

立法會
Legislative Council

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Subcommittee on Poverty

Meeting on 27 April 2013

Proposed overseas duty visit to Finland and Sweden

Purpose

This paper invites members to consider a proposal for the Subcommittee on Poverty ("the Subcommittee") to conduct an overseas duty visit to Finland and Sweden to study their experience in alleviating poverty and addressing relevant problems arising from an ageing population.

Background

2. It was suggested at the meeting of the Subcommittee on 22 January 2013 that members should conduct a duty visit to obtain first-hand information on the experience of combating poverty in places outside Hong Kong. After considering the poverty alleviation strategies in nine selected places (namely, Australia, Guangzhou, Shanghai, South Korea, Taiwan, Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden) at its meeting on 25 March 2013, the Subcommittee has agreed in principle that it will conduct a duty visit of four to five days in mid to late August 2013 to two places in Northern Europe.

Objectives of the proposed visit

3. The objectives of the proposed visit are as follows –
- (a) to obtain first-hand information on the policies and initiatives put in place to alleviate poverty;

- (b) to study their experience in alleviating poverty and addressing relevant problems arising from an ageing population; and
- (c) to exchange views with the relevant parties involved in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of strategies in this regard.

Proposed places and timing of the visit

4. Of the four places of Northern Europe, both Finland and Sweden have a higher percentage of elderly population and dependency ratio and therefore have a more imminent need to address relevant problems arising from an ageing population. Hence, their experience in tackling the problems may be richer than that of the other two places. It is therefore suggested that the Subcommittee should visit Finland and Sweden. Taking into account the flight time required, it is suggested that the proposed visit last six days tentatively from 19 (Monday) to 24 (Saturday) August 2013.

Proposed budget of the visit

5. As approved by The Legislative Council Commission, each Member is provided with an overseas duty visit account of \$55,000 for the purpose of duty visits outside Hong Kong organized by committees of the Council. The fund in the account is for use by the Member in a four-year term. Any expenditure incurred in excess of the available balance in a four-year term has to be paid by the Member personally.

6. A preliminary estimate of the expenditure of the proposed duty visit has been prepared in the **Appendix**. The estimated expenditure to be incurred by each participating member for the visit is about \$25,700 (for economy class air passage).

Advice sought

7. Members are invited to advise whether the Subcommittee should conduct the proposed visit and if yes whether it should be open to non-Subcommittee Members. Subject to members' support for the Subcommittee to conduct the proposed duty visit with the objectives set out

in paragraph 3 above, the Secretariat will work out the details of the proposed duty visit. Members are also invited to note that the endorsement of the House Committee will have to be sought on the proposed duty visit.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
24 April 2013

Subcommittee on Poverty
Proposed overseas duty visit in August 2013
Tentative estimate of the expenditure

Duration of visit : 19 to 24 August 2013 (6 days)

Routing of visit : Hong Kong / Helsinki / Stockholm / Helsinki / Hong Kong

Breakdown of expenses

| Items | Estimated expenses HK\$ (per person) | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| | <u>Economy Class</u> | <u>Business Class</u> |
| 1. Return air passage (Finnair Airlines) Hong Kong / Helsinki / Stockholm / Helsinki / Hong Kong | 9,420* | 28,820* |
| 2. Hotel accommodation | | |
| (a) Stockholm (2 nights) (19 - 20 Aug) | | 4,074 |
| (b) Helsinki (2 nights) (21 - 22 Aug) | | 3,392 |
| 3. Meals, in-town travelling and sundries | | |
| (a) Stockholm | | 2,720 |
| (b) Helsinki | | 2,262 |
| 4. Travel insurance | | 272 |
| 5. Airport tax & TIC fee | | 3,558 |
| TOTAL : | 25,698 | 45,098 |

NOTE :

* Airfare quotation obtained in mid-April 2013.

1. Other expenditure including hospitality, local group transportation, interpretation services and souvenirs will be charged against other votes of the Secretariat. Where the actual cost of in-town traveling expenses is separately paid for by the Secretariat, 5% of the subsistence allowance will be deducted.

2. Exchange rates as at mid-April 2013 –
 HK\$1.2188 = SEK\$1.00
 HK\$9.92025 = EUR\$1.00