

**Minutes of the Eleventh Meeting of
the Joint Committee on Information Technology
for the Social Welfare Sector held at 3:00 p.m. on 26 January 2005**

Present: Mr Paul Tang (Chairperson)
Mrs Agnes Allcock
Mr Sit Tung
Mr Alex Ma
Prof. Chan Wing-tai
Dr Law Chi-kwong
Mr Chong Chan-yau
Mr Leung Wai-fung, Joseph
Mr Lam Bing-chun (Secretary)

Absent with apology: Ms Peggy Leung
Mr Kang Tsi-kit

In attendance: Mr Li Kam-chiu
Mr Kok Che-leung
Ms Gladys Tsui
Dr John Fung
Miss Ann Hon
Mr Fu Tsun-hung
Mr Steve LAM (for agenda item 3 only)
Ms Ella YIP (for agenda item 3 only)
Mr Edmond Keung (for agenda item 5 only)
Ms Shirley Kiang (for agenda item 7 only)
Mr Cliff Choi (for agenda item 7 only)
Mr Fong Kin-lung (for agenda item 7 only)

Confirmation of Minutes of the Last Meeting

The draft minutes of the 10th meeting were confirmed without further amendment.

Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Last Meeting

Paragraph 3

2. Mr Sit Tung informed Members that a meeting with agency heads of

the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) operating integrated family services centres would be held in early March 2005. The meeting would review the approach, schedule and costs in respect of the implementation of NGO Client Information System.

Paragraph 6 – 10

3. The Secretary reported that the vetting of the 3rd batch information technology (IT) related Business Improvement Projects (BIPs) was near to completion. Two outstanding BIPs were under processing while another two joint BIPs would be handled together with the 4th batch BIP applications as the applicant agencies failed to submit the needed supplementary information by the end of 2004.

[Post meeting note: One BIP application was returned to the agency in view of lacking of adequate information for conducting a fair and comprehensive assessment. The agency was informed of the areas that needed to be substantiated on 18 February 2005.]

Business Improvement Projects

4. At the meeting, Members deliberated two BIP proposals and offered their advice and support to proceed with funding application for the proposals.

Evaluation of Knowledge Management (KM) System of the Boys' and Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong (BGCA)

5. Mr KOK Che-leung briefed Members about the major findings of the evaluation and parameters for future consideration of KM related proposals set out in Paper No. JC 2/05.

6. Dr Law Chi-kwong suggested that the schema for processing knowledge mapping mentioned in paragraph 20(c) of the paper would likely be developed alongside the implementation of a KM system and continued after the system roll-out. He shared that the agencies' readiness for cultural change was often driven by the process of implementing KM systems. Mr Sit Tung clarified that paragraph 20(c) served to remind applicant NGOs to pay due attention to such key successful factors as cultural change, which would be considered in the vetting process.

7. Mr Alex Ma viewed that the benefits of KM could not be easily

realised within a short period and the KM proposals might not need to meet all parameters. He appreciated BGCA's initiative to incorporate the KM into the performance appraisal mechanism. In addition, Mr Ma commented that NGOs should focus on specific subject areas to enhance the potential on knowledge sharing in the welfare sector. Dr Law Chi-kwong also echoed that some benefits brought by the KM system were intangible. Mr Sit Tung responded that both tangible and intangible benefits would be taken into account when assessing KM proposals.

8. Mr Kok Che-leung supplemented that the parameters were references to enable NGOs to assess the implications of implementing KM system and to set out their specific objectives. Dr John Fung agreed that the parameters could serve as a good reference guide for NGOs.

9. Mr Joseph Leung agreed that an organization with relatively mature IT development would be more ready for implementing a KM system. Dr Law Chi-kwong also found the parameter set out in paragraph 20(g) of the paper agreeable and pointed out that an organisation should have some basic infrastructure such as an intranet before proceeding to operate a KM system.

10. The Chairperson concluded that the parameters as set out at Annex would be adopted as a reference guide for deliberation of KM related applications from the 4th batch of BIP applications onward.

(Mr Joseph Leung left the meeting at this juncture.)

Progress Report on the Implementation of the Core Applications Development Project (CAP) on Human Resource Management (HRM) and Financial Management (FM) for Non-governmental Organisations

11. The Chairperson referred Members to Paper JC 3/05 and invited Dr John Fung to report the progress on the implementation of CAP.

12. Dr John Fung reported that 21 NGOs had rolled out the HRM system. HKCSS would negotiate with PCCW to extend the implementation service to March 2005 because one NGO could only have the required manpower to conduct the required test at a later stage.

13. Dr John Fung further reported that for batch 3 of CAP, 14 out of the total 16 applicant NGOs had indicated their interest to stay on the project. He stressed that he would help applicant NGOs to focus first on a business process review to ascertain the applicability of CAP to their business environment

before considering the scope of customisation. Mr Chong Chan-yau concurred with this view. He further advised that communication with applicant NGOs should be enhanced for future batches of CAP. Mrs Agnes Allcock added that a communication strategy should be in place during the project implementation.

14. Mr Sit Tung proposed that in view of the good progress of batches 1 and 2 in the past few months, it would be appropriate for batch 3 to proceed. He however suggested that batch 3 NGOs should be arranged to walk through the key functions of CAP before they confirmed in writing their commitment to join the project. In the event that there were still withdrawal cases in batch 3, the 20% agency contribution exempted under the funding parameters for CAP and the sum spent on project implementation would be deducted from the four-million ceiling under the BIP scheme.

15. With regard to the suggestion of walk-through by batch 3 NGOs, Dr John Fung said that an in-depth demonstration of CAP would be more feasible than hands-on trial use by NGOs in view of the resource involved in setting up a trial environment in HKCSS. Professor Chan Wing-tai suggested that NGOs of batches 1 and 2 be invited to join the sessions to share their experience with NGOs of batch 3.

16. Dr Law Chi-kwong suggested providing an exit arrangement for NGOs to withdraw from CAP if they could not adapt to the business process of the system in the early stage of implementation. Dr John Fung proposed that a fund grant be allocated to the HKCSS for conducting a gap analysis before NGOs made a commitment to join the CAP. Mr Sit Tung considered that NGOs should be able to make an informed decision after walking through the CAP and sharing of experience with NGOs of batches 1 and 2.

17. In response to Mr Alex Ma's enquiry, Dr John Fung replied that the service charge per call was unexpectedly high if NGOs sought direct maintenance service from PCCW instead of seeking the first line help desk service provided by the HKCSS. Mr Alex Ma suggested that the HKCSS should try making the recurrent charge for CAP more scalable and competitive. Mr Chong Chan-yau suggested the HKCSS to consider promoting the CAP to non-subsidised NGOs as well.

18. In response to Mr Alex Ma's enquiry, Mr Sit Tung responded that NGOs were allowed to choose their own FM or HRM solution other than CAP on justifiable grounds. However, no further Lotteries Fund (LF) grant would be considered for them to join CAP in future according to the funding parameters.

19. In response to the discussion on the possibility of tapping LF grant for future enhancement of CAP, the Chairperson advised that the LF would cater for one-time cost only. The ongoing enhancement of CAP, which was considered recurrent in nature, should be borne by individual NGOs. He further advised that the HKCSS should provide all applicant NGOs of batch 3 with a full cost picture before they confirmed their commitment to join. Dr John Fung said that he would include this aspect in the demonstration sessions for the applicant NGOs.

20. After discussion, Members agreed to the views of SWD set out in paragraphs 9 to 11 in the paper.

Revised Guidance Notes on Application for IT related Projects

21. Mr Sit Tung highlighted the key changes to the Guidance Notes, which were made based on the revised IT Strategy and past experience on vetting BIP proposals.

22. Dr Law Chi-kwong enquired whether there would be assistance for NGOs to formulate their IT plans or strategies so that they could provide such information in their applications. Mr Sit Tung shared that the Guidance Notes served as a reference to facilitate NGOs to conceive their BIP applications from a corporate perspective with due consideration of system integration and long term investment. NGOs were not required to undertake a detailed strategy study before submitting their applications.

23. Mr Chong Chan-yau considered that the Guidance Notes should be made specific and clear on the required IT strategy and plan as NGOs might have different levels of IT development and their understanding of this information might differ from each other. Professor Chan Wing-tai agreed that NGOs should have a roadmap on its IT development in order to reduce the complexity on system compatibility in the long run.

24. The Chairperson said that the IT strategy could be drawn up from the management angle in order to set out clear direction and objectives for implementing IT systems to underpin their corporate governance and business development.

25. Mr Alex Ma shared that all government departments were required to submit a departmental IT profile to illustrate their IT infrastructure, existing IT systems in use and those under planning when submitting a funding application. Mr Chong Chan-yau supported that such information would be useful for

evaluating NGOs' overall IT plan.

26. In response to Mr KOK Che-leung's enquiry, Dr John Fung said that he was exploring resources to develop a template to help NGOs formulate their IT strategy. Dr Law Chi-kwong suggested using a simple template with a few key questions to guide NGOs deliberating their IT plan or strategy. Mr FU Tsun-hung remarked that the template should be ready by February 2005 to tie in with the schedule of inviting applications of the 4th round BIP.

27. The Chairperson concluded that SWD would discuss the template with the HKCSS and incorporate the suggestion in the revised Guidance Notes.

(Dr Law Chi-kwong and Dr John Fung left the meeting at this juncture.)

Any Other Business

28. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:15pm. The next meeting would be held by May 2005 tentatively with a date to be fixed.

Social Welfare Department
March 2005