

WOMEN'S COMMISSION
Notes of the 92nd Meeting held on 1 August 2018

<u>Present:</u>	Ms CHAN Yuen-han	(Chairperson)
	Ms CHANG King-yiu	Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Vice-Chairperson)
	Professor Cecilia CHAN	
	Ms Susanna CHIU	
	Ms Rabi YIM	
	Mr Philip TSAI	
	Ms Aruna GURUNG	
	Ms Angelina KWAN	
	Ms Yolanda NG	
	Ms Scarlett PONG	
	Dr Loletta SO	
	Ms Yvonne YEUNG	
	Ms Elaine LO	
	Dr Kevin LAU	
	Ms WONG Siu-wah	
	Mrs Viola WONG HO	
	Ms Melaine LEE	
	Ms Carol YIP	Director of Social Welfare
<u>Absent with Apologies:</u>	Mrs Emily LAM HO	
	Professor Shirley HUNG	
	Ms Michelle TANG	
	Miss Sherry TSAI	
	Mr CHEUNG Doi-ching	Principal Assistant Secretary (Constitutional & Mainland Affairs)5, Constitutional & Mainland Affairs Bureau
<u>In attendance</u>	Miss Leonia TAI	Deputy Secretary for Labour and Welfare (1)

	Mr Huggin TANG	Principal Secretary (Acting) Secretary (Secretary)	Assistant (Welfare) 2 /Assistant (Welfare) 2A
	Mr Edwin CHAU	Assistant (Welfare) 2C	Secretary
	Mrs Annie CHAN	Chief Executive (Welfare)2	Officer
For Agenda Item 1	Ms PANG Kit-ling	Assistant Director (Family & Child Welfare)	
	Professor Paul YIP	Chair	Professor, Department of Social Work and Social Administration, Director of the Hong Kong Jockey Club Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention, The University of Hong Kong
	Ms Cynthia XIONG	Project Manager, The Hong Kong Jockey Club Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention, The University of Hong Kong	
	Ms Vivian KO	Principal Secretary (Welfare)	Assistant 1
For Agenda Item 2	Mr LAM Ka-tai	Deputy Director of Social Welfare (Services)	
	Ms Vivian KO	Principal Secretary (Welfare)	Assistant 1

The promotion video of the Elderly Services Programme Plan (ESPP) was shown at the beginning of the meeting. Tasked by the Government in 2014, the Elderly Commission had formulated the ESPP with the assistance of a consultant team from the University of Hong Kong. The ESPP aimed to

strengthen the medium and long-term planning for elderly services. The Government had accepted in principle the strategic directions and recommendations in the ESPP, and had commenced the follow-up actions and arrangements for implementation of the recommendations. Ms CHANG King-yiu, the Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (PSLW) remarked that the ESPP was closely related to the well-being of women as many women assumed the carers' roles. One of the major aspects of the ESPP was to strengthen support to cares of the elderly, e.g. providing financial and training support. Given the increasing elderly dependency ratio due to shrinking work population and ageing population, support measures to the cares would be important in enabling women to choose to work and hence unleashing potential women workforce.

Item 1: Consultancy Study on the Long-term Development of Child Care Services (WoC 07/18)

1.1 The Chairperson and Members confirmed the notes of the 91st meeting without any amendment.

1.2 With the aid of a powerpoint presentation, Professor Paul YIP, Chair Professor of the Department of Social Work and Social Administration of the University of Hong Kong, briefed Members on the progress of the Consultancy Study on the

Long-term Development of Child Care Services (the Study). The consultant team was conducting engagement sessions with different stakeholders, including the relevant advisory bodies. The views collected during the engagement would be taken into account in preparing for the Final Report of the Study, which was expected to be ready within 2018.

1.3 The Chairperson and Members raised various suggestions on enhancing child care services. Suggestions included imposing mandatory requirement for the provision of child care facilities in the sale conditions of government land as well as in the planning of new public housing, optimising the use of land to provide additional facilities for child care services, increasing resources for education programmes that were related to child care services in universities, etc..

1.4 Noting that “Grandparents help out” was found out in the Study to be one of the major reasons for not using child care services, a Member opined that as a matter of choice, many parents preferred their children to be taken care of by themselves or relatives instead of using child care services. Another Member echoed the view and supplemented that for parents with higher income and/or education level, they might have higher expectation on their children’s education. Given the importance of child care setting in child development, she agreed that promotion of early child care and development was the right direction to go.

1.5 A Member suggested that the Study should also look into the services for children with special needs. Another Member opined that the Study should not lose sight of the need of short-term child care services which might arise from various reasons, e.g. school holidays, acute illness of the carers, etc.. The special needs of children of ethnic minorities arising from language and cultural barriers of their families should also be taken into account.

1.6 A Member reflected that child care services provided by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) varied in qualities and suggested the Government to step up monitoring measures. Another Member suggested the Government to adopt the model of pay-for-success to improve the quality of child care services. It was an approach for contracting services that tied payment for service delivery to the achievement of measurable outcomes to encourage the provision of high quality services by the contractor. Under the model, the quality of services would be monitored and evaluated with some key-performance-indicators and the quality service providers would be financially rewarded.

1.7 Members also suggested promoting neighbourhood support and providing training support to carers and parents. A Member opined that besides enhancing child care services, the Government should also promote flexible working hours

and job-sharing to encourage more women to join / remain in the labour force.

1.8 A Member opined that women were still widely perceived by the society as the principal carer in a family, and suggested the Government to take lead in promoting equal sharing of caring responsibilities between women and men. Professor YIP clarified that the Study was gender-neutral and one of the aims of the Study was to empower parents of both genders by enhancing child care services. In fact, the consultant team had come across some examples of parental support measures that promoted gender equality. An example of Finland was that parental leave was co-shared by parents of both genders. The Study had taken into account the actual situation in Hong Kong but never had the least intention of reinforcing gender perception.

1.9 The Chairperson thanked Members for their opinions.

Item 2: Suggestions on the Agenda and Priorities of Family, Child and Youth Welfare Services for 2019-20 (WoC 08/18)

2.1 The social welfare sector had made to the Government various suggestions on family, child and youth welfare services, many of which were of relevance to women. With the aid of a

powerpoint presentation, Mr LAM Ka-tai, the Deputy Director of Social Welfare (Services), briefed Members about the relevant government social welfare initiatives and services.

2.2 The Chairperson and Members raised various suggestions on social welfare initiatives and services, which were summarised in the ensuing paragraphs.

2.3 On family, child and youth services, it was suggested that the Government could consider –

- (i) setting up the Integrated Children and Youth Services Centres in the vicinity of new public rental housing estates;
- (ii) allocating additional resources to increase the manpower of the Family and Child Protective Services Units of the Social Welfare Department (SWD) for strengthening child protection and family support services;
- (iii) providing social work services for children with special needs as early as the age of 0;
- (iv) enhancing the reporting mechanism in relation to family crisis; and
- (v) further facilitating ethnic minorities' access to interpretation and translation services.

2.4 On systemic front, Members opined that consideration might be given to –

- (i) continuing to subsidise NGOs to implement training and business improvement projects by way of the Social Welfare Development Fund (SWDF);
- (ii) providing emotional support and counselling services for social workers;
- (iii) enhancing professional training for social workers; and
- (iv) through long-term planning, increasing the manpower supply of social workers.

2.5 Noting Members' suggestions, Ms Carol YIP, Director of Social Welfare, supplemented that the Task Force for Review on Enhancement of Lump Sum Grant Subvention System, chaired by her with members from the sector and related committees as well as independent members, was conducting a comprehensive review on various welfare-related matters, such as staffing establishment, mechanism for reviewing Funding and Service Agreements, SWDF, etc. The Task Force was gauging views from the sector through various means, including questionnaire, consultation sessions, focus groups and a consultancy study to be conducted.

2.6 Noting that the budget on family and youth services had increased by 12.9% in 2018-19 compared to 2017-18, a Member enquired if there was still room for providing more services. PSLW responded that new services/initiatives that involved substantive costs would require bidding of new resources in accordance with the established mechanism. She remarked that the Chief Executive (CE) would soon meet with various advisory bodies, including Women's Commission, to consult their views on new initiatives in the Policy Address 2018 .

[Post-meeting note: CE consulted WoC on the Policy Address 2018 on 27 August 2018. WoC Chairperson and co-convenors raised WoC's suggestions to CE in the consultation session.]

2.7 In response to the Chairperson's and a Member's comments on the needs of pre-school children with special needs, PSLW supplemented that SWD had launched a pilot scheme on On-site Pre-school Rehabilitation Services with a view to enabling pre-school children with special needs to receive necessary training early in the prime learning period. To ensure these children would be given appropriate support when they proceeded to primary schooling, Education Bureau and the SWD had implemented an information transfer mechanism for pre-school service units and public sector primary schools with effect from the 2018/19 school year. Under the mechanism, a summary report for each child on their performance in various developmental domains and needs for

continuous supportive services would be prepared by pre-school service units and sent to designated primary schools before the school year started with parental consent.

2.8 The Chairperson thanked Members for their comments.

Item 3: Secretary's Report (WoC 09/18)

3.1 The Secretary reported that four working groups (WG) were formed after reorganisation in accordance with WoC paper 03/18 which was endorsed in the 91st WoC meeting. The Chairperson also met with co-convenors of the WGs in mid-July 2018 to discuss the work priorities of WoC. The Chairperson suggested the WGs to discuss their work plans and suggestions for the Policy Address 2018 before the relevant consultation session to be held in late-August 2018.

Item 4: Any Other Business

4.1 The next meeting would be held after the announcement of the Policy Address 2018. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 17:20.

**Women's Commission Secretariat
October 2018**