

立法會
Legislative Council

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by the Administration)

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Subcommittee to Study Issues Relating to Mainland-HKSAR Families

**Minutes of the fourth meeting
held on Wednesday, 17 February 2016, at 8:45 am
in Conference Room 2A of the Legislative Council Complex**

- Members present** : Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, BBS, MH
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan, JP
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, JP
Hon YIU Si-wing, BBS
Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, BBS, MH, JP
Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen, BBS, JP
Hon Christopher CHEUNG Wah-fung, SBS, JP
Hon TANG Ka-piu, JP
- Members absent** : Hon LEE Cheuk-yan
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Dr Hon LAM Tai-fai, SBS, JP
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che
Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, JP
Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun, BBS, MH, JP
- Public Officers attending** : Item I

Mr LEE Kam-kwong
Principal Education Officer (New Territories)
Education Bureau

Mr Albert LEUNG Kwok-yan
Senior Education Officer (Placement & Support)
Education Bureau

Mr CHENG Kwan-yam
Chief Executive Officer
Home Affairs Department

Mr NG Shu-chung
Senior Housing Manager/Tenancy
Management Policy
Housing Department

Mr Samson LOK Yuk-leung
Senior Housing Manager/Applications
Housing Department

Mr Charles HUI Pak-kwan, JP
Assistant Commissioner (Employment Services)
Labour Department

Miss Rita LAU Choi-ha
Chief Social Security Officer (Social Security)
Social Welfare Department

Ms Micy LUI Siu-ying
Chief Social Work Officer (Family & Child Welfare)
Social Welfare Department

Clerk in attendance : Mr Colin CHUI
Chief Council Secretary (2) 4

Staff in attendance : Miss Connie AU
Council Secretary (2) 3

Miss Meisy KWOK
Legislative Assistant (2) 6

Action

I. Policies and measures adopted by the Administration regarding the following subjects relating to Mainland-HKSAR families

- (a) population policy
- (b) support and social welfare services for new arrivals from the Mainland
- (c) cross-boundary students

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)292/15-16(02), CB(2)860/15-16(01) and (02)]

Action

The Subcommittee deliberated (index of proceedings attached at **Annex**).

2. At 9:42 am, the Chairman suspended the meeting to allow some of the Subcommittee members who were also members of the Public Works Subcommittee ("PWSC") to proceed to the meeting venue of PWSC for voting on a motion.

3. The meeting resumed at 9:47 am.

Admin

4. The Subcommittee requested the Administration to provide information on –

(a) the service utilization statistics of the Cross-boundary and Inter-country Casework Service operated by the International Social Service Hong Kong Branch; and

(b) the number of cross-boundary students broken-down by school level and locations of schools.

II. Any other business

5. Members noted that the next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, 31 March 2016 at 2:30 pm.

6. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 9:58 am.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
23 March 2016

**Proceedings of the fourth meeting of the
Subcommittee to Study Issues Relating to Mainland-HKSAR Families
on Wednesday, 17 February 2016, at 8:45 am
in Conference Room 2A of the Legislative Council Complex**

Time marker	Speaker(s)	Subject(s)	Action required
<p><i>Agenda item I – Policies and measures adopted by the Administration regarding the following subjects relating to Mainland-HKSAR families</i></p> <p>(a) <i>population policy</i> (b) <i>support and social welfare services for new arrivals from the Mainland</i> (c) <i>cross-boundary students</i></p>			
000808-001231	Chairman	Opening remarks	
001232-002318	Chairman Admin	<p>Briefing by the Administration on the provision of Public Rental Housing ("PRH") for families with members who were new arrivals from the Mainland and holders of Two Way Permits [LC Paper No. CB(2)860/15-16(01)].</p> <p>The Administration advised that –</p> <p>(a) welfare support services were provided for individuals and families in need, including new arrivals from the Mainland. The 65 Integrated Family Service Centres and the two Integrated Service Centres operated by the Social Welfare Department ("SWD") and non-governmental organizations provided a continuum of preventive, supportive and remedial welfare services to those in need;</p> <p>(b) the services were aimed to assist new arrivals from the Mainland to integrate into the local community, to assist them to cope with adjustment problems and to empower them to achieve self-sufficiency;</p> <p>(c) SWD provided funding for the International Social Service Hong Kong Branch ("ISSHK") to operate the Cross-boundary and Inter-country Casework Service to help individuals and families to handle and solve problems arising from geographical separation. Service counters of ISSHK at the Lo Wu Control Point and the Registration of Persons Office of the Immigration Department provided new arrivals with information on Hong Kong's social services and would refer them to appropriate service units as necessary in order to help identify and prevent family</p>	

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		<p>problems at an early stage; and</p> <p>(d) SWD had linked up its hotline with the New Arrivals Connect Hotline ("NAC Hotline") operated by ISSHK, calls from new arrivals and their family members could be transferred to the NAC Hotline.</p>	
002319-003110	Chairman Mr Steven HO Admin	<p>With regard to the NAC Hotline, Mr Steven HO enquired –</p> <p>(a) how the Administration had promoted it to the service targets; and</p> <p>(b) the utilization rate and effectiveness of the service.</p> <p>The Administration responded that –</p> <p>(a) there was publicity in both Hong Kong and the Mainland to promote the service. However, owing to the huge population in the Mainland, it was difficult to achieve complete coverage; and</p> <p>(b) ISSHK had recorded 1 134 and 2 184 direct calls to the NAC Hotline in the first two quarters and last two quarters of 2015 respectively. Separately, SWD had referred some 500 calls to the NAC Hotline in 2015.</p> <p>Mr HO commented that the number of calls might not accurately reflect the service utilization as there could be repeated calls from the same person and on the same issue(s). He requested the Administration to explore the feasibility of refining the statistics and adopt a more representative indicator like the number of persons who had called the NAC Hotline. The Administration explained that there were practical difficulties in recording the hotline utilization in terms of the number of callers served.</p> <p>Mr HO further asked about –</p> <p>(a) the definition of "dependent relatives" as prescribed in paragraph 4(e) of the Administration's paper [LC Paper No. CB(2)860/15-16(01)]; and</p> <p>(b) the eligibility criteria for Compassionate Rehousing ("CR").</p>	

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		<p>The Administration advised that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) it had no specific requirement on how 'close' the relationship needed to be as long as their family ties could be established. The key consideration was the need for constant support and care to be provided by the current PRH tenant; and (b) CR was a form of housing assistance having to be recommended by SWD based on comprehensive professional assessment on individual cases. General eligibility criteria included: (i) the applicants had a genuine long-term and imminent housing problem that they had no other feasible means to solve by themselves owing to their specific circumstances and personal factors; (ii) the applicants had social and medical needs (if applicable) and the granting of CR could help solve their problems or relieve their hardship; and (iii) the basic eligibility criteria for PRH were met. SWD would consider all pertinent factors of individual cases before putting forward its recommendations to the Housing Department on the granting of CR. 	
003111-004057	Chairman Mr WONG Kwok-hing Admin	<p>Mr WONG Kwok-hing enquired on –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the availability of induction programmes and appropriate training opportunities for adult new arrivals to enable their early integration into the community. He was of the view that new arrivals from the Mainland was a source of labour supply and more emphasis should be placed in unleashing their potential; and (b) the measures available to relieve the overcrowding problems of families living in PRH as a result of the addition of newly-arrived family members from the Mainland. <p>The Administration responded that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) under the policy on universal basic education, the Education Bureau ("EDB") offered placement services to newly-arrived children aged six to 15 for admission to public sector schools in Hong Kong. For 	

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		<p>new arrivals over the age of 15, EDB would provide information on public sector schools or vocational training institutes based on the preference and ability of the persons concerned;</p> <p>(b) the Labour Department ("LD") provided employment services for job seekers (including new arrivals) through a network of 13 job centres, three industry-based recruitment centres and the Interactive Employment Service ("iES") website. Employment officers at the job centres would provide job search advice as well as information on the labour market and training courses to job seekers. Tailor-made employment briefings were organized to help new arrivals understand the local employment market and improve their job search skills. A dedicated webpage for new arrivals was set up under iES to provide them with job search information and services. LD also administered various employment support programmes to enhance the employability of job seekers who had difficulties in finding jobs, such as the Employment Programme for the Middle-aged and the Work Trial Scheme;</p> <p>(c) noting that many new arrivals were female who might wish to find part-time jobs owing to the need to take care of their families, LD had organized a number of thematic job fairs on part-time employment since May 2015 in addition to the launching of a dedicated webpage on part-time vacancies at the iES website. To encourage employers to provide more part-time employment opportunities for middle-aged job seekers, the Employment Programme for the Middle-aged was extended to cover part-time jobs in September 2015. For those in need of child care services, employment officers at the job centres would also provide information in this regard to these job seekers to facilitate them in joining the labour market; and</p> <p>(d) overcrowded families could apply through the Housing Authority's Living Space Improvement Transfer Scheme (applicable to PRH households living below seven square meter internal floor area ("IFA") per</p>	

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		<p>person) or the Territory-wide Overcrowding Relief Transfer Exercise (applicable to PRH households living below five point five square meter IFA per person) for transfer to a larger flat.</p>	
004058-004535	Chairman Admin	<p>The Chairman enquired whether support services would be available to Mainlanders who had been granted One Way Permits pending their arrival in Hong Kong.</p> <p>The Administration advised that support services were available through ISSHK as detailed in time marker 002319 – 003110. At the request of the Chairman, the Administration would provide information on the service utilization statistics of the Cross-boundary and Inter-country Casework Service operated by ISSHK.</p>	Admin (paragraph 4(a) of the minutes)
004536-005612	Chairman Miss Alice MAK Admin	<p>Miss Alice MAK expressed concern about the high tuition fee charged by minban (民辦) schools in Shenzhen under the "Scheme of Classes for Hong Kong Children". She sought the Administration's clarification on the issue and enquired about the effectiveness of the Scheme.</p> <p>The Administration advised that –</p> <p>(a) EDB and Shenzhen Municipal Education Bureau had jointly implemented the "Scheme of Classes for Hong Kong Children" since 2008 to encourage more Hong Kong children residing in the Mainland to complete primary education in Shenzhen. In the 2015-2016 school year, 11 minban schools were providing Hong Kong curriculum for some 3 100 Hong Kong students residing in Shenzhen. Eligible primary six students in those schools could participate in the Secondary School Places Allocation System in Hong Kong; and</p> <p>(b) according to a survey conducted in 2013, a majority of the parents with Hong Kong children residing in Shenzhen would prefer to have their children received education in Hong Kong.</p> <p>Both the Chairman and Miss MAK did not agree to the survey findings at (b) and pointed out that the parents concerned had no choice given that (i) their Hong Kong children would not be</p>	

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		<p>admitted to Mainland public schools due to the lack of household registration; and (ii) the tuition fee charged by those minban schools in Shenzhen was high. Miss MAK urged EDB to strengthen its effort to facilitate those Hong Kong students to study in Shenzhen. In her view, this would be beneficial to Hong Kong students residing in Shenzhen as well as those in Hong Kong.</p>	
005613-005841	Chairman Mr TANG Ka-piu	<p>Mr TANG Ka-piu expressed concern about the long travelling time needed for students to commute daily between their homes in Shenzhen and the schools in Hong Kong. He sought information on –</p> <p>(a) the number and geographical distribution of cross-boundary students (in terms of the locations of their schools); and</p> <p>(b) the tuition fee charged by minban schools in Shenzhen.</p>	
005842-010316	Suspension of meeting		
010317-010737	Chairman Mr TANG Ka-piu Admin	<p>The Administration responded that –</p> <p>(a) there were about 28 100 cross-boundary students studying in kindergartens, primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong in the 2015-2016 school year. Among them, about 90% studied in the North, Yuen Long and Tuen Mun districts; and</p> <p>(b) the tuition fee charged by minban schools in Shenzhen in the 2015-2016 school year ranged between 7,000 to 30,000 yuan per year.</p> <p>Mr TANG responded that there was a considerable gap in the tuition fee as told by the parents in the Mainland (which was as high as 70,000 – 80,000 yuan) and the figures reported at (b) and requested EDB to clarify the issue. The Administration advised that the fee mentioned in (b) was exclusive of fees for other services like hostel accommodation. It was not aware of any minban schools charging a tuition fee as high as 70,000 – 80,000 yuan.</p> <p>At the request of the Chairman and Mr TANG, the Administration agreed to provide information on the number of cross-boundary students broken-down by school level and locations of schools.</p>	Admin (paragraph 4(b) of the minutes)

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010738-011357	Chairman Admin	<p>The Chairman enquired whether the Administration had considered –</p> <p>(a) providing subvention for Hong Kong students studying in the Mainland; and</p> <p>(b) the setting-up of government-funded schools in Shenzhen for those Hong Kong students.</p> <p>The Administration advised that –</p> <p>(a) the provision of subvention for Hong Kong students studying outside Hong Kong involved wide policy implications. As the issue of cross-boundary students was a transient problem which would be alleviated after the 2018-2019 school year, the existing arrangements, including the facilitation measures for cross-boundary students and the arrangement of minban schools, were considered effective in dealing with the problem; and</p> <p>(b) the setting-up of government-funded schools in Shenzhen involved complicated issues like the regulatory regime and the level of subvention etc. In addition, there would be a problem on the sustainability of those schools after the transient problem was solved.</p>	
<i>Agenda item II – Any other business</i>			
011358-011424	Chairman	Closing remarks	