

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)1189/06-07
(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/PL/WS

Panel on Welfare Services

Minutes of meeting
held on Monday, 12 February 2007, at 10:45 am
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building

Members present : Hon CHAN Yuen-han, JP (Chairman)
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Albert HO Chun-yan
Hon Bernard CHAN, GBS, JP
Dr Hon YEUNG Sum
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon LI Fung-ying, BBS, JP
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, JP
Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki

Members absent : Hon LEE Cheuk-yan
Hon Mrs Sophie LEUNG LAU Yau-fun, SBS, JP
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC

Public Officers attending : Agenda item IV
Ms Carol YIP
Deputy Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food
(Elderly Services and Social Security)
Mr Eugene FUNG
Principal Assistant Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food
(Elderly Services and Social Security)

Mrs Kathy NG
Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Elderly)

Mr FU Tsun-hung
Chief Social Work Officer (Elderly) 1
Social Welfare Department

Dr LAW Chi-kwong, JP
Associate Professor
Department of Social Work and Social Administration
The University of Hong Kong

Dr Ernest CHUI
Associate Professor
Department of Social Work and Social Administration
The University of Hong Kong

Dr Lisanne KO
Research Fellow
Department of Social Work and Social Administration
The University of Hong Kong

Agenda item V

Mr Freely CHENG
Principal Assistant Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food
(Family)

Miss SHEA Wing-man
Assistant Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Family) 1

Miss Cecilla LI
Chief Social Work Officer (Family and Child Welfare) 1
Social Welfare Department

Mr Mark WAN
Principal Education Officer (Kowloon)
Education and Manpower Bureau

**Deputations
by invitation**

: Agenda item IV

The Against Elderly Abuse of Hong Kong

Mr Kennex YUE
Chief Executive Director

The Hong Kong Council of Social Service

Mr CHAN Man-yee, Grace
Chief Officer (Elderly)

Ms LEUNG Mei-see
Officer (Elderly)

Association for the Right of the Elderly

Mr CHAN Kam-ming
Chairperson

Ms SO Kit-yin
Vice Chairperson

Clerk in attendance : Miss Betty MA
Chief Council Secretary (2) 4

Staff in attendance : Mr Chris LAI
Senior Council Secretary (2) 7

Miss Maggie CHIU
Legislative Assistant (2) 4

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I. Confirmation of minutes

[LC Paper No. CB(2)1027/06-07]

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2007 were confirmed.

II. Information paper(s) issued since the last meeting

2. Members noted that no information paper was issued since the last meeting.

III. Items for discussion at the next meeting

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1028/06-07(01) and (02)]

3. Members agreed to discuss the following items at the next regular meeting scheduled for 12 March 2007 at 10:45 am –

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- (a) Review of the system for processing applications for Disability Allowance under the Social Security Allowance Scheme; and
- (b) Review of Barrier-Free Access Design Manual 1997.

4. Dr KWOK Ka-ki said that the problem of cross-border drug abuse involving young abusers was becoming serious. Whilst noting that the Panel on Security had discussed the latest drug abuse situation and anti-drug strategies at its meeting on 8 February 2007 and members of the Panel on Welfare Services had been invited to join the discussion, Dr KWOK considered that the Panel on Welfare Services should discuss the matter further focusing on the support and services for young abusers from the welfare perspective. He also suggested that deputations, particularly frontline social workers, should be invited to give views on the severity of the problem and the difficulties faced by social workers.

5. Referring to item 22 of the Panel's list of outstanding items for discussion, Mr Bernard CHAN expressed concern about the malpractice of some charitable fund-raising activities, which had an adverse impact on the fund-raising activities organised by bona fide welfare non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Considering that the requirements for registration as charitable organisations under section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance (IRO) (Cap 112) were too relaxed, Mr CHAN took the view that the Panel should discuss enhancing the monitoring of charitable fund-raising activities as soon as possible.

6. Dr YEUNG Sum supported Mr Bernard CHAN's suggestion. Dr YEUNG said that the malpractice of charitable fund-raising activities was worthy of discussion as the public had become sceptical about such activities. Dr KWOK Ka-ki and Dr Fernando CHEUNG held similar views and said that the Panel should discuss with the Administration ways to enhance monitoring of and regulating fund-raising activities. Dr CHEUNG added that the registration of charitable organisations under IRO should be reviewed as well.

7. The Chairman advised that issues raised by Dr KWOK Ka-ki and Mr Bernard CHAN were on the Panel's list of outstanding items for discussion. As a number of discussion items would be scheduled for discussion by the Panel in the second quarter of 2007, she would liaise with the Administration on the timing for discussing the above items. The Chairman added that special meeting(s) would be held if necessary. Members agreed.

IV. Evaluation study of the re-engineered neighbourhood elderly centres and district elderly community centres
[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1028/06-07(03) to (07)]

8. Deputy Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Elderly Services and

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Social Security) (DS/HWF(ES)) briefed members on the background of the evaluation study on the effectiveness and user satisfaction of the re-engineered District Elderly Community Centres (DECCs) and Neighbourhood Elderly Centres (NECs). She said that the Administration welcomed the findings and recommendations of the study and was considering how to take forward those recommendations which had resource implications both to DECCs and NECs, such as the proposals to strengthen carers' support and relief in the context of hospital discharge planning, and to enhance assistance for outreaching vulnerable elders.

9. With the aid of powerpoint presentation, Dr LAW Chi-kwong, Associate Professor of the Department of Social Work and Social Administration of the University of Hong Kong (HKU) gave an account of the objectives and methodology of the study and highlighted the findings and observations of the study and the recommendations to improve the operation of NECs/DECCs.

Meeting with deputations

10. The Chairman welcomed deputations to the meeting. The views of the deputations are summarized below.

*The Against Elderly Abuse of Hong Kong
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1028/06-07(05)]*

11. Ms Kennex YUE introduced the submission of the Against Elderly Abuse of Hong Kong. While it did not have strong views on the findings and the recommendations of the evaluation study, the Against Elderly Abuse of Hong Kong was gravely concerned about the situation of hidden elders. Ms YUE said that hidden elders were vulnerable to elderly abuse as they did not have a normal social life and were not linked to the existing network of community support. In this connection, she urged the Administration to strengthen the support and services for hidden elders and increase the resources and manpower of DECCs and NECs to render better protection to these elders.

*The Hong Kong Council of Social Services
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1028/06-07(06)]*

12. Ms Grace CHAN presented the views of the Hong Kong Council of Social Services (HKCSS) as set out in its submission. Ms CHAN said that HKCSS appreciated that various stakeholders had been consulted in the evaluation study and was generally supportive of the findings and recommendations of the study. In view of the increasing workload of DECCs/NECs arising from an ageing population, HKCSS suggested that an additional social worker should be provided for each DECC/NEC to enhance counselling services for elders. Carer support services should also be strengthened, in particular, by increasing the number of places of respite services for elders and enhancing home care services.

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The Administration should also step up efforts to outreach to and undertake follow-up action on hidden elders.

Association for the Right of the Elderly
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1028/06-07(07)]

13. Ms SO Kit-yin introduced the submission of the Association for the Right of the Elderly. Ms SO said that the Association expressed general support for the findings and recommendations of the study. The Association had put forth a number of suggestions in its submission to improve the elderly services, which included enhancing carer support services, setting up specialised support teams, modernising the physical setting of DECCs and NECs, facilitating more elderly centres to be upgraded through the re-engineering exercise, arranging a visiting medical doctor to each DECC/NEC, promoting closer collaboration between the Hospital Authority (HA) and DECCs/NECs in hospital discharge planning, and lowering the age limit for joining DECCs and NECs to 50.

The Administration's response

14. Responding to the deputations' views, DS/HWF(ES) said that while recognising the problem of hidden elders, it would be necessary for the Administration to consider the manpower implications and work out the best way to outreach to and follow-up on these elders. Regarding the recommendation on closer collaboration between NECs/DECCs and HA's hospitals in discharge planning, DS/HWF(ES) said that the Administration would consider ways to strengthen the carer support services such as training for carers prior to the discharge of the care-receivers. To tie in with the Government's "ageing in the community" policy, the Administration agreed that DECCs and NECs should, in closer collaboration with the Visiting Health Teams of the Department of Health (DH), further enhance their health promotion and prevention programmes to cultivate an active and healthy lifestyle among elders in the community. Moreover, home care services for elders would be strengthened to gear towards the policy objective. The Administration would also, in partnership with the Elderly Commission, promote positive ageing among elders through various lifelong learning programmes.

Discussion

15. Dr YEUNG Sum declared that he was an academic staff of HKU. He was supportive of the findings and recommendations of the evaluation study conducted by the consultant, and pointed out that in view of the ageing population, the Administration should give due attention to the provision of adequate day care and respite services for elders. Expressing dissatisfaction at the absence of a long-term plan for the development of elderly services, Dr YEUNG strongly urged the Administration to formulate a five-year plan for

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elderly services, analyse the demand and supply of elderly services at district level, and set out the annual amount of resources to be allocated for such services. In short, the plan should list out the proposed enhancement in each district, such as specific plans to provide more space and modernised physical setting for DECCs and NECs to run programmes and activities, additional manpower resources for DECCs and NECs, additional resources for strengthening different types of services (i.e. home care services, carer support services, respite services for elders, health care services at the elderly centres, etc.), plans for complementary measures such as transportation for elders travelling to elderly centres, as well as additional resources for training for carers and volunteers. Dr YEUNG asked DS/HWF(ES) to convey his requests to the Financial Secretary for consideration and make progress reports to the Panel.

16. Expressing concern about the provision of health care services for the elderly, Ms LI Fung-ying enquired about the new initiatives for enhancing health care for elderly in residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs) and those who were members of NECs and DECCs. Apart from recruiting private practitioners to conduct regular visits to RCHEs under the Visiting Medical Officers Scheme, Ms LI asked whether consideration would be given to expanding the scheme to elderly centres. She welcomed the proposal for improving the hospital discharge planning, but was worried about the ability of NECs and DECCs in coping with the additional referrals from HA for carer support services.

17. DS/HWF(ES) responded that the Administration was exploring ways to enhance the manpower resources of NECs and DECCs. As regards health care services for the elderly, she said that the Administration was studying the subject matter which included proposals to strengthen health promotion and prevention programmes and improve the cooperation between DECCs/NECs and HA on discharge planning. DS/HWF(ES) pointed out that given their defined roles and functions, elderly centres should not be regarded as medical service centres for the elderly. The proposal for expanding the Visiting Medical Officers Scheme to elderly centres required further consideration.

18. Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Elderly) (ADSW(E)) added that visiting medical officers made regular visits to RCHEs to provide medical care for the elderly residents.

19. Ms LI Fung-ying said that the Administration had undertaken to enhance the outreaching and follow-up work on vulnerable and hidden elders when the re-engineering exercise was launched in 2003. Since the Administration had made the same commitment again, Ms LI asked the improvements which had been made to the outreach services for vulnerable and hidden elders since the launching of the re-engineering exercise.

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20. ADSW(E) responded that the Support Teams for the Elderly, which were based in DECCs, had outreached vulnerable elders and provided care, counselling and support for them. The Support Teams were serving about 60 000 elders, of whom about 30 000 were singletons. The Support Teams would step up efforts to outreach and provide assistance to vulnerable elders, especially the hidden elders who were more reluctant to receive service. ADSW(E) added that the Administration was considering the manpower implications of the consultant's recommendation in respect of the keeping of records of the general profile of the elderly persons who appeared to be living alone and vulnerable, but refused services when first approached by the Support Teams to facilitate follow-up work in future.

21. Mr TAM Yiu-chung said that since the launching of the re-engineering exercise, the roles and functions of DECCs/NECs had shifted from providing social recreational programmes to other types of programmes. He asked about the proportion of social recreational programmes organised by these centres after the re-engineering exercise. As many DECCs and NECs were still under-provided in terms of space, Mr TAM raised concern as to whether these centres would be able to provide a wide range of services for the elderly.

22. ADSW(E) responded that various output indicators were set out in the Funding and Service Agreement (FSA) of NECs/DECCs. For example, a DECC was required to organise 60 social and recreational programmes, 120 educational and developmental programmes including lifelong learning and 120 other programmes for volunteer recruitment and development each year. In other words, NECs and DECCs would continue to provide a certain number of social and recreational programmes for the elderly. Noting that the concern about space applied to both NECs and DECCs, ADSW(E) said that the Administration had provided more space for NECs and DECCs as far as practicable to meet their new operational needs. She added that the space of one-third of the 115 NECs had been/would be increased from 238 to around 400 square metre, whereas the space of half of the 41 DECCs had increased from 489 to around 600 square metre. The Administration would continue to identify suitable premises for the remaining DECCs and NECs to meet the enhanced schedule of accommodation.

23. Mr TAM Yiu-chung said that instead of attracting more elderly aged between 50 and 59 to join NECs and DECCs as members, consideration should be given to mobilising these relatively younger elders to provide volunteer services for other needy elders. ADSW(E) responded that some NECs and DECCs welcomed elders aged between 50 and 59 to join their programmes and activities, and had organised training for them to become volunteers and as social capital of the elderly centres.

24. Dr Fernando CHEUNG appreciated that the relevant stakeholders had

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been involved in the process of the evaluation study and hoped that such a good practice would be adopted in other reviews and studies. Dr CHEUNG was supportive of the recommendations to enhance the outreaching services for hidden elders and carer support services in the context of hospital discharge planning. Dr CHEUNG said that while the consultant proposed the addition of one social worker to each centre, DECCs and NECs were under great pressure in meeting various output indicators as set out in FSA. The additional staff could not solve the staffing shortage problem, not to mention coping with the additional workload arising from the enhanced services. Dr CHEUNG urged the Administration to review FSA in consultation with the stakeholders with a view to reducing some "non-core duties" such as user-opinion surveys.

25. Dr Fernando CHEUNG further said that the progress of providing more space for and modernising the physical setting of DECCs and NECs was far from satisfactory. He considered that the Administration should set out a concrete implementation timetable in this respect. Furthermore, the Administration should provide more details on how to enhance the hospital discharge planning.

26. DS/HWF(ES) stressed that the Administration would follow up the issues of concern raised by members. DS/HWF(ES) said that support for the elderly was a complex subject which cut across different policy areas and had significant financial implications. It was imperative for the Administration to consider how to take forward the consultant's recommendations having regard to the local context and the availability of funds.

27. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung was of the view that the resources allocated for elderly services were far from adequate, and asked if the Administration had reneged on its promise to care for the elderly. Mr LEUNG cast doubt on the effectiveness of the "ageing in the community" policy, because, unlike overseas countries, most families in Hong Kong lacked facilities and space to meet the long-term care needs of elders. To address the problems arising from the ageing population, Mr LEUNG considered that the Administration should formulate a long-term plan for the development of elderly services.

28. DS/HWF(ES) said that according to the evaluation study conducted by HKU, over 85% of the members of DECCs and NECs and the care-givers were satisfied with the services provided by the re-engineered elderly centres. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung considered the figure unreliable as elderly members of DECCs and NECs were usually reluctant to make negative comments on the services of the centres. In his view, the adequacy of elderly services for the community could only be reflected accurately in terms of the resources and manpower allocated for the purpose.

29. Noting from the findings of the evaluation study that over 70% of the elderly members of NECs and DECCs were female, Mr Frederick FUNG asked

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whether the study had studied the phenomenon and ways to attract more male elders to make use of the services provided by NECs and DECCs.

30. Dr LAW Chi-kwong of HKU responded that the study had not examined the phenomenon. Dr LAW believed that the conventional social and recreational programmes were more appealing to female elders. NECs and DECCs might organise more tailor-made programmes to attract male elders.

31. ADSW(E) added that the Administration was aware that female members of NECs and DECCs outnumbered male members. In this regard, the Administration had invited five NGOs with substantial experience in providing elderly services to organise tailor-made programmes in February and March 2007 with a view to attracting male elders to take part in these programmes. The effectiveness of these programmes would be reviewed in 2007-2008.

32. Mr Frederick FUNG said that while it was understandable that about half of the NEC/DECC members were low-educated elders, he was concerned that more than 50% of them resided in public rental housing as compared with only 38.5% of elderly living in public housing units in Hong Kong. He considered that the phenomenon was worthy of study. Noting that elderly centres were mainly located at public housing estates, Mr FUNG wondered whether this accounted for the lower participation rate of elders who lived in private housing. Given that many low-educated and low-income elders were living in dilapidated private buildings, the Administration should also consider ways to attract these elders to make use of the services of NECs and DECCs.

33. ADSW(E) explained that NECs and DECCs provided community care and support services for the elderly, in particular those in the grassroot level. The number of NECs and DECCs in each district was determined based on the local demand, irrespective of whether the elders were living in public or private housing. Consequently, there were more elderly centres in districts populated by elders such as Sham Shui Po.

34. Dr LAW Chi-kwong of HKU said that the study had not examined the distribution of elderly centres in public and private housing in different districts. Dr LAW believed that most elderly centres were located at public housing estates because it was more difficult to identify suitable premises for NECs and DECCs in private buildings. As the educational attainment of most public housing elderly residents was low, so would members of elderly centres located at public housing estates would generally be low-educated, although further studies would be needed to ascertain the inference. Mr Frederick FUNG held the view that further studies should be conducted to examine the reasons for fewer elders living in private housing to make use of the services of NECs and DECCs.

35. The Chairman said that families with frail elderly members faced great

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difficulties in taking care of them. While the respite service for elders could provide support and temporary relief for the carers, the waiting time for such service was very long. The Chairman further said that the respite service should be available to all elders irrespective of their family income.

36. Dr YEUNG Sum said that the provision of elderly services in Hong Kong was generally inadequate to meet the current and future needs. In the light of the improving financial position, the Government should devote more resources for enhancing elderly services without further delay. Dr YEUNG reiterated his earlier request for the Administration to draw up a five-year plan for elderly services and urged for members' support.

37. DS/HWF(ES) responded that resources for elderly services were allocated under the Government's annual resource allocation exercise and the resources allocated for elderly services have been increasing over the years. The Administration was also considering how to take forward the consultants' proposals to strengthen those elderly services which had resources implications.

38. Dr YEUNG Sum said that the problem of inadequate elderly services could not be fully addressed under the existing resources allocation mechanism, as the funding allocated for the purpose was limited. Dr Fernando CHEUNG agreed with Dr YEUNG Sum that a five-year plan for the development of elderly services and expressed dissatisfaction at the absence of a long-term programme plan for elderly services. Dr CHEUNG moved the following motion –

"鑒於本港人口老化及長者的需要不斷增長，本會促請政府立即制訂長者服務五年計劃，並聽取民間及專業的意見，具體回應日後長者服務的需要。"

(Translation)

"That, in view of the ageing population of Hong Kong and continuous increase in the needs of the elderly, this Panel urges the Government to expeditiously formulate a five-year plan on services for the elderly and incorporate the opinions of the general public and those of the professionals as a concrete response to the service needs of the elderly in the future."

39. The Chairman put the motion to vote. Six members present at the meeting voted for the motion and Mr Tommy CHEUNG abstained from voting. No member voted against the motion. The Chairman declared that the motion was carried. The Chairman urged the Administration to follow up on the motion passed by the Panel and address issues relating to elderly services in a comprehensive matter.

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Formation of a subcommittee under the Panel

40. The Chairman suggested that a subcommittee be formed under the Panel to follow up with the Administration on the implementation progress of the provision of long-term care services for the elderly.

41. Responding to Mr Tommy CHEUNG, the Chairman said that the Panel had discussed at its meeting on 13 October 2005 the proposal of setting up a subcommittee under the Panel to study long-term care services for the elderly. The Panel had decided to defer the decision on setting up the subcommittee after one of the existing two Subcommittees under the Panel had completed its work. As there was wide public concern about elderly services in the light of the ageing population, the Chairman invited members to re-consider whether a subcommittee should be formed to study the subject right away.

42. Dr YEUNG Sum was not in favour of forming a new subcommittee to study long-term care services for the elderly at the moment. Dr YEUNG expressed concern about the heavy workload imposed on members and the Legislative Council Secretariat, having regard to the fact that two subcommittees had already been formed under the Panel.

43. Mr Tommy CHEUNG said that Members belonging to the Liberal Party had reservations about the proposal to set up another subcommittee under the Panel. Mr CHEUNG considered that the subject of long-term care services for elderly should be pursued by the Panel and the appointment of a subcommittee was unnecessary.

44. While expressing support for the need to enhance long-term care services for elders, Mr TAM Yiu-chung expressed reservations about the proposal to appoint a subcommittee under the Panel. Mr TAM suggested that consideration should be given to making the subject matter a standing item for discussion by the Panel.

45. The Chairman concluded that the Panel would defer the decision on setting up the subcommittee after one of the existing two Subcommittees under the Panel had completed its work. Members agreed.

V. Family education initiatives

[LC Paper No. CB(2)1028/06-07(08)]

46. Principal Assistant Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Family) (PAS/HWF(F)) briefed members on the Government's initiatives to enhance and extend family education. PAS/HWF(F) said that an Interdepartmental Task Force on Family Education had been set up in 2006 to map out a comprehensive

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strategy on family education for 2006-2007. The Task Force had formulated a publicity plan entitled the "Family at Heart Campaign" as detailed in the Administration's paper. PAS/HWF(F) said that promoting family education was an integral part of the Government's policy, and it would continue to promote family values and family education.

47. The Chairman expressed support for the Government's initiatives to strengthen and extend family education. Pointing out that the Administration was studying the feasibility of setting up a Family Commission, the Chairman asked how the family education initiatives would tie in with the work of the proposed Family Commission.

48. PAS/HWF(F) responded that a steering committee had been set up by the Health, Welfare and Food Bureau to study whether a Family Commission should be set up. The steering committee had discussed, among others, the Administration's initiatives to strengthen and extend family education. The committee was also studying how to promote family values which could foster family harmony and development of family-friendly policies. PAS/HWF(F) believed that the steering committee would take into account whether a Family Commission should be set up.

49. Responding to the Chairman's enquiry on whether more resources would be provided for promoting family education in high-risk areas such as Tin Shui Wai, PAS/HWF(F) said that resources were allocated to bureaux/departments and NGOs at district level to promote family values and family education. Different bureaux/departments and NGOs would formulate their publicity plans having regard to the local needs and the problems faced by high-risk families. PAS/HWF(F) pointed out that the purpose of the Administration's paper was to brief members on the new resources allocated to take forward the Government's family education initiatives, including a wide range of territory-wide publicity campaigns to promote family education through different channels.

50. While supporting the Government's initiatives, Dr Fernando CHEUNG expressed concern whether the Integrated Family Service Centres (IFSCs) were able to take up the additional responsibilities for delivering family life education programmes. In the face of various complex family problems which needed to be handled, IFSCs had no choice but to give a lower priority to deliver family life education programmes. Apart from one-off funding, Dr CHEUNG asked whether additional recurrent funding would be provided for IFSCs for promoting family education.

51. PAS/HWF(F) responded that the Chief Executive had pledged in his 2005 and 2006 Policy Addresses to allocate additional resources for promoting family education. Recurrent resources were provided for IFSCs to deliver family life education programmes, since these programmes were an integral part of the

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services provided by the centres. In view of the increasing workload, additional resources had been provided for IFSCs in recent years to strengthen their manpower resources and mobilise volunteers, with a view to alleviating the work pressure faced by the frontline social workers. PAS/HWF(F) added that family life education programmes were also delivered by the Integrated Children and Youth Services Centres and elderly centres across the territory, as well as through the school social work services.

52. In the light of the wide scope of family education, Mr Frederick FUNG asked whether the Administration had set out the specific family values and topics of family education to be covered in the publicity campaigns and, if so, whether the Administration had consulted the relevant stakeholders such as parents and NGOs providing welfare services when defining the scope of the publicity campaigns.

53. PAS/HWF(F) explained that family education covered a wide range of topics which included parenting, marital relationship, interpersonal and family relationship. For instance, to support parents in developing parenting knowledge and know-how, a parenting programme was designed for all expectant parents and parents of children aged 0 to 5 attending the Maternal and Child Health Centres. A Positive Parenting Programme was also available to support parents of children with early signs of behavioural problems or those who encountered difficulties in parenting. The Administration had consulted the relevant stakeholders at district level in drawing up the family education initiatives, and the stakeholders generally considered that family education programmes should be delivered at various levels for different target groups and through different channels.

54. Responding to Mr Frederick FUNG, PAS/HWF(F) said that the "Family at Heart Campaign" in 2006-2007 focused on the promotion of family values of "modelling", "harmony", "love and care" and "commitment". Four series of Announcements in the Public Interest on television and radio had been launched to promote the importance of these family values. The Administration would review the effectiveness of the campaign and make necessary improvements in the light of the review findings.

55. Mr Frederick FUNG pointed out that some parents did not have parenting knowledge and know-how, and suggested that the Administration should strengthen the provision of parenting education programmes for these parents. Consideration should also be given to design tailor-made parenting programmes for specific target groups, such as single parents and parents from a disadvantaged background to meet their special needs.

56. PAS/HWF(F) responded that there were a wide range of parenting education programmes in the health, education and social sectors to support

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parents in developing the relevant knowledge and know-how. In addition to the Positive Parenting Programme mentioned earlier, DH had organised a roving exhibition on child development and parenting skills in 18 districts. DH and Radio Television Hong Kong had also co-produced a documentary series on tips and skills of positive parenting.

57. Principal Education Officer (Kowloon), Education and Manpower Bureau added that family education incorporating important family values and attitudes was entrenched in both primary and secondary school curricula. Parent-teacher associations also provided support for the promotion of family education at schools. These associations could apply for the Home-School Co-operation Grants for organising home-school co-operation activities for various purposes, which included nurturing the students' positive values and assisting parents to guide their children to learn.

58. The Chairman said that information technology had been adopted widely for disseminating information to the public. The Chairman expressed concern that children and their families coming from a disadvantaged background lacked access to information technology. She hoped that the Administration would give due regard to the difficulties faced by these disadvantaged families when making use of the information technology to promote family education initiatives.

VI. Any other business

59. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:55 pm.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
9 March 2006