

Family Council
Notes of 4th Meeting

Date: 23 September 2008 (Tuesday)

Time: 3 p.m.

Venue: Conference Room (Room 1220), CGO, West Wing

Attendance

Official Members

Mr Henry TANG, Chief Secretary for Administration (Chairman)

Mr TSANG Tak-sing, Secretary for Home Affairs

Mr Matthew CHEUNG Kin-chung, Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Ms Betty IP, Deputy Secretary for Education (4)

(on behalf of SED)

Prof LEE Ming-kwan, Member (2) /Central Policy Unit

(on behalf of H/CPU)

Non-official Members

1. Ms CHAU Chuen-heung
2. Mr CHOW Yung, Robert
3. Ms KAO Ching-chi, Sophia
4. Mrs KWAN HO Shiu-fong, Cecilia
5. Ms LAI Fung-yee, Angelina
6. Mr Joseph LEE
7. Dr LEE Wai-yung
8. Dr the Hon LEONG Che-hung, Edward
9. Mrs Justina LEUNG NGAI Mou-yin
10. Dr PANG King-chee
11. Ms TAO Chee-ying, Theresa
12. Mr WONG Ying-wai, Wilfred
13. Mr LEONG Kwok-kuen, Lincoln
14. Dr WONG Chung-kwong
15. Prof WONG Po-choi

Absence with apologies
Prof SHEK Tan-lei, Daniel

Secretary
Miss Christine CHOW, Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs
(Civic Affairs)2

In attendance
Ms Grace LUI, Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs (1)
Ms Vivian SUM, Administrative Assistant to Chief Secretary for
Administration
Mr Darryl CHAN, Press Secretary to Chief Secretary for Administration
Ms Elaine MAK, Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs (2)1
Mr LAU Cheuk Kwan, Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs (2)3
Ms Grace PAT, Senior Executive Officer (2)

By invitation for Item 3:
Dr Shirley LEUNG, Principal Medical and Health Officer (Family Health
Service), Department of Health
Mr. Desmond CHENG, Assistant Secretary (Narcotics)1, Security Bureau

By invitation for item 4:
Mrs Anna MAK, Assistant Director (Family & Children Welfare), Social
Welfare Department
Mr Stanley NG, Assistant Commissioner (Employment Services), Labour
Department
Miss Victoria TANG, Assistant Director of Home Affairs (3), Home
Affairs Department
Dr Shirley LEUNG, Principal Medical and Health Officer (Family Health
Service), Department of Health
Mr Tony LIU, Chief Manager, Housing Department

Welcoming remarks

The Chairman welcomed all to the 4th meeting of the Family
Council.

Item 1 – Confirmation of minutes of the 3rd meeting of the Family Council

2. The minutes of the 3rd meeting of the Council were confirmed without amendments.

Item 2 – Matters Arising

(a) Information paper from the Sub-committee on the Promotion of Family Core Values (Paper FC 16/2008)

3. The Chairman informed Members that further to the discussion at the last Council meeting, a Sub-committee had been formed under the Family Council to promote family core values. Mr Wilfred WONG and Mr Robert CHOW were elected the Convenor and Deputy Convenor of the “Sub-committee on the Promotion of Family Core Values” (the Sub-committee) respectively. The Sub-committee was working on a PR Campaign to promote family core values. An opening ceremony was scheduled to be held on 6 December 2008, two weeks leading to the Winter Solstice, to kick start the PR campaign. The Chairman invited members to join him in the opening ceremony to support the work of the Sub-committee in promoting the family core values. As one of the important objectives of the promotion campaign was to engage different stakeholders, the Chairman appealed to relevant Bureaux and Departments (B/Ds) to give full support to the Sub-committee to sustain the promotional efforts.

4. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Wilfred WONG briefed Members that a Consultant with marketing, advertising and PR experience would be engaged to provide advice on the overall planning, liaison and coordination of the campaign to promote family core values. Details of events leading to and following the Winter Solstice would be worked out by the Sub-committee with the assistance from the Consultant. He also informed Members that the Sub-committee would explore room

for further collaboration with relevant stakeholders including the Hong Kong Jockey Club (the HKJC) in areas including support to the production of TV programmes and/or films on the promotion of family values.

(Action: Family Council Secretariat)

5. The Chairman further informed Members that the private sector had taken the initiative to launch programmes to promote the well-being of the family. At the invitation of the Chairman, Secretary for Labour and Welfare briefed Members that an organization known as Community Business would launch a “Work Life Balance Campaign” comprising, amongst other things, a survey with emphasis on the impact of work life balance on employee productivity, health and job satisfaction, and a “Work-Life Balance Day” on 17 October 2008 to raise public awareness on work-life balance.

Item 3 – Development and strengthening of family education through a Life-course Family Education approach to address the needs of family members at different stages of life (Paper FC 17/2008)

6. Members noted the measures undertaken by various government B/Ds to develop family education and exchange views on how family education might be further strengthened. They opined that a “Life-course” approach could be adopted to provide continuous family life education with focus on different roles and responsibilities of family members at different stages of life to prepare them to cope with changes and their roles as a son/daughter, spouse, parent, grandparent, etc. Below was the gist of comments offered by Members (including Prof Daniel SHEK’s as reported by the Secretary on his behalf) -

- (a) Family education should also be provided to children and youths.

- (b) Consideration could be given to offer the prospective brides and bridegrooms and parents-to-be pre-marriage and pre-natal courses to equip them to take up the husband/wife/parent role more readily, and to do more promotion in these aspects, for example, through the marriage registration process.
- (c) Similar consideration could be given to offer pre-retirement courses and courses on “grand-parenting” to the elderly and their family members to foster “inter-generational care” and “cross-generational harmony”.
- (d) For families with members who suffered from mental, emotional or abuse problems, targeted family education could be provided.

7. To sustain the efforts on family education, engagement of the community and collaboration among relevant stakeholders was essential. For example, NGOs could give support in conducting different family life education courses. The employers could also offer family education programmes for their employees. Consideration could be given to building a website on family education in due course to facilitate sharing and access of, for example, related information by all stakeholders.

8. The Chairman thanked Members for their views. He invited relevant B/Ds to take note of Members’ suggestions and to introduce measures to enhance and strengthen family-life education.

(Action: Relevant B/Ds)

9. A member suggested that the Family Council deliberate on the recent tainted milk saga. The Chairman responded that given the public health angle of the subject, the matter should better be handled by the Secretary for Food and Health.

Item 4 – Support for Families with New Arrivals (Paper FC 18/2008)

10. At the invitation of the Chairman, Assistant Director (3), HAD briefed Members on the initiatives and improvements to the existing measures to support families with new arrivals from the Mainland. She drew Members' attention to the services set out at Annex B to the paper.

11. Members were impressed by the wide range of services provided by various B/Ds for families with new arrivals from the Mainland. They discussed the ideas for further improving the services, summarized as follows -

- (a) To explore possibility for provision of pre-migration counselling services to new arrivals to help them gain a better understanding of the situation in Hong Kong before they made the decision to permanently reside here. If at all possible, the HKSARG should explore with the Mainland the possibility of allowing new arrivals to retain their resident status so that they could re-settle in their original residence in the Mainland if they could not adapt to the life in Hong Kong.
- (b) To disseminate the "Service Handbook for New Arrivals" through the immigration checkpoints and the District Offices to show ready support to and reach out to the new arrivals.
- (c) To conduct research on the family problems related to cross-border marriage.
- (d) Care must be taken to avoid labeling effects on new arrivals in delivering services to meet their needs.

12. In response to members' concerns over the support services for new arrivals, Secretary for Labour and Welfare briefed members on the initiatives undertaken by the Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) and the Social Welfare Department (SWD) to enhance services for the new

arrivals. Currently, new arrivals could approach Integrated Family Service Centres (IFSCs) and Integrated Services Centres (ISCs) for a continuum of preventive, supportive and remedial services. To help build neighbourhood support networks, the Community Investment and Inclusion Fund launched 19 funded projects in August in Tin Shui Wai where there was a relatively large population of new arrivals. SWD and NGOs provided outreach and referral services to new arrivals. As a pilot scheme, the Housing Department had also set up a Housing Advisory and Service Team in Tin Shui Wai to assist new tenants to the Tin Ching Estate to adapt to the new living environment as well as to facilitate local NGOs to outreach them. The job centres of the Labour Department (LD) provided a full range of employment and support services for new arrivals, including the provision of labour market information, counseling and guidance interviews, job matching and job referral services. In addition, the Employees Retraining Board (ERB) provided a wide range of orientation programmes, family/parent education, and counselling services to new arrivals.

(Action: HAD in consultation with B/Ds)

Item 5 – Synergy among the Family Council, the Elderly Commission, the Women’s Commission and the Commission on Youth (Paper FC 19/2008)

13. The Chairman informed Members that the Family Council was tasked to map out its working relationship with the Women’s Commission (WoC), the Elderly Commission (EC) and the Commission on Youth (CoY) by the end of March 2009. The meeting noted and endorsed the proposed functional integration approach outlined in paragraphs 7 to 11 of the paper without further comment.

14. A member flagged up the suggestion of setting up another platform to oversee children’s issues. In response, the Chairman said that it was not recommended that a separate platform be set up on children’s issues, as this was against the Administration’s intention to put family related issues under the roof of Family Council.

Item 6 – 2008/09 Policy Address consultation

15. The Chairman invited members to give suggestions for the 2008/09 Policy Address. Below was a summary of members' views -

- (a) The Administration should put more emphasis on life course education to help people cope with changes at different stages of life (e.g. marriage, parenthood etc.).
- (b) The Administration might consider setting up a Family Office and appoint a Commissioner to oversee and co-ordinate all family related policy.
- (c) The Chief Executive should make clear the working relationship among the Family Council, the Elderly Commission (EC), the Women's Commission (WoC) and the Commission on Youth (CoY).
- (d) The Administration must form partnership with the community to put across the message of family building and Hong Kong spirit of care for families.

16. The Chairman thanked members for their invaluable views, and concluded that he would relay members' views to the Chief Executive for consideration.

(Action: CSO)

Item 7 – Any Other Business

17. There being no other businesses, the meeting ended at 5 p.m..

Item 8 – Date of Next Meeting

18. The Chairman said that the next meeting would be held on 18 December 2008 (Thursday) at 3 p.m. at the same venue.

Family Council Secretariat
September 2008