

The Hong Kong Council of Social Service
Specialized Committee on Social Development (2019/2020)

Minutes of the 3rd Meeting

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| Date: | 20 th March, 2020 (Friday) | |
| Time: | 15:00 – 18:00 | |
| Venue: | Remote Meeting: Zoom | |
| Present: | Mr. Bill LAY (Chairperson) | - Caritas Hong Kong |
| | Mr. Po Shan TANG (Vice Chairperson) | - Kwun Tong Methodist Social Service |
| | Mr. Billie LAU | - Evangelical Lutheran Church Social Service |
| | Ms. Ivy LEUNG | - Christian Family Service Centre |
| | Mr. Mike Cheung | - Hong Kong Christian Service |
| | Dr. Kim Wah CHUNG (Co-opted) | - Hong Kong Polytechnic University |
| | Dr. Margaret WONG (Co-opted) | - Hong Kong Shue Yan University |
| | Mr. Anthony WONG (Secretary) | - The Hong Kong Council of Social Service |
| In attendance: | Ms. Natalie YAU | - The Hong Kong Council of Social Service |
| | Ms. Connie CHEN (Recorder) | - The Hong Kong Council of Social Service |
| Apologies: | Dr. Fong Chi Hang, Brian (Co-opted) | - The Education University of Hong Kong |

1. To receive the agenda

The agenda was adopted without amendment.

2. To confirm minutes of last meeting

The minutes were confirmed with the following amendment in the item of APOLOGIES:

“Dr. Fong Chi Hang, Brian (Co-opted) - The Education University of Hong Kong”

3. Business Update

3.1 Policy Research and Advocacy

3.1.1 Policy Bulletin on Transitional Housing (Policy Bulletin Issue 28)

The coming issue on Transitional Housing was scheduled to be released in the middle of April 2020.

3.1.2 Housing

Ms. Natalie YAU presented the major findings of 「業主質性研究」 on the concerned Platform. The sharing was made on 23 January 2020. The concerned Platform organized a press conference in mid-February and Ms. Natalie YAU helped to share the findings during the press conference.

3.1.3 Postponement of Singapore Study Visit on Development of Community-based Social Services for Health Management, Disease Prevention and Community Rehabilitation

Due to novel coronavirus, the Singapore study visit was postponed until further notice.

3.1.4 Release of Social Development Index 2018

There was delay in data collection due to special work arrangement for government departments during February and March. It was expected that all the data would be available in April.

3.1.5 Sub Divided Units (SDU) Research

A 2-year quantitative research on residents of sub-divided units (SDUs) was planned to be conducted from July 2020 to Jun 2022, with an estimation of 20,000 households from the “Assistance Programme to the Living Environment of Low-income Subdivided Unit Households” (為低收入劏房改善家居援助計劃) participating in the survey study. Formulation of research concepts and the design of questionnaire were in progress.

3.2 Centre for Social Impact

Mr. Anthony WONG reported the progress of SIA projects. The 9th Conference on Practice and Research for Social Service Excellence was postponed due to novel coronavirus.

4. Matters for Discussion

4.1 The Proposed Plan for Change of Governance structure of Policy Research and Advocacy

4.1.1 Staff Team Restructure and Strategic Areas of Policy Agenda

Mr. Anthony WONG reported the new staff structure to all Specialized Committee Members. All members agreed on the new staff structure, that it would be comprised of three teams with corresponding research areas. Some members suggested the subjects might cover broader scope, so that it would give flexibility and sustainability for the teams to develop. But at the same time, members suggested the name of the teams should give clear meanings for the staff and the public to understand, so as to avoid any misconception that the works of the 3 teams duplicate.

Mr. Anthony WONG added that there would be review mechanisms on the division of research areas, on a 3-5 year basis. The mechanism would reconsider the subject focuses regularly. The teams would also keep the usual practice of research on specific target groups, upon the requests initiated by the service teams and with the allowed capacity of research teams.

4.1.2 Governance Structure and Capacity Enhancement

On the suggestions concerning governance of PRA, members were given a briefing on the thoughts and opinions by Ex-Co. Members were therefore invited to give their opinions for consolidation and the Council's management would submit a final proposal for Ex-Co's consideration in July. In response to this, members gave the following opinions:

- Agreed that the approach of having expert groups working with the respective small staff teams would enhance the participation of members in a more in-depth manner.
- Noted that adding expert groups in the existing governance structure would make the governance structure complicated and agreed that governance structure should thus be streamlined to enhance effective engagement and communications with the sector.
- Members were aware of the potential duplication of function of the proposed expert groups and the Specialized Committees.
- As the proposed expert groups were not the formal governance bodies, dropping all the Specialized Committees from the existing governance structure of PRA might not be desirable. Members were of the view that it might not be very desirable for PRA Standing Committee to be the sole decision-making body.
- Members generally agreed with Ex-Co opinion that the new governance structure should not compromise the formal participation of the agency members in the governance too much. Preserving one Specialized

Committee while reasonably expanding its membership might be considered.

- If one Specialized Committee were to be preserved, the name and the function of it would be a concern. Members were aware of that while the topics or names of expert groups would be changed from time to time, depending on our regular review of the strategic research foci, the Specialized Committee should be a relatively long-standing one. A broader concept might therefore be needed.

Mr Anthony WONG informed members that Specialized Committee on Social Security and Employment Policy, and the PRA Standing Committee would also be consulted. All concerns and suggestions from the committee meetings would be summarized as a consolidated proposed and forwarded to Ex-co for consideration in July 2020.

5. Any other business

5.1. Policy Suggestions Discussion in the Coming Annual Submission

Several concerned areas were highlighted. 1) Unemployment during recession. Suggestions were on re-introducing youth employment schemes such as the youth ambassador scheme, providing short-to-medium term unemployment subsidies. 2) Measures on private rental market. 3) Acts to foster and strengthen social innovation in social service delivery. 4) Internet learning support for students from low-income families. 5) Measures to maintain small local social enterprise operation under crisis due to the pandemic.

6. The date of next meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 18:00. The date of next meeting would be scheduled later.

Confirmed

by :

Mr. Bill LAY

Chairperson of Specialized Committee on
Social Development

Date:
