

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(2)2305/13-14  
(These minutes have been  
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/HS/1/12

**Subcommittee on Poverty**

**Minutes of the seventeenth meeting  
held on Monday, 24 March 2014, at 10:45 am  
in Conference Room 3 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  
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP  
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che  
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC  
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung  
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming  
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** : Hon WONG Yuk-man  
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, BBS, MH, JP

**Member attending** : Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun, JP

**Public Officers attending** : Item I

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

Ms Carrie LEE  
Deputy Controller (1)  
Student Financial Assistance Agency

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

**Staff in attendance** : Ms Catherina YU  
Senior Council Secretary (2) 4

Ms Ivy CHENG  
Research Officer 3

Miss Maggie CHIU  
Legislative Assistant (2) 4

Action

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**I. Proposed Community Care Fund initiatives to assist needy post-secondary students**  
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1076/13-14(01)]

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

**II. Draft report on duty visit to Taiwan and Japan by delegation of Subcommittee on Poverty**  
[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1076/13-14(02) and CB(2)1108/13-14(01)]

2. Mr TAM Yiu-chung, Dr Priscilla LEUNG and Mr Frankie YICK

Action

expressed reservations on principle (1) and the part regarding "abolishment of asset test" in principle (3) set out in paragraph 5.5 of the draft report. The Chairman said that, in response to the above three members' views, paragraph 5.5 should be revised and footnotes should be added to the report to reflect their views. Paragraph 5.5 incorporating the revisions should be circulated to the Subcommittee for consideration.

Secretariat

*(Post-meeting note: After the meeting, Mr Abraham SHEK and Mr LEUNG Che-cheung expressed to the Secretariat the same reservations as those expressed by the above three members. Mr CHAN Kin-por expressed to the Secretariat that he was against principle (1) and the part regarding "abolishment of asset test" in principle (3). The revised version of paragraph 5.5, which had incorporated members' views, was circulated to the Subcommittee vide LC Paper No. CB(2)1223/13-14 on 3 April 2014.)*

**III. Subjects to be discussed at meetings in April to June 2014**

[LC Paper No. CB(2)1076/13-14(03)]

3. Members agreed that the following subjects should be discussed at the meetings in April to June 2014 –

Meeting date	Subject for discussion
April 2014	Measures to support ethnic minorities in relation to employment and integration into the community
May 2014	Low-income Working Family Allowance
June 2014	Community Care Fund ("CCF")

4. Members also agreed that deputations should be invited to attend the above meetings to give views on the subject matters.

Admin.

5. To facilitate members' discussion on CCF at the meeting in June 2014, the Subcommittee requested the Administration to provide the full report of the consultancy study conducted by Deloitte Consulting (Hong Kong) Limited on enhancing the evaluation of assistance programmes under CCF.

*(Post-meeting note: The full report of the consultancy study was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(2)1832/13-14(01) on 17 June 2014.)*

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**IV. Any other business**

6. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:07 pm.

Council Business Division 2  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
18 September 2014

**Proceedings of the seventeenth meeting of the  
Subcommittee on Poverty  
on Monday, 24 March 2014, at 10:45 am  
in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex**

<b>Time marker</b>	<b>Speaker(s)</b>	<b>Subject(s)</b>	<b>Action required</b>
<i>Agenda item I – Proposed Community Care Fund initiatives to assist needy post-secondary students</i>			
000540 - 001310	Chairman Administration	Briefing by the Administration on its proposals to provide, under the Community Care Fund ("CCF"), a hostel subsidy for needy undergraduate students staying in institutional student hostels and increase the maximum level of academic expenses grant under the Financial Assistance Scheme for Post-secondary Students ("FASP").	
001311 - 001539	Chairman Mr TAM Yiu-chung Administration	Mr TAM Yiu-chung's enquiry about the reasons for not providing hostel subsidy for the entire four-year tertiary studies.  The Administration's response that as the provision of hostel subsidy was not part of the prevailing hostel policy, the Administration needed a longer time to review its effectiveness.	
001540 - 001958	Chairman Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che Administration	Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che's enquiries about whether CCF would consider providing financial assistance or services support for needy post-secondary students with disabilities, e.g. for students with visual impairment, hearing impairment or mobility difficulties.  The Administration's response that –  (a) post-secondary students with financial difficulties, including those with special needs, might apply for financial assistance from the Student Financial Assistance Agency ("SFAA");  (b) non-cash support was provided for students with special needs at school level starting from kindergarten. The Subcommittee on Integrated Education under the Panel on Education had a lengthy discussion with the Education Bureau ("EDB") on support for post-secondary students with special needs. EDB would follow up the subject matter; and  (c) in considering whether a particular assistance programme should be	

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		<p>implemented, CCF would take into account factors such as whether the programme would be in conflict with the Administration's policies and whether it could sustain. CCF would consider members' suggestion on offering support for needy post-secondary students with disabilities.</p>	
001959 - 002534	<p>Chairman Mr CHAN Chi-chuen Administration</p>	<p>Mr CHAN Chi-chuen's enquiries about whether there was a cap on the number of beneficiaries of hostel subsidy and the disbursement arrangements of hostel subsidy for students who did not meet the accommodation time requirement.</p> <p>The Administration's response that –</p> <p>(a) it had not set a ceiling on the number of beneficiaries of hostel subsidy. For the purpose of projecting the required funding to implement the programme, the Administration had made a preliminary estimate on the number of beneficiaries which was about 6 600 needy students; and</p> <p>(b) as some students might only opt to stay in hostels for one semester, it was proposed that the subsidy should be provided on a semester basis. Institutions had the discretion to provide the subsidy for needy students with genuine difficulties who failed to meet the accommodation time requirement. Needy students might consider applying for interest-free loan from SFAA to pay hostel fee.</p>	
002535 - 003107	<p>Chairman The Deputy Chairman Administration</p>	<p>The Deputy Chairman's views that –</p> <p>(a) students with disabilities should be provided with a barrier-free environment at hostels;</p> <p>(b) some students with severe physical disabilities needed to be attended by their carers round-the-clock. Accommodation for their carers at hostels should therefore be considered; and</p> <p>(c) given the high medical-related expenses borne by students with disabilities, these expenses should be deducted from their household income for the purpose of income assessment for SFAA's financial assistance schemes.</p>	

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		<p>The Administration's response that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) medical expense was a deductible item in the calculation of household income for SFAA's financial assistance schemes. The deductible ceiling was \$17,050 per family member;</li> <li>(b) students from families with monthly income at around the median monthly domestic household income ("MMDHI") were eligible for the minimum level of assistance under SFAA's financial assistance schemes. Those from families with monthly income at about 50% of MMDHI were eligible for full level of assistance. Comparing with other financial assistance programmes, the income requirement for student financial assistance schemes were lower to help students move upward; and</li> <li>(c) the Administration would relay the Deputy Chairman's views to CCF.</li> </ul>	
003108 - 003623	Chairman Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung Administration	<p>Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung's views that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) the Administration should consider providing subsidy for post-secondary students with hearing impairment to meet their hearing aids expenses; and</li> <li>(b) subsidy for hostel and academic expenses should also be provided for needy sub-degree students.</li> </ul> <p>The Administration's response that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) EDB would take follow-up actions regarding support for post-secondary students with special needs, having regard to the views of the Subcommittee on Integrated Education;</li> <li>(b) as sub-degree students were not provided with hostel places under the prevailing post-secondary student hostel policy, the relevant proposal did not include sub-degree students; and</li> <li>(c) the Administration would include sub-degree students and students pursuing self-financing programmes in its financial assistance schemes as far as practicable. Like other post-secondary students, sub-degree students who passed the income test and asset test were provided with grants to cover tuition</li> </ul>	

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		<p>fees and academic expenses and a low-interest loan to meet living expenses. Sub-degree students could also benefit from the Administration's proposal to increase academic expenses grant.</p>	
003624 - 004103	Chairman Mr Albert HO Administration	<p>Mr Albert HO's suggestion that the Administration should consider providing low-interest loan for students who had financial difficulties but did not pass the income test for hostel subsidy to meet their hostel expenses.</p> <p>The Administration's response that low-interest loan (the current interest rate was 1.395% per annum) for living expenses was provided by SFAA for students who did not wish to undergo income test or did not meet the income requirement.</p> <p>Mr HO's concern about whether the loan amount would be sufficient to cover the tuition fee and hostel expenses.</p> <p>The Administration's reply that the maximum level of loan amount under SFAA's non-means-tested loan schemes was \$300,000 per student. Students who had exhausted this loan limit for studying courses for attaining their first degree-level study might apply for a maximum level of loan amount of \$100,000 under the extended non-means-tested loan. The loan amount should be sufficient to meet students' tuition and hostel expenses. The Administration would take into account Mr HO's suggestion in the review of the non-means-tested loan schemes to be conducted in 2015.</p>	
004104 - 005238	Chairman Miss CHAN Yuen-han Administration	<p>The Chairman's views that –</p> <p>(a) given that CCF programmes were usually on pilot for one year and the Administration should be able to have a good grasp of the operation of the hostel subsidy programme in one year's time, the pilot period for the programme should be shortened to one or two years; and</p> <p>(b) as academic expenses grant was currently offered to eligible students pursuing self-financing post-secondary programmes and those pursuing publicly-funded programmes (up to \$4,700 per year for the former and up to \$6,700 per year for the latter), the provision of an additional amount of academic expenses grant of \$2,000 for</p>	



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		<p>eligible students pursuing self-financing post-secondary programmes should not be on a pilot basis.</p> <p>Miss CHAN Yuen-han's concern that the next Government might not continue with the two programmes. The Administration should provide these programmes on a regular basis.</p> <p>The Administration's response that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) depending on the nature of the programmes, the pilot period of CCF's programmes varied from one to three years;</li> <li>(b) as funding injections to CCF had been approved by FC, individual programmes were not subject to FC's separate approval. The two programmes, if launched using CCF funding, could be implemented earlier;</li> <li>(c) longer time was required to consider regularizing the hostel subsidy programme as it involved examination of the existing hostel policy and long-term financial arrangements for hostel subsidy; and</li> <li>(d) having regard to the fact that both self-financing and publicly-funded programmes had become more diversified, the Administration would review the level of academic expenses assistance provided for students pursuing these programmes so as to dovetail with the levels of assistance for both groups of students. As time was required to discuss the subject matter with the University Grants Committee and academic institutions, the Administration had proposed that the grant be provided for a period of three years.</li> </ul> <p>The Administration's response to Miss CHAN Yuen-han's enquiry that there would not be a cap on the number of beneficiaries for both programmes.</p>	
005239 - 010144	Chairman Miss CHAN Yuen-han Administration	<p>Reiteration by the Chairman that the pilot period for the two programmes, particularly that for the academic expenses grant, should be reduced, say, to one year.</p> <p>Miss CHAN Yuen-han stressed that the two programmes should be implemented on a regular basis.</p>	

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		The Administration's explanation of the reasons for implementing the two programmes on a pilot basis for three years, the student loan repayment arrangements and the revised arrangement for rent allowance payment under the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance ("CSSA") Scheme for CSSA students who were receiving student financial assistance.	
010145 - 010328	Chairman	The Chairman's view that the proposal to increase the academic expenses grant was a policy decision. As the grant was being offered to students pursuing self-financing programmes under the current mechanism, increasing the grant would not require many technicalities. He remained of the view that the pilot period of three year for the programme was too long.	
<i>Agenda item II – Draft report on duty visit to Taiwan and Japan by delegation of Subcommittee on Poverty</i>			
010329 - 010443	Chairman	Invitation of views by the Chairman on the draft report and the delegation's recommendation for the Subcommittee to seek the agreement of the House Committee for priority allocation of a slot for a motion debate on the duty visit report at the Council meeting of 30 April 2014.	
010444 - 011051	Chairman Mr TAM Yiu-chung Dr Priscilla LEUNG Mr Frankie YICK	Views of Mr TAM Yiu-chung, Dr Priscilla LEUNG and Mr Frankie YICK on paragraph 5.5 of the draft report.  Discussion on the handling of the report and the motion proposed to be moved at the Council meeting.	Secretariat (paragraph of 2 the minutes)
<i>Agenda item III – Subjects to be discussed at meetings in April to June 2014</i>			
011052 - 011326	Chairman The Deputy Chairman	The Deputy Chairman's view that representatives from the Labour and Welfare Bureau, Labour Department and Social Welfare Department should be invited to attend the meeting in April 2014 to discuss measures to support ethnic minorities in relation to employment and integration into the community.	
011327 - 011440	Chairman Miss CHAN Yuen-han	Miss CHAN Yuen-han's view that deputations should be invited to give views on the work of CCF at the meeting in June 2014.	
011441 – 11837	Chairman The Deputy Chairman Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung	Request by the Deputy Chairman and Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung that the Administration should provide the Subcommittee with the full report of the consultancy study conducted by Deloitte Consulting (Hong Kong) Limited on	Admin (paragraph 5 of the minutes)

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		enhancing the evaluation of assistance programmes under CCF.  Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung's view that the rationale of deciding the target beneficiaries of CCF's assistance programmes, priority of launching the programmes, etc. should be discussed in detail.	
011838 - 012315	Chairman Dr KWOK Ka-ki	Dr KWOK Ka-ki's view that the officers attending the meeting should be able to answer questions in relation to the provision of subsidy for drug costs by CCF.	

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