

Panel on Welfare Services

List of outstanding items for discussion
(position as at 8 October 2007)

		Proposed timing for discussion
1.	A project for residential homes for people with disabilities	
	Financial item proposed by the Administration.	November 2007
2.	Progress of the Community Investment and Inclusion Fund	
	The Administration would like to report on the progress of the Fund.	November or December 2007
3.	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.	1 st quarter of 2008
	The Administration has advised that the Government has launched a study on "Sustainability of the Three Pillars of Retirement Protection in Hong Kong", which is expected to be completed in 2007. The Government will consider the findings of the study in deciding the future course of action.	
4.	Infirmiry care in non-hospital setting	
	The Administration consulted the Panel in December 2004 on a proposal to launch a trial scheme to provide infirmiry 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.	1 st quarter of 2008

Proposed timing for discussion

5. 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.

1st quarter of 2008

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.

6. Latest situation on the implementation of review of family services

Item proposed by Hon Albert CHAN at the Panel meeting on 12 October 2004.

1st quarter of 2008

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.

Proposed timing for discussion

7. 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.

To be decided

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. The Administration has advised that a steering committee has been formed to take forward the initiative set out in the 2006-2007 Policy Address to study whether a Family Commission should be set up. The study is still in progress and no conclusion has been reached.

8. 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

Proposed timing for discussion

9. 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.

10. 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).

In 2007-2008, 3 073 out of 3 836 temporary jobs under Social Welfare Department's (SWD) schedule are retained. Of these, 1 383 posts are regularised while 1 690 positions are extended for one year.

Proposed timing for discussion

- 11. 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
- 12. Developing strategy and measures to promote a self/mutual help culture in the community**
- Item proposed by Hon Mrs Sophie LEUNG. To be decided
- 13. Retirement protection**
- Item proposed by Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG. To be decided
- 14. Residential care homes and private homes for the elderly and mentally disabled**
- 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. To be decided
- 15. The disregarded earnings arrangement under the CSSA Scheme and other measures to encourage and assist CSSA recipients to move towards self-reliance**
- When the review of disregarded earnings (DE) under the CSSA Scheme was discussed at the Panel meeting on 12 April 2007, members raised concern about the effectiveness of the DE arrangements and other measures introduced to encourage and assist CSSA recipients to move towards self-reliance. Members agreed that as the subject of DE arrangements was related to the employment of CSSA recipients, a joint meeting could be held with the Panel on Manpower to discuss the subject and that the meeting would be arranged after the re-organisation of policy bureaux of the Government Secretariat in July 2007. To be decided

Proposed timing for discussion

16. Public dental care services for the needy

At the meeting of the Subcommittee on Review of the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme on 2 April 2007, the provision of public dental care services for the needy, including CSSA recipients, was discussed.

To be decided

As the subject of public dental care services for the needy was beyond its purview, the Subcommittee agreed that the matter should be referred to the Panel on Welfare Services and the Panel on Health Services for follow-up, and a joint meeting of the two Panels could be held as appropriate.

17. Charitable fund-raising activities

The existing framework for the monitoring of charitable fund-raising activities was discussed at the meeting on 11 June 2007. Members agreed to further discuss the matter in the 2007-2008 session, especially the monitoring of the use of income generated from public charitable fund-raising activities.

To be decided

18. A solution-focused approach in the provision of welfare services

Item proposed by Mrs Sophie LEUNG at the Panel meeting on 9 July 2007.

To be decided

**Proposed timing for
discussion**

19. Support services for young drug abusers

The subject was discussed by the Panel at the special meeting on 3 July 2007. Dr KWOK Ka-ki suggested that discussion on the subject should be followed up by the Panel at a future meeting. Members agreed that it would be for the Panel to decide the timing for following up the matter in the 2007-2008 session.

The Administration has advised that while the issue of drug abuses is under the policy purview of the Security Bureau (SB), SWD works for 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 discharges from DTRCs. On the other hand, SWD works for the Labour and Welfare Bureau for general welfare services to all needy youth, including drug abusers, through for example services at the Integrated Children and Youth Services Centres, outreaching work for youth at risks and probation services for offenders.