

(Translation)

Minutes of the 2nd Meeting of
Social Welfare Committee (1/24-25)

Date : 6 May 2024
Time : 2:30 p.m.
Venue : Main Conference Room, Tsuen Wan District Office

Present:

Mr CHU Tak-wing, MH (Chairman)
Ms LAM Yuen-pun (Vice Chairlady)
Ms WONG Shuk-fan, Luparker
Mr KOO Yeung-pong, MH
Mr NG Chun-yu
Mr CHOW Sum-ming
Ms CHEUNG Man-ka, Marcella
Ms CHAN Shun-shun
Mr MOK Yuen-kwan
Mr TSANG Tai
Mr FUNG Cheuk-sum
Ms WAH Mei-ling
Mr WONG Kai-chun
Mr KOT Siu-yuen, MH
Mr CHENG Chit-pun
Mr LAU Chung-kong

Government Representatives

Mr LEE Soeng-him, Sean	Assistant District Officer (Tsuen Wan), Tsuen Wan District Office
Ms YUEN Mo-kuen, Monita	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Tsuen Wan/Kwai Tsing)3, Social Welfare Department
Ms LEE Yuen-yee, Linda	Social Work Officer 3 (Planning & Coordinating), Social Welfare Department

Tsuen Wan District Council Secretariat Representatives

Mr LIM Kuen	Senior Executive Officer (District Council), Tsuen Wan District Office
Miss LEUNG Wai Ching, Clementine (Secretary)	Executive Officer (District Council)1, Tsuen Wan District Office
Miss WONG Yuen-chee, Connie	Executive Assistant (Community Involvement)5, Tsuen Wan District Office

I Opening Remarks and Introduction

The Chairman welcomed Members and representatives from government departments to the 2nd meeting of the Social Welfare Committee (SWC).

2. The Chairman said that no Member had submitted an application for absence from this meeting.

3. The Chairman stated that according to the requirements stipulated in the Tsuen Wan District Council Standing Orders, if a District Council (DC) Member found that he/she had any direct personal or pecuniary interests in a discussion item or relevant matters when attending a meeting of the Council or dealing with matters related to the Council, the DC Member should declare the interests. The Secretariat had not received any declaration of interests prior to this meeting. The Chairman enquired whether Members had to make declarations of interests immediately. No Member made a declaration of interests immediately.

II Item 1: Confirmation of Minutes of the 1st Meeting held on 4.3.2024

4. The Chairman said that the Secretariat had not received any proposed amendment prior to this meeting. The Chairman enquired whether Members had to put forth proposed amendments immediately. No Member put forth a proposed amendment immediately. Members unanimously endorsed the captioned minutes.

III Item 2: Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Previous Meetings

5. The Chairman said that there were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

IV Item 3: Tsuen Wan and Kwai Tsing District Social Welfare Office 2024- 25 District Welfare Work Plan

(TWDC SWC Paper No. 1/24-25)

6. The Chairman stated that the Social Welfare Department (SWD) submitted the paper. The representatives from the department attending the meeting were:

- (1) Ms YUEN Mo-kuen, Monita, Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Tsuen Wan/Kwai Tsing)3 (ADSWO(TW/KwT)3), SWD; and
- (2) Ms LEE Yuen-yee, Linda, Social Work Officer 3 (Planning & Coordinating) (SWO3(P&C)), SWD.

7. ADSWO(TW/KwT)3 of the SWD introduced the paper.

8. The views and enquiries of Members were summarised as follows:

- (1) a Member thanked the SWD for its detailed introduction and noted that the SWD provided a variety of services for different target groups. The Member opined that the SWD should identify persons in need of social welfare support as early as possible, and step up its publicity efforts to promote the work and activities of the SWD to the public more frequently through distributing brochures and leaflets in the community and at schools. In addition, the Member suggested that the SWD should strengthen

cooperation with social workers in the district to facilitate the dissemination of information about the welfare work of the SWD to various sectors of the community;

- (2) a Member pointed out that most of the volunteers in the district were elderly persons who had not received systematic training in advance, and enquired whether elderly volunteers could participate in the “Tsuen Wan/Kwai Tsing University of Volunteer” volunteer training programme;
- (3) a Member enquired of the SWD how it would identify and assist hidden patients with mental illness, and suggested that the SWD could monitor the conditions of such patients and provide assistance according to their actual needs by cooperating with their family members or carers;
- (4) a Member said that he/she had received a request for assistance from a person with mental health problems, and such request had subsequently been referred to Caritas Wellness Link – Tsuen Wan for follow-up. However, the service application forms provided by Caritas Wellness Link – Tsuen Wan were only available in English, making it difficult for assistance seekers who were illiterate in English to fill in the forms. Caritas Wellness Link – Tsuen Wan had eventually collected the information of the aforesaid assistance seeker with the Chinese form provided by the “District Services & Community Care Teams” (the “Care Teams”), and had further referred the case concerned to an Integrated Family Service Centre (IFSC) under the SWD for follow-up. Yet, the social workers of the IFSC were not specialised in handling cases of patients with mental illness, and had therefore failed to successfully assist the assistance seeker in the case concerned. Besides, the Member held that service units should proactively report the latest progress in follow-up on the cases to the Care Teams, rather than leaving the work to the Care Teams to take the initiative to learn about the situations from assistance seekers;
- (5) a Member said that he/she was a graduate of the second-term “Tsuen Wan/Kwai Tsing University of Volunteers” volunteer training programme. The Member thought that it was a meaningful programme and encouraged other Members to join the programme as well; and
- (6) a Member said that since some of the operating organisations of the Care Teams were not charities, and there were no registered social workers in the Care Teams, the number of service hours that volunteers of the Care Teams contributed might not be recognised. Therefore, the Member enquired of the SWD if there were other territory-wide volunteer service award schemes for the volunteers concerned to partake in.

9. ADSWO(TW/KwT)3 of the SWD responded as follows:

- (1) the SWD had established coordinating committees for different services in the district, comprising members from the DCs, government departments, the Hospital Authority, the education sector, locals groups, and subvented organisations. District leaders and representatives from schools’ social work units were also engaged in these committees. The members would exchange views and collaborate with one another to jointly promote various

- welfare services in response to the district welfare needs. In addition, the SWD would continue to enhance publicity on relevant welfare work and activities among members of the public, and hoped to further take forward and promote relevant services under the assistance of the DCs and Members;
- (2) the SWD had organised briefing sessions and provided volunteer training for the Care Teams. Collaboration arrangements would be considered if necessary;
 - (3) the difficulty in approaching hidden patients with mental illness lay in the fact that such patients were often unwilling to go out and take the initiative to receive mental health services, or that they required assistance from their family members or persons whom they trusted in learning about the mental health services as well as getting to know the staff of the service units, thereby building their confidence in agreeing to receive such services. If Members or members of the public came across persons in need of mental health services, they could refer the cases concerned to the Integrated Community Centres for Mental Wellness or IFSCs through the SWD for follow-up;
 - (4) when referring assistance seekers for services, Members or the Care Teams might consider using relevant referral forms or other available means (such as letters, emails, etc.) to refer the cases to suitable service units for follow-up. Generally speaking, information for case referrals were mainly required in Chinese. Members could provide the information of the case concerned after the meeting to facilitate the understanding of the situation by the SWD; and
 - (5) the “Tsuen Wan/Kwai Tsing University of Volunteers” volunteer training programme would hold an annual graduation ceremony to recognise the service of the volunteer teams in the past year. In addition, the SWD had terminated the “Volunteer Movement” in 2021 upon review, and the central coordinating system for volunteer registration and service hour record had ceased to operate. Therefore, it was suggested that Members should refer to other organisations (e.g. the Agency for Volunteer Service) for other relevant volunteer commendation schemes.

10. SWO3(P&C) of the SWD supplemented that every year, the “Tsuen Wan/Kwai Tsing University of Volunteers” volunteer training programme would set different themes and recruit volunteer teams during the summer holiday. The volunteer teams would be provided with relevant training, with a view to promoting volunteer services in the district. Each volunteer team was required to have a registered social worker from an organisation to assist the team in conducting volunteer services throughout the year. Local organisations which had not engaged registered social workers could consider cooperating with service units in the district which had registered social workers to form joint teams in order to take part in the aforementioned programme.

11. The views and enquiries of Members were further summarised as follows:

- (1) a Member mentioned a case in which a seriously ill patient had committed suicide by jumping off a building in Tsuen Wan recently because of the

unbearable physical and mental torment. The Member believed that the occurrence of tragedies might be prevented if professionals such as psychiatrists and medical social workers had provided emotional support to such patients in a timely manner. The Member enquired whether relevant services were provided by the SWD to support such patients;

- (2) a Member pointed out that many homemakers in the district often got some spare time after their children went to school. The Member enquired whether consideration would be given to allowing these homemakers to participate in the “Tsuen Wan/Kwai Tsing University of Volunteers” volunteer training programme and whether such qualifications would help them in re-employment in the future;
- (3) a Member said that he/she had referred cases to the social welfare organisations on the list of the SWD, yet some organisations stated that the cases concerned had not met the eligibility criteria for receiving services. As a result, the Member had no choice but to continue to follow up for the assistance seekers. Taking the case of a singleton elder who had applied for subsidies to purchase medical equipment as an example, the organisation concerned advised that submission of a medical certificate issued by a specialist was required in order to process the application. However, the elderly person in the case relayed that he had not yet succeeded in making an appointment for out-patient services after one week. Eventually, the Members sought help from other non-governmental organisations and funds to assist the elderly person in making application for allowance, but the Member opined that the support provided by such organisations was still insufficient. Therefore, the Member did not agree that the IFSCs under the SWD could serve as the last line of defence to support assistance seekers; and
- (4) a Member said that patients with mental illness might not be willing to take the initiative to get in touch with service units. Hence, the Member advised that service units should reach out to the family members of such patients in a proactive manner through, for example, mailing promotional materials to households to attract their participation in relevant activities.

12. ADSWO(TW/KwT)3 of the SWD responded as follows:

- (1) the SWD expressed deep sorrow over the aforementioned suicide case. If Members or members or the public came across persons in need of assistance, they could contact medical social workers or refer the persons concerned to the IFSCs for follow-up and support;
- (2) “Tsuen Wan/Kwai Tsing University of Volunteers” volunteer training programme would conduct the recruitment exercise during the summer holiday every year. Each volunteer team participating in the programme was required to have a registered social worker from an organisation to assist the team in conducting volunteer services throughout the year. A total of 21 volunteer teams from various organisations or groups had participated in the 22nd “Tsuen Wan/Kwai Tsing University of Volunteers” volunteer training programme in 2023-24. A graduation ceremony for the programme

concerned would be held in each academic year, and graduation certificates would be awarded to volunteer graduates who had participated in the programme to recognise their voluntary services in the past year;

- (3) if Members or members of the public came across any persons in need of welfare services, they could refer the persons concerned to the IFSCs under the SWD for better understanding of their situations and needs. The IFSCs would provide appropriate assistance or refer them to suitable service units for follow-up. Members could provide the information of the cases concerned after the meeting for the SWD to follow up; and
- (4) the SWD thanked Members for their views, and would motivate relevant service units and social welfare organisations to adopt a more positive and proactive approach in reaching out to persons in need of mental health services and their family members, as well as stepping up its efforts in the promotion of information on mental health in the district.

13. The Chairman said that Members could refer the SWD for merchants that could provide concessions to persons in need.

V Item 4: Any Other Business

14. The Chairman said that the SWD invited Members to join the Tsuen Wan and Kwai Tsing District Service Quality Groups on Residential Care Homes for the Elderly (RCHEs) and Residential Care Homes for Persons with Disabilities (RCHDs).

15. ADSWO(TW/KwT)3 of the SWD introduced that members of the “Service Quality Group on RCHEs” and “Service Quality Group on RCHDs” (the “Service Quality Groups”) under the SWD were stakeholders from various sectors of the community (including healthcare professionals, service users, their relatives and friends, and district leaders, etc.). The Service Quality Groups aimed to assist and encourage the RCHEs and RCHDs to enhance service quality by conducting visits to the residential care homes without prior notice as well as providing opinions on their facilities and services. Members of the Service Quality Groups would serve for a term of two years, and each participating RCHE or RCHD were required to be visited by members of the Service Quality Groups for three times within the two-year period. The SWD cordially invited Members to serve as members of the Tsuen Wan and Kwai Tsing District Service Quality Groups (2023-25), so as to make a concerted effort in improving the service quality of the RCHEs and RCHDs in the district. The SWD would contact Members who had joined the Service Quality Groups to arrange visits and give a brief account on the relevant procedures in due course.

16. The Chairman announced the Members whose names would be submitted to the Chairman of the TWDC for nominations to serve on the following Service Quality Groups:

- (1) Mr FUNG Cheuk-sum and Mr WONG Kai-chun would join the Service Quality Group on RCHEs; and
- (2) Ms WONG Shuk-fan, Luparker and Mr TSANG Tai would join the Service Quality Group on RCHDs.

VI Adjournment of Meeting

17. The Chairman reminded Members that the next meeting was scheduled for 8 July 2024 (Monday) and the deadline for submission of papers was 20 June 2024 (Thursday).

Tsuen Wan District Council Secretariat
23 May 2024