

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)426/20-21
(These minutes have been
cleared with the Chairman)

Ref : CB2/PL/WS

Panel on Welfare Services

Minutes of special meeting
held on Tuesday, 3 November 2020, at 11:00 am
in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex

Members present : Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, SBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon YIU Si-wing, BBS (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, GBS, JP
Prof Hon Joseph LEE Kok-long, SBS, JP
Hon WONG Ting-kwong, GBS, JP
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, SBS, JP
Hon CHAN Hak-kan, BBS, JP
Hon Claudia MO
Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP
Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, SBS, JP
Hon WU Chi-wai, MH
Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP
Hon CHAN Han-pan, BBS, JP
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, SBS, MH, JP
Hon Kenneth LEUNG
Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen, BBS, JP
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Hon KWOK Wai-keung, JP
Hon Christopher CHEUNG Wah-fung, SBS, JP
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan
Hon IP Kin-yuen
Hon Elizabeth QUAT, BBS, JP
Hon Martin LIAO Cheung-kong, GBS, JP
Hon POON Siu-ping, BBS, MH
Hon Alvin YEUNG
Hon Andrew WAN Siu-kin

Hon LAM Cheuk-ting
Hon Holden CHOW Ho-ding
Hon SHIU Ka-chun
Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing, MH
Hon YUNG Hoi-yan, JP
Hon CHAN Chun-ying, JP
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-kwan, JP
Hon HUI Chi-fung
Hon LUK Chung-hung, JP
Hon LAU Kwok-fan, MH
Hon Kenneth LAU Ip-keung, BBS, MH, JP
Dr Hon CHENG Chung-tai
Hon KWONG Chun-yu
Hon Jeremy TAM Man-ho
Hon Vincent CHENG Wing-shun, MH, JP

**Members
absent** : Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon Dennis KWOK Wing-hang
Dr Hon Pierre CHAN

[According to the announcement made by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government on 11 November 2020 pursuant to the Decision of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress on Issues Relating to the Qualification of the Members of the Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Kenneth LEUNG, KWOK Ka-ki, Dennis KWOK Wing-hang and Alvin YEUNG were disqualified from being a member of Legislative Council on 30 July 2020.]

**Clerk in
attendance** : Miss Lilian MOK
Chief Council Secretary (2) 4

**Staff in
attendance** : Miss Flora TAI
Assistant Secretary General 2

Ms Catherina YU
Senior Council Secretary (2) 4

Mr Roger CHUNG
Council Secretary (2) 4

Miss Alison HUI
Legislative Assistant (2) 4

Miss Natalie WU
Clerical Assistant (2) 4

Action

I. Election of Chairman and Deputy Chairman for the 2020-2021 session

[Appendices III and IV to LC Paper No. CB(2)10/20-21]

Election of Chairman

Mr KWONG Chun-yu, the incumbent Chairman, presided over the election of the Chairman of the Panel for the 2020-2021 session. He recapitulated that at the special meeting on 23 October 2020, Dr CHIANG Lai-wan and Mr SHIU Ka-chun had been validly nominated for the chairmanship of the Panel and the two candidates had presented their election forums and made collective responses to the questions raised by members in the election forum.

2. At the invitation of Mr KWONG Chun-yu, Dr CHIANG Lai-wan and Mr SHIU Ka-chun made their concluding remarks. Mr KWONG Chun-yu then announced a vote by secret ballot. The result of the vote was that 25 members voted for Dr CHIANG Lai-wan and 15 members voted for Mr SHIU Ka-chun. Mr KWONG Chun-yu declared Dr CHIANG Lai-wan elected as the Chairman of the Panel for the 2020-2021 session. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan then took the chair.

Election of Deputy Chairman

3. The Chairman called for nominations for the deputy chairmanship of the Panel for the 2020-2021 session.

4. Mr YIU Si-wing was nominated by Mr CHAN Chun-ying and the nomination was seconded by Mr LEUNG Che-cheung. Mr YIU Si-wing accepted the nomination.

5. Mr SHIU Ka-chun was nominated by Mr WU Chi-wai and the nomination was seconded by Mr Kenneth LEUNG. Mr SHIU Ka-chun accepted the nomination.

6. There being no further nomination, the Chairman announced a vote by secret ballot. The result of the vote was that 25 members voted for Mr YIU Si-wing and 17 members voted for Mr SHIU Ka-chun. The Chairman declared Mr YIU Si-wing elected as the Deputy Chairman

of the Panel for the 2020-2021 session.

II. Schedule of meetings for the 2020-2021 session

7. Members agreed that the Panel would hold its regular meeting on the second Monday of each month at 10:45 am. Members also agreed that the next regular meeting of the Panel be scheduled for 23 November 2020 and the regular meetings in April and June 2021 be rescheduled for 19 April and 21 June 2021 respectively.

(Post-meeting note: The schedule of the regular meetings of the Panel for the 2020-2021 session was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(2)141/20-21 on 3 November 2020.)

III. Items for discussion at the next meeting

[Appendices V and VI to LC Paper No. CB(2)10/20-21 and LC Paper Nos. CB(2)144/20-21(01) to (03)]

8. Members noted the following letters from members which were tabled at the meeting:

- (a) Letter dated 14 October 2020 from Dr Fernando CHEUNG proposing the appointment of a joint subcommittee under the Panel on Health Services and Panel on Welfare Services to study anti-epidemic policies relating to residential care homes and long-term care services (LC Paper No. CB(2)144/20-21(01));

(Post-meeting note: While the Panel on Health Services, at its meeting on 13 November 2020, considered it not necessary to appoint the above joint subcommittee, members agreed to follow up the infection control measures for residential homes when measures for the prevention and control of Coronavirus Disease 2019 ("COVID-19") were discussed. Against this background, the Chairman directed that Dr CHEUNG's proposal would not be placed on the agenda for the next Panel meeting on 23 November 2020.)

- (b) Letter dated 21 October 2020 from Mr LEUNG Che-cheung concerning the initiative to expand the Government Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities to cover persons aged

between 60 and 64 (LC Paper No. CB(2)144/20-21(02)); and

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's response to Mr LEUNG's letter was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(2)257/20-21(01) on 12 November 2020.)

- (c) Letter dated 27 October 2020 from Dr Fernando CHEUNG concerning the Administration's proposal of introducing legislative amendments to the Residential Care Homes (Elderly Persons) Ordinance (Cap. 459), the Residential Care Homes (Persons with Disabilities) Ordinance (Cap. 613) and the relevant subsidiary legislation (LC Paper No. CB(2)144/20-21(03)).

Items proposed for discussion at the regular meeting on 23 November 2020

9. Members agreed to discuss "Annual adjustment of social security payment rates under the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme ("the CSSA Scheme") and the Social Security Allowance Scheme, and issues relating to rent allowance under the CSSA Scheme" proposed by the Administration.

Items proposed for discussion in the 2020-2021 session

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

10. Mr LEUNG Che-cheung, Ms Alice MAK and Ms Elizabeth QUAT requested the Administration to brief members as early as possible on the implementation timetable for the initiative to expand the Government Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities to cover persons aged between 60 and 64.

Support for carers

11. Further to the special meeting held on 23 September 2020 to receive views of relevant deputations/individuals on "Support for carers and provision of residential care services for persons with disabilities", Ms Elizabeth QUAT requested the Administration to update the Panel on how it would enhance the support for carers and increase the provision of residential care services ("RCS") for persons with disabilities to address their needs for care and training.

12. Dr Helena WONG proposed that the Panel should discuss with the Administration the levels of allowances under the Pilot Scheme on Living Allowance for Low-income Carers of Persons with Disabilities and the Pilot Scheme on Living Allowance for Carers of Elderly Persons from Low-income Families.

(Post-meeting note: With the concurrence of the Chairman, the item entitled "Study of support for carers" subsequently proposed by the Administration would be discussed at the meeting on 23 November 2020.)

Services for elderly persons and persons with disabilities

13. Mr LEUNG Che-cheung said that according to the remarks made by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare ("SLW") at a recent radio programme, the Administration intended to encourage private residential care homes for the elderly ("RCHEs") to expand the provision of RCS for elderly persons substantially so as to address the serious shortage of RCS. Pointing out that the ratio of RCS places in private RCHEs to those in subsidized RCHEs was 6:4 and the Panel had been urging the Administration to improve the said ratio by providing more subsidized RCS places, he requested SLW to explain to members the rationale for increasing the provision of RCS by private RCHEs. Dr Fernando CHEUNG and Dr Helena WONG were also concerned about the provision of RCS in the community.

14. In the light of the rapid ageing population and growing demand for various types of elderly services, Dr Helena WONG suggested that the Administration should brief the Panel on the measures to enhance community care and support services for the elderly. Mr Wilson OR proposed that the Panel should discuss the effectiveness of the Pilot Scheme on Residential Care Service Voucher for the Elderly. Dr Fernando CHEUNG further suggested that the Panel should discuss the provision of RCS, day care and home care services for the elderly and visiting arrangements of RCHEs during the COVID-19 outbreak.

15. Noting that the Working Group on the Review of Ordinances and Codes of Practice for Residential Care Homes had submitted its recommendations to the Labour and Welfare Bureau ("LWB") to enhance the quality of service of residential care homes, Dr Fernando CHEUNG urged the Administration to brief the Panel as early as practicable on its proposed amendments to the Residential Care Homes (Elderly Persons) Ordinance (Cap. 459), the Residential Care Homes (Persons with Disabilities) Ordinance (Cap. 613) and the relevant subsidiary legislation.

16. Mr SHIU Ka-chun proposed that the Panel should discuss the Administration's proposal of relaxing the requirement stipulated in the Residential Care Homes (Elderly Persons) Regulation (Cap. 459A) that no part of an RCHE should be situated at a height more than 24 metres above the ground floor in order to facilitate the setting up of more private RCHEs.

Youth and children services

17. Dr Helena WONG suggested that the Panel should discuss the provision of child care services including the Neighbourhood Support Child Care Project, the progress of purchasing premises for child care services and the number of child care service places to be provided in new public housing developments on "Government, Institution or Community" sites.

18. Mr Wilson OR suggested that support for youth and children should be discussed.

Financial assistance for the needy

19. Ms Alice MAK suggested that given the worsening unemployment situation, the Panel should discuss the Social Welfare Department ("SWD")'s manpower and processing time for applications for the CSSA Scheme and the working hour requirements for the Working Family Allowance Scheme. Mr Andrew WAN proposed that the Panel should discuss issues relating to unemployment assistance.

Social welfare planning and administration

20. Mr Wilson OR proposed that the Panel should discuss the provision of social welfare facilities in new development areas as the standards and guidelines for their provision specified in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines failed to meet the needs for welfare services in these areas. He further requested the Administration to update the Panel on the progress of building age-friendly community and disabled-friendly community.

21. Expressing concern about the use of the Lotteries Fund ("LF") for purposes other than financing social welfare services, Mr SHIU Ka-chun suggested that the use of LF be discussed.

22. Mr SHIU Ka-chun noted that the social workers newly recruited by SWD received salary at the starting pay point of his or her rank irrespective of whether he or she possessed recognized experience relevant to requirements. He considered that the Panel should discuss the remuneration of social workers in order to maintain the quality of new recruits and staff morale.

Closing remarks

23. The Chairman said that members who had any proposed items for discussion by the Panel in the 2020-2021 session could provide their views in writing. She and the Deputy Chairman would follow up the issues suggested by members when they met with SLW and the Secretary for Home Affairs to discuss the work plan of the Panel for the 2020-2021 session.

(Post-meeting note: Informal meetings on the work plan of the Panel for the 2020-2021 session with SLW and the Under Secretary for Home Affairs were respectively held on 12 and 19 November 2020. In response to the Chairman's and Deputy Chairman's request, LWB and the Secretariat would review the "List of outstanding items for discussion by the Panel in the 2020-2021 session" and the items therein would be re-categorized based on their key contents with a view to facilitating members' discussion.)

IV. Any other business

24. Members noted that the pilot scheme to provide simultaneous sign language interpretation service at meetings of the Panel would continue in the 2020-2021 session.

25. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 11:38 am.