

**For information
on 11 December 2012**

Legislative Council Subcommittee on Poverty

Poverty Line

Purpose

This paper sets out the background and purpose of setting a poverty line for Hong Kong.

Background

2. As recommended by the former Commission on Poverty (CoP), the Government has been adopting a set of 24 multi-dimensional poverty indicators for monitoring the overall poverty situation in Hong Kong. Of these 24 poverty indicators, 18 are life-cycle-based, covering children and youth, working people and adults as well as elders, while the remaining six are community-based. This set of indicators has been designed to provide a broad picture of how the poverty situation has been evolving and to help identify areas for further study. The Administration's latest report on the indicators is set out in LC Paper No. CB(2)137/12-13(01) and Members were briefed on it on 5 November 2012.

3. The Chief Executive (CE) pledged in his Election Manifesto to reinstate the CoP to undertake an overall review of the forms and manners by which poverty is manifested and their underlying causes. In his statement to the Legislative Council on 17 October 2012, the CE announced that a poverty line would be drawn up to help the Administration monitor Hong Kong's poverty situation, set policy direction and measure the effectiveness of our poverty alleviation policies.

Setting a Poverty Line for Hong Kong

4. On 9 November 2012, the Administration announced the establishment of a new CoP with the following terms of reference –

- (1) examine the current poverty situation and causes of poverty in Hong Kong with a view to identifying favourable conditions for personal development, self-reliance and social mobility, and set a poverty line as a tool for gauging the poverty situation and assessing the effectiveness of poverty alleviation policies;
- (2) review existing policies and formulate new policies to achieve the objectives of preventing and alleviating poverty and social exclusion, promoting social mobility as well as providing an appropriate safety net to better help the disadvantaged overcome material deprivation and improve livelihood;
- (3) co-ordinate and monitor the implementation of poverty prevention and alleviation policies and evaluate measures funded by the Community Care Fund, the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund and other relevant government funding sources as appropriate;
- (4) engage stakeholders and advise on ways to promote tripartite partnership among the Government, the business sector and community organisations in poverty alleviation, including the development of social enterprises;
- (5) promote district-based poverty alleviation measures to better meet the specific needs of local residents; and
- (6) monitor the poverty situation in Hong Kong.

Members will note that the setting of the poverty line and its purpose are referred to in the first item of the terms of reference of the CoP.

5. The CoP will carefully deliberate on the setting of the poverty line having referred to the relevant considerations. Comments from Members of the Legislative Council, deputations attending this Sub-committee meeting and other stakeholders and interested parties in the community will be taken into account.

Labour and Welfare Bureau
December 2012