

**Family Council**  
**Minutes of 30<sup>th</sup> Meeting held on 20 September 2016**

Date: 20 September 2016 (Thursday)

Time: 2:30 - 5:00 p.m.

Venue: Conference Room 1, G/F, Central Government Offices,  
2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong

**Attendance**

**Chairman**

Prof. SHEK Tan-lei, Daniel

**Ex-officio Members**

Mr LAU Ming-wai, Chairman of the Commission on Youth

Mrs LAU KUN Lai-kuen, Stella, Chairperson of the Women's  
Commission

**Non-official Members**

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

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

Ms LAW Suk-kwan, Lilian

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

Prof. LEUNG Seung-ming, Alvin

Dr LI Sau-hung, Eddy

Ms LOO Shirley Marie Therese, Convenor, Sub-committee on the  
Promotion of Family Core Values and Family Education

Dr TSUI Luen-on, Gordon

Miss WONG Siu-ling, Gabriella

Ms YAU Oi-yuen, Irene

Ms YIP Lai-wa, Emily

Official Members

Mrs Betty FUNG, Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs (*attended on behalf of Secretary for Home Affairs*)

Miss Leonia TAI, Deputy Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare)1 (*attended on behalf of Secretary for Labour and Welfare*)

Mrs HONG CHAN Tsui-wah, Deputy Secretary for Education (4) (*attended on behalf of Secretary for Education*)

Prof. WONG Chack-kie, Member (2)/Central Policy Unit (CPU) (*attended on behalf of Head/CPU*)

Secretary

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

In attendance

Miss Iris MA, Chief Executive Officer (Family Council)

(For agenda item 3)

Mr Chris SUN, Head, Healthcare Planning and Development Office, Food and Health Bureau

Mr Herman LAW, Administrative Officer, Healthcare Planning and Development Office, Food and Health Bureau

(For agenda item 4)

Prof. CHAN Cheung-ming, Alfred, Chairperson of Equal Opportunities Commission

(For agenda item 5)

The University of Hong Kong (Department of Social Work and Social Administration)

Dr LAW Chi-kwong, Associate Professor

Dr CHUI Hiu-kwan, Cheryl, Post-doctoral Fellow

Ms YUEN Kwun-ying, Queenie, Senior Research Assistant

Absent with apologies

Dr LAM Ching-choi, Chairman of the Elderly Commission

Miss TANG Pui-yee, Phoebe

Ms WONG Pik-kiu, Peggy

Mr YIU Tze-leung, Ivan

**Welcome Remarks**

The Chairman welcomed all to the 30<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Family Council (the Council) and introduced to Members Miss Leonia TAI, Deputy Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare)1, who represented the Secretary for Labour and Welfare at the meeting.

**Item 1 – Confirmation of Minutes of the 29<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Family Council**

2. The minutes of the 29<sup>th</sup> meeting were confirmed without amendments.

**Item 2 – Matters Arising from the previous meeting**

3. The Chairman noted that the Council Secretariat had circulated a progress report to Members for information. The Hong Kong Catholic Marriage Advisory Council was commissioned to produce a pre-marital family education package. The adjudication for the 2015/16 Family-Friendly Employers Award (FFEA) Scheme was completed with 114 companies/organisations selected for award of “Distinguished Family-Friendly Employers” and 31 for the “Award for Innovation”. An informal discussion meeting would be held with the

research team for the Study on “Parenting Practices in Hong Kong” to discuss its revised findings of school survey, focus group summary and draft country reports. The Sub-Committee on Family Support (Support Sub-Committee) discussed the findings and recommendations of the Study on “Family Mediation Services in Hong Kong” (Mediation Study) at its meeting on 8 September 2016. Policy 21 submitted the draft final report for Family Survey 2015 in August 2016. A total of four organisations were recommended for sponsorship under the “Pilot Scheme on Thematic Sponsorship to Support Family-related Initiatives (2016-17)” (the 2016-17 Pilot Scheme). The two convenors would make a detailed report on the progress of these issues later.

4. The Chairman updated Members that the Council’s responses to the public consultations on retirement protection and on working hours policy direction were issued to the Commission on Poverty on 21 June 2016 and the Standard Working Hours Committee on 24 July 2016. In addition, a reply was issued on 25 August 2016 to the Hon CHAN Yuen-han’s follow-up letter on assisting female homemakers to join the labour market.

5. As Members had no further comments, the progress report was endorsed.

### **Item 3 – Pilot Schemes on Mental Health Services (Paper FC 17/2016)**

6. The Chairman invited Mr Chris SUN, Head, Healthcare Planning and Development Office (HPDO), Food and Health Bureau (FHB), and Mr Herman LAW, Administrative Officer, HPDO, to brief Members on the new initiatives recently launched by FHB to improve the mental health services. Head, HPDO took Members through paper FC 17/2016 using a PowerPoint presentation. The salient points of the presentation were summarised as follows –

*(a) background*

FHB set up a Review Committee on Mental Health (Review Committee) in 2013 to review the existing mental health policy and services with a view to mapping out the future direction for the development of mental health services in Hong Kong. Two expert groups, namely the Expert Group on Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and Expert Group on Dementia, were set

up under the Review Committee to review the existing services in respective aspects and make recommendations on service enhancement;

(b) *Pilot Scheme on School-based Support Services for Students with Mental Health Needs*

Based on the recommendation of the Expert Group on Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, FHB had been working with the Education Bureau (EDB), the Hospital Authority (HA) and the Social Welfare Department (SWD) for launching a pilot scheme on school-based support services for students with mental health needs using a medical-educational-social collaboration model. The pilot scheme would last for two school years. Seventeen secondary and primary schools in Kowloon were invited to participate in the pilot scheme. A cross-sectoral, multi-disciplinary professional team would be set up in each participating school to provide support services to students who were either diagnosed of or suspected to have mental health problems; and

(Post-meeting note: The Pilot Scheme on School-based Support Services for Students with Mental Health Needs has been renamed as the “Student Mental Health Support Scheme”.)

(c) *Dementia Community Support Scheme*

Based on the recommendation of the Expert Group on Dementia, FHB jointly developed with SWD and HA a two-year pilot scheme named “Dementia Community Support Scheme” (dementia pilot scheme) to provide support services in the community, through medical-social collaboration, to elderly people aged 60 or above suffering from mild or moderate dementia. Under the dementia pilot scheme, 20 District Elderly Community Centres (DECCs) in eight districts would, based on care plans formulated by HA, provide suitable support services to elderly dementia patients as well as their carers at the community level. This two-year dementia pilot scheme would be launched in February 2017 and was expected to benefit about 2 000 elderly people.

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

- (a) it was appreciated that the two pilot schemes signified the Government's endeavours to improve mental health services which would in turn bring benefits to families;
- (b) an integrated approach should be adopted as mental health problem was not merely a medical issue. Collaborations among FHB, EDB, SWD and HA were required;
- (c) for early identification of vulnerable cases, it was necessary to equip teachers at schools with the knowledge to identify and handle students with mental health problems under the Student Mental Health Support Scheme. It would be equally important to enhance the services of school social workers who could, by merits of their training and experience, sense the pulse aptly;
- (d) as observed, parents might tend to deny mental health problems of their children if the diagnoses were not made by medical professionals. It would be a challenge to coordinate the different roles of teachers, social workers and nurses under the Student Mental Health Support Scheme. The effectiveness of assigning nurses to schools was doubtful in the light of the experience in the United States;
- (e) the Government should do more at the primary level of preventive education in the community and through the education system. There was currently inadequate coverage of mental health education and human development in the curriculum;
- (f) for the dementia pilot scheme, a member considered that it was a matter of balance between formal and informal health support services. Family support would also be a crucial factor for the success of this pilot scheme. Apart from providing training to carers, consideration should be given to strengthening the homecare support services covering provision of equipment and adaptive adjustment of home environment; and
- (g) there should be a detailed assessment and evaluation of the effectiveness of the two pilot schemes.

8. In response to Members' views, Head, HPDO made the following remarks –

- (a) the Student Mental Health Support Scheme sought to address service needs through a reaching-out approach. The pilot scheme would be supported by experienced nurses. Given the shortage of doctors, it would be very difficult to directly engage psychiatrists for outreach service. Nurses' participation would help relieve the pressure of teachers in handling students with mental health problems, and facilitate liaison and enhance collaboration among HA, schools and SWD in providing treatment to students in need; and
- (b) the two pilot schemes served to explore collaboration models among the medical, social and educational sectors and the Government would carefully review their effectiveness in mapping out the way forward.

9. The Chairman thanked Head, HPDO for his presentation and responses, and hoped that the two pilot schemes would bring benefits to the target groups and their families. He also invited FHB to brief the Council on the progress of the two pilot schemes after their launching.

**Item 4 – “Are families given equal opportunities? EOC’s way forward” (Paper FC 18/2016)**

10. The Chairman invited Prof. CHAN Cheung-ming, Alfred, Chairperson of Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC), to brief the Council on EOC's work relating to families.

11. Chairperson, EOC took Members through the PowerPoint presentation which was covered in paper FC 18/2016. The salient points of the presentation were summarised as follows –

- (a) equal opportunity was a core value of an advanced society and EOC's vision was to create a pluralistic and inclusive society free of discrimination with no barriers to equal opportunity, and in which everyone was treated with dignity and respect;

- (b) apart from the traditional structures, there were different formats of families nowadays such as single-parent families, multiple divorces families, ethnic minority families, families with disabled persons, same sex families. Some of these families might be more vulnerable and in need of extra support;
  - (c) as a watchdog for social conscience, EOC persuaded and educated the majority, protected and advocated for the minority with a view to promoting equality and eliminating discrimination. To this end, it might go against the tide and work against the mainstream if appropriate;
  - (d) education started from the youth in families. As equality came with respect, EOC considered it worthwhile to promote “respect for others” in families and pre-schools.
12. Deliberations of the meeting after the presentation were summarised as follows –

- (a) a Member considered that notwithstanding the advocacy of equal opportunities in the regime of the four anti-discrimination ordinances, EOC should be mindful that some of the values advocated by advanced western societies, such as those pertaining to sexual orientation, might not be in consonance with the traditional Chinese values;
- (b) EOC should exercise due care in positioning itself and caution against blowing up the core values of families and putting family unity at stake;
- (c) EOC might consider doing more on the front of educational and promotional work. It had a role to play in facilitating discussions on equal opportunity issues, but it did not have to take a lead or push for a conclusion before the society had reached consensus through elaborate discussions;
- (d) equal opportunity was one of the many values and should not be placed on an overriding position to upset the equilibrium or ecology. For example, Members pointed out that the unbalanced ratio of male and female students in universities nowadays were the result of implementation of no sex discrimination in the process of allocation of



secondary school places without due regard to the development difference between boys and girls. It turned out that the business sector also suffered from recruitment difficulties;

- (e) a Member supported stepping up the promotion of “respect for others” in view of the prevailing trend of adverse attitude towards Mainlanders. Consideration should also be given to guarding against age discrimination in the light of the ageing population; and
- (f) a Member enquired on exploring the common cases of family status discrimination and appropriate follow up actions.

13. In response to Members’ views, Chairperson, EOC made the following remarks –

- (a) core values could be changing in the context of an evolving community. As an international and multi-cultural society, Hong Kong needed to interface with China and internationally. While EOC was not to lead or decide, it could not refrain from initiating and facilitating discussion on controversial issues relating to equal opportunity; and
- (b) at present, the case work of EOC was mostly related to sex and disability discrimination. Cases of family status discrimination were rare and mainly in connection with female workers in pregnancy.

14. The Chairman thanked the Chairperson, EOC for his presentation. He considered that issues of equal opportunity should not be handled in a vacuum. He welcomed more collaborations between the Council and EOC in promoting equal opportunities for families.

#### **Item 5 – Progress of Study on Family Impact Assessment (Paper FC 19/2016)**

15. The Chairman briefed Members that a consulting team led by Dr LAW Chi-kwong of the Department of Social Work and Social Administration, University of Hong Kong, was commissioned to

conduct an 18-month Study on Family Impact Assessment (FIA study) on 1 June 2016. He invited Dr Law to brief Members on the progress of research and the proposed framework of the FIA checklist.

16. Dr Law took Members through paper FC 19/2016 using a PowerPoint presentation. The salient points of the presentation were summarised as follows –

- (a) the consulting team had completed interviews with bureaux and departments. It was now collecting views from relevant advisory bodies and would later organise district forums and conduct consultation with professional bodies, think tanks, political parties and other interested parties;
- (b) the purpose of this presentation was to collect views on the proposed framework of the FIA checklist and core values, collect feedback on the proposed quality control mechanism of conducting FIA, and discuss the initial training ideas with Members;
- (c) four dimensions of the proposed FIA framework were family responsibility, family stability, family relationships and family engagement;
- (d) to implement the FIA checklist, different workflows were proposed for different types of policy proposals, i.e. new or revised policies or legislative proposals involving public consultation, new or revised proposals that were regarded as confidential at the formulation stage, and subsidiary legislative proposals involving primarily technical amendments;
- (e) the consulting team considered that complex or controversial cases should be identified at an early stage to facilitate the involvement of the Council;
- (f) a blanket approval arrangement was proposed so that bureaux and departments would be relieved of the burden of seeking clearance of the family implications of straight-forward and repetitive items; and
- (g) for implementation of the FIA checklist, training covering family conceptual and sensitivity training, use of checklist

tool, and online resources and self-learning would be provided;

17. Members raised the following issues after the presentation –
- (a) how the policy could be improved after implementation of the FIA checklist, and whether there was any mechanism in the FIA that could facilitate revision of policies;
  - (b) whether the family impact referred to cognitive phenomenon or intrinsic quality; and
  - (c) whether there would be a requirement for the policy bureau/department to collect local data during the FIA process.

18. In response to Members' enquiries, Dr Law made the following points –

- (a) the proposed FIA checklist applied to the policy formulation stage only. Family impact was one of many factors to be considered. On some occasions, even there was negative impact, the policy would still be pursued but the government should consider appropriate mitigating measures;
- (b) there was a step of literature review in the FIA tool that suggested the policy bureau/department to assess family impact having regard to findings of relevant researches; and
- (c) the FIA tool would not prescribe the policy formulation procedures. Collection of local data should be conducted on a need basis, and implementation of pilot scheme was an option if local data was required.

19. The Chairman thanked Dr Law for his presentation. Given the limited time for discussion, he invited Members to provide views after the meeting. The Council Secretariat would consolidate the comments for reference of the Steering Committee before it met the consulting team in November 2016 to discuss the draft FIA Checklist in detail.

(Action: Council Secretariat)

**Item 6 – Progress of Work of the Sub-committees under the Family Council (Paper FC 20/2016)**

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

21. On the work of the Promotion Sub-Committee, Ms Shirley LOO reported that the the Family Focus Group of the Committee on Prevention of Student Suicides had shared its preliminary findings and recommendations with the Promotion Sub-committee at its meeting on 23 August 2016. In respect of the promotional videos of the pre-marital education package, the first batch of rough cuts would be available for review and comments at the Promotion Sub-Committee's next meeting in November 2016.

(Action: Promotion Sub-committee)

22. The prize presentation ceremony for 2015/16 FFEA Scheme was scheduled for the afternoon of 25 October 2016. Ms Loo thanked Miss Phoebe TANG for acting as Master of Ceremony and Mr LAU Ming-wai for taking part in the first experience sharing session. Two celebrities, Mr Peter CHEUNG and his wife Ms Eugina LAU would participate in the second experience sharing session. She welcomed all Members to attend the ceremony. Ms Loo also briefed Members that to sustain the momentum and widely publicise the family-friendly employment practices (FFEPs), the Promotion Sub-Committee agreed to launch a promotion plan in the fourth quarter of 2016 that comprised organisation of experience sharing sessions by the outstanding awardees, production of a series of short videos and souvenir calendars featuring good FFEPs and interviews of outstanding awardees by local newspapers.

(Action: Promotion Sub-committee)

23. Mrs Patricia CHU reported that the Support Sub-committee had deliberated on the findings and recommendations of the Mediation Study at its meeting on 8 September 2016. It noted that the research team recommended, among other things, adopting an inter-sectoral

cooperation and collaboration approach under which the planning, development and coordination of family mediation services was overseen by a policy bureau, and setting up a data bank for family mediation aiming at collecting data, recording it and using it to plan and develop family mediation services. Representatives from relevant bureau/departments and organisations had provided their views on the recommendations during the meeting. After discussion, the Support Sub-Committee concluded that it should defer to the Government to consider and decide on the implementation arrangements including which bureau should take the lead should the recommendations be accepted. Members also suggested that the recommendations might be further grouped into short to medium term and long term measures to facilitate the Government's consideration of appropriate follow-up action. The Support Sub-Committee would keep in view the submission of final report by the research team.

(Action: Support Sub-committee)

24. Ms Chu also briefed Members on the progress of the 2016-17 Pilot Scheme. Amongst the 12 applications received, seven were shortlisted for assessment interviews on 31 August 2016. The assessment panel, chaired by the Council Chairman and included two Convenors, assessed their merits according to the prescribed criteria and recommended granting sponsorship to the top four applicant organisations which scored over 70 marks. The total amount of sponsorship sought was \$2.97 million. Subject to any further comments from Members, the Council Secretariat would seek approval for disbursement of funds and notify the successful applicant organisations of the result. It was expected that the approved projects would be launched in the fourth quarter of 2016. The Support Sub-Committee would oversee the implementation of the sponsored programmes and activities. The Chairman reminded Members to declare potential conflict of interest to the Council Secretariat if they had any tie or connection with the four recommended organisations.

(Action: Support Sub-committee and Council Secretariat)

### **Item 7 – Any Other Business**

25. The Chairman informed Members that the Council agreed to be a supporting organisation of the 5<sup>th</sup> CIFA Regional Symposium organised by the Consortium of Institutes on Family in the Asian Region (CIFA) from 3 to 5 November 2016 in Seoul, Korea vide Paper

FC 15/2016. Upon invitation from CIFA, Ms Lilian LAW was nominated to represent the Council to attend the Symposium.

26. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.. The next meeting would be held on 8 December 2016 (Thursday) at 2:30 p.m..

**Family Council Secretariat  
November 2016**