

Family Council
Minutes of 41st Meeting held on 27 June 2019

Date: 27 June 2019 (Thursday)
Time: 2:30 p.m. – 4:50 p.m.
Venue: Wan Chai District Council Conference Room,
21/F, Southorn Centre, 130 Hennessy Road,
Wan Chai, Hong Kong

Attendance

Chairman

Prof. SHEK Tan-lei, Daniel

Ex-officio Members

Dr LAM Ching-choi, Chairman of the Elderly Commission
Ms CHAN Yuen-han, Chairperson of the Women's Commission

Non-official Members

Ms CHEUNG Lai-chu
Ms CHEUNG Wang-yim, Lavender, Deputy Convenor, Sub-committee
on the Promotion of Family Core Values and Family Education
Mr FONG Yick-jin, Eugene
Dr LAM Chi-yan
Prof. Albert LEE
Ms PUN Siu-fung, Cindy
Mrs WONG NG Kit-wah, Cecilia
Mr WOO Kin-man, Clement

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)
Mrs CHAN SIU Suk-fan, Deputy Secretary for Education (4)
(attending on behalf of Secretary for Education)
Mr Curtis LO, Acting Deputy Head(3)
(attending on behalf of Head/Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office)

Secretary

Ms Carmen KONG, Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs

(Civic Affairs)2

In attendance

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

Ms Adia LAM, Chief Executive Officer (Family Council)

(For agenda item 3)

Mrs CHAN SIU Suk-fan, Deputy Secretary for Education (4),
Education Bureau (EDB)

Ms Reona LUK, Chief School Development Officer (Home-school
Co-operation), EDB

(For agenda item 4)

Miss Leonia TAI, Deputy Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare)1,
Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB)

Mr Daniel FONG, Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare
(Manpower), LWB

Ms Cecilia CHAN, Senior Statistician (Manpower), LWB

Mr Eric LEE, Principal Economist, Office of the Government
Economist of the Financial Secretary's Office

Mr Jonathan NG, Senior Statistician (Household and Income Statistics),
Census and Statistics Department

Absent with apologies

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

Ms CHAN Suk-mei, May

Ms CHENG Chi-man, Sonia

Mr LEE Tsz-king, Dominic

Prof. LEUNG Seung-ming, Alvin, Convenor, Sub-committee on Family
Support

Dr WONG Fung-ye, Margaret, Deputy Convenor, Sub-committee on
Family Support

Ms YIP Lai-wa, Emily, Convenor, Sub-committee on the Promotion of
Family Core Values and Family Education

Ms YIP Yun-wan, Amarantha

Welcome Remarks

The Chairman welcomed all to the 41st meeting of the Family Council (the Council), in particular four new members, namely Ms CHEUNG Wang-yim, Lavender, Mr FONG Yick-jin, Eugene, Prof. Albert LEE and Ms PUN Siu-fung, Cindy who were appointed to

the Council in April 2019 and attended the Council meeting for the first time.

2. The Chairman also introduced to Members Mrs CHAN SIU Suk-fan who succeeded Mr WOO Chun-sing as Deputy Secretary for Education (4), and Mr Curtis LO who succeeded Mr Bassanio SO as Assistant Head (3) of the Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office. A vote of thanks to Mr Woo and Mr So for their contributions to the Council was recorded.

Item 1 – Confirmation of Minutes of the 40th meeting of the Family Council

3. The minutes of the 40th 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 CEO(FC) to brief Members on the progress. CEO(FC) informed the meeting that following the completion of the 2017/18 Family-Friendly Employers Award Scheme, the Council would launch the biennial Award Scheme for the fifth time in 2019. At its meeting held on 6 June 2019, the Sub-committee on the Promotion of Family Core Values and Family Support (Promotion Sub-committee) discussed and agreed on the proposed framework of the 2019/20 Award Scheme, including its official launch in November/December 2019.

5. In respect of the Study on Family Impact Assessment (FIA), CEO(FC) reported that the FIA checklist had been applied to 404 papers as at 31 May 2019. A consolidated summary of FIA cases which were processed since the application of the FIA checklist on 2 May 2017, had been prepared and forwarded to Members for reference.

6. For the other studies in the pipeline, CEO(FC) reported that the revised draft final report for the Family Survey 2017 was circulated to Members of the Sub-committee on Family Support (Support Sub-committee) for consideration on 27 March 2019. With no comments received from Members, the final report was accepted on

4 April 2019 and was uploaded to the Council’s website. As regards the progress of the “Further Study on the Phenomenon of Divorce in Hong Kong” (the Divorce Study), the research team had obtained consent from the Judiciary to have access to some 200 case files from the Family Court and had started capturing the court information in early June 2019. The research team would continue to liaise with the Judiciary to obtain the remaining requested information for the Divorce Study. Moreover, the Working Group’s comments of the draft framework of the qualitative study had been passed to the research team on 24 June 2019, the research team planned to conduct the qualitative study by phases starting from late June 2019. While the research team targeted to submit the revised draft Progress Report within June 2019, they would brief Members of the Working Group (WG) on the latest progress of the Divorce Study at the next WG meeting to be held on 11 July 2019.

[Post-meeting note : Further comments from the WG on the draft framework of the qualitative study, including those raised by Mrs Cecilia WONG at this Council Meeting had been forwarded to the research team on 3 and 8 July 2019 for follow up action.]

7. CEO(FC) then updated Members that as at 31 May 2019, the Council’s Facebook had attracted over 13,230 likes and the average number of “Reaction”, “Comments” and “Sharing” per post was about 228. For the twelve episodes of the new family education package on the family core value of “Communication and Harmony”, the view count of episodes ranged from 266,000 to 385,000 as at 31 May 2019.

8. CEO(FC) also informed that the production of one of this year’s souvenirs of the Council, i.e. a magnetic bookmark of the But’s Family had completed. The magnetic bookmarks would be given out to participants of the activities organised by the Council, including those of the Inter-school Colouring Competition for Kindergarten Students and the Picture Composition Competition for Primary School Students.

Item 3 – Report of the Task Force of Home-School Co-operation and Parent Education (Paper FC 6/2019)

9. The Chairman invited Mrs CHAN SIU Suk-fan, Deputy Secretary for Education (4) and Ms Reona LUK, Chief School

Development Officer (Home-school Co-operation) of EDB to brief Members on the recommendations as contained in the Report of the Task Force of Home School Co-operation and Parent Education (the Task Force). The salient points of the presentation were summarised as follows –

- (a) the Task Force was set up under the Education Commission in December 2017 to review the existing approach in promoting home-school co-operation and parent education in order to formulate the directions and strategies for fostering both. On 29 April 2019, the Task Force submitted its review report to EDB which contained six long-term directions for promoting home-school co-operation and parent education as well as 18 recommendations;
- (b) EDB accepted all the recommendations made by the Task Force and had been arranging the implementation of the related measures, including –
 - (i) raising the ceiling for the subsidy for Home-School Co-operation Activities for Parent-Teacher Associations of schools starting from the 2019/20 school year;
 - (ii) an increase in the number of activities that the Federation of Parent-Teacher Associations could apply for subsidy with effect from the 2019/20 school year;
 - (iii) the commissioning of tertiary institutions or non-governmental organisations to develop a curriculum framework or a set of curriculum guidelines on parent education; and
 - (iv) the launch of a territory-wide “Positive Parent Campaign” to promote the importance of raising happy and healthy children.

10. Members' views were summarised as follows –
- (a) a member considered it important to reinforce the idea to the young generation that all roads lead to Rome. The society should also change the deep-rooted perception that good public examination results and possession of property were the only proof of ones' success;
 - (b) a member, while appreciating the government's good efforts in taking forward the recommendations of the Task Force, reckoned that more collaboration between EDB and the Council could be considered to achieve synergy. Examples include promoting EDB's parent education website "Smart Parent Net" through the Council's website/Facebook;
 - (c) a member shared the views that children were grown up under great influence of their parents and parent education should start as early as possible. It was also important to incorporate the idea of "not being a helicopter parent" when developing the curriculum framework or guidelines on parent education;
 - (d) a member stated that it was important to enhance parents' skills and values in parenting. In addition, learning through play was important to the growth of children. Positive values should also be developed among parents to change their belief of "winning at the starting line";
 - (e) a member was of the view that apart from education, the government should make further efforts in tackling the problems being faced by people with different background in the society, in particular those from grass-roots families. Special attention should also be given to the existing services for the children with special education needs; and
 - (f) a member stated that EDB should explore ways to encourage teachers and parents to join the training courses and parent education programmes respectively as recommended by the Task Force.

11. Mrs Cherry TSE pointed out that with the availability of much on-line information of various kinds/values, children and parents might perceive such information very differently leading to the forming of very different perceptions. Sharing of real life cases on different topics such as career planning and multiple pathways could be a good and lively way of exchanging information and arousing the resonance among the participants of the sharing. Besides, it would be more desirable to implement relevant measures pursuant to the Task Force report progressively.

12. Mrs Chan added that while it was not always easy to change ones' mindset and beliefs, the sharing of real life experiences would be an effective way to help convey the positive and useful ideas/messages to parents as well as children, ideally from the time when they were in kindergartens. In addition, programmes for the general public would also be launched to promote the positive parent campaign in the community.

13. The Chairman thanked Ms Luk for her presentation and members' comments on this item. He remarked that apart from parent education, the directions and strategies for dealing with issues of family should take into account the various well-being and concerns of different family members. In fact, in addition to a set of well-written curriculum guidelines on parent education, the subjects to be covered by the curriculum were of equal importance.

Item 4 – Key Findings on the Manpower Projection to 2027 (Paper FC 7/2019)

14. The Chairman invited Miss Leonia TAI, Deputy Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare) 1, Mr Daniel FONG, Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Manpower), Ms Cecilia CHAN, Senior Statistician (Manpower) of LWB, Mr Eric LEE, Principal Economist, Office of the Government Economist of the Financial Secretary's Office and Mr Jonathan NG, Senior Statistician (Household and Income Statistics) of Census and Statistics Department to brief Members on the key findings on the Manpower Projection (MP) to 2027.

15. Miss Tai briefed Members on the salient points of the paper as summarised below –

- (a) the government had been conducting, at the macro level, periodic MP exercises with a view to assessing the broad trends of Hong Kong's future manpower supply and requirements for the medium term. Adopting 2017 as the base year and covering a 10-year projection period, MP2027 projected the manpower situation up to 2027 on the basis of the latest available manpower statistics;
- (b) the local manpower supply (equivalent to the labour force excluding foreign domestic helpers) was projected to increase from 3.64 million in 2017 to reach a plateau in 2019 to 2022 at 3.67 million to 3.68 million, and then decrease to 3.57 million in 2027. Along with the rapid ageing of the population, the overall labour force participation rate was expected to fall from 59.1% in 2017 to 54.9% in 2027. While the local male manpower supply was expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 0.6% from 2017 to 2027, the local female manpower supply was projected to grow slightly at an average annual rate of 0.2% from 2017 to 2027. The general education profile of the workforce was anticipated to improve further in the next decade owing to the abundant pathways available to youth in pursuing higher education;
- (c) the total manpower requirements (excluding foreign domestic helpers) were projected to increase by 127,000 from 3.61 million in 2017 to 3.74 million in 2027. The projected changes in the occupation pattern and education level of manpower requirements were in line with Hong Kong's continued transformation to a knowledge-based and high value-added economy with focuses on innovation, professionalism and adoption of automation and technology in business processes;
- (d) the manpower requirements were expected to grow in tandem with economic growth whilst the labour force was expected to shrink due to ageing population and low fertility rate in the projection period, resulting in a projected overall

manpower shortfall of 169,700 by 2027; and

- (e) some 66,600 persons, including 50,100 female homemakers aged 30-59 and 16,500 early retirees aged 50-64 (corresponding to 10% and 5% of the respective population subgroups), indicated that they would be willing to work if they were offered “suitable” employment meeting their specific needs. Most of them preferred part-time jobs and less than 10% (or some 6,300 persons) would prefer full-time jobs.

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

- (a) a member asked if external factors like the China-US trade relations had been taken into account when conducting the MP2027. This member also reckoned that many employers in Hong Kong should change their concept of a “job”, i.e. eight-hour working pattern from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., that made these employers very much out of touch with the current labour market;
- (b) a member shared certain opinions in the society that (i) mainland citizens who came to Hong Kong through the one-way permit scheme could be a source of manpower supply to help tackle the problem of labour shortage due to ageing population and low child birth rate in Hong Kong; and (ii) apart from taking care of their children, more and more women were required to take care of the elderly in their families that made them difficult to join the labour market and be seen as “idle” labour force;
- (c) a member was of the view that the manpower requirement could differ from one economic sector to another. Consideration should thus be given to take note of the anticipated manpower requirements of different economic sectors when formulating the education policies for the supply of the manpower with suitable qualifications and expertise. Besides, researches on manpower situation of specific kind of work such as services for the elderly could be done for better forward planning and preparation by the government. Hong Kong should also take note of the

situation in Japan that more and more middle-age people lived in poverty because they had to quit their job to take care of their elderly parents; and

- (d) in view of the fact that Hong Kong had been transforming into a knowledge-based society with an increasing demand for more personal services, a member commented that a review could be done to find out how the manpower could be equipped with suitable knowledge and skills in order to cater for the required manpower needs.

17. Miss Tai thanked members for their comments and responded that both internal and external factors, including those as anticipated as far as possible, like the China-US trade relations, had been taken into account during the analysis of data collected for MP2027. Under the economic sector of “social and personal services”, it was projected that the future manpower requirements for two sub-sectors viz. “human health activities” and “nursing homes, residential care activities and social work activities without accommodation for the elderly and persons with disabilities” would increase at an average annual rate of over 2% from 2017 to 2027, which could shed light on future manpower requirements for elderly services. She also explained that compilation of manpower projection had to make reference to historical manpower statistics and past data trends so as to ensure comparability on sector-specific manpower requirements and other aspects of analysis over time. The government had been making efforts to create a better environment and facilitation measures so as to enable women to join/re-join the labour market. On the other hand, enhancement of training for the elderly or early retirees could help equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to find employment opportunities in the labour market.

18. Mrs Tse agreed that the findings of MP2027 served as a very good reference to the government in formulating the relevant policies. She suggested that the next projection exercise could include more “qualitative” rather than just “quantitative” elements so that more useful analysis on specific areas of concern could be obtained.

19. The Chairman thanked Miss Tai for her presentation and response to members’ views. He added that ways should be explored to understand better the views of both parents and the young generation in pursuing the latter’s career, including what they perceived as a job in

the labour market.

Item 5 – Progress of Work of the Sub-committees under the Family Council (Paper FC 8/2019)

20. The Chairman invited Ms Lavender CHEUNG, the Deputy Convenor of the Promotion Sub-committee to report on work progress.

21. Ms Cheung reported that the Promotion Sub-committee had discussed at its meeting on 6 June 2019 the proposed framework of the 2019/20 Family-Friendly Employers Award Scheme and provided comments on the promotion of the Inter-school Colouring Competition for Kindergarten Students and Picture Composition Competition for Primary School Students. The Chairman remarked that consideration could be given to include a new award for recognising company/organisation with good family-friendly policy/practice on flexible working hours. The Council Secretariat would follow up the suggestion.

(Action : Promotion Sub-committee)

22. The Chairman invited CEO(FC) to report on work progress on behalf of the Convenor and Deputy Convenor of the Support Sub-committee who could not join the meeting today. CEO(FC) reported that the Support Sub-committee had discussed at its meeting on 30 May 2019 the proposed objectives, scope, work plan and deliverables of the Consolidation Exercise for Family Surveys and agreed on the commissioning of the Consolidation Exercise by end 2019 tentatively. The Support Sub-committee had also invited two sponsored organisations to present the results of their completed projects under 2017-18 Pilot Scheme on Thematic Sponsorship to Support Family-related Initiatives at the meeting and provided comments.

(Action : Support Sub-committee)

Item 6 – Any Other Business

23. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m. The next meeting would be held on 12 September 2019 (Thursday).

**Family Council Secretariat
July 2019**