

The Hong Kong Council of Social Service

Standing Committee on Policy Research and Advocacy (2022-23)

Minutes of the 3rd meeting held on Nov 1, 2023 (Wednesday), 1:00pm at YiXin Restaurant.

Present:

Ms. Chak Tung Ching, Yvonne (Chairperson)	- Hong Kong Christian Service
Mr. Fung Kai Man, David (Vice-Chairperson)	- St. James' Settlement
Ms. Keung Choi Yin	- Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited
Ms. Poon Fung Oi, Scarlet	- Baptist Oi Kwan Social Service
Mr. Sin Chiu Hang, Benjamin	- Caritas – Hong Kong
Ms. Pang Shuk Ling, Sally	- Christian Family Service Centre

Apologies

Mr. Ng Yuk Ming, Benson	- Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Lady MacLehose Centre
Ms. Pun Siu Fung, Cindy	- Tsung Tsin Mission of Hong Kong Social Service
Dr. Tam Kin Yuen, Raymond	- Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Department of Applied Social Sciences
Mr. Chuk Wing Hung, Keswick	- Evangelical Lutheran Church Social Service - Hong Kong
Dr. Ko Suk Lan, Flora	- School of Professional Education and Executive Development, Hong Kong Polytechnic University
Ms. Liu Pui Shan, Sisi	- Hong Kong Federation of Women's Centres

In-attendance

Mr. Wong Kin Wai, Anthony	- HKCSS
Mr. Peace Wong	- HKCSS

1. The agenda was adopted.
2. The minutes of last meeting was adopted without comment
3. To report and discuss the latest Policy Address and the Council's response
Mr. Peace Wong introduced some of the key measures being announced by the Chief Executive in the Policy Address on 25 October 2023.
 - A fund of \$0.5b is going to be established which is similar to the Social Welfare Development Fund for the sector. This has been consistently requested over many years and members were happy to hear that the fund is now in place.

- \$1b is to be injected into Innovation and Technology Fund for Application in Elderly and Rehabilitation Care for the promotion and proliferation of use of gerontechnology. The Council has already expressed welcome to this measure.
- Members were concerned about measures of poverty alleviation. In addition to increase in places for Strive and Rise Programme, the CE announced setting up a pioneer Community Living Room. Members were informed that it would be located in Sham Shui Po. Despite saying that it would be a pioneer project, members were aware of that similar attempts had been made by individual NGOs. Details of the government's proposal remained to be announced. In any case, members were happy to see that the government was keen on the idea.
- Policy Address also mentioned that there would be enhancement of the cash allowance for the Working Family Allowance Scheme. Members were also aware of the significant enhancement of allowance for covering the course fee offered by Employment Retraining Board. While this was considered a good move, members were also concerned that the measure might also attract more people who might not be very keen on being employed but simply on enjoying the increased fee. It would be good if the government or the ERB could work out strategy to deal with such moral hazard.
- Members also slightly commented that measures in promoting life birth for Hong Kong. While it was agreed that \$20,000 per new born child for 3 years might not be any big incentive, priority given to households giving new births to children in applying for public housing (Public Rental Housing and Home Ownership Scheme) was considered by members as significant incentive for people.
- Members noted the Council's response to Policy Address and considered the response an appropriate one.

4. To conclude the work of the Standing Committee

- The chairperson announced that this meeting marked the end of the Standing Committee. The ensuing works on policy research and advocacy would be falling within the terms of reference of the newly established Standing Committee on Social Development.
- The chairperson thanked the members for the participation and contribution to the committee, and invited members to continuously be concerned with the work of policy advocacy contributing the development of both the sector and the society as a whole.

- Members also thanked the chairperson for the effective leadership in the last year.

5. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:45pm.

Adopted by: _____

Ms. Yvonne Chak
Chairperson

Date: _____