

Panel on Welfare Services

List of outstanding items for discussion
(position as at 14 April 2005)

Proposed timing for discussion

1. Support for vulnerable elders

At the Panel meeting on 10 May 2004, members agreed that should the Panel decide to hold a meeting in July 2004, consideration should be given to further discussing support for vulnerable elders. The discussion should, among others, include the effectiveness of the re-engineering of family service centres (FSCs)/counselling units into integrated family service centres (IFSCs) on providing support for vulnerable elders.

A written response had been sent to the Panel on 9 July 2004 (LC Paper No. CB(2)3028/03-04(01))

Discussion on the matter was not held at the Panel meeting in July 2004. The Administration, however, had provided a paper in July 2004 setting out its responses to various issues/concerns raised by members at the meeting on 10 May 2004 (LC Paper No. CB(2)3028/03-04(01)).

2. Measures to help single parents on CSSA to achieve self-reliance

At the Panel meeting on 9 February 2004, the Administration agreed to revert to the Panel the improvement measures to help single parents achieve self-reliance, upon completion of the review on the entire issue of single parents on CSSA.

May 2005 at the Subcommittee on Review of the CSSA Scheme

3. Closure of the Single Parents Centres (SPCs)

Item proposed by Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG.

May 2005

The issue was raised at the LegCo meeting on 1 December 2004 in an oral question posed by Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG. In the reply, the Administration has reiterated that the five SPCs have been replaced by the more holistic and user-friendly IFSCs scattered throughout the territory. All services currently/previoursly provided by SPCs are also provided in IFSCs.

Proposed timing for discussion

4. Measures to assist women in poverty

Item proposed by Hon CHAN Yuen-han.

June 2005

5. Subsidy arrangements for residential care services for frail elders

The Administration aims to report progress on the work relating to the feasibility of developing the proposed Fee Assistance Scheme for residential care services for frail elders, taking into account the suggestion of establishing a separate financial assistance scheme for elders and other views expressed by members on the matter on 12 May 2003.

3rd quarter of 2005

6. Report of the Subcommittee on Guardianship and Custody of the Law Reform Commission

At the meeting held on 11 March 2002, members agreed that the Administration should brief the Panel on the above report when it became available.

4th quarter of 2005

The Report on Custody and Access by the Subcommittee on Guardianship and Custody of the Law Reform Commission was released on 7 March 2005. The Administration is studying the recommendations carefully and will consider how to take forward the relevant recommendations together with the recommendations made in the other two earlier reports, namely, the Report on Guardianship of Children and Report on International Parental Child Abduction.

7. Evaluation of the re-engineered community support services for elders

Item proposed by Hon CHAN Yuen-han.

4th quarter of 2005

Proposed timing for discussion

8. Charitable fund-raising activities

The Administration's paper on enhancing the monitoring of charitable fund-raising activities was discussed at the Panel meeting on 19 July 2004. Members agreed that the proposal of regulating funding-raising activities by mail should be followed up by the new Panel in the next legislative session.

4th quarter of 2005

The Reference Guide on Best Practices for Charitable Fund-raising Activities has been promulgated in November 2004. The Administration would review the situation in one year.

9. Review of the implementation of the standardized needs assessment tool for admission to residential homes for people with disabilities

Members agreed at the Panel meeting on 14 June 2004 that the implementation of the standardized needs assessment tool for admission to residential homes for people with disabilities (PWDs) should be followed up by the new Panel in the next legislative session.

1st quarter of 2006

The Administration has pointed out that as the implementation of the assessment tool is set for January 2005, a review of the effectiveness of the assessment tool to identify those PWDs with genuine need for residential services and match them with appropriate types of residential homes would take place one year after.

10. Latest situation on the implementation of review of family services

Item proposed by Hon Albert CHAN at the Panel meeting on 12 October 2004.

2nd quarter of 2006

The Administration has advised that transformation of all existing FSCs/counselling units into 61 IFSCs was completed in March 2005. A review on the implementation of the aforesaid transformation would take place after one year.

Proposed timing for discussion

11. Workload of social workers

Item proposed by Hon Mrs Sophie LEUNG at the Panel meeting on 12 October 2004. To be decided

The Administration is now studying the subject and will discuss the issue with members upon completion of the work.

12. Establishing formal arrangements on adoption with the Mainland

At the request of the Bills Committee on Adoption (Amendment) Bill 2003, the Administration undertook to study the need to establish formal arrangements on adoption with the Mainland and consult the relevant Panel in due course. To be decided

The Administration is liaising this with the Central People's Government and will revert to the Panel in due course.

13. Social welfare planning mechanism, subvention system for the welfare sector and efficiency savings with regard to the welfare sector in the period from 2005-06 to 2008-09

At the Panel meeting on 8 March 2004, the Administration was requested to brief members in June 2004 on the progress made for implementing the 0-0-X funding proposal for the welfare sector and the development of a blueprint for the social welfare policies, and to respond to the Hong Kong Council of Social Service's requests for reviewing the Lump Sum Grant (LSG) subvention system, in particular the aspect relating to funding of personal emoluments. To be decided

The efficiency savings for 2005-06 was discussed at the Panel meeting held on 13 December 2004. The Administration would continue to work closely with the welfare sector to ease/smooth the efficiency savings exercise, and will render assistance to those non-governmental organisations that have genuine difficulties in meeting the savings targets.

Proposed timing for discussion

The Consultant has finished its final report on the NGOs' need for financial assistance after the "Tide-over Period". The Administration is now consulting the welfare sector on the arrangement after the termination of the Tide-Over Grant in 2006-07.

14. Incorporating the posts of programme assistant, youth ambassador, peer counsellor and other similar temporary frontline posts into the staff establishment of the subvented organisations providing welfare services

The Panel was requested by Duty Roster Members to follow up the matter with the Administration. To be decided

The Administration's position on the issue had been sent to the Panel vide LC Paper No. CB(2)1022/04-05(01) on 8 March 2005 (Chinese version only).