

For information on
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Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services Long-term Social Welfare Planning

Purpose

This paper updates Members on the progress of the study on long-term social welfare planning commissioned by the Administration and conducted by the Social Welfare Advisory Committee (SWAC).

Background

2. In view of the rapidly changing social and economic environment in Hong Kong and increasing complexity of social problems, the Administration has commissioned SWAC to conduct a study on the long-term social welfare planning in Hong Kong to ensure that social welfare policies and services in Hong Kong can provide timely and effective response to the changing welfare needs of the society.

3. SWAC launched two rounds of consultation with the welfare sector in 2008 and 2010 respectively. The consultation paper entitled “Long-term Social Welfare Planning in Hong Kong” issued by SWAC in mid-April 2010 marked the commencement of the second round consultation. The paper invites views from stakeholders on SWAC’s analysis of the circumstantial factors affecting the provision of welfare services, the mission and values of social welfare, as well as its initial recommendations on the guiding principles and strategic directions for welfare planning.

Consultation arrangements

4. At the early stage of the consultation, the consultation paper was sent to organisations which had been invited to put forward their views in the first round consultation (including subvented and non-subvented welfare organisations, self-help groups and service user groups, social work related professional bodies, etc.), and also local universities and institutes, business sector/professional bodies, and some private

foundations and charities related to social welfare. As a channel for direct communication with different sectors of the community, SWAC organised six consultation sessions in May and July 2010 for representatives of organisations and interested members of the public to directly exchange views with SWAC members. SWAC also accepted the invitation from individual organisations and agencies and attended meetings with them to exchange views.

5. The Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services held two special meetings on 5 and 26 June 2010 for the deputations to express views on long-term welfare planning. As invited by the Panel, SWAC attended the meetings to listen to the deputations' views. The Labour and Welfare Bureau also attended the meeting on 26 June to brief Members on the progress of the study.

Latest development

6. SWAC concluded the second round consultation with the sector in end-July 2010. After the consultation period, SWAC convened a series of special meetings to examine and analyse the outcome in detail and deliberate on its recommendations on long-term welfare planning.

7. Having thoroughly reviewed the views collected during the consultation period, SWAC is currently preparing a report on its analysis and recommendations. The Administration understands that the welfare sector is concerned about the study conducted by SWAC. We believe that SWAC will carefully handle the views received and finalise its report for submission to the Administration as soon as possible. Upon receipt of SWAC's report, the Administration will thoroughly analyse and study its recommendations and report to the Panel as soon as possible.

Advice sought

8. Members are invited to note the content of the paper.

Labour and Welfare Bureau
March 2011