

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)1122/15-16

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seen by the Administration)

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Subcommittee on Poverty

**Minutes of the thirty-sixth meeting
held on Tuesday, 26 January 2016, at 4:30 pm
in Conference Room 2 of the Legislative Council Complex**

- Members present** : Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung (Chairman)
Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP (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 CHEUNG Kwok-che
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
Hon WONG Yuk-man
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, JP
Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, SBS, JP
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, BBS, MH, JP
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Hon KWOK Wai-keung
Hon TANG Ka-piu, JP
- Members absent** : Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC

**Public Officers : Item I
attending**

Mr Laurie LO, JP
Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs (1)
Home Affairs Bureau

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

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

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

Dr LAW Chi-kwong, GBS, JP
Chairperson
Community Care Fund Task Force under the Commission
on Poverty

**Attendance by : Item I
invitation**

Session One

殘疾人士及長期病患者就業關注組

Mr CHIU Ho-lam
Chairman

輪椅關注政策小組

Mr TSANG Kai

特殊學習需要權益聯會 - Sen 權益會

Mr HO Cheuk-hin
Community Organizer

基層學童關注組

Miss LO Lok-sum

學童發展關注組

Ms CHEUNG Man

Alliance for Children Development Rights

Miss HO Yu-ying
Organizer

1st Step Association

Ms NG Yan-yee
Registered Social Worker

葵涌不適切居所住客聯盟

Mr NG Kwan-lim
Member

葵涌關愛基金關注組

Miss LEUNG Yuk-yi
Member

葵涌劏房戶關注扶貧政策小組

Mr GONG Ho-lam
Member

Concerning Grassroot Housing Right Alliance

Mr HO Chi-chung
Member

自強地區小組(港島)

Mr YIP Wai-keung

Catholic Diocese of HK Diocesan Pastoral Centre for
Workers (Kowloon)

Mr LI Ka-shu
Program Officer

Session Two

Hong Kong Neuro-Muscular Disease Association Limited

Miss Jintana SAE SOW

Labour Party

Mr CHIU Yan-loy
Representative

The Hong Kong Ethnic Minority Concern Group on Equal
Access to Government Services

Miss Abbas Sairah
Assistant Program Officer

Miss KWAN Kit-man

Mr SI Wai-san

Mr LEE Kwok-kuen

Concerning CSSA & Low Income Alliance

Mr Herrick LEE Yen-hao
Community Organizer

Mr CHEUNG Chi-kuen

Mr LAM Kit-seng

爭取低收入家庭保障聯席

Miss YEUNG Pui-yan
Community Organizer

低保聯土瓜灣街坊組

Miss Helen KWOK

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

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

Miss Maggie CHIU
Legislative Assistant (2) 4

Ms Ada TANG
Clerical Assistant (2) 4

Action

I. Community Care Fund

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)709/15-16(01) to (03), CB(2)734/15-16(01), CB(2)758/15-16(01) and CB(2)793/15-16(01)]

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

II. Any other business

2. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 7:00 pm.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
18 March 2016

**Proceedings of the thirty-sixth meeting of the
Subcommittee on Poverty
on Tuesday, 26 January 2016 at 4:30 pm
in Conference Room 2 of the Legislative Council Complex**

Time marker	Speaker(s)	Subject(s)	Action required
<i>Agenda item I – Community Care Fund</i>			
<u>Session One</u>			
000822 - 001537	Chairman Admin The CCF Task Force	Opening remarks Briefing by the Administration and the Community Care Fund ("CCF") Task Force under the Commission on Poverty on the work progress of CCF.	
001538 - 001844	Chairman 殘疾人士及長期病患者 就業關注組	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)734/15-16(01)]	
001845 - 002119	輪椅關注政策小組	Presentation of views	
002120 - 002435	特殊學習需要權益聯會 - Sen 權益會	Presentation of views	
002436 - 002641	基層學童關注組	Presentation of views	
002642 - 002906	學童發展關注組	Presentation of views	
002907 - 003233	Alliance for Children Development Rights	Presentation of views	
003234 - 003630	1 st Step Association	Presentation of views	
003631 - 003952	葵涌不適切居所住客聯 盟	Presentation of views	
003953 - 004142	葵涌關愛基金關注組	Presentation of views	
004143 - 004456	葵涌劏房戶關注扶貧政 策小組	Presentation of views	
004457 - 004839	Concerning Grassroot Housing Right Alliance	Presentation of views	
004840 - 005219	自強地區小組(港島)	Presentation of views	
005220 - 005530	Catholic Diocese of HK Diocesan Pastoral Centre for Workers (Kowloon)	Presentation of views	

Time marker	Speaker(s)	Subject(s)	Action required
005531 - 010027	Chairman The CCF Task Force	<p>The Chairman summarized the major views and concerns of deputations/individuals, which called on the CCF Task Force to consider –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) regularizing the "One-off living subsidy for low-income households not living in public housing and not receiving CSSA" ("One-off Living Subsidy") Programme; (b) removing the age threshold for the "Special care subsidy for the severely disabled" ("Special Care Subsidy") Programme; (c) relaxing the definition of "family members living under the same roof" under the household income assessment for the Special Care Subsidy Programme; (d) accepting applications for the Special Care Subsidy Programme throughout the year; and (e) expanding the scope of the regularized programmes on "Special subsidy to persons with severe physical disabilities for renting respiratory support medical equipment" and "Special subsidy to persons with severe physical disabilities for purchasing medical consumables related to respiratory support medical equipment" ("the two Regularized Programmes") to cover more categories of medical consumables . <p>The CCF Task Force undertook to examine deputations' views on individual assistance programmes and added that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the launch of the One-off Living Subsidy Programme would hinge on relief measures, if any, put forward in the upcoming Budget for 2016-2017; and (b) having considered that more assistance was available for elderly persons aged 60 or above (including those with severe disabilities) during programme design, beneficiaries of the Special Care Subsidy Programme were limited to persons with severe disabilities who were aged below 60. The CCF Task Force undertook to examine the issue. 	

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		<p>The Chairman said that the target beneficiaries of the Special Care Subsidy Programme were not eligible to apply for CSSA, even when they were aged 60 or above. He hoped that the CCF Task Force could examine the issue seriously.</p>	
010028 - 010641	<p>Chairman Miss CHAN Yuen-han The CCF Task Force</p>	<p>Miss CHAN Yuen-han enquired about –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the coverage of the target beneficiaries of the new pilot scheme on raising the maximum level of disregarded earnings for disabled CSSA recipients; (b) the timetable for the further expansion of Elderly Dental Assistance ("EDA") Programme, which had already been expanded to cover Old Age Living Allowance ("OALA") recipients aged 80 or above, to benefit OALA recipients aged 70 to 79; and (c) whether there were any plans to encourage more private dentists to join the EDA Programme, so as to meet the service demand. <p>The CCF Task Force advised that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the Administration had invited CCF to launch a new pilot scheme to encourage persons with disabilities to secure employment by raising the maximum level of disregarded earnings for disabled CSSA recipients. The CCF Task Force would discuss the implementation details; (b) at present, there were over 420 000 OALA recipients. In view of the large number of target beneficiaries, the expanded EDA Programme would be implemented by phases, starting with those OALA recipients aged 80 or above in the first phase. The EDA Programme would be reviewed and further expansion of the Programme to other age groups of OALA recipients would be considered having regard to the progress of implementation; and (c) currently, over 380 private dentists and over 50 dental clinics run by non-governmental organizations ("NGOs") had joined the EDA Programme to provide dental services. CCF would continue to 	

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		<p>encourage more active participation by private dentists in the Programme.</p> <p>The Chairman called on the CCF Task Force to relay Miss CHAN's concern at (c) above to the Administration.</p>	
010642 - 011239	<p>Chairman Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung The CCF Task Force Admin</p>	<p>Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung was of the view that the existing government policies and assistance programmes under CCF did not address the needs raised by deputations. He called on the CCF Task Force and the Administration to –</p> <p>(a) review assistance programmes under CCF, taking into account the views and concerns of the deputations/individuals, and give a comprehensive response accordingly; and</p> <p>(b) consider setting up a dedicated fund under CCF to assist tenants of sub-divided units in paying rental deposit.</p> <p>The CCF Task Force advised that it would examine deputations' views and Mr LEUNG's suggestion, and respond as and when appropriate.</p> <p>Regarding (b) above, the Administration advised that eligible CSSA households could apply for special grant such as removal grant and rental deposit for the accommodation to be moved in. Non-CSSA households which were facing financial difficulties arising from removal might apply for charitable trust funds. However, their applications would be considered on a case-by-case basis to ensure prudent use of public resources.</p> <p>Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung considered that abuse of charitable trust funds could be avoided if applicant households were requested to provide receipts of rental deposit payment when they claimed reimbursement.</p>	
011240 - 012156	Chairman	<p>The Chairman said that –</p> <p>(a) the CCF Task Force should consider the views and concerns of the deputations/individuals when it reviewed assistance programmes under CCF, so as to address the deficiencies of CSSA and the Low-income Working Family Allowance ("LIFA"); and</p>	

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		(b) the CCF Task Force and the Administration were encouraged to keep liaising with community groups on the operation of CCF and implementation of assistance programmes.	
<u>Session Two</u>			
012157 - 012742	Chairman Hong Kong Neuro-Muscular Disease Association Limited	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)758 /15-16(01)]	
012743 - 013058	Labour Party	Presentation of views	
013059 - 013334	The Hong Kong Ethnic Minority Concern Group on Equal Access to Government Services	Presentation of views	
013335 - 013640	Miss KWAN Kit-man	Presentation of views	
013641 - 013831	Mr SI Wai-san	Presentation of views	
013832 - 014155	Mr LEE Kwok-kuen	Presentation of views	
014156 - 014539	Concerning CSSA & Low Income Alliance	Presentation of views	
014540 - 014745	Mr CHEUNG Chi-kuen	Presentation of views	
014746 - 014948	Mr LAM Kit-seng	Presentation of views	
014949 - 015306	爭取低收入家庭保障 聯席	Presentation of views	
015307 - 015653	低保聯土瓜灣街坊組	Presentation of views	
015654 - 020530	Chairman The CCF Task Force	<p>The Chairman said that the views and concerns of the deputations/individuals attending session II of the meeting covered a wide range of issues, such as inadequate promotion of assistance programmes to ethnic minorities ("EMs") and the complicated application procedures of the One-off Living Subsidy Programme.</p> <p>The CCF Task Force reiterated that deputations' views on individual assistance programmes would be considered after the meeting. It added that when the CCF Task Force considered whether a new assistance programme should be rolled out, considerations would be given to –</p>	

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		<p>(a) whether the proposed assistance programme would be in conflict with and have any read across implications on the existing government policies;</p> <p>(b) implementation details, including ways to identify the target beneficiaries and means to help them;</p> <p>(c) whether the proposed assistance programme was a one-off measure in response to special circumstances or would be regularized to provide assistance in the long run;</p> <p>(d) the feasibility of regularizing the proposed assistance programme if the programme was proven effective. The Administration would also consider whether the programmes could fit in with the regular programmes; and</p> <p>(e) allocation of resources, which would be the last consideration.</p> <p>The CCF Task Force further advised that in the coming years, the Administration would earmark significant amount of resources to implement several major policies. This might reduce the capacity of the Administration to regularize CCF assistance programmes, thereby delaying the incorporation of effective assistance programmes which had been run for three or more years into the Administration's regular assistance and service programmes. In that case, CCF would continue implementing those affected programmes for the benefit of the needy.</p> <p>In response to a deputation's enquiry about the proposed pilot schemes under CCF which were mentioned in the 2016 Policy Address, the CCF Task Force considered that the Administration had put forward the proposals in response to public concerns. As invited by the Administration, the CCF Task Force would examine the proposals. Further views from stakeholders were welcomed.</p> <p>Regarding a deputation's concern about inadequate promotion of assistance programmes to EMs, the CCF Task Force responded that in addition to promotion via various mass media channels, it had collaborated with some services units of NGOs</p>	

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		<p>in the past two years to help promote assistance programmes, e.g. the third launch of One-off Living Subsidy Programme, to some needy groups, which could not be approached easily, and would continue doing so. The CCF Task Force noted a deputation's suggestion of doing promotion in food stalls where EMs bought food items which could cater for their needs, and welcomed further suggestions.</p> <p>The Chairman was of the view that the CCF Task Force should consider promoting assistance programmes in schools.</p>	
020531 - 020722	Chairman	<p>The Chairman asked the CCF Task Force to respond to the following deputations' views –</p> <p>(a) the launch of the LIFA Scheme might not be able to provide enough assistance for LIFA households with kindergarten children to cover the high schooling expenses;</p> <p>(b) the "Subsidy for CSSA recipients living in rented private housing" Programme was launched for the fourth time. However, the percentage of CSSA cases with actual rent exceeding the maximum rate of rent allowance still stood at over 30%, and the Administration had not yet reviewed the CSSA Scheme. The condition was not desirable; and</p> <p>(c) the CCF Task Force should consider providing subsidies on rental and electricity/water charges for tenants of sub-divided units to relieve their heavy financial burden.</p>	
020723 - 021426	Chairman Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung The CCF Task Force	<p>Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung reiterated his request at (a) above (time marker: 010642 – 011239), and called on the CCF Task Force to consider taking interim measures to help the needy if long-term measures could not be put in place shortly. Noting that time was required for exploring the feasibility of regularizing an assistance programme under CCF, he called on the CCF Task Force to pledge to extend the implementation period of the existing assistance programmes.</p> <p>The CCF Task Force stressed that the One-off Living Subsidy Programme would hinge on relief measures, if any, put forward in the upcoming Budget for 2016-2017.</p>	

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		<p>The CCF Task Force further advised that the suggestion of the provision of subsidies on rental and electricity/water charges might trigger an increase in rental level in private housing and the rate of electricity/water fees charged by landlords of sub-divided units respectively. In the end, recipients of these subsidies might not benefit from the assistance.</p> <p>The CCF Task Force further explained that the majority of assistance programmes were three-year programmes. Their effectiveness might be evaluated in the second pilot year with a view to exploring the feasibility of regularization or the need for extending the implementation period.</p> <p>The Chairman called on the CCF Task Force to consider increasing the amount of One-off Living Subsidy to help the needy households relieve their financial burden.</p>	
021427 - 021844	Chairman Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung The CCF Task Force	Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung was of the view that the Administration's policies on housing and land use had contributed to the poverty problems. Provision of assistance under CCF could not address the crux of the problem but encouraged the needy to rely on the Administration's assistance. He called on the CCF Task Force to give advice on how to increase the provision of public rental housing for consideration by the Administration.	
021845 - 022551	Chairman The CCF Task Force	<p>The Chairman was of the view that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) beneficiaries of the two Regularized Programmes had to bear a heavy financial burden on purchasing essential medical consumables and equipments, e.g. nutrition products and diapers, which were not covered by the aforesaid programmes; and (b) the CCF Task Force should consider making reference to the operation of the Samaritan Fund ("SF") to take into account applicants' disposable income in the financial assessment of the Special Care Subsidy Programme and other assistance programmes which covered similar target beneficiaries of SF. <p>Regarding the Chairman's suggestion at (b) above, the CCF Task Force advised that when</p>	

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		<p>CCF implemented a new pilot scheme outside the existing mechanism, CCF had to hire additional temporary staff to handle the administrative work involved. Given the limited manpower support in CCF, the design of the programme was intended to be administratively simple, e.g. the adoption of the household income assessment. That said, if consideration was given to regularizing the programme, the Administration would consider refining the financial requirements to better meet the needs of the target beneficiaries.</p> <p>The Chairman suggested that the CCF Task Force should consider accepting applications from people with severe disabilities, who could present medical certificates on their degrees of disabilities, to report their disposable incomes by self declaration, in order to save administrative costs and streamline the vetting process. Applicants would be culpable if they made false statements.</p> <p>Citing the two Regularized Programmes as examples, the CCF Task Force advised that the setting of the amount of subsidy for an assistance programme should be based on the general level of expenditure of the target beneficiaries on the subsidized items. As for the household income threshold, i.e. the means test, for the Special Care Subsidy Programme, it was set at 150% of the corresponding Median Monthly Domestic Household Income, which was relatively generous and simple.</p>	
022552 - 022708	Chairman Mr SI Wai-san	Presentation of views	
022709 - 022845	Chairman Mr LEE Kwok-kuen The CCF Task Force	<p>Presentation of views</p> <p>The CCF Task Force advised that deputations' views would be relayed to the bureaux and departments concerned.</p>	
022846 - 023041	Chairman	<p>The Chairman concluded that –</p> <p>(a) the CCF Task Force should consider examining and addressing deputations' views and concerns relating to the time for application, coverage and age limit of applicants of individual assistance programmes as soon as possible;</p>	

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		<p>(b) the CCF Task Force should consider providing assistance to address the problem of inadequate out-patient services;</p> <p>(c) although some assistance programmes had been implemented for three to four years, they still could not tie in with the existing government policies, in particular CSSA; and</p> <p>(d) community groups could approach the CCF Task Force if they would like to provide suggestions on enhancing the promotion of assistance programmes to different needy groups or noted that some needy people had encountered difficulties in applying for assistance under CCF.</p>	

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