

## **Panel on Welfare Services**

### **List of outstanding items for discussion** (position as at 12 October 2011)

#### **Proposed timing for discussion**

**1. Report of the Subcommittee on Guardianship and Custody of the Law Reform Commission ("LRC")**

At the meeting on 8 February 2010, the Administration briefed the Panel on its position on the recommendations made by LRC in the Report on International Parental Child Abduction. The Administration is working on the amendments to the relevant legislation for implementing the recommendations.

To be decided

As for the Report on Custody and Access released on 7 March 2005, the Administration advised that it is studying the recommendations carefully in consultation with relevant stakeholders and will consider whether and how to take forward the relevant recommendations.

**2. Infirmarary care in non-hospital setting**

The Administration consulted the Panel in December 2004 on a proposal to launch a trial scheme to provide infirmarary 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 infirmarary care. The Administration will report progress in due course.

To be decided

**Proposed timing for discussion**

**3. Social security assistance for needy elderly**

At the meeting on 14 October 2008, Hon WONG Kwok-hing and Hon WONG Kwok-kin proposed to discuss financial assistance and support for poor elders, including providing income supplement for poor elders and implementing a universal retirement protection scheme.

To be decided

The Panel discussed and received views from deputations on the subject of universal retirement protection at the special meeting on 18 December 2010. At the meeting on 10 January 2011, the Panel decided to appoint a subcommittee to study issues relating to retirement protection. After obtaining the approval of the House Committee on 21 January 2011 for the activation of the Subcommittee on Retirement Protection, the Subcommittee on Retirement Protection held four meetings from May to July 2011. The Subcommittee will continue its work in the 2011-2012 session.

**4. Charitable fund-raising activities**

The existing framework for the monitoring of charitable fund-raising activities was discussed at the meeting on 11 June 2007. Members agreed to further discuss the matter in the next session, especially the monitoring of the use of income generated from public charitable fund-raising activities.

To be decided

Following the release of the Consultation Paper on Charities by the Charities Sub-committee of LRC, the Panel held a special meeting on 24 August 2011 to receive public views on the subject. The Charities Sub-committee advised that it would work out concrete proposals after taking into account views and comments collected during the consultation period (which has been extended to 31 October 2011).

**Proposed timing for discussion**

**5. Review of absence limits for Old Age Allowance ("OAA")**

In his Policy Address 2010-2011, CE announced that the absence limit for OAA would be relaxed from 240 days to 305 days a year.

To be decided

At the meeting on 8 November 2010, the Administration advised that as its existing policy on residence requirements under the Social Security Allowance ("SSA") Scheme was being challenged by way of judicial review ("JR"), it would consider the way forward on such restrictions when the situation became clearer. The Administration will revert to the Panel in due course.

**6. Review of the system for processing applications for Disability Allowance ("DA") under the SSA Scheme**

Item proposed by Hon WONG Kwok-hing and Hon WONG Kwok-kin at the meeting on 14 October 2008. Members are concerned about the eligibility criteria for DA, system for processing DA application and the appeal mechanism.

To be decided

Hon WONG Kwok-hing raised an oral question on DA at the Council meeting on 5 November 2008 and enquired about the timing for discussing the item at the Panel meeting on 11 May 2009.

Hon WONG Kwok-hing requested the Panel to discuss the item vide his letters dated 30 October 2009 (LC Paper No. CB(2)183/09-10(01)) and 22 June 2011 (LC Paper No. CB(2)2196/10-11(01)).

The JR case lodged by a former applicant against the decision of the Administration in respect of his eligibility for DA closed in June 2011. The Administration will revert to the Panel in due course upon the completion of its review on the mechanism for implementing the DA scheme.

**Proposed timing for discussion**

**7. Long-term social welfare planning**

At the meeting on 11 July 2011, the Panel discussed the report of the Social Welfare Advisory Committee ("SWAC") on the long term planning of social welfare development in Hong Kong. The Panel held a special meeting on 22 August 2011 to receive public views on the subject matter. The Administration advised that it had yet to form its position on the recommendations of SWAC's study and undertook to revert to the Panel in the 2011-2012 session as early as practicable.

To be decided

**8. Review of the one-year-continuous-residence requirement under the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance ("CSSA") Scheme and SSA Scheme**

At the meeting on 12 July 2010, Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung expressed concern about the recent High Court ruling on JR of the one-year-continuous-residence requirement under the CSSA Scheme and proposed to follow up the matter as well as the residence requirement for OAA applicants. Members were advised that SWD had shelved, with immediate effect, the one-year-continuous-residence requirement in handling applications for CSSA. The OAA applications were processed in accordance with the existing arrangement.

To be decided

In anticipation of the appeal proceedings, members agreed to revisit the need to discuss the matter in due course. Meanwhile, two failed OAA applicants have been granted leave to apply for JR of the one-year-continuous-residence requirement for OAA.

**Proposed timing for discussion**

**9. Elderly Commission ("EC")'s consultancy study on community care services for the elderly**

Following the release of the findings of EC's consultancy study on community care services for the elderly, the Panel was briefed on the findings and recommendations of the study at its meeting on 11 July 2011. The Panel held a further meeting on 22 August 2011 to receive views from deputations on the subject matter. The Administration was requested to revert to the Panel on its stance on the recommendations of the EC study in the 2011-2012 session as early as practicable.

Late 2011

**10. Progress of implementation of recommendations of the Review on the Implementation of the Integrated Family Service Centre ("IFSC") Service Mode ("the Review")**

At the meeting on 14 June 2010, members were briefed on the major findings and recommendations of the Review, as well as the Administration's responses to the recommendations made in the Review. A special meeting was held on 26 June 2010 to receive views from deputations on the Review.

To be decided

At the informal meeting on 25 October 2010, Hon CHEUNG kwok-che, Chairman of 2010-2011 session, proposed that the Administration should brief the Panel on the progress of implementation of the recommendations of the Review.

**Proposed timing for discussion**

**11. Progress of implementation of recommendations of the Lump Sum Grant Independent Review Committee ("LSGIRC")**

At the meeting on 14 May 2010, members were briefed on the implementation of the recommendations of LSGIRC.

To be decided

At the informal meeting on 25 October 2010, Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che, Chairman of the 2010-2011 session, proposed that the Administration should brief members on the progress of implementation of recommendations of LSGIRC.

**12. Work Progress of the Family Council**

At the informal meeting on 4 November 2010, the Administration agreed to brief the Panel on the findings of the four thematic studies being conducted by the Family Council. The Administration plans to brief the Panel on its findings in December 2011.

December 2011

**13. Tackling domestic violence**

Item proposed by Hon WONG Sing-chi vide his letter dated 17 January 2011 (LC Paper No. CB(2)843/10-11(01)).

To be decided