

**Panel on Welfare Services****Subcommittee on Issues Relating to the Silver Age Card****List of items for discussion**

<b>Items for discussion</b>	<b>Information for reference</b>	<b>Timing and arrangements for discussion</b>
(a) Proposal of introducing "Silver Age Card" for older persons aged 60 to 64	<p>The Social Welfare Department ("SWD") launched the Senior Citizen Card Scheme in 1994 to issue Senior Citizen Cards to Hong Kong residents aged 65 or above as a generally recognized proof of age, allowing cardholders to enjoy conveniently the concessions, discounts and priority services offered by government departments, public organizations and private companies.</p> <p>The Chief Executive, together with the Secretary for Labour and Welfare ("SLW") and Secretary for Transport and Housing, announced on 14 January 2020 a package of new livelihood initiative, which included the lowering of the eligible age of the Government Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities ("the Transport Fare Concession Scheme") from 65 to 60 and the studying of the possibility of issuing a personalized octopus card to all silver-age or elderly persons who were eligible for the Transport Fare Concession Scheme, which would also serve as SWD's Senior Citizen Card.</p>	This item has been discussed at the meeting on 26 February 2021.

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	<p>The Administration announced on 12 January 2021 the final report by the consultant to review the Transport Fare Concession Scheme ("the Consultant Report") [LC Paper No. CB(2)651/20-21(01)] and the implementation of the enhancement and anti-abuse measures under the Transport Fare Concession Scheme which included implementing the lowering of the eligible age on the strict condition that persons aged 60 to 64 had to apply for and use tailor-made Personalized Octopus Cards ("P-Cards") with photo and age eligibility as a prerequisite for benefitting from the concessionary fare; and extending the mandatory requirement of using P-Cards to all existing beneficiaries aged 65 and above in the following two years upon completion of the issue of P-Cards to new beneficiaries. The Administration estimated that upon confirmation of the technical specifications for P-Cards, the issue of P-Cards to some 600 000 new beneficiaries aged 60 to 64 could be completed within 13 months.</p> <p>According to the Consultant Report, it is estimated that it would take about 18 months to complete the issuing of P-Cards for the 1.3 million beneficiaries aged 65 or above if additional efforts are made by the Octopus Cards Limited and its contractors. If it is intended to shorten the implementation period, the Consultant suggests that the Administration could review the programme closer to the time to see if certain processes could be carried out in</p>	

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	<p>parallel, or resources could be increased to enhance the processing capacity. That said, the Consultant notes that the time required for the core system modification tasks at the Octopus Cards Limited and the public transport operators may be difficult to shorten. The above apart, the Consultant suggests that the merging of the functions of P-Card with the Senior Citizen Card should be considered seriously if such opportunity arises, as this would not only serve the dual purpose as a payment card and an identification for various concessions (including those under the Transport Fare Concession Scheme), but also facilitate other operations should the opportunities to target the benefits to specific age groups arise in the future.</p>	
(b) Existing welfare measures applicable to persons aged 60 to 64	<p>The Administration has set out in its paper for item (a) above [LC Paper No. CB(2)811/20-21(01)] the labour and welfare measures applicable to persons aged 60 to 64 as well as the enhancements to the Transport Fare Concession Scheme.</p>	<p>Members may consider whether this item needs to be discussed at future meetings.</p>
(c) The latest employment and retirement situation of persons aged 60 to 64 in Hong Kong and the relevant support measures	<p>The Census and Statistics Department ("C&amp;SD") conducts the General Household Survey regularly, which provides, among others, information on labour force, employment, unemployment and underemployment. The Quarterly Report on General Household Survey for the fourth quarter of 2020 has been published in</p>	<p>This item will be discussed at the meeting on 13 April 2021. At the suggestion of the Labour and Welfare Bureau ("LWB"), the Office of the Government Economist ("OGE") and C&amp;SD</p>

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	end-February 2021.	should also be invited to attend the discussion. <sup>#</sup>
(d) Progress to incorporate persons aged 60 to 64 under the Transport Fare Concession Scheme	According to the paper provided by the Administration for item (a) above [LC Paper No. CB(2)811/20-21(01)], it is estimated that this enhancement measure would be implemented progressively in the first quarter of 2022.	At the meeting between the Chairman of the Subcommittee and SLW on 12 March 2021 to discuss the work plan of the Subcommittee, SLW advised that the progress could be reported at the Subcommittee meeting in May 2021.
(e) Application of technology to facilitate older persons to integrate into the community and age in place	According to the suggestions of members, this subject covers the introduction of "Silver Age Card" under item (a) above to enable persons aged 60 to 64 to use a smart card with multi-applications to enjoy various public services and concessions, and the facilitation of the application of gerontechnology in Hong Kong.	Members may consider discussing this item at the meeting in May 2021.
(f) Poverty situation of persons aged 60 to 64 in Hong Kong and measures to assist these persons	The Hong Kong Poverty Situation Report 2019 was released in December 2020. Adopting the analytical framework of the poverty line endorsed by the Commission on Poverty, OGE in collaboration with C&SD updated and analyzed the poverty statistics in the Report using data from the General Household Survey by C&SD as the basis.	Members may consider discussing this item at the meeting in June 2021 and inviting also the Human Resources Planning and Poverty Co-ordination Unit, OGE and C&SD to attend the discussion. <sup>#</sup>

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(g) Health status and average healthcare expenditure of persons aged 60 to 64 in Hong Kong	The Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health ("DH") commenced the territory-wide Population Health Survey 2020 in November 2020, which is expected to last for 15 months, to understand the up-to-date health status of the Hong Kong population. The last round of the Survey was conducted in 2014-2015. This apart, the service data of the Hospital Authority ("HA") may serve as a reference.	Members may consider discussing this item at the meeting in June 2021 and inviting also DH and HA to attend the discussion. <sup>#</sup>
(h) Consumption patterns of persons aged 60 to 64 in Hong Kong and business opportunity of the silver age market	C&SD commenced the 2019-2020 Household Expenditure Survey in September 2019 to collect up-to-date information on the expenditure patterns of households in Hong Kong. It was estimated at the time that results would be released in around mid-2021. The last round of the Survey was conducted in 2014-2015.	Members may consider discussing this item at the meeting in July 2021 and inviting also C&SD to attend the discussion. <sup>#</sup>

<sup>#</sup> Taking into consideration that the purpose for the Subcommittee to study the issue is to understand the demographics of persons aged 60 to 64 in order to explore how to promote the welfare benefits for these persons and that the corresponding policy bureau of the Subcommittee is LWB, LWB will be invited to attend the discussion and coordinate the provision of meeting paper and attendance of different parties.