Minutes of the 26th Meeting of the
Joint Committee on Information Technology (JCIT)
for the Social Welfare Sector held on 7 May 2015

Present :	Ms Carol Yip	(Chairperson)
	Mr Fung Pak-yan	
	Miss Sheila Kong	
	Mr Timothy Cheng	(on behalf of Miss Donna Chan)
	Mrs Paula Leung	
	Mr Billy Tang	
	Mr Kwok Lit-tung	
	Mr James Leung	
	Mr Gordon Lo	
	Prof Leung Kwong-sak	
	Ms Susanna Shen	
	Ms Winnie Tam	(Secretary)

Absent with apologies :	Dr Ng Nam

In attendance :	Mr Wong Yuk Tong	
	Mr Lee Tat-hong	
	Mr Vincent Chan	
	Mr Ricky Fung	(for agenda item 3 only)

Opening Remarks

The Chairperson extended welcome to all Members, in particular Mr Timothy Cheng who attended the meeting on behalf of Miss Donna Chan. The Chairperson also thanked Professor Leung Kwong-sak, Mr Gordon Lo, Dr Ng Nam, Mr Kwok Lit-tung and Mr James Leung for accepting the re-appointment as JCIT members for a period of two years from 1 May 2015 to 30 April 2017.

2. The Chairperson introduced Mr Wong Yuk-tong who had replaced Mrs Sarah Choy as Chief Social Work Officer (Information Systems and Technology). With apology, Dr Ng Nam could not attend this meeting due to other engagement.

Agenda Item 1 - Confirmation of Minutes of the Last Meeting

3.   The draft minutes of the 25th Meeting were sent to Members for comments on 22 September 2014.   Some textual refinements had been received and incorporated into the revised draft which was sent to Members on 28 April 2015.   The minutes of the 25th Meeting were confirmed with no further amendments from Members.

Agenda Item 2 - Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Last Meeting

Paragraph 9: Information Technology (IT) Strategy for the Social Welfare Sector

4.   The Secretary reported that browsing account to access the e-Platform of the Social Welfare Development Fund (SWDF) was created for each Member in December 2014.   Members were advised to change the password for security purpose.

Agenda Item 3 - e-Platform for Social Welfare Development Fund

5.   The Chairperson welcomed Mr Ricky Fung, the representative of Hong Kong Council of Social Service (HKCSS), who assisted Mr Billy Tang in the presentation for this agenda item.   At the invitation of the Chairperson, Mr Billy Tang briefed Members of the e-Platform for SWDF which had been launched since 12 June 2014 for all subvented NGOs.   Each NGO was given a corporate account whereby the administrator could create user accounts to their subvented staff for uploading and updating both IT and non-IT projects approved under SWDF.   As of 24 April 2015, there were 273 users coming from 66 NGOs and 270 IT and non-IT projects were uploaded.   Apart from browsing projects' information, such as nature, duration as well as costs of each project, interested NGOs could also make direct enquiries to other NGOs through the e-Platform's enquiry mechanism.   Mr Billy Tang also performed a live demonstration of the e-Platform.

6.   In response to Mr Gordon Lo and Mr Timothy Cheng's suggestion of uploading the information of service vendors, Mr Billy Tang remarked that while the uploading of the projects was on voluntary basis, NGOs also needed to observe the non-disclosure agreement between the NGO and the service vendor. Ms Susanna Shen added that valuable comments should be encouraged in order to retain knowledge and experience.

7. <u>Miss Sheila Kong</u> supplemented that upon the project completion, NGOs were required to submit evaluation reports on their respective projects. SWD would consolidate the empirical experience and feedback of the concerned NGOs and shared the information among NGOs by means of 'Useful Tips / Good Practices' under NGO Corner of the SWD Homepage. NGOs could also access the information via the e-Platform of SWDF.

Agenda Item 4 - Information Technology Strategy for the Social Welfare Sector (*Paper JC 1/15)*

8. At the invitation of <u>the Chairperson</u>, <u>Mr Wong Yuk-tong</u> gave an update on the implementation progress of the recommendations made under the Review of IT Strategy for the Social Welfare Sector as depicted in the Paper JC 1/15. He highlighted that 11 recommendations under Phase I, which did not require additional funding resources, had already been put in place. He then briefed Members on the proposed implementation approach of Recommendations 2 & 8 under Phase II.

9. <u>Mr Wong Yuk-tong</u> concluded that, under the prevailing IT Strategy for the Social Welfare Sector, NGOs' funding applications for hiring consultancy services to conduct comprehensive IT plans as proposed in Recommendation 2 would be considered. Interested NGOs could apply for funding under the Lotteries Fund (LF). For Recommendation 8, in view that funding provision was already available under SWDF for NGOs to replace and upgrade IT infrastructure for business system upgrading for subvented services, the expansion of Block Grant (BG)'s ambit might not be required at this stage. Given that SWDF would end in 2018-19, SWD would review the ambit of available funding sources nearer the time to address the concerns of NGOs.

10. <u>Mr James Leung</u> viewed that the definition of IT items under LF was not up-to-date to meet the operational needs of NGOs. He cited that some essential and minor IT products were neither supported by the Lump Sum Grant (LSG) nor BG. As regards SWDF, <u>Mr James Leung</u> opined that the applicability of the said fund was not that flexible as SWDF was implemented by phases with specific time frame. With respect to <u>Mr James Leung's</u> concerns, <u>the Chairperson</u> advised the Information Systems and Technology Branch to seek clarification with the Subventions Branch on the deployment of various funding sources regarding procurement of IT equipment and kept Members posted.

[Post-meeting Notes:
Members were informed through email on 1 June 2015 that both LSG and LSG Reserve were accounted for under recurrent subventions and intended for operating expenditure for Funding and Service Agreement (FSA) or FSA related activities. Minor or routine capital expenditure on furniture and equipment (F&E) items (including IT equipment) each costing no more than $20,000 may also be legitimately charged to LSG or LSG Reserve, whereas major acquisitions should be charged to LF. Subject to the $20,000 cap not being exceeded, NGOs could exercise their flexibility of using LSG or LSG Reserve to procure IT equipment, such as LAN cable, router or firewall, which was currently not covered under BG. Besides, as stipulated in 4.2.3 of the LF Manual, BG could be used to replace/upgrade IT equipment, confining to procurement of personal computer and related software and peripherals, i.e. printer, scanner and USB flash drive for data backup. SWD was now working on reviewing the provision of F&E items, including the IT equipment, taking into account the operational concerns of NGOs.]

Agenda Item 5- Progress of IT Projects under SWDF *(Paper JC 2/15)*

11. The Chairperson invited Mr Wong Yuk-tong to update the progress of IT projects under SWDF as depicted in the Paper JC 2/15. Mr Wong Yuk-tong reported that funding application of Phases 1 and 2 under SWDF was completed. Approval was granted to 130 NGOs at a total sum of about $156 million for 211 applications involving 417 IT projects. Among the total 130 applicant NGOs, 81 applied IT projects on both phases. For Phase 1, out of 233 IT projects, 212 (or 91%) were completed, 17 were called off and four were still underway. For Phase 2, a total of 98 applications, involving 184 IT projects, were supported. By April 2015, out of 184 IT projects, 12 (or 6.5%) were completed and 172 (or 93.5%) were in progress. Phase 3 of SWDF would commence in early 2016.

12. Mr Wong Yuk-tong remarked that, to prepare for the launching of Phase 3, SWD had gathered views and suggestions through agency visits and evaluation reports collected from NGOs. As regards the implementation of IT projects, SWD would take forward some facilitating measures, such as fine-tuning the IT application form to facilitate applicant NGOs' thorough and realistic assessment of the project schedules at the planning stage, as well as uploading useful tips / good practices for delivery of IT projects to SWD Homepage and the e-Platform for SWDF for sharing among NGOs.

13. On Mr Gordon Lo's enquiry on the proportion of funding among the three phases of SWDF, Mr Wong Yuk-tong replied that the funding cap for each phase was one third of the total funding to NGOs. Nevertheless, NGOs could seek for SWD's prior approval to vary the percentage of the funding cap for the

relevant phases.   NGOs could use the remaining one third of funding cap under Phase 3, in addition to the remaining balance of funding brought forward from the previous two phases.

14.   Ms Susanna Shen shared her views on the advantages of using cloud computing as a strategic approach to implement IT projects under SWDF.   Mr Gordon Lo and Mr James Leung echoed that the cloud computing was suitable for small NGOs which lacked expertise to implement IT projects.   Ms Susanna Shen further suggested for the adoption of a common application system for projects with similar nature.   Mr Timothy Cheng shared with Members the difficulties encountered by the concerned NGOs on the shared use of a core application system on human resource management and financial management years ago.   Mr Billy Tang remarked that there were limitations to develop core applications which depended largely on the readiness of NGOs to change their workflow to suit the system requirements.

15.   The Chairperson expressed her gratitude to Members for their contribution and assistance in vetting all the IT projects under SWDF.   She also showed appreciation to HKCSS for taking the leading and coordinating role to advocate and promote the sharing culture in the welfare sector.

Agenda Item 6 - Any Other Business

16.   The Chairperson shared with Members that the Best Practice Manual (BPM) for NGOs on human resource management, financial management, as well as corporate governance and accountability had been put in place since July 2014.   The Chairperson encouraged NGOs to upgrade their IT competence through mutual sharing as recommended under BPM.

17.   The Chairperson again thanked Members for their valuable views given in the meeting.   There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:30pm.

Agenda Item 7 - Date of Next Meeting

18.   The date of the next meeting would be fixed in due course.

Social Welfare Department
June 2015