

Minutes of the Ninth Meeting of the
Social Welfare Committee
under Eastern District Council

Date: 10 June 2025 (Tuesday)
Time: 2:30 pm
Venue: Eastern District Council Conference Room

Present

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| Mr TING Kong-ho, Eddie, MH | Mr LAM Wing-shing | Ms TSANG Cheuk-yi |
| Mr TING Wong, Kacee | Mr LAM Wing-cheung | Ms CHIK Kit-ling, Elaine |
| Mr WONG Chi-chung | Mr CHAU Chi-yan, Benny | Mr CHENG Chi-sing, MH |
| Ms HO Sau-yin, Zareenah (Chairlady) | Ms LIN Cai-ying | Ms LAU Suk-yin |
| Mr YUEN Kin-chung, Kenny | Mr HUNG Chi-kit | Ms LAU Dana Sing-she |
| Ms LI Lee | Mr HUNG Lin-cham, MH, JP | Mr LAU Hing-yeung, MH |
| Ms NG Ching-ching | Mr HUNG Chiu-kwan | Mr LAI Nuen-san |
| Ms LEE Ching-har (Vice-chairlady) | Mr KWOK Ho-king, Calvin | Mr LU Xiaofeng, Anthony |
| Mr HO Ngai-kam, Stanley | Mr KWOK Wing-kin | Mr CHEUNG Man-sung (Co-opted Member) |
| Mr LAM Sum-lim, MH | Mr CHAN Hoi-wing, Joseph | Ms TSOI Ka-yu (Co-opted Member) |

In Regular Attendance (Government Representatives)

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| Mr FU Yiu-nam, Daniel | Assistant District Officer (Eastern) ² , Eastern District Office |
| Miss MA Siu-yee | Senior Executive Officer (District Council), Eastern District Office |
| Miss NGAI Ka-man, Carman | Senior Liaison Officer (4), Eastern District Office |
| Ms TSANG Yim-ting | Social Work Officer (Planning & Co-ordinating) (Eastern/Wan Chai) ¹ , Social Welfare Department |

In Attendance by Invitation (Representatives from the Government)

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| Ms SIU Kin-heung, Mabel | Social Welfare Officer (Eastern/Wan Chai), Social Welfare Department |
| Dr CHIANG Chi-lin | Senior Medical and Health Officer (Visiting Health Team), Department of Health |
| Dr LEUNG Lai-kwan, Queenie | Medical and Health Officer (Emergency Preparedness and District Relations) ² , Department of Health |
| Mr Jonathan CHAN | Cluster Director (IT/IS), Hong Kong East Cluster / Deputy Chief of Service (Medicine), Pamela Youde Nethersole |

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| Mr CHING Wai-kuen | Eastern Hospital, Hospital Authority |
| Ms Loletta SO | Director (Strategy and Planning), Hospital Authority Cluster Chief Executive, Hong Kong East Cluster, Hospital Authority |
| Mr Axel SIU | Chief of Service (Accident & Emergency), Ruttonjee and Tang Shiu Kin Hospitals / Deputising Chief of Service (Accident & Emergency), Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital, Hospital Authority |
| Ms Michelle PANG | Public Affairs Officer, Hong Kong East Cluster, Hospital Authority |
| Ms CHAN Wai-kit, Vicky | Senior Manager (District Health Centre) A, Primary Healthcare Commission |
| Mr CHAN Lok-wai | Senior School Development Officer (HKE), Education Bureau |
| Ms MA Wai-yin, Eva | Labour Officer (Employment Services)(North Point), Labour Department |
| Mr CHOW Kwok-chu, Tony | Assistant Police Community Relations Officer, Eastern District, Hong Kong Police Force |
| Mr KWOK Wai-man | Neighbourhood Police Co-ordinator, Eastern District, Hong Kong Police Force |

Secretary

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| Ms NG Sze-chung, May | Executive Officer I (District Council)3, Eastern District Office |
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Opening Remarks

The Chairlady welcomed all Members and representatives from the government bureau, relevant departments, and organisations to the meeting.

Agenda 1. Confirmation of the Draft Minutes of the 8th Meeting of Social Welfare Committee (SWC)

2. The above draft minutes were confirmed by the SWC without amendment.

Agenda 2. Concerns about Ageing Population in Eastern District
(SWC Paper No. 6/2025)

3. The Chairlady welcomed the representatives of the Social Welfare Department (SWD), Department of Health (DH), Hospital Authority (HA), Primary Healthcare Commission (PHC Commission) and Labour Department (LD) to the meeting.

4. A Member briefed the meeting on Paper No. 6/2025.

5. Members expressed appreciation for the detailed written replies from various departments and organisations, and their views and enquiries about the agenda item were summarised as follows:

- (a) Members enquired about the publicity channels and the number of beneficiaries of the Elderly Health Care Voucher Pilot Reward Scheme (“Pilot Reward Scheme”);
- (b) Members enquired whether participants of the Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (“Re-employment Scheme”) would remain working in the matched industries after receiving the re-employment allowance;
- (c) Members proposed strengthening inter-departmental collaboration to review the accessibility facilities available in the vicinity of elderly homes currently participating in the Enhanced Bought Place Scheme;
- (d) Members suggested the Government refer to and explore the introduction of smart home safety devices for the elderly commonly used in the Mainland, such as health monitoring and activity detection devices;
- (e) Members hoped that medical institutions in Fujian Province could be included in the Elderly Health Care Voucher Greater Bay Area Pilot Scheme;
- (f) Members proposed strengthening the cooperation between the District Health Centre Express (DHCE) and the District Services & Community Care Teams (Care Teams);

Action

- (g) Members suggested enhancing the introductory video on Woman Health Service at the Women Wellness Satellite in Chai Wan;
- (h) Members expressed concern about the mental health services for the elderly and cases of singleton elders being found deceased in their homes;
- (i) Members urged relevant departments to formulate long-term plans to address the severe ageing population in the Eastern District, and to adjust and enhance community and healthcare resources; and
- (j) Members proposed developing social welfare facilities catering to the needs of the elderly to tackle the tremendous challenges brought by ageing population.

6. The representatives of the departments and organisations noted Members' views and suggestions, and responded as follows:

SWD

- (a) The SWD had been supporting elderly persons and their carers in the district through the Residential Care Service Voucher Scheme for the Elderly and the Community Care Service Voucher Scheme for the Elderly;
- (b) The SWD would visit families of singleton and doubleton elderly together with the Care Teams from time to time and assist those in need to apply for the installation of "Safety Bells"; and
- (c) The SWD would allocate resources based on the proportion of elderly population in the district.

DH

- (d) The DH had been publicising the Elderly Health Care Voucher Scheme through the dedicated website, press releases, social media, etc., and would continue to publicise the Pilot Reward Scheme. The DH added that the scope of coverage of the Elderly Health Care Voucher Greater Bay Area Pilot Scheme was determined by the Health Bureau; and
- (e) Throughout the years, in addition to organising talks and promotional

Action

activities for the elderly with the District Elderly Community Centres (DECCs), Neighbourhood Elderly Centres (NECs) and Social Centres for the Elderly under the SWD, the DH had also been providing training courses for staff of elderly homes and volunteers of District Support Centres for Persons with Disabilities and the Care Teams as appropriate, with a view to consolidating their nursing knowledge and expertise.

(Post-meeting note: The DH also publicised through broadcasting announcements of public interest (APIs) on television and radio; displaying advertisements on public transport; broadcasting APIs and distributing leaflets at Home Affairs Enquiry Centres; and disseminating leaflets at DECCs, NECs, hospitals and clinics under the HA, estate management offices, etc. The DH also mobilised its Visiting Health Teams to organise health talks for the elderly and members of the Senior Police Call in various districts to promote the Pilot Reward Scheme.

A total of 788 975 elderly persons had received rewards under the Pilot Reward Scheme since its launch on 13 November 2023 to 31 December 2024.)

PHC Commission

- (f) The Eastern DHCE had striven to collaborate with the Care Teams in promoting primary healthcare services; and
- (g) The PHC Commission stated that the Pilot Reward Scheme encouraged elderly persons to use the health care vouchers, and that the elderly could also use these vouchers to pay for the relevant expenses when receiving primary healthcare services provided by the District Health Centres and DHCEs.

HA

- (h) Regarding mental health services for the elderly, the HA provided hospitalisation and psychogeriatric outreach services for the elderly, and would refer patients in need to participate in the Dementia Community Support Scheme, with a view of achieving the goal of “Ageing in Place”; and
- (i) The HA would endeavour to understand and support the care needs of terminally ill patients who were unwilling to be hospitalised, and strive to strengthen the care services at the community level through medical-

Action

social collaboration, thereby providing appropriate support services for elderly persons with mild or moderate dementia in the community to help stabilise their condition and reduce the need for frequent hospital visits.

LD

- (j) The three-year “Re-employment Scheme” was well received, with preliminary observations indicating that most participants aimed at working continuously for 12 months in order to receive the second-phase allowance.

SWD/DH/HA/PHC
Commission/LD

- 7. After discussion, the agenda item would be followed up on upon further progress.

Agenda 3. Concern over the Merger of the Hong Kong East and Hong Kong West Hospital Clusters **(SWC Paper No. 7/2025)**

- 8. The Chairlady welcomed the representatives of the HA to the meeting.
- 9. A Member briefed the meeting on Paper No. 7/2025.
- 10. The views of Members about the agenda item were summarised as follows:
 - (a) Members opined that the HA had only announced the framework for the merger of the Hong Kong East Cluster and Hong Kong West Cluster (cluster merger), but had not explained the specific details, causing concern among many residents of the Eastern District;
 - (b) Residents’ concerns included:
 - (i) The need to travel long distances across districts to Queen Mary Hospital for treatment, which might cause patients with stroke and myocardial infarction to miss the prime time for treatment;
 - (ii) The concentration of specialists would reduce the emergency response capacity of the Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital (PYNEH) and increase waiting times for specialist appointments;
 - (iii) The cost of escort services would increase significantly, making

Action

the workload of the Care Team even heavier;

- (iv) The morale of medical staff would be dampened by the uncertainty of their future prospects, exacerbating talent loss;
- (c) Members hoped that the HA would not only consider how to facilitate administrative management and simplify administrative procedures, but also consider from the patients' perspectives;
- (d) Members urged that the HA should provide more specific information on the cluster merger as soon as possible so that Members could explain it to residents; and
- (e) Members expected that the HA would make good use of the land vacated by the relocation of the Chai Wan Laundry to address the problems of disrepair and bed shortage in the PYNEH, and then implement the construction of the Ambulatory Care Block of PYNEH in accordance with the initial concept of the Second Ten-year Hospital Development Plan.

11. The representative of the HA noted Members' views and suggestions and responded as follows:

- (a) It was expected that after the cluster merger, the volume of specialist out-patient services and the number of hospital beds at PYNEH would not be lower than the current level;
- (b) The vast majority of patients in the district (including those using emergency services, general out-patient services, and general specialty services with high volume and relatively lower complexity) could continue to receive treatment at the nearby PYNEH and Ruttonjee Hospital;
- (c) The hospital's existing facilities would continue to perform their vital functions and maintain operational excellence, complementing the strengths of other hospitals in the cluster to provide comprehensive care services more effectively;
- (d) The management team had already established various communication channels to understand the views and needs of staff to minimise staff

Action

turnover;

- (e) The HA would allocate resources according to the needs of the cluster. Therefore, it was expected that additional resources, including beds, medical equipment and healthcare personnel, would continue to be allocated to the PYNEH in the coming year as required; and
- (f) The service integration work was currently at the planning and discussion stage. The HA would continue to actively communicate with stakeholders (including District Council Members) to jointly formulate a merger plan suitable for Eastern District residents.

HA

12. After discussion, the agenda item would be followed up on upon further progress.

Agenda 4. Concerns about Student Mental Health in Eastern District **(SWC Paper No. 8/2025)**

13. The Chairlady welcomed the representatives of the Education Bureau (EDB) and SWD to the meeting.
14. A Member briefed the meeting on Paper No. 8/2025.
15. The views of Members about the agenda item were summarised as follows:
 - (a) Members believed that having access to data on student suicides and the causes of suicide would help specifically address the issue and prevent tragedies;
 - (b) Members enquired whether schools would arrange emotional assessments to enable early identification of students at risk of suicide and refer them to social workers for follow-up; and
 - (c) Members enquired whether the bureau would organise large-scale and territory-wide youth activities to encourage students to exercise more, so as to maintain a balanced physical and mental health.

Action

16. The representatives of the bureau and department noted Members' views and suggestions, and responded as follows:

EDB

- (a) The causes of each student suicide case were different and involved complex issues. Following the occurrence of such incidents, schools generally activated crisis management teams for follow-up, and deployed educational psychologists, counsellors and social workers to provide support to teachers, students and parents affected; and
- (b) The EDB had provided a one-off grant to each public sector school and Direct Subsidy Scheme school in the 2023/24 school year to support them in fostering a more conducive school sports atmosphere, and encourage students to accumulate at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity daily on average throughout the week. This would align with the development of the physical education curriculum, foster a habit of regular physical activities among students, and promote their physical and mental wellbeing.

SWD

- (c) Suicidal behaviour among schoolchildren was a highly complex issue involving many interrelated factors;
- (d) The SWD currently funded five non-governmental organisations to run Cyber Youth Support Teams. They proactively identified and reached out to at-risk and hidden youth aged 6 to 24 through popular online platforms, providing timely intervention through 24-hour emotional counselling and support services; and
- (e) The Child Fatality Review Panel prepared regular reports, and the latest report published in 2024 had included analyses of earlier cases.

EDB/SWD

17. After discussion, the agenda item would be followed up on upon further progress.

Agenda 5. Progress Report of Matters Arising from Previous SWC Meetings under Eastern District Council
(SWC Paper No. 9/2025)

(i) ***“Suggesting the Government to Conduct Joint Operations in Stamping Out On-street Prostitutes on Chun Yeung Street in North Point to Restore Community Peace”***

18. The Chairlady welcomed the representatives of the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF) to the meeting.

19. The SWC noted the written reply from the Immigration Department (ImmD).

20. The views of Members about the agenda item were summarised as follows:

- (a) Members opined that closed-circuit television (CCTV) did play a certain role in preventing and detecting crime, but expressed reservations about its use in addressing the problem of street prostitution;
- (b) Members suggested the HKPF continue to conduct joint operations with the ImmD to target on-street prostitutes in the district;
- (c) Members hoped that the HKPF would step up patrols and intercept suspected on-street prostitutes and clients; and
- (d) Members proposed that the HKPF should park police vehicles in the Chun Yeung Street area to enhance the deterrent effect.

21. The representative of the HKPF noted Members’ views and suggestions, and provided the following complements and response:

- (a) In terms of law enforcement, the HKPF, together with the ImmD and the LD, conducted 10 joint anti-vice operations between January and May 2025. The Eastern District Special Duty Squad also carried out three raids, during which some criminals were arrested for the offence of soliciting for an immoral purpose;
- (b) In terms of publicity, the HKPF would periodically station police vehicles on Chun Yeung Street to remind owners in Chinese, Minnan

Action

(Hokkien) dialect, Cantonese (Punti dialect) and English not to rent their properties to offenders to prevent their premises from becoming tools of crime, such as being used as vice establishments; and

- (c) The HKPF would make good use of CCTV footage of suspicious persons to collect information and conduct intelligence analysis. Arrests would be made in a timely manner once criminal offences were detected.

HKPF/ImmD 22. After discussion, the SWC agreed to follow up on the agenda item upon further progress.

- (ii) ***“Request for Additional Residential Care Home for the Elderly in Eastern District”***

SWD 23. The agenda item would be followed up on upon further progress.

- (iii) ***“Improvement to Difficulties in Appointment Booking with General Outpatient Clinics in the Eastern District”***

HA 24. The agenda item would be followed up on upon further progress.

- (iv) ***“Establishment of a Support Service Centre for Ethnic Minorities in Chai Wan for Enhancing Support for Ethnic Minorities in Eastern District”***

Housing
Department/
District Lands
Office, Hong Kong
East/Planning
Department/
Home Affairs
Department/
EDB

25. The agenda item would be followed up on upon further progress.

Action

(v) ***“Concern over Future Development Plan of Eastern Hospital”***

- HA 26. The agenda item would be followed up on upon further progress.

Agenda 6. Any Other Business

27. There was no other discussion item for the SWC.

Agenda 7. Date of Next Meeting

28. The tenth SWC meeting would be held at 2:30 pm on 26 August 2025 (Tuesday).

29. The meeting ended at 4:48 pm.

Eastern District Council Secretariat
July 2025