

ITEM FOR FINANCE COMMITTEE

HEAD 141 – GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT : LABOUR AND WELFARE BUREAU

Subhead 700 General non-recurrent

New Item “Injection into the Elder Academy Development Foundation”

Members are invited to approve the creation of a commitment of \$50 million for injection into the Elder Academy Development Foundation.

PROBLEM

We need to inject new resources into the Elder Academy Development Foundation (EADF) to facilitate the continued development of the Elder Academy (EA) Scheme.

PROPOSAL

2. The Secretary for Labour and Welfare proposes injecting \$50 million into EADF in 2013-14.

JUSTIFICATION

3. In his 2014 Policy Address, the Chief Executive announced that the Government planned to inject \$50 million into EADF to facilitate active ageing of the elderly.

Background

4. To promote active ageing, the Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) and the Elderly Commission (EC) launched in early 2007 the EA Scheme to enable our senior citizens to pursue continued learning in a school setting so that they can lead a fulfilled life. Having regard to the aspiration of some elderly persons to

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study in a university, the scope of EA Scheme was expanded in 2008 to cover tertiary institutions to allow the elderly to take academic courses in various disciplines such as contemporary history, Chinese music appreciation, astronomy and media and cultural studies, etc. At present, a total of 108 EAs have been set up in primary and secondary schools and in tertiary institutions, providing more than 10 000 learning places every year.

5. In 2009, the Government allocated \$10 million to set up EADF under the Director of Social Welfare (DSW) Incorporation Ordinance (Cap. 1096) for the continued development of the EA Scheme. DSW, acting as the Trustee under the DSW Incorporation Ordinance (Cap. 1096), is also responsible for the investment of the Fund in accordance with the provisions of the Trustee Ordinance (Cap. 29). The Committee on EADF (the Committee) was also established under EC in 2009. The Committee is responsible for devising strategy and measures relating to the set-up, curriculum design, extra-curricular activities and development of EAs. EADF also accepts donation from external parties. The membership list of the Committee is set out in Enclosure 1, and its terms of reference are set out in Enclosure 2.

Encl. 1
Encl. 2

Current situation of EADF

6. There are three types of funding allocated by EADF, which include funding support for the setting up of EAs in primary and secondary schools, for the setting up of EAs in tertiary institutions, and for various activities that encourage elderly learning and inter-generational harmony.

7. According to the current funding arrangements, the Committee provides a one-off three-year funding of \$80,000 to collaborating school sponsoring bodies/schools and welfare organisations for setting up EAs in primary and secondary schools. EAs may make use of the funding to procure equipment, organise courses, set up EA management committees, and organise inter-generational activities and related promotional activities.

8. As the EAs set up in tertiary institutions generally require more course resources when compared with primary and secondary schools, the amount of funding for tertiary institutions will be considered according to the contents of individual funding proposals. Tertiary institutions may make use of the funding to organise thematic short courses that meet the interests and needs of the elderly, and recruit academic staff and students to serve as tutors and teaching assistants respectively. Some tertiary institutions also make use of the funding to provide programmes for our senior citizens to sit in on undergraduate courses.

9. EADF also provides funding for various activities that encourage elderly learning and foster inter-generational harmony, such as the biennial Elder Academy Sports Day and activities organised by the New Territories West Elder Academies Cluster (NTWEAC) that encourage the elderly to pursue learning across districts. NTWEAC aims at facilitating exchanges and collaboration between EAs in different districts, including curriculum development, exchange of experience and training for instructors, standardising the types, levels and advancing arrangements for progression of courses, establishing a course credit transfer system so as to enable the elderly to take up courses at different levels systematically and encourage their active participation in activities organised by EAs in the area, and standardising records of students, instructors and course grades.

10. Over the past four financial years (2010-11 to 2013-14), EADF allocated about \$5.7 million of funding for the above three types of applications. At present, EADF has a balance of about \$15 million, taking into account the donations received.

Future development of EADF and the need for injection

11. In the first half of 2013, LWB and the Committee conducted a review on the EA Scheme and visited some EAs (including EAs that are operating and had ceased operation) so as to understand their operating experience and difficulties. Many school sponsoring bodies and welfare organisations have expressed the need for continued funding support so as to provide diversified courses for the elderly in a sustainable manner. Taking into account the long-term development of the EA scheme, some Committee members have suggested gradually developing EA clusters at district-level, with reference to the mode of development of NTWEAC as mentioned in paragraph 9 above.

12. In view of the feedback from operating parties, we agree that there is a need to inject additional funding into EADF to further support EAs in providing more diversified and innovative courses and to suitably increase the number of tertiary-level courses so as to match the needs and ability of this new generation of elderly persons. The proposed \$50 million injection will enable the Committee to plan ahead in a longer timeframe and implement these improvements to the EA Scheme. We will explore with the Committee on how to make the best use of the proposed \$50 million injection to help the elderly better achieve active ageing through lifelong learning.

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FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

13. Subject to Members' approval, we will make a one-off injection of \$50 million into EADF in 2013-14. Sufficient provision has been earmarked by LWB in the 2013-14 Estimates for the proposed injection.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

14. We consulted the Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services (the Panel) on the proposed injection on 23 January 2014. The Panel supported the proposal.

Labour and Welfare Bureau
February 2014

**Committee on Elder Academy Development Foundation
Membership List**

	Name	Background
Chairman	Dr LEONG Che-hung	Medical, Former Chairman of the Elderly Commission
Members	Prof CHAN Cheung-ming, Alfred	Academic, Chairman of the Elderly Commission
	Mr CHAN How-chi	Education
	Mr CHAN Iu-seng, Star	Commercial sector
	Dr CHAN Kwok-chiu	Commercial sector
	Mrs CHAN LUI Ling-yee, Lilian	Education
	Dr CHAN Wai-chi	Medical
	Dr CHAU Wai-lap, Albert	Education
	Mr HO Chung-yan, David	Media
	Rev LAU Wai-ling, Dorothy	Social service
	Mr MA Kam-wah, Timothy	Social service
	Mr NG Chi-wing, Stephen	Social service
	Mr TAI Hay-lap	Education
	Ms TING Yuk-chee, Christina	Education
	Prof VRIJMOED KWAN Lee-ping, Lilian	Academic
	Ms YUE Mui-ying, Constance	Social service
	Chairman of Association of Principals of Government Secondary Schools, or representative	
	Chairman of Hong Kong Direct Subsidy Scheme Schools Council, or representative	
	Chairman of Hong Kong Subsidised Secondary Schools Council, or representative	
	Chairman of Union of Government Primary School Headmasters and Headmistresses, or representative	

Representatives from Government Bureaux/Departments

Secretary for Education, or representative
Secretary for Labour and Welfare, or representative
Director of Health, or representative
Director of Social Welfare, or representative

**Committee on Elder Academy Development Foundation
Terms of Reference**

For the purpose of promoting and providing for school-based elder learning in Hong Kong which incorporates the concept of intergenerational harmony, to –

- (a) devise and implement strategy and measures relating to curriculum design, learning structure, extra-curricular activities, establishment and development of elder academies, etc. for the sustainable development of the Elder Academy Scheme;
- (b) advise the trustee on matters relating to the management and administration of the Elder Academy Development Foundation;
- (c) consider and approve applications for funding from the Foundation;
- (d) advise the trustee on matters relating to the acceptance of public money, donations, subscriptions and bequests to the Foundation; and
- (e) be responsible to the Elderly Commission on its work in (a) to (d) above.
