

Family Council
Minutes of 49th Meeting held on 14 January 2022

Date: 14 January 2022 (Friday)
Time: 3:30 p.m. – 5:24 p.m.
Venue: Online meeting via Zoom

Attendance

Chairman

Ms PANG, Melissa Kaye

Ex-officio Members

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

Non-official Members

Ms CHAN Suk-mei, May

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

Mr CHEUNG Pok-man

Mr FONG Yick-jin, Eugene

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

Mr LUK Hua, Warren

Ms PUN Siu-fung, Cindy

Mr WONG Bing-kin, Solomon

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

Mr Joe WONG, Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs

(attending on behalf of Secretary for Home Affairs)

Mr David LEUNG, Deputy Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare)1

(attending on behalf of Secretary for Labour and Welfare)

Dr Verena LAU, Principal Assistant Secretary (School Administration)

(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)2

In Attendance

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

Ms Adia LAM, Chief Executive Officer (Family Council)

(For agenda item 3)

Mr KOK Che-leung, Deputy Director of Social Welfare (Services), Social Welfare Department (SWD)

Ms CHAU Fung-mui, Wendy, Assistant Director (Family and Child Welfare), SWD

(For agenda item 4)

Prof. Alice CHONG, Senior Researcher (2), Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB)

Prof. Marco PANG, Professor, Department of Rehabilitation Sciences, and Lab Coordinator of Neurorehabilitation Lab, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU)

Prof. Angela LEUNG, Professor, School of Nursing, and Deputy Director of World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre (WHOCC) for Community Health Services, PolyU

Absent with apologies

Dr LAM Ching-choi, Chairman of the Elderly Commission

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

Mr CHAN Kwan-yeung, Arnold

Prof. CHEN Yu-hai, Eric

Ms CHEUNG Lai-chu

Prof. Albert LEE

Mrs WONG Ng Kit-wah, Cecilia

Welcome Remarks

The Chairman welcomed all to the 49th meeting of the Family Council (the Council), in particular Mr WONG Bing-kin, Solomon and Mr CHEUNG Pok-man who had been appointed to the Family Council under the Member Self-recommendation Scheme for Youth Phase IV since 1 January 2022, Mr Joe WONG, Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs and Dr Verena LAU, Principal Assistant Secretary (School Administration) of the Education Bureau who attended the Council meeting for the first time.

Item 1 – Confirmation of Minutes of the 48th Meeting of the Family Council

2. The minutes of the 48th 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 821 Legislative Council briefs as at 31 December 2021. Besides, following the completion of the pilot surveys in October 2021, the fieldwork for both the general and thematic surveys of the Family Survey 2021 had started in November 2021 and was expected to be completed in February 2022.

4. As regards the Scheme on Thematic Sponsorship to Support Family-related Initiatives, CEO(FC) reported that two sponsored organisations had presented their projects to the Sub-committee on Family Support (Support Sub-committee) at its meeting on 13 December 2021. All the four sponsored projects would complete by end February 2022 and the sponsored organisations would submit the final and financial reports by end of April 2022. CEO(FC) also informed the meeting that as at 31 December 2021, the Council’s Facebook page had attracted over 27 200 “likes” and the average number of “Reaction”, “Comments” and “Sharing” per post was about 324. In respect of the Story Creation-cum-Story Telling Competition of “Secret to Perfection of The But’s Family”, the results were announced through the Council’s website and Facebook page on 17 December 2021. Moreover, audio segments of about 15 minutes each to present the winning entries by the winners along with tips on story writing, creative thinking and public speaking skills, were produced and had been broadcast in Radio Television Hong Kong’s radio programme between late December 2021 and March 2022. In addition, a service provider was engaged through a quotation exercise in October 2021 to produce the third storybook of the “The But’s Family” which would be launched in the first quarter of 2022.

5. With regard to the “Further Study on the Phenomenon of Divorce in Hong Kong” (the Divorce Study), CEO(FC) reported that the Council

Secretariat provided the research team with its comments on the revised draft final report in September 2021 and had a meeting with the research team in November 2021. The Council Secretariat had also impressed upon the research team the importance of taking into account the observations and comments of the Working Group on Further Study on the Phenomenon of Divorce in Hong Kong (WG) and the Council Secretariat in revising the draft final report. Subject to the research team's satisfactory completion of their work, the WG would meet to discuss the draft final report. Upon the WG's deliberations, the research team would brief the Council on the findings and recommendations of the study.

Item 3 – Chief Executive's 2021 Policy Address: Family-related Policy Initiatives of the Labour and Welfare Bureau (Paper FC 1/2022)

6. The Chairman invited Mr KOK Che-leung, Deputy Director of Social Welfare (Services) and Ms CHAU Fung-mui, Wendy, Assistant Director (Family and Child Welfare) of SWD, to brief Members on various new family-related policy initiatives as announced by the Chief Executive in her 2021 Policy Address and Policy Address Supplement. The salient points of the presentation were summarised as follows –

- (a) in respect of support for children and families, the new initiatives included (i) the exploration of the feasibility of integrating the Pilot Project on Tier 1 Support Services in Kindergartens/Kindergarten-cum-Child Care Centres with On-site Pre-school Rehabilitation Services (OPRS); (ii) an increase in the number of OPRS service places to 10 000 in the 2022/23 school year; and (iii) establishment of a mandatory reporting mechanism for child abuse cases;
- (b) on care for the elderly, the Government would explore the extension of the Residential Care Services Scheme in Guangdong; and introduce an amendment Bill into the Legislative Council to improve the quality of services provided

by residential care homes for the elderly and residential care homes for persons with disabilities;

- (c) as regards support for the disadvantaged, the Government would incorporate the planning ratios of long-term residential care, day rehabilitation, pre-school rehabilitation and community support services concerned into the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines in 2021-22; and
- (d) in relation to poverty alleviation, the new initiatives included (i) the merging of the Normal and Higher Old Age Living Allowance; and (ii) the exploration of the relaxation of absence limit under the Social Security Allowance Scheme.

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

- (a) a Member understood that the Government had allocated \$1 billion to set up the Innovation and Technology Fund for Application in Elderly and Rehabilitation Care (the Fund) in December 2018. She suggested that more innovative technology facilities should be installed in the community centres which would provide more chances for the elderly people to gain access to these facilities and learn how to use them;
- (b) a Member reckoned that women had been facing much pressure in taking care of their children and families, especially during the pandemic. The Government should continue to enhance the child care services to alleviate the pressure of women;
- (c) a Member was of the view that consideration should be given to increase the ratio of school social workers and students in primary schools; and

- (d) a Member considered that more financial support should be given to parents such as provision of lump sum grant because the fee for day care services was fairly high. She also asked if the Government's planned increase in the number of child care centres could meet the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines.

8. Mr Kok thanked Members for their comments and responded that the Government had implemented a number of measures to strengthen child care services, which included the enhancement of manning ratio in child care centres and the subsidisation of partial child care centre services fee for parents. Moreover, the Government would review the use of the Fund for better utilisation of the funding, including the promotion of use of innovative technology by the elderly and persons with disabilities. Ms Chau added that while there were planning standards for child care centres in new towns/new development areas, the Government would carefully take different factors into account, including the supply of land and distribution of population during the course of redeveloping old areas.

9. The Chairman invited Mr Kok to take note of Members' comments, and inquired about the manpower and work of the Cyber Youth Support Teams (CYSTs). She also asked if there was any fund for the ethnic minorities (EM) and hidden youths which was similar to the Arts Development Fund for Persons with Disabilities. Mr Kok replied that CYSTs aimed to proactively approach and engage those at-risk and hidden youths aged 6 to 24 who might not prefer conventional mainstream services, through cyber means. CYSTs comprised social work officers and other supporting staff who provided professional social work intervention with online and offline counselling and group/programme services. Besides, the availability of financial support under various government funding schemes would help develop the talents and potential of young people, including the EM and hidden youths, in different areas.

Item 4 – The Consultancy Study on Needs and Support Required of Carers of Elderly Persons and of Persons with Disabilities in Hong Kong (Paper FC 2/2022)

10. To facilitate discussion of this agenda item, the Chairman invited Prof. Alice CHONG, Senior Researcher (2) of LWB, Prof. Marco PANG, Professor, Department of Rehabilitation Sciences, and Lab Coordinator of Neurorehabilitation Lab, PolyU and Prof. Angela LEUNG, Professor, School of Nursing, and Deputy Director of WHOCC for Community Health Services, PolyU, to brief Members on the progress of the Consultancy Study on Needs and Support Required of Carers of Elderly Persons and of Persons with Disabilities in Hong Kong (the Study). The salient points of the presentation were summarised as follows –

- (a) LWB commissioned a multi-disciplinary consulting team of PolyU to carry out the Study to collect empirical data (both quantitative and qualitative) so as to explore the needs of the carers and their services expectations;
- (b) the objective of the Study was to propose evidence-based and carer-centered recommendations to support carers of elderly persons and persons with disabilities, with the aim to enable carers to maintain a balance between their caring responsibilities and a life outside caring;
- (c) the preliminary recommendations of the Study included (i) raising the awareness of carers about the importance, availability and access of available information and services; (ii) examination of existing websites and encourage the development of a carer centric and sustainable information gateway to address carers' needs by non-governmental organisations/social enterprises/corporates; (iii) provision of carer-centric training and intervention to promote carers' wellbeing, self-management, ability to cope with stress; (iv) promotion of family-based support and mutual assistance

among peer carers; (v) cultivation of carer-friendly neighbourhoods; (vi) identification of high-risk carers and provision of timely support; and (vii) utilisation of assistive technologies to relieve the care burden of the carers.

11. Members' views and questions were summarised as follows –
- (a) a Member commented that there were other government bureaux/departments (B/Ds) which were involved in providing support to the carers of elderly persons and persons with disabilities. He hoped that the Government would comprehensively review the existing support services being provided by different B/Ds and enhance such services after the review;
 - (b) a Member pointed out that it was important to enhance the promotion of support services to the carers and suggested creating more platforms for providing such services. The Government should also ensure the service quality to better meet the needs of carers, taking into account the actual problems being faced by the carers such as the time required to obtain the needed services;
 - (c) a Member considered that one of the sources of stress of the carers was the need to help the elderly persons or persons with disabilities to make important decisions. She opined that the Government should take this into account and provide assistance to the carers to make such decisions; and
 - (d) a Member stated that apart from provision of support services, it was also important to promote the importance of sharing the responsibility of taking care of the elderly persons and persons with disabilities in the community, in particular among the younger generation.

12. The Chairman thanked the speakers from LWB and PolyU for the briefing and Members for their comments. She remarked that the pandemic had much impact on the emotion of people in Hong Kong. She inquired if the Study had paid any special attention to what had happened in Hong Kong during the past 12 months, and whether there was any online platform that was collecting comments/ratings from the users of the existing services for carers. Prof. Leung replied that while the scope of the Study did not cover the period since the outbreak of the pandemic, one of the preliminary recommendations of the Study was related to the better use of assistive technologies to help relieve the care burden and enhance the caring capability of the carers. Prof. Pang supplemented that preventive measures including raising the awareness of carers about the availability and access of information and services, as well as promotion of inter-generational support were of particular importance. Prof. Chong also added that as LWB only played a part in providing the required support to the carers, the preliminary findings and recommendations of the Study had been forwarded to other B/Ds, including the Education Bureau for views and comments which would be incorporated in the final report of the Study.

Item 5 – Progress of Work of the Sub-committees under the Family Council (Paper FC 3/2022)

13. 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 having regard to the positive responses of the general public to the two storybooks of “The But’s Family” launched in January 2020 and February 2021 respectively, the Promotion Sub-committee agreed to publish the third storybook of “The But’s Family” to cover primary four to six students with the theme of “Enhancement of Family Resilience”. With the endorsement by the Promotion Sub-committee on the proposed

parameters, format, storyline, theme song, etc., the relevant service provider briefed the Promotion Sub-committee on the latest position on producing the storybook. Besides, for the 2022-23 Publicity Plan, the Promotion Sub-committee agreed to (a) adopt the theme of “Strengthening Family Cohesion and Solidarity”; (b) collaborate with the Radio Television Hong Kong to launch a territory-wide publicity campaign; (c) continue to promote the Council and its activities through the Council’s Facebook page; and (d) stage a roving drama series for secondary one to three students and their family members. Furthermore, to help generate more publicity and optimise the synergy effects of the work of the Council and the Women’s Commission (WoC), the two advisory bodies agreed to collaborate in promoting a culture of loving family in the community through the production of a short video. Having sought the comments of the WoC, the Council Secretariat would take forward the preparation work for the video.

(Action: Promotion Sub-committee)

14. The Chairman invited Dr Kay LAM, the Convenor of the Support Sub-committee, to report on its work progress. Dr Lam reported that the Support Sub-committee supported the launch of the Thematic Sponsorship Scheme to Support Family-related Initiatives (the Scheme) which aims to provide sponsorship to support non-profit making and worthwhile family-related initiatives, with the objectives to heighten community awareness of family core values as well as to promote a pro-family environment and family well-being. There were three themes under the Scheme, namely, “Preventing and Resolving Family Conflicts/Disputes”, “Step and Split Families” and “Divorce Education”. The four projects approved under the Scheme, launched in January 2021, were expected to be completed in February 2022. Besides, two sponsored organisations, namely, International Social Service Hong Kong Branch (香港國際社會服務社) and the Society for Truth and Light (明光社) briefed the Support Sub-committee meeting on the progress of their projects at its meeting on 13 December 2021. The two organisations were reminded to suitably

review the effectiveness of their projects through the research being conducted.

(Action: Support Sub-committee)

Item 6 – Any Other Business

15. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:24 p.m. The next meeting would be held on 1 April 2022 (Friday) tentatively.

[Post-meeting note: the meeting originally scheduled for 1 April 2022 was deferred to a later date having regard to the development of the pandemic.]

**Family Council Secretariat
April 2022**