

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(2)1039/14-15  
(These minutes have been  
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/HS/1/12

**Subcommittee on Poverty**

**Minutes of the twenty-sixth meeting  
held on Thursday, 29 January 2015, at 8:30 am  
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 CHAN Kin-por, BBS, JP  
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP  
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC  
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming  
Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP  
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen  
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, SBS, JP  
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki

**Members absent** : Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP  
Hon Ronny TONG Ka-wah, SC  
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che  
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung  
Hon WONG Yuk-man  
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, BBS, MH, JP  
Hon KWOK Wai-keung  
Hon TANG Ka-piu, JP

**Public Officers : Item I  
attending**

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

Ms Jane LEE  
Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare  
(Poverty)  
Labour and Welfare Bureau

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

Mr Nick AU YEUNG  
Principal Assistant Secretary (Community Care Fund)  
Home Affairs Bureau

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

**Staff in : Miss Kay CHU  
attendance Council Secretary (2) 4**

Miss Maggie CHIU  
Legislative Assistant (2) 4

Action

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- I. Policy initiatives relating to the work of the Commission on Poverty set out in the Chief Executive's 2015 Policy Address (excluding those on retirement protection)**  
[LC Paper No. CB(2)728/14-15(01), the 2015 Policy Address booklet and the 2015 Policy Agenda booklet]

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

Action

**II. Any other business**

2. The Chairman said that there would be election of the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Subcommittee at the next meeting scheduled for 24 February 2015.
3. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 10:27 am.

Council Business Division 2  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
13 March 2015

**Proceedings of the twenty-sixth meeting of the  
Subcommittee on Poverty  
on Thursday, 29 January 2015, at 8:30 am  
in Conference Room 1 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 – Policy initiatives relating to the work of the Commission on Poverty set out in the Chief Executive's 2015 Policy Address (excluding those on retirement protection)</i>			
000745 - 001525	Chairman Admin	Briefing by the Administration on policy initiatives relating to poverty alleviation set out in the Chief Executive's 2015 Policy Address.	
001526 - 002325	Chairman Dr KWOK Ka-ki Admin	<p>Dr KWOK Ka-ki urged the Administration to –</p> <p>(a) set out clearly qualification requirements and suggested remuneration levels for hiring a coordinator under the proposed pilot programme on arranging a designated teacher to coordinate support on special educational needs ("SEN") in school ("the proposed pilot programme on SEN support coordinator"); and</p> <p>(b) expand the Elderly Dental Assistance Programme ("the EDA Programme") to cover elderly persons aged 65 or above.</p> <p>The Administration advised that –</p> <p>(a) the proposed pilot programme on SEN support coordinator was announced in the 2015 Policy Address in response to the request by the education sector and thorough discussion by the Subcommittee on Integrated Education under the Panel on Education. Subject to discussion by the Community Care Fund Task Force ("the CCF Task Force") under the Commission on Poverty ("CoP"), the qualification and training requirements as well as the implementation details of the aforesaid pilot programme would be clearly set out. Like other CCF new programmes, the Administration would brief relevant Panels or the Subcommittee on Poverty prior to launching the aforesaid pilot programme; and</p> <p>(b) as at end-2014, there were over 400 000 Old Age Living Allowance ("OALA") recipients, among whom some 130 000 were aged 80 or above. Having regard to the large number</p>	

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		<p>of prospective beneficiaries and only about 300 participating private dentists/dental clinics, the EDA Programme would be expanded progressively to cover elderly persons who were OALA recipients by phases, starting with those aged 80 or above in the first phase.</p>	
002326 - 003228	<p>Chairman Miss CHAN Yuen-han Admin</p>	<p>Miss CHAN Yuen-han asked if –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) CoP agreed to conduct public consultation on retirement protection in the first half of 2015;</li> <li>(b) the Administration could shorten the lead time of 15 to 18 months prior to the implementation of the Low-income Working Family Allowance ("LIFA"); and</li> <li>(c) there were any justifications for limiting beneficiaries of the expanded EDA Programme to OALA recipients who were aged 80 or above.</li> </ul> <p>The Administration advised that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) CoP would discuss retirement protection at its meeting on 3 February 2015. In the coming few months, CoP would devise a framework and set out details for public consultation in the latter half of 2015. It was hoped that a substantial progress in this regard could be made within the current term of the Government;</li> <li>(b) the Administration would strive to expedite the launching of the LIFA Scheme following the funding approval by the Finance Committee on 16 January 2015. That said, barring unforeseeable circumstances, a lead time of 15 to 18 months would be required as a substantial amount of work had to be done, such as leasing and fitting-out works of office premises, development of information technology system, etc. To help the needy before the implementation of LIFA, the Administration would invite CCF to consider the provision of a one-off special subsidy for primary and secondary students on full grant under the School Textbook Assistance Scheme ("STAS") in the 2015/16 school year ("the proposed one-off special subsidy for full grant primary and secondary students") while CCF was also receiving applications for the "Relaunching the one-off living subsidy for low-income households not</li> </ul>	

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		<p>living in public housing and not receiving CSSA"; and</p> <p>(c) the EDA Programme would be expanded progressively as explained in its reply to Dr KWOK Ka-ki at (b) above.</p>	
003229 - 004101	Chairman Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung Admin	<p>Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung asked if the Administration would –</p> <p>(a) brief members on retirement protection after CoP's meeting scheduled for 3 February 2015;</p> <p>(b) introduce any measure to help elderly persons who were not eligible for Comprehensive Social Security Assistance ("CSSA") and OALA before the implementation of retirement protection;</p> <p>(c) consider expanding the EDA Programme to cover elderly persons aged 65 or above/60 or above; and</p> <p>(d) enhance the support for the growing number of SEN students.</p> <p>The Administration advised that –</p> <p>(a) issues on retirement protection would be followed up by the Subcommittee on Retirement Protection;</p> <p>(b) the needy elderly persons who encountered difficulties in applying for CSSA could seek assistance from the Social Welfare Department ("SWD"). The Administration also explained to members the purpose of requesting children of elderly applicants for CSSA to declare their financial support, if any, to their parents;</p> <p>(c) members' concern about the implementation of the EDA Programme was noted. It would consider extending the aforesaid Programme to other age groups progressively having regard to the progress of implementation and the overall situation; and</p> <p>(d) regarding the support for SEN students, the Administration had increased the grant rates of the Learning Support Grant ("LSG") by 30% starting from the 2014/15 school year. Besides, CCF would consider the proposed pilot programme on SEN support coordinator.</p>	

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004102 - 004901	Chairman Deputy Chairman Admin	<p>The Deputy Chairman welcomed the proposed pilot programme on SEN support coordinator. However, he expressed disappointment that although the aforesaid proposal was announced in the 2015 Policy Address, the Administration could not provide more implementation details to facilitate the discussion in this regard.</p> <p>The Administration advised that implementation details of the CCF programme had yet to be deliberated at the CCF Task Force and hence details could not be provided at this stage. The Administration reassured members that relevant Panels or the Subcommittee on Poverty would be consulted before the launching of the aforesaid pilot programme.</p>	
004902 - 005438	Chairman Mr LEE Cheuk-yan Admin	<p>Mr LEE Cheuk-yan noted with concern that the limited number of participating dentist/dental clinics was the crux of the problem which hindered the expansion of the EDA Programme. He asked if the Administration had the determination to address the aforesaid problem in the 2015-2016 financial year.</p> <p>The Administration advised that according to the Hong Kong Dental Association ("HKDA"), which was the implementing agency of the EDA Programme, many dentists were already tied up with their bookings and might not be able to join the Programme. That said, the Administration and HKDA would continue to encourage more dentists to join the Programme. Meanwhile, the EDA Programme would be expanded progressively having regard to the number of participating dentists/dental clinics.</p>	
005439 - 010326	Chairman Dr Priscilla LEUNG Admin	<p>Dr Priscilla LEUNG urged the Administration to –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) provide welfare services and social security allowances for retirees aged between 60 to 64;</li> <li>(b) provide mobile dental van service for elderly persons; and</li> <li>(c) encourage able-bodied elderly persons to enter the job market, in particular the elderly services industry.</li> </ul> <p>The Administration advised that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) elderly persons aged 60 or above were already eligible for relevant welfare services,</li> </ul>	

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		<p>such as using elderly centres. CSSA for elderly people was also available for eligible persons aged 60 and above;</p> <p>(b) it would explore measures to encourage more dentists/dental clinics to join the EDA Programme; and</p> <p>(c) regarding the employment of able-bodied elderly persons, the Labour and Welfare Bureau had proposed to the Security Bureau to consider relaxing the licensing system of security industry to increase job opportunities for elderly persons while the Employees Retraining Board would focus on elderly persons as one of its key training targets in the future. The Administration would continue to promote active ageing in view of increasing longevity in Hong Kong.</p>	
010327 - 011051	Chairman Mr CHAN Chi-chuen Admin	<p>Mr CHAN Chi-chuen enquired about –</p> <p>(a) considerations in limiting beneficiaries of "the proposed one-off special subsidy for full grant primary and secondary students" to those students who were on full grant under STAS; and</p> <p>(b) the amount of subsidies provided for dentists/dental clinics under the EDA Programme.</p> <p>The Administration advised that –</p> <p>(a) while the means test mechanism for STAS and LIFA were not the same, both schemes aimed to assist needy families and there were some overlapping in the recipient families. For comparison purpose, the level of household income of full grant recipients of STAS was generally about 50% of Median Monthly Household Income, at which the poverty line was set. Hence, the Administration invited CCF to consider providing "the proposed one-off special subsidy for full grant primary and secondary students" to those who were recipients of STAS full grant in the 2015/16 school year. It also clarified that recipients of the aforesaid one-off special subsidy under STAS might not be eligible for LIFA given the two schemes had different eligibility criteria in different aspects (e.g. the asset test and working hour test which were not taken into account in STAS); and</p>	

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		<p>(b) the maximum subsidy for each elderly person receiving dental services under the EDA Programme was about \$13,000 (among which about \$8,800 was for dentures and about \$4,200 was for related dental services). HKDA, under the supervision of the Food and Health Bureau ("FHB"), would monitor the quality of services of participating dentists/dental clinics.</p>	
011052 - 011702	Chairman Mr Frankie YICK Admin	<p>Mr Frankie YICK urged the Administration to consider –</p> <p>(a) providing the amount of LSG for ordinary schools according to the number of SEN students they admitted without setting a ceiling of \$1.5 million per annum for each ordinary school; and</p> <p>(b) allowing flexibility for schools to deploy the cash grant provided by the proposed pilot programme on SEN support coordinator according to their needs.</p> <p>The Administration advised that –</p> <p>(a) from the 2013/14 school year onwards, the Education Bureau ("EDB") had raised the ceiling of LSG from \$1 million to \$1.5 million per annum for each ordinary school to support SEN students. EDB had further increased the grant rates of LSG by 30% from the 2014/15 school year. The Administration would take into account members' views when it reviewed the subject; and</p> <p>(b) the suggestion at (b) above would be relayed to the CCF Task Force for consideration.</p>	
011703 - 012511	Chairman Mr Albert HO Admin	<p>Mr Albert HO urged the Administration to put forward new initiatives to enhance the provision of child care services, such as home-based child care service under the Neighbourhood Support Child Care Project, to help release women labour force.</p> <p>The Administration advised that in the short, medium and long run, a series of enhancement measures on child care services would be launched. Details were set out in paragraphs 31, 32, 57 and 58 of the Administration's paper (LC Paper No CB(2)629/14-15(01)) which was discussed at the meeting of the Panel on Welfare Services on 26 January 2015.</p>	

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012512 - 013642	Chairman Admin	<p>The Chairman asked if the Administration would consider –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) providing basic subsidies to all eligible children who were taking long whole-day places of kindergartens;</li> <li>(b) encouraging more kindergartens to provide school-based after-school care service;</li> <li>(c) proposing to the Financial Secretary ("FS") that the 2015-2016 Budget should provide for a waiver of the rent for public rental housing tenants for one month; and</li> <li>(d) providing a timetable for the implementation of retirement protection.</li> </ul> <p>The Administration advised that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) issues relating to free kindergarten education would be followed up by EDB;</li> <li>(b) the After-School Care Programme with fee-waiving subsidies provided by SWD were operated at the premises of the operating schools and non-governmental organizations. Besides, schools were encouraged to apply for the dedicated fund under the Partnership Fund for the Disadvantaged to provide after-school learning and support programmes at their venues or other suitable venues with regard to the content and nature of the activities and the needs and situation of the students;</li> <li>(c) the suggestion at (c) above would be relayed to FS for consideration; and</li> <li>(d) its aim was to start the public consultation on retirement protection in the second half of 2015.</li> </ul>	
013643 - 014631	Chairman Deputy Chairman Admin	<p>The Deputy Chairman urged the Administration to consider –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) expanding the regularized CCF assistance programme on "subsidy to meet lunch expenses at schools" to cover whole-day primary and secondary school students who received grant from the Student Financial Assistance Agency;</li> <li>(b) providing an additional amount of subsidy under "the proposed one-off special subsidy</li> </ul>	

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		<p>for full grant primary and secondary students" and the CCF assistance programme on " Relaunching the one-off living subsidy for low-income households not living in public housing and not receiving CSSA" for eligible households with persons with disabilities and elderly persons before the implementation of LIFA; and</p> <p>(c) reviewing the maximum rates of the rent allowance and the amount of meal allowance for students under CSSA.</p> <p>The Administration advised that –</p> <p>(a) the suggestion at (a) above would be relay to the CCF Task Force for consideration;</p> <p>(b) it had several considerations as explained in its reply to Mr CHAN Chi-chuen at (a) above before coming up with "the proposed one-off special subsidy for full grant primary and secondary students"; and</p> <p>(c) the maximum rates of the rent allowance under CSSA would be increased by 6.7% with effect from 1 February 2015 under the annual adjustment mechanism. The Administration stressed that any further increase in rent allowance might trigger a rise in the private housing rental and might put financial pressure on non-CSSA private housing tenants.</p>	
014632 - 015312	Chairman Mr Frankie YICK Admin	<p>Mr Frankie YICK called on the Administration to consider providing a subsidy for schools to employ additional staff, such as hiring part-time janitors, to facilitate the provision of after-school learning and support services at schools.</p> <p>The Administration advised that CCF had implemented the After School Care Pilot Scheme to provide additional resources to schools to enhance their after-school services.</p>	
015313 - 015757	Chairman Deputy Chairman Admin	<p>The Deputy Chairman asked the Administration to –</p> <p>(a) provide information on the number of beneficiaries of different subsidized dental services under the EDA Programme; and</p> <p>(b) consider providing additional services under the EDA Programme for elderly persons who lived in residential care home for the</p>	

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		<p>elderly ("RCHEs") to address their health issues relating to articulation, swallowing difficulties and gum problems, which were not covered by the Outreach Dental Care Programme for the Elderly.</p> <p>The Administration advised that –</p> <p>(a) the aim of the EDA Programme was to subsidize needy elderly persons for dentures. Participating dentists might provide other related necessary dental services in the course of the treatment. While most of the beneficiaries of the EDA Programme were subsidized for dentures and other related necessary dental services, some elderly persons were found not suitable for wearing dentures. Dentists would provide these elderly persons with other necessary dental services, such as fillings; and</p> <p>(b) if elderly persons who lived in RCHEs were identified with health issues other than dental problems, they should be referred to appropriate healthcare services. The Deputy Chairman's suggestion at (b) above would be relayed to FHB for consideration.</p>	
<i>Agenda item II – Any other business</i>			
015758 - 015822	Chairman	The Chairman said that there would be election of the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Subcommittee on Poverty at the meeting scheduled for 24 February 2015.	