

Sha Tin District Council
Minutes of the 3rd Meeting of
the Education and Welfare Committee in 2018

Date : 2 May 2018 (Wednesday)
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	5:34 pm
Mr WONG Fu-sang, Tiger (Vice-Chairman)	"	2:30 pm	5:34 pm
Mr HO Hau-cheung, SBS, MH	DC Chairman	2:30 pm	5:34 pm
Mr CHAN Billy Shiu-yeung	DC Member	2:30 pm	3:32 pm
Mr CHAN Kwok-keung, James	"	2:30 pm	3:12 pm
Ms CHAN Man-kuen	"	2:30 pm	5:34 pm
Mr CHAN Nok-hang	"	2:34 pm	3:32 pm
Mr CHING Cheung-ying, MH	"	2:30 pm	5:34 pm
Mr CHIU Chu-pong, Sunny	"	2:30 pm	3:33 pm
Mr CHIU Man-leong	"	2:30 pm	5:04 pm
Mr HUI Yui-yu, Rick	"	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Mr LAI Tsz-yan	"	2:30 pm	5:08 pm
Mr LEUNG Ka-fai, Victor	"	2:30 pm	4:07 pm
Mr LI Sai-hung	"	2:34 pm	5:01 pm
Mr LI Sai-wing	"	2:30 pm	3:28 pm
Mr LI Wing-shing, Wilson	"	2:30 pm	3:28 pm
Mr MOK Kam-kwai, BBS	"	2:36 pm	3:37 pm
Mr NG Kam-hung	"	2:58 pm	3:27 pm
Mr PUN Kwok-shan, MH	"	2:30 pm	4:41 pm
Mr SIU Hin-hong	"	2:30 pm	5:34 pm
Mr TING Tsz-yuen	"	2:48 pm	4:07 pm
Mr TONG Hok-leung	"	2:30 pm	4:00 pm
Ms TUNG Kin-lei	"	2:30 pm	5:06 pm
Mr WAI Hing-cheung	"	2:51 pm	5:34 pm
Mr WONG Hok-lai	"	2:30 pm	5:15 pm
Mr WONG Ka-wing, MH	"	2:41 pm	5:34 pm
Ms WONG Ping-fan, Iris	"	2:30 pm	5:34 pm
Mr WONG Yue-hon	"	2:39 pm	5:18 pm
Mr YAU Man-chun	"	2:30 pm	3:15 pm
Mr YIP Wing	"	2:30 pm	5:34 pm
Mr YIU Ka-chun	"	2:30 pm	5:34 pm
Ms YUE Shin-man	"	2:38 pm	3:59 pm
Mr YUNG Ming-chau, Michael	"	2:36 pm	5:34 pm
Mr MOK Man-lok, Mannix (Secretary)	Executive Officer (District Council) 1 / Sha Tin District Office		

In Attendance

Mr CHAN Ping-ching, Roy

Ms CHIU Lo-man

Ms LAU Yuk-yee, Lydia

Ms CHENG Siu-ling, Katy

Mr YUEN Chun-kit, Derek

TitleAssistant District Social Welfare Officer (Shatin) 1 /
Social Welfare DepartmentSenior School Development Officer (Sha Tin) 4 /
Education BureauHousing Manager (Tai Po, North and Sha Tin 1) /
Housing DepartmentChief Liaison Officer /
Sha Tin District OfficeSenior Executive Officer (District Council) /
Sha Tin District Office**In Attendance by Invitation**

Ms CHAN Yuen-han, SBS, JP

Mr CHAU Kwan-yat, Edwin

Mrs LEE CHEUNG Yat-wai, Gloria

Ms LI Wing-sze, Grace

Title

Chairperson / Women's Commission

Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare) /
Labour and Welfare BureauDistrict Social Welfare Officer (Shatin) /
Social Welfare DepartmentAssistant District Social Welfare Officer (Shatin)2 /
Social Welfare Department**Absent**

Mr PANG Cheung-wai, Thomas, SBS, JP

Mr LEE Chi-wing, Alvin

Mr MAK Yun-pui

Ms PONG Scarlett Oi-lan, BBS, JP

Ms TSANG So-lai

Title

DC Vice-Chairman (Application for leave of absence received)

DC Member (")

" (")

" (")

" (")

Action

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

Application for Leave of Absence

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

Mr Thomas PANG	Official commitment
Mr Alvin LEE	"
Mr MAK Yun-pui	"
Ms Scarlett PONG	"
Ms TSANG So-lai	"

3. Members unanimously endorsed the applications for leave of absence submitted by the members above.

Confirmation of the Minutes of the Meeting Held on 6 March 2018

(EWC Minutes 2/2018)

4. Members unanimously confirmed the above minutes.

Discussion Items

2018-2019 Work Plans and Funding Applications of Working Groups under the Committee
(Paper No. EW 8/2018)

5. The Chairman said under Order 40(6) of the Sha Tin District Council (STDC) Standing Orders, “a ‘standing working group’ should draw up the work plan for the first quarter of each financial year, and submit it to the relevant committee for endorsement. Any amendment to the work plan should be submitted to the relevant committee for endorsement. The work plan should be submitted to the Council for endorsement if necessary.” In order to let the Working Groups under the Committee start the preparatory work as soon as possible, the Working Groups had approved the 2018-2019 work plans and relevant funding applications.

6. Members unanimously endorsed the above paper.

Updated Membership Lists of Working Groups under the Committee
(Paper No. EW 9/2018)

7. Members unanimously endorsed the above paper.

An Outline of the Topics to be Covered in the Fourth Report of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
(Paper No. EW 10/2018)

8. The Chairman welcomed Ms CHAN Yuen-han, Chairperson of the Women’s Commission (WoC) and Mr Edwin CHAU, Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare) of the Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) to the meeting.

9. Ms CHAN Yuen-han introduced the contents of the paper.

10. Mr James CHAN said regarding 57(d) of Annex B of the paper, “to consider extending the applicability of the Palermo Protocol to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, and enact laws to comprehensively combat trafficking of women”, he pointed out that there were one-woman brothels in Hong Kong, especially in the Yau Tsim Mong District. The Police often arrested women from South East Asia or the Mainland who contravened the conditions of stay. It was widely known that vice activities were under triad control and such problem could be regarded as trafficking of women. Many foreign magazines described Hong Kong as a hub of trafficking of women. For the sake of Hong Kong’s international image, he hoped that the Chairperson would pay more attention and help solve the problem.

11. The views of Mr SIU Hin-hong were summarised below:

- (a) women being leaders were quite common nowadays. While the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Convention) was achieving success, relatively speaking, it was more necessary to protect men by a convention. For example, for homosexual issue, male homosexuals generally faced stronger discrimination in society than female homosexuals;
- (b) in respect of maternity leave, women were entitled to a maternity leave for 14 weeks in foreign countries. In some countries, men were also entitled to paternity leave. If men were not entitled to paternity leave, they could not take care of their wives who had just given birth to a child. He suggested that men be entitled to paternity leave. On the other hand, as providing parental leave to employees would bring higher operational cost to small and medium sized enterprises, he opined that the Government could provide allowance; and
- (c) he believed that the Convention was introduced long before and had already brought changes to society throughout the years. For example, men were responsible for housework in some of his friends' families and he was worried that there would be an imbalance in society. He was aware that Ms CHAN Yuen-han always worked efficiently, so he hoped that she could reflect to the Government that there was an increasing need to introduce a convention to protect men's rights and bring balance to society.

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

- (a) she said she was the Convenor of the Working Group on Family and Women Affairs and thanked the WoC for providing fund to the Working Group for organising activities all along. For example, an activity "Expressing Care by Showing Talent" was organised last year and it was popular. If more resources were allocated, the Working Group could organise activities of a larger scale. The Working Group would also organise activities this year and she hoped that Ms CHAN Yuen-han would join the activities;
- (b) people had an impression that women were supposed to stay at home and take care of their families. However, women's role in the job market had been more and more important nowadays and they hoped that they could be recognised in various aspects, for example, getting equal pay with men for equal work in the job market. Besides, women faced difficulty in fully committed to their jobs because they had to take care of their families. A woman had asked whether child care service could be enhanced. She cited herself as an example, saying that she had to take care of two children and did not have much time for her hobbies. She hoped that government policies could support women and allowed them to take care of their families and work at the same time;
- (c) for maternity leave, she asked whether the maternity leave could be extended to 14 weeks. Not only maternity leave, paternity leave for men was equally important as men could help take care of new born babies and do housework. She agreed with Mr SIU Hin-hong's views; and

- (d) she said Ms Scarlett PONG was paying a duty visit in Taiwan and could not attend this meeting. She was appointed by Ms Scarlett PONG to express on her behalf that she wished that the Government could pay attention to the issue of the retirement protection of housewives and safeguard their livelihood in their twilight years.

13. The views of Ms TUNG Kin-lei were summarised below:

- (a) women needed more protection in the community so that they would not be discriminated. She said that she had been encouraging the Government to promote the family-friendly policies. Currently, the work on releasing the labour force of women was not satisfactory, as mothers had to strike a balance between families and work and had to face great pressure. If better protection was provided, it could help women re-enter the labour market. She hoped that Ms CHAN Yuen-han could help fight for that; and
- (b) she opined that currently, women did not have enough protection at work. A Legislative Council Member had recently snatched a mobile phone from a female staff member and the incident had reflected this point. She hoped that Ms CHAN Yuen-han could strive for more protection for women at work from the Equal Opportunities Commission.

14. The views of Mr Michael YUNG were summarised below:

- (a) discrimination against women had improved over the past 10 years or so and the community had paid more respect to women. A member had mentioned the mobile phone-snatching incident and he believed it was just an individual case and should not be discussed on this occasion;
- (b) to create a women-friendly environment, work could be done in a few ways. The political party that he earlier belonged to had paid attention to this issue and a party member always mentioned the gender mainstreaming issue and it was not fair to stereotype women. In respect of the positioning of the issue, women needed equal treatment instead of privilege. In respect of employment, women could re-enter the labour market if more support was provided in kindergarten, but Hong Kong was not doing a good job in this regard. Members had visited the Ministry of Education of Singapore during the duty visit earlier, and found that measures were implemented in Singapore to support working women. They could leave their children in child care centres without worries. Women were encouraged to work;
- (c) in respect of education, some subjects were currently stereotyped. For example, it was generally considered that men were more suitable to study engineering disciplines. Such discrimination should be eliminated;
- (d) as maternity leave lasted for 10 weeks only, some members of the public had complained that employers were not considerate enough to mothers who had just given birth to children, especially those employers of medium and small enterprises. Employers might think they had to keep paying salary to the

employee while she was on leave. He asked whether it was possible to strengthen the protection through legislation;

- (e) in respect of the equal access to health facilities, there was no Women Health Centre in New Territories East. If illnesses could not be detected early because women were unable to undergo medical check-ups in time, this might increase the burden of health care service. Therefore, he believed it was necessary to discuss with the Department of Health to review the health care system, so as to enhance the health care service for grass-root women; and
- (f) from an economic point of view, women might be at a disadvantage. If there was no universal retirement protection scheme, women who spent their whole life taking care of their families might not be protected. Quite a number of members therefore called for the introduction of a universal retirement protection scheme. There were customs in villages, for example, properties could be inherited by men but not women. He respected traditional customs, but it was also important to consider how to help women live in the community in a more equal way.

15. The views of Ms Iris WONG were summarised below:

- (a) she agreed that maternity leave should be extended. At present, the Government encouraged breastfeeding but it was not widely accepted in terms of facilities or social atmosphere. As breastfeeding facilities were often located next to toilets, babies had to be fed next to toilets; and
- (b) sometimes mothers who breastfed their babies were filmed and publicly criticised when the film was uploaded online. Mothers were treated unfairly in this way. There was no statutory protection at present and the Government had not yet taken a stance on this issue. Even if there was legislation against sexual harassment faced by women at work, when it came to law enforcement, employers had not formulated any clear guidelines to deal with this problem. She hoped that relevant guidelines could be provided in future and the public would have a better understanding of this issue.

16. The views of Mr LI Sai-wing were summarised below:

- (a) he said that he had been striving for releasing the labour force of women over the past, and some school principals in the district also wished to make contribution in this aspect because encouraging women to work could bring additional family income and lessen the family burden. Some schools were willing to provide venues for child care service after school and students could stay at schools to do their homework, so that their mothers could work without worries;
- (b) he was aware that women encountered problems in daily lives. For example, some women said they were indecently assaulted on public transport modes like MTR during peak hours. There had been demand for women-only compartments, but no progress had been made yet. Women who were victims

of indecent assault had no channel to lodge their complaints. He hoped that Ms CHAN Yuen-han could help with the women-only compartment issue;

- (c) in respect of women welfare, he said when his wife was pregnant, obstetric and gynaecological service was not cheap and antenatal check-ups were expensive. He hoped that more welfare could be provided in this regard; and
- (d) he concurred that men were in need of care and attention, too. He had a teenage friend who worked as a steel fixer to earn more income for his family. He could only express his concern to his friend, and hoped that the Government could introduce policy which promoted gender equality as men needed care, too.

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

- (a) he said from his daily district work he could see that attention should be paid to women in a few aspects. Women had to make adaptations when they re-entered society after giving birth. The Government could provide more assistance in terms of breastfeeding facilities and employment, etc. Some women wished to get back to work after their children had grown up. The Government could provide assistance in training services;
- (b) many women still had to live with their ex-husbands after divorce due to government policies, and this caused problems. The implementation of alimony arrangement was also unsatisfactory; and
- (c) since some women lived longer than their spouses, it was necessary for the Government to provide additional counselling service and protection.

18. The views of Mr Wilson LI were summarised below:

- (a) he believed that it was important for Hong Kong to submit the report to the Central Government and the United Nations. Hong Kong had made progress in this aspect. For example, the ratio of male and female toilets had improved over the past 20 years, but there was still room for improvement. Regarding breastfeeding, in developed countries, breastfeeding rooms were not located next to toilets and breastfeeding was treated in a liberal way;
- (b) post-partum depression was common nowadays and would bring negative impact to families. The Government had not reviewed the existing 10-week maternity leave for a long time and had adopted a relatively conservative attitude. He believed that the maternity leave should be extended; and
- (c) sexes were often stereotyped. For example, when he studied in university, there were fewer female students in engineering disciplines. He believed that progress had already been made and society had begun to discuss family managers instead of housewives nowadays. It took time for society to make progress. As gender mainstreaming was vital, when the Government formulated its policies, different needs of male and female, and how to achieve

equal rights for the two genders should be considered. He and his political party opposed all forms of discrimination and hoped that Hong Kong could bring forth equal rights for the two genders.

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

- (a) a considerable part of the paper was about women employment and their role in family, and child care service was crucial in this aspect. At present, several ten thousand babies were born in Hong Kong each year, but just a few thousand places for child care service were insufficient. In some developed countries, subsidy was provided to families. As child care service in Hong Kong was insufficient, women therefore were unable to go out to work or even considered giving up having children. Attention should be drawn to this aspect; and
- (b) Hong Kong had made progress in eliminating discrimination against women. Many women were able to study in universities. In the University of Education in Hong Kong, the proportion of female students was even high up to 70%. In other words, actually men needed protection. The number of male university students kept dropping and there had been assumption that it was because boys and girls had not been separately ranked in the allocation of secondary school places since 1999 and boys were slower in development. He believed that the Government should pay attention to this issue.

20. The views of the Chairman were summarised below:

- (a) she said that women affairs was a subject of great importance to the STDC. The Working Group on Family and Women Affairs was set up under the EWC;
- (b) she said that she had just given birth and taken maternity leave for more than 10 weeks. But she still had to work during that period because district work kept going. She as a mother still had to take up most of the responsibilities to take care of the infant even though elder members of her family offered help. The Government could do a better job in releasing the labour force of women. There were only a two-digit number of child care centres in the Sha Tin District over the past 10 years and the number had not increased. Women could not feel at ease if their children were not taken care of properly and thus the labour force could not be released. The Government should step up efforts to enhance child care service; and
- (c) the Government had introduced life planning education. She asked whether it was possible to bring out the concepts such as jobs like engineers were not limited to men. She was aware that the Budget often allocated fund to support housewives. As they had made significant contribution to society, she asked how the Government could recognise their contribution. She hoped that Ms CHAN Yuen-han could help strive for recognition.

21. Ms CHAN Yuen-han gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) she could feel from members' speeches that they had done an excellent job in district work, and could express women's concerns. For maternity leave, actually a period of 14 weeks was not enough. The care for children between the ages of 0 to 6 was crucial. On the Mainland and in Taiwan, women could take maternity leave for up to half a year, and could extend the leave if necessary. If prompt support was given to women who had given birth, that meant support was given to the community as a whole. The current Secretary for Labour and Welfare was discussing the issue with the business community and she felt that the current Government was committed to working on the well-being of society;
- (b) prenatal and postnatal health issues that women encountered and the immense pressure after giving birth brought conflicts to families. Not every family could get help from elder members in the family, and thus the Government should pay attention to this issue. Many families wanted to bring their children out during holidays but breastfeeding facilities were insufficient. She had witnessed similar circumstances, too. She hoped that the Chairman of the STDC could help and urge real estate developers to provide more relevant facilities at future housing estates;
- (c) she was aware that MTR compartments were crowded and there was a need to consider designating women-only compartments. However, the MTR Corporation Limited had declined the suggestion on the ground of high cost. She would continue to reflect the views;
- (d) many District Councils were concerned about the lives of divorcees. It was indeed unsatisfactory for people who had conflicts to live together, but the Housing authority often stated that housing supply was tight. When she was still a DC Member, she noticed that only extreme cases were dealt with most of the time. She would continue to reflect the views. For alimony arrangement, Dr. LAW Chi-kwong, the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, was very familiar with this topic. When he was still a Legislative Councillor, he already had a profound understanding of the alimony system in Australia;
- (e) the issue that there were more female than male university students deserved consideration. Several members had mentioned the importance of men's rights. Actually there were organisations advocating and striving for men's rights like paternity leave. If the Government believed that there was a need to further protect men's rights, it could consider providing subsidy, which was similar to the Mandatory Provident Fund offsetting arrangement. The Government had to give consideration to this matter. The United Nations advocated mutual support between men and women instead of opposition. The WoC had to carry out their work because from an objective point of view, women had a different body structure from men and needed to be protected;

- (f) the WoC was very concerned about how to encourage women to go out for work and at the same time to make sure that children or elders could receive proper care at home. She thanked members for their views and would definitely relay their views to the LWB which was responsible for drafting the report;
- (g) she agreed that retirement protection should be provided. Although the Government did not introduce a universal retirement protection scheme, it still implemented the life annuity scheme (HKMC Annuity Plan) and the Reverse Mortgage Programme (Reverse Mortgage). She had reflected to the Government that only property owners could apply for Reverse Mortgage, while under the HKMC Annuity Plan, elders could only get some five thousand dollars per month with a premium of one million dollars. The Government believed that the issues could be handled. She would reflect members' views;
- (h) for the issue that village properties could only be inherited by men but not women, a District Council had suggested that she discuss the issue with Rural Committees. She said she would be glad to communicate with Rural Committees; and
- (i) as Sha Tin had a large population, she understood that there was a need to set up a Women Health Centre. She would include the suggestion in the report.

22. Mr Edwin CHAU said that the WoC Secretariat would collate members' views and submit them to the WoC for discussion and follow-up action. The LWB and the WoC had held a consultation session in the Central Government Offices on 26 April and the second session would be held on 16 May. The Chairperson of the WoC and the LWB officials would explain the Convention. Members and district organisations were welcomed. After discussion with the WoC, the public consultation period would be extended to 31 May and written submissions were welcomed.

23. Members noted the above paper.

2018-2019 Work Plan of Sha Tin District Social Welfare Office
(Paper No. EW 11/2018)

24. The Chairman welcomed Mrs Gloria LEE, District Social Welfare Officer (Shatin) and Ms Grace LI, Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Shatin) 2 of the Social Welfare Department (SWD) to the meeting.

25. Mrs Gloria LEE introduced the contents of the paper.

26. The views of Ms Iris WONG were summarised below:

- (a) she opined that the work plan was comprehensive. She was concerned about resources distribution, as Shek Mun Estate Phase 2 would be occupied this year and integrated services would be launched. In the past, Shek Mun Estate relied on the services provided by organisations in other districts. For instance,

elderly services were first supported by the Shatin Rhenish Neighbourhood Elderly Centre (SRNEC) in City One Shatin and then by the Ho Tai Neighbourhood Centre for Senior Citizens sponsored by Sik Sik Yuen (Ho Tai Centre), and the two centres had different practices;

- (b) the SRNEC would assign a staffer to each case, so that the elderly encountering problems could reach out to the officer in-charge. To ensure a smooth handover, she briefly explained previous service procedures to the Ho Tai Centre when it took over and hoped that social workers would meet with the elderly. However, the Ho Tai Centre replied that such arrangements could not be made, and said that there were not enough resources to support the entire Shek Mun Estate Phase 2 if each case had to be assigned to a different officer to follow up on. She therefore hoped the SWD could explain in detail how the integrated services would be launched in the new estate and what resources could be provided for the Ho Tai Centre;
- (c) regarding the Community Investment and Inclusion Fund (CIIF), she had met with two organisations which were competitors in the application stage, and she asked how the SWD would coordinate the situation;
- (d) there were a lot of teenagers in Shek Mun Estate; however youth support was insufficient in the district. A number of organisations showed enthusiasm in providing support to Shek Mun, but they had to move their supplies around. She asked if there would be a youth centre in Shek Mun in the future, so that organisations could provide stable services;
- (e) family problems abounded in the community. She asked about the kind of support the Government would provide to problematic families that had never been in touch with the SWD and how the SWD would take the initiative to reach out to relevant cases; and
- (f) she participated and recommended a person to participate in the Sha Tin District Recognition Scheme for Carers of Persons with Disabilities last year. That person could not attend the event to receive the award, but the SWD did not follow up on the matter afterwards. She thought the scheme did not seem sustainable and asked if award winners last year could take part again this year, so that they could gather and give each other emotional support.

27. The views of Ms TUNG Kin-lei were summarised below:

- (a) the work plan of the SWD was extensive. She had always thought that there was a mismatch in the social welfare resources in the Sha Tin District. She cited Tai Wai as an example. Although a lot of elderly people lived in Mei Lam Estate, the elderly centre had been relocated to Mei Tin Estate where no youth centre was present, as the youth centre was located in Festival City. Therefore, families and elderly people encountering problems did not receive suitable care. Although she relayed the issue to the SWD in the past and had been striving for a welfare block to be set up at Free Methodist Mei Lam Primary School, the SWD said the Education Bureau had to acquire the school

premises, giving an impression of indifference; and

- (b) in the past, she had been striving for the Social Security Field Unit and the Integrated Family Service Centres (IFSC) of the SWD to be moved back to Tai Wai; however the SWD gave no positive response. The SWD was relatively passive in fighting for resources. Recently, the SWD issued a letter saying that The Wellness Centre (Sha Tin) of the New Life Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association would be set up in Mei Lam Estate. Many residents expressed to her their opposition regarding the news, and the Mutual Aid Committees (MACs) had collected objections signed by over 500 persons. However, the SWD took no initiative to respond, failed to arrange a meeting with residents or to allay their concerns and beat about the bush when dealing with the issue, worrying members of the public. She hoped that the SWD would solve relevant issues in the coming year and strive for more resources to improve welfare work in Tai Wai.

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

- (a) the work of the SWD was divided into 2 parts, one of which was the attempt to take the initiative to hold educational publicity campaigns; however, given the SWD's limited resources, it might be more practical to hand this aspect of work over to different non-profit-making organisations. He understood that the SWD had a huge workload but thought there was still room for improvement. In these few years, the way the SWD dealt with the mentally ill and those undiagnosed people displaying strange behaviours in the district was hardly satisfactory. The SWD often said it could only observe the situation if the family members concerned did not find those people problematic, while problems kept occurring;
- (b) with respect to elderly support services, the waiting time for the elderly services was long and the home care services were just a stopgap measure. The elderly relied on the mere remaining resources they had for living and often found support terribly limited. It was difficult for the SWD to notice and provide for the needs of the elderly. He had been reminding the SWD to consult the MACs, which understood the sentiments and people's way of life within the district, but the SWD did not take his advice;
- (c) in paragraph 3.33 of the paper, the SWD said Sun Chui Estate had more disadvantaged groups. He asked if the SWD could extend its attention and work to include Sun Tin Wai Estate; and
- (d) in these few years, the SWD gave the impression that it was passive in dealing with cases, which was unsatisfactory.

29. The views of Mr SIU Hin-hong were summarised below:

- (a) the SWD's work plan valued social harmony, but he opined that the SWD focused more on ideology than actual work. The work plan did not mention potential future problems. As the SWD had limited resources in the Sha Tin

District, he asked why it could not cooperate with non-profit-making organisations;

- (b) with respect to social harmony, cooperation from schools was necessary. He asked if the SWD and the Education Bureau worked together. Changes in family structures meant the popular nuclear families nowadays lacked mediation from elders, which was present in families in the past, rendering conflicts harder to handle. He asked how the SWD would build up the functions of family. Also, he opined that the monitoring of existing non-profit-making organisations was insufficient and asked how it could be strengthened;
- (c) the paper mentioned mental health services, which he thought was good as many children were under tremendous stress at present. He asked if the SWD would focus its measures on preventive or remedial purposes;
- (d) every year, the SWD would release a work report, but it did not release any review report towards the end of the year. He opined that the work of the SWD was important and review was necessary; and
- (e) he thought that the present non-profit-making organisations were profit-driven, instead of service-oriented and that the performance of social enterprises was not necessarily ideal after receiving CIIF funding. He opined that efficiency could be improved if social enterprises and commercial enterprises worked together.

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

- (a) in paragraph 3.3.1 of the paper, it was said that “through liaising with the MACs, owners’ corporations or property management agencies of the district, strengthen the support network and to encourage mutual assistance in the neighbourhood. Through introducing community resources and providing information on welfare services, encourage residents to identify early persons and families in need or at high risk in the neighbourhood, and to introduce them to or refer them to suitable social services, in order to build housing estates with loving and caring neighbours.” He could not understand the passage. In fact, the SWD knew where mentally ill patients lived, but would often refuse to divulge such information for privacy reasons. The Housing Department (HD) would inform people of stigmatised properties, but not where mentally ill patients lived. The SWD kept claiming that it had to protect those with special needs; he asked if the SWD had considered how it would protect the safety of normal people;
- (b) in the referral cases from District Council (DC) Members that the SWD dealt with, the clients would reject the services if they were reluctant. He asked if it was up to the clients’ decision to receive the services or not and if the SWD had protected other residents;
- (c) he had watched some frightening video footage where a person was wielding a knife at the metal gate of a resident’s place. He later understood the person’s

behaviour was the result of not taking medication as scheduled, and asked how the SWD could protect the safety of residents in the neighbourhood. Given the number of complaints, he asked if the SWD could carry out mandatory follow-up measures on relevant cases; and

- (d) the SWD said that services could only be provided with the coordination of a number of departments, and leases would many a time limit the range of the services provided. He said he had been following up on an organisation for 2 years and still it could not amend its range of services. Other departments said that the services could be provided with the approval of the SWD. Thus he hoped that the SWD would give more flexibility to the Integrated Community Centre for Mental Wellness (ICCMW), or else they would be impossible to provide optimised services.

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

- (a) the DC discussed a lot of work plans submitted by departments every year. The work plan of the SWD covered a lot but was insufficient as a work plan. Since its work was continuous, the work plan should also provide a review on the work of the previous year, while on-going work should continue to be reported in the work report next year;
- (b) the amount of data provided in the entire work plan was relatively scarce. The DC wished to learn more about the situation in the district, such as that of poor families and the waiting situation of care homes. As the SWD made arrangements for work according to the social conditions in the district, its annual work plan should be specific;
- (c) on non-profit-making organisations that received public funding, he commented that the work of many of these organisations in the district was problematic; for example, some elderly persons had mentioned conduct problems of home service providers; and
- (d) the report did not mention the women's health centre and the Tai Wai Complex to be built that Ms CHAN Yuen-han brought up previously. He asked about the SWD's strategic work in this aspect.

32. The views of Mr Michael YUNG were summarised below:

- (a) the SWD's annual work plan addressed some of members' concerns, such as past concerns about insufficient support from the HD to new estates leading to insufficient space for the SWD to implement certain plans. Paragraph 3.3.2 of the paper said that "before the intake of Shek Mun Estate Phase 2, the Working Group on Community Service Promotion in Shek Mun Estate would be established to coordinate the social service units serving residents of Shek Mun Estate." He asked if the arrangement was permanent, as Shek Mun Estate would not be the only public housing estate in the Sha Tin District. There would also be public housing in Fo Tan and along the northbound and southbound road sections in Ma On Shan in the future;

- (b) paragraph 3.3.4 of the paper said “enhance the network built in Mei Tin Estate and Shui Chuen O Estate last year by the Green Ribbon in collaboration with the district”. In smaller-scale estates such as Yan On Estate, he did not notice similar work by the SWD. As the previous location of a tutorial centre in Yan On Estate was already vacant, he asked if the SWD would use it as a temporary venue for providing social welfare services;
- (c) with respect to the situation of mentally ill patients, they had agreed that an ICCMW was necessary. However, the SWD or the service providers might be short-staffed and thus could not follow up on cases regularly. He asked the SWD how it would assist patients in dealing with their illnesses and in attending scheduled follow-up consultation. If patients failed to attend follow-up consultations, they would become invisible bombs in the community. Similar incident had happened in Yan On Estate, which had fortunately been suitably dealt with; and
- (d) with respect to the completion times of facilities in the new estate, there would be a welfare block in Shek Mun Estate Phase 2, where various organisations would be stationed. He asked if relevant information could be provided, such as the time when the HD would hand over the venues, which organisations would be stationed, the number of quotas, etc.

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

- (a) the SWD’s work plan seemed to lack depth. With respect to mental illness patients and elderly persons with dementia, he said the estate in his constituency was over 30 years old and the population was ageing as much of the younger generation moved away. The situation was problematic, since only elderly singletons or aged parents were left behind;
- (b) people were concerned about and hoped to provide support for situations where the mentally ill caused nuisance to their neighbours. However, as stipulated in the law, if the involved persons or their family members did not seek help, there was nothing the SWD could do. Recently, there had been an unpleasant incident, where the police were called to handle a simple case of mother-son conflict. The involved person, much to everyone’s dismay, took an officer’s gun, fired thrice and injured an officer. In the housing estate he resided in, a mentally ill patient living alone had a problem of incontinence. Even though various social workers had been following up on the case, the issue still was not properly resolved and distressed the neighbours; and
- (c) the number of mentally ill patients was growing. Without proper measures, the problem would continue to exacerbate. The mentally ill needed professional care and more than a mere referral by the housing estates or DC Members. He opined that it was important for the SWD to consider ways to solve this problem, such as ways to expand medical service plans or even to improve existing legislation.

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

- (a) the SWD did a lot of work and he appreciated that there was a theme to the SWD's report every year;
- (b) the SWD provided classes for the youth. He asked if such classes could also be provided for women to cater to the needs of the community;
- (c) non-profit-making organisations were responsible for 2 of the SWD's collaboration projects. He saw that there were many wheelchair users and people dealing with elderly persons with cardiovascular conditions and dementia in the community. If the community relied only on the services provided by non-profit-making organisations, the support might not be sufficient. If there were training courses and perhaps courses that awarded a certificate to women upon their completion of the programme, a more ideal scenario might result where not only employment would grow but also certain families would benefit; and
- (d) the demographic structure of the community was changing. He took Lung Hang Estate as an example. There was an obvious increase in the size of the elderly population but there was only one elderly centre. Even though the functionality of the centre was enhanced, the area served did not expand. The centre had resources but lacked space, and thus could not effectively solve problems. It might be inconsistent with the SWD's requirements to use youth centres for other services; however, young people and elderly people might not need to use the relevant centres when they were at school during daytime or at night respectively. He asked how the SWD would make good use of the centres and if it would provide a fund to encourage cooperation between youth centres and elderly centres. As inter-generational harmony was beneficial to both generations, he hoped that the SWD would attach importance to the matter.

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

- (a) the work plan covered a lot but its efficiency was uncertain. She understood that the SWD had a heavy workload and asked if the manpower establishment was properly increased;
- (b) with respect to mental health services, she had expressed every time with regards to past work plans of the SWD that the way it handled complaints against the mentally ill might not be really helping the residents. Due to privacy issues, if the family members of the persons involved refused to seek help, it was difficult for the SWD to initiate investigation, regardless of the number of people relaying or complaining about the issue to the SWD. It was worrying that a lot of such cases had not been dealt with in the district; and
- (c) there was a case that had been dealt with for a long time and had been reported to the SWD. However, as the person involved did not seek help, the case could not be officially opened and the problem had dragged on for 3 to 4 years. Both the residents and the management office of the estate felt helpless. This

case was not the only one. Her office had already been notified of other similar cases. She asked if the SWD had considered improving its policies and hoped that the SWD could further explore ways to deal with the situation so as to avoid unpleasant outcomes.

36. The views of Mr Tiger WONG were summarised below:

- (a) the paper mentioned the Sha Tin District elderly service collaboration project and the Sha Tin District rehabilitation service collaboration project. He opined that the SWD should further improve district facilities, including those within private properties, e.g. providing additional barrier-free facilities would be beneficial to the community; and
- (b) he opined that the SWD should focus on educating family members on ways to handle the situation to prevent patients' condition from worsening in its large-scale publicity campaign about dementia. The SWD should study in partnership with non-profit-making organisations ways to assist the mentally ill. Many illnesses were categorised as mental illnesses nowadays which was why centres should consider how to prevent patients from being labelled when providing services. He understood there were many reasons for patients to refuse medication, such as the lack of company, heavy dosage or side-effects of medication, etc., and hoped that the SWD and relevant organisations could expand the scope and direction of their services.

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

- (a) with respect to mentally ill patients, he was aware of cases where the mentally ill affected the whole block. If the patient lived alone, both the SWD and the estate management office had no way of handling the situation. As the SWD did not mention in the report how to deal with such problems, he asked the SWD how it would handle the issue; and
- (b) the paper mentioned that the SWD would enhance the network built in Mei Tin Estate and Shui Chuen O Estate last year by the Green Ribbon in collaboration with the district. A lot of teenagers lived in Mei Tin Estate and there had been 2 cases of serious juvenile delinquency recently. The need for youth services was keen, but the estate did not have a youth centre. He asked if resources could be allocated for the purpose.

38. The views of the Chairman were summarised below:

- (a) she appreciated the SWD for holding the Sha Tin District Recognition Scheme for Carers of Persons with Disabilities in Sha Kok Estate last year;
- (b) she said she was a registered social worker and had some opinions of her own. According to her understanding, ex-mentally ill persons seemed unfamiliar with current rehabilitation services in the community. The ICCMW had been running for a few years but found it difficult to deal with the above problems. She asked if the ICCMW should strengthen communication, not only with the

MACs or the management office, but with members as well;

- (c) the ICCMW had a duty to promote its services. She thought it insufficient to only provide mental health first aid course for the youth and asked if the course could be made open to the public, as she also wanted to join it but could not before. She believed such work was beneficial to the community and could raise public awareness of mental health issues;
- (d) resources allocation in the Sha Tin District had yet to be improved as its population distribution kept changing. She asked the SWD how it would handle the problem. The paper was concerned with the intake of Shek Mun Estate Phase 2, while a lot of other buildings would be completed soon, such as Ka Shun Court in her constituency. She was concerned about how the new-comers would blend in with the community and worried that the SWD would neglect smaller housing estates;
- (e) she thanked the SWD for the opportunity to participate in the Service Quality Group Scheme in residential care homes for persons with disabilities, and opined that if more members or community members could participate in the scheme, it would be helpful to their understanding of the scheme and for them to give opinions;
- (f) the Budget mentioned that it would launch the “one social worker for each school” policy in the future in response to child abuse cases in society. She asked if the SWD could provide details as to how the policy would be implemented. Although social workers mainly focused their work on children, many principals thought parents were the bigger problem, and therefore she opined that it was important for schools to find ways to nurture children together with their parents;
- (g) with respect to child care services, a quota of over 70 had been set for children aged 0 to 3 in the Sha Tin District. Shek Mun Estate Phase 2 would be completed soon. According to her understanding, there would be child care services, but the work plan did not mention the arrangements. The Government provided child care services, but she thought that training elderly to assist in child care was a cause worthy of promoting and asked how the SWD would expand the service in the future. It would be difficult to release the female labour force if no one could help take care of the children; and
- (h) as the SWD had a role in cross-sector collaboration, she asked how the SWD would realise such cooperation with hospitals, schools and others.

39. Mrs Gloria LEE gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) with respect to the upcoming intake of Shek Mun Estate Phase 2, the SWD would liaise with all service providers in the district to provide services for the new residents, so as to help them adjust to the new community. The SWD was preparing a service promotion working group and had liaised with individual organisations;

- (b) with respect to the promotion of services within new estates, as Shui Chuen O Estate was a large-scale housing estate, the SWD had started liaising with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) within the district in 2015 for them to promote various community services to the residents. To strengthen support to residents of the new estates, the SWD was also very supportive of NGOs applying for the CIIF to promote community service schemes that aimed at developing mutual care and assistance in the neighbourhood or to provide target and continuous services for special groups in the community. There were 2 schemes funded by the CIIF running in Shui Chuen O Estate currently. Based on the estate's experience, the SWD wished to encourage NGOs to apply for the CIIF when new estates were completed, so as to provide timely assistance and support to new residents;
- (c) with respect to preventing family problems, the IFSC would not only provide casework services and group activities, but also start an outreaching service and set up booths on the streets to publicise and promote relevant services;
- (d) the SWD would use as a reference the opinions regarding the Sha Tin District Recognition Scheme for Carers of Persons with Disabilities;

(Post-meeting note: For the participant who was recommended by members but could not attend the ceremony, a SWD staff member had already contacted him after the event to arrange for the collection of the award, but he did not collect it.)

- (e) with respect to members' question on the planning of welfare facilities to be provided in the future Tai Wai Complex, the SWD had noted the plan and was exploring the feasibility of resources to map out relevant services. However, as specific information of the relevant project was yet to be provided, details were not currently listed in the work plan report. Besides, with respect to the suggestion of setting up a welfare block at the premises of an old school, since the school premises were not for welfare facility use and the SWD was not notified of a change of use of the school premises, the SWD did not have the right to use the premises as far as policies were concerned;
- (f) the SWD noted members' suggestion that youth centres could be open for elderly centres to provide service in suitable time slots. It would consider granting such flexibility as long as it abided by the service agreement and the tenancy conditions;
- (g) with respect to members' concern about cases of the ex-mentally ill or the suspected mentally ill, the SWD needed inter-departmental and multi-disciplinary collaboration when dealing with such cases, involving such parties as psychiatrists from the Hospital Authority and the police. Factors such as statutory standards, privacy protection and guarantee of personal safety also had to be considered. The SWD and relevant departments had successfully handled difficult cases in the past and it would continue to cooperate with all stakeholders to properly address relevant problems;

- (h) with respect to publicity effort of community services, the SWD would give priority to existing large-scale or new housing estates, such as Mei Tin Estate, Sun Chui Estate and Shui Chuen O Estate. For the publicity effort of community services in other smaller housing estates, the SWD would suggest that NGOs cater to the service needs of other housing estates when planning their services and providing activities;
- (i) with respect to rehabilitation, elderly and youth services, the SWD would maintain close contact with NGOs to promote the development of such services. As for community inclusion, a school in the district took the initiative to hold mental health ambassadors training at school. Also, as the family institution was changing, the SWD wished to train grandparents to take care of grandchildren and, subject to the allocation of resources, would consider implementing the relevant scheme in the future;
- (j) the SWD had always valued the continuity of its services, such as to introduce to students above Secondary 3 the development of a nursing career in the social welfare sector by promoting a nursing internship programme. It would also consider members' suggestions and present the continuous progress of the service programmes in the work plan next year. The SWD invited members and their assistants to its service sharing session in the past years. If necessary, the SWD could arrange sharing sessions in the future to introduce its services to members and their assistants;
- (k) the SWD would consider the suggestion of providing mental health and nursing experience schemes for women as well;
- (l) with respect to subsidising the development of standalone child care centres, as the SWD did not know the actual completion date of Shek Mun Estate Phase 2, details were not mentioned in the work plan documents. In Shek Mun Estate, there would be a subvented standalone child care centre offering 100 places, an elderly home offering 150 places, a day care service unit for the elderly offering 30 places, a supported hostel for mentally handicapped offering 30 places, Social Security Field Unit and a branch of the Integrated Children and Youth Services Centre;
- (m) with respect to the youth problem in Mei Tin Estate, the SWD would suggest relevant outreach teams be provided to strengthen their youth outreach and counselling work; and
- (n) NGOs had held open days in the past to introduce members and members of the public to their services. The NGOs could consider holding such activities again in the future to facilitate exchange of opinions. With respect to the "one social worker for each school" policy, the SWD did not have any detailed information to provide regarding the planning of the service for the time being. Besides students' problems, parents were also the target and focus of the service, and therefore the SWD would discuss with social workers of the IFSC ways to coordinate to help families in need.

40. Mr Michael YUNG said there seemed to be a lack of a quorum in the conference room, requested a headcount and asked the SWD to answer members' further questions.

41. Mr HO Hau-cheung suggested asking the SWD to answer members' further questions first.

42. The Chairman agreed and asked the SWD to answer the questions first.

43. Mrs Gloria LEE replied that if the SWD received other departments' enquiries about individual NGOs, it would provide opinions in the welfare aspect. However, the SWD could not provide opinion on matters unrelated to the welfare aspect. With respect to looking for premises for welfare purposes, the SWD would discuss with the HD the rental of vacant units for providing welfare services, based on the needs of the district and the urgency of services. As Shek Mun Estate Phase 2 would be completed soon, the SWD would review the boundaries of NGOs' catchment areas, in the hope of achieving seamless connection to fulfil district's welfare needs. The CIIF was vetting the applications of NGOs, and thus relevant information could not be provided for the time being. After the organisations received funding from the CIIF, the SWD would advise them on the implementation of their service proposals. The SWD noted members' opinions on the provision of services by NGOs.

44. The Chairman hoped the SWD would launch more promotion in the community, in particular on ways for ex-mentally ill persons or carers of dementia patients to find support. She then ended the discussion on the item.

45. The Chairman said a member previously requested a headcount. Due to the lack of a quorum, she adjourned the meeting for 15 minutes in accordance with Order 12 (2) of the STDC Standing Orders, and asked the Secretary to summon absent members to attend the meeting.

46. As a quorum was still not present after 15 minutes, the Chairman announced the adjournment of the meeting at 5:34 pm, and decided to postpone the questions not yet discussed to the next meeting and to deal with report items and information papers by circulation of papers for members' consideration.

Date of Next Meeting

47. The next meeting was scheduled to be held at 10:00 am on 12 July 2018 (Thursday).

48. The meeting was adjourned at 5:34 pm.

Sha Tin District Council Secretariat
STDC 13/15/35

April 2018