

Family Council
Minutes of 37th Meeting held on 5 June 2018

Date: 5 June 2018 (Tuesday)
Time: 2:30 p.m. - 4:10 p.m.
Venue: Conference Room 4, G/F, Central Government Offices,
2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong

Attendance

Chairman

Professor SHEK Tan-lei, Daniel

Ex-officio Members

Ms CHAN Yuen-han, Chairperson of the Women's Commission

Non-official Members

Ms CHAN Suk-mei, May

Mrs CHU YEUNG Pak-yu, Patricia, Convenor, Sub-committee on
Family Support

Mr LEE Luen-fai, Convenor, Sub-committee on the Promotion of
Family Core Values and Family Education

Professor LEUNG Seung-ming, Alvin

Miss TANG Pui-yee, Phoebe, Deputy Convenor, Sub-committee on the
Promotion of Family Core Values and Family Education

Dr TSUI Luen-on, Gordon

Miss WONG Siu-ling, Gabriella

Mr WOO Kin-man, Clement

Ms YIP Lai-wa, Emily

Ms YIP Yun-wan, Amarantha

Official Members

Mrs Cherry TSE, Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs (*attending on behalf of Secretary for Home Affairs*)

Miss Leonia TAI, Acting Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (*attending on behalf of Secretary for Labour and Welfare*)

Mr WOO Chun-sing, Deputy Secretary for Education (4) (*attending on behalf of Secretary for Education*)

Ms Cindy KWAN, Senior Administrative Officer (3), Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office (PICO) (*attending on behalf of Head, PICO*)

Secretary

Ms Karyn CHAN, Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs (Civic Affairs) 2

In attendance

Mr Patrick LI, Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs (1)

Mr Nick AU YEUNG, Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs (Community Care Fund)

Miss Iris MA, Chief Executive Officer (Family Council)

Miss Teresa LEUNG, Policy Analyst (3)C, PICO

(For agenda item 3)

Dr Regina CHING, Head of Surveillance and Epidemiology Branch, Centre for Health Protection, Department of Health (CHP, DH)

Dr Karen LEE, Senior Medical Officer (Disease Prevention)2, CHP, DH

(For agenda item 4)

Miss Leonia TAI, Acting Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Ms PANG Kit-ling, Assistant Director (Family and Child Welfare), Social Welfare Department

Absent with apologies

Dr LAM Ching-choi, Chairman of the Elderly Commission

Mr LAU Ming-wai, Vice-Chairperson of the Youth Development Commission

Ms CHENG Chi-man, Sonia

Ms CHEUNG Lai-chu

Prof. LAM Tai-hing, Deputy Convenor, Sub-committee on Family Support

Mr LEE Tsz-king, Dominic

Mrs WONG NG Kit-wah, Cecilia

Welcome Remarks

The Chairman welcomed all to the 37th meeting of the Family Council (the Council), in particular, Ms CHAN Yuen-han, Chairperson of the Women's Commission, Mrs Cherry TSE and Mr Nick AU YEUNG of the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB), and Ms Cindy KWAN of the Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office who attended the Council meeting for the first time.

2. The Chairman informed Members that Mr LAU Ming-wai would continue to be an ex-officio member of the Council in his capacity as Vice-Chairperson of the Youth Development Commission. Mrs Cherry TSE had succeeded Mrs Betty FUNG and taken up the post of Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs (PSHA). Also, Mr Nick AU YEUNG would serve as the Secretary of the Council upon the transfer out of Ms Karyn CHAN on 1 July 2018. The Chairman suggested and Members agreed to record a vote of thanks to Mrs Fung and Ms Chan for their contributions to the Council.

Item 1 – Confirmation of Minutes of the 36th meeting of the Family Council

3. The minutes of the 36th meeting were confirmed without amendments.

Item 2 – Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting

4. The Chairman noted that the Council Secretariat had circulated a progress report to Members for information, and invited Chief Executive Officer (Family Council) (CEO(FC)) to brief Members on the progress. CEO(FC) informed the meeting that the award presentation ceremony of the 2017/18 Family-Friendly Employers Award Scheme (Award Scheme) would be held in the Hong Kong Disneyland in the afternoon of 8 December 2018, Saturday. By the closing date of 13 May 2018, a total of 3 543 applications for the Award Scheme were received.

5. In respect of the Study on Family Impact Assessment (FIA), CEO(FC) reported that the draft checklist had been applied to 198 papers as at 25 May 2018. The Council Secretariat was liaising with the Civil Service Bureau with a view to uploading the FIA checklist, user manual as well as case examples onto the Cyber Learning Centre Plus and including FIA training in the induction course for Administrative Officers. For the various studies in the pipeline, CEO(FC) reported that a research team led by Professor Paul YIP, Chair Professor of Population Health, Department of Social Work and

Social Administration of The University of Hong Kong had been appointed to conduct the Further Study on the Phenomenon of Divorce in Hong Kong (Divorce Study). So far, two members had opted to be regular members of the Working Group to be set up for monitoring the Divorce Study and three others as ad-hoc members. Members who would like to join the Working Group could contact the Council Secretariat. The progress of the two other on-going studies were examined by the Sub-committee on Family Support (Support Sub-committee) at its meeting on 14 May 2018 and would be reported under Item 5.

6. CEO(FC) then updated Members that the Council's facebook had attracted over 7 800 likes as at 25 May 2018 and the average number of "Reaction", "Comments" and "Sharing" per post was about 150. The publicity event 「家・多一點愛 在乎你」 was successfully held on 26 May 2018 with over 250 participants. For the progress of the Pilot Scheme on Thematic Sponsorship to Support Family-related Initiatives, a briefing session was conducted on 10 April 2018 to prepare two selected organisations for commencement of the last two approved projects for 2017-18 Scheme in April 2018. The final reports of the four approved projects under 2016-17 Scheme would be available by June 2018 and the Council Secretariat would then conduct an interim review.

7. CEO(FC) also informed the meeting that Members' enrolments for the Asian Family Summit (AFS) were sent out on 21 March 2018.

Item 3 – Strategy and Action Plan to Prevent and Control Non-communicable diseases in Hong Kong (Paper FC 7/2018)

8. The Chairman invited Dr Regina CHING, Head of Surveillance and Epidemiology Branch and Dr Karen LEE, Senior Medical Officer (Disease Prevention) 2 from the Centre for Health Protection of Department of Health (DH) to brief Members on the strategy and action plan entitled “Towards 2025 : Strategy and Action Plan to Prevent and Control Non-communicable diseases in Hong Kong” (SAP) .

9. Dr Ching briefed the meeting of the current situation of major non-communicable diseases (NCD) in Hong Kong and the details of the SAP. Salient points of her presentation included –

- (a) Of the 46 662 cases of registered deaths in 2016, over half were caused by NCD like cancers, heart diseases, stroke, chronic respiratory disease and diabetes. Due to unhealthy habits such as insufficient physical activity, smoking and drinking, the prevalence of diabetes, hypertension and high blood cholesterol in local population aged over 15 were 8%, 27% and 49% respectively but public awareness in this regard was low. If no timely preventive action was taken to combat NCD, there would be huge burden to our healthcare system and society in future;
- (b) on the advice of a Steering Committee on Prevention of Control of NCD, Food and Health Bureau and DH had

co-launched an SAP comprising a variety of actions around five key areas that fit the acronym HeALTH, namely Healthy start, Alcohol free, Live well and be active, Tobacco free and Healthy diet, with a view to reducing NCD by 2025;

- (c) family influence on adoption of healthy lifestyle was critically important. For example, the percentage of minors with drinking experience was much higher in families with drinking habits. Apart from tightening the legislative control of commercial sale and supply of alcohol to minors, DH would step up public education with a view to achieving the target of reducing the prevalence of binge drinking and harmful use of alcohol by 10%;
- (d) physical activity was essential for children's development. It promoted brain growth and raised learning performance. According to the target set by the World Health Organization (WHO), children and adolescents aged 5 to below 18 should have at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity of physical activity per day. Developing an enabling environment for active living was one of the strategies to reduce the prevalence of insufficient physical exercises;
- (e) at present, 44% of students spent two hours or more on electronic screen products for non-study related purpose per day, and 58% slept less than eight hours before school days. Healthy use of internet and electronic screen products was

an area for attention of parents;

- (f) the other relevant targets that family might help achieve included 30% relative reduction in mean population daily intake of salt/sodium which would help reduce the risk of high blood pressure, 30% relative reduction in prevalence of current tobacco use in persons aged 15+, containing the prevalence of raised blood pressure and halting the rise in diabetes and obesity by 2025;
- (g) concerted efforts of all sectors, including families, were required for successful implementation of the SAP. The ultimate target was to reduce premature death arisen from NCD by 25%; and
- (h) DH would monitor the progress of achieving the 9 targets by adopting a set of 34 indicators, comprising 25 key indicators with reference to WHO's indicators and nine supplementary indicators of local relevance. DH would also strengthen NCD surveillance by conducting biennial household surveys, supplemented by physical and biochemical measurements every four to six years.

10. Deliberations of the meeting after the presentation were summarised as follows –

- (a) a member enquired about the prevailing position of Hong Kong in various aspects covered by the SAP and which kind

of intervention, according to overseas experience, would be more effective and applicable in Hong Kong;

- (b) on the target of reducing the prevalence of binge drinking, members noted a growing trend of social drinking since the introduction of zero wine duty. Under the influence of advertisement, the general public might have a perception that social drinking was not a harmful habit. While further deliberation on the more stringent control measures recommended by WHO would be required with due regard to both economic and public health concerns, the Government should do more on the publicity work on the harmful effect of drinking;
- (c) some members commented that insufficient sleeping hours and physical exercises were caused by the prevailing trend of heavy load of homework and long working hours which could not be easily tackled without determination of the Government and concerted efforts of all parties;
- (d) quoting an example in Taiwan, a Member raised that town planning was an important facilitating factor for promotion of physical activities. Another member suggested that in respect of sports facilities in Hong Kong, the Government should examine whether the problem lied on inadequate provision or low utilisation;
- (e) a member said that the publicity work on benefits of regular exercise should address the general public's unclear concept

about sports and physical exercises. Other members echoed that doing exercises could happen anywhere including at home by means of daily housekeeping work and the publicity might include suggested exercise plan for reference of families as well as schools. It was hoped that promotion of physical activity could help reduce excessive patronage of electronic screen products which was now a common cause of family disputes. Developing a family culture of regular exercise would have benefits to both family and individual's health;

- (f) while a member noticed that the issue of mental health was not covered by the SAP, another member asked if heredity was also an influencing factor for NCD;
- (g) a member opined that the preventive measures listed in the SAP could be categorised into different levels such as primary, secondary and tertiary, and the Government played an important role in linking up the measures with policies; and
- (h) members considered that “family” could help promote healthy lifestyle to forestall NCD. Being a cross-sector platform for promoting family wellbeing, the Council could contribute by echoing the SAP strategies such as promoting family exercises in our publicity work, and co-ordinating the discussion with various bureaux/departments on family-friendly practices and policies that would facilitate

the development of healthy habits at home and at workplaces.

11. In respect of promotion of physical activities, PSHA informed the meeting that while the sports policy was to raise the standard and profile of sports in Hong Kong, more efforts would be put on promoting the community participation in recreational and sports activities in future. For example, HAB would collaborate with the Education Bureau on an “Opening up School Facilities for Promotion of Sports Development Scheme” with a view to encouraging more sports activities be organised in school venues. She considered that promoting the element of team spirit could be an effective way to boost public participation in physical exercises, and local examples on how physical activity would promote brain growth and raise learning performance could also achieve good publicity effect.

12. Dr Ching thanked Members for their comments and responded that Hong Kong’s performance varied in different aspects covered by the SAP. For example, we were lagging behind the western countries in terms of adequacy of physical activity among adolescents and adults, but our problem of binge drinking was relatively less serious. While legislative measure might be regarded as a more effective tool, its applicability varied in different context. For example, the public might accept taxation as a useful tool for tobacco control but not for discouraging intake of sugar. Legislative measure could not be effectively implemented without the support of the public. Hence, we needed to do more on public education and communication which did not merely mean delivery of publicity program for awareness raising, but more importantly, a change of

culture and mindset through education. Sometimes, administrative measure could help create a facilitating environment. For example, imposition of appropriate conditions in tendering and service agreements of lunchbox suppliers and involvement of parents in monitoring the quality of food could be conducive to improving the nutritional value of students' lunchboxes. While no regulatory measure was included in the SAP now, DH would regularly review the effectiveness of our strategies with a view to achieving the targets by 2025.

13. The Chairman thanked Dr Ching for the presentation. In the interest of time, he suggested members to forward their further opinions, if any, to the Council Secretariat for preparing a consolidated response to DH for consideration. The Council would further discuss how well it could assist to promote family participation in achieving the targets of SAP.

Item 4 – Follow-up on the Law Reform Commission Report on Child Custody and Access and Related Support Measures (Paper FC 8/2018)

14. The Chairman invited Miss Leonia TAI, Acting Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare and Ms PANG Kit-ling, Assistant Director (Family and Child Welfare) of Social Welfare Department (SWD) to brief Members on the latest position regarding the implementation of the recommendations of the Law Reform Commission (LRC) Report on Child Custody and Access and the related support measures.

15. The salient points of Miss Tai's presentation were summarised below –

- (a) given the divergent views received in response to the public consultation as well as the motions passed by the LegCo Panel on Welfare Services, the proposed legislation to implement the LRC Report on Child Custody and Access would not be introduced into the LegCo at this stage, and the Government would focus on strengthening the support services to divorcing/divorced/separated families;
- (b) as a matter of priority, the Government would increase resources in 2018-19 to strengthen co-parenting counselling and parenting coordination service, including making the Pilot Project on Children Contact Service (Pilot Project) a regular service of SWD with service expansion. The Government would enhance the services by setting up five specialised co-parenting support centres in five clusters over the territory by the end of 2018 to provide one-stop services on co-parenting counselling, parenting coordination services, child-focused counselling, etc.;
- (c) in addition, the integrated family services centres operated by SWD as well as its Family and Child Protective Services Units would be allocated additional manpower resources for enhancing parents' capability to cope with divorce and strengthening family functioning, and providing early intervention services; and

- (d) LWB would, upon implementation of the enhanced support measures, consult the stakeholders again on the proposed legislation.
16. Members' views were summarised as follows –
- (a) a member enquired on the progress of review on the Pilot Project and if any particular difficulty in operation was observed. She also asked if SWD would strengthen support to step and split families, the number of which was on a rising trend as a result of increasing number of remarriage in Hong Kong, and the related training support for provision of services in this aspect; and
 - (b) another member asked if it would be possible from policy and resource perspectives to require couples considering divorce to attend briefing sessions.
17. In response, Ms Pang informed Members that the Pilot Project was found to be effective even though the number of cases was not substantial. SWD was now evaluating the effectiveness of the Pilot Project. For the way forward, SWD would contemplate new specialised centres on the basis of the successful experience of the Pilot Project, with a view to providing comprehensive services to prepare the divorcing couples for proper family functioning after separation. Relevant training would be provided to front-line social service workers. For step and split families, SWD was aware of the trend and would work towards meeting this service need in future. Miss Tai

supplemented that LWB also received suggestion on provision of mandatory information session for divorcing couples, and considered that public education work was required before this idea was further explored.

18. The Chairman thanked Miss Tai for her presentation and asked LWB to share the evaluation findings of the Pilot Project with the Council when they were available.

Item 5 – Progress of Work of the Sub-committees under the Family Council (Paper FC 9/2018)

19. The Chairman invited the Convenors of the Sub-committee on the Promotion of Family Core Values and Family Education (Promotion Sub-committee) and the Sub-committee on Family Support (Support Sub-committee) to report work progress.

20. Mr LEE Luen-fai reported on the number of applications received for the 2017/18 Award Scheme and the arrangement of holding the award presentation ceremony at the Hong Kong Disneyland on 8 December 2018. He also informed members that the Promotion Sub-committee had agreed to source different types of family activities under the categories of “Foodie Family”, “Caring Family”, “Green Family” and “Learning Family” for distribution to the general public as gifts for game posts published on the Council’s facebook.

(Action : Promotion Sub-committee)

21. Mrs Chu briefed Members on the progress of “A Study on Family Research in Hong Kong : A Critical Review and Annotated Bibliography” (Bibliography Study) and Family Survey 2017. The research team of the Bibliography Study had completed a number of tasks according to schedule and would proceed to conduct the qualitative study which included interviewing scholars/practitioners who had extensive knowledge on family-related topics in the coming months. The draft final report would be available by September 2018. As regard the Family Survey 2017, the Support Sub-committee noted that the research team was lagging behind the schedule and had urged them to catch up the progress. The research team was taking remedial action in conducting fieldwork survey afresh, and it had undertaken to conduct supplementary focus group meetings if required. Also, it would make a trial attempt to conduct longitudinal analysis of findings of family surveys conducted since 2011.

(Action : Support Sub-committee)

Item 6 – Any Other Business

22. Mrs Chu updated Members of the progress of the Asian Family Summit (AFS) which would be held in the Centennial Campus of The University of Hong Kong from 19 to 22 August 2018. It was confirmed that Ms Daniela BAS, Director of Division for Inclusive Social Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations would officiate at the AFS opening ceremony and

deliver a keynote speech on “Sustainable development 2030 – An Agenda for World Action”. With speakers from nine economies of Asia region, the plenary sessions would cover four different subjects relating to family such as “Family Health, Happiness & Harmony”. The Council Chairman would also present a keynote speech on Hong Kong experience in Family Impact Assessment. She appealed to Members’ support to the AFS which is opened to all sectors.

23. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:25 p.m. The next meeting would be held on 18 September 2018 (Tuesday) at 2:30 p.m.

(Post-meeting note : At the request of LWB, a special meeting would be conducted on 2 August 2018 to discuss the direction of recommendations of its Consultancy Study on Long-term Development of Child Care Services which was originally an item scheduled for discussion at the September meeting.)

**Family Council Secretariat
July 2018**