

**Family Council**  
**Minutes of 48<sup>th</sup> Meeting held on 24 September 2021**

Date: 24 September 2021 (Friday)  
Time: 2:30 p.m. – 4:40 p.m.  
Venue: Conference Room 6, G/F., Central Government Offices,  
2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong

**Attendance**

**Chairman**

Ms PANG, Melissa Kaye

**Ex-officio Members**

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

Dr LAM Ching-choi, Chairman of the Elderly Commission

**Non-official Members**

Ms CHAN Suk-mei, May

Prof. CHEN Yu-hai, Eric

Ms CHEUNG Lai-chu

Mr FONG Yick-jin, Eugene

Dr LAM Chi-yan, Convenor, Sub-committee on Family Support

Mr LUK Hua, Warren

Ms PUN Siu-fung, Cindy

Mrs WONG NG Kit-wah, Cecilia

Mr WOO Kin-man, Clement

Ms YIP Yun-wan, Amarantha, Convenor, Sub-committee on the Promotion  
of Family Core Values and Family Education

Mr YOUNG Chit-on, Jeremy

Official Members

Mrs Cherry TSE, Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs

*(attending on behalf of Secretary for Home Affairs)*

Ms Alice LAU, Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

*(attending on behalf of Secretary for Labour and Welfare)*

Mr CHENG Ming-keung, Principal Assistant Secretary (School  
Administration Special Support)

*(attending on behalf of Secretary for Education)*

Mr Sylvester WONG, Assistant Head (3)

*(attending on behalf of Head/Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office)*

Secretary

Mr Kenneth CHAN, Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs (Civic  
Affairs)<sup>2</sup>

In attendance

Miss Helen TANG, Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs (1)

Ms Adia LAM, Chief Executive Officer (Family Council)

(For agenda item 3)

Mr David LEUNG, Deputy Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare)<sup>1</sup>,  
Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB)

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

(For agenda item 4)

Mr Horman CHAN, Assistant Director (Leisure Services)<sup>1</sup>, Leisure and  
Cultural Services Department (LCSD)

Ms Carrie LEE, Chief Leisure Manager (Development), LCSD

Ms Vivian HO, Senior Project Manager (Technical Section), LCSD

Mr Joe LAM, Senior Project Manager 337, Architectural Services  
Department (ArchSD)

Mr CHAN Chun-ho, Landscape Architect/2, ArchSD

Absent with apologies

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

Mr CHAN Kwan-yeung, Arnold

Ms CHEUNG Wang-yim, Lavender, Deputy Convenor, Sub-committee on  
the Promotion of Family Core Values and Family Education

Prof. Albert LEE

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

**Welcome Remarks**

The Chairman welcomed all to the 48<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Family Council (the Council), in particular Mr YOUNG Chit-on, Jeremy who had been appointed to the Council since April 2021, and Ms Alice LAU, Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare, who attended the Council meeting for the first time.

**Item 1 – Confirmation of Minutes of the 47<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Family Council**

2. The minutes of the 47<sup>th</sup> meeting were confirmed without amendment.

## **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, and invited Chief Executive Officer (Family Council) (CEO(FC)) to brief Members on the report. In respect of the application of the Family Impact Assessment (FIA) checklist, CEO(FC) reported that the FIA had been applied to 809 Legislative Council briefs as at 31 August 2021. Besides, a service provider was engaged to conduct the Family Survey 2021 and preparatory work for the survey, including a pilot survey for both the general and thematic surveys, was underway.

4. For the Scheme on Thematic Sponsorship to Support Family-related Initiatives, CEO(FC) reported that all four sponsored organisations submitted the half-yearly progress reports of their projects to the Council Secretariat in late July 2021. Moreover, two of the sponsored organisations presented their projects to the Sub-committee on Family Support (Support Sub-committee) at its meeting held on 3 September 2021 while the remaining two would present the progress of their projects at the next Support Sub-committee meeting scheduled for December 2021 tentatively. CEO(FC) also informed the meeting that as at 31 August 2021, the Council's Facebook page had attracted over 27 108 "likes" and the average number of "Reaction", "Comments" and "Sharing" per post was about 325. Besides, the video series entitled "Family: A Hub to Cheer You Up" which comprised eight short family education videos was launched at the Council's website and YouTube Channel by phases between June and August 2021.

5. In relation to the "Further Study on the Phenomenon of Divorce in Hong Kong" (the Divorce Study), CEO(FC) reported that upon receipt of the consolidated comments of relevant bureaux/departments (B/Ds) on the revised draft Final Report in March 2021, the research team refined the draft Final Report and submitted a revised version in August 2021. Upon preliminary vetting by the Council Secretariat, it was noted that the revised draft still did not address quite a number of comments previously raised by

relevant B/Ds. The preliminary observations and comments had been forwarded to the research team for further follow-up action. In particular, the research team had been asked to analyse the background, circumstances and factors underlying the different maintenance collection arrangements in different jurisdictions, and examine their merits/demerits and applicability to Hong Kong in an evidence-based manner. A meeting between the Council Secretariat and the research team was being arranged. Subject to the research team's satisfactory completion of their work, the Working Group on Further Study on the Phenomenon on Divorce in Hong Kong (WG) would meet to discuss the draft Final Report. Upon the WG's deliberations on the draft Final Report, the research team would brief the Council on the findings and recommendations of the study.

**Item 3 – Proposed Mandatory Reporting Requirement for Suspected Child Abuse Cases (Paper FC 10/2021)**

6. The Chairman invited Mr David LEUNG, Deputy Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare)<sup>1</sup> of LWB, and Ms PANG Kit-ling, Assistant Director (Family and Child Welfare) of SWD, to brief Members on the mandatory reporting requirement for suspected child abuse cases proposed by the Government. The salient points of the presentation were summarised as follows –

- (a) in addition to existing legislation, the Government had implemented a wide range of administrative measures in recent years for the prevention, early identification and appropriate intervention of suspected child abuse cases. These included strengthening social work services at different levels of schools, promulgating guidelines for schools to implement a reporting mechanism for non-attendance cases, and providing guidelines for the relevant professionals to enhance inter-disciplinary co-operation. The Government would continue to improve and strengthen the administrative measures in order to enhance the protection of children; and

- (b) as non-compliance with a statutory requirement of mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect cases would come with a criminal liability, the Government would take into account stakeholders' views on the proposed mandatory reporting mechanism before proceeding to work out a detailed legislative proposal for further consultation with stakeholders.

7. Members' views and questions were summarised as follows –

- (a) a Member suggested that training for professions who had frequent contacts with children should be enhanced to equip them with the necessary knowledge and expertise to handle child abuse cases;
- (b) a Member opined that considerations should be given to preventing possible deterioration of family relationships during the course of handling child abuse cases which very often involved corporal punishment by close family members living under the same roof;
- (c) a Member was of the view that while the consultation paper did not mention about the specific mechanism of the mandatory reporting proposal such as to which parties the suspected child abuse cases should be reported, an independent team which had the required statutory power to follow up on the abuse cases, should be formed. She also reckoned that the existing social support services were insufficient to support the full and smooth implementation of the proposed mandatory reporting system. For instance, apart from hospitals, there was not enough emergency placement for children who were not suitable to return home during the course of investigation; and
- (d) a Member considered that child abuse was an issue which implicated on the efforts of a number of different

parties/personnel, and it might not be suitable to specify “home-school co-operation” in the consultation paper.

8. Mr David Leung thanked Members for their comments and added that the Government attached great importance to the well-being of children and had implemented a number of improvement measures in recent years to enable the early detection of abuse cases. To strengthen the Government’s efforts in this respect, a cross-bureaux working group was set up to consider carefully and thoroughly the views received from relevant stakeholders on the proposed mandatory reporting mechanism before working out the appropriate way forward.

9. The Chairman invited Mr David Leung to take note of Members’ comments, and asked if the Law Reform Commission (LRC)’s recommendation of introducing a new offence of “failure to protect a child or vulnerable person where the child’s or vulnerable person’s death or serious harm results from an unlawful act or neglect” (the proposed offence) had any impact on the Government’s proposed mandatory reporting system. She also remarked that apart from the Government’s current consultation of the proposed mandatory reporting mechanism, the current efforts of both the Government and the community to protect our children and ensure their healthy growth and development should continue. Public and parent education was of particular importance and should also be enhanced. Mr Leung replied that the proposed offence of LRC sought to impose criminal liability on bystanders to deal with the problem of “which of you did it” cases, where a victim of abuse died or suffered serious harm and all accused parties were acquitted of murder or other causative offences because it could not be proven beyond reasonable doubt which one of them was directly responsible. The proposed mandatory reporting mechanism sought to encourage early and effective detection of suspected child abuse and neglect cases by imposing on designated professionals who had frequent contacts with children a statutory reporting obligation. The two legislative proposals were complementary with the common goal of safeguarding the safety of children.

**Item 4 – Transformation of Public Play Spaces Managed by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (Paper FC 11/2021)**

10. To facilitate discussion of this agenda item, the Chairman invited Mr Horman CHAN, Assistant Director (Leisure Services)<sup>1</sup>, Ms Carrie LEE, Chief Leisure Manager (Development), Ms Vivian HO, Senior Project Manager (Technical Section) of LCSD, Mr Joe LAM, Senior Project Manager 337 and Mr CHAN Chun-ho, Landscape Architect/2 of ArchSD, to brief Members on the latest development of the transformation of public play spaces managed by LCSD. The salient points of the presentation were summarised as follows –

- (a) the Government announced in the 2019 Policy Address the launch of a five-year plan to transform more than 170 public play spaces under the management of LCSD. The total expenditure for the project was estimated to be \$680 million;
- (b) with the positive feedback from the community on the transformation of the children’s playground in the Tuen Mun Park into an innovative inclusive play space, the Government had proposed to use the Tuen Mun Park as a prototype to transform public play spaces in other areas of Hong Kong; and
- (c) LCSD would encourage and promote community participation and engagement during the course of transforming public play spaces through various means, including workshops and opinion surveys so that the transformed public play spaces could better meet the needs of the users.

11. Members’ views and questions were summarised as follows –

- (a) a Member commented that the Tuen Mun Park served as a very good example of how to transform an existing children’s playground into an innovative public play space and ideal



gathering place for families. While the Government should continue its efforts in transforming other children's playgrounds in Hong Kong, due considerations should be given to the needs of young people during the process of designing public play spaces;

- (b) a Member pointed out that in addition to the current five-year plan to transform some 170 public play spaces under the management of LCSD, the Government should consider conducting regular reviews of all public play spaces in Hong Kong by taking into account the changing needs of children;
- (c) a Member considered that more flexibility should be allowed in using public play spaces by members of the public, such as specific areas should be allowed for skateboarding, cycling and playing ball games. Inclusion of more pet-friendly facilities was also recommended; and
- (d) a Member suggested including facilities in public play spaces that would encourage more interactions between parents and their children and help enhance parent-child relationship. She also reckoned that more resources should be reserved for maintaining the existing public play spaces for better enjoyment by the public.

12. Mr Horman Chan thanked Members for their comments and stated that ArchSD had conducted a consultancy study on "Design of Play Space in LCSD Venues" to review the current practices and develop design guidelines which aimed to make public play spaces more attractive, user-inclusive and fun to serve the whole family in a safe manner. Besides, the Government was also considering to provide more spaces in park to allow for activities such as balance bike for toddlers, cycling, skateboarding and inline skating while priority should be given to the safety of users. The design of public play spaces would also take into account the needs of users

and the uniqueness of specific districts where such public play spaces were located.

13. Mrs Cherry Tse added that the Development Bureau had been taking forward a number of harbourfront enhancement projects which aimed to further capitalise on the existing waterfront promenade along both sides of the Victoria Harbour and improve accessibility to the waterfront for the enjoyment of all. Moreover, the Home Affairs Bureau had commissioned a Consultancy Study on Provision of Sports Facilities in Hong Kong which provided recommendations on the planning of sports facilities with a view to better addressing the evolving needs for sports facilities in the community.

#### **Item 5 – Progress of Work of the Sub-committees under the Family Council (Paper FC 12/2021)**

14. The Chairman invited Ms Amarantha YIP, the Convenor of the Sub-committee on Promotion of Family Core Values and Family Education (Promotion Sub-committee), to report on its work progress. Ms Yip reported that for the Story Creation-cum-Story Telling Competition for the Council's second storybook, i.e. "Secret to Perfection of The But's Family" (the Competition), three online workshops on creative story writing and storytelling were organised in July and August 2021 for interested students. Adjudication and online public voting for favourite entries would be held in October and November 2021 respectively while the results of the Competition would be announced in late December 2021 tentatively via the Council's website and Facebook page. As regards the third storybook of "The But's Family", it was agreed at the Promotion Sub-committee meeting on 26 August 2021 that the storybook would tie in with the theme of the 2021-22 Publicity Plan, i.e. "Enhancement of Family Resilience", and was expected to be launched in the first quarter of 2022. A quotation exercise would be arranged to engage a publisher to produce the storybook, theme song and the related materials.

(Action: Promotion Sub-committee)

15. The Chairman invited Dr Kay LAM, the Convenor of the Support Sub-committee, to report on its work progress. Dr Lam reported that at the Support Sub-committee meeting held on 3 September 2021, Members discussed the implementation plan of the Family Survey 2021 and the proposed questionnaire design of the thematic survey presented by the service provider at the meeting. The service provider would take note of Members' comments, including the timing of conducting the pilot survey and the length of the questionnaire for the thematic survey, and refine the questionnaire to facilitate an early commencement of the pilot survey.

(Action: Support Sub-committee)

#### **Item 6 – Any Other Business**

16. The Chairman updated Members that the Assessment Panel which comprised her goodself, Ms Amarantha Yip and Council Secretary, had conducted interviews with 20 shortlisted applicants of the Member Self-recommendation Scheme for Youth. Subject to completion of the required appointment formality, the two selected applicants would join the Council as non-official members by the fourth quarter of 2021 tentatively.

17. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m. The next meeting would be held on 30 December 2021 (Friday) tentatively.

**Family Council Secretariat**  
**September 2021**