

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)492/17-18

(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/PL/WS

Panel on Welfare Services

Minutes of meeting
held on Tuesday, 24 October 2017, at 4:30 pm
in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex

Members present : Hon SHIU Ka-chun (Chairman)
Hon KWONG Chun-yu (Deputy Chairman)
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP
Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, SBS, MH, JP
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Hon KWOK Wai-keung, JP
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan
Hon POON Siu-ping, BBS, MH
Hon Alvin YEUNG
Hon Andrew WAN Siu-kin
Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing, MH
Hon YUNG Hoi-yan
Dr Hon Pierre CHAN
Hon LUK Chung-hung
Hon Kenneth LAU Ip-keung, BBS, MH, JP

Members absent : Hon CHU Hoi-dick
Dr Hon Junius HO Kwan-yiu, JP

Member attending : Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP

**Public Officers : Item I
attending**

Labour and Welfare Bureau

Dr LAW Chi-kwong, GBS, JP
Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Ms CHANG King-yiu, JP
Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Mr Caspar TSUI
Under Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Miss Leonia TAI, JP
Deputy Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare) 1

Mr Donald CHEN, JP
Deputy Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare) 2

Mr David LEUNG, JP
Commissioner for Rehabilitation

Ms Carol YIP, JP
Director of Social Welfare

Miss Cecilla LI
Deputy Director of Social Welfare (Administration)

Mr LAM Ka-tai, JP
Deputy Director of Social Welfare (Services)

Mr Esmond LEE, JP
Head, Working Family and Student Financial
Assistance Agency

Home Affairs Bureau

Mr Jack CHAN, JP
Under Secretary for Home Affairs

Ms Karyn CHAN
Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs (Civic
Affairs) 2

Miss Vinci CHAN
Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs (Civil
Affairs) 3

Ms Rebecca WAN
Chief Executive Officer (Community Care Fund)

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

Staff in attendance : Mr Roger CHUNG
Council Secretary (2) 4

Miss Alison HUI
Legislative Assistant (2) 4

Action

I. Briefing by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare and the Secretary for Home Affairs on the Chief Executive's 2017 Policy Address

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)35/17-18(01) to (02), CB(2)133/17-18(01), the 2017 Policy Address booklet and the 2017 Policy Agenda booklet]

At the invitation of the Chairman, Secretary for Labour and Welfare ("SLW") and Under Secretary for Home Affairs ("USHA") highlighted the major initiatives of the Labour and Welfare Bureau ("LWB") and the Home Affairs Bureau ("HAB") respectively, as set out in the 2017 Policy Address and the Administration's papers presented to the Panel.

Advocacy for cherishing the family

2. Mr KWOK Wai-keung considered the Family-Friendly Employers Award Scheme ("the Award Scheme") ineffective as not many companies and organizations had participated in the Award Scheme since its launch in 2009. Noting that the Administration would introduce a new category of grand award for family-friendly employers in the Award Scheme 2016-2017, he expressed concern about the effectiveness of the Award Scheme in advocating a pro-family environment. Mr KWOK enquired

whether there had been any changes in the policy on the promotion of family-friendly employment practices.

3. USHA advised that the Award Scheme had received overwhelming response and over 50% of companies and organizations had newly joined the Award Scheme in recent years. The Award Scheme 2015-2016 was successfully concluded in October 2016 with a total of 2 555 corporations, small and medium enterprises and organizations from different sectors being commended as family-friendly employers and involving about 520 000 employees. The new category was introduced with a view to encouraging more employers to continue the family-friendly employment practices. SLW supplemented that while HAB would organize programmes and activities to foster a pro-family culture, government bureaux and departments would continue to collaborate in promoting family-friendly employment practices in the community.

Building age-friendly communities

4. Noting that a total of nine districts had obtained the World Health Organization's "age-friendly community" accreditation, Mr KWOK Wai-keung enquired whether the Administration would take measures to assist the remaining districts in obtaining the accreditation. SLW responded that the Administration encouraged each district to implement age-friendly community projects at district level and obtain the accreditation.

Implementing the Guangdong Scheme and Fujian Scheme

5. Mr KWOK Wai-keung enquired about the progress of implementing the Fujian Scheme, and whether the Administration would consider providing the Old Age Living Allowance under the Guangdong Scheme and Fujian Scheme. SLW advised that the Fujian Scheme was expected to be implemented in the second quarter of 2018 at the earliest. The Administration had no plan to provide the Old Age Living Allowance for participants of the Guangdong Scheme and Fujian Scheme at the moment.

Manpower supply for the welfare sector

6. Mr LUK Chung-hung expressed concern about the importation of care workers to increase the overall manpower supply in residential care homes. Mr LUK enquired whether the Administration would also increase the rate of allowance under the Enhanced Bought Place Scheme,

so as to enable private residential care homes for the elderly to recruit frontline care staff more effectively.

7. Noting that the Administration planned to increase the salaries of frontline care workers and provide a total of 6 000 vouchers under the Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly ("the Pilot Scheme on CCS Voucher"), Mr LEUNG Che-cheung expressed concern about the manpower shortage of frontline care workers. He suggested that the salaries of care workers employed by service providers under the Pilot Scheme on CCS Voucher should also be increased by adjusting the service package values of the vouchers, with a view to addressing the needs of an ageing population.

8. SLW advised that the initiative of increasing the salaries of frontline care workers would also cover similar posts in service units of subsidized rehabilitation services as well as family and child welfare services. Meanwhile, service units under the Enhanced Bought Place Scheme, the Pilot Scheme on CCS Voucher and the Pilot Scheme on Residential Care Service Voucher for the Elderly might also be affected by such an initiative. The Social Welfare Department ("SWD") would study how to provide sufficient resources for handling the related issues.

9. Mr POON Siu-ping held the view that long working hours and low salary level were the major reasons for the manpower shortage of frontline care staff. Noting that the Administration would allow subsidized units of elderly and rehabilitation services greater flexibility in the importation of care workers, he expressed concern about local manpower supply for the welfare sector. Mr POON asked about the rationale in increasing the salaries of frontline care staff by two pay points.

10. SLW advised that the Administration had increased the salaries of physiotherapists, occupational therapists and nurses in elderly services in recent years. According to a survey conducted by The Hong Kong Council of Social Service, the increase of salaries was effective in lowering vacancy rates of these healthcare professionals. Given the vacancy rates of around 18% of personal care workers and home helpers, the Administration had made reference to such an increase to improve the salaries of frontline care staff by two pay points.

11. Mr Poon Siu-ping expressed concern about participation in and the way forward for the Navigation Scheme for Young Persons in Care Services. SLW responded that the Administration would continue to

encourage young persons to join the elderly and rehabilitation care services through the Scheme.

12. Referring to a family tragedy in Kwai Shing East Estate where two foreign domestic helpers were employed to take care of an elderly person, Mr Alvin YEUNG enquired whether the Administration had a comprehensive plan to take care of the physical, psychological, social and spiritual health of elderly persons. Mr YEUNG said that social workers in Taiwan were responsible for managing foreign domestic helpers who took care of elderly persons through a case management approach. He opined that the Administration should make reference to such a practice to develop managerial skills of and create a career path for local care workers. Remuneration of local care workers should also be improved and young persons should be encouraged to join the elderly long-term care sector. He expressed concern about the supply of residential places for care workers who were to be imported for working in subsidized service units.

13. SLW responded that the Administration had allocated additional resources in recent years to elderly centres and home care services teams to strengthen community support and care services for elderly persons and their carers. As announced in the 2017 Policy Agenda in October 2017, the Administration would further allocate additional resources to all subvented elderly centres and home care services teams in the territory to enhance outreaching services for supporting needy carers living in the community and for looking after frail elderly persons. SWD would discuss with service providers to examine any room for improvement in this regard. SLW further advised that subsidized units of elderly and rehabilitation services had to provide suitable residential places for imported care workers. Mr Alvin YEUNG opined that the Administration should review the effectiveness of the use of the resources allocated to care services for elderly persons over the years.

Enhancing dementia care

14. Mr LUK Chung-hung said that the Administration should provide more resources for addressing the needs of persons with dementia. Taking the view that it was not appropriate for younger persons with dementia to join the Dementia Community Support Scheme at district elderly community centres, Mr LUK suggested that support services for persons with dementia should be dedicated services and should therefore be segregated from elderly services. Expressing concern that some persons with dementia might not be moderately or severely impaired, he

asked whether the Administration would review the eligibility criteria for the Pilot Scheme on CCS Voucher.

15. SLW responded that SWD would soon complete the review of the Standardized Care Need Assessment Mechanism for Elderly Services ("SCNAMES"). It was expected that the revised SCNAMES could better assess the impairment levels of elderly persons with dementia. SLW further advised that the Administration would consider allowing more flexibility in supporting persons with dementia who were aged below 65. According to crude estimates, there were around 140 000 persons with dementia living in Hong Kong. Establishment of dedicated care centres for persons with dementia could not cope with such a huge population. Instead, the Administration would implement a series of new initiatives to strengthen care and support for persons with dementia at community level. For example, it would increase the number of social workers in neighbourhood elderly centres in the territory, with a view to facilitating early detection of elderly persons suspected of suffering from dementia.

16. Dr Helena WONG considered that the Administration should strengthen care and support for demented persons living in the community and their carers. She sought information about the allocation of additional resources for enhancing dementia care. SLW advised that details of the additional resources would be set out in the Budget. The manpower of professional staff would be increased for provision of enhanced care for dementia at community level.

Zero waiting time for pre-school rehabilitation services and community care services for elderly persons

17. Noting that the Chief Executive pledged in the Policy Address to reduce the waiting time to zero for pre-school rehabilitation services for children with special needs as well as for home and community care services for needy elderly persons, Mr CHAN Chi-chuen enquired how the target could be achieved by only providing an additional 1 000 vouchers under the Second Phase of the Pilot Scheme on CCS Voucher in 2018-2019. Expressing concern about the quantity and quality of the services provided under the Pilot Scheme, Mr CHAN opined that the Administration should review the usage of various services under the Pilot Scheme and formulate improvement plans.

18. SLW advised that the Administration's objective for elderly services was to enable senior citizens to age in place. The Administration would set a target of zero waiting time for home and community care

services for needy elderly persons despite difficulties in achieving the target. While manpower shortage would be one of the major obstacles in providing sufficient elderly services, the Administration would take measures to address the problem, e.g. improving the salaries of frontline care staff and considering the possibility of allowing subsidized service units greater flexibility in the importation of care workers. Meanwhile, SWD would continue to increase day care places for elderly persons under a multi-pronged approach.

19. Given that there were around 30 000 elderly persons waiting for subsidized residential care services, Dr Fernando CHEUNG considered that a total of 6 000 vouchers under the Pilot Scheme on CCS Voucher could not address the needs of elderly persons. Noting that 7 000 service places would be provided under the Pilot Scheme on On-site Pre-school Rehabilitation Services ("the OPRS Pilot Scheme"), Dr CHEUNG expressed concern about the great demand for the services of special child care centres.

20. SLW advised that the implementation of the OPRS Pilot Scheme had induced the demand for pre-school rehabilitation services from children studying in kindergartens. The demand of children with special needs for rehabilitation services would be studied during the formulation of a new Hong Kong Rehabilitation Programme Plan ("RPP"). Besides, children receiving services under the OPRS Pilot Scheme would choose to stay at kindergartens, and places of some early education and training centres might in return be deployed for other children with special needs.

21. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung said that the service package values of the vouchers under the Pilot Scheme on CCS Voucher were not adequate in meeting the needs of elderly persons. Mr LEUNG urged the Administration to allocate more resources for strengthening support for carers of elderly persons. The Chairman, Mr CHAN Chi-chuen, Dr Fernando CHEUNG and Mr LEUNG called on the Administration to provide a timetable for achieving the target of zero waiting time for pre-school rehabilitation services for children with special needs as well as for home and community care services for elderly persons.

22. SLW responded that it was expected that the ratio of the projected demand for residential care services places to community care services places would be improved from the existing ratio of around 3:1 to 1.5:1 within 15 years. In addition, the Administration had taken measures to enhance support services for elderly persons, e.g. improving the salaries of frontline care staff, promoting gerontechnology and reserving premises

for welfare facilities. It would take into consideration the effectiveness of such measures in deciding the way forward for achieving the target of zero waiting time for home and community care services for elderly persons.

Improving the Low-income Working Family Allowance Scheme

23. Dr Fernando CHEUNG called on the Administration to increase the rates of allowance for low-income working families with disabled members or children with special needs, and delink the Child Allowance from the working hour requirements. Dr CHEUNG opined that the Administration should improve its mechanism for collecting stakeholders' views and suggestions in facilitating the enhancement of welfare-related initiatives.

Child care services and support for children with special needs

24. Mr Michael TIEN held the view that school-based after-school care services were important to working parents as they did not have time to take their children to other after-school care centres. Mr TIEN suggested that LWB should discuss with the Education Bureau the collaboration with non-governmental organizations ("NGOs") to provide school-based after-school care services.

25. Dr Helena WONG took the view that the current provision of aided child care places in various districts was not adequate. She enquired how the Administration would increase aided child care places, and why the Administration planned to provide additional aided child care places in phases in four districts only. Director of Social Welfare ("DSW") advised that SWD had worked for a period of time to reserve sites for increasing the provision of child care places across the territory. The Administration had planned to provide 92 and 56 child care places in Kwun Tong and North District respectively in September 2018, 100 child care places in Shatin in March 2019 and 50 child care places in Kwai Tsing in the first quarter of 2020. In addition, the Administration had encouraged NGOs through the Special Scheme on Privately Owned Sites for Welfare Uses to provide more child care places.

26. Given an incident in which a child fell from height and died, Dr Helena WONG held the view that the Administration should increase the provision of child care service places in order to prevent the recurrence of similar incidents. She considered that the slow progress in making such an increase was due to shortages of land and manpower

resources. Dr WONG suggested that the Administration should communicate with the MTR Corporation Limited to explore reserving sites for child care services along major stations. SLW responded that the Administration noted members' views and would study the matter to identify scope for improvement. Dr WONG called on the Administration to examine the feasibility of this suggestion in the Consultancy Study on the Long-term Development of Child Care Services.

27. Dr Fernando CHEUNG said that a number of children aged below 18 who did not have medical needs were hospitalized in public hospitals due to lack of emergency residential child care service places. He expressed concern about the long waiting time for small group homes for mildly mentally handicapped children. Dr CHEUNG enquired whether the Administration would take measures to meet the demand for such places from children at risk, e.g. providing additional foster care places.

28. SLW advised that the Administration had been monitoring the demand for and utilization of various types of residential child care services as well as increasing service provision as necessary. DSW supplemented that 240 additional foster care places would be provided by phases commencing 2017-2018. SWD would introduce an extra incentive payment for foster parents who took care of children under the age of 3. Measures would be taken to encourage and recruit more suitable persons to become foster parents.

Government Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities

29. Noting that the Transport and Housing Bureau had undertaken to explore the possibility of including residents' services ("RS") in the Public Transport Fare Subsidy Scheme, Mr Michael TIEN called on LWB to include RS in the Government Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities ("the Fare Concession Scheme") as soon as possible.

30. SLW advised that the Public Transport Fare Subsidy Scheme set the line at \$400 in the monthly expenditure on public transport, with the Administration providing a subsidy amounting to 25% of the actual expenses in excess of this level, subject to a cap of \$300 a month. Regarding the Fare Concession Scheme, beneficiaries could travel on designated public transport modes at \$2 per trip and the Administration had to reimburse the differential fares of the trips to operators of the public transport. As fares of the trips were determined by operators, it

could be difficult for the Administration to control the amount of reimbursement for the Fare Concession Scheme. Besides, elderly persons might use public transport other than RS and red minibuses. The Administration had no plan to include these two modes of public transport at the moment. Mr Michael TIEN and Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung expressed disappointment about the Administration's reluctance to include RS in the Fare Concession Scheme.

Motions

31. Mr Michael TIEN moved the following motion:

"鑒於施政報告提出公共交通費用補貼計劃，運輸及房屋局承諾會就紅巴及邨巴能否納入計劃進行研究，因此，若邨巴能納入公共交通費用補貼計劃，本委員會促請勞工及福利局，應盡快把邨巴納入'政府長者及合資格殘疾人士公共交通票價優惠計劃'。"

(Translation)

"Given that the Policy Address proposed to introduce the Public Transport Fare Subsidy Scheme, the Transport and Housing Bureau has undertaken to explore the possibility of including red minibuses and residents' services ("RS") in the Scheme; as such, if RS can be included in the Public Transport Fare Subsidy Scheme, this Panel urges the Labour and Welfare Bureau to include RS in the Government Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities as soon as possible."

32. The Chairman put the motion to vote. All members present voted for the motion. The Chairman declared that the motion was carried.

33. Mr Michael TIEN moved another motion:

"鑒於2017年施政報告提出推出'放寬"課餘託管收費減免計劃"下低收入家庭入息上限及增加減免名額試驗計劃'，本委員會促請政府，研究將過往關愛基金項目'課餘託管試驗計劃'與現有教育局的'校本課後學習及支援計劃'整合，透過校本支援及與非政府機構合作，在全港的資助小學以及全港參與免費優質幼稚園教育計劃的半日制和全日制幼稚園推行託兒、功課輔導及個人成長活動三合一的課後支援。對象主要是領取綜援及全額/半額學生資助的學生，並可將特定名額撥予不屬上述類別，而學校認為有需要多加照顧的學生；服務時間是全年上課日子，由課後至晚上7/8

時。上述建議能幫助學生善用課後時間，得到適當照顧及指導，同時在職家長不必另行接送子女到其他託管中心，有更多時間參加全日培訓或投入全職工作，一舉兩得。”

(Translation)

"Given that the 2017 Policy Address proposed to launch the Pilot Scheme on Relaxing the Household Income Limit of the Fee-waiving Subsidy Scheme under the After School Care Programme for Low-income Families and Increasing Fee-waiving Subsidy Places, this Panel urges the Government to study the integration of the previous After-school Care Pilot Scheme under the Community Care Fund with the existing School-based After-school Learning and Support Programmes offered by the Education Bureau, so as to introduce, by means of school-based support and collaboration with non-governmental organizations, three-in-one after-school support comprising child care, homework guidance and personal growth activities to aided primary schools as well as half-day and whole-day kindergartens joining the Free Quality Kindergarten Education Scheme across the territory. The target beneficiaries are mainly students receiving Comprehensive Social Security Assistance and full/half level of financial assistance, and a specific quota can be allocated to students not falling into the aforesaid category but, in the school's opinion, in need of more care. The service hours are from after school to 7:00 pm or 8:00 pm on school days throughout the year. The aforesaid proposal can serve the dual purpose of helping students make good use of their time after school while receiving appropriate care and guidance, and allowing more time for working parents to attend full-day training or engage in full-time work as they do not need to otherwise take their children to other after-school care centres."

34. The Chairman put the motion to vote. All members present voted for the motion. The Chairman declared that the motion was carried.

Support services for divorced families

35. Ms YUNG Hoi-yan took the view that the existing manpower resources of Integrated Family Service Centres ("IFSCs") and Integrated Services Centres ("ISCs") could not address the needs of divorced families. She suggested that the Administration should set up one-stop service centres for divorced families to provide counselling services, and provide training for social workers who were supporting divorced

families. She sought information about the provision of additional manpower resources for IFSCs and ISCs as well as the Family and Child Protection Services Units. Ms YUNG called on the Administration to provide a timetable for reviewing and regularizing the Pilot Project on Children Contact Service.

36. DSW responded that the Administration would increase the number of social workers for family and child protection services to enhance the co-parenting support for divorced/separated parents and their children. Details of the additional manpower resources would be set out in the Budget. Besides, SWD would review the Pilot Project on Children Contact Service with a view to better addressing the needs of separated/divorced/divorcing parents and their children. SWD would collect stakeholders' views on the Pilot Project and evaluate its effectiveness for mapping out the way forward (e.g. setting up more parent-child contact centres if considered necessary). SLW supplemented that to his understanding, many social workers of IFSCs and ISCs had received training on counselling services.

37. Mr LEUNG Che-cheung held the view that one-stop service centres for divorced families should be set up to provide emotional support, legal assistance and mediation service for separated and divorcing families. He called on the Administration to take effective measures to assist divorced mothers in collecting maintenance payment, e.g. setting up a maintenance board.

38. SLW advised that family mediation service had been developed in Hong Kong for a period of time. Social workers had received relevant training to enrich their knowledge in and understanding of providing mediation service for divorcing and separated families. USHA responded that the Administration was committed to enhancing the effectiveness of the system of collection of maintenance payments and enforcement of maintenance orders. The Administration had carefully examined the suggestion of setting up a maintenance board before and considered that the suggestion would unlikely bring, to either the maintenance payees or taxpayers, any significant benefits over and above those which could be achieved by improving the existing system. Measures taken to improve the system of maintenance included: (i) relaxing the requirement for the court to make Attachment of Income Orders to make the issuance procedure more flexible; (ii) imposing interest or even surcharge against defaulting maintenance payers; (iii) upon request from legal professionals who could provide sufficient information, allowing designated government departments (e.g. Immigration Department and Inland

Revenue Department) to disclose the addresses of maintenance payers against whom legal actions would be taken to sue for arrears in maintenance free-of-charge; and (iv) launching publicity and education programmes to strengthen public understanding of the responsibilities of maintenance payers, rights of maintenance payees and services available to them when they were unable to receive maintenance payments. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung considered that the measures taken were not effective in improving the system of maintenance.

(The Deputy Chairman took the chair at this juncture in the absence of the Chairman.)

Residential care homes for persons with disabilities issued with certificate of exemption

39. Noting that the Administration aimed to have all residential care homes for persons with disabilities ("RCHDs") issued with certificate of exemption ("CoE") to fully comply with the licensing requirements within three years after an incident which revealed the quality problem of private RCHDs (commonly known as the "Bridge of Rehabilitation Company" incident), the Deputy Chairman enquired when all RCHDs with CoE would be issued with licences. He expressed concern about the threshold for granting the licences and suggested that the Administration should regularly report the progress to the Panel on Welfare Services.

40. DSW advised that SWD had set up a working group to review the Residential Care Homes (Persons with Disabilities) Ordinance (Cap. 613) and the related Code of Practice. It was expected that some concrete recommendations on legislative amendments and revising the Code of Practice would be drawn up in two years. SWD had increased the transparency of the progress of the working group by publishing relevant information on the internet. Besides, SWD had put in place a host of facilitating measures to assist RCHDs in speeding up the necessary improvement works. These measures included increasing the grant to 90% of the recognized cost of the improvement works under the Lotteries Fund for private RCHDs and streamlining the workflow of engaging authorized persons for the provision of technical support. In 2017, over 30% of RCHDs had been issued with licences. It was estimated that over 70% of RCHDs would be able to meet the licensing requirements in 2018 and all RCHDs would be issued with licences by late 2019.

Formulating a new Hong Kong Rehabilitation Programme Plan

41. Dr Fernando CHEUNG said that the Administration had planned for the provision of long-term care services on the basis of age and provided services for needy persons separately through the elderly services and rehabilitation services. As such, needy persons had to face two sets of assessment mechanisms and services. He opined that given Hong Kong's ageing population, the Administration should consider allocating additional resources to meet the great demand for long-term care services and establishing a social insurance scheme for elderly persons and persons with disabilities. Dr CHEUNG suggested that the new RPP should be renamed as service planning for persons with disabilities. In formulating the new RPP, the Administration should consider providing support services for persons with disabilities beyond the age of 60.

42. SLW responded that LWB and SWD were mindful of the needs of ageing users of rehabilitation services at different stages of life. SWD would continue to coordinate the provision of appropriate services by rehabilitation service organizations to meet the needs of ageing persons with disabilities. In addition, the Elderly Services Programme Plan ("ESPP") had examined issues relating to the financing model of long-term care services. The Administration would consider how to implement the relevant recommendations.

Planning for welfare-related initiatives

43. Dr Helena WONG considered that the Administration did not have a good planning for its welfare-related initiatives in relation to allocation of premises, manpower and resources. She suggested that the Administration should conduct more public consultation exercises, and review the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines ("HKPSG") to reserve premises for various welfare facilities.

44. SLW advised that as it was difficult for the Administration to formulate a comprehensive plan covering various welfare-related initiatives in one go, the Administration would instead formulate plans for specific areas progressively. For example, ESPP, RPP and the Consultancy Study on the Long-term Development of Child Care Services were to lay the foundation for the future development and planning of relevant services. In addition, the Administration would consider how to implement the ESPP's recommendation in reinstating the population-based planning ratios for elderly services in HKPSG. Having

regard to the recommendations of the new RPP and the findings of the Consultancy Study being conducted, LWB and SWD would collate the demand and supply information concerning relevant services to facilitate the planning work.

Promoting employment of persons with disabilities

45. Dr Fernando CHEUNG said that persons with disabilities having employment difficulties who were employed under the Work Orientation and Placement Scheme could only get employed when their employers were receiving the allowance under the Scheme. To his understanding, around 60% of the graduated students from the Shine Skills Centre could not continue their employment if their employers were no longer receiving the allowance. He expressed concern about the effectiveness of the Scheme in encouraging employers to hire persons with disabilities having employment difficulties. Dr CHEUNG suggested that in awarding outsourced service contracts, the Administration should accord priority to NGOs which hired persons with disabilities having employment difficulties. SLW advised that the Administration took note of members' concerns and would review if there was any room for improvement in this regard.

Overnight shelter places for street sleepers

46. Noting that the number of overnight shelter places for street sleepers to be provided at the reprovisioned street sleepers' services units in Yau Ma Tei would be 70, Dr Helena WONG suggested that the Administration should take the opportunity to provide more such shelter places in the reprovisioned building and allocate more resources to NGOs operating urban hostels for single persons and urban emergency shelters. SLW advised that the utilization rate of such shelter places remained steady at about 80%-90%. The Administration would monitor the situation closely and deploy additional resources to meet the demand if necessary.

II. Any other business

47. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 6:23 pm.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
8 December 2017