

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)2524/99-00
(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration
and cleared with the Chairman)

Ref : CB2/PL/WS

LegCo Panel on Welfare Services

Minutes of meeting
held on Monday, 12 June 2000 at 10:45 am
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building

Members Present : Hon CHAN Yuen-han (Chairman)
Hon HO Sai-chu, SBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon David CHU Yu-lin
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
Hon LEE Cheuk-yan
Hon Eric LI Ka-cheung, JP
Hon LEE Kai-ming, SBS, JP
Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, JP
Dr Hon YEUNG Sum
Hon YEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon LAW Chi-kwong, JP

Member Attending : Hon Mrs Sophie LEUNG LAU Yau-fun, JP

Public Officers Attending : Item IV

Mr Robin GILL, JP
Deputy Secretary for Health and Welfare 3

Miss Ophelia CHAN
Assistant Director of Social Welfare
(Rehabilitation & Medical Social Services)

Mr K M LAM

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Acting Commissioner for Rehabilitation

Item V

Mr Robin GILL, JP
Deputy Secretary for Health and Welfare 3

Miss Diane WONG
Principal Assistant Secretary for Health and Welfare (Welfare) 2

Mrs Patricia CHU, JP
Deputy Director of Social Welfare (Services)

Miss Ann LAU
Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Family and Child Welfare)

Item VI

Mrs Marion LAI, JP
Deputy Director of Social Welfare (Administration)

Mr Laurie LO
Principal Assistant Secretary for Health and Welfare (Welfare) 1

Mrs Rachael CARTLAND, JP
Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Social Security)

Miss Lilian FUNG
Senior Statistician, Social Welfare Department

Item VII

Mrs Marion LAI, JP
Deputy Director of Social Welfare (Administration)

Mr Laurie LO
Principal Assistant Secretary for Health and Welfare (Welfare) 1

Mrs Rachael CARTLAND, JP
Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Social Security)

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**Deputations by
Invitation** : Item IV

Hong Kong Blind Union

Mr CHONG Chan-yau

Mr LO Yiu-man

Ms Sandra CHEUNG

Item V

Hong Kong Council of Social Service

Ms Angie LAI
Vice-chairperson, Family Service and Child Care Division

Ms Mariana CHAN
Division Officer, Family Service and Child Care Division

Item VII

Society for Community Organization

Mr MUI Wai-keung
Social Worker

Ms TAM Pui-man
Representative of elderly CSSA recipients

Ms TSANG Shue-lan
Representative of elderly CSSA recipients

Hong Kong Council of Social Service

Dr WONG Hung

**Clerk in
Attendance** : Ms Doris CHAN
Chief Assistant Secretary (2) 4

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Staff in Attendance : Ms Joanne MAK
Senior Assistant Secretary (2) 4

I. Confirmation of minutes of meeting
(LC Paper No. CB(2)2255/99-00)

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 May 2000 were confirmed.

II. Draft report of the Panel for submission to the Council on 21 June 2000
(LC Paper No. CB(2)2258/99-00)

2. Members endorsed the draft report of the Panel for submission to the Council on 21 June 2000.

III. List of follow-up actions by the Administration
(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)2256/99-00(01) and (02))

3. The Chairman referred to the "List of follow-up actions by the Administration" and requested the Administration to provide the requested information in writing before the end of June 2000. Deputy Secretary for Health and Welfare 3 (DS(HW)3) agreed.

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4. In response to the Chairman's question, DS(HW)3 said that the Administration would confirm as soon as possible when it would be ready to brief members on the social welfare subvention reforms.

5. The Chairman informed members that eight Panel members had expressed support for convening a special meeting to discuss the Comprehensive Social Protection Scheme (CSP Scheme) proposed by the Hong Kong Social Security Society. Members agreed to discuss both the social welfare subvention reforms and the CSP Scheme at a special meeting to be scheduled. Members of the Panels on Health Services and Manpower would be invited to join the discussion of the CSP Scheme.

6. The Chairman said that as this was the last regular Panel meeting in this session, she took the opportunity to thank the support rendered by the Secretariat and the Clerk for her contribution to the work of the Panel.

IV. Assistance provided to the blind or visually impaired persons in processing and accessing information on the computer
(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)2256/99-00(03) and (04))

7. DS(HW)3 briefed members on the salient points of the Administration's paper. In addition, he informed members that the Hong Kong Council of Social Service (HKCSS) had recently made an application for \$33 million from the Lotteries Fund to implement a programme which sought to facilitate Internet access by people with disabilities. The proposal was being considered by the Administration.

8. Mr CHONG Chan-yau of the Hong Kong Blind Union (the Union) referred to the Union's submission tabled at the meeting and urged the Administration to devise a comprehensive policy on how to facilitate people with disabilities to process and access information on computers. He requested the Administration to pay particular attention to the following aspects -

- (a) The Administration should provide financial assistance to people with disabilities to help them acquire suitable computer software and hardware for use. It should also pledge to increase the number of visually impaired persons who were able to use the computer from the existing 500 to a few thousands;
- (b) The Administration should assist to enhance the development of tailor-made software for use by the visually impaired; and
- (c) The Administration should assist to solve the problem of inaccessibility by the visually impaired to the Web sites of large business corporations on the Internet.

9. Mr LAW Chi-kwong referred to page 4 of the Administration's paper and pointed out that in 1999, only a total of \$9.4 million from the Lotteries Fund had been allocated to 300 rehabilitation service units to purchase computers and software for users. As each unit was only given about \$30,000 for the purpose, Mr LAW considered that the amount of funding was far too small to meet the needs of service users. He further said that it was important to facilitate people with visual impairment to access information on computers in order to assist their integration into the community. He urged the Administration to provide adequate assistance to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to purchase computer facilities to meet the training needs of the visually impaired. In addition, he suggested that the Administration should install computers with the devices required by the disabled at convenient locations throughout the 18 districts to promote access to computer and Internet by these people.

10. Mrs Sophie LEUNG LAU Yau-fan enquired about the availability of English and Chinese software suitable for use by the visually impaired. Mr CHONG Chan-yau replied

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that there was tailor-made English software for the visually impaired which had made it possible for them to use word-processing programme in Windows systems and to access the Internet. He estimated that such software was being used by a few hundreds of the visually impaired in Hong Kong to meet different needs in their daily life. He said that good achievement had also been made in the development of Chinese software for the visually impaired, such as the Access with Speech and Braille for Chinese Windows 98 as mentioned in the Administration's paper. However, as the development of the software was sponsored by funding allocations from the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust on a one-off basis only, he requested the Administration to provide financial support for future enhancement of the software to help maintain the price for the use of such software at a reasonable level. He considered that the Government should spend at least several million dollars to develop software for the visually impaired as it would also benefit the blind and elderly users of Chinese Internet on the Mainland and all over the world.

11. Mr CHONG further said that to facilitate the visually impaired to access the Internet, the design of Web sites had to be improved. He noted that in some overseas countries, it was required by the law that the design of Web sites must take into account the needs of the blind and people with visual impairment but it was not the case in Hong Kong. He requested the Administration to promote a general awareness in the information technology (IT) sector of the needs of the visually impaired to access computer and Internet and the need to create a barrier-free environment on the Internet for them. Mr CHONG further suggested that the Information Technology and Broadcasting Bureau (ITBB) should explore introducing the requirement of accessibility by the visually impaired to local Web site designers. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan expressed support for the suggestion. In this connection, Dr YEUNG Sum considered that the Administration should provide guidelines to Internet service providers on improving the design of Web sites to cater for the needs of the visually impaired and enlist the sector's support in creating a barrier-free environment on the Internet.

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12. In reply, DS(HW)3 reiterated that the Government's policy was to enhance the development and use of IT to all interested residents including the disabled. He pointed out that a large number of government departments and bureaux already had started to modify their individual homepages to facilitate access by the visually impaired. He agreed that the Hong Kong community as a whole should do more on this issue and he undertook to liaise with the ITBB to reflect members' views. He would also discuss with the Rehabilitation Advisory Committee and seek its members' advice on how to take this issue forward. Addressing concerns about the availability of funds for future enhancement of the Chinese software, DS(HW)3 said that there were many funding sources currently available for this purpose including the Lotteries Fund. The Commissioner for Rehabilitation (Acting) quoted an example that as far as he was aware, ITBB had included in its tendering documents issued to suppliers of the system for the Electronic Service Delivery Scheme the requirement of ensuring accessibility by the visually impaired in the design of their products.

13. Summing up his views, Mr LAW Chi-kwong said that it was necessary for the

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Administration to make available computer courses and suitable computer devices for use by the visually impaired. In addition, it should endeavour to solve the problem of inaccessibility to some Web sites by the visually impaired.

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14. The Chairman requested DS(HW)3 to provide an information paper on the subject following his discussion with ITBB. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan added that the paper should also provide information on the progress made in respect of the modification of the homepages of all government departments / bureaux and the target date of completion. In addition, the paper should include the Administration's response to the submission made by the Union. The Chairman directed that the subject be followed up by the Welfare Services Panel in the next legislative session.

V. Review of family services

(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)2256/99-00(05) and (06))

15. Ms Angie LAI of HKCSS expressed support for the need to carry out a review on family welfare services and she noted that the Social Welfare Department (SWD) would conduct such a review in August 2000. Ms LAI considered that the review provided an excellent opportunity for the Administration to examine its role in supporting families and devise policies in relevant policy areas for strengthening the functions of families. She pointed out that since child care services were an important form of supportive services to the family, the review should look at the development of child care services and examine the interface between child care services and family services. She was also of the view the review should identify areas where interfacing between family welfare services and other supportive services provided by different government departments was needed. She suggested that the review should also look at the coordination between family service centres and the Family and Child Protective Services Units of SWD in handling domestic violence cases.

16. Ms LAI considered that if it was found in the course of the review that there was a need to allocate additional resources to meet the needs of families for welfare services, the Administration should provide the required additional resources. Since the consultancy study would have to cover a large number of topics, she proposed extending the consultancy period from eight months to 10 months or one year.

17. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan agreed with Ms Angie LAI that the Administration should formulate a policy on supporting families. He held the view that the Government tended to emphasize economic development only and neglected the well-being of families. This had resulted in the rise in the divorce rate as well as the increase in the number of child abuse and domestic violence cases. He felt that it was inadequate for the Administration just to commission a consultancy study on the effectiveness of existing family services as such an approach was actually remedial in nature. Instead, it should look at family problems from a wider perspective and tackle the related problems, such as the problems of poverty, low wages and long working hours of employees, which had been impacting on

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families. He further suggested that the Administration should set up a multi-disciplinary working group or launch a multi-disciplinary study to identify those internal and external factors which might adversely affect family functioning and take measures to prevent family problems.

18. In response, Deputy Director of Social Welfare (Services) (DDSW(S)) explained that the purpose of the review was to examine how to better coordinate the existing family welfare services and re-prioritize services to meet changing needs. She pointed out that during the consultation conducted by SWD over the past few months, the NGO sector, HKCSS and academics had all agreed that there was a need to carry out a review of existing services. She considered that the suggestions made by Ms Angie LAU and Mr LEE Cheuk-yan were related to issues at a higher level and were outside the scope of the review.

19. DS(HW)3 agreed that the review would have an impact on other policy areas. However, he considered that it was premature at the moment to go into the other areas. He believed that the views and feedback obtained through the review would enable the Administration to develop its policy on how to better support families. Responding to the concerns about the need to increase provision of resources to meet new needs, DS(HW)3 said that the Administration might cope with new demands by re-deploying existing resources after reviewing the priority of service needs in the consultancy study.

20. Dr YEUNG Sum also supported expanding the scope of the review to examine not just the effectiveness of the existing services but also the need for any supportive services to be provided by other government departments for families, and the interface between these services. Dr YEUNG supported that if necessary, the consultancy period should be extended so that all relevant topics could be covered.

21. In response, DDSW(S) said that as mentioned in paragraph 10(a) of the Administration's paper, one of the objectives of the review was to develop a long-term strategy for the provision of family services, which would include identifying the problems faced by families. She pointed out that actually a lot of supportive services were being provided to families, such as those provided by Medical Social Workers or child custody services. She added that at the last Panel meeting on 12 May 2000, the Administration had already made a report on the provision of child care services. If necessary, it could also provide information papers on the handling of child abuse and domestic violence problems. She said that the review would certainly touch on the interface between these services.

22. Ms Angie LAI reiterated that families were facing a wide spectrum of problems, ranging from housing, education, employment and so on, which had to be tackled by joint efforts of various policy bureaux. Ms Mariana CHAN of HKCSS further suggested that the review should include re-examining the roles of families and look into family problems in the light of the recent spate of domestic violence cases.

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23. In response, DS(HW)3 said he fully appreciated members' request to broaden the remit of the study. He assured members that the Administration would broaden the scope of the study after it had gained more feedback through this review from different groups of the society including the NGO representatives and service users. As regards the duration of the study, DS(HW)3 said that time was not crucial and the period of study could be extended if necessary.

24. Mr LAW Chi-kwong also considered that the consultancy period was too short and regretted that details of the review were provided to the Panel only after they had been publicized. He agreed with HKCSS that before launching the review, the Administration should set some goals in its planning for family welfare services and look at the interface between the different kinds of supportive services as mentioned by DDSW(S) in paragraph 21.

Clerk

25. The Chairman also considered that the scope of the review, which concentrated on the delivery of the existing family welfare services only, was too restricted. She said that it should also include consulting service providers and service users on how to improve the existing services. She directed that the Panel should write to the Chief Secretary for Administration to reflect members' concerns about the scope of the review and request the Administration to work out a policy on supporting the family and ensure that all relevant public policies would work towards the same goal.

Adm

26. DS(HW)3 said that he had no disagreement with the need to broaden the scope of the review as it developed. He would take into consideration members' views and would go out to seek the views of service users. He believed that when the consultancy report was released, discussion on the subject would continue in the community and no doubt it would be broadened to encompass views from different sectors in the community. In response to members' request, he agreed to ensure that domestic violence would be included in the review.

27. Concluding the discussion, the Chairman suggested that the Panel should follow up this issue in the next legislative session.

VI. Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme - inflation adjustment
(LC Paper No. CB(2)2290/99-00(01))

28. Principal Assistant Secretary for Health and Welfare (Welfare) 1 (PASHW(W)1) said that as the standard payment rates under the CSSA and Social Security Assistance (SSA) Schemes had been adjusted in the past according to inflation forecast, the rates had been over-adjusted by 6.5% from 1997 to 1999. He said that when the matter was discussed by the Panel last year, it was agreed that the Administration should maintain the standard payment rates at their prevailing levels until inflation caught up. In July 1999, the Finance Committee was informed that the Administration would maintain the standard

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payment rates at their prevailing levels for 12 months as from August 1999.

29. PASHW(W)1 further reported that for the period 1999-2000, the Social Security Assistance Index of Prices (SSAIP) had fallen by 2.7%. He said that if the Administration were to strictly follow the principle of clawing back the over-adjustments in the past years, the CSSA and SSA standard payment rates would have to be adjusted downwards by 9.2% (i.e. 6.5% plus 2.7%) from 1 August 2000. However, since it had already been agreed in the previous year that the standards rates should remain unchanged in subsequent years until inflation caught up, it was now proposed that the rates would be maintained at current levels for another year as from August 2000.

30. Mr LAW Chi-kwong pointed out that subsequent to the review of CSSA in June 1999, the CSSA payment rates payable to households comprising three able-bodied adults/children and four able-bodied adults/children had already been cut by 10% and 20% respectively. For these households, they would have to face a real decrease in CSSA standard payments by 9.2% in the next few years because in the future, their standard payment rates would not be adjusted even if there was inflation until the effects of the 6.5% over-projection were fully offset. He considered that this would cause real hardship to these households at times of inflation.

31. In response, PASHW(W)1 invited members to note that SSAIP measured inflation according to the expenditure pattern of the CSSA recipients. As the CSSA standard payment rates had been maintained at the current level for the past three years despite the negative growth of SSAIP registered in the same period, the purchasing power of the recipients had increased and they had really benefited from the over-projection. Moreover, the Administration had put in place mechanisms to monitor SSAIP movement on a half-yearly basis and would consider seeking approval for adjustment to the standard payment rates ahead of the annual cycle if SSAIP movements and other indicators showed that high inflation was imminent. The Chairman took the view that the Administration should exercise flexibility and where necessary, it should shorten the interval for reviewing the SSAIP movement.

32. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan considered that the 6.5% over-projection should be written off and in the future when there was inflation again, the CSSA standard payment rates should be increased accordingly. He objected that they should be frozen until the effects of the 6.5% over-projection were fully offset because this arrangement was almost like clawing back the over-adjustments in the past years. However, Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Social Security) (ADSW(SS)) pointed out that as the Administration had never implemented a claw-back, the CSSA rates had turned out to be much higher than the rates calculated based on the formula approved by the Finance Committee in the past. Therefore, the proposed arrangement was necessary as the established mechanism was to adjust the standard payment rates according to annual inflation adjustment. Members had no further comment on the Administration's proposal.

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VII. Issues arising from the review of CSSA
(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)2256/99-00(07) to (12))

33. Ms TSANG Shue-lan and Ms TAM Pui-man of the Society for Community Organization (SOCO) said that the new arrangement requiring persons living with family members to apply for CSSA on a household basis had created many problems for the elderly recipients. They pointed out that now an elderly person who was in need of CSSA could not apply for it if his/her family members did not want to apply for CSSA or refused to provide supporting documents to prove their income amounts. Ms TAM pointed out that there was a lack of clear guidelines and eligibility criteria on the policy as many cases were now approved by senior officers by exercising discretionary power. To enhance transparency of the system, Mr MUI Wai-keung of SOCO suggested to set a clear income criterion based on which applications made by applicants on a household basis would be approved. For eligible families, the elderly family member should be allowed to be the applicant for CSSA just by declaring the household income.

34. Dr WONG Hung of HKCSS considered the Panel should continue in its efforts to monitor the CSSA Scheme. In particular, it should follow up the problems arising from the review of CSSA, such as the adverse effect of the new tightening measures on the elderly, new arrival children, single parents, the disabled and those in ill health. In addition, he made the following comments -

- (a) A Council on the Social Security System responsible for formulating policies on the Social Security System and monitoring the System's operation should be set up. It should be independent of the Government and comprise members of the public and LegCo Members.
- (b) The Administration should seek to achieve good coordination between the social security policy with other policies (such as policies on manpower, vocational training and education) in tackling the problem of poverty and assisting the unemployed to re-join the workforce.
- (c) SWD, which was responsible for screening and approving applications for CSSA, should not be involved in providing the services under the Active Employment Assistance (AEA) scheme. Instead, the services should be contracted out to NGOs for implementation.
- (d) There was no channel for the public to make complaints against the operation of SSFU and its services. An independent appeal board should be set up to receive complaints of this nature.
- (e) The operation of the Social Security System such as details of the screening procedures and the eligibility criteria adopted should be made available for monitoring by the public.

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- (f) Service quality standards (SQS) should be applied to the evaluation of the service quality of SSFU and the relevant information should be made available for public monitoring.

35. Mr Fred LI Wah-ming referred to paragraph 8 of the Administration's paper and asked for the reasons for the 82 withdrawal cases. He considered that it was unacceptable for the Administration to have discontinued the special grants for the purchase of spectacles for school children of CSSA families and urged the Administration to reinstate such special grants. Referring to the paper, Mr LI questioned the basis on which SWD had come to the view that the Senior Social Security Officer (SSSO) of the respective region could be entrusted to be responsible for assessing the value of a property on the Mainland held by an applicant.

36. In response, Deputy Director of Social Welfare (Administration) (DDSW(A)) said that the Administration understood well the concerns expressed by members and the community over the problems arising from the requirement of applying for CSSA on a household basis. However, the Administration remained of the view that members of the same family had the responsibility of rendering mutual support for each other and the income earners should support their family members who had no financial means. Where the total income of a family was assessed to be insufficient to meet its total recognized needs, financial assistance would be provided to bridge the gap. The Administration considered that the system was fair and equitable. If it was found that there was a poor relationship between the elderly person and his family members, special consideration could be given on an individual basis and discretion could be exercised by SWD to exempt individual applicants from the requirement where necessary.

37. As regards concerns about the service quality of SSFUs, DDSW(A) assured members that SWD would continue in its efforts to seek improvements in the operation of SSFU. She said that in the coming year, SWD would review the work procedures of SSFU with a view to streamlining the procedures as far as possible and look at problems arising from staff manner and work attitude. In this connection, detailed guidelines had already been provided to the staff and experience sharing sessions had been held to help the staff to understand the right approach in servicing clients.

38. DDSW(A) pointed out that SWD would be at a more advantageous position to implement the services under the AEA scheme for the following reasons -

- (a) SWD had a good network comprising 38 SSFU offices distributed throughout the 18 districts to support the implementation of the services;
- (b) After implementing the AEA scheme for over one year, SWD staff had acquired much experience in the implementation and had become conversant with the details of the scheme; and
- (c) As much liaison work would be involved with other government departments

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/ public organizations in implementing the services, SWD would be in a better position to undertake the liaison work.

39. DDSW(A) added that after funding approval had been given by the Finance Committee, SWD would employ non-civil servants to implement the services and the arrangements would be reviewed three years later. She invited members to note that a substantial amount of resources would be allocated to NGOs to provide tailor-made services for the unemployed recipients.

40. In response to the comments of Mr Fred LI Wah-ming in paragraph 35 above, DDSW(A) said that cases involving ownership of Mainland properties had been discussed by the Subcommittee on issues arising from the review of CSSA (the Subcommittee). She said that the Administration agreed with members that there was much difficulty in assessing the values of such properties. As suggested by the Subcommittee, the Administration had decided to designate the SSSO of respective region to assess the value of such properties held by applicants and estimate if the property involved was saleable or not. She said that the SSSOs would be required to equip themselves with knowledge of Mainland properties and enhance their knowledge by experience sharing.

41. As regards the 82 voluntary withdrawal cases, DDSW(A) said that most of the applicants had not disclosed to the staff their reasons for withdrawal. She stressed that as an established practice, the staff were required to explain clearly to the elderly persons their rights to seek exemption from the requirement if they had the need. They were also required to tell the applicants that they should approach SSFUs again should they require financial assistance in the future.

42. As to the provision of special grants, DDSW(A) said that after deliberations, the Administration remained of the view that based on the existing level of CSSA payment rates, recipients should be able to economize on their expenditures and make savings to buy personal items such as new glasses.

43. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan believed that the new arrangement of requiring applicants to apply for CSSA on a household basis would lead to further deterioration in the relationship between some elderly recipients and their family members. He recalled that at the Subcommittee meeting held on 17 January 2000, Mr LAW Chi-kwong had suggested a more flexible approach for dealing with cases involving elderly recipients and he urged the Administration to consider the proposal. Referring to the recent speech of the Financial Secretary who said Hong Kong would not allow any children to be starved to death or deprived of their right to receive education, he asked how the Administration justified the requirement of one-year residence imposed on new arrival children.

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44. In response, PASHW(W)1 said that instructions had been given to the SSFU staff that the one-year residence requirement should not be applied rigidly and in cases of genuine hardship, SWD could exercise discretion to approve payment for these cases. However, Mr LEE Cheuk-yan pointed out that the current approach taken by SWD staff

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was very harsh as the new arrivals had to prove that they had exhausted all the possible sources of income/assistance available to them before they could apply for CSSA. ADSW(SS) clarified that the policy was that the staff were just required to ask the new arrivals whether they had got any other family members who could support them. It was a reasonable question because in many cases the women/children had come to join their husbands/fathers here. She also invited members to note that, as mentioned in paragraph 26 of the paper, between May 1999 and April 2000, 206 out of 766 applications had been approved by the exercise of discretion.

45. However, Mr LAW Chi-kwong took the view that in reality, the number of new arrival families in need of help might be much more than 766 as he suspected that many new arrivals had been advised by SSFU staff not to apply even before they had submitted applications. He supported the suggestion made by HKCSS that mechanisms should be put in place to monitor the operation and service quality of SSFU. In response, ADSW(SS) said that actually SQS had already been applied and SSFUs would be required to abide by the SQS too. DDSW(A) said that CSSA recipients who were not satisfied with the services of SSFU could lodge complaints with the respective District Social Welfare Officers. They might also appeal to the Social Security Appeal Board if they were dissatisfied with the decisions made on their applications.

46. In response to Dr YEUNG Sum's question, DDSW(A) said that an elderly person who wanted to apply for CSSA could be the applicant himself but his family members' income would be taken into account in processing the application. She clarified that applicants were not required to provide income certifications from employers if there were other readily available documentary proofs, such as wage slips, bank statements and so on.

47. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 1:10 pm.

Legislative Council Secretariat
26 July 2000