

(Translation)

Elderly Commission
Minutes of the 118th Meeting

Date: 25 March 2025 (Tuesday)

Time: 3:00 p.m.

Venue: Conference Room 3, G/F, Central Government Offices,
2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong

Present

Chairman

Dr LI Kwok-tung, Donald, GBS, JP

Members

Prof BAI Xue

Dr CHAN Chi-kau, Johnnie Casire, SBS, JP

Ms CHAN Man-yee, Grace

Prof LAI Wing-leung, Daniel

Mr LAU Tat-chuen

Mr LIT Hoo-yin, Horace

Dr LUK Ka-hay, James

Mr MA Heng, Theodore

Ms MAN Wei-yin, Queenie

Mr NGAI Shi-shing, Godfrey

Mr SIU King-wai, Kyrus

Ms WONG Chor-kei, Macy, MH

Ms LAU Yim, Alice, JP

Permanent Secretary for Labour and
Welfare

Acting Director of Social Welfare

Assistant Director of Health (Elderly
Health)

Head of Community Network, Health
Bureau

Chief Manager/Management (Support
Services Section 2), Housing
Department

Director (Strategy and Planning),
Hospital Authority

Ms LEUNG Yee-lee, Maggie

Dr HO Lei-ming, Raymond

Ms CHAN Yuk-sim

Ms AU Mo-ching, Katherine

Dr CHING Wai-kuen

In attendance

Mr CHONG Wing-wun, JP

Ms LAW Lai-tan, Linda

Mr WONG Chi-chung, Max

Ms YAN Lai-ming, Jenny

Mr TAM Kam-chi, Kelvin

Ms HO Koon-ling, Rosanna

Mr LAM Chi-kwong, Ares

Deputy Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare) 2

Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare) 3

Assistant Director of Housing (Project) 3

Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Elderly)

Chief Social Work Officer (Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services) 4, Social Welfare Department

Chief Executive Officer (Welfare) 4, Labour and Welfare Bureau

Executive Officer (Welfare) 4, Labour and Welfare Bureau

Absent with apologies

Ms IP Shun-hing, BBS, MH, JP

Prof LAM Chiu-wa, Linda

Dr LEE Shun-wah, Jenny

Mr SU Yau-on, Albert, MH, JP

Ms YU Chui-yee, BBS, MH

Secretary

Ms CHAN Ah-wing, Ivy

Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare) 4

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Dr LI Kwok-tung, Donald, the Chairman, welcomed all Members to the meeting. The Chairman reminded Members that they must declare potential conflicts, if any, between their interests and matters under discussion. Members declared as follows:

Relevant Agenda Item	Matters Declared
Item 3: Well-being Design in Public Housing Developments	<u>Dr CHAN Chi-kau, Johnnie Casire</u> was the Chairman of the Building Committee, Hong Kong Housing Authority and a member of the Special Committee on Elderly Housing, Hong Kong Housing Society.

Relevant Agenda Item	Matters Declared
Item 4: Extension of the District Services and Community Care Teams - Scheme on Supporting Elderly and Carers to 18 Districts across the Territory	<u>Mr NGAI Shi-shing, Godfrey</u> was an appointed member of the Wong Tai Sin District Council.

Agenda item 1: Confirmation of the Minutes of the 117th Meeting

2. Members did not propose any amendments to the Chinese and English versions of the draft minutes issued by the Secretariat on 18 February 2025. The minutes were confirmed.

Agenda item 2: Matters arising

3. There were no matters arising from the 117th meeting.

Agenda item 3: Well-being Design in Public Housing Developments

4. With the aid of presentation slides, Mr WONG Chi-chung, Max, Assistant Director of Housing (Project) 3, briefed Members on the Well-being Design Guide (Guide) and its application in new public housing development projects and existing housing estates.

5. After the briefing, the Chairman and Members expressed views and raised questions as follows:

- (a) adopting the well-being design in public housing estates and further promoting the design to the private sector was a meaningful initiative worth supporting. Enquiries were raised on the progress of the promotion work and the level of acceptance by the private sector;

- (b) it was suggested that the professional team developing the well-being design should include members from the technology sector, and that innovation and technology elements, such as smart sensor lights and home monitoring systems for identifying abnormal situations, should be incorporated. Where necessary, cases requiring follow-up could be referred to Community Care Teams (Care Teams) of the respective districts, so as to provide appropriate assistance and care for elderly residents;
- (c) noting that half of the eight well-being concepts were elderly-related, it was suggested that more elderly-friendly measures should be provided in terms of content and design. Such measures might include installing highly recognisable signs to assist persons with dementia to identify directions, as well as making available venues and facilities for social welfare organisations to provide primary healthcare services for the elderly, etc.;
- (d) it was suggested that, in order to boost the sense of belonging and well-being among public housing residents more effectively, the Housing Department (HD) should enhance the quality and efficiency of estate management and maintenance, in addition to improving estate design and facilities ;
- (e) it was suggested that apart from comparing residents' subjective opinions on their living environment before and after moving into public housing units via questionnaire surveys, the HD should also consider comparing objective measurements of their physical and mental conditions before and after move-in, such as social life, exercise frequency and cognitive ability. This would help assess the effectiveness of the well-being design more efficiently and better identify areas for further improvement; and
- (f) a Member shared the findings of a research conducted by the Hong Kong Polytechnic University's Research Centre for Gerontology and Family Studies earlier. The research, involving around 5 000 respondents aged 50 or above, found that public housing residents had better language abilities than private housing residents, indicating a direct impact of the public housing environment on residents.

6. In response to Members' views and questions, Mr WONG Chi-chung, Max gave a consolidated reply as follows:

- (a) since the promulgation of the Guide in September 2024, the Housing Bureau (HB) had received positive feedback from the private sector, with a good number of developers enquiring details about the Guide. The HB had also conducted multiple industry sharing and exchange sessions on the Guide that included private organisations, with a view to leading and promoting the vision of “Well • Being” within the sector;
- (b) the HB had long supported the application of innovative technologies. Over 580 multi-disciplinary stakeholders (including those from the technology sector) were engaged in the formulation of the well-being design for public housing. Design teams had also exchanged experience on the application of innovative technologies with relevant Mainland organisations, with a view to continuously refining the design and leveraging technologies to serve public housing residents. The Well-being Design primarily focused on enhancing the sense of well-being of residents by providing them with better public spaces, facilities and estate environment. With regard to the views on the design of residential units of public housing estates, the HB would conduct regular reviews and follow up timely, while proactively exploring technological applications for the concept of “Age-friendliness”;
- (c) the HB had progressively adopted the concepts of the Guide into recently completed public housing projects, such that the public might appreciate how “big changes” could be brought about by “small design measures” that were human-centric and heart-warming. In particular, the concept of “Family and Community Connection” focused on creating public spaces conducive to family bonding and social connection, encouraging the elderly to step out of their homes to socially connect with neighbours. Additionally, the concept of “Age-friendliness” focused on designing an age-friendly environment, taking into account the elderly’s need for ageing in place. For instance, leaning benches inside lifts and entrance lobbies, handrails along long corridors as well as additional pictorial signage for improved building and directional recognition enable elderly residents to go out and locate different facilities easily. Another example was supporting charitable and non-governmental organisations to provide mobile health check-ups and medical services within public housing estates to meet the needs of the elderly. In the future, the HB would continue to implement more measures to facilitate such needs for creating an elderly-friendly living environment with a greater sense of well-being;

- (d) the HD had been providing timely maintenance for public housing estates, and would adopt suitable well-being design as part of the improvement works for existing estates according to the actual circumstances by, for example, installing different types of barrier-free facilities in residential units and common areas for residents to enjoy a safe and pleasant living environment. In respect of estate management, the HD would apply technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things and robotics to enable people-oriented and smart management for enhancing residents' sense of well-being. In addition, the HD would organise a symposium on innovation and technologies in public housing in November this year to share the latest knowledge and technological applications, including smart estate management, with representatives from the Mainland and other countries; and
- (e) Members' valuable suggestions on the well-being design in public housing were appreciated. The HD would proactively take them into account for further refinement of the Guide.

Agenda item 4: Extension of the District Services and Community Care Teams — Scheme on Supporting Elderly and Carers to 18 Districts across the Territory

7. With the aid of presentation slides, Ms YAN Lai-ming, Jenny, Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Elderly) briefed Members on the measures of extending the District Services and Community Care Teams - Scheme on Supporting Elderly and Carers (the Scheme) to 18 districts across the territory.

8. After the briefing, the Chairman and Members expressed views and raised questions as follows:

- (a) the initiative of extending the Scheme to all 18 districts to benefit more elderly persons and carers was supported. It was suggested that the Social Welfare Department (SWD) should enhance support for Care Teams by providing them with training and reference materials on welfare services, and fostering their connection and collaboration with social welfare service units in the respective districts, etc.;
- (b) noting that the number of Care Teams under the Scheme would increase significantly from the existing 36 teams in two districts to 452 teams across

all 18 districts, it was enquired how the SWD would monitor the work of Care Teams and assess their performance;

- (c) it was suggested that upon the setting up of the Carer Database, information about singleton, hidden or needy elderly persons should be made available to Care Teams for supporting their work and enhancing efficiency;
- (d) enquiries were made regarding the operational details of the Chatbot to be launched on the Information Gateway for Carers; and
- (e) the Elderly Commission (the Commission) could consider promoting the “age-friendly city” initiative and facilitate the sharing of relevant key measures and services, practical achievements and personal experiences, etc. among different stakeholders.

9. In response to Members’ views and questions, Ms YAN Lai-ming, Jenny and Mr TAM Kam-chi, Kelvin, Chief Social Work Officer (Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services) 4, the SWD, gave a consolidated reply as follows:

- (a) the SWD provided training for Care Teams to equip them with basic communication skills, information of welfare services in their respective districts, procedures for making case referrals to district welfare service units, etc. Furthermore, District Social Welfare Offices (DSWOs) would offer specific training to Care Teams based on the circumstances and service needs of individual districts. Designated contact persons were available in these offices to support Care Teams in their respective districts;
- (b) to effectively monitor Care Teams’ performance, the SWD had set Key Performance Indicators for their service output, including the number of care actions taken (such as visits and telephone contacts), as well as support services provided and referrals made (such as organising support activities, referring needy cases, providing information on social welfare services/community resources, accompanying service targets to social welfare service units for enquiries and/or applications, etc., in order to enhance their motivation to receive services). Care Teams were also required to input data on services provided into the household information management platform, consolidate feedback from service users upon completion of the Scheme, and submit relevant returns to the SWD. In addition, DSWOs under the SWD

would monitor Care Teams' performance through visits, document reviews and attendance at their activities;

- (c) the Government was exploring the setting up of a cross-disciplinary and inter-organisation database on carers of elderly persons and persons with disabilities by leveraging the existing data and information collected as required by Care Teams during home visits. The aim was to enable early identification of high-risk cases via the database, introduce suitable targeted support services and proactively intervene in emergencies as appropriate. The SWD agreed that with access to information on singleton, hidden or needy elderly persons, Care Teams could deliver services in a more focused manner. As such, the department would consider how to follow up on the suggestion while ensuring the protection of personal privacy; and
- (d) new content would be added to the Information Gateway for Carers by phases, including the plan to launch an AI Chatbot in 2025. By then, users could obtain the necessary information and support more quickly with the help of the Chatbot by simply clicking the corresponding function and enter their questions on the website.

10. The Chairman opined that given the wide coverage of the “age-friendly city” initiative, the Commission should, for the time being, remain focused on its major terms of reference. Ms LAU Yim, Alice, Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare pointed out that each government advisory committee had its respective functions, and the Commission was tasked to advise the Government on the formulation of a comprehensive policy for the elderly, co-ordinate the planning and development of various elderly programmes and services and monitor the implementation of policies and programmes affecting the elderly. Amid challenges of an ageing population in Hong Kong over recent years, there was already an increased public awareness of and support for elderly care issues. The Commission had therefore focused on taking forward specific elderly care efforts. Notwithstanding this, the Commission also served as a platform for government agencies and different professional sectors to exchange and discuss elderly care policies and elderly-friendly measures, thereby fostering effective implementation and improvement of elderly care efforts by harnessing collective wisdom and insights. If the Commission considered it necessary to publicise or review the progress of individual elderly care issues, it might consider issuing a press releases or uploading relevant information onto its website, etc. depending on the circumstances. Members were welcomed to put

forward relevant suggestions, if any, to the Secretariat.

Agenda item 5: Progress Reports by Working Groups and Committee

Working Group on Elderly Services Programme Plan and Working Group on Ageing in Place

11. Ms CHAN Ah-wing, Ivy, Secretary to the Commission, reported that:

- (a) the fifth joint meeting of the Working Group on Elderly Services Programme Plan (ESPP) and Working Group on Ageing in Place was held on 15 January 2025. Representatives from the SWD and the Hospital Authority (HA) briefed Members on the enhancement measures of the Innovation and Technology Fund for Application in Elderly and Rehabilitation Care and the HA's supporting measures for discharged elderly patients in need respectively;
- (b) the terms of the above two working groups would end on 30 April 2025. A review of their backgrounds was as follows:
 - (i) the Working Group on ESPP was established in 2014 to assist the Commission in formulating the ESPP and conducting long-term planning for elderly services, and provided valuable advice on the implementation of the ESPP. Recommendations put forward in the ESPP had been implemented and were being carried out on an on-going basis, including updating the Standardised Care Need Assessment Mechanism for Elderly Services to better understand the care and support needs of elderly persons, thereby ensuring that priority was accorded to those most in need; and
 - (ii) the Working Group on Ageing in Place was established in 2018 to follow up on new initiatives for supporting frail elderly persons living in the community, including a number of pilot schemes. Through its concerted efforts with relevant policy bureaux and departments as well as the social welfare sector, a vast majority of the new initiatives and pilot schemes to support ageing in place had been successfully implemented or regularised. For example, the Community Care Service Voucher Scheme for the Elderly, which was still in the pilot stage at the time of

launching the ESPP, was regularised in September 2023. Adopting a “money-follows-the-user” approach, the Scheme allowed eligible elderly persons to choose community care services that suit their individual needs, so as to tie in with the Government’s policy objective of “ageing in place as the core, institutional care as back-up” in the provision of elderly services.

- (c) given that their major work had largely been completed, both working groups would be dissolved at the end of their current terms to optimise the use of resources and streamline the Commission’s work. Subsequent issues relating to the ESPP and ageing in place would henceforth be discussed by the Commission. Should the need arise in future, the Commission might consider setting up other working groups or conduct focused and in-depth discussions on individual issues in other formats; and
- (d) the LWB thanked all working group members for their dedicated efforts and valuable contributions to the discussions over the years.

Committee on Elder Academy Development Foundation

12. Ms CHAN Ah-wing, Ivy reported that in February 2025, the Committee on Elder Academy Development Foundation (EADF) endorsed 29 second round applications for EADF funding in 2024-25, involving a total funding of about \$7.92 million. The first round funding application in 2025-26 would be closed on 31 May 2025.

Agenda item 6: Any Other Business

13. There was no other business for discussion at the meeting.

Time of Adjournment

14. The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Date of Next Meeting

15. The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for 24 June 2025. The Secretariat would advise Members of the meeting details in due course.

May 2025