

Summary of Minutes of the 4th Meeting of the Social Services Committee (2014-2015)

Meeting

The Social Services Committee (“SSC”) held its 4th meeting on 20 May 2014.

Invitation to Support Smoke-free Community Campaign

2. Members commented on the follow-up and activity arrangements of the Smoke-free Community Campaign, and suggested the Hong Kong Council on Smoking and Health step up publicity to promote smoking cessation.
3. Moreover, the SSC confirmed that the Smoke-free Community Campaign for the year would be followed up by the Working Group on Community Care.

Request for Improvement to Cataract Treatment Services in New Territories West

4. Members hoped that the Hospital Authority (“HA”) would provide information on cases of cross-cluster referral for cataract surgery and participation in the Cataract Surgeries Programme in New Territories West. The HA was also urged to address the problem of limited medical resources and enhance its ophthalmic service.
5. The HA would be invited to attend the next SSC meeting to respond to Members’ comments, and provide relevant specific information.

Request for Increase in Dementia Care Services in Tuen Mun District

6. Views expressed by Members on the aforesaid matter included: it was considered that the current dementia services in Tuen Mun District could not cope with local needs; it was proposed that the Social Welfare Department (“SWD”) should enhance assessment of patients’ needs, increase day care places for people with dementia, step up community education and publicity to promote dementia support service, and attach importance to skills training for carers; and it was hoped that the Government would plan ahead to address the increasing prevalence of dementia among younger people.
7. The representative of the SWD responded that the Government had always been concerned about the needs of people with dementia and their carers. Training, care, emotional and health support, etc. were also provided to the demented and their carers through various district service centres for the elderly. In the 2014-15 Budget, additional funding had also been earmarked to enhance carer training, employ additional professional staff for district centres to enhance support service to demented elderly and their carers, and provide more home care places for the elderly, etc.

Tuen Mun District Anti-corruption Programme in 2014/2015: “A Clean Future for Our Next Generation”

8. A Member opined that despite the importance of hammering home integrity to young people and students, insufficient resources had been allocated to promote integrity education. This Member supported the work of the Independent Commission Against Corruption, and hoped that the District Council would allocate additional resources to consolidate the value of integrity in the future.

Work Reports by Working Groups under SSC

(a) Working Group on Medical and Rehabilitation Services

9. The Members who spoke supported the Working Group to continue to organise Sports Day with the Disabled, and commented on the use of the District Council and Working Group funds. In view of inadequate funding for the Working Group to organise Sports Day with the Disabled this year, various proposals were made, including: reallocation of resources of the Working Groups under the SSC; procurement of additional funding from the Finance, Administration and Publicity Committee (“FAPC”); securing sponsorship by the Working Group; or reallocation of activity funds by the Working Group.

10. After discussion, the SSC confirmed the procurement of additional funding of \$50,000 from the FAPC for the Working Group.

(Post-meeting note: At its meeting on 4 June, the Working Group solved the problem of inadequate funding for Sports Day with the Disabled by reallocating its activity funds. Therefore, it was unnecessary for the SSC to procure additional funding from the FAPC.)

(b) Working Group on Community Care

11. A Member hoped that the publication of final activity reports could be environmentally friendly, and opined that the reports could be printed upon completion of activities by the current Working Groups. The Chairman responded that the final activity reports were published by the last Working Groups, and were undergoing preliminary typesetting. The convenor responded that the three Working Groups had decided to publish one joint final activity report instead of three separate reports to protect the environment.

12. In addition, a Member suggested the Working Group consider holding the Launching Ceremony of Tuen Mun Community Care Scheme together with other activities. The convenor responded that it was not advisable to do so as the Launching Ceremony would have featured a number of other activities.

(c) Working Group on Education and Youth Services

13. A Member suggested the Working Group make specific proposals to alleviate the overcrowding situation at Hong Chi Morning Hill School, Tuen Mun.

Report by Tuen Mun District School Development Section of Education Bureau (“EDB”)

14. A Member hoped that the EDB could coordinate the kindergarten admission arrangements for 2015/16 school year, and urge kindergartens to complete this year’s student registration procedures as soon as possible to release hoarded places. Another Member said that as far as he was aware, the EDB staff who answered enquiry calls on kindergarten places would not inform parents of kindergartens with available places immediately, and this practice was unsatisfactory. The representative of the EDB responded that as kindergartens commenced administrative procedures before admission of students, more and more parents had given up their hoarded places. So it should be relatively easy for other parents to find school places. Moreover, the EDB had agreed with local kindergartens on responding to enquiries about school places. Detailed replies would be given to enquiries about availability of places in a particular district or of a particular kindergarten.

15. On the other hand, a number of Members said that the education sector did not want to see the cessation of admission to any local secondary school. They opined that the EDB’s “three-fold preservation” measures had not solved the problem of decline in Secondary 1 population in the long run.

Report by SWD

16. The SSC noted the contents of the report of the SWD.

Report on Crime Figures in Tuen Mun District

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

Public Education Activities on Rehabilitation 2014-15

18. The SSC confirmed unanimously that matters related to the use of funds for Public Education Activities on Rehabilitation 2014-15 of the Labour and Welfare Bureau would be followed up by the Working Group on Medical and Rehabilitation Services.

Tuen Mun District Council Secretariat

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