

Sha Tin District Council
Minutes of Resumption of the 5th Meeting of
the Education and Welfare Committee in 2019

Date : 17 September 2019 (Tuesday)
Time : 2:30 pm
Venue : Sha Tin District Council Conference Room
 4/F, Sha Tin Government Offices

<u>Present</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Time of joining the meeting</u>	<u>Time of leaving the meeting</u>
Ms LAM Chung-yan (Chairman)	DC Member	2:30 pm	3:14 pm
Mr WONG Fu-sang, Tiger (Vice-Chairman)	”	2:30 pm	3:14 pm
Mr HO Hau-cheung, SBS, MH	DC Chairman	2:30 pm	3:14 pm
Mr PANG Cheung-wai, Thomas, SBS, JP	DC Vice-Chairman	2:30 pm	3:14 pm
Mr CHAN Billy Shiu-yeung	DC Member	2:36 pm	3:14 pm
Mr CHAN Kwok-keung, James	”	2:46 pm	3:12 pm
Ms CHAN Man-kuen	”	2:30 pm	2:53 pm
Mr CHAN Nok-hang	”	2:30 pm	3:14 pm
Mr CHING Cheung-ying, MH	”	2:30 pm	3:14 pm
Mr CHIU Chu-pong, Sunny	”	3:02 pm	3:14 pm
Mr CHIU Man-leong	”	2:30 pm	3:14 pm
Mr LEUNG Ka-fai, Victor	”	2:30 pm	3:02 pm
Mr LI Sai-hung	”	2:37 pm	3:14 pm
Mr LI Sai-wing	”	2:30 pm	3:14 pm
Mr LI Wing-shing, Wilson	”	2:42 pm	3:14 pm
Mr NG Kam-hung	”	2:30 pm	3:14 pm
Mr PUN Kwok-shan, MH, JP	”	2:30 pm	3:14 pm
Mr SIU Hin-hong	”	2:30 pm	3:08 pm
Mr TING Tsz-yuen	”	2:30 pm	3:12 pm
Mr TONG Hok-leung	”	2:33 pm	3:14 pm
Ms TUNG Kin-lei	”	2:30 pm	3:14 pm
Mr WAI Hing-cheung	”	2:30 pm	3:14 pm
Mr WONG Hok-lai	”	3:11 pm	3:12 pm
Mr WONG Ka-wing, MH	”	2:30 pm	3:10 pm
Ms WONG Ping-fan, Iris	”	2:38 pm	3:14 pm
Mr WONG Yue-hon	”	2:30 pm	3:14 pm
Mr YAU Man-chun	”	2:32 pm	3:14 pm
Mr YIP Wing	”	2:30 pm	3:14 pm
Mr YIU Ka-chun, MH	”	2:34 pm	3:14 pm
Mr YUNG Ming-chau, Michael	”	2:30 pm	3:14 pm
Ms YU Wai-ting, Amy (Secretary)	Executive Officer (District Council) 1/ Sha Tin District Office		

<u>In Attendance</u>	<u>Title</u>
Ms CHAN Lai-na, Laura	Housing Manager (Tai Po, North and Shatin1)/ Housing Department
Mr CHAN Ping-ching, Roy	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Sha Tin) 1/ Social Welfare Department
Mr WONG Tsz-hei, Christopher	Senior School Development Officer (Sha Tin) 2/ Education Bureau

In Attendance

Ms CHENG Siu-ling, Katy
 Ms NG Suk-min
 Mr YUEN Chun-kit, Derek

Title

Chief Liaison Officer/ Sha Tin District Office
 Senior Liaison Officer (East)/ Sha Tin District Office
 Senior Executive Officer (District Council)/
 Sha Tin District Office

In Attendance by Invitation

Ms CHAN Yee-chi, Elaine

Title

Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Sha Tin) 2/
 Social Welfare Department

Absent

Mr MOK Kam-kwai, BBS
 Ms PONG Scarlett Oi-lan, BBS, JP
 Ms TSANG So-lai
 Mr HUI Yui-yu, Rick
 Mr LAI Tsz-yan

Title

DC Member	(Application for leave of absence received)
”	(”)
”	(”)
”	(No application for leave of absence received)
”	(”)

Action

The Chairman welcomed all members and representatives of government departments to the resumption of the fifth meeting of the Education and Welfare Committee (EWC) of this year.

2. The Chairman informed the meeting that members of the public observing the meeting were taking videos at the venue.

Applications for Leave of Absence

3. The Chairman said that the Secretariat had received the applications for leave of absence in writing from the following members:

Mr MOK Kam-kwai	Official commitment
Mr Sunny CHIU	”
Ms Scarlett PONG	”
Ms TSANG So-lai	”

(Mr Sunny CHIU arrived to attend the meeting at 3:02 pm.)

4. Mr Thomas PANG said that Ms YUE Shin-man had also submitted an application for leave to the Secretariat.

5. The Chairman said that Ms YUE Shin-man was not a member of the EWC.

6. Members unanimously confirmed the applications for leave of absence submitted by the members above.

Questions

Question to be Raised by Ms CHAN Man-kuen on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly

(Paper No. EW 26/2019)

7. The Chairman said that since Mr TONG Hok-leung had not yet arrived at the Conference Room, she suggested discussing the question raised by Ms CHAN Man-kuen first, and asked the Secretariat to contact Mr TONG Hok-leung.

8. No members objected to the above arrangement of adjustment of the agenda.

9. The views of Ms CHAN Man-kuen were summarised below:

- (a) in its reply, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) pointed out that a total of 9 725 elderly persons had made an application in the Second Phase of the “Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly” (“Community Voucher Pilot Scheme”). She asked if the number of applications had included applicants in the First Phase of the “Community Voucher Pilot Scheme”. If eligible elderly persons repeatedly submitted applications in the 2 phases of the scheme, whether it would cause difficulties in the calculation of the actual increase of the number of applications. In addition, currently there was a discrepancy between the number of Community Voucher holders and the number of people using the service, she asked whether it represented that some resources were wasted;
- (b) when the SWD would make the “Pilot Scheme on Training for Foreign Domestic Helpers in Elderly Care” a recurrent scheme, and how the Department would measure the effectiveness of the training and whether the work of elderly care of foreign domestic helpers could be assessed; and
- (c) although Phase 3 of the “Pilot Scheme on Living Allowance for Carers of Elderly Persons from Low-income Families” had been launched, a continuously rising trend had not been seen in the number of carers of elderly persons from low-income families benefited from the scheme. She asked whether the SWD would make the scheme recurrent.

10. The Chairman asked for the number of applicants of the “Community Voucher Pilot Scheme” in Sha Tin District and how long a pilot scheme of the SWD would stay in the pilot stage usually, and what the indicators were for the decision of whether a scheme would become recurrent. In view of an ageing population, quite a number of elderly persons urgently needed social care services, e.g., meal delivery, cleaning services, etc. She asked if the “Community Voucher Pilot Scheme” could effectively improve such situations.

11. Ms Elaine CHAN, Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Sha Tin) 2 of the SWD gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) the cumulative number of applicants of the Second Phase of the “Community Voucher Pilot Scheme” was 9 725. This was the total number of applicants as at the end of June of this year, which excluded the applicants of the First Phase.

Among them, 5 221 applicants were current holders of Community Vouchers, including 3 788 persons who were using the service. As at August of this year, the latest number of users of the service slightly increased to 3 877, representing a utilisation rate of 75%. She continued to point out that it was due to various reasons that 25% of the Community Voucher holders had not yet used the Community Vouchers on the cut-off date, e.g., voucher holders were still looking for an appropriate recognised service provider, change of physical conditions, etc. Generally speaking, Community Vouchers were still valid within 3 months upon issuance. Voucher holders could flexibly decide when to start using the vouchers based on their needs;

- (b) the “Pilot Scheme on Training for Foreign Domestic Helpers in Elderly Care” had been well-received since its launch in March 2018. Pilot districts had been increased to 7 this year from originally 6, including Sha Tin District. The term of the scheme would be extended to December 2020, and 950 places would be additionally provided. She indicated that the primary purpose of the scheme was to train foreign domestic helpers to strengthen their basic care knowledge and skills of taking care of physically weak elderly persons, and the training was taught by nurses, nutritionists, physiotherapists, etc. under the Department of Health. The Department would continuously review the effect of the scheme, and would further study in detail about the feasibility of making the pilot scheme recurrent upon expiry of the term of the pilot scheme;
- (c) the “Pilot Scheme on Living Allowance for Carers of Elderly Persons from Low-income Families” launched by the government in 2014 through the Community Care Fund had come to Phase 3. The Department would review the effect of the scheme in due time and depending on the results and factors such as supporting resources, further review the feasibility of making the scheme recurrent. She said that the Department would brief everyone if there was any development in the pilot scheme; and
- (d) the SWD had commissioned Sau Po Centre on Ageing of the University of Hong Kong to review the second phase of the Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly to look into the future direction of the pilot scheme to better match the different needs of service users. As at the end of August this year, the total number of applicants across Hong Kong exceeded 9 000, and the utilisation rate was about 75%, but the Department was yet to have information of the number of each district.

12. The Chairman requested the SWD to provide relevant information of each district of the “Community Voucher Pilot Scheme” after the meeting.

Question to be Raised by Mr TONG Hok-leung on Services for Ex-mentally Ill Persons
(Paper No. EW 25/2019)

13. Mr TONG Hok-leung said that there were only 200 odd places of residential care service provided for ex-mentally ill persons and he was not certain if these could satisfy the demand. He asked the Department about the time of waiting for the residential service. In addition, he opined that it was more difficult for ex-mentally ill persons to join the labour market compared to people with other disabilities. Quite a number of ex-mentally ill persons was living alone and lacked family members to take care of them. He asked if the Department would provide

assistance and regularly check on their conditions.

14. The views of Mr Billy CHAN were summarised below:

- (a) the reply from the SWD lacked actual policies and measures and the places of residential service provided for ex-mentally ill persons were insufficient. He wanted to know if the Department had plans or if the Department would increase places on any schedule. In addition, the number of ex-mentally ill persons over 65 years of age continued to rise, they were discriminated in the community as well as in workplaces, whether the Department would provide any support service; and
- (b) information showed that Take Your Way Clubhouse founded by Stewards had only about 1 740 members. He believed that there were way more ex-mentally ill persons in need than this number. He asked how the Department would locate these people in need to provide support.

15. The views of Mr PUN Kwok-shan were summarised below:

- (a) in the reply from the Food and Health Bureau (FHB) regarding Question (m), the Hospital Authority was recruiting non-locally trained medical practitioners, including psychiatric specialists. He asked what the percentage of psychiatric specialists would account for in the overall number;
- (b) he recognised the work of The Wellness Centre which provided psychiatric support service in Tai Wai; however, it only had 540 members; he asked the Department if The Wellness Centre had room for expanding its service. In addition, both Integrated Community Centres for Mental Wellness in the district, respectively The Wellness Centre and Take Your Way Clubhouse, had mobile vans for publicity on mental wellness. He asked what services these mobile vans for publicity would provide and whether they would follow up the medication use of ex-mentally ill persons; and
- (c) although the Labour Department (LD) offered employment counselling, quite some patients with mood disorders such as depression would resign after working for a period of time and they might want to engage again in the society after a period of time. He asked if the employment counselling service would continue or had to be reapplied.

16. Ms Elaine CHAN gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) the number of places of residential care service referred to in the reply paper from the SWD was the number of this district, so it would not be appropriate to compare it to the number of mental patients in consultation and treatment across Hong Kong. She indicated that there were different types of psychiatric illness. Many patients, although troubled emotionally, could generally live and work as usual, and therefore not all patients needed residential service. However, if ex-mentally ill persons could not take care of themselves and lacked family members to take care of them, after social workers had assessed their situations in detail and confirmed that they needed residential care, those in need could be arranged to move into institutions. This transitional residential arrangement

aimed to help ex-mentally ill persons to learn to live independently and take care of themselves to facilitate community integration;

- (b) the Department had made long-, medium- and short-term plans based on ex-mentally ill persons' situation of waiting for the residential service. Measures included proactively keeping close contact with various relevant bureaus and departments, actively studying about reserving part of the lands for welfare service facilities in appropriate developments on "government, institution or community facilities" sites, public housing estate developments or Urban Renewal Authority projects. Some government properties or school buildings, etc. currently vacant due to service reorganisation would also be re-constructed. In addition, we would actively locate some vacant public housing units or vacant government premises to reconstruct them for welfare purpose;
- (c) ex-mentally ill persons had varying ability for employment. The SWD provided quite some employment support services to train their social and basic employment skills and offered opportunities for internship, including "Sunnyway - On the Job Training Programme for Young People with Disabilities" and "On the Job Training Programme for People with Disabilities", to encourage ex-mentally ill persons to try working and continue to work in a job. Every participant in the training would be granted an allowance of \$2,000 per month, while the employers offering trainee opportunities would also be paid subsidies;
- (d) regarding the support to ex-mentally ill persons, in addition to providing a series or residential care and employment training, if ex-patients had proven upon assessment that they could adequately care for themselves and had the ability to live alone independently, the SWD would arrange for compassionate rehousing depending on their needs so that they could have a stable home after they left the institutions. In addition, upon receipt of cases referred by different members of the community, e.g. DC Members and medical personnel, the Department would follow up and provide proper assistance;
- (e) in face of the ageing problem of ex-mentally ill persons, the Department had been actively reviewing and implementing various measures, including visiting medical practitioner service, basic medical care and support for those living in halfway houses and supported hostels, increasing resources to increase manpower for care homes and supported hostels in the long-term, strengthening speech therapy service, and establishing the 1 billion "Innovation and Technology Fund for Application in Elderly and Rehabilitation Care" to fund relevant service units to use technology products to improve the care and quality of life of service users;
- (f) in addition to receiving vocational rehabilitation training for ex-mentally ill persons at Integrated Vocational Rehabilitation Services Centre, trainees who were old or with deteriorated work abilities could maintain their basic mobility and receive caring and wellness services through the "Work Extension Programme" therein. Severely disabled people aged 60 or above, including ex-mentally ill persons, could also choose to receive Integrated Home Care Services (Frail Cases);

- (g) the service of the Integrated Community Centres for Mental Wellness (Community Centres) had since this year been extended to cover all secondary students. The number of people served by the 2 Community Centres would also increase in the future. The Department would actively collaborate with the Community Centres operating in the district and encourage members of the public in need to seek help from the centres, in the hope that more people would understand and accept mental patients and ex-mentally ill persons to achieve social inclusion; and
- (h) one of the additional resources in rehabilitation services of the SWD this year was to set up 5 mobile vans for publicity service on mental wellness across Hong Kong. The mobile van for publicity service in New Territories East was operated by non-governmental organisation New Life Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association. The service had already begun since July this year. In the future, the mobile vans for publicity would hold activities in different districts to carry out promotion and education as well as providing personalised consultation service, in order to early identify people who had needs of mental wellness service but were not actively seeking help and to provide them with support.

17. The views of Mr Billy CHAN were summarised below:

- (a) it was mentioned in the reply from the FHB that medical social workers would provide community support to patients with mental wellness conditions. He said that the time for patients with mental illness to attend medical consultations at medical institutions was insufficient, while some staff of non-governmental organisations failed to provide assistance whole-heartedly, so he hoped that the Department would coordinate well with other departments and organisations to help those with mental wellness conditions to integrate into the community; and
- (b) regarding the assistance of the SWD and the LD in the employment of ex-mentally ill persons, he requested the departments to supplement information on how many employers were currently in cooperation with the government to employ the disabled or ex-mentally ill persons after the meeting. In addition, it was pointed out in the reply from the LD that they would assist ex-mentally ill persons to get a job. He hoped that the Department would provide data on the employment of the disabled or ex-mentally ill persons after the meeting.

18. Mr TONG Hok-leung indicated that the several hundred hostel places provided for ex-mentally ill persons in the district could not satisfy the demand. He urged the Department to try their best to increase hostel places and provide updated data in the future. He also pointed out that ex-mentally ill persons were subject to more serious workplace discrimination and were more difficult to get a job. Moreover, quite a few ex-mentally ill persons' conditions worsened due to lack of care from family and friends so that they were not taking their medicine as directed by their doctors. The SWD or relevant organisations sometimes could do nothing. He hoped the government could increase service manpower, and frontline staff could be more patient.

19. Ms Elaine CHAN gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) there were resident psychiatric medical social workers at Shatin Hospital and Prince of Wales Hospital in the district. They had been actively following up cases and were concerned of patients' emotions, handled their discharge arrangements, financial, residential and other welfare issues. At that same time, they kept collaboration with community nurses to follow up patients' conditions together. In addition, medical social workers kept close contact with the Integrated Community Centres for Mental Wellness, and would transfer cases as necessary to the Community Centres; and
- (b) regarding the number of employers participating in the "Sunnyway - On the Job Training Programme for Young People with Disabilities" and "On the Job Training Programme for People with Disabilities", relevant numbers would be provided after the meeting when they were available to the SWD. Ms CHAN thanked Mr TONG Hok-leung for his views regarding hostel places and manpower, and his views would be conveyed to relevant service branches for review.

Information Item

Reports of Working Groups
(Paper No. EW 27/2019)

20. The Chairman indicated that Mr Sunny CHIU had arrived at the Conference Room to attend the meeting and asked members to note this.

21. Members noted the above paper.

Information Papers

Number of Children Referred to Public Sector Primary and Secondary Schools in Sha Tin District Provided by the Education Bureau
(Paper No. EW 28/2019)

22. Members noted the above paper.

Financial Position and Activity Progress of Expenditure Head 5 (Education and Welfare)
(Paper No. EW 29/2019)

23. Members noted the above paper.

Date of Next Meeting

24. The Chairman said this was the last meeting of this EWC term. She thanked members for their concern and contribution to the education and welfare affairs of Sha Tin District in the past 4 years, and thanked the representative from various government departments for attending the EWC meeting and offered their valuable views.

25. The meeting was adjourned at 3:14 pm.

Sha Tin District Council Secretariat
STDC 13/15/35

November 2019