

# 立法會

## *Legislative Council*

LC Paper No. CB(2)1947/13-14

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### **Report of the Panel on Welfare Services for submission to the Legislative Council**

#### **Purpose**

This report gives an account of the work of the Panel on Welfare Services during the 2013-2014 Legislative Council ("LegCo") session. It will be tabled at the Council meeting of 9 July 2014 in accordance with Rule 77(14) of the Rules of Procedure.

#### **The Panel**

2. The Panel was formed by a resolution of the Council on 8 July 1998 and as amended on 20 December 2000, 9 October 2002, 11 July 2007 and 2 July 2008 for the purpose of monitoring and examining Government policies and issues of public concern relating to welfare (including women welfare) and rehabilitation services, poverty, social enterprise and the Family Council. The terms of reference of the Panel are in **Appendix I**.

3. The Panel comprises 20 members, with Hon CHAN Yuen-han and Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che elected as its Chairman and Deputy Chairman respectively. The membership list of the Panel is in **Appendix II**.

#### **Major work**

##### Social welfare planning and administration

##### *Special scheme on privately owned sites for welfare uses*

4. Members were briefed on the progress of implementing the special scheme on privately owned sites for welfare uses ("the Special Scheme"), which sought to encourage non-governmental organizations ("NGOs") to provide the necessary welfare facilities, in particular elderly and rehabilitation facilities, through in-situ expansion or redevelopment. Members were also consulted on the Administration's proposal to seek the approval of the Finance Committee

("FC") to transfer \$10 billion to the Lotteries Fund ("LF") to ensure the availability of sufficient resources to implement the feasible projects under the Special Scheme.

5. Whilst supporting the Administration's proposal, the Panel was concerned about the ratio of subvented to self-financing services under the Special Scheme. The Administration advised that while the ratio would depend on the needs for the respective services, it would liaise with the applicant organizations in this regard. The Administration also pointed out that the applicant organizations could provide some ancillary welfare facilities at their sites subject to agreement of the Social Welfare Department ("SWD") but this should not be done at the expense of the provision of the mainstream welfare facilities. Given that the projects under the Special Scheme would be funded by LF, members called on the Administration to provide guidelines to the applicant organizations regarding the provision of subvented and self-financing services under the Special Scheme.

*Production of Best Practice Manual for non-governmental organizations receiving Lump Sum Grant subvention*

6. The Panel was briefed on the production of the Best Practice Manual ("BPM") for NGOs, which received Lump Sum Grant ("LSG") subvention, on three areas, viz. human resource management, financial management, as well as corporate governance and accountability. According to the Administration, there were two levels of guidelines in BPM. Level One guidelines were those that NGOs were expected to follow unless there were strong justifications not to do so; Level Two guidelines were those that NGOs were encouraged to adopt. Currently BPM contained guidelines for 14 items<sup>1</sup>. The Working Group of the

<sup>1</sup> A gist of the two levels of guidelines for the 14 items in BPM is set out in the table below:

	Financial management	Human resource management	Corporate governance and accountability
Item(s) covered by Level One guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maximised use of LSG reserve</li> <li>- Status of LSG reserve</li> <li>- Usage of Provident Fund ("PF") reserve</li> <li>- Status of PF reserve</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Salary adjustment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Composition, duties and responsibilities on handling complaints at different levels</li> <li>- NGOs' policies and procedures on complaints handling</li> </ul>
Item(s) covered by Level Two guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Optimal level of LSG reserve</li> </ul>	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communication</li> <li>- Term of office of governing board</li> <li>- Roles of governing board</li> <li>- Delineation of roles and responsibilities of governing board</li> <li>- NGOs' decision making on important management issues of SWD-subvented services</li> <li>- NGO's decisions made on important management issues of SWD-subvented services</li> </ul>

LSG Steering Committee was exploring the inclusion of another four items<sup>2</sup> in BPM.

7. Noting that the LSG subvention system had a huge negative impact on the welfare sector, members suggested that the Level One and Level Two guidelines, which were the most fundamental principles for governance, should be enforced immediately in a mandatory manner and subject to public scrutiny. They also took the view that representatives of staff and service users should be included in the board of directors of NGOs, so as to enhance communication and governance. The Panel planned to revisit the subject matter relating to LSG subvention in the next session and invite deputations to give views thereon.

### Social Security

#### *Study on retirement protection in Hong Kong*

8. The Panel was advised that a study on retirement protection ("the Study") in Hong Kong was being conducted by a consultancy team under Professor Nelson CHOW's leadership. The Study would make an in-depth analysis in the relationship among the elderly Comprehensive Social Security Assistance ("CSSA") Scheme, Old Age Living Allowance ("OALA"), and Old Age Allowance ("OAA"), as well as their collective retirement protection functions. The retirement protection functions performed collectively by the three pillars<sup>3</sup> would also be analyzed. Feasible options to further improve the social security and retirement protection for the elderly would be proposed based on the analysis and projections on the major proposals put forth by the community groups, the political sector and academics.

9. Some members were concerned about the offsetting arrangement under the Mandatory Provident Fund ("MPF") Scheme, i.e. allowing employers to use their contributions to the MPF Scheme for offsetting severance payments or long service payments. These members took the view that, as a result of the offsetting arrangement, the MPF system could not provide employees with retirement protection. The consultancy team was requested to look into the matter in the Study and make suggestions to address the problem.

10. Some other members called on the Administration to make use of the Land Fund, which had a balance of around \$210 billion, to contribute to the retirement protection scheme. They considered that the retirement protection

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<sup>2</sup> A gist of these four items, which are all under human resource management, are set out as follows - (a) staff remuneration; (b) pay policy; (c) administration of transfer and termination with regard to time-defined contracts; and (d) decision making with regard to time-defined contracts.

<sup>3</sup> The three pillars refer to the Mandatory Provident Funds Scheme, the non-contributory social security system (including the CSSA Scheme, the Social Security Allowance Scheme, OAA and Disability Allowance), and voluntary private savings.

system should be a contributory system to which the Government, employers and employees should contribute. These members stressed that retirement protection was a right rather than welfare. In considering retirement protection for the elderly, the Administration should capitalize values of the retirement protection system in Japan which stemmed from respecting elderly persons.

11. The Panel expressed great disappointment and dissatisfaction that notwithstanding discussions at length in the community on the subject of retirement protection, the Administration had yet to map out any conceptual framework for a retirement protection scheme. As the community had high expectation that the current term Government would introduce a retirement protection scheme, members called on the Administration to draw up a concrete plan and implementation timetable, including the period for public consultation, to follow up the final report of the Study. In this connection, the Panel's Subcommittee on Retirement Protection had held five meetings so far and scheduled another meeting in July 2014 to study the related issues in detail. The Subcommittee would continue its work in the next session.

*Pilot scheme on provision of living allowance for carers of elderly from low income families*

12. The Panel was consulted on the feasibility of introducing a two-year pilot scheme ("Pilot Scheme") to be funded by the Community Care Fund ("CCF") to provide a living allowance for carers of elderly persons from low income families. The Administration proposed to set the number of eligible carers at 2 000. These carers were subject to the "double benefits restriction" under which recipients of the carer allowance could not at the same time receive CSSA or OALA. To follow the income assessment requirement adopted in most CCF programmes, the carer's household income would be at or below 75% of the Median Monthly Domestic Household Income.

13. Some members were concerned about the "double benefits restriction", which would force the carers to give up certain financial assistance. They also called on the Administration to remove the cap on the number of beneficiaries of the carer allowance, relax the income limit or remove the income assessment requirement in the long run, and extend the Pilot Scheme to cover carers of persons with disabilities or with chronic illness.

*Annual adjustment of standard payment rates under Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme and Social Security Allowance Scheme*

14. The Panel was consulted on the Administration's proposal to adjust the social security payment rates under the Social Security Allowance ("SSA") and the CSSA Schemes, having regard to the latest Social Security Assistance Index of Prices ("SSAIP"). The proposal was in line with the adjustment mechanism

whereby the Administration would take into account inflation or deflation as reflected by SSAIP and adjust the social security payment rates on an annual basis. Whilst supporting the proposal, members called on the Administration to strive to resolve the problem that the existing mechanism for adjusting the standard CSSA payment rates had lagged behind inflation. Some members requested the Administration to review the existing CSSA system and introduce measures to raise the standard of living of the CSSA recipients above the poverty line.

15. Members were gravely concerned that the rent allowance under CSSA was often insufficient to cover rental expenses of private rental accommodation. According to the Administration, 48% of CSSA households living in private housing were paying a rent equal to or less than the maximum rates of the rent allowance ("MRA") under CSSA. With the Administration's proposed increase of MRA, the percentage of such households would be increased to 60%, and to 68% if the one-off subsidy under the "Subsidy for CSSA Recipients Living in Rented Private Housing" programme of CCF was also taken into account. Members called on the Administration to consider regularizing that CCF programme to reduce the burden of CSSA recipients.

#### *Amendments to medical assessment form for Disability Allowance under Social Security Allowance Scheme*

16. The Panel examined the Administration's proposed revisions to the Medical Assessment Form ("MAF") and the Checklist used in medical assessments for the Disability Allowance ("DA"). The proposal included the removal of the reference to "100% loss of earning capacity" from MAF, and removal of the applicant's condition regarding his/her ability to "work in the original occupation and perform any other kind of work for which he/she is suited" ("the condition") from the Checklist.

17. The Panel supported the proposed removal of the reference as the proposal was in line with the recommendation of The Ombudsman who considered the reference misleading and irrelevant. Members, however, objected to the proposed removal of the condition. They considered that the removal of the condition would render persons with severe disability (e.g. with loss of one limb), who were currently assessed by doctors to be eligible for DA, become ineligible. The Panel therefore considered it necessary to retain the condition in the Checklist.

#### Services for the elderly

##### *Pilot scheme on community care service voucher for the elderly*

18. The Panel was briefed on the progress of the implementation of the first

phase of the Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly ("the CCS Voucher Scheme"). According to the Administration, the CCS Voucher Scheme was to be implemented in two phases over a period of four years. The CCS Voucher Scheme aimed at testing the viability of a new funding mode, whereby the Government adopted a "money-follows-the-user" approach and provided subsidy directly to the service users (instead of service providers) in the form of service vouchers. Eligible elderly persons might choose the service provider, the type of service and the service package that suited their individual needs. The first phase was launched in September 2013 with a maximum of 1 200 vouchers issued to moderately impaired elderly applicants in eight selected districts.

19. Members noted that the Administration had issued 8 500 invitation letters but only 749 eligible elderly persons had participated in the first phase of the CCS Voucher Scheme. Some members considered that the low participation boiled down to the poor design of the CCS Voucher Scheme. The service mode had not provided enough flexibility to cater for the services most needed by the elderly persons, which were home-making, meals delivery and escort services. The elderly persons might not be able to afford the co-payment either. Besides, the means-test requirement might also be one of the main reasons for the unsatisfactory response to the CCS Voucher Scheme. Given that many stakeholders had criticized the design of the CCS Voucher Scheme, the Panel called on the Administration to examine afresh the CCS Voucher Scheme and rectify the design mistakes.

*New contract residential care homes and day care centres/units for the elderly*

20. The Panel examined the Administration's funding proposals to set up new contract residential care homes for the elderly ("RCHEs") and day care centres/units for the elderly.

21. Whilst supporting these proposals, members called on the Administration to provide more residential care places for the elderly and address the problem of deteriorating quality of some contract RCHEs. Noting the long lead time for the contract RCHEs to commence service, members also requested the Administration to carry out the construction works and the related tendering exercises for selecting suitable operators for running these contract RCHEs in tandem, so that they could come into operation three to six months after the completion of the construction works. Members pointed out that elderly persons with financial difficulties could not afford to reside in self-financing places in contract RCHEs because of the high fee. The Administration was requested to increase the ratio of subsidized residential care services ("RCS") places to non-subsidized RCS places in contract RCHEs from 6 : 4 to 8 : 2.

*Creation of a supernumerary directorate post for Elderly Services Programme Plan and Voucher Scheme on Residential Care Services for the Elderly*

22. The Panel was consulted on the Administration's proposal to create a supernumerary directorate post (Administrative Officer Staff Grade C) in the Labour and Welfare Bureau. The proposed post was tasked to assist the Elderly Commission in formulating the Elderly Services Programme Plan and exploring the feasibility of introducing a voucher scheme on residential care services for the elderly ("RCS voucher scheme").

23. While the majority of members supported the staffing proposal, some members were against it. According to these members, the results of a consultancy study conducted by The University of Hong Kong in 2009 did not recommend the implementation of an RCS voucher scheme. They also pointed out that the voucher approach was being tested for CCS by the introduction of the CCS Voucher Scheme in September 2013 and a review of that Scheme had yet to be conducted. As such, there was no experience to be drawn on regarding the merits or otherwise of the voucher approach. These members therefore took the view that the feasibility study on an RCS voucher scheme should not be conducted at this stage.

*Rehousing matters relating to RCHEs at Dills Corner Garden*

24. The Panel was gravely concerned about the existing private RCHEs at the Dills Corner Garden ("DCG") with 958 residents. These RCHEs would need to be vacated and cleared in 2018 according to the current implementation programme of the Kwu Tung North ("KTN") New Development Area ("NDA"), which was one of the North East New Territories ("NENT") NDAs<sup>4</sup>. The Panel visited these RCHEs in December 2013 and invited the Secretary for Labour and Welfare ("SLW") to go along. During the visit, members discussed the rehousing arrangement with SLW as well as the residents and operators of these RCHEs.

25. Members were briefed on the Administration's latest proposed arrangements for these RCHEs at the Panel meeting on 12 May 2014. According to the Administration, it was considering decanting and demolishing the RCHEs at DCG in two phases to tie in with KTN NDA development programme, in particular the Advance Works, with the first phase to take place in 2018 and the second in 2023 at the latest. Those RCHEs on the part of the site which was subject to development by 2023 could stayput at DCG until the second phase removal. The Administration was also seriously exploring the construction of a purpose-built complex of contract RCHEs with 1 100 places at

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<sup>4</sup> The NENT NDAs consist of KTN NDA as well as NDAs in Fanling North and in Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling.

a possible site within KTN NDA in the vicinity of DCG. If this option was found feasible, the contract RCHEs were expected to commence service by 2023.

26. According to the Administration, in allocating places of the new contract RCHEs, priority would be given to eligible existing residents at DCG who had passed the care needs test under the Standard Care Needs Assessment Mechanism for Elderly Services ("SCNAMES") before service commencement of the proposed new contract RCHEs in 2023. Eligible residents affected by the second-phase clearance might move directly from the existing RCHEs at DCG to the new contract RCHEs. Eligible residents affected in the first phase clearance might also opt to move to the new contract RCHEs, though inevitably they would have to move to other RCHEs during the interim period. For those residents who had not passed the care needs test or not been assessed under SCNAMES by the time of service commencement of the new contract RCHEs, SWD would offer them assistance in finding alternative placements in other private RCHEs.

27. As regards DCG RCHE operators, the Administration advised that they could participate in the open tendering exercise and bid for the operation of the new contract homes in accordance with the existing arrangements. Given the large number of residential care places (1 100) involved, SWD would select several operators to run the places in the form of separate RCHEs.

28. At its meeting on 12 May 2014, the Panel also received views of representatives of the operators and residents of the RCHEs at DCG as well as family members of these residents. According to the depositions, the residents at these RCHEs hoped to preserve their communities and relocation of these residents should be in the vicinity en bloc. The depositions also requested the Administration to allow the existing RCHE operators to run the new RCHEs there. Members noted that after 17 years of operation, DCG, with its beautiful environment being fit for accommodating elderly people, had become an elderly village for almost 1 000 elderly people. The Panel passed a motion<sup>5</sup> taking the view that the RCHEs at DCG should be preserved and re-planned on the principle of "no removal and no demolition" under the NENT NDAs Project, so that the elderly people could enjoy a peaceful life in their twilight years.

*Funding mode for Enhanced Home and Community Care Services and matters relating to competitive bidding for such services*

29. The Panel discussed with the Administration and depositions from the welfare sector the funding mode for provision of the Enhanced Home and Community Care Services ("EHCCS") and matters relating to competitive

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<sup>5</sup> At the Panel meeting on 12 May 2014, the motion was passed with eight votes in favour of it, two votes against it and two abstentions.



bidding for EHCCS. According to the Administration, EHCCS aimed to support elderly persons with moderate or severe impairment level to age in place. Service operators for EHCCS were selected through contract bidding, which aimed to enhance transparency and fairness, secure innovative and value-added services, enhance quality of service and achieve cost-effectiveness. This allocation approach was in accordance with the policy direction to open up welfare services for competitive bidding on a cost and quality basis. Currently there were a total of 5 579 (about 5 600) EHCCS places provided under 24 contracts which were due to expire on 28 February 2015.

30. The Panel was advised that the Administration had secured resources to continue to provide these 5 579 places. In addition, the Administration had also secured resources for the provision of 1 500 new EHCCS places from March 2015 onwards. The Administration proposed to conduct a single contract bidding exercise to provide for a total of 7 079 (about 7 100) EHCCS places to cover both the existing and the new places. Noting the welfare sector's wish to change the funding mode for EHCCS to annual subvention under LSG, the Administration considered that this would represent a fundamental change from the contract bidding arrangement mentioned in paragraph 29 above. The Administration would need to consider this carefully and it would take some time. As there was an urgent need to decide, well before February 2015, on the service operators for the 7 100 EHCCS, the Administration would continue its dialogue with the welfare sector and the Hong Kong Council of Social Service on the allocation of these EHCCS places on the basis of contract arrangement, with a view to providing timely service.

31. The Panel shared the deputations' concern about the impact on the service users, the serving operators and their staff if the serving operators were unsuccessful in bidding the contracts under the proposed single contract bidding exercise. Members called on the Administration to continue the provision of the 5 600 places to the existing service operators, so that the existing service operators and service users would not be affected. The Administration was also requested to allocate the additional 1 500 places according to the existing mechanism. As regards the allocation arrangement in future, the Panel called on the Administration to change the current contract bidding mode by incorporating the 7 100 places into the LSG Subvention System, so as to maintain the service quality and ensure the job stability of over 1 000 staff members. Noting the wish of service users for EHCCS to make oral representations to the Panel on the service content of and planning for the provision of EHCCS, members agreed to invite them to present views at the regular Panel meeting to be held in July 2014.

## Services for people with disabilities

### *Upgrading the ranking of Commissioner for Rehabilitation and strengthening directorate manpower of his team*

32. The Panel supported the Administration's proposal to upgrade the ranking of Commissioner for Rehabilitation ("C for R") and strengthen the directorate manpower of his team, so as to enhance co-ordination among various policy bureaux and departments in implementing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities ("Convention"). Nevertheless, some members were concerned whether the ranking of C for R, even after the upgrading, was still too low to perform his co-ordination work. They pointed out that Article 33(2) of the Convention stipulated that States Parties should establish one or more independent mechanisms to promote, protect and monitor the implementation of the Convention. Moreover, the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities had recommended that Hong Kong should set up an independent monitoring mechanism that involved the active participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations. The Administration was therefore urged to provide for that mechanism.

### *Provision of facilities for persons with disabilities*

33. The Panel examined the Administration's proposals to construct facilities in Sham Shui Po for providing pre-school rehabilitation services as well as day training service and RCS for persons with intellectual disabilities. Whilst supporting these proposals, members noted with grave concern about the serious shortfall of places for these services. In respect of pre-school rehabilitation services, there were currently more than 7 000 applicants but only about 607 additional places came on stream in 2013-2014. As early identification and intervention was important for the growth and development of disabled children, the long waiting time arising from the serious shortfall had deprived disabled children of the opportunity to receive suitable services. Members called on the Administration to shorten the waiting time.

34. Regarding RCS for persons with intellectual disabilities, members were advised that the average waiting time for hostel for severely mentally handicapped persons was 105.6 months in 2013-2014. The Panel took a strong view that the provision of RCS places for persons with intellectual disabilities should be expedited to shorten the waiting time to a reasonable time frame. Members called on the Administration to set targets for the provision of residential care homes and hostels for mentally handicapped persons, e.g. setting a target waiting time and a specific percentage of the total area of a new public housing project for such provision. The Panel would follow up the matter in the next session.

### *Strengthening support for athletes with disabilities*

35. The Panel supported on the Administration's proposal to inject \$200 million into the Hong Kong Paralympians Fund, which sought to ensure its sustainability and strengthen support for athletes with disabilities to facilitate the development of budding athletes with disabilities to their full potential. Nevertheless, some members requested the Administration to consider raising the amount of subsistence grants given to elite athletes with disabilities to a level on a par with those given to elite able-bodied athletes, so that the grants were adequate to support these athletes with disabilities to engage in full-time training. The Administration was also urged to strengthen its support for retired athletes with disabilities in their search for employment.

### Services for young people

#### *Drug treatment and rehabilitation services*

36. The Panel was briefed on the drug treatment and rehabilitation services in Hong Kong, with reference to the consultation on the RESCUE Drug Testing Scheme ("RDT"). Members took a strong view that the Administration should have holistic planning on drug treatment and rehabilitation services before taking forward RDT. They also called on the Administration to strengthen its support to drug rehabilitation centres and the reprovisioning of Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Centres ("DTRCs").

37. According to the Administration, following the release of the Report of the Task Force on Youth Drug Abuse in 2008, the Administration had been increasing funding allocation to anti-drug measures, including setting up more Counselling Centres for Psychotropic Substance Abusers, assistance to DTRCs for carrying out the necessary upgrading works, increasing some 100 social workers stationed at schools, and collaborating with the healthcare sector for the enhancement of anti-drug medical services. The Administration had also been engaging in dialogue with different sectors and would take account of their views in working out the drug testing mechanism for RDT.

38. Members stressed the need for the Administration to be more proactive in assisting teenagers to quit drugs and providing a concrete timetable on the provision of drug treatment and rehabilitation services in its future proposal on RDT.

### Situation of Programme Workers in social welfare sector

39. The Panel was concerned about the situation of Programme Workers ("PWs") in the social welfare sector. According to the Administration, PWs

were not core or permanent posts in the NGOs concerned. As at end-November 2013, some 2 100 young people were employed as PWs in various welfare service units of 90 SWD-subsidized NGOs. These temporary PW posts were due to lapse by end-March 2014. As the purpose of creating temporary PW posts was to facilitate the incumbents to gain work experience for securing jobs in the employment market, the serving PWs should have equipped themselves to look for other opportunities for career development after serving in the temporary posts. The majority of the serving PWs were working in youth services. Nevertheless, the overall provision of the Integrated Children and Youth Services Centres exceeded the requirement because of the gradual decrease in youth population.

40. The Panel expressed grave concern about the impact of the deletion of the PW posts on the provision of services. SWD was urged to recognize the contribution of PWs, attach importance to manpower planning of the social welfare sector, and review the relevant policies expeditiously. The Administration was requested to report to the Panel on the progress by July 2014 and establish a permanent supporting grade to absorb some 2 100 PWs for enhancement of service quality.

#### Work progress of Family Council

41. The Panel discussed with the Family Council its work progress. Members were advised that notwithstanding its reconstitution under a non-official chairman since April 2013, the Family Council had reaffirmed its position as a high-level cross-sector and cross-bureau platform in examining family-related issues. Bureaux/departments and relevant advisory bodies had proactively briefed the Family Council on family-related issues. Noting that the Family Council was primarily an advisory body, some members doubted whether the Family Council's views and recommendations would be taken forward by the Administration.

42. According to the results of the 2013 Family Survey conducted by the Family Council, quite a number of parent-respondents found the stress of raising their children overwhelming. Given the recent incidents of domestic violence (particularly a tragedy involving a mother alleged of suffering from postpartum depression), members were gravely concerned about the inadequate support to women particularly those suffering from postpartum depression. The Family Council had advised that it would discuss the subject with a view to preventing women from suffering postpartum depression and early identifying patients with such a disease. The Family Council would also examine whether there was a need to strengthen the work in this respect.

43. In view of wide public concern on the aforesaid incidents of domestic violence, the Panel decided to hold a special meeting in end June this year to

discuss with the Administration and receive deputations' views on the services and policies relating to family support. The subject matter would also be followed up by the Subcommittee on Strategy and Measures to Tackle Domestic Violence, which would be activated shortly.

#### Ways to improve situation of mandated refugees, torture claimants and asylum seekers in Hong Kong

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44. The Panel discussed with the Administration its proposed enhancement to the humanitarian assistance for non-refoulement claimants<sup>6</sup> in Hong Kong. According to the Administration, it had been offering in-kind assistance to claimants who were deprived of basic needs during their presence in Hong Kong to prevent them from becoming destitute. The service package for claimants would be enhanced in terms of accommodation, food, transportation and utilities allowances.

45. Some members were concerned that the enhancements were inadequate to prevent claimants from becoming destitute. In addition to providing in-kind assistance, the Administration was also requested to speed up the screening process and evaluate what else it could do to help claimants.

#### Meetings held

46. During the period between October 2013 and June 2014, the Panel held a total of 15 meetings, including a joint meeting with the Panel on Manpower to discuss women employment. Another meeting has been scheduled for July 2014.

Council Business Division 2  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
2 July 2014

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<sup>6</sup> According to the Administration, persons who have lodged an asylum claim with the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees and mandated refugees may also receive such assistance.

**Legislative Council**

**Panel on Welfare Services**

**Terms of Reference**

1. To monitor and examine Government policies and issues of public concern relating to welfare (including women welfare) and rehabilitation services, poverty, social enterprise and Family Council.
2. To provide a forum for the exchange and dissemination of views on the above policy matters.
3. To receive briefings and to formulate views on any major legislative or financial proposals in respect of the above policy areas prior to their formal introduction to the Council or Finance Committee.
4. To monitor and examine, to the extent it considers necessary, the above policy matters referred to it by a member of the Panel or by the House Committee.
5. To make reports to the Council or to the House Committee as required by the Rules of Procedure.

**Panel on Welfare Services**

**Membership list for 2013 - 2014 session**

<b>Chairman</b>	Hon CHAN Yuen-han, SBS, JP
<b>Deputy Chairman</b>	Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che
<b>Members</b>	Hon Albert HO Chun-yan Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP Hon Ronny TONG Ka-wah, SC Dr Hon LEUNG Ka-lau Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung Hon WONG Yuk-man (up to 10 March 2014) Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming Hon Gary FAN Kwok-wai Hon CHAN Chi-chuen Hon CHAN Han-pan, JP Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, BBS, MH, JP Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan Hon POON Siu-ping, BBS, MH Hon TANG Ka-piu, JP

(Total : 20 members)

**Clerk** Mr Colin CHUI

**Legal adviser** Miss Mimi CHANG

**Date** 2 July 2014