

Sha Tin District Council**Minutes of the 3rd meeting of
the Education and Welfare Committee in 2016**

Date : 3 May 2016 (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	6:16 pm
Mr HO Hau-cheung, BBS, MH	DC Chairman	2:30 pm	6:14 pm
Mr PANG Cheung-wai, Thomas, SBS, JP	DC Vice-Chairman	2:30 pm	6:16 pm
Mr CHAN Billy Shiu-yeung	DC Member	2:30 pm	6:16 pm
Mr CHAN Kwok-keung, James	”	2:39 pm	3:40 pm
Ms CHAN Man-kuen	”	2:44 pm	6:16 pm
Mr CHAN Nok-hang	”	2:41 pm	6:04 pm
Mr CHING Cheung-ying, MH	”	2:30 pm	6:16 pm
Mr CHIU Chu-pong, Sunny	”	2:30 pm	6:16 pm
Mr CHIU Man-leong	”	2:30 pm	5:47 pm
Mr HUI Yui-yu, Rick	”	2:30 pm	5:04 pm
Mr LAI Tsz-yan	”	2:30 pm	6:16 pm
Mr LEUNG Ka-fai, Victor	”	2:30 pm	5:46 pm
Mr LI Sai-hung	”	2:30 pm	6:16 pm
Mr LI Sai-wing	”	2:30 pm	6:11 pm
Mr LEE Chi-Wing, Alvin	”	5:03 pm	6:16 pm
Mr LI Wing-shing, Wilson	”	2:30 pm	3:44 pm
Mr MOK Kam-kwai, BBS	”	2:37 pm	6:16 pm
Mr NG Kam-hung	”	2:30 pm	6:16 pm
Ms PONG Scarlett Oi-lan, JP	”	2:30 pm	5:46 pm
Mr PUN Kwok-shan, MH	”	2:30 pm	6:04 pm
Mr TING Tsz-yuen	”	2:59 pm	5:00 pm
Mr TONG Hok-leung	”	2:30 pm	6:12 pm
Ms TSANG So-lai	”	2:30 pm	4:10 pm
Ms TUNG Kin-lei	”	3:41 pm	5:50 pm
Mr WAI Hing-cheung	”	2:30 pm	6:11 pm
Mr WONG Fu-sang, Tiger	”	2:30 pm	6:16 pm
Mr WONG Hok-lai	”	2:30 pm	6:16 pm
Mr WONG Ka-wing	”	2:30 pm	6:16 pm
Ms WONG Ping-fan, Iris	”	2:30 pm	6:16 pm
Mr WONG Yue-hon	”	2:30 pm	6:16 pm
Mr YAU Man-chun	”	2:30 pm	6:16 pm
Mr YIP Wing	”	2:30 pm	3:59 pm

<u>Present</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Time of joining the meeting</u>	<u>Time of leaving the meeting</u>
Mr YIU Ka-chun	DC Member	2:44 pm	6:12 pm
Ms YUE Shin-man	”	2:30 pm	6:16 pm
Mr YUNG Ming-chau, Michael	”	2:30 pm	6:16 pm
Mr CHU Ho-fai, Kelvin (Secretary)	Executive Officer (District Council) 1, Sha Tin District Office		
<u>In Attendance</u>	<u>Title</u>		
Mr CHAN Ping-ching, Roy	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Shatin) 1, Social Welfare Department		
Mrs YU CHOW Kai-ching, Alice	Senior School Development Officer (Sha Tin) 4, Education Bureau		
Ms LAU Yuk-yee, Lydia	Housing Manager/Shatin 1, Housing Department		
Mr WONG Tin-pui, Simon	Assistant District Officer (Sha Tin)		
Ms CHENG Yuk-kam, Brenda	Senior Liaison Officer (East), Sha Tin District Office		
Mr YUEN Chun-kit, Derek	Senior Executive Officer (District Council), Sha Tin District Office		
<u>Attendance by Invitation</u>	<u>Title</u>		
Mr CHEUNG Kin-chung, Matthew, GBS, JP	Secretary for Labour and Welfare		
Ms LAI Wing-yu, Jade	Political Assistant to Secretary for Labour and Welfare		
Mrs LEE CHEUNG Yat-wai, Gloria	District Social Welfare Officer (Shatin), Social Welfare Department		
Ms LI Wing-sze, Grace	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Shatin) 2, Social Welfare Department		
<u>Absent</u>	<u>Title</u>		
Mr MAK Yun-pui (Vice-Chairman)	DC Member	(Application for leave of absence received)	
Mr CHENG Tsuk-man	”	(No application for leave of absence received)	

Action

The Chairman welcomed members and representatives of government departments to the third meeting of the Education and Welfare Committee of the year.

Application for Leave of Absence

2. The Chairman said that the Secretariat had received the application for leave of absence in writing from the following member:

Mr MAK Yun-pui Official Commitment

3. Members unanimously approved the application for leave of absence submitted by the above member.

Confirmation of the Minutes of the Meeting Held on 1 March 2016
(EWC Minutes 2/2016)

4. Members unanimously confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 1 March 2016.

Discussion Items

Public Engagement Exercise on Retirement Protection
(Paper No. EW 4/2016)

5. Mr CHEUNG Kin-chung, Matthew, the Secretary for Labour and Welfare introduced the contents of the paper.

6. The views of Mr CHING Cheung-ying were summarised below:

- (a) the retirement protection as suggested by the Government did not quite measure up to the public expectation on a universal retirement protection scheme;
- (b) as he estimated that less than 1/3 of the elderly would require assistance, he considered that the Government had overestimated the relevant expenses; and
- (c) he said that providing public assistance to those who had made their contributions to the community could help maintain the stability of society.

7. The views of Mr YUNG Ming-chau, Michael were summarised below:

- (a) he said that the Government could implement a universal retirement protection scheme through Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) under the zero pillar, while additional help could be obtained from public housing under the fourth pillar;
- (b) with regard to the contributions to the Mandatory Provident Fund (MPF) made by employers and employees, under the offsetting mechanism, the MPF of employees would be offset by the severance payment or long service payment, to which the Government had no corresponding measure for the time being. Downward adjustment of the MPF charges might not necessarily be the most effective approach. He said that the MPF bodies would be able to safeguard employees' benefits in a more effective manner if they charged administrative fees at a certain percentage after making a profit;
- (c) since at present, a fixed administrative fee would be charged regardless of the current investment returns of the MPF, there was no profit-making incentive for the MPF bodies. As a result, the "MPF semi-portability" would have to be fully implemented in order to set up a competitive mechanism that allowed fund managers to make a profit; and
- (d) he said that he had not received the presentation for this meeting.

8. The views of Mr NG Kam-hung were summarised below:
- (a) he said that the exercise was conducted in a low profile and the data collected from the consultation seemed to be too complicated;
 - (b) it was contradictory that a drop in the labour force coincided with an increased utilisation rate of the MPF;
 - (c) he asked whether the fact that the Secretary only mentioned four of the five pillars suggested by the World Bank meant that the remaining one was unnecessary;
 - (d) the MPF contributions could only be withdrawn when one reached 65, with no profit made;
 - (e) while self-owned properties were included under one of the pillars, not everyone could afford them. The ratio of young people living with their parents was quite high; and
 - (f) should inflation rise, the savings of the elderly might not be enough to cover their medical expenses.
9. The views of Mr LI Wing-shing, Wilson were summarised below:
- (a) he expressed support for a universal retirement protection scheme. While five pillars had been suggested by the World Bank, Hong Kong only had the zero pillar, the second pillar, the third pillar and the fourth pillar for the time being. He looked forward to seeing the establishment of the first pillar as soon as practicable;
 - (b) he said that the asset limit of \$80,000 was unacceptable;
 - (c) while the Secretary mentioned structural deficit and the depletion of fiscal reserve, the economy however, could be interpreted in cycles, and the fiscal reserve was also far from being depleted;
 - (d) given the high management fees for the MPF, he said that it would be appreciated if they could be adjusted downward following the implementation of “MPF semi-portability”, so as to prevent fund managers from being the only ones who made profits; and
 - (e) the Government could consider adjusting the contribution rate of the MPF without raising taxes, and it should endeavour to deliver on its commitment to cancelling the offsetting mechanism.
10. The views of Mr LI Sai-hung were summarised below:

- (a) it had been proved more than a decade ago that a universal retirement protection scheme could be implemented as long as there was enough capital injection from the Government;
- (b) the Government was not aware of the difficulties faced by the youth or the elderly. The monthly Old Age Living Allowance (OALA) of \$2,390 per month was not enough to make ends meet;
- (c) many elderly persons were eligible for neither CSSA nor OALA. Since the system currently in place couldn't offer them help, he therefore hoped for the implementation of a universal retirement protection scheme; and
- (d) while the option proposed by Professor Nelson Chow was close to the public expectation, it was not adopted by the Government.

11. The views of Mr CHAN Billy Shiu-yeung were summarised below:

- (a) since both simulated options of “regardless of rich or poor” and “those with financial needs” seemed unrealistic, the Government could consider other options, for example, the option proposed by Professor Nelson Chow;
- (b) while having access to a large fiscal reserve and surplus, the Government, instead of using them to implement a universal retirement protection scheme, for which there was an urgent need, however, utilised them solely on major construction works;
- (c) the public was unhappy about the indicator of \$80,000, stating that it might result in a labelling effect. People called for a retirement protection scheme that would benefit all community members; and
- (d) it was difficult for the low-income group to have sufficient savings.

12. The views of Mr CHAN Kwok-keung, James were summarised below:

- (a) he enquired whether the estimated population growth included the number of mainland citizens immigrating to Hong Kong, and which age group the Government had selected for its estimates;
- (b) the MPF failed to benefit retirees, making a loss on top of the high service fees; and
- (c) since District Council Members did not have to make contributions to the MPF, he enquired whether they belonged to the working class or the privileged class.

13. The views of Mr WONG Hok-lai were summarised below:

- (a) the Government should consider cancelling the offsetting mechanism of the MPF, for it would exploit employees' benefits;

- (b) five of the 19 MPF-approved trustees accounted for approximately 70% of the contribution. Operating in a monopolised market, the MPF failed to serve its saving function;
- (c) he enquired whether the implementation of a universal retirement protection scheme would mean higher MPF contribution for employers or employees; and
- (d) failing to benefit all the elderly, the asset limit of \$80,000 should be increased.

14. The views of Mr YAU Man-chun were summarised below:

- (a) the asset limit of \$80,000 was too low, and many elderly persons would not be able to benefit from it; and
- (b) he urged the Government to consider the option proposed by Professor Nelson Chow.

15. The views of Mr WONG Ka-wing were summarised below:

- (a) as to the issues of an ageing population and the shortage of labour force, the Government failed to develop any long-term policy to address the issues attributable to structural factors; and
- (b) he urged the Government to first work on encouraging childbearing and the immigration policies, and then change public perceptions about working in general and motivate the young people to make savings.

16. The views of Ms PONG Scarlett Oi-lan were summarised below:

- (a) she said that childbearing ought to be encouraged and that she looked forward to seeing women and early-retirees join the labour market;
- (b) improvements could be made to the offsetting mechanism, investment options and the level of fees and charges of the MPF. In addition to funds, equities could also be introduced as an additional option;
- (c) despite their contribution to society, housewives were not protected under any scheme;
- (d) the Government could provide a few investment vehicles that were more conservative in nature as options for retirees; and
- (e) in addition to calling for an enhanced effort in promoting the “Reverse Mortgage Programme”, she also suggested that the elderly should be encouraged to live with their children. In this regard, she proposed tax reduction for the children or allocation of designated public housing.

17. The views of Mr WONG Yue-hon were summarised below:

- (a) he said that with its low investment returns and high management fees, the MPF should be reformed, and he suggested that it should be managed by the Government;
- (b) a 50-year option would start to record expenditure exceeding its income after 20 years. In addition, asking companies with profits over an amount of \$10,000,000 to pay the profits tax at 1.9% might also cause a decrease in employees' salaries; and
- (c) he said that it would be fairer and more effective to introduce a sales tax.

18. The views of Mr CHIU Chu-pong, Sunny were summarised below:

- (a) setting the limit at \$80,000 might not necessarily provide benefits on a universal basis. The elderly would need to lead a life with dignity, but they could not make ends meet relying on the subsidies alone, and people would label them for receiving the CSSA;
- (b) while the Government spent a large amount of resources on the major infrastructure works, it however, did not inject more resources for the benefits of the elderly;
- (c) the Government pointed out that a universal retirement protection scheme would result in increased tax burdens on the youth, causing them to take a position against the elderly. In fact, the youth would also benefit from the universal retirement protection scheme;
- (d) setting the limit at \$80,000 would create sandwiched elderly persons, who would suffered from great difficulties yet could not benefit from the option;
- (e) with its low investment returns, the MPF was found not very useful; and
- (f) the Government could raise taxes on major consortia.

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

- (a) the Government lacked insight and adopted an approach far too conservative for its fiscal arrangement;
- (b) the amount of reserved \$50 billion as funds was far from enough to finance the retirement protection scheme, on which the public placed so much hope, and only minor amendments had been made to the four-pillar approach;
- (c) despite a large number of participants under the MPF scheme, the Government failed to resolve the issues such as high administrative fees and offsetting of the MPF. He suggested that management of the MPF should be taken over by the Government;

- (d) he looked forward to seeing the age limit for the Elderly Health Care Vouchers adjusted downward to 65. That would help relieve the pressure on public hospitals and make the scheme fiscally bearable for the Government; and
- (e) the age threshold for receiving the Old Age Allowance could also be lowered to 65.

20. The views of Mr HUI Yui-yu, Rick were summarised below:

- (a) while no means test was set under the option proposed by Professor Nelson Chow, there was however, a \$80,000 limit for the simulated options suggested by the Government, which might be adopted to replace the OALA and CSSA; and
- (b) he enquired how the amount of \$3,230 was calculated. In his opinion, such an amount was not enough to make ends meet.

21. The views of Mr CHAN Nok-hang were summarised below:

- (a) one should be able to unconditionally receive a fixed amount to maintain his living upon retirement. However, at present, suggestion made by the Government was not a universal retirement protection scheme. It was a measure aimed at alleviating poverty instead;
- (b) the Government failed to take the feelings of the elderly into consideration. Many of them claimed to have no financial needs because they were current CSSA recipients, or unwilling to receive allowance because they needed to ask their children to present the “declaration of not providing support to parents”;
- (c) the grant currently provided to the elderly was not enough to maintain a living; and
- (d) the MPF offsetting mechanism had incurred high costs for employees, while the Government had spent a large amount of funds on major construction projects.

22. The views of Mr PANG Cheung-wai, Thomas were summarised below:

- (a) various sectors in the community had expressed their opinions on retirement protection, suggesting that the Government should broaden its revenue base while containing expenditure, with a view to guaranteeing people to lead a secured life after retirement. As raising taxes might prove to be difficult, a feasible alternative would be to impose a few additional taxes on large enterprises with profits exceeding \$100 million;
- (b) with a tax structure similar to those adopted by its neighbours, Hong Kong should avoid introducing too many taxes, lest they affected Hong Kong's competitiveness;

- (c) the \$80,000 limit was far too low. Under the circumstances of a longer life expectancy and increased living expenses, retirees would still be anxious even in possession of assets of higher values. The testing system should therefore be adjusted based on current social conditions;
- (d) the Government could consider lowering the age limit for the Elderly Health Care Vouchers and the Old Age Allowance to 65; and
- (e) the Government should figure out the ways to resolve the issues in relation to the offsetting mechanism, with a view to achieving a more effective management of the MPF.

23. The views of the Chairman were summarised below:

- (a) she urged the Government to respond to the public demand for the implementation of a universal retirement protection scheme; and
- (b) the Government seldom mentioned the source of its funds in the consultation document. She said that the Government should propose different options so that the public could make comparison.

24. Mr CHEUNG Kin-chung, Matthew gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) as some of the elderly were capable of providing for themselves, the Government should allocate resources to those elderly persons with actual needs;
- (b) according to the data from the Census and Statistics Department, decreases had been recorded for both the working population and the number of mainland citizens coming to Hong Kong for family reunion;
- (c) the amount of \$3,230 was calculated by adding the inflation rate to the amount of \$3,000 suggested by Professor Nelson Chow three years ago;
- (d) there was no political agenda behind the \$80,000 limit. It was set solely for the purpose of comparing the two simulated options, namely “regardless of rich or poor” and “those with financial needs”. The asset limit for the elderly singletons under the current CSSA Scheme was \$43,500. The simulated option of “those with financial needs” was therefore set with an asset limit of approximately twice the amount;
- (e) a calculator for the simulated option of “those with financial needs” was available at the consultation website for retirement protection. It could calculate the number of beneficiaries under different asset limits, additional expenses and changes in tax increases;

- (f) it should not be neglected that one of the downsides of introducing sales tax was its impact on the grassroots. In addition, raising taxes on enterprises would undermine Hong Kong's competitiveness. Any change made to the tax system might have an impact on Hong Kong's economy, affecting its employment, investment, competitiveness, etc.;
- (g) the Government had reservations about implementing a universal retirement protection scheme, stating that resources should be focused on those in need. The Government would like to listen to opinions from various sectors so as to improve the existing system;
- (h) according to the information available, approximately 250 000 elderly persons would receive additional financial support if the asset limit was set at \$80,000 for the stimulated option of "those with financial needs"; and
- (i) the OALA was not a minimum financial support provided to the elderly. Should its asset limit be adjusted downward, it was likely that its beneficiaries would fall into the CSSA net.

25. Mr CHU Ho-fai, Kelvin, Executive Officer (District Council) 1 of the Sha Tin District Office said that the Secretariat had attached the presentation (in PDF format) to an email, which had been sent to members on 22 April 2016.

2016-2017 Work Plan of Sha Tin District Social Welfare Office
(Paper No. EW 5/2016)

26. Mrs LEE CHEUNG Yat-wai, Gloria, District Social Welfare Officer (Shatin) of the Social Welfare Department (SWD) introduced the contents of paper.

27. The views of Mr CHING Cheung-ying were summarised below:

- (a) the grassroots, especially the new arrivals, knew very little about the social services in Hong Kong, and they did not know how to seek help when they encountered difficulties. He urged the relevant parties to contact those people and gain a deeper understanding about them through various community caring activities;
- (b) while he did not object to Dr. & Mrs. Olinto de Sousa Integrated Family Service Centre (IFSC) serving the constituencies of Chun Fung and Sun Tin Wai, he however, said that the same person should be appointed to follow up the cases, and that the said centre should commence a publicity exercise in the district as soon as practicable;
- (c) in view of the long waiting time for the Residential Care Homes (RCHs), he urged the Government to place an importance on the issue; and
- (d) the inadequate support provided to the ex-mentally ill people may easily cause trouble at the community level.

28. The views of Mr CHAN Billy Shiu-yeung were summarised below:

- (a) with regard to the “Collaboration Programme of Elderly Services in the Sha Tin District” and “Improvement Programme of Elderly Centres”, he urged the SWD to consider providing additional home for the aged places;
- (b) as many of the socially withdrawn adolescents insisted on staying at home, the collaboration programme of “Sha Tin Youth Community Ambassadors” proved less than successful. He looked forward to seeing its outreach programme being carried out online; and
- (c) the child care services provided in the district could no longer meet the needs. He enquired about the measures that the SWD could implement to help the working parents.

29. Mr WONG Ka-wing said that some of the socially withdrawn elderly who lived on their own might be suffering from emotional or mental disorders. He proposed to allocate additional resources to non-governmental organisations for implementing the Neighbourhood Mutual Help Programme (such as forming recreational groups, interest groups, volunteer teams, etc.), with a view to enhancing interaction.

30. The views of Mr HO Hau-cheung were summarised below:

- (a) he was unable to get a full picture of the situation in the Sha Tin District due to a lack of relevant data and information;
- (b) he enquired of the SWD how it monitored the quality of services provided by social welfare organisations. He said that in addition to coordinating with the non-governmental organisations, the SWD should also monitor their services; and
- (c) in light of the very few channels through which the youth could provide their services to the social welfare sector, he suggested that the SWD should organise summer internship programmes.

31. The views of Mr TONG Hok-leung were summarised below:

- (a) he enquired how the SWD would help those who had to take leave temporarily due to injuries;
- (b) in view of the undersupply of Residential Respite Service for people with disabilities, he urged the Government to help those families in need;
- (c) in view of the shortage of subsidised RCHs and their long waiting time, he urged the Government to introduce additional places, which should be included in its planning; and

- (d) he said that the support available to new immigrants was inadequate, and thus suggested that the SWD should take the initiative to offer assistance to them.

32. The views of Mr YAU Man-chun were summarised below:

- (a) the IFSC in North Sha Tin will serve Shui Chuen O Estate. In view of a lack of transportation supporting facilities, he suggested that Bus Route No. 81K should travel via Shui Chuen O Estate to reach Wo Che Estate, and he urged the SWD to pass on the advice to the Transport Department; and
- (b) he thanked the frontline staff from the SWD for helping with the referral of relevant cases.

33. The views of Mr NG Kam-hung were summarised below:

- (a) in view of the inadequate provision of care services and RCHs for the elderly in Sha Tin, as well as the extremely long waiting time for residential places, he urged the SWD to reflect to the Government these issues caused by the worsening problem of an ageing population; and
- (b) with regard to the inadequate pre-school services in Sha Tin and Tai Wai, he suggested that space should be reserved in the newly built government buildings for the provision of such services.

34. The views of Ms WONG Ping-fan, Iris were summarised below:

- (a) with inadequate services and support in the Bik Woo area, residents had to visit the youth centres and centres for the elderly in City One Shatin, whose service capacity was already saturated;
- (b) the SWD provided inadequate support to new housing estates. Taking Shek Mun Estate as an example, no social service organisations had been established six years after its intake. Although some youth activities had been held at the estate in recent years, services relating to marriage, education and mental rehabilitation remained scarce;
- (c) there was an overwhelming demand for child care services that far exceeded the current supply in the district. In light of the difficulties encountered during the promotion of home-based child care service, she suggested that the said service could be matched and allocated on a small community basis; and
- (d) she understood that it was difficult to find suitable places to provide welfare services in private residential areas, but she still hoped that the needs of residents living in private buildings could be catered for. She suggested that the SWD should initiate negotiations with owners' corporations or management offices.

35. The views of Mr YUNG Ming-chau, Michael were summarised below:

- (a) given the fact that the intake of the new and expanded housing estates (e.g. Shui Chuen O Estate) had gradually commenced in recent years, he was worried that the resources would be depleted following the service rationalisation. Capable of serving a population between 100 000 and 150 000, family service centres had their service area determined by the Director of Social Welfare. He urged the Director of Social Welfare to allocate additional resources to set up the sixth IFSC in the Sha Tin District, with a view to meeting the demand of new tenants and residents;
- (b) given that Shing Mun River East was currently in need of a service centre, he asked if it was possible to rationalise the current services. As the existing service centre was located in a place without easy transport access, residents might need to take a long journey to get there. He looked forward to seeing additional resources allocated to each of the IFSCs; and
- (c) currently, no space at Yan On Estate could be vacated to accommodate social welfare organisations. He urged the SWD to ask the Housing Department (HD) to reserve some space for these organisations when expanding the housing estates in the future.

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

- (a) many residents in the district, suspected of suffering from mental disorder, affected their neighbours and posed potential danger. The SWD, however, seemed to have taken no corresponding measures; and
- (b) the SWD failed to effectively deal with individual residents who were suspected of suffering from mental disorder. She urged the SWD to work out more effective solutions, and to share with the local residents how to live in harmony with those people.

37. Mr WONG Fu-sang, Tiger pointed out that as some patients in the district diagnosed with mental disorder failed to attend follow-up consultations, their cases therefore, could only be followed up when their families sought help. He urged the SWD to actively provide assistance to those in need.

38. The views of the Chairman were summarised below:

- (a) she enquired whether the estimates about population growth were taken into account when planning the current re-demarcation of geographical service boundaries for the IFSCs;
- (b) as the SWD failed to inform each of the areas concerned that the re-demarcation of geographical service boundaries would take effect from 16 May 2016, she suggested that the Internet could be utilised for the dissemination of information;

- (c) she urged the SWD to inform members and other social welfare organisations of the service hours of each family service centre;
- (d) she wished to be informed of the implementation schedule of the Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly; and
- (e) she urged the SWD to meet the demand for child care services in the district.

39. Mrs LEE CHEUNG Yat-wai, Gloria gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) with the consent of the new arrivals to provide information when they arrived in Hong Kong, the Immigration Department staff would forward their information to the IFSCs of different districts, including the service units in the Sha Tin District. The SWD would invite and arrange them to visit the service centres where social services in Hong Kong would be introduced. Since new arrivals might not find themselves in need of welfare support until they had lived in Hong Kong for a certain period of time, she therefore, encouraged members of the mutual aid committees or community members to promote the “Family Caring Ambassador” scheme in collaboration, with a view to getting in touch with and providing assistance to the new arrivals;
- (b) the SWD had started preparing for the publicity work in collaboration with Dr. & Mrs. Olinto de Sousa IFSC, whose staff would promote the services in areas near Chun Fung and Sun Tin Wai after briefing members;
- (c) in view of a growing elderly population, a new RCH had been set up in Tai Wai, and more would also be put into service in the future. For example, an RCH with 100 places would be set up to serve Shui Chuen O Estate, and additional RCHs would be provided for Shek Mun Estate Phase II and other new housing estates in Fo Tan;
- (d) the SWD aimed at continuously reinforcing community care services for the elderly, and thus the number of service vouchers would increase from the current 1 200 to 1 800, reaching 3 000 in total during the second phase of the Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly. The Sha Tin District had achieved a satisfactory utilisation rate of vouchers during the first phase of the said scheme, with a small number of quotas remaining at only a few centres;
- (e) since the Prince of Wales Hospital and Shatin Hospital provided psychiatric services in the Sha Tin District, the SWD would discuss matters related to mental wellness in the district with their doctors at scheduled meetings. A total of two Integrated Community Centres for Mental Wellness in the district, were providing one-stop services, such as conducting outreaching activities and establishing contact with psychiatric healthcare staff. Residents or members were encouraged to take the initiative to contact the said centres for follow-up actions when they found people in need of psychiatric services;

- (f) in respect of youth services, though the Pilot Cyber Youth Outreaching Projects had come to an end, the SWD still committed to offering follow-up services in collaboration with social welfare organisations. The SWD would pass on members' comments to the headquarters;
- (g) provision of child care services in the Sha Tin District reported continued growth. A child care centre with 100 places would be set up at Shek Mun Estate to serve families with working parents. With regard to the difficulties in implementing home-based child care service, the SWD would discuss matters related to service promotion with the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in charge of its launch, with a view to encouraging more women to join the service;
- (h) currently, all elderly centres in the Sha Tin District provided supporting services for the elderly, including recruiting volunteers to visit socially withdrawn elders;
- (i) the SWD would study and follow up members' request for providing district-based figures;
- (j) in terms of planning, the Department would reserve lands for accommodation based on the future growth in the elderly population;
- (k) enhanced resilience was useful in relieving stress, which would help the young people with their personal development and enable parents to have better care for their children. The SWD had established a working group that aimed at strengthening family resilience last year. It provided assistance to families in need through cross-sector collaboration;
- (l) a counselling centre would be established at Shui Chuen O Estate, which would be available for use by staff from the IFSCs to meet with residents;
- (m) no space at Shek Mun Estate Phase 1 had been reserved for social service facilities at its planning stage. Therefore, social service units nearby currently provided outreach and project-based services to residents. Also, there were organisations that had applied for the Community Investment and Inclusion Fund, preparing to offer a wider range of services at Shek Mun Estate. Moreover, social service units of City One Shatin also served neighbouring private buildings;
- (n) each of the IFSCs served a predetermined population, with its planning standard based on, among others factors, economic conditions and social indicators of the corresponding district. While the SWD understood that the service demand was likely to increase as the population in the Sha Tin District grew, it was of the view that the current service level was still sufficient. Therefore, the five IFSCs currently serving the Sha Tin District should prove to be capable of addressing the needs of Shui Chuen O Estate as well as the new housing estates of which the intake would shortly start. The SWD would continue to review the service demand and apply for additional resources if necessary;

- (o) with regard to supervising the NGOs in the district, the Subventions Branch under the SWD headquarters, was responsible for supervising compliance of staff, service quality and standard of each of the subvented organisations with the requirements of their respective service agreements. The District Social Welfare Offices would also monitor the services provided by the said organisations and report the problems to the headquarters, if any;
- (p) the service units under the SWD office in the Sha Tin District also organised job shadowing and visiting activities for secondary school students, aiming to promote youth engagement in social welfare services; and
- (q) the SWD would follow up with members individual cases that they were concerned about.

40. Members noted the above paper.

Establishment of Working Groups under the Committee
(Paper No. EW 6/2016)

41. The Chairman asked members to consider whether they agreed to establish the following three standing working groups and endorse their terms of reference in accordance with the proposal set out in the paper:

- (a) Working Group on Age-friendly Community;
- (b) Working Group on Education and Youth Affairs; and
- (c) Working Group on Family and Women Affairs.

42. Members unanimously endorsed the establishment of the aforementioned three working groups and their terms of reference.

43. The Chairman proposed to elect convenors of the working groups based on the following criteria and procedures:

- (a) the convenor of any working group must be a District Council Member;
- (b) each candidate must be nominated by one member and seconded by at least two other members;
- (c) in the event of there being one candidate only, the candidate in question should be deemed to be elected ipso facto; and
- (d) in the event of there being more than one candidate, the convenor should then be elected by show of hands by members present on the basis that the one nominated earlier should be voted on first, with the candidate who obtained the absolute majority of votes winning the election.

44. Members unanimously endorsed that the convenors of the working groups would be elected based on the aforementioned criteria and procedures.

45. The Chairman asked members to nominate a candidate to act as the Convenor of the Working Group on Age-friendly Community.

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Nominator</u>	<u>Second</u>
Ms PONG Scarlett Oi-lan	Mr WONG Yue-hon	Mr TONG Hok-leung Mr LEE Chi-wing, Alvin Ms CHAN Man-kuen

46. There being no other nominees, the Chairman forthwith declared the nomination closed, and that Ms PONG Scarlett Oi-lan was elected ipso facto as the Convenor of the Working Group on Age-friendly Community.

47. Subsequent to completion of the election procedures for the Convenor of the Working Group on Age-friendly Community, the election of the Convenor of the Working Group on Education and Youth Affairs forthwith commenced.

48. The Chairman asked members to nominate a candidate to act as the Convenor of the Working Group on Education and Youth Affairs.

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Nominator</u>	<u>Second</u>
Mr WONG Yue-hon	Ms PONG Scarlett Oi-lan	Mr LI Sai-wing Mr TONG Hok-leung

49. There being no other nominees, the Chairman forthwith declared the nomination closed, and that Mr WONG Yue-hon was elected ipso facto as the Convenor of the Working Group on Education and Youth Affairs.

50. Subsequent to completion of the election procedures for the Convenor of the Working Group on Education and Youth Affairs, the election of the Convenor of the Working Group on Family and Women Affairs forthwith commenced.

51. The Chairman asked members to nominate a candidate to act as the Convenor of the Working Group on Family and Women Affairs.

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Nominator</u>	<u>Second</u>
Ms CHAN Man-kuen	Ms WONG Ping-fan, Iris	Ms TUNG Kin-lei Ms PONG Scarlett Oi-lan

52. There being no other nominees, the Chairman forthwith declared the nomination closed, and that Ms CHAN Man-kuen was elected ipso facto as the Convenor of the Working Group on Family and Women Affairs.

53. Members unanimously endorsed that the terms of office for the aforementioned three working groups would commence on 3 May 2016 and expire on 31 December 2019, being the end of the Committee's term of office.

Funding Scheme for Age-friendly Community
(Paper No. EW 7/2016)

54. Members unanimously endorsed the above paper.

Questions

Question to be Raised by Mr WAI Hing-cheung on the School Place Issue of Hong Kong Baptist University Affiliated School Wong Kam Fai Secondary and Primary School
(Paper No. EW 8/2016)

55. The views of Mr WAI Hing-cheung were summarised below:

- (a) according to the information provided by the Hong Kong Baptist University Affiliated School Wong Kam Fai Secondary and Primary School (HKBUAS), over the past three years, its primary school had received an average of thousands of applications for Primary 1 admission every year, while the applications for its secondary school averaged hundreds on an annual basis. He urged the Education Bureau (EDB) to provide the exact figures;
- (b) since the EDB mentioned that the school in question and the Bureau itself had both received enquiries raised by parents, he said that he would like to be informed of the relevant contents. As the EDB also mentioned that some parents had urged the school to raise the ratio for admitting students from the Sha Tin District, he pointed out that parents would also like to know the possibility of revising the said ratio;
- (c) the ratio for admitting schoolchildren from the Sha Tin District could only be revised upon mutual consent between the HKBUAS and the Sha Tin District Council (STDC). Since the school expressed no inclination to make such amendment, he looked forward to discussing the issue at the meeting; and
- (d) it had been more than ten years since 2004 when the HKBUAS guaranteed that its annual ratio for admitting students living in the Sha Tin District would not exceed 15% of its school places. However, the circumstances in the district (for example, its population) were no longer the same. He hoped he would have an opportunity to discuss with the school about the necessity to determine the ratio anew.

56. The views of Mr HO Hau-cheung were summarised below:

- (a) the STDC did offer advice when the HKBUAS was founded. Many school sponsoring bodies and principals from the district bore witness as the school gave the above guarantee;
- (b) he enquired whether others district schools like the HKBUAS, which operated on the mode of “through-train” under the Direct Subsidy Scheme, had given similar guarantees. As it had been over ten years, he said that such guarantee(s) could be discussed and reviewed anew; and

- (c) he was inviting in person associations of heads of primary and secondary schools and school sponsoring bodies in the district to a non-official tea gathering, with a view to learning about the education services in the district as well as difficulties encountered. He invited all members to join, and suggested that they should comment on matters related to the HKBUAS in the gathering.

57. The views of Mr WONG Yue-hon were summarised below:

- (a) many parents in the Sha Tin District would like their children to be enrolled by the HKBUAS, but there was still an over-supply of school places for secondary schools in the district. For those secondary schools in other districts, they should also undertake to avoid over-enrolment, with a view to preventing the Government from shutting down a school through legal or administrative measures; and
- (b) he urged the EDB to provide information about admission to Secondary 1 for reference. The Bureau should also consult other stakeholders (e.g. the association of heads of secondary schools) for their opinions before discussing whether the ratio guaranteed could be revised.

58. The views of Mr PANG Cheung-wai, Thomas were summarised below:

- (a) when the HKBUAS was founded, the principals of various primary and secondary schools were worried that their schools might be shut down due to an under-admission of students. However, the promise was made because a school under the Direct Subsidy Scheme would benefit the residents in the district;
- (b) he said that the HKBUAS should be allowed to decide on its own whether the ratio should be revised. Then, further discussion would be carried out after consulting the association of heads of secondary and primary schools to avoid interfering with the school policies; and
- (c) he suggested that the Committee should pass on the question and the relevant minutes of meeting to the HKBUAS, so that the school could decide on its own whether the ratio should be revised.

59. Mrs YU CHOW Kai-ching, Alice, Senior School Development Officer (Sha Tin) 4 of the EDB gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) according to information provided by the HKBUAS, over the past three years, its primary school had received an average of several thousands of applications for Primary 1 admission every year, among which approximately 20% were from schoolchildren living in the Sha Tin District. And those admitted from Sha Tin accounted for an average of approximately 15% of the school places for Primary 1 offered by the school;
- (b) as Primary 6 students of the HKBUAS could be directly admitted to its Secondary 1 classes, the school places of Secondary 1 available for outside

applicants every year decreased accordingly. One could visit the school website or make enquiries by phone for more information about application for admission to the school;

- (c) given the large number of applicants for admission to the HKBUAS from various districts throughout the territory in recent years, the school, therefore, had no intention to propose to the STDC the amendment of the current ratio for admitting students from the Sha Tin District;
- (d) the STDC had raised its concern about the school building programme when the HKBUAS was founded in 2004. In this regard, the school sponsoring body of the school in question had guaranteed to maintain the annual ratio for admitting students living in the Sha Tin District at or less than 15% of its school places. No such an arrangement had been made for the schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme in other districts; and
- (e) the EDB used to receive individual enquiries from parents about the admission arrangement of the HKBUAS.

60. The Chairman agreed to pass on the question and relevant minutes of meeting to the HKBUAS. She also suggested that this issue could be discussed again at the aforementioned non-official tea gathering.

Secretariat

Question to be Raised by Mr YAU Man-chun on School Places at Kindergarten and Primary School Levels in the District
(Paper No. EW 9/2016)

61. The views of Mr YAU Man-chun were summarised below:

- (a) the kindergarten at Shui Chuen O Estate still had not entered into a contract with the HD. Since kindergarten children usually started school in August, he was worried that the kindergarten would not have enough time to admit students. He therefore urged the EDB to communicate with the relevant school sponsoring body. In case the said kindergarten could not commence operation in the current school year, he hoped that the EDB would notify the parents as soon as practicable;
- (b) he thanked the EDB for disclosing the number of vacant school places of the kindergartens located in close proximity of Shui Chuen O Estate;
- (c) although schools were allowed to admit 10% more students than their school places for every class, he was worried that schoolchildren would have to travel a long distance to attend schools in other districts because the school places of primary schools within School Net 91 were already saturated and more residents would move to Shui Chuen O Estate. He urged the EDB to communicate with those schools within School Net 91 in advance and make appropriate arrangements as soon as practicable to see if vacant classrooms were available for additional school places; and

- (d) he enquired how the EDB would allocate the students transferred to School Net 91. He also urged the EDB to provide relevant figures to help parents be mentally prepared.

62. Mrs YU CHOW Kai-ching, Alice gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) with regard to the kindergarten at Shui Chuen O Estate, the EDB had contacted its sponsoring body and was informed that its renovation and school registration procedures should commence upon completion of certain construction works. According to the preliminary estimates, the said kindergarten would start operation in the current school year. The EDB would closely monitor the progress; and
- (b) through the HD, the EDB had distributed application forms and contact information of schools in the Sha Tin District (including secondary, primary schools and kindergartens) to residents who would move to Shui Chuen O Estate, with a view to helping them transfer to schools in the district. The EDB had also written to primary schools nearby, notifying them to arrange school places for schoolchildren in need from Shui Chuen O Estate. These schools had gradually admitted the said schoolchildren with their remaining school places. As at April 2016, approximately 50 students had been registered to transfer to schools in the Sha Tin District in September 2016. Currently, there were still adequate vacant school places in School Net 91 to take in transferred students from Shui Chuen O Estate. The EDB would notify parents of the relevant school place arrangements as soon as practicable. If necessary, the EDB would also make use of the vacant classrooms in schools in the district to approve additional classes for relevant grades so as to meet the demand for school places.

Information Papers

Number of Newly Arrived Mainland Children Admitted to Public Sector Secondary and Primary Schools in Sha Tin District Provided by the Education Bureau
(Paper No. EW 10/2016)

63. Members noted the above paper.

The Respective Numbers of Schools, School Places and Students in Sha Tin
(Paper No. EW 11/2016)

64. Members noted the above paper.

2016-2017 Approved Estimates of an Expenditure Head under the Committee
(Paper No. EW 12/2016)

65. Members noted the above paper.

Date of Next Meeting

66. The next meeting will be held at 2:30 pm on 28 June 2016 (Tuesday).
67. The meeting was adjourned at 6:16 pm

Secretariat of the Sha Tin District Council

STDC 13/15/35 V

June 2016