

(Translation)

**Minutes of the 3rd Meeting of
Social Welfare and Women Development Committee,
the 7th Term Kwun Tong District Council**

Date: 23 May 2024 (Thursday)
Time: 2:30 p.m. – 4:29 p.m.
Venue: Conference Room, Kwun Tong District Office,
Unit 05-07, 20/F, Millennium City 6, 392 Kwun Tong Road,
Kwun Tong, Kowloon

Present

Ms FU Pik-chun, MH (Chairlady)	Mr TSANG Wing-fai
Ms LEE Shuk-woon, Sophia (Vice-chairlady)	Ms CHING Hoi-yan
Mr YU Ka-ming	Mr WONG Chun-ping, MH, JP
Mr NG Ting-fung	Ms ZHAN Baoyu
Mr LEE Ka-hang	Mr LAU Kar-wah
Mr LAM Fung, MH	Ms CHU Lok-wai
Mr LAM Wai	Mr TANG Wing-chun
Ms KAM Kin	Mr CHENG Keung-fung
Mr HUNG Kam-in, MH	Mr TAM Siu-cheuk
Ms LEUNG Sze-wan	Mr KWAN Kin-wing
Mr HSU Yau-wai	Mr PANG Chi-sang

In Attendance

Ms CHAN Wai-chun, Regina	Assistant District Officer (Kwun Tong)1
Mr CHOW Lap-kan, Douglas	Senior Executive Officer (District Council), Kwun Tong District Office
Miss YIK Wai-sze, Cecilia	Senior Liaison Officer (2), Kwun Tong District Office
Miss Sandra LIM	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Kwun Tong)1, Social Welfare Department

Secretary

Mr WONG King-yui, Bobby

Executive Officer (District Council)1,

Kwun Tong District Office

Absent

Ms FENG Yunsi

Opening Remarks

The Chairlady welcomed all attendees to the 3rd meeting of the Social Welfare and Women Development Committee (“SWWDC”) under the 7th Term Kwun Tong District Council (“KTDC”).

2. The Chairlady said that the Secretariat had received a notice of absence from Ms FENG Yunsi before the meeting. Since the application of Ms FENG was in compliance with Order 64 (1) of the Kwun Tong District Council Standing Orders, SWWDC consented to the above application for absence.

I. Confirmation of Minutes of Last Meeting

3. Members did not raise any other comments. The minutes of the 2nd meeting were confirmed.

**II. Proposal for Residential Child Care Centre
(KTDC SWWDC Paper No. 1/2024)**

4. The representative of the Social Welfare Department (“SWD”) presented the paper.

5. Members raised views and enquiries as follows:

5.1 Members supported the establishment of a residential child care centre (“RCCC”).

5.2 Members enquired about the services provided by the RCCC, the definition of urgent cases, the duration of children’s residential stay, and the timetable for the establishment of the RCCC.

- 5.3 Members suggested that SWD expand the list of proposed operating organisations and select an organisation familiar with the situation in Kwun Tong District to operate the RCCC.
 - 5.4 Members enquired how assistance could be provided to the RCCC to ensure smoother operations.
 - 5.5 Members suggested that the future operating organisation of the RCCC strengthen exchanges with Care Teams, “the three committees” and KTDC to facilitate their referral of those in need to receive the RCCC’s services.
 - 5.6 Members enquired about how SWD would improve the monitoring system for RCCCs in response to the earlier incident of child abuse in a residential home for children.
 - 5.7 Members suggested that SWD set up more child care facilities in Kwun Tong West.
6. The responses from the representative of SWD to Members’ views and enquiries were consolidated as follows:
- 6.1 SWD expressed gratitude for Members’ support for the services. The department would step up the monitoring of child care centres and suggested that Members and other district personalities consider becoming volunteers of the RCCC in future to support its operations.
 - 6.2 SWD stated that residential child care services were provided for children and adolescents who temporarily could not receive proper care due to various factors (such as family, behavioural, or emotional problems). Urgent cases included children who encountered sudden or emergency incidents, such as child abuse and situations where parents were unable to care for them due to various reasons (such as hospitalisation), and who lacked family care and urgently needed immediate and short-term residential care services.
 - 6.3 SWD stated that the RCCC would offer 48 emergency places, with each case expected to stay for three months, i.e. providing services for about 192 attendances per year. In addition to offering residential services, the RCCC was also equipped with basic facilities needed for accommodation, such as kitchens, laundry rooms and lavatories. The department added that it would consider how to minimise the impact on nearby residents in the design.

- 6.4 SWD mentioned that organisations exempt from tax under section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance were eligible to bid. Regarding the consideration of the district ties and networks of the bidding organisations, the department would relay the suggestion to the relevant service branch.
- 6.5 SWD expressed hope to provide two RCCC's in Hong Kong, specifically in Tuen Mun and Kwun Tong Districts, within 18 months following the passage of the Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse Bill. The department would consider arranging for the selected operating organisations to strengthen exchanges with district personalities to build community relations.
- 6.6 SWD understood that Members hoped more child care services would be provided in Kwun Tong West and would endeavor to identify suitable locations to provide the relevant facilities.
7. Members raised views and enquiries as follows:
- 7.1 Members enquired about how SWD would relocate the children residing in the RCCC if issues arose with the operating organisation.
- 7.2 Members enquired about the support provided by SWD for cases on the waiting list and suggested increasing the number of places at the RCCC.
- 7.3 Members enquired whether SWD would specify the requirements for applicant organisations during the tendering process, such as requiring organisations to provide task forces or special support services by social workers.
- 7.4 Members indicated that the main cause of the child abuse incident that happened earlier in a children's residential home was inadequate supervision by the management of the organisation and by SWD. They suggested that SWD invite district women's organisations to visit child care centres to play a supervisory role. Members also recommended that SWD use artificial intelligence to monitor operating organisations.
- 7.5 Members enquired about how SWD would step up inspections and supervision of the management of operating organisations following the child abuse incident in a residential home for children.

- 7.6 Members stated that many new housing estates would be completed in the Tai Sheung Tok area in future, with a reserved site for social welfare facilities. SWD might consider whether the site was suitable for use as a RCCC.
- 7.7 Members suggested that SWD give more opportunities to small non-governmental organisations when selecting service organisations.
- 7.8 Members hoped that SWD would consider the impact on the nearby communities and use noise insulation materials as far as practicable when building the RCCC.
8. The responses from the representative of SWD to Members' views and enquiries were consolidated as follows:
- 8.1 SWD indicated that some children on the waiting list with pressing needs were arranged to stay in Po Leung Kuk's reception centre and other residential care services, including emergency foster care families.
- 8.2 SWD stated that there were currently 130 places available for emergency foster family care services. The department hoped to promptly arrange long-term placements for children who continued to need residential care, so that they could have a stable life as soon as possible, and emergency places could be made available for urgent cases.
- 8.3 SWD stated that the RCCC in Tuen Mun District would provide 36 places for children aged 0 to under 3 and 12 places for children aged 3 to under 6.
- 8.4 SWD indicated that the RCCC in Kwun Tong District would provide 48 emergency places for children aged 3 to under 6. It had considered the space and layout of the premises to maximise its use and provide the maximum number of places where feasible.
- 8.5 SWD stated that it was planning to set up more child care centres in Kwun Tong District, including at the site of the Public Housing Development at Lei Yue Mun Phase 4 and public housing on Wang Chiu Road in Kowloon Bay, to increase day child care services.
- 8.6 SWD stated that following the child abuse incident in a children's residential home, the department had strengthened service regulation and monitoring, including intensifying inspection efforts and support in other aspects.

8.7 SWD indicated that it would consider Members' views on the interior design and renovation works, including strengthening noise insulation equipment to reduce the impact on the nearby communities and using artificial intelligence and other equipment to enhance service quality.

9. Members endorsed the paper.

**III. Social Welfare Department – Report on the data on major social services in Kwun Tong District
(KTDC SWWDC Paper No. 2/2024)**

10. The representative of SWD presented the paper.

11. Members raised views and enquiries as follows:

11.1 Members suggested that SWD provide a more detailed categorisation of the data, such as by age group, case nature, or sub-districts.

11.2 Members enquired how SWD could more effectively enable hidden cases in the community to receive assistance.

11.3 Members enquired about the application method for the “Certificate of Old Age Living Allowance Recipients (for Medical Waivers)”.

11.4 Members enquired about the number of young people in Kwun Tong District applying for Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (“CSSA”) and how SWD followed up on these cases.

11.5 Members asked how many cases followed up by Family Service Centres involved children.

11.6 Members suggested that SWD share data with Care Teams to enable them to provide services to those in need in the district.

11.7 Members considered that the Government's asset tests on social security allowance applicants were not stringent enough and mentioned that the Government rarely conducted spot checks on the public's assets unless reports were received.

11.8 Members enquired whether government departments shared data among themselves and whether they would conduct a unified investigation when a case of non-compliance was discovered to determine if the individual in question was truly eligible for other social welfare benefits.

11.9 Members relayed that when referring cases to service organisations, the assigned social workers indicated that they needed written consent from the individuals concerned before following up on the cases. They felt that social workers lacked initiative in engaging with residents.

12. The responses from the representative of SWD to Members' views and enquiries were consolidated as follows:

12.1 SWD noted Members' suggestion on the detailed categorisation of data and would consider the feasibility of providing such categorised data in the next report.

12.2 SWD indicated that due to the different purposes of data collection, government departments did not share data among themselves. However, SWD had a spot check mechanism and kept abreast of news and court rulings. If any irregularities related to CSSA/social security allowance applicants were discovered, the department would investigate the individuals involved to prevent abuse of resources.

12.3 SWD explained that the requirement for written consent was in place to protect the individuals involved, ensuring that they were willing to receive assistance, except in cases where the individuals had lost their self-care abilities. The department encouraged Members to contact the district social welfare office for guidance on how to follow up on different cases if they encountered difficulties in case referrals.

12.4 SWD stated that District Elderly Community Centres currently provided services to hidden elderly individuals. Members could refer or introduce such individuals to the centres to receive services.

12.5 SWD mentioned that currently there was no age-specific statistical data on CSSA applications. However, cases of individuals applying for CSSA due to unemployment (which might include younger individuals) accounted for about 13% of the total applicants across the territory. The department required these individuals to regularly receive employment support services and would arrange for them to participate in

volunteer services.

12.6 SWD stated that it would proactively provide medical fee waiver for Old Age Living Allowance recipients aged 75 or above without requiring them to apply separately.

13. Members noted the paper.

IV. Any Other Business

14. The Chairlady indicated that SWD had earlier written to invite KTDC to nominate DC members to participate in the “Service Quality Group (“SQG”) on Residential Care Homes for the Elderly (“RCHEs”)” in Kwun Tong District (2023-2025). The Chairman of KTDC had earlier referred the matter related to the nominations for the SQG on RCHEs (2023-2025) to SWWDC for follow-up discussion.

15. The representative of SWD presented the paper.

16. The Chairlady indicated that the number of DC members interested in joining the Group exceeded the quota limit. Therefore, the nominee was selected through lot drawing. After the draw, the Chairlady announced that Mr TSANG Wing-fai would join the SQG on RCHEs (2023-2025).

17. Members enquired about the composition of the Group.

18. The representative of SWD stated that the Group consisted of 20 members, including one DC member, six members from District Coordinating Committees (three from the Coordinating Committee on Elderly Service, two from the Coordinating Committee on Rehabilitation Service and one from the Local Committee on Services for Young People), healthcare professionals, one service user, and ten representatives from elderly service units. The representative of SWD added that since 19 RCHEs participated in the scheme, the Group would be divided into ten teams, each comprising two members. Each time, two team members would conduct visits together with one SWD staff member.

19. Members suggested that SWD refer to the Housing and Development Planning Committee’s Progress Report of Public Housing Projects under the Housing Department and include the timelines and progress of SWD’s major projects in the report of agenda item III.

20. The representative of SWD indicated that when planning land use, the Government would

reserve premises for various social welfare facilities based on future population development and use some of the premises to make up for the current shortfall in the area of social welfare facilities. However, the premises/public housing estates where these social welfare services were to be located were still under construction, limiting the commencement of services. Most of the construction projects were still a long way from completion and mainly involved the overall construction progress, making it difficult for SWD to regularly update project progress at each meeting.

21. Members enquired about the current youth and elderly population, the number of youth centres and elderly centres, and the current shortfall in the area of social welfare facilities in Kwun Tong District.

22. Members asked for the list of the 19 RCHEs participating in the SQG Scheme.

(Post-meeting note: The Secretariat forwarded SWD's list of RCHEs in Kwun Tong District participating in the SQG Scheme to Members on 15 July 2024.)

23. Members suggested that SWD refer to the practice of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department and report on the current shortfall in the area of social welfare facilities and future development projects in the community.

24. The representative of SWD stated that it could only provide population data for the year 2021 based on information from the Census and Statistics Department and pointed out that currently there were four District Elderly Community Centres, 21 Neighbourhood Elderly Centres, and 13 children and youth services centres in Kwun Tong District.

25. The representative of SWD indicated that it was unable to provide data on the shortfall in the area of social welfare facilities in completed housing estates. This was because the Government currently planned social welfare facilities for new housing estates based on population ratios, but the situation was different for completed estates. SWD would refer to the central waiting list data and identify suitable sites in completed housing estates to provide various social welfare facilities based on community needs.

26. Members noted the paper.

V. **Date of Next Meeting**

27. The next meeting was scheduled to be held on 25 July 2024 (Thursday).

28. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:29 p.m.

The minutes of the meeting were confirmed on 25 July 2024.

Kwun Tong District Council Secretariat

July 2024