

**Family Council**  
**Minutes of 39<sup>th</sup> Meeting held on 22 November 2018**

Date: 22 November 2018 (Thursday)  
Time: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon  
Venue: Conference Room 3, 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

Ms CHENG Chi-man, Sonia

Ms CHEUNG Lai-chu

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

Dr Lam Chi-yan, Kay

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

Prof. LEUNG Seung-ming, Alvin

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

Mr Patrick LI, Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs (1) (*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 LEE Kam-kwong, Principal Assistant Secretary (School Development), Education Bureau (*attending on behalf of Secretary for Education*)

Mr Bassanio SO, Assistant Head (3) (*attending on behalf of Head/Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office*)

Secretary

Mr Nick AU YEUNG, Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs (Civic Affairs) 2

In attendance

Miss Iris MA, Chief Executive Officer (Family Council)

Ms Carmen KONG, Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs (Civic Affairs)2 (Designated)

(For agenda item 3)

Mr David LEUNG, Commissioner for Rehabilitation, Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB)

Mr KOK Che-leung, Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services), Social Welfare Department (SWD)

Miss CHAN Lai-chu, Chief Social Work Officer (Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services)1, SWD

Ms KO Man-lai, Senior Social Worker Officer (Pre-school Rehabilitation Services), SWD

Ms Mary MEAU, Senior Specialist (Educational Psychology Service / Kindergarten), Education Bureau (EDB)

Dr Anna HUI, Associate Professor, Department of Social & Behavioural Sciences, City University of Hong Kong (CityU)

Dr Angela SIU, Associate Professor, Department of Educational Psychology, The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK)

(For agenda item 4)

Ms PANG Kit-ling, Assistant Director (Family & Child Welfare), SWD

Absent with apologies

Dr LAM Ching-choi, Chairman of the Elderly Commission

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

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

Mr LEE Tsz-king, Dominic

Mrs WONG NG Kit-wah, Cecilia

**Welcome Remarks**

The Chairman welcomed all to the 39<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Family Council (the Council), in particular, Dr Lam Chi-yan, Kay, Mr LEE Kam-kwong of EDB, and Ms Carmen KONG of Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) who attended the Council meeting for the first time.

2. The Chairman informed Members that Dr Kay Lam was appointed as member of the Council on 1 November 2018 in place of Miss Phoebe TANG who had resigned from the Council. Ms Carmen Kong would take up the role of Council Secretary following the transfer of Mr Nick AU YEUNG out of HAB. The Chairman suggested and Members agreed to record a vote of thanks to Miss Tang and Mr Au Yeung for their contributions to the Council.

**Item 1 – Confirmation of Minutes of the 38<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Family Council**

3. The minutes of the 38<sup>th</sup> 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 adjudication interviews for the 2017/18 Family-Friendly Employers Award Scheme (Award Scheme) were completed with 14 companies/organisations being selected for “Grand Award” and 10 for the “Outstanding Family-Friendly Employment Practices 2017/18”. The facebook voting game on the Favourite Family-Friendly Employment Practice was completed with over 5 300 votes received. The Award Presentation Ceremony would be held at the Storybook Theatre, Hong Kong Disneyland at 2:30pm on 8 December 2018. The Chief Secretary for Administration (CS) would officiate at the ceremony.

5. In respect of the Study on Family Impact Assessment (FIA), CEO(FC) reported that the draft checklist had been applied to 280 papers as at 31 October 2018. Formal adoption of the FIA Checklist tool was announced by the issue of a circular memorandum in August 2018, and the FIA checklist and user manual had been uploaded onto the Cyber Learning Centre Plus for reference of government officers. For the other studies in the pipeline, CEO(FC) reported that the research team for Family Survey 2017 presented its findings to the Sub-committee on Family Support (Support Sub-committee) at its meeting on 18 September 2018 and submitted the draft final report on 2 October 2018. For the “Further Study on the Phenomenon of Divorce in Hong Kong”, the first Working Group meeting was conducted on 18 September 2018 to discuss the draft inception report.

6. CEO(FC) then updated Members that the Council’s facebook had attracted over 11 160 likes as at 31 October 2018 and the average number of “Reaction”, “Comments” and “Sharing” per post was about 196. The Council’s revamped webpage featured with a new set of cartoon icons would be launched by end of November 2018, and a new family education package on the family core value of “Communication and Harmony” would be launched in around end December 2018. The Council Secretariat was also examining the final reports of four projects approved under 2016-17 Pilot Scheme on Thematic Sponsorship to Support Family-related Initiatives with a view to presenting the preliminary observations to the Support Sub-committee at its next meeting scheduled for January 2019.

7. CEO(FC) also informed the meeting that the Asian Family Summit (AFS) was successfully held from 19 to 22 August 2018, with the Chief Executive and Ms Daniela Bas from the United Nations as the guests of honour at the opening ceremony. It was attended by over 550 participants from 17 countries/regions. Mrs Patricia CHU thanked Members' support for the event and reported that the AFS had received very good feedback from guests and participants. Information of the event was also uploaded onto the YouTube portal of the Division for Inclusive Social Development under the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations.

### **Item 3 – Evaluation Study of the Pilot Scheme on On-site Pre-school Rehabilitation Services (Paper FC 13/2018)**

8. The Chairman briefed the meeting that the Council first discussed the issues of pre-school rehabilitation services at its meeting on 20 February 2014. On the basis of Members' views expressed at the meeting and supplementary written comments, he issued a letter setting out the views of the Council to the CS on 27 May 2014. In response, CS wrote to him on 6 November 2015 on the updated developments, in particular the planned launching of a two-year Pilot Scheme on On-site Pre-school Rehabilitation Services (the Pilot Scheme) in the fourth quarter of 2015. The Council was subsequently briefed on the details of the Pilot Scheme on 26 November 2015. He invited Mr David LEUNG, Commissioner for Rehabilitation, LWB, Mr KOK Che-leung, Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services) and his colleagues from the SWD, Ms Mary MEAU, Senior Specialist (Educational Psychologist) of EDB, Dr Anna HUI, Associate Professor, Department of Social & Behavioural Sciences, CityU and Dr Angela SIU, Associate Professor, Department of Educational Psychology, CUHK to brief Members on the outcome of the evaluation study on the Pilot Scheme.

9. Mr Leung informed the meeting that the Pilot Scheme was launched with a view to enabling pre-school children with special needs to receive necessary training early in their prime learning period. As announced in the 2017 Policy Address, the Government had earmarked an annual recurrent expenditure of \$460 million to convert the Pilot Scheme into a regular government subsidy programme after its conclusion, and increase the number of service places from 3 000 to around 5 000 in October 2018 and further to 7 000 by October 2019. Dr Hui went on to brief the meeting on the findings of the evaluation

study. Salient points of her presentation included –

- (a) comprising longitudinal study of around 400 cases, 97 case studies, questionnaires survey as well as focus group interviews with various stakeholders, the study examined the child outcomes of the Pilot Scheme and observed positive impacts on child performance in both the quantitative and qualitative analyses;
- (b) in the longitudinal study, significant improvements were evident in the child outcomes across all domains and maintenance effect on children being discharged from services was also observed. Principals and teachers of participating schools mentioned observable improvements in self-expression, classroom behaviours and self-concept during focus group interviews. Parents' satisfaction level of the service was 99.8%;
- (c) the study also examined the performance of project operators in achieving essential output and outcome standards, and proposed adjustments to two items which failed to meet the stipulated requirements, namely the minimum number of centre-based training and consultative sessions provided for teachers;
- (d) based on the key success factors on service delivery mode identified in the study, the research team made several recommendations on the modes and standards of services to be adopted upon service regularisation. The suggestions covered enhancement for staffing of inter-disciplinary service team in respect of speech therapy, social work support and ancillary staff provision; measures to overcome environmental constraints such as setting up of mobile training centres and provision of training room for service operators; strengthening of parental support through various means including reaching out high-risk parents; strengthening support for teachers to build up their competence to immerse concepts of identification and rehabilitation for children with special needs, as well as adjustment of output standards having regard to the operational experience such as relaxing the duration of consultation session provided for teachers from two hours to

30 minutes, etc.; and

- (e) in the long run, the study recommended that the assessment for children with special needs by the Child Assessment Service under the Department of Health should be speeded up. Consideration should be given to focus the Early Education and Training Centre service to serve children before the age of three when the waiting time for pre-school rehabilitation services was substantially shortened as a result of the regularisation of service. School-based social work support should be enhanced and a “Continuous Support Mechanism” should be introduced for children who had made significant progress. Moreover, a longitudinal study might be conducted to track the development of children from young childhood to childhood after they proceeded to Primary One.

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

- (a) a member noted that some families might have difficulties to bring their children to receive services and enquired on the support measures to these families;
- (b) a member supported providing more flexibility to the project operators and the proposed “in and out” arrangement under the “Continuous Support Mechanism”. She considered that the transitional support to children proceeding to Primary One should target at children and family as a whole, and additional resources should be provided for provision of stakeholder training and increasing the manpower supply for services. Another member echoed on the need to strengthen manpower supply; and
- (c) a member commented that the research team’s presentation did not cover much support services to parents and expected improvement in this area as well.

11. In response, Mr Kok of SWD informed the meeting that they would support provision of training room in the schedule of accommodation of office bases for project operators, co-ordinate with EDB to further enhance the transitional support services for children

proceeding to Primary One, and closely liaise with the EDB and Food and Health Bureau (FHB) on manpower planning. Mr Leung told the meeting that there would be short to long term measures to increase the manpower supply, and the Government would review if the establishment of mobile training centres would help address some families' difficulties in arranging for their children to receive services. For parent support, the number of parents/relatives resource centres subvented by SWD would be increased from six to 19. There were also plans to increase the number of social workers in all service teams and launch a pilot scheme to provide social work services in pre-primary institutions.

12. The Chairman thanked LWB and the research team for the comprehensive review and recommendations. He suggested inviting LWB to report on the outcome of their review of the operation of mobile training centres in future. In the interest of time, Members who had yet to provide views on the study might forward their opinions to the Council Secretariat for onward transmission to LWB.

(Post-meeting Note : Two members' written comments were sent to LWB in January 2019)

#### **Item 4 – Chief Executive's 2018 Policy Address Family-Related Policy Initiatives of the Labour and Welfare Bureau (Paper FC 14/2018)**

13. The Chairman invited Ms PANG Kit-ling, Assistant Director (Family and Child Welfare) of the SWD to brief Members on the major family-related initiatives of the LWB as set out in the 2018 Policy Address (PA).

14. The salient points of Ms Pang's presentation were summarised below –

- (a) the Government would implement an array of new and enhanced measures covering support for children and families, poverty alleviation, care for the elderly and support for the disadvantaged;
- (b) in respect of support for children and families, additional resources would be allocated for the Commission on



Children to implement various measures to safeguard the well-being of children. At the same time, the Government would strengthen the services focusing on children's development through different means, such as enhancing child care services to integrate care and development, formulating planning ratio for the provision of child care centre places, enhancing the existing manning ratios for qualified child care workers in day and residential child care centres, increasing the level of subsidy for child care centre service, enhancing the service quality of the Neighbourhood Support Child Care Project, setting up four new small group homes and five specialised co-parenting support centres, launching in phases a three-year pilot scheme of provision of social work services for pre-school children and their families, and a two-year project on Child Care Training Programme for Grandparents, etc.;

- (c) separately, LWB would explore the provision of after-school care services for children aged three to six in suitable welfare facilities settings as well as the feasibility of integrating family-related policies under the respective purviews of the LWB and HAB; and
  - (d) there would be measures to enhance support for ethnic minorities, support ageing in place for the elderly and relieve their carers, purchase additional subsidised residential care places for elderly, facilitate local elderly persons who choose to retire in Guangdong and Fujian, enhance community support services for persons with disabilities, etc.
15. Members' views were summarised as follows –
- (a) a member, while appreciating the efforts of the government in rolling out various initiatives, expected to see more innovative ideas such as issue of child care vouchers to address the needs of parents in a more flexible manner. She was of the view that manpower shortage would be a big challenge to the Government in enhancing the welfare services for an ageing population;

- (b) a member shared the concerns over the inadequate residential care places for the elderly caused by manpower shortage. He wondered if the problem could be addressed by provision of more part-time worker positions, while another member suggested provision of a structured career development path to attract young people to join the elderly care service sector. Procurement of subsidised residential care places for elderly was viewed by a member as a zero-gain measure as there would be no increase in the total supply of residential care places in the market;
- (c) a member considered that the planning parameters for child care services should be reviewed while another member suggested extending the opening hours of child care centres to cover non-office hours and weekends;
- (d) a member provided views on the pre-school services for children with special needs. Her concerns included the service gap for children reaching six years old and the practical difficulties caused by the existing manning ratio of one social worker to 1 200 students in kindergartens. Another member shared the view that the manning ratio of social worker should be enhanced;
- (e) in respect of support for ethnic minority, a member suggested providing financial assistance to non-governmental organisations in employing English speaking workers;
- (f) a member quoted the discussion at the round table meeting of the Asian Family Summit and raised the need to strengthen support services for divorced and split families. She also suggested strengthening support to families of patients suffering from prolonged illnesses;
- (g) a member flagged up the need to enhance manpower support for provision of emotion support services for students, while another member looked forward to enhanced measures for timely identification of possible child abuse cases;

- (h) a member considered that the education and preventive work at family level should be strengthened and asked for more details about the integration of family-related policies as mentioned in the PA; and
- (i) a member expected the government to enhance support to the social service sector as well. Manpower planning and training aside, she considered that there was also room for improvement in the service tendering procedures.

16. Miss Leonia TAI, Acting Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare pointed out that shortage of land and manpower were big challenges to the provision of welfare facilities. The Government had taken a multi-pronged approach to address the issues. On long term planning, following the incorporation of the population-based planning ratios for elderly services in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG) by end-2018, the Government would formulate planning ratio for the provision of child care centre places and incorporate in the HKPSG. The Government would also encourage private developers to provide in their development projects various welfare facilities. On elderly services, the Government would continue to promote ageing in place. On residential care services for the elderly, while the Government would continue to construct new residential care homes for elderly, in view of the long lead time required, the Government would at the same time procure services from the private market and in the process incentivise the private service operators to improve quality of services.

17. In respect of support services for children, Miss Tai explained that the manning ratio of social worker to children under the Pilot Scheme on Social Work Services for Pre-primary Institutions was 1:400. In other words, one social worker would normally serve two pre-primary institutions only. Ms Pang added that while the existing mode of allowing social work teams to match with the pre-school units on mutual agreement was initiated by the sector which provided flexibility of matching for social work teams and pre-school units, the Government would review the arrangement in the light of experience gained before launching the remaining two phases of the Pilot Scheme. As regard the service gap for children reaching six years old with special needs, Ms Pang explained that children of five years old would be accorded with priority under the prevailing arrangement so as to avoid their becoming ineligible for service after turning six. Support for pre-school ethnic minorities children was provided through

assistance to pre-school institutions. Members' comments on the opening hours of child care centres were noted but with the existing staff constraint, there would be operational difficulties for extending the operating hours to Sundays and public holidays. The Government also attached great importance to the training and development of social workers and provided training provision to agencies under the lump sum grant subvention system.

18. The Chairman thanked Miss Pang for her presentation and the supplementary information provided by her and Miss Tai in response to members' comments. He suggested that the Government might explore how to encourage and engage the retired elderly persons to participate in community services to complement the service needs. On support to the social service sector, he pointed out that there was currently no on-going professional training for social workers and saw room for improvement. He remarked that family services and policies straddled across several bureaux including the EDB, FHB as well as Security Bureau. At the Chairman's request, Miss Tai undertook to share with the Council the Government's plan on exploring the feasibility of integrating family-related policies under the respective purviews of the LWB and HAB in due course.

#### **Item 5 – Progress of Work of the Sub-committees under the Family Council (Paper FC 15/2018)**

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

20. Mrs Chu briefed Members that the Support Sub-committee had examined the findings and recommendations in the draft final report of "A Study on Family Research in Hong Kong : A Critical Review and Annotated Bibliography" (Bibliography Study). Having conducted review of thousands of publications published or released between 2000 and 2016, the research team identified several areas of issues with relatively limited coverage. To further advance the development of family and family-related studies in Hong Kong, the research team recommended setting up a family research fund. Mrs Chu and Prof LAM Tai-hing, the Deputy Convenor of Support Sub-committee, had raised this suggestion to the Chief Executive and the Financial Secretary at their consultation sessions for Policy Address

and Budget.

(Action : Support Sub-committee)

21. Dr Gordon TSUI, member of the Promotion Sub-committee, reported on the progress of production of education package and 4-panel comics. He told members that the package producer would invite experts or key opinion leaders to share some practical tips and produce optional post-episode interviews for each episode. The whole series of 12 episodes would be launched in the Council's facebook page starting late December 2018. Separately, a specially-designed icon entitled "But's family" would be introduced to disseminate the Council's messages and promoting the family core values in a lively manner. To amplify the publicity effect, a naming competition was being conducted and the icons would be formally launched at the Award Presentation Ceremony of the 2017/18 Award Scheme cum Family Fun Day on 8 December 2018. It would then be followed by the publishing of a 4-panel comics featuring the family icon on the Council's facebook page biweekly.

(Action : Promotion Sub-committee)

### **Item 6 – Any Other Business**

22. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon. The next meeting would be held on 15 March 2019 (Friday) at 2:30 p.m.

**Family Council Secretariat  
January 2019**