

The Hong Kong Council of Social Service

Standing Committee on Policy Research and Advocacy (2021-22)

Minutes of the 2nd meeting held on January 20, 2022 (Thursday) at 3:00pm through zoom.

Present:

Ms. Sky Siu (Chairperson)	-	KELY Support Group
Ms. Iris Liu (Vice-Chairperson)	-	International Social Service Hong Kong Branch
Mr. David Fung	-	St. James' Settlement
Mr. Jim Hoe	-	Sai Kung District Community Centre Limited
Ms. Yvonne Chak	-	Hong Kong Christian Service
Mr. Keswick Chuk	-	Evangelical Lutheran Church Social Service - Hong Kong
Dr. Raymond Tam	-	Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Department of Applied Social Sciences
Ms. Cindy Pun	-	Tsung Tsin Mission of Hong Kong Social Service
Dr. Wong Yu Cheung	-	Caritas Institute of Higher Education
Dr. Paul Wong	-	University of Hong Kong
Ms. Sisi Liu	-	Hong Kong Federation of Women's Centres

In-attendance

Mr. Anthony Wong	-	HKCSS
Mr. Peace Wong	-	HKCSS
Mr. Charles Ho	-	HKCSS
Ms. Karen Yiu	-	HKCSS
Ms. Olivia Ip (Recorder)	-	HKCSS

Apologies:

Ms. Christa Cheung	-	Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups
Mr. Benson Ng	-	Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Lady MacLehose Centre

1. Welcome members of the Committee

1.1 On behalf of HKCSS, the chairperson welcomed Ms. Sisi Liu to join this Committee.

1.2 There was still one vacancy for co-option, but since there had not yet no suitable person been nominated, he invited members to make suggestions for consideration.

2. To adopt the agenda of the meeting

The agenda of the meeting was adopted.

3. To endorse the minutes of last meeting

The minutes of last meeting were confirmed with the following amendment:

3.1 Kely Support Group should read KELY Support Group.

3.2 Item 7.6 should read as:

After discussion and nomination, Convenors of the 3 Task Forces were:

- Task Force on Poverty and Basic Income Protection 2021-24
 - Dr. Raymond Tam
- Task Force on Health and Housing of the Grassroots 2021-24
 - Mr. Jim Hoe
- Task Force on Aging Population and Society 2021-24
 - Ms. Yvonne Chak

4. **Matters Arising**

- 4.1 Mr. Anthony Wong reported that Mr. Tik Chi Yuen was elected as the member of the Legislative Council representing the social welfare functional constituency.

5. **To discuss major initiatives for Business Plan 2022-23**

Mr. Anthony Wong introduced the followings:

- 5.1 The Council invited McKinsey to evaluate HKCSS's strategic direction for the upcoming 10 years. The strategic directions would have to be confirmed later.
- 5.2 Members were briefed about the timeline of making corporate plan. The overall plan would be discussed and endorsed by the Executive Committee in March every year.
- 5.3 As there was a change in the governance structure of PRA, initiatives for this business plan would be based on the suggestions by 3 Task Forces. Two of them had met and had submitted their recommendations. PRA Standing Committee would have the right to make amendments to the proposed recommendations when we formulated our business plan.

5.4 Task Force on Poverty and Basic Income Protection

Mr. Peace Wong reported the first meeting of the Task Force on Poverty and Basic Income Protection that:

- 5.4.1 The meeting mainly brainstormed and discussed the following issues: employment and unemployment, and also including the employment situation of disadvantaged groups and single parents.
- 5.4.2 Issues pertaining to casual workers, job stability, lower income, and the impact of COVID on employment were also discussed. Secretariat would put up a more detailed plan at the next meeting for discussion.
- 5.4.3 Mr. David Fung told that his agency was conducting a project on helping university students to find jobs. His colleagues initially thought that young people would prefer choosing contract work or part-time work.

However, after project running more than a year and a half, they found that young people preferred to find a stable permanent job rather than a contract job. He was looking forward to the Council's report, it could help them finding out why young people intended to find permanent job.

- 5.4.4 Ms. Sky Siu asked about the research on young people's entrepreneurship, Mr. Peace Wong replied that he was considering and tried to conduct a research study on young people job transition. He suggested that the agenda of young entrepreneurship could be incorporated into the research plan, as one of the common phenomena related to job transition of youth is that some are pursuing to starting small enterprises (eg. starting an online business). Their need of support may be one of the foci to be investigated.
- 5.4.5 Dr. Wong Yu-cheung was concerned about the assessability and thresholds of CSSA. Anthony Wong replied that rather than further conducting research, the Council might make use of the regular meeting with SWD every year to sound out our concerns together with frontline workers. Participants would usually express the difficulties of the user in applying for CSSA. He told members that the Council would have more sharing meeting with SWD after the pandemic subsided.
- 5.4.6 Mr. Peace Wong reported that the Council continued to follow up on the issue of retirement protection, and reported that the government was planning to make some change to MPF and rationalize different retirement protection schemes. The Council would continue to follow the issue.
- 5.4.7 The chairperson proposed to include the situation and suggestions on the issue of employment due to the impact of the epidemic in the proposal. Members agreed.

5.5 Task Force on Health and Housing of the Grassroots

- 5.5.1 Mr. Anthony Wong briefed that Social Housing of HKCSS had 3 projects:
- (a) The Council mainly followed up the work on transitional housing and the tenancy control ordinance. It had also proposed to the government a feasible solution and proposal for rent control.
 - (b) Nam Cheong Street Project – tenants would move out on August, 2022;
 - (c) Yen Chow Street Project had been completed. Waiting for occupancy certificate to move in.
 - (d) Yip Shing Street Project - construction work was still in progress.
 - (e) Recently, there were several NGOs working on transitional housing projects. The Council was engaged by the government to provide consultancy to these NGOs.

5.5.2 Sub-divided unit

- (a) The Council was conducting a series of surveys on sub-divided housing households not applying for CSSA or Working Family Allowance Scheme. The second batch of survey had been completed and the findings were expected to be released before Chinese Lunar New Year.
- (b) A study on health and quality of life had also been being carried out, and we were working on designing questionnaire.
- (c) Knowing that the government was compiling a blueprint for primary health care, the Council planned to propose to the government the role of the social welfare sector in health care. It was heard that the government was considering setting up an authority to deal with primary health care. Depending on the development of the situation, the Council would convene the sector to discuss recommendations to the government. The upcoming Policy Bulletin would discuss the issue of medical-social cooperation, and it was produced to prepare the sector to participate in the discussion.
- (d) St. James' Settlement was the operator of Yen Chow Street Project, they had been doing community primary health care and housing work in the past. The Council, in cooperation with St. James' Settlement and a professor at CUHK, would submit a research project application to the government.

5.5.3 Mr. Jim Hoe, Convenor of this Task Force reported the first meeting that they were mainly discussing how to align some names and terminologies. Members also put forward other opinions during the meeting, which would be further discussed and consolidated in the next Task Force meeting.

5.5.4 Mr. Anthony Wong said that the staff team was trying to identify a suitable research on primary health care, including social medical collaboration. He welcomed suggestions from members for consideration.

5.5.5 Members were concerned that public perception of primary health care focused mainly on the elderly. Members agreed the Council to take the lead to advocate that primary health care should concern all people of the general public. Some members mentioned that every time the government rolled out policies related to use of new technology, such as the use of online medical appointments and safety travel systems, social workers would always be the first one to help people in the neighborhood. There was an obvious role that social workers could play in primary health care.

5.5.6 Ms. Sky Siu and Ms. Yvonne Chak also thought that most of the current researches focused on the health of the elderly, but not too much research on other age groups such as childhood or disabled person. Ms. Sky Siu suggested the Council considering to conduct research on a wider topics of social medical collaboration. Ms. Yvonne Chak agreed with Ms. Sky Siu's suggestion.

5.6 Task Force on Aging Population and Society

5.6.1 A research study on 照顧者喘息需要研究 was released in June 2021. Mr. Anthony Wong shared the report to the committee members through zoom at the meeting.

5.6.2 The staff team was planning to conduct research study on long term care financing in aging society. It would be discussed when the Task Force held its first meeting. Dr. Wong Yu Cheung commented that before starting the research, it was better to assess the long care demand, the actual amount support and services that should be in place before we could talk about financing issue.

5.6.3 The Council would continue conduct research and advocacy on carer support. Ms. Sisi Liu updated members that PolyU Study on Carers would be released this year.

5.7 Mr. Anthony Wong highlighted that the Council was now conducting a project to construct a Hong Kong Inclusion and Diversity Index to advance the social well-being of ethnic minorities in Hong Kong, which was supported by a private foundation. Research framework would include important areas of everyday life such as education and health. The staff team had done a lot of engagement work recently. It was expected that the Index could be released every two or three years and become an important policy advocacy. Due to the epidemic, the third quarter indicator report proposed to be released in the middle of the year.

5.8 Mr. Anthony Wong updated that PRA Annual Conference would be held at March 18, 2022 instead of March 17. The Conference of this year was mainly focused on data science and methodology. Promoting policy research and advocacy and empowerment to generate new idea on promoting the research and advocacy capacity of the welfare sector. Chairperson encouraged members to join.

5.9 It was hoped that through the conference, participants, whether or not co-workers in charge of research work, could improve their research capacity or educational capacity in the agency.

5.10 Policy Bulletin

5.10.1 Mr. Anthony Wong reported that the Policy Bulletin was published twice a year with the support by an Editorial Board. Due to the change of governance, and the function of the Task Forces overlapped with the Editorial Board. The staff team proposed not to continue with the Editorial Board.

6. Co-opt member

- 6.1 After discussion, members agreed to invite Ms. Flora Ko to be the co-opted member. Mr. Keswick Chuk would share information to Mr. Anthony Wong for follow up. (Post-meeting note: Flora Ko was invited and she agreed to join our Committee as co-opted member.

7. Any Other Business

- 7.1 Ms. Iris Liu introduced “傾計劃 - 實踐智慧分享會” to members which would be held at February 16, 2022. She would share more details to members for information after the meeting.
- 7.2 Dr. Paul Wong told members that HKU and CUHK Psychiatry Department received Government sponsorship and would conduct projects for ethnic minorities. If there was more information, he would share to members.
- 7.3 The Council would organize a discussion session and invite members of LegCo Welfare Panel for an exchange on various social welfare issues concerning social welfare sector.

8. Date of Next Meeting

Date of next meeting was scheduled to be held at March 11, 2022 (Friday) from 3pm by zoom. (Post-meeting note: The meeting was eventually cancelled due to sickness of the chairperson. It was eventually scheduled for 3pm 19 April 2022 by Zoom.

Adopted by: _____
(Sky Siu, Chairperson)

Date: _____