

LEGCO PANEL ON WELFARE SERVICES

Progress Report on the Government's Efforts in Strengthening Support for Tin Shui Wai

The Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Welfare Services held a special meeting on 30 October 2007 to discuss the provision of welfare services and community facilities by Government for Tin Shui Wai (TSW) residents. Subsequent to that, at the Council meeting on 7 November 2007, LegCo passed a motion urging the Administration to strengthen support for TSW. The wording of the motion passed is as follows:

“That, as the Government’s faulty planning has caused family tragedies to have occurred time and again in Tin Shui Wai in recent years and to prevent similar tragedies from happening, this Council urges the Government to :

- (a) expeditiously implement the various recommendations put forward in the Report of Review Panel on Family Services in Tin Shui Wai and comprehensively improve the community facilities and services in the district, give suitable support to the needy families and provide family services on all fronts to create a harmonious community;*
- (b) cooperate with the stakeholders, such as the residents, community organisations, non-governmental organisations and relevant professional bodies in the locality, to map out the town planning and community development strategies for the district afresh, improve its population structure, better the neighbourhood relations and perfect the transport support, medical services, and arts, recreational and sports facilities for the area;*
- (c) solve the problem of working poverty and formulate a family-friendly labour policy to alleviate the troubles faced by grass-roots families in the district due to work and financial pressure;*

- (d) *inject more economic activities into the district, and increase facilities and business opportunities for cultural and recreational enterprises, so as to enhance employment opportunities and promote a balanced community development in the district; and*
- (e) *set up an investigation committee to find out the causes of the problems in Tin Shui Wai; recruit more social workers to clear case backlogs and strengthen the coordination mechanism, and create Family Service Case Manager posts; establish Community Practice Centres to support residents' organisations and enhance mutual aid among neighbours; develop wetland resort hotels, 'riverside markets' and recovery parks; enhance employment counselling service and relax restrictions on the cross-district transport allowance to allow a family to be a unit in making applications; assist social enterprises in real terms, and suggest that the Housing Department provide rent concession to social enterprises."*

2. The Administration is always concerned with the well-being of TSW residents, and has accorded a high degree of importance to providing support to the residents. The summary table at Annex sets out the various suggestions raised by LegCo Members during the motion debate, and the progress made by the Administration in following up the motion. Members are invited to note the progress made so far.

Labour and Welfare Bureau
Home Affairs Bureau
*(with inputs from relevant
Bureaux and Departments)*

January 2008

**Follow-up on Legislative Council Motion Debate on “Strengthening Support for Tin Shui Wai”
Held on 7 November 2007**

| | Suggestions Raised by LegCo Members | Measures taken by the Administration |
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| 1. | <p>Welfare services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– implement the various recommendations put forward in the Tin Shui Wai (TSW) Report– strengthen services of the Integrated Family Services Centre (IFSC) (social worker manpower; extended operating hours; specialised support for specific groups)– strengthen social work manpower of the Family and Child Protective Service Unit (FCPSU)– strengthen child care service and provide more flexible, affordable service– strengthen 24-hour hotline service– remove the 7-year residence requirement for the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme– adopt a “case manager” approach– strengthen inter-disciplinary collaboration– expedite implementation of the Child Fatality Review mechanism and extend coverage to serious injury cases and other domestic violence cases | <p>The Administration is always concerned with the well-being of TSW residents and has accorded a high degree of importance to providing support to the residents.</p> <p>Over the past few years, altogether 12 new social welfare service initiatives were implemented in TSW, and another six are expected to come on stream in 2008 (i.e. Creative Media Training Centre for Youth, Clinical Psychology Unit, Special Child Care Centre/Early Education and Training Centre, District Elderly Community Centre, Care and Attention Home for the Elderly and Integrated Children and Youth Services Centre/Children and Youth Centre). The Administration also plans to launch one of the Child Development Fund pioneer projects in TSW in order to provide children with more development opportunities and encourage them to plan for the future and cultivate positive attitudes.</p> <p>On the hotline service, the Social Welfare Department (SWD):</p> <p>(a) has allocated additional resources to further strengthen the manpower of NGOs concerned to provide backup hotline service outside the duty hours of its social workers so as to</p> |

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| | <p>provide timely assistance to those in need;</p> <p>(b) has recently upgraded its own hotline system, including the revamping of the call flow to diversify calls with different nature more effectively, such that those calls requiring counselling from social workers can be handled as soon as possible; and</p> <p>(c) plans to direct calls on social security enquiries to the “1823 Integrated Call Centre” from February 2008 so that social workers of the SWD hotline can more readily handle calls requiring counselling and other welfare assistance and provide more timely intervention service for individuals and families in crisis.</p> <p>SWD will launch the pilot review mechanism for child death cases in the first quarter of 2008. The review mechanism aims to examine the practice and service issues pertaining to child death cases, identify patterns and trends for formulation of prevention strategies, and promote multi-disciplinary and inter-agency cooperation in the prevention of child death. A review will be conducted after the two-year pilot and this will cover such issues as the feasibility of expanding the scope of cases subject to the review mechanism.</p> <p>Besides, the Administration has since 2004 implemented a series of measures to follow through the recommendations put forth in the “Report of Review Panel on Family Services in Tin Shui Wai” to</p> |

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| | <p>improve the family services in the district. SWD has strengthened social work manpower in FCPSUs and IFSCs, and increased the number of FCPSUs from five at that time to the present 11 across the territory. Additional resources have also been allocated to enhance shelter services for women, childcare services, and clinical psychological services for victims and families in need, as well as to strengthen multi-disciplinary collaboration and co-ordination.</p> <p>On case management, social workers already adopt the principle of “one family one worker” to serve the whole family in need, and if more than one social worker is involved in the case, one of them will take up the role as the key worker, responsible for liaising with all other social workers concerned and co-ordinating the services provided.</p> <p>More details on the measures implemented are set out in the paper submitted to the LegCo Panel on Welfare Services for its special meeting held on 30 October 2007 (LC Paper CB(2)147/07-08(01)).</p> <p>In respect of the CSSA Scheme, it aims to provide a safety net for those who cannot support themselves financially to meet their basic needs. Since 1 January 2004, the applicant has to meet the 7-year residence requirement to become eligible for non-contributory social security benefits that are heavily subsidised by public funds. This requirement was introduced on the basis of the recommendations in the Report of the Task Force on Population Policy. It provides a rational basis on which our public resources are allocated and helps to sustain a non-contributory social security system with increasing</p> |

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| | | <p>demand. It should, however, be noted that Hong Kong residents aged below 18 are exempted from any prior residence requirements. The Director of Social Welfare may, at his discretion, grant CSSA to those who do not satisfy the residence requirement but are in genuine hardship.</p> |
| 2. | <p>Mental Health Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – shorten waiting time for mental care services – strengthen manpower of related mental health professionals – strengthen long-term support for ex-mentally ill persons living in the community and support for their families – step up efforts in prevention and public education for mental health issues | <p>The Hospital Authority (HA) is now providing comprehensive mental health services ranging from in-patient service, specialist out-patient service to ambulatory care in the community.</p> <p>On in-patient service, as at end-March 2007, the HA has a total of 4 622 psychiatric beds in 10 public hospitals to provide medical care for patients whose condition requires hospitalisation. The occupancy rate of HA's psychiatric beds has dropped from over 80% in 2000-01 to 74% in 2006-07. The HA has in recent years rationalised the provision and distribution of psychiatric beds on a cluster basis to reduce the need for cross-district admission and minimise the inconvenience for patients and their carers, as well as to facilitate the rehabilitation of patients.</p> <p>As for specialist out-patient service, a triage mechanism is in place to ensure that urgent cases are attended to within a reasonable time frame. In 2006-07, 94% of the cases triaged as first priority were treated within two weeks.</p> |

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| | <p>In recent years, the HA has employed more psychiatric staff to strengthen the support for psychiatric treatment and services. For example, the number of psychiatrists in the HA has increased from 212 in 2000-01 to 256 in 2006-07; and that of psychiatric nurses has also increased from 1 797 to 1 927 (including 118 community psychiatric nurses) during the same period. At present, SWD has stationed 193 psychiatric medical social workers at the psychiatric units of all public hospitals and clinics.</p> <p>More details of the mental health services available in the public sector are set out in the Administration's paper submitted to the LegCo Panel on Health Services for its special meeting held on 22 November 2007 (LC Paper CB(2)373/07-08(01)). The support services for ex-mentally ill persons and their families are also set out in paragraphs 22-33 of the paper submitted to the LegCo Panel on Welfare Services for its special meeting held on 30 October 2007 (LC Paper CB(2)147/07-08(01)).</p> <p>As for the prevention of mental health illness, a number of community-based outreach programmes have also been launched in recent years for early identification of persons with signs of mental health problems in schools, families and in the community for provision of early counselling and treatment services. These programmes are specially designed to cater for different target groups such as children, adolescent, adults and elders.</p> |

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| | | <p>Over the years, we have also continued our efforts on public education and promotion to increase the awareness and correct understanding of mental health in the community. The Government has been collaborating with the 18 District Councils, local organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to organise public education programmes and promotion campaigns. Meanwhile, the HA is promoting mental health through its psychiatric services while the Department of Health has incorporated mental health into its public health education portfolio.</p> |
| 3. | <p>Health Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – improve access to public hospital by TSW residents – expedite and advance the opening of the out-patient clinic in Area 109 before year 2012 as planned – expedite implementation of the pilot project to purchase primary care services from the private sector in TSW North | <p>The health care services of the HA are provided on a cluster basis. At present, the health care services for TSW area are provided by the New Territories West Cluster (NTWC) under the HA. The redevelopment and expansion of the Pok Oi Hospital (POH) under NTWC was completed in end-2006. Services of POH are being commissioned by phases to further strengthen the service provided for TSW area. For example, the accident and emergency (A&E) department of POH was opened in September 2007 and is projected to serve about 73,000 attendances in 2007-08. It is expected that the waiting time of emergency care service in NTWC could be further improved. Meanwhile, for the medium and long term planning, the Administration would explore the proposal of constructing a hospital in TSW. We are carrying out the preliminary preparatory work on site selection and project planning in conjunction with other government departments.</p> |

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| | | <p>The Administration also recognises the need of the residents in TSW for public general out-patient service. At present, TSW is served by a public general out-patient clinic (GOPC), as well as around 25 private doctors operating in the area. We have planned to establish a new GOPC in TSW North Area 109, and the current works plan aims to complete the clinic in 2012. We will endeavour to expedite the progress of works and other necessary procedures.</p> <p>The Administration and HA are also actively exploring other feasible measures to strengthen the general out-patient service in TSW before the completion of the new GOPC. HA has been providing supplementary general out-patient services at the Pok Oi Hospital Chinese Medicine Clinic in Tin Wah Estate. HA will also conduct a pilot project to purchase primary care services from the private sector in TSW North for chronic patients. HA is formulating the details of the pilot scheme and consulting the local community and private doctors. Subject to the consultation and reaching agreement on the service contract, our target is to commence the pilot scheme around mid-2008.</p> |
| 4. | <p>Community and Leisure Facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – expedite implementation of community and leisure facilities already planned – provide more covered space for social activities of TSW residents, particularly in TSW North | <p>There are currently three Community Centres/ Community Hall in TSW, including the Tin Yiu Community Centre and Tin Shui Community Centre in TSW South, as well as the newly completed Tin Ching Community Hall in TSW North. The Home Affairs Department (HAD) is actively planning the inclusion of an</p> |

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| | <p>additional Community Hall in TSW North in the “Sports Centre and Community Hall in Area 101 Tin Shui Wai” project led by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD). Construction of the project is scheduled to commence in late 2009 for completion in early 2012. By that time, there will be a total of 4 Community Centres / Community Halls for local residents and associations to organise district activities.</p> <p>In addition, the LCSD would expedite implementation of the following leisure and cultural facilities already planned with an estimated total cost of some \$1,134.5 million:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) “District Square at Areas 33A and 29 Tin Shui Wai” (near Kingswood Ginza): the project is under construction. The completion date of the project would be advanced from mid-2008 to early 2008; (b) “District Open Space in Area 107, Tin Shui Wai” (near Tin Yat Estate): the project is under construction. The completion date of the project would be advanced from mid-2010 to late 2008; (c) “Tin Shui Wai Public Library cum Indoor Recreation Centre (with an indoor heated swimming pool)” (near the West Rail Tin Shui Wai Station): the project has been advanced to commence construction in November 2007 for completion in mid-2011; and |

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| | <p>(d) “Sports Centre and Community Hall in Area 101 Tin Shui Wai” (near Tin Yan Estate): the project has been advanced for active planning. Construction of the project is scheduled to commence in late 2009 for completion in early 2012.</p> <p>The LCSD is also reviewing the feasibility of providing a swimming pool complex in Area 107 Tin Shui Wai (near Tin Yat Estate) with a view to early implementation.</p> <p>Separately, the Housing Authority is planning to provide more recreational/leisure facilities such as sitting-out areas and play equipment at the open space of the public housing estates in Tin Yuet Estate, Tin Yan Estate and Tin Shui Estate in TSW.</p> <p>The Housing Department will also facilitate local NGOs to make better use of the multi-purpose function room at 6/F of Tin Heng Carpark to promote family cohesion and harmony. Part of the Tin Heng Carpark and part of the Ancillary Facilities Block of Tin Chak Estate are also being converted into welfare/social service use.</p> <p>Three schools in TSW have responded to the invitation of the Education Bureau to open up their school premises for community use after school hours on a pilot basis for a period of five years starting from the 2005/06 school year. These three community-based centres were set up under the one-off \$10 million funding from the Commission on Poverty for minor conversion / refurbishment works and non-recurrent funding has been provided to</p> |

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| | | <p>these schools to meet the operation cost. In addition, 29 schools in TSW have indicated willingness to open up their school premises. Discussion on detailed arrangements would be held with them.</p> <p>Apart from the above, greening enhancement works will be implemented at Tin Shui Wai North. Green corridors enhanced by colourful and rich plantings will be established along Tin Shui Road, Tin Sau Road and Wetland Park Road to better connect the landmarks and open spaces such as the Wetland Park and the river bank. The proposed planting works will be completed by August/September 2008. The Yuen Long District Office will help to mobilise community participation in the completion ceremony of the works.</p> |
| 5. | <p>Community Building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – increase funding and professional support to Mutual Aid Committees (MACs) – provide funding support to local concern groups – provide familiarisation and other support services for new arrivals | <p>To encourage MACs in TSW to organise activities aimed at strengthening neighbourhood network and promoting mutual help, HAD has made available additional financial resources in 2007/08 to deal with applications under the TSW Neighbourhood Mutual Help Programme. HAD will consider whether this special financial assistance for MACs should continue in the next financial year after a review of this year's Scheme.</p> <p>On subsidy to MAC to pay for their basic daily operation expenses such as utility charges and stationery, HAD will continue to review the level of subsidy in accordance with inflation rate to ensure that</p> |

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| | <p>the purchasing power of the subsidy will not diminish as a result of inflation.</p> <p>Besides, in accordance with the recommendations in the 2006 District Council (DC) Review, the annual provision of DC Funds will be increased to \$300 million starting from 2008-09 for the 18 districts to organise community involvement projects, including leisure, sports and cultural programmes, partnership programmes with other sectors and proposals with district characteristics aiming to achieve a wide spectrum of social objectives.</p> <p>Local groups are also welcome to apply for seed funding under the Community Investment and Inclusion Fund (CIIF) to implement projects which aim at developing social capital and promoting mutual support in the neighbourhood. The Administration has stepped up the promotion of the CIIF in TSW. For instance, the CIIF Secretariat and the SWD have jointly organised several workshops involving more than 30 local groups and external organisations to facilitate their partnership in building social networks. In the latest round of applications, the CIIF Secretariat has received about 50 project proposals, of which more than 20 aim to serve TSW. The assessment process is expected to be completed in three months.</p> <p>The Partnership Fund for the Disadvantaged administered by SWD also disburses grants to NGOs to match donations by the business sector for welfare projects.</p> |

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| | | <p>Yuen Long District Office has been collaborating with district organisations in providing support services for the new arrivals. This year HAD has also commissioned an experienced NGO to hold a series of activities for new arrivals such as pre-employment counselling to facilitate their integration into the society.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Housing Department has proposed to set up a Housing Advisory and Service Team in Tin Shui Wai for two years under a pilot scheme to assist new tenants to settle in, and render social and other tangible assistance to existing tenants.</p> <p><u>On after-school learning and support to disadvantaged students</u></p> <p>Under the School-based After School Learning and Support Programmes, recurrent funding has been provided by the Education Bureau for NGOs to organise community-based projects for disadvantaged students. Activities organised include after-school tutorial courses, cultural and arts activities, sports activities, leadership training, voluntary work and visits etc. In TSW, 15 NGOs are being subsidised to organise a total of 15 projects in the 2007/08 school year.</p> |
| 6. | <p>Town planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – cease allocation of new public housing estate in TSW – re-zone TSW and nearby areas to provide sites | <p><u>On allocation of new public housing units</u></p> <p>In order to effectively utilise our valuable public housing resources</p> |

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| <p>for social services and commercial activities</p> <p>– improve future town planning to ensure heterogeneity of the new town(s) in terms of population structure and economic activity and also to ensure that relevant community facilities are in place before moving people into the new towns</p> | <p>for over 110 000 applicants on the Waiting List for public rental housing (PRH), there is a need for the Housing Authority to continue allocating to the Waiting List applicants all available PRH flats in the territory, including those in TSW. Applicants are offered flats according to the region of their choices and each applicant has a maximum of three allocation offers so that he/she may choose the flat which best meets his/her needs.</p> <p><u>On rezoning and improvement of town planning</u></p> <p>Most of the land in TSW New Town has either been developed or is under construction. However, there are some undeveloped “G/IC” sites which could be used. For the developed areas, flexibility has already been included in the TSW Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) to allow for the provision of social services and commercial activities under a wide range of land use zonings. For instance, under the “Commercial”, “Residential (Group A)”, “Residential (Group B)”, “Other Specified Uses”, “Government, Institution or Community” zonings, social welfare facilities and a variety of commercial uses including shop and services, market, office, eating place, exhibition or convention hall, hotel, place of entertainment, etc., are either always permitted or may be permitted by the Town Planning Board upon application. Recently, we have applied flexibility to the conversion of part of the car parking floors of the existing multi-storey car park at Tin Heng Estate to provide social welfare facilities such as a youth centre and a creative media workshop.</p> |

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| | | <p>The undeveloped sites in Areas 32, 108A, 112 and 115 meanwhile are allowed for a wide range of uses with or without planning permission (including commercial, residential, hotel, place of entertainment, office, etc.) under the Notes of the OZP. These vacant and readily available government sites could be used to meet the latest requirement of the relevant bureaux and departments in addressing the needs of TSW.</p> <p>The Administration, through listening to the views expressed from various sectors (including those from the private sector and NGOs), considers the use of land in a flexible manner to promote social development of TSW is worth consideration. The two pieces of land in Areas 112 and 115 of TSW adjoining the Wetland Park can serve this purpose. We are listening to the views raised by the various sectors, and will consider how to create more job opportunities and provide facilities to meet the community needs in TSW.</p> |
| 7. | <p>Transportation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – relax the Transport Support Scheme (TSS) – reduce transportation costs for TSW (e.g. introduction of monthly pass and student discounts) – improve connectivity of TSW, particularly TSW North – improve the network of cycling paths in TSW | <p>The Labour Department (LD) has enhanced the promotion of the TSS to TSW residents and advanced the timing of the review in order to explore the possibility of relaxing eligibility criteria so as to facilitate job search/change and work across districts by the needy unemployed/low-income employees. The review is well under way and is expected to be completed by end-February 2008.</p> |

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| | <p>The Administration has always encouraged public transport operators to provide fare concessions taking into account their own operating conditions in order to alleviate the financial burden of the travelling public. MTRCL has undertaken to maintain the fare promotions (viz. Light Rail Personalised Octopus Frequent User Bonus Scheme, the West Rail monthly pass and free ride on Transit Service Area bus service for West Rail passengers) unchanged until the end of June 2009. Upon the rail merger in December 2007, the second boarding charge for passengers using Octopus and interchanging between the original MTR and KCR systems has been abolished and West Rail fare has been reduced under the fare reduction package. Besides, franchised bus operators also provide concessions for the 13 bus routes connecting TSW, with a same day return discount ranging from \$1 to \$6.</p> <p>As regards student fares, upon the rail merger, MTRCL continues to provide student fare concession for student users when travelling on six specified railway lines (viz. Kwun Tong Line, Tsuen Wan Line, Island Line, Tung Chung Line, Tseung Kwan O Line and Disneyland Resort Line). Student travelling on original KCR network (viz. East Rail Line, West Rail Line and Ma On Shan Line) will benefit from the other aspects of the fare reduction package. The interests of student users have been safeguarded.</p> <p>On connectivity of TSW, railway is the backbone of the public transport system in North-west New Territories (NWNT). To cater for future passenger demand and to improve service and efficiency, MTRCL will purchase 22 additional Light Rail vehicles.</p> |

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| | | <p>In addition, there are currently 20 franchised bus routes and 6 Green Minibus (GMB) routes serving TSW. If operators of franchised buses and GMBs submit proposals to Transport Department to enhance their services in response to the changes in transport services in the area, the Department will consider such proposals taking into account passenger demand.</p> <p>The Administration will improve cycle tracks in Tin Shui Wai, e.g. along the section of Tin Shing Road next to the Light Rail Terminus, in order to maintain a convenient cycle track route in the area. We will also widen the existing cycle track at Tung Tau Industrial Area in Yuen Long to the standard width of 3.5m for better connection of the network with Yuen Long District. The proposed works will be completed around mid-2008.</p> |
| 8. | <p>Employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – strengthen vocational training and retraining – strengthen employment services (including setting up more Vacancy Search Terminals and organising job fairs) – promote family-friendly employment practices – implement minimum wage / standard working hours policy | <p><u>On employment services and vocational training/retraining</u></p> <p>To strengthen employment services in TSW, apart from the touch-screen Vacancy Search Terminals (VSTs) installed at the nearby Yuen Long Job Centre, LD has installed four VSTs in TSW (viz. Tin Shui Community Centre, Tin Ching Community Hall, TSW South and North Social Security Field Units) to facilitate residents' access to updated job vacancies. LD held two job fairs in TSW in October and December 2007, and is planning another major one in February 2008.</p> |

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| | <p>The Employees Retraining Board (ERB) plans to provide target specific generic and vocational skills courses to enhance the employability of the clients in TSW, and their understanding of the local labour market. ERB is also planning to launch a pilot “one-stop” training and employment support service centre in TSW</p> <p><u>On family-friendly employment practices (FEPPs)</u></p> <p>LD will organise various promotional activities, including roving exhibitions at different locations throughout the territory to increase public awareness on FEPPs. LD will organise an exhibition on the Employment Ordinance and FEPPs at Kingswood Ginza, TSW on 12-13 January 2008. It will also promote enlightened FEPPs among human resources practitioners through its network of 18 Human Resources Managers Clubs formed in various trades and industries.</p> <p><u>On minimum wage / standard working hours policy</u></p> <p>As pointed out in the 2007-08 Policy Address, an overall review of the Wage Protection Movement for cleaning workers and security guards (WPM) will be conducted in October 2008. If the overall review indicates that the voluntary movement fails to yield satisfactory results, the Administration will introduce a draft bill on a statutory minimum wage for cleaning workers and security guards to the LegCo in the 2008-09 legislative year.</p> |

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| | <p>Whilst a decision on whether to legislate for a minimum wage would be made only in the light of the outcome of the overall review of the WPM scheduled for October 2008, LD will continue to step up the promotion of the WPM in order to garner more support from different sectors of the community as well as identify possible areas for improvement to enhance the effectiveness of the movement.</p> <p>At the same time, the LD would study various issues which would be relevant to both the continued implementation of the WPM and the introduction of a statutory minimum wage for cleaning workers and security guards so that no time would be lost in case the overall review indicates that the WPM has not been effective and a bill can be introduced into LegCo in the 2008-09 legislative year.</p> <p>The proposal on standard working hours is complicated and carries far-reaching implications on our socio-economic development and labour market. Public views on the issues are also divided. We should be careful in handling the issue.</p> <p>Under the WPM, workers should be suitably compensated if they have to work beyond contractual hours. From the occupational safety and health perspective, LD and the Occupational Safety and Health Council published the “Guide on Rest Breaks” to encourage employers and employees to work out through consultation rest break arrangements that would suit the needs of employees and operational needs of the business.</p> |

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| 9. | <p>Creating more local job opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – develop more tourist attractions in TSW (e.g. developing new tours and scenic sightseeing routes, building theme parks, resort hotels, riverside marketplace, factory outlets, flea markets, etc), with sufficient supporting facilities e.g. restaurants and carparks – turn vacant public housing units into hotels and build more new hotels to attract Mainland visitors – establish hawker bazaars – facilitate creation of more business opportunities in TSW (e.g. facilitate commercial and industrial development) – expedite implementation of the major infrastructural projects – consider feasibility of moving Government offices or facilities to TSW – expedite and facilitate establishment of social enterprises in TSW | <p>To create more job opportunities in TSW, the Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC) is planning to set up a “Telebet Centre cum Volunteer and Training Centre” in TSW, which will create 2 500 jobs. The details of the terms and technical requirements of the proposed letting are being negotiated between the Housing Department and HKJC. Subject to the necessary approvals by the Housing Authority and the Town Planning Board, the first phase of the Centre is expected to come into operation in 14 months.</p> <p>Also, to enhance the work experience and employability of young people, the Government will create 3 000 three-year temporary jobs for them starting from 2008-09. Some 300 of these jobs will be allocated to the Yuen Long district (including TSW).</p> <p><u>On developing more tourist attractions</u></p> <p>The Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) will continue to promote TSW and Yuen Long to visitors. Attractions in the vicinity, such as Ping Shan Heritage Trail, Hong Kong Wetland Park (HKWP) and Mai Po Wetlands are featured in its promotional materials. HKTB also promotes the uniqueness of the areas in terms of “heritage tourism” as well as “nature tourism”. Ping Shan Heritage Trail is featured in “Discover Hong Kong by Rail” whilst HKWP and Mai Po Wetlands are featured in “Discover HK Nature”. Tour packages “Hong Kong Wetlands Delight Tour” and “Mai Po Wetland Experience” are included in the Hong Kong Nature Kaleidoscope</p> |

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| | <p>programme.</p> <p>HKTB welcomes any initiative to develop new tourist facilities / attractions in the area. Any new initiative will enrich the product bundle of TSW and Yuen Long with the accessibility support of the West Rail and Light Rail systems.</p> <p>Under the Corporation Community Service Programme of the HKWP, the Television Broadcast (TVB) sponsored a free film show “Planet Earth” and free admission for 400 TSW children to the Park in December 2007. Besides, HKWP is contemplating to organise a Fun Day event jointly with Yuen Long DC for residents of TSW in 2008.</p> <p><u>On feasibility of turning vacant PRHs into hotels</u></p> <p>In order to effectively utilise our valuable public housing resources for over 110 000 applicants on the Waiting List for PRH, there is a need for the Housing Authority to continue allocating to the Waiting List applicants all available PRH flats in the territory including those in TSW. Moreover, these PRH flats may not be suitable for conversion into hotels.</p> <p><u>On establishment of hawker bazaars</u></p> <p>District Councils and residents have different views on hawking activities. Some people consider that hawking can promote the local economy and create employment opportunities; while others</p> |

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| | <p>are concerned that hawking will bring about obstruction and environmental hygiene problems. Between October 2006 and September 2007, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) has received some 600 complaints from the public concerning hawking activities in TSW. Some complainants even asked FEHD to step up enforcement against hawking activities in the area.</p> <p>Given the diverse views of the public on hawking activities, the proposal of establishing hawker bazaars at designated locations must have the support of the District Council and local residents. Should there be community support for such projects, FEHD will provide any appropriate assistance to facilitate the project proponent(s) to establish such bazaars.</p> <p><u>On expediting implementation of major projects</u></p> <p>The Development Bureau (DEVB) will continue to press ahead with the large-scale projects through close supervision at a high level by enhancing coordination amongst various bureaux and departments and sort out fundamental issues at an early stage.</p> <p>DEVB has reviewed the procedures in the delivery of capital works projects. It will take measures to streamline the administrative procedures in order to reduce the planning lead time for medium sized civil engineering projects from 45 months to 40 months. The streamlined administrative procedures are also applicable to major infrastructure projects.</p> |

| Suggestions Raised by LegCo Members | Measures taken by the Administration |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| | <p>In the current LegCo session, we expect a total of 101 Public Works items to be submitted for funding approval totalling some \$86 billion. As of the end of December 2007, 25 items have been approved with funding allocation of \$18.29 billion. The works departments will accord top priority to projects in TSW and will take every step to shorten the planning lead time with a view to achieving early commencement of construction and commissioning of the facilities as far as possible.</p> <p><u>On moving Government facilities to TSW</u></p> <p>DEVB and the Financial Services and Treasury Bureau are jointly exploring the initiative. Subject to details of site requirement, there are sites in TSW which can be considered for receiving relocated Government offices or facilities.</p> <p><u>On social enterprise</u></p> <p>The Enhancing Self-Reliance through District Partnership Programme (Programme) has approved under its first and second phases of application a total grant of about \$50 million to over 50 new social enterprise projects that would create some 1 000 jobs for the socially disadvantaged groups. Under the Programme, some \$1 million has been approved for a social enterprise project that operates a catering business in TSW and roughly 15 job opportunities have so far been created. The Administration will continue to identify big commercial corporations to partner with</p> |

| | Suggestions Raised by LegCo Members | Measures taken by the Administration |
|-----|--|---|
| | | NGOs in launching social enterprise projects that suit the local needs of TSW. |
| 10. | <p>Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – set up an investigation committee to find out causes of the problems in TSW | <p>The Administration is concerned with the well-being of TSW residents all along. As noted from the above response, all relevant bureaux and departments are actively considering means on different fronts to further strengthen the support for TSW residents, under the coordination of the Labour and Welfare Bureau and the Home Affairs Bureau. There is no need to set up an investigation committee.</p> |

Labour and Welfare Bureau
Home Affairs Bureau
*(with inputs from relevant
Bureaux and Departments)*

January 2008