

Panel on Welfare Services

List of outstanding items for discussion
(position as at 10 April 2015)

Proposed timing for discussion

1. Hong Kong Law Reform Commission Report on Child Custody and Access

The Law Reform Commission ("LRC") has published its Report on Child Custody and Access putting forward 72 recommendations, the main thrust of which relates to the introduction into Hong Kong's family law of a new "parental responsibility model". The Administration has conducted a public consultation exercise on LRC's recommendations in January 2012. The Panel was briefed in July 2013 on the results of the consultation exercise and members' views were sought on the proposed way forward. The Administration will report the progress in due course.

To be decided

2. Infirmity care in non-hospital setting

The Administration consulted the Panel in December 2004 on a proposal to launch a trial scheme to provide infirmity care places for medically stable elders in a non-hospital setting. Various options are being explored, including upgrading some of the places in subvented residential care homes for the elderly to provide infirmity care. The Administration will report the progress in due course.

To be decided

3. Charitable fund-raising activities

Following the release of the Consultation Paper on Charities by the LRC Charities Sub-committee, the Panel held a special meeting on 24 August 2011 to receive public views on the subject. The Sub-committee has proceeded to work on concrete

To be decided

proposals for enhancing the monitoring measures for charitable fund-raising activities in light of the views collected from the public consultation which ended in October 2011.

On 6 December 2013, LRC released its report on charities, which put forward a number of recommendations including those on monitoring charitable fund-raising activities. As the recommendations of the report are relevant to various bureaux and departments, the Home Affairs Bureau ("HAB") is coordinating their input and views with a view to formulating Government's responses to the report.

The Panel has requested the Administration to brief members on the progress of its work in this respect at the Panel's regular meeting in May 2015. HAB, as the coordinating bureau, instead of policy bureau, for the item on monitoring charitable fund-raising activities, has advised that Government's responses and actions with regard to LRC reports are reported to the Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services ("AJLS Panel") and HAB is planning to report progress to the AJLS Panel later when the responses are ready.

4. Review of Disability Allowance ("DA") and the system for processing applications thereof

The Administration briefed members on the findings of the consultancy study on practices of places outside Hong Kong in respect of financial assistance for persons with disabilities at the Panel meeting on 9 March 2015. The Chairman requested the Administration to report to the Panel on the outcome of its review on the eligibility criteria for DA and related matters in due course.

To be decided

Proposed timing for discussion

5. Review of the one-year-continuous-residence requirement under the Social Security Allowance ("SSA") Scheme

Item raised by Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung in 2010. He expressed concern about the residence requirement for Old Age Allowance ("OAA") applicants.

To be decided

The Court of First Instance dismissed two cases of judicial review of the OAA one-year-continuous-residence requirement on 14 May and 17 September 2012 respectively, and ruled that the requirement was constitutional.

6. Visiting Pharmacist Scheme

Item proposed by the Administration.

To be decided

7. Provision of barrier-free access and facilities for persons with disabilities

The Subcommittee on Improving Barrier Free Access and Facilities for Persons with Disabilities submitted its report (LC Paper No. CB(2)2065/11-12) to the Panel in May 2012 and recommended, inter alia, that the Panel should follow up with the Administration on the matter in the Fifth Legislative Council.

To be decided

Retrofitting programmes for upgrading the barrier-free facilities at Government and Housing Authority ("HA") premises had been completed by 30 June 2014. The progress report will be submitted to the Panel and uploaded to the Labour and Welfare Bureau's website for public information.

The Administration will continue to enhance the barrier-free facilities in Government and HA premises and facilities and take forward any additional proposals having regard to views and suggestions of stakeholders in accordance with the

established mechanism. Members of the public may continue to make use of the Access Co-ordinator and Access Officer Scheme to seek assistance, offer suggestions and lodge complaints in respect of the barrier-free facilities of Government and HA venues. The Administration will also continue to work closely with the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Rehabilitation Advisory Committee, the rehabilitation sector and the community in building a barrier-free and inclusive society.

8. Elderly care policy

Item proposed by Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che.

(a) Residential care services for the elderly

To be decided

Hon CHAN Yuen-han suggested that the Panel should discuss residential care services for the elderly. Both the long-term care policy and residential care services for the elderly have been studied by the former Joint Subcommittee on Long-term Care Policy ("former Joint Subcommittee") and covered in its report (LC Paper No. CB(2)2154/13-14(01) Annex I).

(b) Elderly Services Programme Plan

November or
December 2015

The Administration reported to the Panel at its meeting on 8 December 2014 on the progress of the Elderly Commission ("EC")'s preparation of the Elderly Services Programme Plan. The Panel received deputations' views on the Programme Plan at its special meeting on 20 January 2015. The Chairman said that the Administration should prepare an interim report on the subject and brief the Panel on the report in November or December 2015.

Proposed timing for discussion

9. Provision of welfare service premises for the elderly and enhancement of facilities therein

Item proposed by Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che.

To be decided

10. Social welfare planning

Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che suggested that the Panel should discuss social welfare planning.

To be decided

The Panel discussed medium and long-term social welfare planning at its meetings on 19 February, 26 March and 8 July 2013. Members suggested that the Panel should discuss with the Administration progress of the subject matter as soon as possible.

Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che has suggested that the Panel discuss planning for rehabilitation services.

11. Proposal for formation of a subcommittee on issues relating to welfare of people with disabilities

Item proposed by Hon CHAN Yuen-han at the Panel meeting on 12 November 2012. In deciding that the Panel would receive views from deputations on review of the system for processing applications for DA at the regular meeting to be held in December 2013, Hon CHAN Yuen-han suggested that the proposal for formation of a subcommittee on issues related to welfare of persons with disabilities should be included in the list of outstanding items for discussion by the Panel.

To be decided

12. Provision of child care services and after-school care services

In its submission to the Panel (LC Paper No. CB(2)601/12-13(01)), Hong Kong Women Workers' Association requests the Panel to discuss, as soon as possible, improving the provision of child care services and after-school care services.

To be decided

Dr Hon Helena WONG suggested on 20 January 2014 (LC Paper No. CB(2)748/13-14(01)) that the Panel fix a date for discussing the subject and receiving views from deputations. She has requested the Panel to deal with the subject as soon as possible.

The Subcommittee on Poverty will meet with deputations and the Administration on "Measures to unleash labour force in families for increasing the grassroots' income" at its meeting on 28 April 2015. The Panel has also been invited to join the discussion of the subject at that meeting.

13. Manpower of paramedical and supporting staff in the social welfare sector

In discussing the shortage of supporting staff (including Programme Workers) in the social welfare sector at the Panel meeting on 13 January 2014, the Panel passed a motion urging the Administration to, among others, submit a report on matters related to Programme Workers to the Panel within six months. The report was forwarded to members on 31 July 2014 (LC Paper No. CB(2)2162/13-14(01)).

To be decided

Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che has requested that the manpower situation of paramedical and supporting staff in the social welfare sector be discussed at a Panel meeting.

Proposed timing for discussion

14. Review of Old Age Living Allowance ("OALA")

Item proposed by Hon LEUNG Che-cheung.

To be decided

The Administration has undertaken to review OALA one year after its implementation and report the outcome of the review to the Panel.

15. Progress report on the production of the Best Practice Manual for non-governmental organizations receiving Lump Sum Grant Subvention

The item was discussed at the Panel meeting on 12 May 2014. Hon CHAN Yuen-han suggested that the Panel revisit the subject matter relating to Lump Sum Grant Subvention in the 2014-2015 session and invite deputations to give views thereon.

To be decided

16. Targets for provision of hostels for mentally handicapped persons

The Panel was consulted on the Administration's proposal to set up a day activity centre cum hostel for severely mentally handicapped persons and supported hostel for mentally handicapped persons in Cheung Sha Wan Estate, Shum Shui Po at its meeting on 12 May 2014. Hon CHAN Yuen-han suggested that the Panel consider discussing, in the 2014-2015 session, the subject of setting targets for the provision of hostels for mentally handicapped persons, e.g. setting a target waiting time and a specific percentage of the total area of a new public housing project for such provision.

To be decided

Proposed timing for discussion

17. Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly

The subject was discussed at the meetings of the Panel on 13 January and 10 November 2014. Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che has suggested that the Panel follow up on the subject at a Panel meeting to be held in the second quarter of 2015.

To be decided

18. Progress of implementation of the Special Scheme on Privately Owned Sites for Welfare Uses ("Special Scheme")

Item proposed by the Administration. At the Panel meeting on 10 February 2014, the Administration briefed the Panel on the implementation of the Special Scheme and sought members' support for the proposal to transfer \$10 billion to the Lotteries Fund to ensure the availability of sufficient resources to implement the feasible projects under the Special Scheme. The Administration will update the Panel on the progress of implementation of the Special Scheme on 13 April 2015.

13 April 2015

19. Setting up a new contract residential care home for the elderly ("RCHE") at Ancillary Facilities Block of Choi Yuen Road public rental housing ("PRH") development, Sheung Shui

Item proposed by the Administration. The item is to consult the Panel on the proposal to set up a new contract RCHE at Ancillary Facilities Block of Choi Yuen Road PRH Development, Sheung Shui.

11 May 2015

20. Ageing of persons with intellectual disabilities

Item proposed by Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che. The issue has been studied by the former Joint Subcommittee and covered in its report (LC Paper No. CB(2)2154/13-14(01) Annex I).

To be decided

Proposed timing for discussion

21. Additional provision for social security recipients

Item proposed by the Administration. The Financial Secretary proposed in the 2015-2016 Budget the provision of an extra allowance to Comprehensive Social Security Assistance ("CSSA") recipients, which is equal to two months of the standard rate of CSSA payments, and an extra allowance to the recipients of OAA (including the Guangdong Scheme), OALA and DA, which is equal to two months of the respective allowances. The Administration will brief the Panel on its proposal.

13 April 2015

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