

Summary of Minutes of the 2nd Meeting of the Social Services Committee (2014-2015)

Meeting

The Social Services Committee (“SSC”) held its 2nd meeting on 21 January 2014.

Arrangement on Choice of Schools for Cross-boundary Students (“CBS”) for 2014/15 School Year

2. The SSC considered the Education Bureau (“EDB”)’s publicity and consultation on revised arrangements for Central Allocation for Primary One Admission to be insufficient without giving a full account of the relevant data. Moreover, the quality of education might be affected by admission of CBS from the Mainland who had different cultural backgrounds from Hong Kong students. Therefore, additional resources were required to strengthen the EDB’s support to schools admitting CBS. On the other hand, the SSC was concerned about the traffic arrangements for CBS, e.g. whether the capacity of the existing transportation facilities was adequate. For kindergarten education, the SSC hoped that the EDB could arrange kindergarten places properly before the implementation of 12-year free education. This item would be followed up further by the Working Group on Education and Youth Services.

Request for Improvement of Methods of Subsidy of Samaritan Fund (“Fund”)

3. A Member opined that subsidy granted under the Fund might not necessarily meet a patient’s needs if assessment was made solely on his/her health condition at the time of application. Therefore, apart from the opinions of patients and doctors, other independent professional advice should be sought and the medical records of patients should be reviewed to ensure that drugs or medical items provided met the patients’ needs. In addition, the Member considered that the Fund lacked a mechanism that allowed sufficient communication and appeals so as to listen to patients’ needs.

4. The representative of the Fund responded that subsidy was granted based on the patient’s clinical needs. If the patient really required specific drugs or medical items according to the assessment of his/her doctor or healthcare practitioner, subsidy would be granted under the Fund. Patients with special requests might communicate with the medical social workers of the Fund. Discretion would also be exercised in individual cases.

Terms of Reference for SSC (2014-2015)

5. The Terms of Reference for the SSC had been endorsed by the Tuen Mun District Council (“TMDC”) on 5 November 2013, and Members had no other comments on its contents.

Formation of Working Groups under SSC (2014-2015)

6. The SSC endorsed the formation of three standing working groups in 2014-2015 for a term until 31 December 2015 as follows:

- (a) Working Group on Medical and Rehabilitation Services;
- (b) Working Group on Community Care; and
- (c) Working Group on Education and Youth Services.

7. Mr CHAN Yau-hoi, Mr SO Shiu-shing and Mr CHOW Kam-cheung were elected as convenors of the above three working groups respectively.

Civic Education's Cooperation Scheme with District Councils 2014-15

8. The SSC decided unanimously to participate in the aforesaid scheme, and a letter of invitation had been sent to Tuen Mun District Civic Education Committee after the meeting for joint organisation of relevant activities.

Request for Provision of Additional Facilities for Tuen Mun Hospital ("TMH")

9. The Member who submitted the paper said that Tuen Mun was a grassroots community with an aging population. She hoped that the TMDC's views would be taken into account and additional resources would be allocated to TMH for the early provision and enhancement of facilities.

10. Views put forward by other Members on this item included: it was opined that the standard of medical practitioners and surgery success rates should be guaranteed before opening a new operating theatre; it was pointed out that there was still room for improvements in TMH, which ranked lower in certain services in the territory; it was concerned about TMH's application of new funds granted by the Government to upgrade its facilities; it was hoped that TMH's hardware and software could be enhanced, including recruitment of more experienced medical staff; it was hoped that public-private partnership programmes in healthcare could be implemented in Tuen Mun, proper allocation of quota for out-patient consultation service could be ensured, and transparency of relevant arrangements could be increased.

Work Reports by Working Groups under SSC 2012-2013

(a) Working Group on Medical and Rehabilitation Services

11. The SSC noted the contents of the report of the Working Group.

(b) Working Group on Community Care

12. The SSC noted the contents of the report of the Working Group.

(c) Working Group on Education and Youth Services

13. A Member said that the SSC had discussed many times about the school premises of Hong Chi Morning Hill School, Tuen Mun/Hong Chi Morning Light School, Tuen Mun, including the proposal of using other school premises. He had also opposed the use of former premises of the Salvation Army Sam Shing Chuen Lau Ng Ying School by the aforesaid schools without consulting local residents. The Member who made the aforesaid proposal agreed that local residents should be consulted before using the vacant school premises.

14. The short and medium term solutions to the problem of school premises as well as Member's proposal of using the vacant school premises would be followed up further by the Working Group on Education and Youth Services.

Report by Tuen Mun District School Development Section of EDB

15. Views put forward by a Member on the report of the EDB included: it was suggested that the EDB should terminate the revised arrangements for Central Allocation in Tuen Mun, provide incentives to schools in Hong Kong to encourage CBS admission, and ensure a healthy class structure and balanced ratio between Hong Kong and Mainland students; it was concerned about the adequacy of classroom provision in Tuen Mun; it was hoped that schools in Tuen Mun would

not admit students beyond their capacity to keep their heads above water, sacrificing the school lives of both local students and CBS; it was pointed out that CBS's demand for school places was temporary, so new schools should not be built for them. The crux of the problem should be how to increase resources allocated to schools to meet the peaks of CBS coming to Hong Kong for studies. It was also considered that small class teaching, though not the best guaranteed teaching method, should be adopted if teaching quality could be ensured.

16. Matters related to allocation of Primary One places would be followed up further by the Working Group on Education and Youth Services.

Report by Social Welfare Department ("SWD")

17. A Member requested full-time services be provided in the Integrated Community Centres for Mental Wellness ("ICCMW") in On Ting Estate and Wu King Estate, and pointed out that the former users of On Ting Estate Centre could not get along well with the existing users of Wu King Estate Centre after changing centre. The representative of the SWD responded that in the light of this Member's views, the SWD would discuss with the agency operating the two centres on flexible resource utilisation upon completion of On Ting Estate Centre's renovation works to determine opening hours that better meet the needs of residents.

18. Another Member requested that the District Support Centre for Persons with Disabilities and the Training Centre for the Hearing Impaired Persons under planning be set up in Leung King Estate as soon as possible. The representative of the SWD responded that progress had been made despite disruption in the setup process, and the facilities should commence operation in the near future. The SWD would report to the SSC on any further information.

19. After discussion, matters related to the ICCMW in the district would be followed up by the Working Group on Medical and Rehabilitation Services.

Report on Crime Figures in Tuen Mun District

20. The SSC noted the contents of the report of the Hong Kong Police Force.

Tuen Mun District Council Secretariat
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