

The Hong Kong Council of Social Service

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

Minutes of the 3rd meeting held on April 19, 2022 (Tuesday) 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
Ms. Christa Cheung	-	Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups
Mr. Benson Ng	-	Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Lady MacLehose Centre
Dr. Flora Ko	-	School of Professional Education and Executive Development, Hong Kong Polytechnic University

In-attendance

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

1. Welcome members of the Committee

1.1 On behalf of HKCSS, Vice-chairperson, Ms. Iris Liu welcomed Dr. Flora Ko to join this Committee.

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:

- Dr. Raymond Tam was absent from the last meeting, so moved his name from Present item to Apologies item.

4. To identify issues and recommendations for the Annual Submission 2022

- 4.1 2022 is the year for the Election of the Chief Executive of HKSAR. The Council had already produced a 5-year social welfare agenda earlier, so we would use the 5-year social agenda as a blueprint to prepare the Annual Submission. Mr. Anthony Wong invited members to give suggestions, and the Annual Submission would submit for discussion and approval at the Council's Executive Committee meeting at the end of May.
- 4.2 Mr. Anthony Wong reported that the Council tried to invite Mr. John Lee Ka Chiu, the candidate for Chief Executive, to meet with the representatives of the social welfare sector, but he did not have time to meet. The Council would explore if he could be able to come and meet with the sector later on other occasion.
- 4.3 Mr. Anthony Wong introduced the previously submitted 5-year social welfare agenda to member for information, and that would serve as the basis for the Annual Submission for 2022.
- 4.4 Members feedbacks were:
- 4.4.1 Ms. Flora Ko commented on page 6 point 3 building and community capacity that some social workers implemented primary care through community health care centres. She agreed that DHC would be the most important and a very important platform for residents to participate and built their communities together. Residents should take responsibility for taking care of their own health, and it could empower them to build a more important and better community for themselves.
- But she questioned that there were so many public housing estates / private housing estates in Hong Kong, it was very difficult to promote the community structure with this model. So she proposed to figure out how to make use of DHC and leverage other community stakeholders and resources to engage the community to take care of their own health .
- 4.4.2 Ms. Iris Liu said that the government proposed to establish and legislate mandatory reporting of child abuse cases. But she commented that it was not only concerned with children's residential services, it also concerned various issues of children. In 2017, social welfare sector had tried to ask for establishing a children affairs commissioner, but so far it was not realized.
- 4.4.3 Ms. Cindy Pun agreed and commented that services provided for aged 0-6 were limited, service policies for children was very outdated. She recommended to revise policies and set up children affairs commissioner as soon as possible to avoid similar incidents to happen again.
- 4.4.4 Ms. Karen Yiu informed members that in the Policy Address, it was

mentioned that the government would set up a children's commissioner.

- 4.4.5 At the meeting, members shared that some foreign countries law combined the adolescent law and child protection law. Dr .Paul Chan and Ms. Yvonne Chak disagreed. Ms. Yvonne Chak said that although there was Children's Affairs Commissioner, but there is still no Youth Affairs Commissioner in Hong Kong, and the scopes of both was relatively broad. She believed that it was more appropriate to deal with the work of the two Commissions separately.
- 4.4.6 Mr. Keswick Chuk shared his opinions that as far as the role of PRA, our recommendations should be at a higher level. Lately, many stakeholders were quite concerned with SDG(United Nations Sustainable Development Goals), he wondered whether the Council would make reference to SDG. Also, knowing that the government had proposed to restructure bureaus, HKCSS should give comment to the government
- 4.4.7 Although the lump sum grant had been mentioned every year in the past, members still insisted that it should continue to be mentioned.
- 4.4.8 Knowing that the government would dissolve the mutual aid committee in January next year. Mr. Benson Ng told members that some Specialized Committee had discussed this issue in previous meeting but no conclusion.
- 4.4.9 Members agreed to set up community support network and mutual aid network, as long as regional residents could strengthen themselves, and they could help their own community.
- 4.4.10 Carer policy: Ms. Sisi Liu told members that she attended the PolyU briefing two months earlier. PolyU had eleven recommendations, and ten recommendations were put forward on the same day. The eleventh recommendation was resource issue, but it was not put forward on the same day. She personally thought that the government said to encourage enterprises to support the social responsibility staff, but she could not see the determination of the government to take responsibility. She suggested strengthening the requirement for the government to take responsibility or establish legislation when compiling the annual submission.
- 4.4.11 Mr. Anthony Wong responded to the followings that:
- he understood members' concerned about the district community network;
 - the government's responsibility and input to caregivers;
 - the rebuilding of trust would be needed but it was not easy to concretize how it could be done
 - there was currently no formal consultation on the government re-

structuring. The Council had used its channel to give some feedback. As of the date of meeting, it was known that the work on youth issues would not be entirely transferred to the Home Affairs. But nothing was conclusive.

- Regarding rehabilitation service and home-base service issues he would discuss with Ms. Teresa Li, our Chief Officer of Rehabilitation Service.

5. To discuss the findings of Mckinsey's study and consult members of the suggested governance structure change

5.1 Mr. Anthony Wong reported that Mckinsey's final report was endorsed in the last Council's EXCO meeting. He told members that the new structure would change positioning, mission statement and also have strategy change. The PRA was also contemplating changes to the governance structure and staff team structure.

5.2 Mr. Cliff Choi attended this meeting and introduced that the main purposes of the change were:

5.2.1 It's mainly to set the positioning and strategic direction of the HKCSS;

5.2.2 HKCSS would be expected to be an impact-driven platform in the next decade;

5.2.3 social welfare sector and other cross-sectors worked together to create new opportunities for social transformation and new development;

5.2.4 Set up 1+3 strategic directions for creating an impact driven culture, to strengthen policy development and research capacity, namely, co-creation, tech enablement, and talent development for an impact-driven culture.

5.2.5 Comprehensive social service development, policy advocacy, more innovation, integration of cross-sectoral forces, corresponding to the ever-changing society;

5.3 Mr. Cliff Choi summarized the above items were the consensus obtained after the discussion in the past six months and endorsed at last EXCO meeting.

5.4 Second stage was going to discuss the change in governance structure and staff structure. He encouraged members giving recommendations on the governance structure.

5.5 He reiterated that the proposal and change of this project would not happen in the short term, there would still be meetings and discussions during this period, and there was no need to implement the changes in this year.

5.6 The proposed change in governance was presented through Powerpoint presentation.

- 5.7 Mr. Benson Ng commented that HKCSS had made constant changes in the past 20 years, but it would still serve as a counterpart unit for the subsidizing agencies and the Social Welfare Department. The current proposal made him worry the positioning of the HKCSS would go further and further away from member NGOs. He urged the Council continuing to be able to speak on behalf of the sector.
- 5.8 Ms. Iris Liu suggested to simplify the names of various committees and groups, as well as the scoping of the committees. They looked rather confusing.
- 5.9 Ms. Yvonne Chak suggest to set goals and time-table for the change. She believed that after restructuring, the objectives of standing committees and specialized committees would be changed, and the work of the specialized committees would be much larger in scope than before.
- 5.10 Ms Christa Cheung commented that the development of IT in the social welfare sector had always been relatively weak. She believed if social welfare sector wanted to do more on tech enablement in welfare, it would be necessary to communicate more with IT sector and get their expertise to help us.
- 5.11 Mr. Cliff Choi had the following responses:
- 5.11.1 In response to Ms. Iris Liu's comment, he said the names of the committees might be revisited;
 - 5.11.2 He agreed with Mr. Benson Ng's opinion that the Council should continue speaking on behalf of the sector. However, as the most of the issues we were dealing with involved a lot of different stakeholders, the Council would need to change according to the requirements of the objective environment of the society.
 - 5.11.3 He said that the restructure would make sure that frontline colleagues could enjoy more exposure to different perspectives, practices and experiences.
 - 5.11.4 In response to Ms. Yvonne Chak's question about the timetable that the coming few months were reserved for discussion. If consensus and implementation could not be obtained in the coming year term (2022-23), it could even be postponed to the next year term (2023-24).
 - 5.11.5 About Ms. Christa Cheung's concerned that the social welfare sector's use of technology to promote social service work, he agreed and believed that it was also necessary to consider how to integrate the service development of the sector and the application of technology.
 - 5.11.6 The Council should continue to be a platform and speak out for the social welfare sector.
 - 5.11.7 Mr. Anthony Wong added two points:
 - The Council, the Social Welfare Department and the Labour and

Welfare Bureau had strong working ties. Our function as a bridge between these government bodies and the sector would not change due to the restructure.

- The Council would strive for more cooperation and contacts with other government departments with respect to the change in direction.
- Regarding the issue of technology, he commented that the most important thing was the change in the mindset of governance and management of agency before technology could really be fully embedded in the service process.

5.12 The Chairman thanked Mr. Cliff Choi for attending today's meeting.

6. To discuss impact of 5th wave of COVID-19 and potential areas of work for social service sector

6.1 The fifth wave of the Covid-19 epidemic was serious, members of the committee share their opinions:

- 6.1.1 Ms. Sky Siu said that KELY was a non-subsidized agency. In this epidemic, the work of young people needed to follow the trend very closely. Her agency hoped to expand the work model and carried out education about alcohol and life skills through online platforms. KELY referred to the teaching model of Calm Academy to create an online education platform, for young people to learn social emotional education themselves.
- 6.1.2 Ms. Yvonne Chak reported that it was mentioned in the Ageing population task force. The outbreak of COVID-19, the prohibition of family members from visiting the elderly in the elderly homes, and the inability of caregivers to visit the elderly due to illness. Task force thought that the details of the discussion were most appropriate to be discussed in working groups or specialized committee meetings, especially in operational or service issues.
- 6.1.3 Mr. Anthony Wong told members that research unit was going to conduct a desktop research on the long-COVID, the role of the welfare sector in the epidemic and how to deal with it, etc. Mental health issues had to be dealt with. He would discuss with Mr. Peace Wong and Ms. Karen Yiu on the feasibility of holding a workshop.
- 6.1.4 Ms. Sisi Liu told member that in early 2020, her agency received many cases of domestic violence for seeking help. At present, there were more cases of family quarrels. Some of them were staying at home because of the epidemic, and several families living in the same house (such as sub-divided units), would quarrel over household hygiene issues.
- 6.1.5 Ms. Iris Liu said that in addition to the above suggestions, PRA could cooperate with institutions to carry out research study. She believed that scholars were very interested in conducting research on COVID-19.

Dr. Paul Wong agreed with Iris's suggestion.

7. Any Other Business

Nil.

8. Date of Next Meeting

Next meeting date would be fixed in early May.

Post-meeting Note:

Next meeting was scheduled to be held at May 20, 2022 (Friday) from 10:00am via zoom.

Adopted by: _____
(Sky Siu, Chairperson)

Date: _____