

## **Family Council**

### **Progress of Work of the Sub-committees under the Family Council**

#### **PURPOSE**

This paper briefs Members on the progress of work of two Sub-committees under the Family Council (“the Council”).

#### **SUB-COMMITTEE ON THE PROMOTION OF FAMILY CORE VALUES AND FAMILY EDUCATION**

2. The Sub-committee on the Promotion of Family Core Values and Family Education (“the Promotion Sub-committee”) held a meeting on 27 February 2017 to discuss details of 2017-18 publicity campaign.

##### *Territory-wide Publicity Campaign by the Radio Television Hong Kong*

3. The Promotion Sub-committee agreed at its meeting on 15 November 2016 to adopt “intergenerational communication” and “extended family support” as the themes of 2017-18 publicity campaign. In view of the positive response to the previous publicity programmes co-organised with Radio Television Hong Kong (“RTHK”), it agreed to continue to collaborate with RTHK in 2017-18. At the meeting on 27 February 2017, the Promotion Sub-committee considered and endorsed the following programmes proposed by RTHK –

- (a) An inter-generational family day in May 2017 to echo with the celebration of the International Day of Families;
- (b) three radio programmes covering touching stories and expert advice relating to intergenerational communication, heart to heart talks hosted by children, and guests’ sharing of stories on their communication and relationship with family members to be broadcast

either weekly or bi-weekly during the period from April 2017 to March 2018;

- (c) a series of eight video episodes on the theme of extended family support to be launched from June 2017 to January 2018;
- (d) promotional programmes trailers and souvenirs; and
- (e) a dedicated webpage for the publicity campaign on RTHK's website.

#### *2018-18 Publicity Campaign – Snapshot Competition*

4. To mark the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Council<sup>1</sup>, the Promotion Committee endorsed the Council Secretariat's proposal to launch another large-scale publicity event in November or December 2017. The event is the culmination of a "Happy Moments of Family" Campaign which is a snapshot competition leveraging on various activities to be organised by the Home Affairs Department as well as the Leisure and Cultural Services Department during August to September 2017. The photos collected under the two categories of "Community and Fun" and "Sports and Exercises" will be used to create photo mosaics<sup>2</sup> that showcase the family core values advocated by the Council and to be exhibited at the publicity event which also serves as the presentation ceremony of the snapshot competition. To encourage participation of families, photos will be collected through on-line submission as well as collecting booths to be set up at the venues of designated activities and a souvenir of specially designed board game will be distributed as a token of thanks. The photos collected will be short-listed by adjudicating panels for public voting on social media. Families of all shortlisted entries will be invited to attend the event in November or December 2017 and the top ten entries in each category will be awarded coupons of "poon choi" (盤菜) for use during family gatherings.

### **SUB-COMMITTEE ON FAMILY SUPPORT**

5. The Sub-committee on Family Support ("the Support Sub-committee") met on 15 March 2017 to discuss the proposed objectives, scope and work plan of two studies namely, Family Survey 2017 and Further In-depth Study on the Phenomenon of Divorce in Hong Kong ("In-depth Divorce

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<sup>1</sup> The Family Council was established on 1 December 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Photo mosaics are pictures made up of many smaller pictures. The small tile images can be seen up close, but at a distance, an entirely different image can be seen.

Study”).

### *Family Survey 2017*

6. The Council first conducted the Family Survey (“the Survey”) in 2011 and agreed at its meeting on June 2012 to carry out similar surveys on a biennial basis to keep track of the changes and development of Hong Kong families in terms of family structures, attitudes and values, etc. Following the completion of the 2015 Survey, the Council Secretariat worked out and the Support Sub-committee endorsed at its meeting on 15 March 2017 the framework of the 2017 Survey. The coverage of the 2017 Survey largely follows the previous surveys with addition of some items as suggested in the report of 2015 Survey as well as Members’ views thereon. To cope with the expanded scope and to facilitate in-depth analysis, the sample size of survey will be increased from 3 000 to 4 000. The Council Secretariat will invite proposals in April 2017, and the fieldwork survey is expected to be conducted from September to December 2017. The whole survey will be completed in 12 months and the final report is expected to be ready in the second quarter of 2018.

### *In-depth Divorce Study*

7. Since the conclusion of “A Study on the Phenomenon of Divorce in Hong Kong” in February 2014, there have been new developments in several issues concerning matrimonial legislation that call for a holistic review of the latest situation of divorce in Hong Kong which include –

- (a) the compatibility issue of the judgment summon (“JS”) proceedings with the rights enshrined in Articles 10 and 11 of the Hong Kong Bill of Rights Ordinance (Cap.383) (“HKBOR”);
- (b) the deliberation on reduction of minimum age of marriage without parental consent from 21 to 18 years;
- (c) submissions received during the public consultation on the draft Children Proceedings (Parental Responsibility) Bill which, among other things, urged for improvement to the mechanism on maintenance payments including the setting up of a maintenance board as a support measure to facilitate the implementation of the parental responsibility model; and

- (d) proposed reciprocal recognition and enforcement of judgments on matrimonial and related matters.

8. The Support Sub-Committee recommended commissioning an In-depth Divorce Study to examine the above-mentioned intricately related issues, and discussed the proposed framework prepared by the Council Secretariat in details during its meeting on 15 March 2017. As agreed, the objectives of the In-depth Divorce Study are to –

- (a) update the demographic and socioeconomic landscape of divorce in Hong Kong including further examining the correlation between marriage age and divorce rate, the divorce rate of cross-boundary marriage and more background information of divorced families, including step and split families arising from divorce and remarriage;
- (b) review the existing systems of collection of maintenance payments and enforcement of maintenance orders, and collect maintenance-related statistics and information in Hong Kong; and
- (c) examine the effectiveness of JS proceedings in recovering default maintenance payments and identify viable improvement measures that are in compliance with Articles 10 and 11 of the HKBOR.

9. The period of the proposed study is 18 months. The Council Secretariat will invite proposals in April 2017 with a view to commissioning the study in June 2017. A working group will be set up to monitor the progress of the study and the consultant appointed will be required to present its work to the Support Sub-Committee at appropriate intervals. Representatives from relevant bureaux and departments will be co-opted to the working group as and when required to tap their input and facilitate discussion of issues concerned. The final report is expected to be ready by end 2018.

## **WAY FORWARD**

10. The Sub-committees will continue to oversee their respective programmes and activities. Members are welcome to convey their comments and suggestions to the Secretariat.

**Family Council Secretariat  
March 2017**