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Minutes of the 27th Meeting of the
Joint Committee on Information Technology (JCIT)
for the Social Welfare Sector held on 20 April 2016

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Present :	Miss Cecilla Li	(Chairperson, on behalf of Ms Carol Yip)
	Miss Sheila Kong	
	Mr Dominic Kwong	(on behalf of Miss Donna Chan)
	Mr Horace Ho	(on behalf of Mrs Paula Leung)
	Ms Susanna Shen	
	Dr Shirley Hung	
	Prof Leung Kwong-sak	
	Mr Gordon Lo	
	Mr Kwok Lit-tung	
	Dr Ng Nam	
	Mr Tony Lee	
	Ms Winnie Tam	(Secretary)

In attendance :	Mr Wong Yuk-tong
	Mr Lee Tat-hong
	Mr Vincent Chan

Opening Remarks

The Chairperson informed Members that the meeting was chaired by her on behalf of the Director of Social Welfare (DSW) who sent her apology as she had to attend the Elderly Commission meeting rescheduled only lately and clashed with this meeting. The Chairperson extended welcome to all Members, particularly those attending the meeting for the first time-

➢ Dr Shirley Hung Suet-lin, Associate Professor of Hong Kong Baptist University (Social Work), replacing Professor David Cheung; and

➢ Mr Tony Lee Chang-pui, replacing Mr Billy Tang as the representative of the Hong Kong Council of Social Service (HKCSS).

The Chairperson also informed Members that DSW had personally sent thank-you letters to Professor Cheung and Mr Tang for their remarkable contributions to the work of JCIT over the past years.

2.   The Chairperson introduced two official representatives, Mr Dominic Kwong and Mr Horace Ho, who attended the meeting on behalf of Miss Donna Chan of the Office of Government Chief Information Officer and Mrs Paula Leung of the Labour and Welfare Bureau respectively. She also informed Members that Mr James Leung, representative of the Non-Government Organisation (NGO) welfare sector, had left the sector for personal reason. The Social Welfare Department (SWD) would identify a suitable replacement from the NGO welfare sector.

Agenda Item 1 - Confirmation of Minutes of the Last Meeting

3.   The draft minutes of the 26th Meeting had been sent to Members for comments on 11 June 2015.   The minutes of the 26th Meeting were confirmed without amendment.

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

Paragraph 5: e-Platform for Social Welfare Development Fund (SWDF)

4.   Mr Tony Lee updated Members on the latest position of the e-Platform. He reported that since the launch of the e-Platform on 12 June 2014, 281 IT and non-IT projects had been uploaded by NGOs and around 740 views were recorded in the past year.   As at 20 April 2016, 408 users coming from 170 NGOs had registered to use the e-Platform.

Paragraph 10: Post-meeting Notes

5.   The Secretary reported that the review on the provision of furniture and equipment items was completed and the Lotteries Fund (LF) Manual was updated accordingly in August 2015.   NGOs could make use of the Block Grant under LF for replenishment of IT equipment, such as computer hardware, software, peripherals and network products.

6.   In response to Mr Dominic Kwong's enquiry, Miss Sheila Kong clarified that all funding commitments under LF were one-off and non-recurrent in nature.

Agenda Item 3 - Review of the Funding Parameters of the Core Applications Development Project (Paper JC 1/16)

7.   At the invitation of <u>the Chairperson</u>, <u>Mr Wong Yuk-tong</u> briefed Members on the review of the funding parameters of the Core Applications Development Project (CAP) as depicted in the **Paper JC 1/16.**

8.   <u>Mr Wong</u> shared with Members the background and current situation of CAP. As at end March 2016, there was a total of 26 applications (i.e. 11 Human Resource Management (HRM) and 15 Financial Management (FM) systems) used by 19 NGOs. While the Information Technology Resource Centre (ITRC) of HKCSS provided maintenance support service to these 26 applications, the participating NGOs paid the annual subscription fee, in accordance to the size of NGOs, to ITRC for technical advice and support.

9.   <u>Mr Wong</u> highlighted the common problems of CAP since its live-run in 2005 and the latest situation that some participating NGOs wishing to withdraw from CAP and set up their own HRM/FM systems had encountered difficulties in mobilising alternative funding source.   He further elaborated that, according to the funding parameters for implementation of CAP, no further LF grant would be considered for CAP users if they choose to exit CAP and set up their own HRM and FM systems subsequently.   Since the Social Welfare Development Fund (SWDF), the prevailing available funding source for NGOs to implement IT projects, was sourced from LF, requests from the participating NGOs of CAP to apply for SWDF to develop/redevelop their own HRM/FM systems were not supported under Phases 1 and 2.   SWD had conducted a review in February 2016 on the funding parameters of CAP.   To be in line with the prevailing IT strategy for the social welfare sector and to maximise the use of SWDF, the participating NGOs and those withdrawn from CAP previously were allowed to apply for SWDF under Phase 3 to develop/redevelop their own HRM/FM systems.

10.   <u>Dr Ng Nam</u> shared his agency's experience in using the FM system under CAP.   He recalled that CAP had provided a good opportunity for NGOs to start using FM/HRM systems and could achieve synergy among NGOs in using a common core application at that time.   However, owing to the expansion of service scopes and re-engineering of organisational structure over the past years, the existing functionalities of CAP might not efficiently and effectively meet these NGOs' growing operational and managerial needs.   Yet, it would not be easy to reach a consensus among all the participating NGOs on

the adoption of common functionalities for CAP given their varied business needs. Besides, the current maintenance cost was high. Dr Ng further stated that the requirement of contribution of 15% project cost from NGOs under SWDF would hinder the participating NGOs of CAP from using the said fund to develop/redevelop their own HRM/FM systems.

11. Professor Leung Kwong-sak opined that the future development of CAP might have significant impact on the participating NGOs' forward planning regarding CAP. Ms Susanna Shen shared her views and experience that core application, which helped save resource and achieved synergy, should be promoted among NGOs. Mr Dominic Kwong and Dr Ng Nam echoed that the welfare sector had, through CAP, gained practical experience in implementing joint projects and acquired knowledge about the benefits and drawbacks of developing IT system through a collective approach. Yet, Dr Ng reiterated that it was not so amenable for all participating NGOs to agree on such development. Professor Leung raised the point that NGO stakeholders should be fully engaged and that advice from IT professionals should be sought before implementing any redevelopment/enhancement plan of CAP which was supported by Ms Shen.

12. The Chairman drew Members' attention that Paper JC 1/16 mainly focused on the review of the funding parameters of CAP with a view to offering greater flexibility in facilitating NGOs to maximise the use of SWDF. The future direction of CAP depended largely on the inclination and operational needs of the participating NGOs.

13. Mr Tony Lee shared with Members the current situation of CAP and the role of ITRC. While the participating NGOs had their own discretion of exiting from CAP to develop their own HRM/FM systems or continuing to subscribe CAP, HKCSS had started working with the participating NGOs on their intention and readiness to join the redevelopment/enhancement of the existing CAP in order to meet the changing IT environment and operational needs of NGOs. Mr Lee remarked that funding support would be sought by joint application under SWDF Phase 3. To achieve the economy of scale, invitation was also extended to those non-participating NGOs. Mr Lee remarked that the tentative schedule for submitting the joint application would be September 2016.

14.   In response to <u>Mr Gordon Lo's</u> enquiry on the timing for announcement to NGOs regarding the uplifting of restriction, <u>Mr Wong Yuk-tong</u> shared that all enhancement measures under SWDF Phase 3, including the relaxation of restriction under the funding parameters of CAP, had been notified to all NGOs in February 2016 and NGOs should have sufficient time to plan their projects ahead.

15.   <u>Miss Sheila Kong</u> supplemented that no joint applications for redevelopment/enhancement of CAP was received under SWDF Phases 1 and 2. Should the participating NGOs agree to redevelop/enhance the existing CAP under Phase 3, HKCSS would be the leading NGO responsible for submitting the joint application and assuming the coordinating role for all the participating NGOs concerned. <u>Miss Kong</u> also highlighted that the funding parameters for CAP under the Business Improvement Project (BIP) Scheme as given in the Annex of Paper JC 1/16 were no longer applicable. It was because the BIP Scheme had been subsumed under SWDF since the latter's implementation in 2010 and that all NGOs applying for SWDF should adhere to the stipulated funding requirements/parameters of the said fund.

16.   <u>The Chairperson</u> thanked Members for their stimulating deliberations on the subject issue which would be very useful for HKCSS in putting forward their redevelopment/enhancement plan of the existing CAP with the participating NGOs. She invited <u>Mr Tony Lee</u> to keep SWD posted of the progress of the redevelopment plan.

Agenda Item 4 – Progress of the IT Projects Funded under the Social Welfare Development Fund *(Paper JC 2/16)*

17.   <u>The Chairperson</u> invited <u>Mr Wong Yuk-tong</u> to update the progress of IT projects under SWDF as depicted in the Paper JC 2/16. <u>Mr Wong</u> reported that 214 (99%) out of 216 IT projects under Phase 1 were completed. The remaining two projects, which had sought SWD's approval for extension of project schedule, would be completed by October 2016. For Phase 2, 43 (24%) out of the total 182 IT projects were completed while the remaining 139 (76%) projects were in progress. To better prepare for the implementation of the coming phase, SWD had conducted a review on Phase 2 through various means and positive feedback was received.

18.   <u>Mr Wong</u> also highlighted for Members' attention on the enhancement and facilitating measures related to IT projects as well as the vetting arrangement under Phase 3. The first round of Phase 3 had been launched. NGOs might submit a maximum of three composite applications according to their operation needs and business priorities from 2 March to 31 December 2016.

19.   On <u>Mr Gordon Lo's</u> enquiry about the time required for completing the vetting of an application, <u>the Secretary</u> explained that owing to the difference in NGOs' IT capability and maturity, the Information Systems and Technology Branch (ISTB) of SWD needed to go through and discuss each and every application with the applicant NGOs in details in the course of assessing the proposed IT projects. To ensure that the proposed IT projects could be implemented smoothly and practicably, ISTB would provide technical advice, where appropriate, to the applicant NGOs to facilitate their review and revision of respective project proposals prior to seeking endorsement from JCIT and the Lotteries Fund Advisory Committee. Making reference to the applications under Phases 1 and 2, it would usually take about two to three months for seeking endorsement upon receipt of the final version of application form from applicant NGOs.

20.   In response to <u>Professor Leung Kwong-sak's</u> enquiry about the checking mechanism on the completed IT projects, <u>the Secretary</u> reported that random audit checking by means of site visits to selected NGOs would be conducted where they would be required, among others, to provide documentation proof on the projects approved under Phase 1. Besides, three NGOs were invited to share their successful projects in the briefing session conducted to NGOs in February 2016 for the launch of SWDF Phase 3.

21.   On <u>Mr Dominic Kwong's</u> enquiry on the types of IT projects applied by NGOs, <u>the Secretary</u> pointed out that majority of the applications (over 65%) was related to service delivery and capacity enhancement. Other applications were related to websites development, as well as HRM and FM systems.

22.   In addressing <u>Members'</u> concerns, <u>the Secretary</u> shared that SWD had informed all NGOs about their remaining funding cap which they could mobilise in SWDF Phase 3. While NGOs had the autonomy to decide the ratio

of fund to be spent among the three scopes and their coverage in each phase under SWDF, it was the corporate plan of an individual NGO to acquire this funding resource for both its IT and non-IT projects with respect to their business needs.   Regarding the application for IT projects, all relevant information, including the Guidance Notes for Application, Application Form for Phase 3 as well as the Tips for Managing IT projects under SWDF had been uploaded to SWD Homepage for NGOs' ease of reference.   Besides, the e-Platform had also provided an easy and convenient means for NGOs to share their experience of implementing projects.

23.   Mr Kwok Lit-tung expressed appreciation on the technical advice given by ISTB to his agency during the vetting and implementation stages.   He also recapped the recent experience of sharing his agency's IT projects with another NGO.   He considered that the e-Platform had provided a good means to facilitate mutual sharing among NGOs.

Agenda Item 5 - Any Other Business

24.   The Chairperson thanked Members for their valuable views given in the meeting.   There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon.

Agenda Item 6 - Date of Next Meeting

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

Social Welfare Department
May 2016