

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)1524/09-10

(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/PS/3/08

Panel on Welfare Services

Subcommittee on Poverty Alleviation

**Minutes of the 10th meeting
held on Wednesday, 31 March 2010, at 2:30 pm
in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building**

Members present : Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon LEE Cheuk-yan
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon Ronny TONG Ka-wah, SC
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che
Hon WONG Sing-chi
Hon WONG Kwok-kin, BBS
Hon IP Wai-ming, MH

Public Officers attending : Item I

Mr Franco KWOK Wai-fan
Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Poverty)

Mr FUNG Man-lok
Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Youth and Corrections)

Mr Andrew TSANG Yue-tung, JP
Assistant Director for Home Affairs (2)

Miss Winnie TSE Wing-yee
Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs (Civic Affairs) 3/
Secretary to the Social Enterprise Advisory Committee

**Deputations
by invitation** : Item I

Mr LUK Chung-hung, member of Yuen Long District Council

The Hong Kong Council of Social Service

Mr WONG Kwai-yau
Chairperson, Specialized Committee on Social Security and
Employment Policy

Ms PONG Scarlett Oi-lan, member of Sha Tin District Council

Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong, Diocesan Pastoral Centre for
Workers (NT)

Mr Augustine YU Siu-po
Program Officer

North District Employment Concern Group

Ms KWOK Yuen-Yee
Group Member

Community Development Alliance

Ms WONG Wing-chi
Representative

關注天水圍小販大聯盟

Ms LAW Yim-fong
Member

天水圍北交通關注組

Mr CHAN Yu-cheung
Representative

推動天水圍經濟發展大聯盟

Mr LIU Chiu-sam
Member

Hong Kong Association for Democracy and People's Livelihood

Mr WANG Shing-mo
Community Organizer

Concerning CSSA Review Alliance

Miss YEUNG Pui-yan

荃灣綜援關注組

Mr CHAN Sai-hang

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

Staff in attendance : Ms Yvonne YU
Senior Council Secretary (2) 5

Miss Maggie CHIU
Legislative Assistant (2) 4

Action

I. District-based poverty alleviation measures

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)756/09-10(01), CB(2)965/09-10(01), CB(2)1158/09-10(01) to (05) CB(2)1168/09-10(01) to (02), CB(2)1179/09-10(01), CB(2)1197/09-10(01) to (03) and CB(2)2480/08-09(01)]

The Subcommittee deliberated (index of proceedings attached at **Annex**).

2. The Subcommittee received views from 12 deputations on the district-based poverty alleviation measures. Major views of the deputations are summarised as follows –

- (a) the Administration should put collaborated efforts in devising an overall policy and measures to tackle poverty;
- (b) the Administration should develop the pilot Transport Support Scheme into a longer-term scheme and extend it to all districts; and
- (c) the Administration should promote local economic activities in Tin Shui Wai and the neighbouring areas with a view to creating local job opportunities for the low-income and low-skilled workers in the areas. In this regard, the Administration should –
 - (i) enhance tourist attractions in the areas;

Action

- (ii) make use of vacant sites to set up hawker bazaars to promote local economic activities;
- (iii) promote the development of local economic activities having regard to the unique situation and characteristics of the districts; and
- (iv) encourage large commercial corporations to partner with non-governmental organisations ("NGOs") in launching social enterprise ("SE") projects that addressed the specific needs of Tin Shui Wai and the neighbouring areas.

3. Members expressed the following views –

- (a) the Administration should consider setting up new government facilities and buildings in Yuen Long and North District to promote local economic activities with a view to creating local job opportunities;
- (b) the Administration should formulate a long-term strategy and measures to promote the development and sustainability of SEs; and
- (c) District Officers ("DOs") should collaborate with District Councils ("DCs"), district organisations and departments concerned to identify the specific district needs and promote the development of SEs, say, through the delivery of the Enhancing Self-Reliance Through District Partnership Programme, with a view to improving the poverty situation of districts concerned.

4. The Administration made the following responses –

- (a) the Administration attached great importance to poverty alleviation work, and adopted a pragmatic and multi-pronged approach to tackle the problem. The key to tackling poverty lied in promoting economic growth, which would create more job opportunities. In tandem, the Administration had provided training and retraining opportunities to raise the competitiveness and skills of the workforce, in particular the middle-aged and low-income earners. At the same time, the Administration had invested in education and child development to enhance social mobility and reduce inter-generational poverty;
- (b) the Task Force on Poverty, headed by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, was set up in October 2007 to follow up the implementation of the recommendations of the former Commission on Poverty ("CoP");

Action

- (c) district-based poverty alleviation measures had been implemented in the less well-off districts. For example, the Labour Department ("LD") had organised 10 large-scale job fairs since 2008 for job seekers in Yuen Long to address the relatively high unemployment rate in the district. Moreover, LD was planning to set up on a pilot basis Hong Kong's first one-stop employment and training centre in Tin Shui Wai in early 2011 to streamline, integrate and enhance the existing employment and training/retraining services of LD, Social Welfare Department and Employees Retraining Board;
- (d) the Administration was conducting a study on ways to reduce the burden of travelling expenses borne by low-income employees, which was expected to be completed by the end of 2010. The Administration would then consult the relevant panel of the Legislative Council;
- (e) DOs, in collaboration with DCs, had been cooperating with other sectors in identifying the local needs and providing worthwhile programmes to meet the specific district needs, and working closely with different bureaux/departments and district organisations in promoting local economic activities, and thereby creating more job opportunities in the districts;
- (f) the Administration was open-minded on the proposal of establishing a morning bazaar in an appropriate site in Tin Shui Wai. The relevant departments were discussing the viability of the proposal with the hawker associations concerned on the arrangements;
- (g) as announced in the 2010-2011 Budget, the recurrent funding for the School-based After-school Learning and Support Programmes would be increased by \$100 million to \$175 million to enable schools and NGOs to organise more after-school activities for needy students; and
- (h) the Administration would continue promoting the development of SEs through collaboration with the business sector, NGOs and community organisations. A number of government cleansing service contracts and gardening service contracts had been identified for priority bidding by SEs. It would convey members' views on SE development to the Social Enterprise Advisory Committee ("SEAC") for consideration, and update the Panel on Welfare Services of the work progress of SEAC.

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5. In view of the limited job opportunities and the relatively high unemployment rate in Yuen Long, members generally considered that the establishment of hawker bazaars and the implementation of large-scale development project in the district would help promote local economic activities and create job opportunities.

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6. As regards the proposal to set up a morning bazaar in Tin Shui Wai, the Administration advised that the departments concerned had been following up the matter with the relevant parties, with a view to working out a viable proposal. The Administration would provide further information to the Subcommittee when available.

Admin

7. The Administration further advised that apart from the district-based poverty alleviation initiatives implemented in Yuen Long and North District, as discussed at the meeting on 21 January 2010, the Hong Kong Housing Society would develop an Integrated Elderly Community Project in Tin Shui Wai Area 115. It was expected that the project would create about 300 jobs during the construction phase and some 1 200 jobs after its completion, and would also promote local economic activities. The Administration undertook to relay members' concerns to the Development Bureau about the positive impacts of the development projects on boosting local economic activities and creating job opportunities.

II. Any other business

8. The Chairman said that a further meeting of the Subcommittee would be held to discuss the draft report of the Subcommittee. In the light of members' concerns about the impact of the large-scale development projects in Tin Shui Wai on creating job opportunities and alleviating the poverty situation in the district, the Subcommittee might consider further discussing the matter at the next meeting. Members agreed. The Chairman added that members would be informed of the meeting date in due course.

9. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:50 pm.

**Proceedings of the 10th meeting of the
Subcommittee on Poverty Alleviation
on Wednesday, 31 March 2010, at 2:30 pm
in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building**

Time marker	Speaker(s)	Subject(s)	Action required
<i>Agenda item 1 – District-based poverty alleviation measures</i>			
000000 - 000444	Chairman	Opening remarks	
000445 - 000851	Mr LUK Chung-hung, member of Yuen Long District Council	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1168/09-10(01)] Proposals for alleviating the poverty problem in Yuen Long and Tin Shui Wai	
000852 - 001254	The Hong Kong Council of Social Service	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1223/09-10(01)] Proposal for re-establishing the Commission on Poverty ("CoP") for the formulation of long-term plan of poverty alleviation Suggestions on district-based poverty alleviation measures	
001255 - 001733	Ms PONG Scarlett Oi-lan, member of Sha Tin District Council	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1223/09-10(02)] Suggestions on poverty alleviation measures	
001734 - 002206	Chairman Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong, Diocesan Pastoral Centre for Workers (NT)	Presentation of views [LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1158/09-10(01) and (02)] Highlighting its survey findings on the working conditions of residents in the North District, and making recommendations on poverty alleviation measures in these districts	
002207 - 002615	North District Employment Concern Group Chairman	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1158/09-10(03)] Proposals for improving the unemployment situation in the North District	
002616 - 003120	關注天水圍小販大聯盟	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1179/09-10(01)] Concern about the high unemployment rate in Tin Shui Wai Proposal for creating job opportunities for the unemployed in Tin Shui Wai by setting up a morning bazaar in the district	
003121 - 003528	天水圍北交通關注組	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1197/09-10(02)] Concern about the high transport expenses of Tin Shui Wai residents in travelling to work and request for a review of the Transport Support Scheme ("TSS")	

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003529 - 004035	推動天水圍經濟發展 大聯盟 Chairman	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1197/09-10(03)] Proposals for alleviating the poverty problem in Tin Shui Wai by creating more job opportunities and promoting economic activities at the district level having regard to the unique situation and characteristics of the district	
004036 - 004537	Hong Kong Association for Democracy and People's Livelihood	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1158/09-10(04)] Proposal for alleviating the poverty problem by providing more care services for the needy elderly and children	
004538 - 004944	Concerning CSSA Review Alliance	Presentation of views Concern about the unemployment problem and difficulties faced by grassroots Highlighting its successful experience of launching the Co-Purchase Scheme in helping the low-income group in Tin Shui Wai	
004945 - 005145	荃灣綜援關注組 Chairman	Presentation of views Concern about the difficulties faced by the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance recipients and low-income employees	
005146 - 005600	Community Development Alliance	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1197/09-10(01)] Proposals for alleviating the poverty problem in Tin Shui Wai by creating job opportunities and implementing more local development projects	
005601 - 010658	Chairman Administration	The Administration's responses – (a) the Administration attached great importance to poverty alleviation work and adopted a pragmatic and multi-pronged approach. It considered that the key to tackling poverty lied in promoting economic growth, thereby creating more job opportunities. In tandem, the Administration had provided training and retraining opportunities to raise the competitiveness and skills of the workforce, in particular the middle-aged and low-income earners. At the same time, it had invested in education and child development to enhance social mobility and reduce inter-generational poverty; (b) the inter-bureau/departmental Task Force on Poverty, headed by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, was set up in 2007 to follow up on the recommendations of the former CoP; (c) the Labour Department ("LD") had organised 10 large-scale job fairs since 2008 for job seekers in Yuen Long to address the relatively high unemployment rate in the district. Moreover, LD	

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		<p>was planning to set up on a pilot basis Hong Kong's first one-stop employment and training centre in Tin Shui Wai in early 2011 to streamline, integrate and enhance the existing employment and training/retraining services of LD, Social Welfare Department and Employees Retraining Board. Based on its operational experience, the Administration would consider extending it to other districts;</p> <p>(d) the Administration was conducting a study on ways to reduce the burden of travelling expenses borne by low-income employees, which was expected to be completed by the end of 2010. The Administration would then consult the relevant panel of the Legislative Council. The Financial Secretary has undertaken to make suitable financial provisions depending on the findings of the study;</p> <p>(e) District Officers ("DOs"), in collaboration with District Councils ("DCs"), had been working closely with different bureaux/departments and district organisations in identifying and providing worthwhile programmes to meet the district needs; and</p> <p>(f) the Administration was open-minded on the proposal of setting up a morning bazaar in an appropriate site in Tin Shui Wai</p>	
010659 - 012041	Chairman Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung Administration	<p>Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung expressed the following views –</p> <p>(a) having regard to the difficulties faced by middle-aged job seekers, the Administration should consider legislating against age discrimination;</p> <p>(b) the Administration should expedite the review of TSS and introduce interim arrangements for those whose allowance was to be exhausted; and</p> <p>(c) the Administration should consider setting up new Government offices in Yuen Long and North District in a bid to injecting economic activities, and thereby creating job opportunities in the districts</p> <p>The Administration's responses –</p> <p>(a) LD would continue to enhance employment support services and promote an inclusive working environment for the middle-aged; and</p> <p>(b) the review on TSS was underway. A study on ways to reduce travelling expenses borne by low-income employees was being conducted and was expected to be completed by the end of 2010. The Administration would then consult the relevant panel of the Legislative Council in due course</p>	

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012042 - 012958	Chairman Administration	<p>Views of the Chairman that the Administration should make reference to overseas experience and take a more proactive role and provide complementary measures to promote the development of social enterprises ("SEs"), e.g. extending the funding period of the Enhancing Self-Reliance Through District Partnership Programme ("ESR Programme")</p> <p>The Administration's responses –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the Home Affairs Department was reviewing the eligibility and contents of the ESR Programme; and (b) the Social Enterprise Advisory Committee ("SEAC") would provide advice on ways to further promote SE development 	
012959 - 014304	Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che Administration Chairman	<p>Issues raised by Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) formulation of a long-term strategy to promote the sustainable development of SEs; (b) work progress of SEAC; and (c) establishment of poverty alleviation working committees at district level <p>The Administration's responses –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) established on 15 January 2010, SEAC held its first meeting on 5 March 2010. Members of SEAC agreed that work priority would be given to enhancing sustainability of SEs and promoting the public acceptance of SEs; and (b) DOs had been collaborating with DCs and the relevant committees of DCs to carry out programmes for the disadvantaged at district level having regard to the specific district needs 	
014305 - 015009	Mr LEE Cheuk-yan Administration Chairman	<p>Issues raised by Mr LEE Cheuk-yan –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) policy on the establishment of a morning bazaar in Tin Shui Wai; (b) progress of the review on and way forward for TSS; and (c) impact of the development projects in Area 112B and Area 115 on alleviating the poverty situation in Tin Shui Wai 	
015010 - 015547	Chairman Administration Mr LEE Cheuk-yan	<p>The Administration's responses –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the departments concerned had been following up on the proposal of setting up a morning bazaar in Tin Shui Wai with a view to working out a viable proposal; and (b) the Hong Kong Housing Society ("HKHS") would develop an Integrated Elderly Community Project in Tin Shui Wai Area 115, which would create 	

Time marker	Speaker(s)	Subject(s)	Action required
		some 300 jobs during the construction phase and some 1 200 jobs after its completion. The project would also help promote local economic activities	
015548 - 015644	Chairman	Proposed discussion items for the next meeting Extension of the meeting for 15 minutes	
015645 - 020005	Hong Kong Association for Democracy and People's Livelihood	Reiterating its proposal of increasing the provision of subsidised care services for the elderly and the children so as to create more local job opportunities	
020006 - 020033	推動天水圍經濟發展大聯盟	Request for public consultation before taking forward the development projects in Tin Shui Wai Area 112B	
020034 - 020204	North District Employment Concern Group	Calling upon the Administration to address the difficulties faced by the middle-aged unemployed in seeking jobs	
020205 - 020436	Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong, Diocesan Pastoral Centre for Workers (NT)	Reiteration of views that the Development Bureau should expedite implementation of development projects to promote local employment opportunities for the disadvantaged	
020437 - 020731	The Hong Kong Council of Social Service	View that the recommendations of former CoP were incompatible with the present day poverty situation, and the Administration should set specific performance targets for poverty alleviation for evaluating the effectiveness of the measures	
020732 - 021712	Chairman Administration	Chairman's enquiry on the implementation of district-based poverty alleviation initiatives to meet the specific needs of different disadvantaged groups, such as the needy elderly and children, in the less well-off districts The Administration's elaboration of its multi-pronged approach to tackle poverty, and the difficulties in setting targets for poverty reduction The Administration's explanation of specific district-based initiatives implemented in Sham Shui Po, such as the District-based Scheme on Carer Training to train carers for elders, the Enhanced Home and Community Care Service Team to provide home care services for frail elders, and the pilot Neighbourhood Support Child Care Project	
021713 - 022036	Chairman Administration	The Administration's advice that the Home Affairs Bureau would report to the Panel on Welfare Services on issues relating to the development of SEs including the work progress of the discussion of SEAC around half year after the first meeting of SEAC	
022037 - 022153	Chairman	Date and agenda of next meeting	