

**Extract from the minutes of the House Committee meeting  
on 18 March 2011**

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**VII. Proposal to set up a subcommittee to study the subject of poverty alleviation**

*(LC Paper No. ESC 31/10-11)*

43. Dr Margaret NG, Chairman of the Establishment Subcommittee ("ESC"), said that at its meeting on 5 January 2011, ESC had considered the Administration's proposal to retain a supernumerary post of Administrative Officer Staff Grade C ("AOSGC") in the Labour and Welfare Bureau ("LWB") for three years with effect from March 2011 to coordinate the Administration's efforts in poverty alleviation. She elaborated that with the conclusion of work of the former Commission on Poverty ("CoP") in 2007, LWB had taken up the responsibilities of overseeing and monitoring poverty alleviation work. The AOSGC post was to provide dedicated directorate support to underpin LWB's efforts in this regard.

44. Dr Margaret NG further said that when examining the Administration's staffing proposal, members considered it important and necessary for LegCo to continue the work of the former subcommittees on poverty alleviation, and suggested that a subcommittee be appointed again to study the subject and follow up with the Administration on the outstanding recommendations on poverty alleviation. As poverty alleviation straddled across various policy bureaux, there was a view that it would be appropriate for the proposed subcommittee to be set up under the House Committee. However, there was another view that the proposal should be referred to the WS Panel for consideration first. On behalf of ESC, she had therefore brought up the matter to the House Committee to seek its views.

45. The Chairman invited Members' views on the matter.

46. Mr LAU Kong-wah said that during the discussion at the ESC meeting, he had expressed the view that the WS Panel should first be invited to consider the need for the appointment of a subcommittee on poverty alleviation.

47. Mr Frederick FUNG said that he was the Chairman of the two former subcommittees appointed to study the subject of poverty alleviation. He agreed to the need for LegCo to continue to study the subject. He pointed out that following the conclusion of work of CoP, the responsibility for overall coordination on poverty alleviation work had been taken up by LWB. There had been concerns about the progress in taking forward the recommendations of CoP. As the problems currently faced by the poverty-stricken groups were different from those a few years ago, he considered it necessary to conduct a comprehensive study on the subject again. In his view, it was more appropriate for a subcommittee to be appointed under the House Committee.

48. Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che, Chairman of the WS Panel, said that while he considered it more appropriate for the proposed subcommittee to be appointed under the House Committee given that poverty alleviation straddled across various policy areas, he noted that even if a subcommittee was to be appointed, it could not commence work immediately as three subcommittees had already been on the waiting list. In the circumstances, he considered it a better arrangement to refer the proposal to the WS Panel for consideration first. In the meantime, the WS Panel could continue to follow up issues relating to poverty alleviation. Should the WS Panel decide to recommend the appointment of a subcommittee under the House Committee to study the subject, it would raise the matter with the House Committee.

49. Mr IP Kwok-him expressed support for referring the proposal to the WS Panel.

50. Members agreed to refer the proposal for the appointment of a subcommittee to study issues relating to poverty alleviation to the WS Panel for consideration.

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