

SOCIAL WORKERS REGISTRATION BOARD
Notes of the 140th Meeting of the Committee on Administration

Date: 6 May 2019
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Venue: Conference Room, 26/F Eastern Commercial Centre, 83 Nam On Street, Shau Kei Wan, Hong Kong.
Present: Dr. TING Wai-fong (Convenor)
Ms. CHEUNG Lai-yi
Mr. LO Wa-kei, Roy
Ms. LUI Siu-ying
Mr. LUN Chi-wai
Secretary: Mr. LEE Wing-po, Eric, Registrar and
Ms. FAN Lai-yee, Veronica, Assistant Registrar

*Matters
Arising*

1. Confirmation of the notes of last meeting

Referring to paragraph 5 of the notes of meeting, the Secretary corrected the information that the maximum recording capacity of the CCTV system should be 14 days and when the storage was full, the earliest day of recording would be deleted and replaced by new one. The Secretary also updated that in a recent check-up by the vendor, two cameras were required to be replaced and the cost would be (business information deleted). The Committee considered that it was not cost-effective to replace the broken parts only as the system had been used for 9 years and became ageing and it was suggested to replace the system in whole. The Board office was asked to obtain quotations and circulated to the Committee for consideration. Members had no further comment on the notes. *(Post meeting notes: the revised notes were circulated to the Committee on 14 May 2019.)*

*Para.5 of
last
meeting
notes*

2. Matters Arising

(a) Revised registration form, renewal form and notification of changes

*Para.6-10
of last
meeting
notes*

The Board office was asked to revise the forms according to the Committee's comments as follows:

- (i) A remark should be added in the forms that the registered address needed not be residential address;
- (ii) In part C (1), the second "am" should be removed;
- (iii) It was suggested to remove part C (3) until the fit and proper criteria were worked out and the discussion of such could be made reference to the revised Code of Practice and definitions from overseas.

(iv) In part C (6), it was suggested to specify what were “specified matters” and “the Board’s statutory functions” and to classify the opt-out choices.

- (b) Progress of the complaint against the Registrar and status of the related disciplinary complaint case *Para. 11 of last meeting notes*

The Secretary updated that the recommendation report of the related disciplinary case would be discussed at the Board meeting to be held in May 2019. The complaint against the Registrar would then be brought up to the Committee when the case was concluded.

- (c) Progress of developing an integrated database and information system *Para. 12 of last meeting notes*

The Secretary reported that only two quotations were received and open tendering was required as the indicated amounts exceeded HK\$500,000. The Board office would prepare the tender document subsequently.

- (d) Progress of appointments to the Disciplinary Committee Panel

The proposal was brought forward from the 154th Board meeting to the next meeting to be held in May 2019.

3. Administration

- (a) To review the procedures of handling complaints against the Board’s policy or staff

The matter was arising from a complaint from a RSW who requested for lodging the complaint verbally. As the current mechanism only accepted written complaint, the Board directed the Committee to review the related procedures. After discussion, the Committee considered that we should follow the practice of other government department or statutory bodies to accept complaint being lodged verbally on the basis that the complaint was not anonymous and the complainant was reachable. The Committee proposed that the handling officer should verbally reconfirm with the complainant the content of complaint before putting up the case in accordance with the existing complaint handling procedures. To better protect the staff and the complainant, the telephone conversation should be recorded. The Board office would revise the procedures and also translate the document into English.

- (b) To review the policy of reporting suspected violation of Section 34 cases to the Police

In a recent batch of re-application cases, two Board members concerned of applicants who had reported duty for social work posts prior to the Board's approval, meanwhile application forms were submitted before date of reporting duty. The Committee was invited to consider whether the policy of reporting suspected violation of Section 34 cases to the Police should be reviewed. The Secretary reported that the matter had been discussed in the previous terms and the legal advice suggested that cases should be considered on individual case merits. At the meeting, a member shared that negative feedbacks were received from frontline social workers and his stance on the matter became different from the time when he served in the previous term. Based on the above background, members had different suggestions in dealing with the matter such as setup a fast-track for approving re-application, sending reminder to NGOs. After discussion, the Committee considered that it was not necessary to make changes to the policy, whilst it was proposed to invite the Social Welfare Department or other relevant associations to encourage employing agencies building up internal mechanism to ensure RSWs under their employ were on the register and renewed their registrations on time.

- (c) To consider installation of telephone recording system

The Committee was invited to consider the proposal of installing the voice recording system in order to deal with verbal complaints as well as complaints against staff in relation to attitudes or wrong information provided over the phone. The Board office was asked to obtain additional quotations for replacement of the keyline system for comparison.

- (d) To consider procedures for removing names of deceased RSWs from the Register

The Committee considered the proposal and commented that it was not appropriate to write to the deceased's family members by relying on information from media or third party. After discussion, the Committee considered not necessary to take extra actions to conduct death record search or follow up the deceased case unless supporting document was provided to the Board office of any case of passing away.

- (e) Proposed alignment to new and re-application procedures

In consideration of the shortcomings of the current online registration facility, the Committee agreed to drop the online registration facility for

new application and align that both new and re-application should submit their application together with the statutory declaration in hardcopy.

4. Finance

- (a) To consider quotations of financial audit for FY2018/19

(Business information deleted).

- (b) To consider the proposal of setting up auto-pay for settlement of recurrent expenditure

The Committee agreed to put forth the proposal to the Board for approval.

5. Promotions

- (a) Progress report on promotion of the Board

The Committee took note of the progress report.

6. Any other business

There being no other business.

7. Date of next meeting

The next meeting would be scheduled at 7:00pm on 2 July 2019.

8. The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm.

8 May 2019