

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)976/07-08
(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/PL/WS

Panel on Welfare Services

Minutes of meeting
held on Monday, 14 January 2008, at 10:45 am
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building

Members present : Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung (Chairman)
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, SBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Albert HO Chun-yan
Hon LEE Cheuk-yan
Hon Mrs Sophie LEUNG LAU Yau-fun, GBS, JP
Dr Hon YEUNG Sum, JP
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon LI Fung-ying, BBS, JP
Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Hon Mrs Anson CHAN, GBM, JP

Member absent : Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung

Public Officers attending : Items IV and V

Mr Matthew CHEUNG Kin-chung, GBS, JP
Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Mr FUNG Pak-yan
Deputy Director of Social Welfare (Services)

Item IV

Ms Subrina CHOW
Administrative Assistant to Secretary for Labour and
Welfare

Miss Hinny LAM
Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare
(Welfare) 2

Mrs Loretta CHAU
District Social Welfare Officer (Yuen Long)

Mr James CHAN, JP
District Officer (Yuen Long)

Mr Tony LIU
Chief Manager/Management (Support Services 2)
Housing Department

Dr T W LEE
Service Director (Clinical & Ambulatory Care) NTWC /
Hospital Chief Executive, Pok Oi Hospital
Hospital Authority

Item V

Mr Paul TANG, JP
Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Ms Carol YIP
Deputy Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare) 2

Miss Helen TANG
Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare
(Poverty)

**Deputations /
individuals
by invitation**

: Item V

Society for Community Organization

Miss SZE Lai-shan
Community Organizer

The Boys' and Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong

Mr WONG Kwai-yau
Supervisor

Ms HO Yin
Social Worker

Hong Kong Committee on Children's Rights

Dr CHOW Chun-bong
Chairman

Hong Kong Society for the Protection of Children

Ms Susan SO
Director

The Hong Kong Council of Social Service

Mr CHAN Kam-ming
Service Development (Children and Youth)
Chief Officer

Ms YIP Choi-ha
Service Development (Children and Youth)
Officer

Against Child Abuse Ltd

Mrs Priscilla LUI
Director

Ms Grace CHAN
Member

Hong Kong College of Paediatricians

Dr Patricia IP
Member, Professional and General Affairs Committee

Hong Kong Paediatric Foundation

Dr CHAN Chok-wan
Chairman

Caritas Medical Centre

Dr YU Chak-man
Consultant Paediatrician

Individuals

Mr TANG Ka-piu
Member, Islands District Council

Dr CHAN Ching-hai
Network Convenor of Network for Health and Welfare
Studies
Department of Applied Social Sciences
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

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)720/07-08]

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2007 were confirmed.

II. Information paper issued since the last meeting
[LC Paper No. CB(2)742/07-08(01)]

2. Members noted that a referral from Duty Roster Members on the provision of health care services for the elderly had been issued since the last meeting.

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III. Items for discussion at the next meeting

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)721/07-08(01) and (02)]

3. Members agreed to discuss the following items proposed by the Administration at the next meeting on 14 February 2008 at 10:45 am –

- (a) Progress report on the implementation of Comprehensive Child Development Service; and
- (b) Establishment of the Family Council.

(Post-meeting note : Consequent to the discussion under agenda item V, members agreed to further discuss the Child Development Fund at the meeting on 14 February 2008.)

4. Dr KWOK Ka-ki said that following the announcement by the Chief Executive in his Policy Address 2007-2008, a high-level inter-departmental task force was established and headed by the Secretary for Justice to combat juvenile drug abuse. Dr KWOK considered that it was an opportune time for the Administration to revert on the new measures drawn up by the Task Force. He suggested that the Panel should hold a joint meeting with the Panel on Security in late February/early March 2008 to follow up the support measures for young drug abusers. Members agreed.

IV. Measures to assist the Tin Shui Wai community

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)147/07-08(01) and CB(2)721/07-08(03) and (04)]

5. Secretary for Labour and Welfare (SLW) said that following the family tragedy on 14 October 2007, the Administration and various sectors in the community had made considerable efforts in providing support for Tin Shui Wai (TSW) residents. SLW stressed that the Administration was always concerned with the well-being of TSW residents and had accorded a high degree of importance to providing support for them. Pursuant to the special meeting of the Panel on 30 October 2007 and the motion debate at the Council meeting on 7 November 2007, the Administration had introduced a number of measures to strengthen support for TSW. He then briefed members on the progress made by the Administration in following up the suggestions raised by Members. SLW said that the key measures included –

- (a) creating more local job opportunities in TSW by further developing and promoting more tourist attractions in TSW and encouraging more companies to set up business in the area. For example, the Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC) was planning to set up a "Telebet

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Centre cum Volunteer and Training Centre" in TSW, which would create 2 500 jobs. Of the 3 000 three-year temporary jobs to be created by the Administration for young people starting from 2008-2009, some 300 jobs would be allocated specifically to the Yuen Long district (including TSW);

- (b) enhancing employment services and vocational training/retraining for TSW residents, and organizing more large-scale job fairs in TSW. The Employees Retraining Board was also planning to launch a pilot "one-stop" training and employment support service centre in TSW;
- (c) advancing the timing of the review on the Transport Support Scheme (TSS) which was expected to be completed by end-February 2008;
- (d) considering different views received regarding the more flexible use of the undeveloped sites in Areas 112 and 115 adjoining the Wetland Park to promote the socio-economic development of TSW North;
- (e) strengthening health care services for TSW residents, such as redevelopment and expansion of the Pok Oi Hospital (POH), establishing a new public general out-patient clinic in Area 109 of TSW, conducting a pilot project by the Hospital Authority (HA) to purchase primary care services from the private sector in TSW North for chronic patients, and exploring the proposal of constructing a hospital in TSW; and
- (f) promoting mutual help and support, and strengthening neighbourhood network in the TSW community through various initiatives and schemes, such as the Community Investment and Inclusion Fund.

SLW stressed that the Administration would continue to enhance support for the TSW community taking into account the views of relevant stakeholders, including Members of the Legislative Council.

Creating more local job opportunities and enhancing employment services

6. The Chairman welcomed the measures introduced by the Administration to enhance support for TSW residents. However, he was disappointed at the absence of concrete measures to address the poor town planning in TSW which, in his view, was the fundamental cause for the family and social problems in the district. Dr KWOK Ka-ki shared the Chairman's views.

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7. In view of the high unemployed young population in TSW, Dr KWOK Ka-ki considered that the creation of temporary jobs was far from adequate to solve the problem. The Administration should upgrade the skills of young people to enhance their employability for taking up higher paid jobs. Moreover, the eligibility criteria for TSS should be relaxed to facilitate TSW residents to seek employment across districts.

8. SLW responded that the Administration fully agreed with the importance and need for upgrading the skills and employability of unemployed persons, and was working proactively towards this direction. For example, the Employees Retraining Board was planning to launch a pilot "one-stop" training and employment support service centre in TSW.

9. Noting that the Administration would develop more tourist attractions in TSW so as to create more local job opportunities, Mr LEE Cheuk-yan enquired about the concrete plan and timetable.

10. Miss CHAN Yuen-han pointed out that some welfare non-governmental organizations (NGOs), arts organizations and local groups had shown interests in providing services and organizing activities in TSW but they were unable to secure Government support, such as in identifying appropriate venues. Miss CHAN strongly urged the Administration to review the existing policies to enhance support for interested organizations to start providing services in TSW as early as possible.

11. SLW responded that the Administration was listening to the views of various sectors on providing facilities to meet community needs. SLW advised that the Administration would actively consider proposals on the use of land in a flexible manner to promote the socio-economic development of TSW, for example, the Chief Executive had undertaken at the Summit on Social Enterprises held on 20 December 2007 to consider proposals on the use of Areas 112 and 115 of TSW adjoining the Wetland Park. More concrete plans were expected to be available in mid-2008. SLW added that the Administration welcomed any proposals to vitalize TSW.

12. Noting that the Government would create 3 000 three-year temporary jobs for young people, Mr LEE Cheuk-yan suggested that the Administration should increase the number to 10 000 in order to enhance the work experience and employability of young people, especially those living in TSW.

13. SLW responded that having regard to the special needs of TSW residents, some 300 out of the 3 000 three-year temporary jobs for young people would be allocated specifically to the Yuen Long district, including TSW. The Administration would monitor closely the progress and the need to create more

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temporary jobs for young people taking into account the service demand and availability of resources.

14. Mr TAM Yiu-chung said that the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong (DAB) was coordinating a job fair to be held in TSW in January 2008. Apart from this, DAB had put forward a proposal on developing factory outlets in TSW for the Development Bureau's consideration. He hoped that the Administration would utilize effectively the land and manpower resources in the area to attract more investment and facilitate creation of more business opportunities.

15. SLW echoed Mr TAM Yiu-chung's view for stepping up efforts in the creation of more business and local job opportunities in TSW, and appreciated the efforts made by DAB in this regard.

16. Pointing out that the first phase of HKJC's "Telebet Centre cum Volunteer and Training Centre" would only come into operation in 14 months, Ms LI Fung-ying urged the Administration to enhance efforts to create more local jobs for TSW residents expeditiously. She enquired about the number of job seekers who were able to secure employment in the job fairs held by the Labour Department (LD) in TSW.

17. SLW responded that the Administration would endeavour to create more local job opportunities for TSW residents. He said that about 160 of some 700 vacancies advertised in the job fair organized jointly by the Hong Kong Federation of Restaurants and the related trades and LD in late December 2007 were filled during the job fair. Some job seekers were asked to attend interviews afterwards. LD would review the outcome of the job fairs.

18. Ms LI Fung-ying considered that given the improved fiscal position of the Government and the increasing severity of the problem of the working poor, TSS should be extended to eligible workers living in all districts if they needed to commute long distance to work.

19. Expressing similar views, Mr TAM Yiu-chung considered that TSS should be extended to part-time workers who worked less than 18 hours a week. He urged the Administration to release its review results as early as possible. He added that the bus companies should increase the frequency of bus services to facilitate TSW residents to work across districts.

20. SLW advised that the review of TSS, including the possibility of relaxing the eligibility criteria, was underway and was expected to be completed by end-February 2008.

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Health care services

21. Dr KWOK Ka-ki was concerned about the inadequate provision of health care services in TSW, in particular mental health services and rehabilitation services. He asked whether new resources would be allocated with a view to shortening the waiting time for such services.

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22. Service Director (Clinical & Ambulatory Care) NTWC/Hospital Chief Executive, POH, Hospital Authority (SD(NTWC)/HCE(POH)) responded that despite resource constraints, the Castle Peak Hospital had since last year strengthened the community support services for discharged ex-mentally ill persons to help them re-integrate into the community. At Dr KWOK Ka-ki's request, the Administration would provide further information after the meeting on the additional community support services provided for discharged ex-mentally ill persons in New Territories west region in the past year.

23. Dr KWOK Ka-ki and Ms LI Fung-ying supported the pilot project to purchase primary care services from the private sector in TSW for chronic patients, and urged the Administration to expedite the implementation.

24. SD(NTWC)/HCE(POH) explained that HA was working on the details of the pilot scheme such as the agreement on the service contract and preparatory work. As such, the earliest date for commencing the pilot project would be around mid-2008.

25. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan welcomed the Administration's commitment to exploring the proposal for constructing a hospital in TSW. He saw an urgent need for the hospital and enquired about the concrete timetable for the proposal.

26. SLW responded that the Food and Health Bureau was carrying out the preliminary work on site selection and project planning in conjunction with other Government departments. Given the complexity of the issues involved, the Administration was not in position to provide the timetable for the construction of a hospital in TSW at this juncture.

27. Mr TAM Yiu-chung said that POH was unable to cope with the increasing demand for health care services in TSW. In the light of improving Government fiscal position, the Administration should set aside adequate resources for the construction of a hospital in TSW.

Other issues of concern

28. Dr YEUNG Sum said that the Administration's proposals to develop more tourist attractions in TSW, such as factory outlets, would require inter-bureau/departmental efforts. However, the measures taken by the

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Administration so far were piecemeal. The Government had yet to demonstrate its commitment and preparedness to provide long-term support for the TSW community. In his view, a high-level task force headed by the Chief Secretary for Administration or the Financial Secretary should be set up to formulate a long-term plan to vitalize TSW. Mrs Anson CHAN and the Chairman expressed similar views.

29. SLW reiterated that the Government was concerned with the well-being of TSW residents all along and was committed to enhancing support for the TSW community. He stressed that all relevant bureaux and departments were considering actively different means to further strengthen the support for TSW residents under the coordination of the Labour and Welfare Bureau. The Administration had been taking a concerted approach in this respect. There was no need to set up a separate task force for the purpose.

30. Expressing concern about the difficulties faced by new arrivals in TSW where support networks were relatively weak, Mrs Anson CHAN said that consideration should be given to re-opening the Post Migration Centres in TSW to enhance the support and assistance for new arrivals.

31. SLW responded that the Administration fully understood the difficulties faced by new arrivals. To utilize resources more effectively, the Administration had re-engineered various family services into the Integrated Family Service Centres. The Administration had no plan to re-open the Post Migration Centres at the moment, but would enhance the service for new arrivals in TSW to cope with their special needs.

32. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan considered that the Administration should provide appropriate venues for welfare NGOs and mutual help groups to provide services in the district. Consideration could be given to allocating vacant car parks in the public housing estates in TSW to these organizations.

33. Chief Manager/Management (Support Services 2), Housing Department (HD) replied that the Administration had already let 27 900 square metres of non-domestic premises to 52 NGOs in TSW public housing estates. In addition, HD was currently processing nine applications for letting of 3 140 square metres of welfare premises from NGOs and had planned to convert another 7 600 square metres surplus non-domestic premises, including carparks, for social welfare letting. At Mr LEE Cheuk-yan's request, the Administration agreed to provide information on welfare premises available for letting and vacant parking spaces amenable for conversion into other uses in TSW as well as the details of applications for converting such parking spaces into welfare and social use and the gross floor areas concerned.

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34. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan expressed concern about the inadequate provision of

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public transport services in TSW North, especially the lack of direct bus routes to the urban areas. He was also concerned about the inconsistent interchange fare concessions provided by bus companies to bus routes connecting TSW with the urban areas. SLW said that he would convey Mr LEE's concern to the Transport and Housing Bureau for consideration.

35. In closing, the Chairman requested that the Administration should continue with its efforts and strengthen the inter-bureau/departmental co-ordination to enhance support for TSW residents. SLW said that the Administration would keep members abreast of progress made in due course.

V. Child Development Fund

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)697/07-08(01), CB(2)721/07-08(05) and (06), CB(2)800/07-08(01) to (04), CB(2)836/07-08(01) and (02) and CB(2)889/07-08 (01)]

36. SLW briefed members on the Administration's proposal to set up a \$300 million Child Development Fund (CDF) to try out a new model for promoting the longer-term personal development of children from a disadvantaged background. He said that CDF would comprise three major components, namely personal development plans, mentorship programme and targeted savings. Before deciding how the \$300 million CDF should be deployed in the long term, the Administration would use part of the allocation to implement pioneer projects on child development. The first batch of pioneer projects would be implemented in seven regions/districts aiming at children aged 12 to 16, and priority would be given to children aged from 14 to 16. The savings target for the participating children and their families was proposed to be set at \$200 per month, but operating NGOs would be able to exercise discretion or make alternative arrangements to facilitate the smooth completion of the saving part of the programme for truly deserving cases. SLW advised that the Administration planned to submit the funding proposal to the Finance Committee (FC) for consideration at its meeting on 22 February 2008.

Views of deputations/individuals

37. The Chairman welcomed the deputations/individuals to the meeting. The views of deputations/individuals are summarised below.

Society for Community Organization
[LC Paper No. CB(2)889/07-08(01)]

38. Miss SZE Lai-shan said that the needy families were too poor to save. To help children from a disadvantaged background to get out of poverty, the Administration should review the education policy with a view to ensuring equal

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opportunities for these children to receive education. As far as the proposed CDF was concerned, Miss SZE said that the Government should also make matching contribution. The proportion of savings from participating children and the matching contribution from both the donors and the Government should be 1:2:2.

The Boys' and Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong
[LC Paper No. CB(2)721/07-08(06)]

39. Mr WONG Kwai-yau was of the view that the Administration should set clear targets for CDF and formulate long-term poverty alleviation policies. Mr WONG considered that the CDF pioneer projects should first be implemented in those districts/regions which had comparatively more needy children. In addition to the proposed pioneer projects, the Administration should consider introducing another pilot scheme for children aged between 10 and 14. As regards the project proposed, Mr WONG considered that the minimum savings target should be set at \$100 per month, the savings plan should be extended to three years, and support for participating children should be strengthened.

Hong Kong Committee on Children's Rights
[LC Paper No. CB(2)836/07-08(02)]

40. While supporting the establishment of CDF, Dr CHOW Chun-bong said that the Administration should make clear the policy objectives of CDF, e.g. in what way would CDF help reduce inter-generational poverty. Dr CHOW was concerned about the implementation and monitoring of CDF, as detailed in the submission. Dr CHOW added that consideration should be given to involving paediatricians in the mentorship programmes as they could provide input on the health and developmental needs of children from birth to young adulthood.

Hong Kong Society for the Protection of Children
[LC Paper No. CB(2)836/07-08(01)]

41. Ms Susan SO was disappointed that the CDF pioneer projects failed to cater for the development needs of children aged between zero and 12. The Administration should consider ways to assist those children aged below 12 who had special development needs. Ms SO added that the CDF pioneer projects should cater for the needs of ethnic minority children and those who lived in children's homes. Moreover, the savings target should be set at a level which was affordable by the participants.

The Hong Kong Council of Social Service
[LC Paper No. CB(2)800/07-08(01)]

42. Mr CHAN Kam-ming expressed support for CDF as one of the measures

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to tackle inter-generational poverty. He, however, considered that co-ordination should be enhanced to avoid duplication of efforts with other poverty alleviation measures. Mr CHAN suggested that the Administration should play a more proactive role in facilitating the partnership between the operating NGOs and the business sector. Moreover, the Administration should make matching contributions which should be 1:1:2 from participating children and their families, individual donors and the Government. In addition, the participants should be allowed to set their own savings target at, say, \$50, \$100 or \$200 per month. Mr CHAN added that two batches of pioneer projects should be launched concurrently to cater for the different needs of children aged between 10 and 14, and between 15 and 18.

Against Child Abuse Ltd
[LC Paper No. CB(2)800/07-08(02)]

43. Mrs Priscilla LUI said that only a limited number of children would benefit under the pioneer projects. To demonstrate its commitment to reduce inter-generational poverty, Mrs LUI urged the Administration to widen the scope of the pioneer projects. The Administration should also consider actively the proposal of setting up a Child Commission to look after the well-being of children. She added that the Administration should be mindful in avoiding duplication of efforts and resources for providing assistance to needy children.

Hong Kong College of Paediatricians
[LC Paper No. CB(2)800/07-08(03)]

44. Pointing out that the maximum number of children who would benefit under the current proposal was 13 600, Dr Patricia IP said that the Administration should increase the total number of places. She expressed concern about the ability of low-income families to save \$200 per month for a period of two years, and the criteria for determining the truly deserving cases which warranted the operating NGOs to make alternative arrangement to facilitate the completion of the savings part of the programme. Dr IP said that the Administration should give out the special financial incentive of \$3,000 to the participating children if they were unable to complete the savings programmes due to unforeseen circumstances. Lastly, the Administration should formulate a comprehensive child policy and set up a Child Commission.

Hong Kong Paediatric Foundation
[LC Paper No. CB(2)800/07-08(04)]

45. Dr CHAN Chok-wan expressed concern about the viability of the proposal for low-income families to save \$200 per month for two years. He considered that individual development plans should aim to help develop full potential of the participating children in all aspects. The Administration should also introduce

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measures to enhance the quality and continuity of mentorship, and set up an evaluation system to monitor the implementation of the CDF pioneer projects. He suggested that the Administration should get paediatricians involved in the mentorship programmes as they could provide input on the health and developmental needs of children from birth to young adulthood. Dr CHAN added that consideration should be given to turning successful pioneer projects into regular services.

Caritas Medical Centre

46. Given that asset building would take time to yield positive outcomes, Dr YU Chak-man considered that the CDF pioneer projects should target at younger children. He added that the Administration should set aside CDF resources to cater for the special development needs of children with severe and profound disabilities.

Mr TANG Ka-piu, member of Islands District Council

47. Noting that about 100 children in Tung Chung would benefit under the first batch of pioneer projects, Mr TANG Ka-piu said that the number was inadequate as there were some 3 000 children who were members of families on Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) in the district. He was concerned that Tung Chung residents, who were mostly low-income earners, were too poor to save. As such, he was worried that the operating NGOs would select children with the ability to save to join the pioneer projects, instead of those who were most in need of the development plans. Mr TANG added that the pioneer projects should be extended to include non-engaged youth. Consideration should also be given to launching similar projects for children aged between 10 and 12.

Dr CHAN Ching-hai, Network Convenor of Network for Health and Welfare Studies, Department of Applied Social Sciences, the Hong Kong Polytechnic University

48. Dr CHAN Ching-hai said that according to the experience of some pilot asset-building projects for needy children, the Administration should introduce different modes of CDF to cater for the specific needs of children of different age groups. Moreover, participating children should be allowed to determine the duration of savings plan to meet their own development needs. Dr CHAN took the view that apart from soliciting views on the mode of operation of the pioneer projects, the Administration should formulate a long-term policy on child development taking into account the evaluation results and practical experience in the implementation of the first batch of projects at the end of the two-year period.

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Discussion

49. Responding to the deputations' views and suggestions, SLW made the following points –

- (a) as a pilot scheme to try out a new model for promoting the longer-term personal development of children from a disadvantaged background, the Administration had suggested the implementation of the first batch of seven pioneer projects in seven regions/district, with a minimum of 100 children from each region/district. The actual number of places for each district could be more than 100 children. An evaluation of the overall CDF project would be conducted after completion of the first batch of the seven pioneer projects. Modifications and improvements to the design or arrangements could be considered for subsequent batches to be launched;
- (b) given that one of the objectives of CDF was to encourage children from a disadvantaged background to accumulate non-financial assets, such as right attitudes and a proper mindset, personal resilience and capacities as well as social networks, instead of just focusing on the amount of savings to be achieved, the Administration had proposed to set aside \$15,000 to provide training/programmes for each participating child;
- (c) The initial feedback from the business sector to provide matching contribution and mentors was encouraging; and
- (d) a Steering Committee would be set up under the Labour and Welfare Bureau to oversee and monitor the implementation of CDF.

50. Miss CHAN Yuen-han held the view that the Administration should draw up a long-term plan and a concrete timetable for CDF to address the development needs of children irrespective of their age. Expressing concern that needy families were too poor to save, Miss CHAN said that the Administration should set the savings target at a lower level and provide greater flexibility for the operating NGOs to make alternative arrangements for those who had difficulties to complete the savings part of the programme. Mrs Sophie LEUNG, Ms LI Fung-ying, and Dr KWOK Ka-ki shared Miss CHAN's view that in the light of the financial hardship faced by the needy families, the savings target of \$200 per month should not be set across the board.

51. While recognizing the merits of CDF, Mr LEE Cheuk-yan considered it more important for the Administration to introduce measures to ensure that the basic needs of children from a disadvantaged background could be met fully.

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Given that there were over 230 000 children living in low-income households, Mr LEE asked about the plan to bring these children under the CDF projects. He urged the Administration to draw up a long-term plan.

52. Mr Frederick FUNG advised that the Commission on Poverty (CoP) had held in-depth discussion on the mode of operation of CDF, and most CoP members considered that the Administration should implement a long-term CDF targeted at children aged between 0 and 18. Notwithstanding this, he would not raise objection to the Administration's current proposal to launch a two-year pilot scheme as he supported the objective of CDF. He agreed with the proposal to give priority to those between the ages of 14 to 16 as these children were considered mature enough to make their own personal development plans. However, choices should be provided for the participants to set the monthly savings target having regard to their financial position. Mr FUNG added that taking into account the matching contribution from the donors and the special financial incentive of \$3,000 from the Government, the total amount for fulfilling the personal development plans would be less than \$13,000 if the savings target was set at \$200 per month. To facilitate the participating children to set longer-term development plans, the Administration should increase the amount of special financial incentive for each participating child upon completion of the two-year savings programme.

53. Mrs Sophie LEUNG welcomed the provision of training and guidance to the parents/guardians of the participating children to engage them in the life planning and financial planning for the children. She suggested that the training for the parents should cover parental responsibilities.

54. Mrs Sophie LEUNG and Ms LI Fung-ying held the view that some NGOs had launched successful pilot programmes based on the CDF model to promote the personal development of children and youth. They did not see a need for the Administration to launch a fresh pilot scheme to try out a new model for promoting the longer-term personal development of children from a disadvantaged background. Instead, the Administration should take into account the experience of these NGOs and formulate the long-term way forward right away.

55. Dr YEUNG Sum supported in principle the proposal to set up CDF. He had no objection to the proposal of launching pioneer projects. In his view, the Administration could bid for additional resources for more projects on the basis of the successful pilot results. However, priority of the CDF pioneer projects should be given to children aged below eight, so that they could be provided with more personal development opportunities at an early stage of childhood. Dr YEUNG agreed with the views that the savings target should be set at different levels, say, \$50, \$100 or \$200, so that more children from a disadvantaged background could participate in the CDF pioneer projects.

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56. Ms LI Fung-ying urged the Administration to consider seriously the deputations' views. The Administration should provide a response to the issues of concern raised by deputations and members prior to submitting the proposal to FC for approval. Miss CHAN Yuen-han echoed the request. Ms LI added that the number of places for each district allocated under the pioneer projects should be determined based on the number of needy children in the district.

57. Dr KWOK Ka-ki expressed reservations about the effectiveness of the CDF pioneer projects in tackling inter-generational poverty. To address the problem at source, the Administration should enhance its support for disadvantaged families, e.g. the provision of child care services, financial assistance to children from a disadvantaged background to take part in extra-curricular activities.

58. Responding to members, SLW stressed that CDF sought to encourage children from a disadvantaged background to plan for the future. He pointed out that apart from providing special financial incentive (\$3,000) for each participating child upon completion of the savings programme, the Administration had proposed to set aside \$15,000 for the provision of training to each participating child to help them achieve their development targets as set out in their personal development plans. SLW said that the Administration fully understood that the pioneer projects could not meet the full demand of children from a disadvantaged background. The launch of the pioneer projects was the first step to try out a new model of CDF. An evaluation of the overall CDF project would be conducted after completion of the first batch of the seven pioneer projects, and the results would be taken into account in considering the long-term way forward. It was therefore difficult for the Administration to formulate a long-term plan at the moment. He assured members that the Administration would revert to the Panel on the evaluation results and the long-term way forward.

59. The Chairman said that while members expressed general support for the establishment of CDF, they were concerned about the implementation details and the long-term way forward. He asked whether modifications would be made to the funding proposal to be submitted to FC in the light of the views and concern raised by members and deputations at the meeting.

60. SLW said that as he had explained earlier, the Administration would consider whether modifications and improvements should be made to the design or arrangements for subsequent batches to be launched in future after taking into account the practical experience in the implementation of the pioneer projects. The scheme proposed already allowed flexibility in the proposed level of savings target for participating children and their families.

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61. Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare supplemented that as some senior secondary school students might, on completion of 9 year compulsory education, choose to receive vocational training or join the labour market, the Administration had proposed to accord priority of the CDF pioneer projects to help those between the ages of 14 to 16 to plan for their future. He said that the Administration would not rule out the possibility of expanding the scope of target participants in the light of the operational experience in the implementation of the pioneer projects and stakeholders' views.

62. SLW appealed to members' support for the Administration's proposal. SLW said that CDF was one of the recommendations put forward by CoP. The Administration planned to submit the proposal to FC for consideration in February 2008 so that the CDF pioneer projects could be launched as early as practicable.

63. The Chairman said that members had no intention to delay the submission of the funding proposal to FC. He pointed out that the Government had in fact earmarked \$300 million for the setting up of a new CDF in the 2007-2008 Budget, but the Administration had taken an unduly long time to come up with the current proposal. He commented that the Administration should have consulted the Panel earlier. Miss CHAN Yuen-han proposed that the Panel should hold another meeting to further discuss with the Administration the implementation details of CDF before the FC meeting on 22 February 2008. The Chairman suggested that the Panel could further discuss the matter at the next regular meeting on 14 February 2008. Members agreed.

64. SLW advised that the Administration would consider fully the Panel's views before submitting the funding proposal to FC. In this connection, the Administration would defer its plan to submit the proposal to FC in February 2008. To facilitate the Panel's further discussion at the next meeting, the Chairman requested the Administration to provide a written response to the issues of concern raised by members and deputations at the meeting.

Admin

VI. Report of the Subcommittee on the Review of the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme
[LC Paper No. CB(2)778/07-08(01)]

65. The Chairman, who was also Chairman of the Subcommittee on the Review of the CSSA Scheme, said that the Subcommittee had concluded its work and agreed that the agreement of the Panel and the House Committee should be sought for the allocation of a debate slot to him under House Rule 14A(h) for moving a motion on the Subcommittee's report at the Council meeting on 20 February 2008. Members endorsed the Subcommittee's report and agreed

Action

with the Subcommittee's proposal. Members further agreed with the wording of the motion.

VII. Any other business

66. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 1:17 pm.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
13 February 2008