

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)171/13-14

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seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/HS/1/12

Subcommittee on Poverty

**Minutes of the tenth meeting
held on Monday, 8 July 2013, at 3:30 pm
in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex**

Members present : Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP (Chairman)
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Albert HO Chun-yan
Hon LEE Cheuk-yan
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP
Hon Ronny TONG Ka-wah, SC
Hon CHAN Kin-por, BBS, JP
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
Hon WONG Yuk-man
Hon Charles Peter MOK
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, SBS, JP
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Hon KWOK Wai-keung
Hon TANG Ka-piu

Members absent : Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, BBS, MH, JP

**Public Officers : Item I
attending**

Mr Matthew CHEUNG, GBS, JP
Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Mr Donald CHEN
Deputy Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare) 2
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Mr FUNG Man-chung
Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Family & Child
Welfare)
Social Welfare Department

Ms Candy LAU
Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs
(Community Care Fund)
Home Affairs Bureau

Mrs Angelina CHEUNG
Deputy Secretary for Education (6)
Education Bureau

Ms Nancy SO
Controller
Student Financial Assistance Agency

**Attendance by : Item I
invitation**

Session One

Oxfam Hong Kong

Mr HO Chun-kit
Policy Officer

People Power

Mr YU Fei
Policy Researcher

Labour Party

Mr TAM Chun-yin
General Secretary

Cleaning Workers' Union

Mr SZE Ching-wee
Organizer

Alliance for Universal Pension

Mr AU YEUNG Kwun-tung
Organizer

Neighbourhood and Worker's Service Centre

Miss Yoyo CHAN Ka-yin
Representative

Kwai Chung Estate Striving For the Transportation
Subsidy Concern Group

Miss Vincci WONG
Representative

Mr WONG Yun-tat, Member of Kwai Ching District
Council

New People's Party

Mr Jason WONG
Policy Officer

天水圍社區發展陣線

Mr KONG Kin-shing
Community Organizer

天水圍爭取尊嚴生活權益會

陳定邦先生

天水圍爭取低收入家庭權益會

周智莉女士

爭取低收入保障聯席

Miss YEUNG Pui-yan
Community Organizer

關注低收入小組

Mr WU Shing
Member

關注幾時上公屋小組

Ms HU Kwan-wing
Member

Miss KWAN Cho-yi

Mr LAU Ka-cheong

Mr WONG Yat-tak

Concerning CSSA & Low-income Alliance

Mr LEE Tai-shing
Community Organizer

葵涌劏房住客聯盟

Ms HE Li-zhen
Member

葵涌劏房低收入關注組

Mr NG Kwan-lim
Member

The federation of Hong Kong and Kowloon Labour Unions

Miss TAM Kam-lin
Secretary to Social Services

葵涌新來港低收入家庭關注組

Miss XU Yuan-yuan

Civic Party

Mr Zico MAN

Session Two

Hong Kong Association for Democracy and People's Livelihood

Mr LI Ting-fung
Campaigner

Tung Chung Community Development Alliance

Miss CHIU Sin
Community Organizer

Tung Chung Parent Right Group

Ms LO
Representative

富昌邨居民服務中心

Mr Richard LI
Registered Social Worker

Hong Kong Federation of Women Centre

Mr LEUNG Shek-lun
Advocacy Officer

Tin Shui Wai Community Development Network

Mr CHAN Wai-lun
Organizing Officer

Mr LIU Man-king

中港低收入家庭互助網絡

Ms WAH Lin-sau
Representative

Women Workers' Cooperative

Miss CHOW Wing-chi
Organizer

Industrial Relations Institute

Ms HO Yee-yan
Representative

Liberal Party

Mr Dominic LEE
Chairperson, Liberal Party Youth Committee

Miss Mabel LAU

Mr Anthony YIU

Miss LAM Yan-pui

North District Employment Concert Group

Mr Simon TAM
Member

Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong Diocesan Pastoral
Centre for Workers (New Territories)

Miss TSE Yuk-man
Acting Centre Supervisor

New Territories Evangelical Ambassador

Mr CHOW King
Member

Smart and Beauty House

Ms LAW Lai-ping
Member

Miss Evangeline LAU Chung-ki

Miss KWOK Hong-lee

Miss TSOI Chung-wai

Mr WU Ho-chi

Clerk in attendance : Mr Colin CHUI
Chief Council Secretary (2) 4

Staff in attendance : Miss Karen LAI
Council Secretary (2) 4

Ms Judy TING
Council Secretary (2) 6

Miss Maggie CHIU
Legislative Assistant (2) 4

Action

I. Support for low-income working households which are not on Comprehensive Social Security Assistance
[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1484/12-13(01) to (02)]

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

Action

2. The Subcommittee passed the following motion moved by Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung –

"本小組委員會要求政府盡快設立全港性以住戶入息及住戶人數為主要考慮因素的低收入家庭補貼方案。"

(Translation)

"That this Subcommittee requests the Government to expeditiously draw up a proposal to provide a territory-wide low-income family supplement with household income and household size as major factors to be taken into account."

II. Any other business

3. Members agreed to the Chairman's suggestion that the subject matter of *"ways to provide posts or types of work offering higher pay, and to assist members of the public in starting up businesses and earning more income for improving their poverty situation"* should be added to the list of discussion items of the Subcommittee.

4. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 7:12 pm.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
29 October 2013

**Proceedings of the tenth meeting of the
Subcommittee on Poverty
on Monday, 8 July 2013, at 3:30 pm
in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex**

Time marker	Speaker(s)	Subject(s)	Action required
<i>Agenda item I – Support for low-income working households which are not on Comprehensive Social Security Assistance</i>			
001323 - 002125	Chairman Administration	Opening remarks Briefing by the Administration on its support currently provided for low-income working households which were not on Comprehensive Social Security Assistance ("CSSA").	
002126 - 002430	Oxfam Hong Kong Chairman	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1484/12-13(03)] Expressing support for the provision of low-income supplement for needy working families with children in order to alleviate the financial burden of these families, encourage wage earners to stay in employment and address the problem of inter-generational poverty among children of these families.	
002431 - 002753	People Power Chairman	Views that the Administration should consider implementing a negative income tax regime to help low-income working households to be self-reliant, given the Government's huge financial surplus.	
002754 - 003059	Labour Party Chairman	Presentation of views that – (a) it was necessary to introduce low-income working family supplement to help needy families to make ends meet; (b) different levels of supplement should be set on the basis of the income level of households; (c) Inland Revenue Department should be tasked with the administration of low-income working family supplement since it held records of Hong Kong taxpayers, thereby incurring less administrative cost; and (d) eligibility for the supplement should not be subject to assessment of assets.	
003100 - 003338	Cleaning Workers' Union Chairman	Presentation of views that – (a) the Statutory Minimum Wage ("SMW") did	

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		<p>not provide sufficient income protection for low-income families;</p> <p>(b) eligibility for low-income working family supplement should not be subject to assessment of assets; and</p> <p>(c) to raise the wages of cleaning employed by subcontractors, the Government should take the lead by abolishing the "contracting-out" system.</p>	
003339 - 003702	Alliance for Universal Pension Chairman	<p>Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1573/12-13(06)]</p> <p>Views that –</p> <p>(a) a large number of the working population did not have spare money to be saved for retirement;</p> <p>(b) applications on individual basis should be allowed for the proposed low-income working family supplement;</p> <p>(c) the number of applicants for the Old Age Living Allowance ("OALA") did not meet the Administration's target; and</p> <p>(d) there was a genuine need to review the outdated CSSA scheme.</p>	
003703 - 003858	Neighbourhood and Worker's Service Centre Chairman	<p>Presentation of views that –</p> <p>(a) in considering the provision of low-income supplement for needy working families, it was also important to offer supplement to needy singletons who worked as casual labour and did not have stable income;</p> <p>(b) low-income supplement not only helped needy individuals to escape from poverty, it would also enable them to pursue personal development and save money for the future; and</p> <p>(c) it was unacceptable to incorporate elements of low-income working family supplement into the existing Work Incentive Transport Subsidy ("WITS") Scheme, given that WITS was to reduce low-income workers' cost of travelling to and from work while low-income supplement was to help needy families or individuals to escape from poverty.</p>	

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003859 - 004146	Kwai Chung Estate Striving For the Transportation Subsidy Concern Group Chairman	<p>Presentation of views that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) SMW rate should be raised to help needy people to meet high living expenses; (b) low-income working family supplement should include a basic amount of money to prevent families from falling into poverty; and (c) low-income working family supplement should not be incorporated into the existing WITS given their different policy objectives. 	
004147 - 004502	Mr WONG Yun-tat, Member of Kwai Tsing District Council Chairman	<p>Presentation of views that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) there was a need to implement low-income working family supplement, under which different levels of supplement should be set according to the income level of households; (b) many low-income families living in Kwai Tsing area did not apply for CSSA because of stigmatization concern; (c) the complicated means test system adopted under various Government subsidies, such as WITS, discouraged needy people from applying for such subsidies; and (d) special subsidies should be provided for children from low-income families to attend extra-curricular activities, and for children with special education needs to pursue education. 	
004503 - 004817	New People's Party Chairman	<p>Presentation of views that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) wide consultation should be conducted on the proposal of low-income working family supplement; (b) New People's Party was open to the proposal of low-income working family supplement; and (c) the Administration should address inter-generation poverty, to enable children of low-income families to have an opportunity to advance. 	
004818 - 005139	天水圍社區發展陣線 Chairman	<p>Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1573/12-13(02)]</p> <p>Request for the Administration to introduce</p>	

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		low-income working family supplement and negative income tax to alleviate poverty.	
005140 - 005407	天水圍爭取尊嚴生活權益會 Chairman	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1573/12-13(02)] Request that the Administration should introduce low-income supplement to enable needy working families to meet medical needs.	
005408 - 005702	天水圍爭取低收入家庭權益會 Chairman	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1573/12-13(02)] Providing information on the financial hardships being faced by low-income working families living in Tin Shui Wai; and expressing support for the introduction of low-income working family supplement.	
005703 - 010017	爭取低收入保障聯席 Chairman	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1573/12-13(05)] Views that – (a) low-income working family supplement should be expeditiously introduced; (b) the Commission on Poverty ("CoP") should consider the proposal of low-income working family supplement submitted by 爭取低收入保障聯席, under which different subsidy levels should be set on the basis of 50%, 60% and 70% of monthly median domestic household income ("MMDHI") of the employed population; and (c) supplement should be provided for families with children, children with special education needs, and disabled adults.	
010018 - 010316	關注低收入小組 Chairman	Views that the Administration should tackle poverty at source, since poverty would bring about instability to the community; and request for the introduction of low-income working family supplement.	
010317 - 010624	關注幾時上公屋小組 Chairman	Providing information on the difficulties being faced by low-income families in respect of food, housing, transport and medical needs.	
010625 - 010951	Miss KWAN Cho-yi Chairman	Request for the Administration to provide a specific supplement for those low-income families living in sub-divided units to meet the high cost of electricity.	

Time marker	Speaker(s)	Subject(s)	Action required
010952 - 011306	Mr LAU Ka-cheong Chairman	Expressing support for the introduction of low-income supplement for needy working families, in particular those with unstable income; and views that the Short-term Food Assistance ("STFA") Service did not live up to the expectations of providing food assistance to needy people as it mainly provided canned food rather than fresh food, and service users were allowed to receive such service for only six weeks.	
011307 - 011603	Mr WONG Yat-tak Chairman	Presentation of views that – (a) the Administration should formulate long-term policy to address youth poverty; (b) specific support should be provided for needy young people to help them to pursue education and career; and (c) low-income working family supplement should be introduced.	
011604 - 011923	Concerning CSSA & Low-income Alliance Chairman	Requests for the Administration to – (a) address the disparity between the rich and the poor; (b) implement a comprehensive low-income supplement for needy working households; and (c) avoid incorporating low-income supplement into the existing WITS.	
011924 - 012246	葵涌劏房住客聯盟 Chairman	Requests for the Administration to provide specific support for low-income working families to meet the high costs of education, water and electricity, and introduce low-income working family supplement under which different levels of supplement should be set on the basis of the number of children in the family.	
012247 - 012553	葵涌劏房低收入關注組 Chairman	Request for the introduction of low-income supplement to help needy working families to make ends meet.	
012554 - 012928	The Federation of Hong Kong and Kowloon Labour Unions Chairman	Suggestion that providing low-income supplement for the needy people on the Waiting List ("WL") for public rental housing ("PRH") was more direct and cost-saving, given that the income levels of these people had been investigated and vetted by the Housing Authority.	

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012929 - 013201	葵涌新來港低收入家庭關注組 Chairman	Views that the provision of low-income supplement should benefit newly-arrived families, as many of these families were not eligible for CSSA due to the seven-year residence requirement, and did not have stable jobs due to language and qualification problems.	
013202 - 013512	Civic Party Chairman	<p>Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1573/12-13(07)]</p> <p>Views that to provide support for low-income working households which were not on CSSA, the Administration should improve the existing WITS, STFA Service and After School Care Programme, as well as introduce primary medical voucher, cash subsidy for PRH applicants who had been on WL for more than three years, and a central vetting mechanism to waive school activity fees for students from low-income families.</p>	
013513 - 014258	Chairman Administration	<p>The Administration's response that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) OALA was well received by needy elderly persons; as at early July 2013, some 340 000 applications for OALA had been approved and about 50 000 applications were being vetted; (b) the Administration was considering the suggestion of implementing a central processing arrangement to handle applications for Government subsidies and fee waiving schemes; (c) the Administration would strive to improve employment opportunities for grassroots people living in remote areas, and address youth employment; (d) under STFA Service, the five service operators had already served some 120 000 needy people; (e) the Administration enhanced STFA Service in October 2011 by, among others, adding food and hot meal coupons which could be redeemed at designated food stalls, supermarkets and restaurants, and providing special dietary food for people from ethnic minority background; (f) the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved an additional provision of \$200 million in June 2013 to improve and 	

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		<p>extend the STFA service, which included increasing the number of STFA service operators from five to seven, extending the service period from a maximum of six weeks to eight weeks, and raising the allocation per meal-day for service operators by 10%;</p> <p>(g) consideration would be given to regularizing the assistance programmes under the Community Care Fund ("CCF") if they were found to be effective in supporting low-income families, such as subsidy for students to meet lunch expenses, and training subsidy for children with special needs who were on the waiting list for subvented pre-school rehabilitation services; and</p> <p>(h) the Administration would seriously consider the views expressed by the deputations.</p>	
014259 - 015610	Break		
015611 - 020000	Hong Kong Association for Democracy and People's Livelihood Chairman	Presentation of views that in order to alleviate and prevent poverty, the Administration should raise SMW rate to at least \$35, and introduce low-income working family supplement and a second safety net.	
020001 - 020302	Tung Chung Community Development Alliance Chairman	Request for the introduction of low-income supplement for needy working families, in particular those living in Yat Tung Estate of Tung Chung, to alleviate their financial hardships such as unstable income, high transportation and food costs.	
020303 - 020552	Tung Chung Parent Right Group Chairman	<p>Presentation of views that –</p> <p>(a) there was an urgent need to introduce low-income supplement for needy working households to help them make ends meet;</p> <p>(b) the supplement should include specific assistance for children's education; and</p> <p>(c) different supplement levels should be set according to the household size and special needs of family members.</p>	
020553 - 020904	富昌邨居民服務中心 Chairman	<p>Presentation of views that –</p> <p>(a) the Administration spent little efforts to develop social enterprises;</p>	

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		<p>(b) it was important for the Administration to solicit the views of the community in developing social enterprises; and</p> <p>(c) the hospice service operated under the 富昌邨居民服務中心 not only provided affordable funeral services for needy elders, but also employed a number of low-skilled and low-education women to help them to earn a living.</p>	
020905 - 021223	Hong Kong Federation of Women Centre Chairman	<p>Presentation of views that –</p> <p>(a) it was important for the Administration to attach importance to the role played by women in low-income families;</p> <p>(b) to address women poverty, specific allowance, such as carer's allowance, should be provided for needy women; and</p> <p>(c) there was a genuine need to improve childcare services to enable more women to join the workforce, making reference to the practices adopted in the implementation of the After-school care pilot scheme of CCF.</p>	
021224 - 021545	Tin Shui Wai Community Development Network Chairman	Suggestions that SMW rate should be reviewed and childcare services should be provided for needy families on a long-term basis to enable women of these families to seek employment.	
021546 - 021923	Mr LIU Man-king Chairman	Calling for the regularization of CCF's assistance programmes which were found to be effective.	
021924 - 022205	中港低收入家庭互助網絡 Chairman	<p>Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1573/12-13(04)]</p> <p>Request for the Administration to allow those families on WL to have immediate access to PRH, implement rent control, and provide low-income supplement for needy working families according to their income levels.</p>	
022306 - 022633	Women Workers' Cooperative Chairman	<p>Suggestions that –</p> <p>(a) in the absence of rent control, the Administration should not introduce low-income working family supplement, as this subsidy would be an excuse for landlords to increase rent;</p> <p>(b) consideration should be given to redeveloping private buildings and units that had been vacant for a long time as PRH;</p>	

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		<p>(c) Government land that had been unoccupied for a long time should be used for building PRH; and</p> <p>(d) there was a need to restructure the Urban Renewal Authority to ensure that its renewal projects met the housing needs of the community.</p>	
022634 - 022934	Industrial Relations Institute Chairman	<p>Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1573/12-13(03)]</p> <p>Views that the Government's non-interventionist policy resulted in the ever increase of living costs, and contributed to the continual exploitation of the poor by the rich; and there was a need to introduce a progressive tax regime to limit the accumulation of wealth by the rich.</p>	
022935 - 023239	Liberal Party Chairman	<p>Presentation of views that –</p> <p>(a) in its poverty alleviation policy, the Administration should avoid implementing universal assistance programmes and should impose means tests on applicants for enrolment in assistance programmes;</p> <p>(b) assistance should only be provided to the needy elderly persons, single-parents and people with disabilities; and</p> <p>(c) it was appropriate to introduce low-income supplement for needy families to encourage them to stay employed, and helped them to appreciate the meaning of work.</p>	
023240 - 023519	Miss Mabel LAU Chairman	<p>Presentation of views that –</p> <p>(a) public resources should be spent on those who were genuinely in need of assistance, such as low-income working families;</p> <p>(b) abuse of CSSA for the unemployed was on the rise;</p> <p>(c) to tackle the abuse of CSSA for the unemployed, a vetting mechanism should be put in place to further assess the eligibility of those recipients who had been receiving CSSA for the unemployed for two consecutive years or above ; and</p> <p>(d) there was a need to optimize the existing Integrated Employment Assistance</p>	

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		<p>Programme for Self-reliance, so as to enable recipients of CSSA for the unemployed to make the best use of their abilities to contribute to society.</p>	
023520 - 023724	Mr Anthony YIU Chairman	<p>Presentation of views that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) public resources should be saved for those who were in genuine need of assistance; (b) able-bodied people with working ability should be encouraged to get employed and become self-reliant; and (c) consideration should be given to setting additional conditions, such as a time limit for receiving assistance, to prevent abuse of CSSA for the unemployed. 	
023725 - 024024	Miss LAM Yan-pui Chairman	<p>Presentation of views that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) due to limited public resources, it was necessary to ensure that CSSA only benefitted those in genuine need of assistance, such as low-income working families; (b) able-bodied people with working ability should be encouraged to join the workforce and become self-reliant; and (c) the abuse of CSSA for the unemployed by able-bodied recipients would affect the overall image of CSSA recipients, resulting in needy people being reluctant to apply for CSSA because of stigmatization concern. 	
024025 - 024339	North District Employment Concern Group Chairman	<p>Presentation of views that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the Administration should address the problems faced by working people with disabilities to help them to meet high medical costs; (b) the income earned by some people with disabilities resulted in their ineligibility for Government subsidies because the combined income of their families exceeded the relevant thresholds; and (c) under the proposed low-income supplement, a lower threshold should be set for working people with disabilities. 	

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024340 - 024653	Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong Diocesan Pastoral Centre for Workers (New Territories) Chairman	<p>Presentation of views that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) WITS should not be changed to low-income working family supplement given their different targeted beneficiaries; WITS provided transportation assistance for low-income workers while low-income working family supplement provided financial support for the whole family; (b) there was a need to introduce different transport subsidies to facilitate low-income people living in remote areas to travel to urban areas to work; and (c) the Administration should consider including a subsidy for the unemployed in its poverty alleviation policy. 	
024654 - 024957	New Territories Evangelical Ambassador Chairman	<p>Presentation of views that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) low-income working family supplement and WITS should be separately implemented; (b) while WITS helped workers to meet transportation costs, low-income working family supplement helped families to meet living expenses; and (c) many working people with disabilities were paid less wages than able-bodied workers. 	
024958 - 025218	Smart and Beauty House Chairman	<p>Presentation of views that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the prevailing high inflation resulted in a situation where the low-income working population could not afford the high living costs; (b) the Administration should provide specific assistance for those low-income families whose income was at or below 60% of MMDHI; and (c) specific subsidy, say \$600 per child per month, should be provided for low-income families with children to help them to pursue education. 	
025219 - 025346	Miss Evangeline LAU Chung-ki Chairman	Views that the low income of workers of the Government's outsourced cleaning services was not sufficient for them to make ends meet; and there was a need to implement low-income working family supplement to help these workers to lead their lives in dignity.	

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025347 - 025702	Miss KWOK Hong-lee Chairman	Views that in implementing the SMW policy, the Administration had failed to take into account the subsistence needs of the families of workers, resulting in a situation where the low income of a breadwinner could not afford the subsistence living of his/her whole family, and the review of SMW rate should be conducted more frequently so as to catch up with inflation.	
025703 - 030013	Miss TSOI Chung-wai Chairman	<p>Presentation of views that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) in the formulation of low-income working family supplement, the Administration should clearly set out the policy intent and implementation method; (b) the Administration should first identify the subsistence living needs of low-income families and then work out the supplement amount; and (c) the policy intent of WITS was confusing, as the Administration had failed to explain whether it was a subsidy for encouraging workers to stay in employment or helping needy families to make ends meet. 	
030014 - 030318	Mr WU Ho-chi Chairman	<p>Presentation of views that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) there was a genuine need for the Administration to tackle inter-generational poverty; (b) specific assistance should be provided for children to pursue education and extra-curricular activities; and (c) given the different policy intents of WITS and low-income working family supplement, the Administration should ensure that these subsidies be implemented separately. 	
030319 - 030931	Chairman Administration	<p>The Administration's response that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) it was at an early stage of considering the subject of low-income working family supplement, and there was a need to solicit views in the community; (b) the Administration would enhance its efforts in developing social enterprises; the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund Task Force of CoP would provide funding for worthwhile social 	

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		<p>enterprise projects;</p> <p>(c) currently, there were some 266 000 families (covering some 400 000 beneficiaries) receiving assistance under the CSSA Scheme; as at May 2013, the number of unemployment cases was about 23 000, which had been decreasing in the past 45 months;</p> <p>(d) the Administration would continue its efforts to encourage able-bodied people with working capability to find jobs and stay in employment under the employment assistance programmes of CSSA;</p> <p>(e) workers of the Government's outsourced cleaning services might consider applying for WITS; the Administration had recently relaxed WITS Scheme by providing for the option of individual applications as an alternative to household applications;</p> <p>(f) the income limit of a person, who applied for WITS as a single-person household, was \$7,700; since income did not include employee's mandatory contribution to a Mandatory Provident Fund Scheme, the effective income level of such an applicant was \$8,105; and</p> <p>(g) on the review of SMW rate, it was a statutory requirement for the Minimum Wage Commission ("MWC") to report on SMW rate at least once in every two years; hence, MWC might carry out a review on SMW rate in less than two years' time if there was evidence supporting the need, such as the change of socio-economic situation.</p>	
030932 - 031029	Hong Kong Association for Democracy and People's Livelihood Chairman	Views that there was a need to consolidate the applications for different Government subsidies and fee waiving schemes.	
031030 - 031112	Tung Chung Community Development Alliance Chairman	Views that abuse of CSSA for the unemployed was not serious.	
031113 - 031148	Hong Kong Federation of Women Centre Chairman	Request for the Administration to incorporate the elements of gender mainstreaming in its formulation of policies.	
031149 - 031300	Tin Shui Wai Community Development Network Chairman	Request for the improvement of childcare services to enable more women to join the workforce.	

Time marker	Speaker(s)	Subject(s)	Action required
031301 - 031414	Liberal Party Chairman	Views that the proposal of low-income working family supplement would help increase the income of needy families thereby discouraging them from relying on CSSA.	
031415 - 031514	Miss Evangeline LAU Chung-ki Chairman	Views that some low-income workers who needed to work overtime were not eligible for WITS because their overall income exceeded the income threshold.	
031515 - 031700	Administration Chairman	<p>The Administration's response that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) it was committed to incorporating gender needs and perspectives into the formulation of policies so that women and men could have equitable access to, and benefit from, society's resources; (b) efforts would be made on improving childcare services with a view to releasing women workforce to meet the needs of society in areas such as elderly care; and (c) there was a need to solicit help from social workers to promote the WITS Scheme to facilitate more low-income workers to apply for the subsidy. 	
031701 - 031801	Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung Chairman	The motion moved by Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung was passed by the Subcommittee.	
031802 - 032509	Mr LEE Cheuk-yan Administration Chairman	<p>Mr LEE Cheuk-yan's views that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the Administration should set a timetable for the implementation of low-income working family supplement; (b) the social enterprises operating under the service contracts of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department ("LCSD") offered employment services to people with disabilities, but were not required to pay SMW to their disabled employees; (c) in inviting bidders for its service contracts, LCSD should arrange exclusive bidding by those social enterprises which employed people with disabilities, enabling them to pay SMW to their disabled employees; and (d) there was a need to formulate a long-term childcare policy. <p>The Administration's response that –</p>	

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		<p>(a) the Administration was considering the subject of low-income working family supplement and had yet to come to a decision and a timetable; the subject warranted more discussions in the community;</p> <p>(b) in inviting social enterprises to participate in bidding for its service contracts, LCSD accorded priority to those social enterprises which undertook to employ people with disabilities;</p> <p>(c) under the Enhancing Employment of People with Disabilities through Small Enterprise Project, SWD granted seed money to non-governmental organizations for setting up small enterprises. A funded business needed to fulfill the requirement that the number of employees with disabilities should not be less than 50% of the total number of employees; many of these social enterprises paid SMW to their disabled employees; and</p> <p>(d) the Administration was committed to improving childcare services, such as the Neighbourhood Support Child Care Project ("NSCCP").</p>	
032510 - 033019	Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung Administration Chairman	<p>Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung's views that –</p> <p>(a) to effectively alleviate poverty, the Administration should implement rent control, raise the SMW rate, and provide specific support for low-income families with children;</p> <p>(b) there was no evidence to support that abuse of CSSA for the unemployed was on the rise; and</p> <p>(c) the remuneration of carers under NSCCP should be raised.</p>	
033020 - 033556	Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung Administration Chairman	<p>Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung's views that the most effective way to assist low-income working households in meeting high living costs was to increase the SMW rate, and there was an urgent need to increase the remuneration of carers under NSCCP to enhance childcare services and enable women to join or return to the workforce.</p> <p>The Administration's response that NSCCP was a mutual-aid scheme instead of an employment project; its objective was to foster community participation and mutual help in the</p>	

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		neighbourhood, and provide needy families with flexible childcare support service; the childcare services under NSCCP was well received in the community.	
033557 - 034109	Chairman Administration	<p>The Chairman's views that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) it was unreasonable that a large number of Hong Kong workers did not earn enough income to meet the living expenses of himself/herself and/or his/her families, given that Hong Kong was a rich city; (b) according to the Statistics and Census Department, Hong Kong's GDP per capita in 2012 was some \$22,000 per month; and about half of the population of Hong Kong, i.e. some 3.5 million people, was in employment; (c) it was necessary to ensure that the income of workers was sufficient to meet the living expenses of a two-person family, excluding housing because of fluctuating housing price; and (d) the introduction of a negative tax regime was another option for tackling poverty. <p>The Administration's response that it was necessary to consider with great care the positioning of the proposed low-income working family supplement in the context of other subsidies, and solicit views in the community on the subject; and the Administration would take into account the views of the Chairman, members and deputations in its consideration.</p>	
<i>Agenda item II – Any other business</i>			
034110 - 034225	Chairman	The Chairman's suggestion that the subject matter of " <i>ways to provide posts or types of work offering higher pay, and to assist members of the public in starting up businesses and earning more income for improving their poverty situation</i> " should be added to the list of discussion items of the Subcommittee.	