

Panel on Welfare Services

List of outstanding items for discussion
(position as at 4 April 2007)

	Proposed timing for discussion
1. Review of the system for processing applications for Disability Allowance under the Social Security Allowance Scheme	May 2007
At the Panel meeting on 12 March 2007, the Administration was requested to provide responses to areas of concern raised by members. Members agreed to further discuss the matter when the Administration revert to the Panel in May 2007.	
2. Proposed review mechanism for fatal child abuse cases	May 2007
Discussions were held at the Panel meeting on 29 June 2006. The Panel agreed to follow up the views and recommendations of the members and deputations and a number of reports of the Law Reform Commission relating to child protection.	
The Administration was requested to brief members on the details of its proposed death review mechanism for fatal child abuse cases before implementation.	
At members' request, the Research and Library Services Division of the Legislative Council Secretariat is conducting a research study on child protection policies and measures in England, Ontario and New South Wales. The research report has been completed and will be submitted to the Panel for consideration at the meeting on 12 April 2007.	
3. Licensing of rehabilitation homes for people with disabilities	June 2007
Item proposed by the Administration.	

4.

Charitable fund-raising activities

The Administration's paper on enhancing the monitoring of charitable fund-raising activities was discussed at the Panel meeting on 19 July 2004. Members agreed that the proposal of regulating funding-raising activities by mail should be followed up by the Panel in the 2006-2007 legislative session.

June 2007

The Reference Guide on Best Practices for Charitable Fund-raising Activities has been promulgated in November 2004.

At the Panel meeting on 12 February 2007, members expressed concern about the malpractice of some charitable fund-raising activities and agreed that the Panel should discuss enhancing the monitoring of charitable fund-raising activities as soon as possible.

5.

2005 Rehabilitation Programme Plan Review

At past Panel Meetings, Members were informed that the Administration was conducting a review of Rehabilitation Programme Plan. The Administration undertook to submit the Plan to Panel once the drafting and the necessary consultation process were completed.

2nd quarter of 2007

6.

Social security assistance for needy elderly in Hong Kong

Discussions were held at the Panel meeting on 13 June 2005. The Administration was requested to brief the Panel on its thinking on how better to provide retirement protection to the current and future generation of older persons by the end of the year.

2nd quarter of 2007

7.

Rehab buses for disabled persons

Referred for follow-up by the Panel at a special meeting of the Finance Committee held on 13 April 2005.

2nd quarter of 2007

Proposed timing for discussion

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8. Infirmary care in non-hospital setting	
The Administration consulted the Panel in December 2004 on a proposal to launch a trial scheme to provide infirmary care places for medically stable elders in a non-hospital setting. In the light of feedback from the Panel and the sector during the consultation process, the Administration is considering the best way to bring forward the proposal.	2 nd /3 rd quarter of 2007
9. Progress of the Community Investment and Inclusion Fund	
The Administration would like to report on the progress of this Fund.	3 rd quarter of 2007
10. A project for residential homes for people with disabilities	
Item proposed by the Administration.	3 rd quarter of 2007
11. Report of the Subcommittee on Guardianship and Custody of the Law Reform Commission	
At the meeting held on 11 March 2002, members agreed that the Administration should brief the Panel on the above report when it became available.	4 th quarter of 2007
The Report on Custody and Access by the Subcommittee on Guardianship and Custody of the Law Reform Commission was released on 7 March 2005. The Administration is studying the recommendations carefully and will consider how to take forward the relevant recommendations together with the recommendations made in the other two earlier reports, namely, the Report on Guardianship of Children and Report on International Parental Child Abduction.	

	Proposed timing for discussion
12.	Latest situation on the implementation of review of family services
	Item proposed by Hon Albert CHAN at the Panel meeting on 12 October 2004.
	The Administration has advised that transformation of all existing Family Services Centres/counselling units into 61 Integrated Family Services Centres was completed in March 2005. A review on the implementation of the aforesaid transformation would take place in 2007-2008.
13.	Proposed establishment of the Family Commission
	At the Panel meeting on 13 October 2006, the Panel was advised that the Administration would study the feasibility of setting up a Family Commission. At the Panel on Home Affairs meeting of 8 December 2006 when the proposal to discuss the establishment of a Commission on Children was raised, members agreed with the Administration's suggestion that the issue should be followed up by the Panel on Welfare Services in the context of the proposed establishment of a Family Commission. Members of the Panel on Home Affairs will be invited to the future meeting of the Panel if the issue is discussed.
	The subject had originally been scheduled for discussion by the Panel at the meeting in April 2007. At the request of the Administration, discussion on the item would be deferred to a future meeting.

To be decided

Proposed timing for discussion

14. Support services for young drug abusers

Item proposed by Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki at the meeting on 12 October 2006. Dr KWOK suggested that deputations, particularly frontline social workers, should be invited to give views to the Panel when the matter was discussed.

To be decided

At the Panel meeting on 12 February 2007, members noted that the Panel on Security had discussed the latest drug abuse situation and anti-drug strategies at its meeting on 6 February 2007 and members of the Panel on Welfare Services had been invited to join the discussion. However, in view of the problem of cross-border drug abuse involving young abusers was becoming serious, members considered that the Panel should discuss the matter further focusing on the support and services provided by Social Welfare Department (SWD) and social welfare agencies for young abusers.

The Administration has advised that the SWD works for the Security Bureau (SB) to provide preventive and rehabilitative services dedicated to drug abusers through non-medical voluntary drug treatment and rehabilitation centres (DTRCs), counselling centres for psychotropic substance abusers, social clubs and halfway houses for dischargees from DTRCs. On the other hand, SWD works for the Health, Welfare and Food Bureau for general welfare services to all needy youth, including drug abusers, through for example services at the Integrated Children and Youth Services Centres, outreach work for youth at risks and probation services for offenders.

As the issue of drug abuses is under the policy purview of SB, the Administration suggested that it would be more appropriate to further discuss the subject at a joint Panel meeting of the Panel on Security and the Panel on Welfare Services.

Proposed timing for discussion

15. Subsidy arrangements for residential care services for frail elders

The Administration aims to report progress on the work relating to the feasibility of developing the proposed Fee Assistance Scheme for residential care services for frail elders, taking into account the suggestion of establishing a separate financial assistance scheme for elders and other views expressed by members on the matter on 12 May 2003.

To be decided

16. Establishing formal arrangements on adoption with the Mainland

At the request of the Bills Committee on Adoption (Amendment) Bill 2003, the Administration undertook to study the need to establish formal arrangements on adoption with the Mainland and consult the relevant Panels in due course.

To be decided

The Administration has raised this with the Ministry of Civil Affairs (MCA). The Central People's Government (CPG) has already put in place legislation and mechanism to handle adoption of Mainland children by Hong Kong people. As regards adoption of children in Hong Kong by Mainlanders, the CPG does not see an urgent need for it at the moment because there is little demand, according to the MCA. The CPG may however consider adoption by close relatives on a case-by-case basis. The Administration will continue to liaise with the CPG.

	Proposed timing for discussion
17. Incorporating the posts of programme assistant, youth ambassador, peer counsellor and other similar temporary frontline posts into the staff establishment of the subvented organisations providing welfare services	
The Panel was requested by Duty Roster Members to follow up the matter with the Administration.	To be decided
The Administration's position on the issue had been sent to the Panel vide LC Paper No. CB(2)1022/04-05(01) on 8 March 2005 (Chinese version only).	
The Panel on Manpower was briefed on the results of the review on temporary jobs in the public sector on 16 November 2006. SWD proposed to retain 3 073 out of 3 836 temporary jobs. Of these, 1 383 posts would be regularised while 1 690 positions would be extended in 2007-2008.	
18. Setting up of a refuge centre for abused men	
Referred for follow-up by Duty Roster Members following their meeting with a deputation on 13 June 2005.	To be decided
19. Developing strategy and measures to promote a self/mutual help culture in the community	
Item proposed by Hon Mrs Sophie LEUNG.	To be decided

	Proposed timing for discussion
20. Services for victims of family violence to be provided by the new Multi-purpose Crisis Intervention and Support Centre	To be decided
<p>At its meeting on 31 July 2006, the Subcommittee on Strategy and Measures to Tackle Family Violence passed a motion urging the Administration to conduct further consultation on the proposed new service model for victims of sexual violence and to suspend the bidding procedure for operating the new Multi-purpose Crisis Intervention and Support Centre in August 2006. The Subcommittee agreed at its meeting on 20 September 2006 that the Panel be requested to follow up the matter with the Administration.</p>	
21. Retirement protection	To be decided
<p>Item proposed by Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG.</p>	
22. Residential care homes and private homes for the elderly and mentally disabled	To be decided
<p>Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki has proposed to discuss measures to enhance the services of residential care homes and private homes for the elderly and mentally disabled.</p>	

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
4 April 2007