

**Minutes of the 36th Meeting of
the Committee on Services for Youth at Risk**

Date : 11 March 2005 (Friday)
Time : 2:30 p.m.
Venue : Conference Room 1
Social Welfare Department Headquarters
9/F., Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East,
Wan Chai, Hong Kong.

Present

Mr Paul Tang, JP (Chairperson)
Social Welfare Department

Mr Y C Cheng, JP (Vice Chairperson)
Education and Manpower Bureau

Dr Choi Yuen-wan, SBS, JP
Breakthrough Limited

Prof Hau Kit-tai, MH
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Mr Paul Chan, JP
The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups

Mrs Justina Leung, JP
The Boys' and Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong

Ms Jane Tsuei
The Hong Kong Council of Social Service

Mr Ma Wai-luk
Hong Kong Police Force

Miss Wendy Cheung
(representing Mr Freely Cheng)
Health, Welfare and Food Bureau

Ms Esther Leung
Home Affairs Bureau

Dr Mak Kwok-hang
Department of Health

Miss Anna Chor
Security Bureau

Mr Cheung Hing Wah
Social Welfare Department

Mr Allan Ng Ting Kwong
Social Welfare Department

Mr Hung Wai Lun
Social Welfare Department

(Secretary)

In attendance

Professor Shek Tan Lei, Daniel, BBS, JP
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Miss Winnie Leung Oi Lin
Social Welfare Department

Miss Hannah Yip Hau Yu
Social Welfare Department

Absent with apologies

Mr Lee Kwok Sung
Education and Manpower Bureau

Mr Tai Hay-lap, BBS, JP
School Principal

Mr Cheng Cho-chak
School Principal

Mr Hui Chin-yim, Stephen
The Hong Kong Subsidised Secondary School Council

Dr Tsang Kit-man, Sandra
Committee on Home-School Co-operation

Dr Tam Wing Kun
Action Committee Against Narcotics

Welcoming remarks

The Chairperson extended warm welcome to Professor Shek, who would then brief Members on the P.A.T.H.S. to Adulthood : A Jockey Club Youth Enhancement scheme (hereafter referred to as “the Project”).

Agenda Item 4 – Discussion on the Hong Kong Jockey Club Youth Project (CSYR Paper 2/2005)

2. As Professor Shek had to leave the meeting earlier because of his teaching engagement, this item was first discussed. Professor Shek then referred Members to his information paper circulated before the meeting and remarked that the Project aimed at developing the potentials of the young people by providing opportunities and recognition for them to build up their competence and enhance their skills in taking on future life challenges. He in particular highlighted the following characteristics of the Project:

- Being different from the remedial type of intervention, the Project adopted a positive and proactive approach in addressing the needs of young people. It aimed at promoting the holistic development of the youth before the emergence of problem.
- In enhancing the credibility of the Project, an overseas consultant, Professor Richard Catalano of the University of Washington, the United States of America, had been engaged to provide external assessment of the framework, programme design and evaluation of the Project.
- Flexibility would be another feature of the Project which encompassed two tiers of programme aiming at meeting both the universal and specific needs of the students. The Tier 1 Programme was a universal positive youth development programme targeting at all students in Secondary One to Secondary Three of the participating schools. There would be 20 hours of training per school year at each level, comprising ten hours of core programme and ten hours of elective programme. Schools might choose to implement the core programme only or both the core and elective programmes according to the needs of their students.
- The Tier 2 Programme was a selective programme targeting adolescents with greater psychosocial needs who were identified in the Tier 1 Programme and / or via other sources. Applicant NGOs had the choice of designing appropriate programmes to cater for the needs of students with reference to the objectives of the Project. The programmes could be flexibly tailored according to individual needs of the students.

- The project applications would be considered by SWD with the guidance and assistance of the Research Team. The basic orientation of the review process was not to consider the applications on a competitive basis but rather to render necessary support to the applicant NGOs in ensuring the standard of proposals.
- The Project would be first rolled out to the Secondary One level in the 2005/06 school year with the programmes commencing in January 2006. It would then be extended to cover the Secondary Two and Three levels in the 2006/07 and 2007/08 school year respectively.
- Two evaluation studies, namely the Comprehensive Evaluation Study and Quasi-Experimental Longitudinal Study, would be conducted to evaluate the project. The research team would further work out the details of the evaluation studies upon the advice from the overseas consultant, Professor Richard Catalano.

3. After Professor Shek's presentation, the Chairperson invited members' views on the project. Mrs Justina Leung raised enquiry on (a) the interface between the project and other existing youth programmes in secondary schools such as the Understanding Adolescent Project (UAP) and the Adolescent Health Programme (AHP); (b) the components built in the Tier 1 programme corresponding to the constructs; (c) the assessment tool of the greater need for the Tier 2 programme; and (d) the benchmark indicators of change in Tier 2 programme. Professor Shek responded that the cumulative practice experiences of UAP might possibly be applied to the Tier 2 programme of the project while different programmes had different focuses as in the case of AHP which focused more on adolescent health. The secondary schools concerned could exercise their discretion in taking up the appropriate project(s) to meet their students' individual needs. He assured that the 15 constructs would be logically incorporated in the Tier 1 programme in accordance with the most updated literature and proposed conceptual model. For the assessment tool, Professor Shek stressed that flexibility was given to both the NGOs and schools in making use of information from multiple sources, such as the Hong Kong Student Information Form, Life Satisfaction Scale, or any other relevant quantitative and qualitative assessment. Yet, the Tier 2 proposals had to be evidence-based and include an evaluation plan, which should indicate the expected changes. Mrs Justina Leung raised concern on the evaluation of the Tier 2 programme in light of the varieties in the large number of proposals. Professor Shek admitted that the evaluation for tier 2 programme would be quite complicated but the research Team would work out the detailed evaluation mechanisms in due course.

4. Dr. Choi Yuen Wan showed his support to the positive and holistic youth development concept of the project. He shared his experiences in the implementation of UAP in primary and secondary schools that took eight years to

involve both the frontline workers and university researchers to validate and enhance programme content. He wondered if P.A.T.H.S. should go through a validation process before rolling out. He was concerned about the quality of the programme if it was put in place in a rush. He suggested that the project should better be built on existing valuable practice experiences and a pilot study should be conducted. He also expressed concern on the heavy workload generated from the project upon frontline workers. Professor Shek while agreeing that the project was under a very tight time schedule, considered that the quality of the project could still be ensured as it was built on existing practice experiences. He further revealed that a few schools were already engaged to test run the programme with a view to refining it. As regards workload, he expected frontline workers to make reference to the existing youth programmes they were running, which should not generate much additional workload. He emphasized that frontline staff were just expected to add on an evaluation component, rather than doing a piece of research. In view of the readily available funding, Hong Kong Jockey Club preferred to implement the programme the soonest possible and thus the evaluation had to be conducted in parallel.

5. Mr Cheung Hing Wah highlighted that NGOs were currently running a lot of service initiatives for young people, which largely fell under the Tier 1 programme but they might not be fully validated. For the Tier 2 programme a similar one such as the UAP, there might be different views towards its assessment tool and effectiveness, including Professor Hau's comments at the previous CSYR meetings. He drew Members' attention to the fact that 292 out of 484 secondary schools in Hong Kong (i.e. about 60%) took part in the UAP in the 2004/05 school year due to various reasons. Taking heed the termination of UAP due to resources constraint, Hong Kong Jockey Club had developed the project, where the experiences of UAP could still be transferred to its Tier 2 programme. To facilitate the adoption of UAP, SWD had entrusted the Chinese University of Hong Kong to develop an e-screening tool to identify those students in greater need. To address the imminent service needs of young people, the Hong Kong Jockey Club could hardly afford a considerable period of time for validation, but spearhead to serve the youth first. They considered that the project's further development would very much depend on the effective outcome of the services. Given the flexibility of the Tier 2 programmes, participating organisations of P.A.T.H.S. could make use of their existing youth programme so that they needed not start from zero. The Hong Kong Jockey Club's intention was not to reinvent the wheel but rather to enrich the project basing on existing experiences. The NGOs concerned could make use of the funding from the Hong Kong Jockey Club to employ additional hands to implement the programme, hence, the project should not cause a great burden to existing frontline staff.

6. Ms Jane Tsuei drew members' attention to the following points. Firstly, she wished the project could build on the strengths gained from existing programmes. This would facilitate the sector to buy in the project because their previous inputs were treasured and recognized. Secondly, the frontline social workers' participation in developing the programme was essential. In this way, they would develop a sense of ownership of the project. Thirdly, a pilot study should be conducted before the

implementation of the project. If this was not feasible, the NGOs and schools concerned had to be involved to make a comprehensive review of the project for sustainability. Professor Shek considered there were already some measures to enable the sector to buy in. For the Tier 2 programme, frontline social workers were just required to write a brief proposal of no more than 5 pages to save their time. To facilitate their work, two sample proposals were prepared for the NGOs concerned as easy reference while two forums on proposal writing for the Tier 2 programme would be organized. The NGOs and schools concerned had the full autonomy to transfer their existing programmes, such as UAP into the Tier 2 programme where appropriate. To cultivate a sense of ownership, a certificate would be issued to each trainee who attended the Tier 1 Training at each level. EMB also supported that the training hours on the project would be recognized as Continuous Professional Development Training. Professor Shek believed that those measures would serve as incentives to attract both the welfare and education sectors to join the project.

7. Professor Hau opined that the Tier 1 programme hours should be extended because 20 hours would not be intensive enough to achieve the project objectives. With reference to the Quality Education Fund, he wondered if the Tier 2 programme would manifest the conceptual framework on positive youth development. It might merely serve to encourage some enthusiastic NGOs to run more youth development programmes. Professor Shek responded that NGOs through the Tier 2 programme had to demonstrate the positive youth development change, such as the cultivation of resilience.

8. Professor Hau also showed his concern on the project monitoring. Mr Cheung Hing Wah supplemented that NGOs operating school social work services, in a joint venture with their serving schools, should be responsible for the project monitoring as they would receive the funding from the Hong Kong Jockey Club direct. SWD would act as a coordinator at the central level to collate the information and operations if required.

9. Mr. Paul Chan viewed that frontline staff would probably be bound by the preset 30 minutes units, particularly in the format of classroom curriculum. In addition, fine tuning of the project was necessary with regard to the huge resources and manpower invested. If the project was to be implemented as scheduled, he urged the Research Team to provide guidelines, which clearly spelled out the expectation upon the NGOs and their frontline staff. In response, Professor Shek clarified that flexibility was allowed to combine each 30 minutes unit into sessions so as to meet the individual needs of the students. Although it was difficult to apply the programme in a curriculum approach, he found it feasible as evidenced by the outcome studies conducted by Professor Richard Catalano. He reassured that Guidance Notes with two sample proposals would be provided for the NGOs in due course. He stressed that the award of the funding was not on a competitive basis. Instead, NGOs would be advised to revise their proposals if they were not up to the minimal threshold quality standard.

10. Concerning the implementation schedule of the project, Mr. Cheung Hing Wah informed the meeting a series of publicity activities as follows:

- (a) A Media Briefing would be held at the Hong Kong Jockey Club on 23.3.2005 to attract media coverage of the project.
- (b) A territory-wide Launching Ceremony cum Briefing Session would be held on 8.4.2005 for school personnel, Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) and relevant stakeholders. The Briefing Session covered the background, overall design, funding arrangement and implementation details of the project.
- (c) Two forums on proposal writing would be organised on 11 and 12 April 2005 for social workers and teachers with a view to familiarising them with the design of the Tier 1 and Tier 2 Programmes as well as the proposal's requirement.
- (d) NGOs would be invited to submit funding proposal in May 2005 with endorsement of the school principals concerned.
- (e) The project under the Experimental Implementation Phase would be implemented in January 2006.

11. Ms Jane Tsuei asked if NGOs could participate in the training of proposal writing though they might not apply for funding of the project from the Hong Kong Jockey Club due to religious reasons. Mrs Justina Leung would like to know which party would take up the training. Professor Shek said that NGOs rendering school social work service were welcome to join the training while the Research team comprising academics from five universities in Hong Kong would conduct the training.

12. Dr. Choi Yuen Wan would like the Research team to pay attention to the outcome measures of Tier 1 programme as they were not yet validated. He reiterated that the valuable experiences gained from UAP should be incorporated in the Tier 2 programme. Professor Shek concurred that to measure the change in the students brought about by the project was utmost important and the Research Team had already planned to conduct a longitudinal study for the Tier 1 programme to examine if there were any changes demonstrated in the students. Taking into consideration the rich accumulative experiences developed from UAP, Professor Shek had included the Hong Kong Student Information Form as one of the assessment tools, which was mentioned in both the Brochure and the Guidance Notes. He assured that he would mention UAP to be incorporated as one of the Tier 2 programmes in the coming briefing.

13. In view of the successful experiences from UAP, Mrs Justina Leung felt it a pity to terminate UAP. Mr. Cheung Hing Wah pointed out that the Tier 2 programme of the project could incorporate into UAP, whose e-screening tool had been developed by SWD to facilitate the NGOs' continual making use of it in the project as they deemed appropriate.

14. Having sufficient discussion on the topic, the Chairperson concluded that UAP could be applied into the Tier 2 programme while the Tier 1 programme was a universal programme, where UAP did not have such coverage. In this regard, it was believed that UAP's experience could be retained and the project would be enriched and further developed in light of the universal coverage. Members had no further comments on the project. Professor Shek left at this juncture.

Confirmation of minutes of last meeting held on 27 April 2004

15. The minutes were confirmed with no further amendment.

Matters Arising

16. The Chairperson drew members' attention to the review of the membership of the Committee (p.14, para. 37), with reference to Home Affairs Bureau's suggestions on review of the Role and Functions of Public Sector Advisory and Statutory Bodies that a member should not serve more than 6 years in an advisory or statutory body to ensure turnover of members. In this connection, six members of the committee had already served for over 6 years. Except Dr. Choi Yuen Wan who would be re-appointed in the capacity of Commissioner on Youth (CoY) with a view to maintaining good communication between CoY and this committee, replacement had to be identified for the other 5 members, including Mr Tai Hay Lap, Mr Cheng Cho Chak, Professor Hau Kit Tai, Mrs Justina Leung, and Mr. Paul Chan in their respective sectors. The chairperson extended hearty thanks and appreciation for their significant contribution in this Committee. He wished to count on their continuous support on young people services even upon expiry of their terms of service at the Committee.

Agenda Item 3 – Discussion on the Revised Terms of Reference of CSYR (CSYR Paper 1/2005)

17. The Chairperson informed that the existing Terms of Reference (TOR) were last revised in April 1998, which did not genuinely reflect the current work of this Committee. He therefore invited Mr. Allan Ng to present the Paper on the Revised Terms of reference of CSYR, which was issued to members before the meeting. Mr. Allan Ng further elaborated the background of the review and the proposed new TOR. Members agreed to adopt the new TOR as follows:

- (a) To examine current youth issues and keep young people services under continuous review in order to address the changing needs of young people;
- (b) To advise the Government, through the Director of Social Welfare, on policy and measures related to young people and in particular youth-at-risk; and
- (c) To promote cross-sector collaboration and co-ordination at policy and working levels.

Agenda Item 5 – Sharing on New Initiatives for Young People under Policy Address 2005 (CSYR Paper 3/2005)

18. The Chairperson invited Mr. Cheung Hing Wah to share members with the new initiatives for young people under the Policy Address 2005. Mr. Cheung Hing Wah introduced the additional resources of \$5 Mn for After School Care Programme, \$15 Mn for District Support for Children and Youth Development and \$23 Mn for Assistance to Youth at Risk and Young Offenders. The sector would be duly informed about details of the operational arrangement. Mrs Justina Leung asked when the new initiatives would be put into effect. Mr Cheung Hing Wah answered that they would likely be implemented half a year later to allow time for necessary preparatory work. Ms Jane Tsuei opined that the manpower of each Community Support Services Scheme (CSSS) should be strengthened. Mr Cheung Hing Wah responded that it was difficult to assess the individual district service demand of CSSS and Young Night Drifters (YND) due to the varied individual district characteristics. Yet the Social Welfare Department would carefully examine the allocation of resources to different CSSS and YND teams. He also considered that cross sector collaboration, such as working with the Police, would also need to be boosted.

19. Ms Jane Tsuei would like to have a comprehensive picture of other new initiatives on young people services conducted by other Bureaus / Departments.

20. Mr YC Cheng took the opportunity to brief members about the School-based After-school Learning and Support Programmes (hereafter referred to as “the programmes”). He informed that it had been the policy objective of the Government to reduce poverty as far as possible. For this purpose, a recurrent provision of \$75 million per annum had been earmarked starting from the 2005-06 financial year to enable schools to provide the programmes, in collaboration with NGOs where necessary. The target group would be students on Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) or receiving full grant under the Student Financial Assistance (SFA) scheme. They were economically deprived and their families did not have the means to let them take part in fee-charging learning activities.

In particular, the programmes would cater for those needy students who also did not have adequate parental support and guidance. EMB had already invited the Hong Kong Council of Social Service and NGOs to deliberate the programmes. The following principles would be adopted in the implementation of the programmes:

- (a) the programmes should be school based and tailor-made to suit the needs of students concerned, and be conducted outside normal school hours;
- (b) the programmes should not overlap with or replace any similar existing services;
- (c) the grant would supplement subsidies / services currently provided by Government and other agencies for helping students from disadvantaged families; and
- (d) the focus of the programmes would be placed on providing needy students with after-school remedial learning support and other activities conducive to their whole-person development.

21. Mr YC Cheng added that to avoid undue additional workload on teachers, schools would be encouraged to work in partnership with NGOs, which could make reference to their existing support programmes. Since this was a new scheme, EMB would consult schools, NGOs, and the Legislative Council Panel on Education concerned. He would report the progress of the programmes to Members in due course.

Any Other Business

22. As Members raised no further business for discussion, the meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Date of Next Meeting

23. The next meeting was scheduled on 15 July 2005 (Friday) at 2:30 p.m.

(Post Meeting Note: The 37th meeting of the Committee on Services for Youth at Risk which was scheduled on 15 July 2005 would be postponed and confirmed in due course.)