenses of the deceased recipient. He further said that funeral arrangement was a matter of personal choice, and there were funeral service providers in the private sector offering inexpensive funeral services to families in need. The Administration considered the current level of burial grant generally sufficient to cover the basic funeral and related expenses.

20. In response to Mr LEE Cheuk-yan’s request for a breakdown of the specific items included in calculating the prescribed maximum rate of the burial grant, Chief Social Security Officer (Social Security) 1 (CSSO(SS)1) explained that the maximum rate of the burial grant under the CSSA Scheme was pegged to the burial grant payable under the Emergency Relief Fund, which was adjusted annually in accordance with the movement of the Consumer Price Index (A). The same mechanism also applied in determining the rate of the burial grant payable under the Traffic Accident Victims Assistance Scheme and the Criminal and Law Enforcement Injuries Compensation Scheme. He further said that there were no rules as to how the grant should be used and all funeral-related expenses could be reimbursed under the grant, up to the prescribed maximum level.

21. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan said that the deputations had pointed out clearly that

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the current level of the burial grant was not adequate to cover all the necessary funeral-related expenses. He asked whether the Administration intended to review the mechanism for determining the level of the grant.

22. PASHWF(ES&SS)2 replied that the Administration did not intend to overhaul the mechanism. DDSW(A) supplemented that while the level of the burial grant was set with reference to the Emergency Relief Fund, the Administration had also conducted market surveys to ascertain the adequacy of the grant. The results of the surveys showed that the burial grant was adequate to meet the basic expenses in relation to funeral matters.

23. In response to the request of Mr LEE Cheuk-yan, the Chairman and Ms LI Fung-ying for information on such market surveys, DDSW(A) informed members that the Administration had sought the views of some funeral service providers, who advised that the level of the grant could cover the basic funeral-related expenses. She added that the amount of the grant was increased by 1.2% to \$10,430 on 1 April 2006 to take account of inflation.

24. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan asked what items were considered by the Administration as basic funeral-related expenses. Referring to paragraph 2 of the Administration's paper, PASHWF(ES&SS)2 responded that such expenses might include charges for the death certificate, coffin, sacrificial articles, clothing for the deceased, cremation and hiring of the ritual hall, etc. In response to Mr LEE's enquiry as to whether the burial grant included expense for purchase of a niche in a columbarium, PASHWF(ES&SS)2 reiterated that the Administration did not prescribe specific expense items which were covered by the grant. All funeral-related expenses could be reimbursed under the grant, up to the prescribed maximum level. He added that apart from niches, families of the deceased could also place the deceased's ashes in a church cemetery or at home, or spread it in the gardens of remembrance in Government crematoria, depending on the religion or the wish of the deceased.

25. Referring to table attached to the submission of the Comfort Care Concern Group listing out the expenses incurred in a funeral totalling \$13,702, the Chairman asked the Administration to provide a similar table on what it considered to be basic funeral expenses, or alternatively, to inform members which of the 17 items listed in the table could be crossed out from the table as non-basic items.

26. Mr Eddie CHAN of the Comfort Care Concern Group supplemented that the expenses listed in the table were based on the quotation provided by the Diamond Hill Funeral Parlour under the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals, a non-profit organisation. He considered that all the expense items in the list, comprising government charges and basic funeral-related expenses, were

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necessary ones.

27. CSSO(SS)1 replied that he could not comment on whether the individual items listed in the table were basic ones or not, as the types of expenses incurred in a funeral depended on the individual needs and wishes of the bereaved families. For instance, some bereaved families might consider item 12 unnecessary on religious ground. He further said that according to the information provided by some undertakers, there were funeral service providers in the private sector offering inexpensive funeral services to families in need. Such services, which could be met by the current level of burial grant, included arranging for the death certificate, coffin, clothing and make-up for the deceased, photo arrangement, hiring of a ritual hall for a duration of not less than 2 hours, sacrificial articles, rental for a shuttle bus and cremation, etc. As for bereaved families who wished to place the deceased's ashes in a niche, they might consider the funeral services provided by funeral parlours under the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals, which included arranging for a death certificate, coffin, clothing for the deceased, cremation and arranging for a niche, etc. The charges for such services could also be met by the burial grant.

28. Mr NG Yiu-tong of the Funeral Business Association surmised that the information quoted by CSSO(SS)1 in paragraph 27 above dated back to four years ago, as the service halls in the Hung Hom Public Funeral Parlour were no longer provided free of charge for bereaved families. CSSO(SS)1 clarified, however, that such information was up-to-date, as it had only been provided by some funeral service providers shortly before this meeting.

29. Mr Alan LEONG asked whether any of the 17 items listed in the table provided by the Comfort Care Concern Group could not be reimbursed under the burial grant. CSSO(SS)1 replied that all the items could be reimbursed as they were all related to funeral expenses. Mr LEONG further asked whether the Administration considered any of the 17 items to be over-charged. CSSO(SS)1 responded that he did not have the answer to that question, as the price for individual funeral items, such as coffins, or decoration of funeral halls, varied according to the requirements of the bereaved families. Mr LEONG added that based on CSSO(SS)1's replies to his two questions, it seemed that the case had been made out that all the 17 items in the table, totalling \$13,702, were basic expenses for a arranging funeral. The burial grant, at \$10,430, was therefore inadequate to meet the basic expenses concerned.

30. Ms LI Fung-ying said that for CSSA recipients, consideration should be given to waiving the government charges relating to funeral matters, such as those for the death certificate and cremation. The Chairman concurred with Ms LI's view.

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31. In reply, DDSW(A) said that the existing level of the burial grant had already taken into account these government charges. Waiving such charges would, in effect, mean increasing the level of the grant. She added that the Administration did not prescribe a list of items on which the burial grant might be spent so to allow flexible use of the grant by the deceased recipient's family according to their wish.

Provision of niches

32. Responding to the concern raised by some deputations about the shortage of niches, Assistant Director (Operations) 2, FEHD (AD(O)2, FEHD) said that due to limited land supply for burials, the Government had been encouraging the public to adopt cremation in lieu of burials since the 1970s. The adoption of cremation as a means of disposal of the dead had been rising steadily in the last few decades, reaching 86% (around 33 000 cremations) in 2005. This in turn led to rising demand for niches.

33. AD(O)2, FEHD further said that FEHD managed a total of 138 000 niches, all of which had been sold out in March 2005. To meet the immediate shortage of niches, the Administration had made plans to construct 7 000 new niches at the Columbaria at Cape Collinson, Kwai Chung and Wo Hop Shek. It was anticipated that these new niches would be available for public allocation within this year.

34. AD(O)2, FEHD added that in the longer term, the Administration planned to provide more new niches in existing cemetery/columbarium sites at Wo Hop Shek and Kwai Chung, subject to consultation with relevant District Councils. He pointed out that despite the rising demand for niches in recent years, the public at large generally did not favour the presence of the columbaria in their neighbourhood possibly due to psychological reasons.

35. AD(O)2, FEHD further told members that to make the best use of the limited land available for building columbaria and having regard to the visual impact on the surrounding, the Administration had introduced, inter alia, the following new columbarium designs –

- (a) to increase the number of storeys of columbarium blocks from the current norm of seven storeys to nine storeys; and
- (b) to build more standard niches (for holding two urns) and less family ones (for holding four urns).

36. In response to Mr LAU Kit-yan's comment on the price increase for Government niches, AD(O)2, FEHD clarified that the two former Municipal

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Councils had set different prices for government niches in the urban areas and the New Territories, and FEHD had not revised those prices since it took over the management of the niches.

Cremation service

37. In response to the comment of Ms YU Mei-yuk on the long waiting time for cremation service, AD(O)2, FEHD said that, to cope with the rising demand for such service, the Administration had been reprovisioning cremators to increase the cremation capacity in the past few years. All the eight cremators at Kwai Chung and Fu Shan Crematoria had been replaced by more efficient ones. Reprovisioned cremators were now under construction at the Diamond Hill Crematorium, and they would be commissioned in early 2007. Moreover, the Administration was working on plans to reprovision exiting cremators at Wo Hop Shek and Cape Collinson Crematoria.

Facilities for holding simple funeral ceremonies

38. Consultant Forensic Pathologist i/c, Department of Health (CFP,DH) briefed members on the existing facilities in the public mortuaries for holding simple funeral ceremonies, which were provided at no charge and did not require prior application. At the Fu Shan Public Mortuary and the Kwai Chung Public Mortuary, bereaved families could hold simple mourning ceremonies in the encoffining room or the parking lot. There were also joss paper burners in the parking lot. As for the Victoria Public Mortuary and the Kowloon Public Mortuary, where the original encoffining rooms had been converted into cold chambers, simple funeral ceremonies could be held in the parking lot. He further informed members that the Administration had been actively planning to enhance the facilities in the public mortuaries for holding simple funeral ceremonies. To this end, representatives from the Department of Health, the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD), and the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) had conducted site visits to all the public mortuaries in April 2006. In view of the limited space in the existing mortuaries for further development, there was a need, in the long-run, to construct new mortuaries or reprovision the existing ones. However, this had always met with strong local resistance.

39. In response to Ms LI Fung-ying's request for more details on the Administration's plan for improving the existing facilities for holding simple mourning ceremonies in the public mortuaries, CFP,DH reiterated that following their recent site visits to the public mortuaries, ArchSD and EMSD would give professional advice on how best to improve the existing facilities for the purpose.

40. The Chairman said that in some public mortuaries, there was not even a table for the bereaved families to place the photo of the deceased when holding

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simple mourning ceremonies. This was disrespectful to the deceased. He said that some simple measures, such as providing a table for holding mourning ceremonies, could be easily implemented without the need to resort to professional advice. He requested the Administration to provide a timetable for implementing the improvement measures.

41. CFP,DH responded that professional advice was indeed necessary for some of the planned improvement measures, such as adding a cover to the area designated for holding mourning ceremonies. He undertook that the Administration would implement the improvement measures as soon as possible.

Resources for provision of hospice services

42. On the comment made by some deputations that the Administration should provide resources to NGOs to meet the increasing demand for end of life services, Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Elderly) (ADSW(E)) responded that NGOs were providing hospice services of different scale, in accordance with the vision and mission of individual NGOs. The Administration would continue to encourage tripartite partnerships among the Government, the third sector and the business community in the provision of social welfare services, including elderly services. She added that some NGOs had made good use of the social resources available (such as the CIIF and the Community Chest) to augment their existing services.

43. Referring to the survey conducted by the Society for the Promotion of Hospice Care on the general public's attitude towards death as detailed in its written submission (LC Paper No. CB(2)2024/05-06(03)), Mr LEE Cheuk-yan said that the provision of hospice care and related support services to elders and their families could go a long way towards addressing the worries of the elderly and promoting their emotional well-being. However, it appeared that the Administration had not done much in this respect. Instead of providing resources to NGOs for provision of such services, the Administration simply asked NGOs to seek funding support from charity funds or the business sector.

44. ADSW(E) responded that under the Lump Sum Grant subvention system, NGOs were given flexibility in the deployment of subvention funding to organise different programmes to meet the service needs of elders, including activities related to end-of-life services.

Other issues

45. As regards the case mentioned by Mr Gary SHAM of SJS that a 59-year old woman was required to join the SFS Scheme immediately on the death of her husband, DDSW(A) said that as a matter of policy, all able-bodied unemployed

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CSSA recipients aged between 15 to 59 were required to participate in the SFS Scheme. She added that it was difficult for her to comment on individual cases, and suggested that the woman concerned should contact SWD direct so that the latter could determine, having regard to the circumstances of her case, whether special consideration could be given to granting her a grace period in respect of participation in the SFS Scheme.

46. In response to the suggestion of Mr Eddie CHAN that the Administration should compile an approved list of NGOs which could assist in making funeral arrangements for deceased CSSA recipients with no relatives in Hong Kong, PASHWF(ES&SS)2 said that for such cases, the Administration had always allowed the staff of the NGOs concerned to make funeral arrangements on behalf of the bereaved families.

47. The Chairman asked whether the unclaimed bodies buried at the Sandy Ridge Cemetery could have their names, rather than mere numbers, inscribed onto the plaques, so as to show greater respect to the deceased. AD(O)2, FEHD responded that as the names of some of the unclaimed bodies remained unknown, all the unclaimed bodies were represented by numbers. In any case, the names of the unclaimed bodies, if known, had been kept on record. He further said that given that the nature of the Sandy Ridge Cemetery was a communal grave, the plaques in the cemetery would only record the number of deceased persons buried in the Cemetery in a given year, rather than the name of each person buried there.

Conclusion

48. In summing-up, the Chairman reiterated that end of life services had been a blind spot in the provision of elderly services, and he hoped that the Administration would seriously consider reviewing the level of the burial grant under the CSSA Scheme. He added that further discussion on the subject could be held at a future meeting of the Panel on Welfare Services if necessary.

49. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:34 pm.