

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)1746/09-10

(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/PL/WS

Panel on Welfare Services

Minutes of meeting
held on Friday, 14 May 2010, at 10:45 am
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building

Members present : Hon WONG Sing-chi (Chairman)
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che (Deputy Chairman)
Hon LEE Cheuk-yan
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon LI Fung-ying, BBS, JP
Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP
Hon Ronny TONG Ka-wah, SC
Hon Paul CHAN Mo-po, MH, JP
Dr Hon LEUNG Ka-lau
Hon WONG Kwok-kin, BBS
Hon IP Wai-ming, MH

Members absent : Hon Albert HO Chun-yan
Dr Hon PAN Pey-chyou

Public Officers attending : Items IV and V

Mr Paul TANG Kwok-wai, JP
Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Item IV

Mr Franco KWOK Wai-fan
Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare
(Poverty)

Mr FUNG Man-lok
Assistant Director of Social Welfare
(Youth & Corrections)

Item V

Ms Karyn CHAN Ching-yuen
Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare
(Welfare) 1

Mr Patrick NIP Tak-kuen, JP
Director of Social Welfare

Miss Ann HON
Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Subventions)

Clerk in attendance : Miss Betty MA
Chief Council Secretary (2) 4

Staff in attendance : Ms Yvonne YU
Senior Council Secretary (2) 5

Miss Karen LAI
Council Secretary (2) 4

Miss Maggie CHIU
Legislative Assistant (2) 4

Action

I. Confirmation of minutes
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1489/09-10]

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 April 2010 were confirmed.

II. Information paper(s) issued since the last meeting
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1525/09-10(01)]

2. Members noted that the referral from Duty Roster Members regarding the provision of support services for street sleepers had been issued since the last meeting.

Action

III. Items for discussion at the next meeting

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1490/09-10(01) to (02)]

3. Members agreed to discuss the Review on the implementation of the Integrated Family Services Centre ("IFSC") service mode proposed by the Administration at the next meeting to be held on 14 June 2010 at 10:45 am. The Chairman then sought members' views on whether the Panel should receive views from deputations on the subject. Members agreed to hold a special meeting on 26 June 2010 for the purpose.

4. The Chairman said that a number of parents of persons with disabilities had relayed to him the concern about the lack of vocational rehabilitation services and learning opportunities for disabled adults especially persons with mentally handicapped. The Chairman suggested and members agreed that the Panel should follow up the matter at the next regular meeting.

5. The Chairman further said that the Social Welfare Advisory Committee was conducting a consultation with the sector and relevant stakeholders on the long-term planning of social welfare development in Hong Kong with a view to working out concrete proposals. In the light of the implications of the consultation, the Chairman suggested and members agreed to hold a special meeting on 5 June 2010 to receive views from deputations on the subject matter.

6. Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che and Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung said that the Panel on Health Services had discussed the subject of mental health services in early May 2010, and members expressed concern about the support services for the ex-mentally ill persons. In this connection, members might wish to consider the need for holding a joint meeting between this Panel and the Panel on Health Services to further discuss the community support services for the ex-mentally ill persons. After discussion, members agreed to consider the need for holding the joint meeting later, if necessary.

7. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung said that newly-arrived single mothers from the Mainland were ineligible for Comprehensive Social Security Assistance ("CSSA"), they had to rely on the CSSA payments of their Hong Kong resident children to make ends meet. In view of the grave difficulties faced by these families, he considered that the Panel might consider holding a special meeting to receive deputations on the matter, or when the subject of review of IFSC service mode was discussed. The Chairman advised that the Panel would hold a special meeting on 26 June 2010 to receive deputations on the review of IFSC service mode.

Action

IV. Progress report on the Child Development Fund

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1490/09-10(03) to (04)]

8. Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare ("PSLW") briefed members on the latest progress of the Child Development Fund ("CDF"). He advised that the first batch of seven pioneer projects supported by CDF, rolled out in December 2008 by six operating non-governmental organisations ("NGOs"), was well received by the community. A total of 750 children had been recruited to the seven projects and the drop-out rate was less than 1%. The majority of the participating children had been able to meet the savings target at \$200 per month. The operating NGOs had succeeded in securing matching contributions from private sector and recruited more than 690 volunteers to serve as the mentors. The mentors would provide guidance to the children in drawing up and implementing personal development plans and share their life experience with the children. PSLW further advised that the operating NGOs had organised about 350 training programmes for the mentors, participating children and their parents. More training programmes would come on stream in the second year.

9. PSLW informed members that the Administration had commissioned the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (the Consultant) to evaluate the pioneer projects and make recommendations on how to further develop CDF. While the study was expected to be completed by mid-2012, the Consultant's initial observation showed that the projects were bringing about positive changes to the participants. In particular, the participating children's communication with family members had improved and the targeted savings had helped them build up a savings habit.

10. PSLW added that, having regard to the practical experience gained in the pioneer projects and feedback from the stakeholders, the second batch of 15 projects would be rolled out in June 2010, benefiting at least 1 500 children. These projects would be similar to those in the first batch in terms of project content. The Social Welfare Department ("SWD") had received 34 proposals from NGOs. The selection process had recently completed and SWD would announce the results shortly. In the light of the experience gained in the second batch projects, the Administration would consider the timetable for rolling out the subsequent batches of project with a view to benefiting 13 600 children ultimately.

Two-year savings programmes

11. Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che was supportive of the launch of the second batch of CDF projects to help more children from a disadvantaged background develop positive values and build up financial and non-financial assets. Noting that 13 children had not set their savings target at \$200 per month, Mr CHEUNG asked

Action

about their specific savings amounts. For those children who had withdrawn from the savings plan, he asked whether they could take part in the associated training programmes provided by the operating NGOs and whether they could rejoin the savings programmes if the financial situation of their families was improved later.

12. PSLW said that of the 13 children who had set their savings target at below \$200 per month, four of them had set their target at \$150, six at \$100 and three at \$50. Of the five children who had withdrawn from the targeted savings programme, one had left Hong Kong and the other four continued to participate in the mentorship programme and attend training programmes provided by the operating NGOs. PSLW added that the respective operating NGOs had discussed with all the children concerned and their parents to try to explore other feasible alternatives before they decided to withdraw from the targeted savings programme.

13. Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che further asked about the specific personal development plans developed by the participating children and whether the savings were adequate to realise the plans.

14. PSLW said that upon the completion of the two-year savings plan, each child would be able to accumulate about \$10,000, inclusive of the matching contributions from the partner organisations and individual donors and a special financial incentive of \$3,000 from the CDF. Since the participating children had yet to develop their own personal development plans, the Administration did not have any information on their plans to use the savings at the current stage. The Administration would revert to the Panel when more information was available.

Admin

15. Pointing out that the evaluation study being conducted by the Consultant was expected to be completed by mid-2012, Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che was of the view that the Administration should consider requesting the Consultant to furnish an interim evaluation report of the pioneer projects with a view to fine tuning the CDF projects at an early stage.

16. While raising no objection to rolling out the second batch of CDF projects, the Chairman took the view that the progress of CDF was too slow having regard to the fact that only 750 children had been recruited to the first batch of seven pioneer projects. Moreover, in the absence of evaluation findings of the pioneer projects, he was uncertain about the extent to which CDF had helped reduce inter-generational poverty.

Action

17. PSLW said that one of the objectives of the longitudinal study was to evaluate the effectiveness of CDF. However, there was no need for an interim report because relevant findings would only be available upon completion of the pioneer projects for the Consultant to come to definitive views on the CDF. However, the Consultant's initial observations, as mentioned, showed that the pioneer projects had brought about positive changes to the participating children. The Administration would keep Members informed of the Consultant's major observations.

Scope and implementation of CDF projects

18. Noting that the CDF projects aimed to benefit a total of 13 600 children, Dr LEUNG Ka-lau asked about the total number of children aged 10 to 16 who met the eligibility criteria of CDF, i.e. children whose families were receiving CSSA or full grant under the student finance schemes administered by the Student Financial Assistance Agency, or whose household income was less than 75% of the Median Monthly Domestic Household Income. Dr LEUNG further asked about the disbursement of the \$300 million CDF.

19. PSLW said that there were about 110 000 children who met the eligibility criteria of CDF. As at March 2010, the actual expenditure amounted to about \$8.7 million. PSLW added that CDF sought to try out a new model for promoting the longer-term development of children from a disadvantaged background. The Administration concurred with NGOs' views that the projects should be rolled out gradually, having regard to the operating NGOs' capacity, the availability of suitable mentors and the need to ensure effective management of projects.

20. Dr LEUNG Ka-lau was of the view that the progress of CDF was too slow in the light of the number of participating children and the disbursement of the fund. He urged the Administration to expedite rolling out the subsequent batches of CDF projects so that more children could benefit from CDF as soon as possible. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung expressed similar views and called upon the Administration to invest more resources to help the children in poverty.

21. PSLW reiterated that, as a first step to try out the new service model, the Administration must ensure that the operating NGOs could recruit sufficient number of quality mentors. In addition, the operating NGOs had to carefully design the projects to meet the different needs of the children. He added that the Administration was mindful of benefiting more needy children and therefore the targeted number of participants of the second batch CDF projects would be doubled to 1 500.

Action

22. Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Poverty) ("PAS(P)") supplemented that the CDF funding would be mainly allocated to the operating NGOs for provision of training programmes and activities to the participating children, their parents and mentors. The Administration had committed to set aside \$15,000 per child for the provision of relevant training programmes and a special financial incentive of \$3,000 for each participating child for the seven pioneer projects. As the funds were disbursed to the operating NGOs by installments, the total expenditure of the first batch pioneer projects would therefore be fully reflected in the third year.

Recruitment of mentors

23. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung noted with concern about the difficulties encountered by the operating NGOs in recruiting mentors. In view of the imminent need to recruit a larger pool of mentors for the 1 500 participants of the second batch of CDF projects to be rolled out in June 2010, he asked about the criteria for recruiting mentors and the measures in place to ensure the recruitment of suitable mentors. Mr LEUNG also expressed concern about the quality of the mentorship programme. To this end, he considered that mentors should be requested to make periodic progress report on the mentorship programme.

24. PSLW advised that while there was strong demand for mentors, the quality of mentors would not be compromised. Instead of recruiting the mentors centrally by the Administration, the operating NGOs were responsible for the recruitment through their own networks. To assist mentors in discharging their duties, the operating NGOs also provided training programmes for the mentors to enhance their relevant knowledge and skills. The Labour and Welfare Bureau ("LWB") had already issued a guidebook for mentors so that they were aware of their roles and responsibilities. PAS(P) supplemented that the minimum ratio for mentor to mentees was one to three so that the operating NGOs would have more flexibility in the recruitment of the mentors.

25. Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Youth & Corrections) ("ADSW") said that the operating NGOs were required to comply with the performance standards and conditions as stipulated in the Services Agreements of CDF projects. SWD had from time to time visited the programmes organised by the operating NGOs. The Administration would consider Mr LEUNG's suggestion of requesting the operating NGOs to obtain from their mentors periodic progress reports on their mentorship with the mentees.

26. The Chairman expressed disappointment that the Administration had yet to evaluate the effectiveness of the pioneer projects, although the two-year savings programme had started since April 2009. To his understanding, the operating NGOs encountered grave difficulties in recruiting mentors. He asked whether the Administration would consult the operating NGOs and would take into account their operational difficulties and fine tune the project arrangement in rolling out the subsequent batches of projects.

Action

27. PSLW said that the operating NGOs were invited to report the progress and gave feedback to the Steering Committee on Child Development Fund regularly. The Administration had also taken into consideration the feedback and suggestions made by the operating NGOs in planning the second batch of projects. For instance, the operating NGOs were encouraged to recruit disabled and ethnic minorities children and the number of participating children of the second batch CDF projects would be doubled. PSLW further said that as the training programmes of the pioneer projects were on-going, it was premature to assess the overall effectiveness of the pioneer projects at this stage. Nevertheless, the Consultant would evaluate the pioneer projects and make recommendations on how to further develop CDF. He stressed that the Administration would closely monitor the implementation of CDF projects and would report the progress to the Panel from time to time.

Training programmes

28. Referring to Annex II of the Administration's paper, the Chairman and Mr Frederick FUNG asked about the number of participants of the training programmes. Mr FUNG further asked how many programmes could not achieve 80% attendance rate and whether the participating children were required to attend the programmes compulsorily.

Admin

29. PSLW undertook to provide the required information after the meeting. He elaborated that the operating NGOs were given flexibility in designing and implementing the training programmes having regard to the needs of the participating children. The Administration would monitor the training programmes and would identify some exemplary programmes for the reference of the operating NGOs. SWD would also share with the operating NGOs their observations. PSLW further said that the Consultant would also evaluate the practices and contents of the training programmes and make recommendations. ADSW added that the participating children were encouraged to attend all the training programmes as far as practicable. However, they might not be able to attend training programmes occasionally owing to clashes with school examination or family commitments.

30. Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che considered that the slow progress in rolling out CDF projects was due to an inadequate administration fee for the operating NGOs to run the programmes. Given that the administration fee was capped at 10% of the total cost of the training programmes, the amount was far from adequate for the operating NGOs to hire staff to run the programmes. The Chairman shared a similar view and said that the problem was particular pressing for small NGOs. They wondered whether the ceiling of administration fees could be relaxed to enable more NGOs to implement CDF projects.

Action

31. PSLW said that the level of administrative fee for operating NGOs was fully deliberated by the Finance Committee when it approved the funding proposal for setting up the CDF in April 2008. To achieve cost-effectiveness in implementing CDF projects, small NGOs could consider submitting joint proposals.

V. Report on the progress of implementation of recommendations of the Lump Sum Grant Independent Review Committee
[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1490/09-10(05) to (06)]

32. PSLW said that at the special meeting of the Panel on 19 December 2008, members were briefed on the Review Report prepared by the Lump Sum Grant Independent Review Committee ("LSGIRC"). A further special meeting was held on 17 January 2009 to receive views from deputations. The Administration provided responses to the recommendations of the Review Report and the concerns raised by members and deputations at the meeting on 9 February 2009. The Administration also indicated that it accepted in principle all the 36 recommendations and would take them forward in concert with the welfare sector and seek funding approval as necessary, with a view to introducing most of the new initiatives by the end of 2009. The implementation of LSGIRC recommendations followed the planned schedule: among the 36 recommendations, 33 were introduced by the end of 2009, and the remaining three in January 2010.

33. Director of Social Welfare ("DSW") said that as recommended by LSGIRC, the Lump Sum Grant Steering Committee ("LSGSC") was reconstituted in April 2009 to steer and monitor the implementation of LSGIRC recommendations. LSGSC held four meetings from May 2009 to January 2010 to deliberate, advise, refine and endorse the implementation proposals drawn up by the Administration. Out of the 36 recommendations, eight required extra resources for implementation. The Administration had reserved or deployed resources for carrying out four recommendations, namely -

- (a) drawing up the Best Practice Manual;
- (b) conducting the First Round Pilot of Actuarial Service;
- (c) setting up a Help Desk for small NGOs; and
- (d) setting up the Secretariat for the Independent Complaints Handling Committee ("ICHC").

Action

As for the other four recommendations, Lotteries Fund ("LF") grants had been earmarked in 2010-2011 for -

- (a) launching the first three-year phase (i.e. from 2010-2011 to 2012-2013) of the Social Welfare Development Fund ("SWDF");
- (b) providing additional financial resources for small NGOs;
- (c) increasing the Block Grant from 1% to 1.5% of the respective NGO's recurrent subvention allocation for the year; and
- (d) providing additional resources for NGOs which needed to employ para-medical staff or hire their services.

34. DSW further said that a progress summary detailing the implementation of the recommendations of LSGIRC was set out in the Administration's paper. DSW highlighted that while all the 36 recommendations had been implemented or introduced by January 2010, some of the recommendations, including the Best Practice Manual, actuarial service and SWDF, required a longer time span to accomplish. The Administration would continue to work closely with the reconstituted LSGSC to ensure that they were implemented in accordance with the respective objectives designated by LSGIRC.

35. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan took the view that the problems in the welfare sector, notably the high staff turnover rate and the low salaries arising from the implementation of the Lump Sum Grant Subvention System ("LSGSS") remained unresolved. He elaborated that -

- (a) 58% of staff in the welfare sector were employed on time-limited contracts, this had inevitably upset the stability of services, undermined the sense of staff commitment and increased the staff turnover rate. Given that the Civil Service Bureau had proposed to revise the existing civil service "3+3" appointment terms such that a new recruit would be considered for appointment on permanent terms upon satisfactory completion of the three-year probation period, he considered that NGOs on subvention should be encouraged to model on the new proposal in devising the employment terms of new recruits;
- (b) as a result of the need to maintain NGO's financial viability, the NGO management could only offer lower pay levels to new recruits so as to honour its commitment to the Snapshot Staff. To address the problem of high wastage rate in the sector, due recognition should be given to the years of relevant service in determining the appropriate pay levels of new recruits;

Action

- (c) individual NGOs were keeping excessive reserves as evidenced by the level of reserves had amounted to \$2 billion. As a matter of principle, provident fund reserves should be spent on commitment for provident fund. He did not see the need for some NGOs keeping excessive reserves for the purpose. Moreover, consideration should be given to modelling on teaching staff in subvented schools for providing the provident fund on incremental basis; and
- (d) consideration should be given to including the right to collective bargaining in accordance with the International Labour Convention in the Best Practice Manual.

36. PSLW said that following the introduction of LSGSS, SWD no longer imposed input controls on the NGOs concerned in terms of staffing structures, levels of pay and individual items of expenditure. The monitoring of NGOs had since then shifted from input control to output and outcome monitoring. The salary structures of staff in NGOs on LSG had been delinked from those of the civil service. It was not necessary for NGOs to model on the civil service in devising their operational modus and employment terms. PSLW further said that LSGIRC made a number of recommendations in relation to staffing arrangements. Notably, the reconstituted LSGSC would work with the sector, including the NGO management and frontline staff, in drawing up a Best Practice Manual for NGOs on various management issues. The Administration had been providing additional resources for NGOs through different channels. For instance, the establishment of the SWDF would cover the costs of workers to relieve staff who went on training, and thereby support training and enhance skills of frontline social workers. This apart, additional resources were provided for NGOs to employ para-medical staff or hire their services for three years.

37. DSW supplemented that under LSGSS, NGO management was provided with the flexibility in terms of financial and human resource management, and hence NGOs could devise and implement their own staffing and remuneration structures to best suit their unique financial management and human resource management needs. Notwithstanding this, the performance standards and conditions were stipulated in the Funding and Services Agreements. DSW said that as mentioned earlier, the reconstituted LSGSC would work with the sector in drawing up a Best Practice Manual for NGOs on various management issues covering corporate governance and accountability, financial and human resource management. As regards Mr LEE Cheuk-yan's concerns about the right to collective bargaining, DSW said that the matter which related to the employers and employees relationship would be beyond the purview of the Social Welfare Department but he believed that the reconstituted LSGSC would fully deliberate

Action

related issues in drawing up the Best Practice Manual for NGOs. DSW added that the level of reserves kept by NGOs had been capped at 25% of NGOs' operating expenditure since 2007. Commencing from 2007-2008, any unused subventions above the 25% cap needed to be refunded to the Government in the following financial year apart from those in the holding accounts.

38. As regards the concern about the provident fund reserves, Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Subventions) ("ADSW(S)") said that a standard 6.8% provident fund provision was provided for NGOs to meet the contractual commitment, which was considered adequate as the contribution for mandatory provident fund for non-Snapshot Staff was 5% only.

39. Given that the Best Practice Manual was non-binding, Mr LEE Cheuk-yan expressed reservation with the compliance of the Manual by NGOs. In his view, the Administration should introduce measures to ensure the compliance of the Manual.

40. Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che enquired about the consultation process in respect of drawing up the Best Practice Manual. ADSW(S) advised that the Administration had yet to award the contract to a management consultancy to draw up a draft Manual for further deliberation by the reconstituted LSGSC with the stakeholders. The Administration would consult relevant stakeholders in the welfare sector.

41. Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che said that notwithstanding LSGIRC's recommendation that the additional funding provided in line with civil service salary adjustments should be spent solely on staff in subvented services, to his knowledge, some NGOs had not made corresponding salary adjustments to the pay of their staff after receiving the supplementary provision. This apart, some NGOs had used the subventions for delivering non-subvented services. He took the view that SWD should monitor closely the proper use of subventions by NGOs for intended purpose. Otherwise, the balance of additional funding should be clawed back.

42. Ms LI Fung-ying held the view that the additional funding provided in line with the civil service pay adjustments should be spent solely on staff in subvented services. To ensure that NGOs had used the additional funding for the intended purpose, SWD should step up the monitoring mechanism in this respect.

43. ADSW(S) said that the additional funding provided in line with the civil service pay adjustments was calculated based on the recognised strength on 1.4.2000, although some NGOs had since then recruited additional staff for implementing new subvented services and projects. ADSW(S) further said that SWD had issued a letter to remind subvented NGOs to spend the additional

Action

amounts of subvention for the purpose of adjusting the pay of their subvented staff. SWD would monitor through subvention inspection on whether the subvention was spent on recognised activities under the provisions of the Funding and Services Agreements and would not allow NGOs to use the resources on non-subvented services. DSW added that if the supplementary provisions were used for adjusting the salaries of staff of specific grades and ranks in NGOs, the arrangements were considered appropriate. As agreed by LSGSC, the issue, being a human resource management concern, should be addressed in the Best Practice Manual.

44. Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che said that should the heads of the subvented NGOs have not adhered to SWD's letters and factored in pay adjustments in budgeting for non-subvented services, SWD failed to monitor the misuse of public fund. He remained of the view that consideration should be given to imposing a clear condition on the exclusive use of the additional subventions for the increase of salary for NGO staff.

45. ADSW(S) reiterated that human resource management policies were part and parcel of the NGO's corporate governance. In line with the spirit of LSGSS, NGOs on LSG had flexibility in determining their own staffing structures and remuneration levels in deploying their subvention for staff expenses. DSW said that the additional funding provided in line with civil service salary adjustments must be spent on staff for providing subvented services and not for non-subvented services, and SWD would conduct inspections as appropriate. Moreover, additional provisions had been allocated to NGOs for implementing new services. DSW further said that in budgeting for non-subvented services, NGOs needed to factor in pay adjustments, so that they might be in a better position to meet staff expectations when subvented services received additional funds for pay adjustments. DSW added that should there be any information concerning the use of additional funding provided in line with civil service salary adjustments for purpose other than salary adjustments, SWD would take appropriate follow-up actions if necessary,

46. Noting that SWD would conduct more frequent service performance inspections and surprise visits as recommended by LSGIRC, Ms LI Fung-ying asked about the details of the implementation, in particular the service performance inspections and surprise visits so conducted.

47. DSW said that since the inception of LSGSS, the monitoring of NGOs had shifted from input control to output and outcome monitoring. The service performance of NGOs was to be assessed on the basis of the Funding and Service Agreements and a generic set of Service Quality Standards drawn up between SWD and NGOs operating subvented services. ADSW(S) supplemented that to take forward the recommendations of LSGIRC, SWD had increased the number of review visits and introduced surprise visits in the three-year monitoring cycle of 2009-2012 and conducted additional on-site visits for the investigation of

Action

complaints. The One-in-Ten principle was adopted for selecting NGOs for either review visit or surprise visit. During these visits, service users' feedback would be collected systematically. Further inspections of NGOs would be conducted upon receipt of complaints. Ms LI Fung-ying asked about the average number of such inspections and visits to a NGO in the three-year monitoring cycle. DSW undertook to provide the requisite information after the meeting.

Admin

48. Noting that a management consultancy would conduct a pilot actuarial study on one NGO, Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che asked about the scale of the NGO concerned and the reasons why only one NGO was involved. ADSW(S) responded that the pilot actuarial study would be conducted on a large NGO with an annual LSG of more than \$5 million. Thereafter, the NGO concerned had to share its experience of participating in the pilot study with other NGOs subvented under LSGSS before the launch of the Second Round Actuarial Study, tentatively scheduled for 2011-2012.

49. Noting that the Advisory Committee on Social Work Training and Manpower Planning had completed the data collection on staff turnover and wastage rates for the purpose of monitoring the welfare sector's overall manpower position, Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che requested the Administration to provide the relevant statistics on the manpower situation in the welfare sector. DSW agreed to provide the requisite information after the meeting.

Admin

50. Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che asked whether and how the consultation was conducted in respect of LSGIRC's recommendation to set up the \$1 billion SWDF to support training and capacity enhancement initiatives. DSW advised that the Lotteries Fund Advisory Committee had granted approval-in-principle in November 2009 for setting up the \$1 billion SWDF from LF. Briefing sessions for NGOs were held in January 2010. NGOs could submit their applications for SWDF in Phase 1 during the application period from 15 January 2010 to 30 June 2010.

51. Referring to LSGIRC's recommendation that SWD should establish a mechanism whereby NGOs which anticipated financial difficulties could alert SWD in advance so that remedial measures could be taken as appropriate before the NGOs concerned exhaust their reserves, Mr CHEUNG kwok-che asked whether SWD had received any such requests. DSW responded that SWD had not received any request from NGOs so far.

52. Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che noted that in response to LSGIRC's recommendation, SWD would provide additional resources for NGOs to employ para-medical staff or hire such services for three years starting from 2009-2010, and asked about the way forward beyond the three-year period. DSW advised that SWD had sought an allocation of \$278 million from LF to provide additional

Action

resources to NGOs employing para-medical staff or hiring such services for three years (i.e. 2009-2010 to 2011-2012), so that they might offer more competitive salaries to recruit and retain these staff. SWD would take into account the market situation and review the arrangements in due course.

53. Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che asked about the number of LSG-related complaints against NGOs had been received and handled by ICHC since its establishment in 2009. DSW responded that up to May 2010, 121 LSG-related complaints had been received under the established complaints mechanism, of which 16 complaints had been referred to ICHC for direct investigation and 105 complaints had been referred to the NGOs concerned for follow-up actions. Of the 16 complaints which had been referred to ICHC for investigation, three complaints were substantiated or partially substantiated, three were unsubstantiated, one complaint had been withdrawn and nine complaints required follow-up actions. DSW agreed to provide further information on these complaint cases after the meeting.

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VI. Any other business

54. The Chairman advised that as the Subcommittee on Poverty Alleviation considered it necessary to hold a further meeting on 31 May 2010, the Subcommittee would not submit its report to the Panel at this meeting. Instead, the Subcommittee would submit the report to the Panel at the next regular meeting on 14 June 2010.

55. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:48 pm.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
23 June 2010