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Panel on Manpower

Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat for the meeting on 15 December 2011

Latest progress of the setting up of a pioneer one-stop employment and training centre in Tin Shui Wai

Purpose

This paper provides background information on the discussions of the Panel on Manpower ("the Panel") on the progress of setting up a proposed pioneer one-stop employment and training centre ("OSS") in Tin Shui Wai.

Background

2. In the 2009-2010 Policy Address, the Chief Executive announced that, to enhance support to job seekers, the Administration would set up a pioneer OSS in Tin Shui Wai. This initiative, which took forward one of the major recommendations of the former Commission on Poverty, aimed at streamlining, integrating and enhancing the existing employment and training or retraining services provided by the Labour Department ("LD"), Social Welfare Department ("SWD") and Employees Retraining Board ("ERB"). LD is responsible for setting up OSS and its operations and coordinating the provision of employment and training or retraining services in one stop.

3. OSS will be housed on the fourth floor of the new Amenity and Community Building ("ACB") at Tin Ching Estate in Tin Shui Wai. This will have an office area of 1 050 square metres, which is about two to three times the size of a job centre of LD. Apart from providing a wide array of employment services and programmes, various enhanced features will be introduced. Besides, there will be an ERB Service Centre ("the Centre") on the third floor of ACB. The co-location of OSS and the Centre will in practice facilitate job-seekers in obtaining employment and training or retraining services in one stop. A referral mechanism will be devised such that job-seekers assessed by LD as requiring training or retraining will be readily accepted by the Centre for further assessment or admission to suitable courses.

4. The existing Yuen Long Job Centre ("YLJC") will merge with OSS to serve all the job seekers of Yuen Long District, when OSS starts operation. Moreover, in its first year of operation, it will provide personalized and customized employment services to 500 unemployed able-bodied Comprehensive Social Security Assistance ("CSSA") recipients in Tin Shui Wai, with a view to helping them secure employment and become self-reliant. As experience gathers, it will cater for more unemployed able-bodied CSSA recipients in the District.

Deliberations of the Panel

5. The progress of the setting up of OSS were discussed at the Panel meeting on 18 November 2010, and the briefings by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare on policy initiatives relevant to the Panel in the Chief Executive's 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 Policy Address. The deliberations of the Panel are summarized in the following paragraphs.

Employment services provided by OSS

6. Concerns were raised about the duration for which the personalized and customized employment services would be provided by OSS to 500 unemployed able-bodied CSSA recipients in Tin Shui Wai ("the relevant services"), and how these 500 CSSA recipients would be selected.

7. Members were advised that OSS would provide the relevant services on a trial basis to 500 unemployed able-bodied CSSA recipients in its first year of operation, with a view to helping them secure employment and become self-reliant. SWD would refer fresh CSSA recipients to OSS as existing CSSA recipients were already receiving assistance under the employment assistance programmes operated by SWD. After gaining experience and refining the modus operandi if appropriate, OSS would then be more ready to serve more unemployed able-bodied CSSA recipients in the district. Apart from these 500 CSSA recipients, OSS would serve other job-seekers in need of employment assistance in a way similar to job centres of LD.

Location and operation of OSS and the Centre

8. Information was sought on the rationale for setting up OSS in Tin Shui Wai, given its remote location, and whether the merging of OSS with the existing YLJC was due to resource constraints.

9. According to the Administration, Tin Shui Wai, densely populated with needy job seekers including unemployed CSSA recipients and new arrivals, had the second highest unemployment rate in Hong Kong. OSS would provide residents of Tin Shui Wai with enhanced employment services. In addition, ACB could provide additional space for OSS to operate. OSS in Tin Shui Wai would be easily accessible by various transportation means and it was only 15 minutes away by public transport from Yuen Long town centre. The merging of OSS and the existing YLJC would facilitate better utilization of resources.

10. Information was sought on how and when the Administration would evaluate the success of OSS, whether the Administration would establish OSS in other districts, and whether the Administration planned to replace existing job centres of LD with OSSs.

11. Members were advised that in the initial period of operation, the performance of OSS would largely be measured in quantitative terms, such as the number of job-seekers using the facilities of OSS, seeking job referrals and receiving case management services. Thereafter, the effectiveness in assisting hard-to-employ job-seekers to secure employment, for which a longer time was needed for consolidating the experience, could be evaluated. The operation of OSS would be reviewed two years after its commencement.

12. Members were also advised that OSS would be extended to other districts if the pilot OSS was proved successful in the provision of employment assistance and the services of OSS were found suitable to the districts having regard to their unique socio-economic characteristics. If OSS was to be extended to other districts, a major challenge would be the availability of suitable premises with sufficient space.

Relevant papers

13. A list of the relevant papers on the Legislative Council website is in the **Appendix**.

**Relevant papers on
The progress of the setting up of a pioneer one-stop employment and
training centre in Tin Shui Wai**

Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Manpower	21.10.2010 (Item II)	<u>Agenda</u> <u>Minutes</u>
Panel on Manpower	18.11.2010 (Item III)	<u>Agenda</u> <u>Minutes</u>
Panel on Manpower	20.10.2011 (Item II)	<u>Agenda</u> <u>Minutes</u>

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