

70pc social workers opposed to selection

A SURVEY has shown that nearly 70 per cent of social workers are opposed to their functional constituency's method of electing a representative to the Legislative Council.

The social services sector has been designated as a functional constituency since 1985. However, the right to vote has been confined to corporate electors, comprising the member groups of the Council of Social Service, without specifying how the votes of an organisation should be decided.

Due to the ambiguity, some groups' boards decided who to vote for, while others involved all staff in an internal "one person, one vote" procedure.

However, the survey released yesterday found that only 31 per cent of respondents accepted the system of voting by corporate electors.

A total of 4,250 questionnaires were sent by a group of social workers to social welfare staff and 1,134 (26.7 per cent) replied.

Even among the respondents who accepted the existing system, most wanted all welfare staff of each organisation to be involved in deciding which candidate to support.

So far, the only candidate for the functional constituency is Mr Hui Yin-fat, the director of the Hongkong Council of Social Service.

Mr Hui said it would be difficult to shift the voting rights from corporate electors to individual social workers as non-social workers in the same organisation would be unhappy.

The best solution was to strive for the establishment of a separate functional constituency for social workers in 1995, he said.