

**Family Council**  
**Notes of 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting**

Date: 20 October 2011(Thursay)  
Time: 3:00 p.m.  
Venue: Conference Room (Room 1220), 12/F, West Wing,  
Central Government Offices

Attendance

Official Members

Mr Stephen LAM, Chief Secretary for Administration (Chairman)  
Mr TSANG Tak-sing, Secretary for Home Affairs  
Ms Doris CHEUNG, Deputy Secretary for Labour & Welfare (Welfare) 1  
(*attended on behalf of Secretary for Labour and Welfare*)  
Mrs Betty IP, Deputy Secretary for Education (3) (*attended on behalf of Secretary for Education*)  
Prof LEE Ming Kwan, Member (2)/Central Policy Unit (*attended on behalf of Head/Central Policy Unit*)

Ex officio Members

Prof CHAN Cheung-Ming (陳章明教授), Chairperson of the Elderly Commission  
Mr CHAN Chun-bun, Bunny (陳振彬先生), Chairperson of the Commission on Youth  
Ms KAO Chin-chi, Sophia (高靜芝女士), Chairperson of the Women's Commission

Non-official Members

Mr CHOW Yung, Robert (周融先生)  
Ms LAI Fung-ye, Angelina (黎鳳儀女士)  
Ms LAW Suk-kwan, Lilian (羅淑君女士)  
Dr LEE Wai-yung (李維榕博士)  
Dr LI Sau-hung, Eddy (李秀恆博士)  
Ms LOO Shirley Marie Therese (羅乃萱女士)  
Dr PANG King-chee (彭敬慈博士)  
Prof SHEK Tan-lei, Daniel (石丹理教授)

Dr WONG Chung-kwong (黃重光醫生)

Prof WONG Po-choi (黃寶財教授)

Ms YAU Oi-yuen, Irene (邱藹源女士)

Mr YIU Tze-leung (姚子樑先生)

Absence with apologies

Dr KOONG May-kay, Maggie (孔美琪女士)

Ms WONG Pik-kiu, Peggy (黃碧嬌女士)

Secretary

Miss Christine CHOW, Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs  
(Civic Affairs) 2

In attendance

Mr Raymond YOUNG, Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs

Mr CHENG Yan-chee, Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs (1)

Mrs Angelina CHEUNG, Principal Assistant Secretary (Welfare) 3,  
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Mr Bruno LUK, Administrative Assistant to Chief Secretary for  
Administration

Ms Aubrey FUNG, Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs (2)1

Ms Jessica CHENG, Chief Executive Officer (Family Council), Home  
Affairs Bureau

Ms Grace PAT, Senior Executive Officer (2), Home Affairs Bureau

For agenda item 3

Dr Catherine CHAN, Deputy Secretary for Education (5), Education  
Bureau

For agenda item 4

Mr Tony LIU, Assistant Director (Estate Management) 3, Housing  
Department

For agenda item 5

Dr Shirley LEUNG, Assistant Director (Family and Elderly Health  
Services), Department of Health

Ms Rosemary KWAN, Chief Social Work Officer (Family Welfare),  
Social Welfare Department

Dr Tony KO, Chief Manager (Patient Safety & Risk Management),  
Head Office, Hospital Authority

Dr Anna CHENG, Associate Consultant (Paediatrics & Adolescent  
Medicine), United Christian Hospital, Hospital Authority

Dr Zoe YU, Associate Consultant (Psychiatry), Kwai Chung Hospital,

Hospital Authority

## **Welcoming Remarks**

The Chairman welcomed all to the 14<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Family Council and thanked Members for their valuable contribution and untiring efforts in helping to foster a culture of loving families in the community. In the light of the encouraging achievements made by the Family Council in the past years, he looked forward to Members' continuous support.

### **Item 1 – Confirmation of Minutes of the 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Family Council**

2. The minutes of the 13<sup>th</sup> meeting were confirmed without amendments.

### **Item 2 – Family-related Initiatives in the 2011-12 Policy Address (Paper FC 11/2011)**

3. In response to the invitation of the Chairman, the Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs presented the paper, highlighting the family-related initiatives in different policy areas featured in the 2011-12 Policy Address and Policy Agenda booklet.

4. Members were invited to note the paper for information.

### **Item 3 – Family Perspectives in the Policies of the Education Bureau (Paper FC 12/2011)**

5. In response to the invitation of the Chairman, the Deputy Secretary for Education (3) and Deputy Secretary for Education (5) briefed Members on how family perspectives were applied in the policies of the Education Bureau (EDB). Members' comments and discussions mainly focused on the following areas -

- (a) issues relating to cross-boundary students (CBS);
- (b) promotion of home-school co-operation;
- (c) “After-School Care Programme”;
- (d) gender perspective in school curriculum; and
- (e) mental health of students and parents.

*Issues relating to cross-boundary students*

6. On issues relating to the CBS, Members expressed the following views -

- (a) suitable and timely assistance should be provided to parents of the CBS. Consideration could be given to enhancing the dissemination of information, particularly the transportation arrangements at various boundary control points to parents in Hong Kong and the Mainland;
- (b) in general, parents would first look for suitable school places before applying for the “Closed Area Permits” (CAPs). As such, a mismatch of school places and the CAPs might sometimes happen. In view of the above, the Government should consider whether a permit-based allocation of school places to the CBS was a viable option; and
- (c) with a view to equipping parents of the CBS with better parental skills, it was proposed that the Government should organize more parental and family education courses for these families.

7. In response, EDB’s representatives made the following responses -

- (a) in recognition of the fact that some parents might have genuine needs to arrange for cross-boundary schooling of their children, the Government had been putting in place various measures with a view to facilitating the transportation of the CBS, including further diverting the CBS from Lo Wu Station Road and Lok Man Chau Spur Line to other boundary control points, provision of special e-Channels for CBS, as well as the introduction of cross-boundary school buses;
- (b) the “bottleneck” problem might arise if large numbers of children were relying on the use of CAPs to travel to schools as the CAPs were originally designed for the purpose of meeting special and emergency needs; and
- (c) EDB shared the concerns of Members in relation to the promotion of parent education. According to information available, some non-governmental organizations (NGOs) had already taken active steps to outreach to the parents residing in the Mainland. One of the objectives was to promote family core values amongst the CBS’ parents.

### ***Promotion of Home-School Co-operation***

8. Insofar as the promotion of home-school co-operation was concerned, Members expressed the following views -

- (a) the Government might consider giving more financial support to low-income families for enrolment of parent education courses organized by the Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs);
- (b) to facilitate “early identification” and “early intervention”, the possibility of extending the establishment of the PTAs to kindergartens was worth

consideration; and

- (c) under the existing arrangement, the liaison work amongst the PTAs was shared amongst teachers. Subject to availability of resources, EDB might consider the proposal of designating a full-time teacher to be responsible and dedicated for such work.

9. In response, EDB's representatives informed Members that measures had already been in place to assist low-income families in their participation of activities organized by the PTAs, such as exemption of fees. As regards the suggestion of extending the establishment of the PTAs to kindergartens, it was noticed that quite a number of kindergartens had established PTAs. Nevertheless, promotion of the establishment of PTAs in the kindergarten sector had its own challenges, for example, their mode/scale of operation and the relatively short duration of schooling. Regarding the designation of a full-time teacher to take up the liaison work amongst the PTAs, because of competing priorities, resources might not be available for implementation of the proposal. Nonetheless, schools could employ additional staff using various grants to take up such work. EDB's representatives thanked Members for their views and suggestions on the promotion of home-school co-operation.

### ***“After-School Care Programme”***

10. Regarding the “After-School Care Programme” (the Programme), Members proposed that the Government should proactively explore the possibilities of making use of school facilities to further enhance the implementation of the Programme. In response, the Chairman thanked Members for their views and considered that the proposal was worth support in principle. As regards the suggestion to extend the hours of the Programme, the Chairman noted that the Community Care Fund (CCF) had already earmarked funds for programmes to enhance after-school child care service. The Education Sub-Committee under the CCF was studying the assistance programme on enhancing after-school child care service. He invited the Home

Affairs Bureau (HAB) to report further progress of work in this area to the Council in due course.

(Action: HAB)

### ***Gender perspective in school curriculum***

11. The inclusion of gender perspective in school curriculum was a matter of concern to Members. It was observed that “gender stereotype” was quite noticeable in school curriculum, in the sense that too much emphasis might be given to the role of mother in taking care of household work in the family, and that of father as bread-winner. In addition, it also appeared that the issue of gender equality had not been accorded adequate importance in school curriculum. In response, EDB’s representatives informed the meeting that the school curriculum provided a balanced coverage of contents and was successful in promoting gender equality in studying. Admittedly, teachers had to be equipped with understanding of the gender roles in families. EDB’s representatives took note of concerns expressed by Members and undertook to examine if further enhancements could be made as far as practicable.

(Action: EDB)

### ***Mental Health***

12. On issues relating to mental health of students, Members generally considered that this should receive immediate attention particularly at the school level as not only students were affected by the problem, but their parents and families as well. Members noted that this could relate to family psychology and with reference to some authoritative sources of international research, the problem of mental health was not unique to Hong Kong and was indeed a world-wide phenomenon. Members noted that EDB had already devoted much effort to promulgate the family core values in the school curriculum. Nonetheless, to help alleviate the increasing mental health stress and problems faced by students and their parents, it was suggested that

further consideration be given to making fuller use of the school platform to help identify high-risk families early, and to strengthening further the family-based concepts in the school curriculum.

13. Other related issues raised by Members included the possibility of extending the provision of student guidance officer /teacher to primary schools and the provision of school social work service at kindergartens.

14. To help further promulgate the family core values in a more effective manner, Members proposed that more synergistic work could be done by EDB in schools in consultation with relevant stakeholders. The Chairman thanked Members for their valuable suggestions and invited EDB to examine further improvement measures as far as practicable taking into account the views and suggestions received.

(Action: EDB)

#### **Item 4 – Family Perspectives in the Policies of the Transport and Housing Bureau (Paper FC 13/2011)**

15. Upon the Chairman’s invitation, the Assistant Director (Estate Management)<sup>3</sup>, Housing Department presented the paper and introduced how family perspectives were taken into account in the course of policy formulation under the Housing Authority (HA)’s purview.

16. Members expressed appreciation to HA for its work in taking family perspectives into account in different policy areas under its purview. Given the encouraging results of the four-pronged “Harmonious Families” policy, the Chairman agreed with Members’ suggestion that the HA should step up its publicity and promotion efforts to promulgate its achievements.

(Action: HA)

17. As regards the “Enhanced Partnering Arrangements” between the Estate Management Advisory Committees and NGOs, Members were pleased to note that the HA had actively participated in the “House Captain Project” to promote the neighbourliness and community development in public housing estates.

18. Members noted that the HA would provide adequate premises at concessionary rent for NGOs to provide welfare, educational and medical services for residents. At present, the HA had let 1,300 premises to NGOs, with some 20 vacant premises. Advertisements had already been placed on the websites of the HA as well as the Social Welfare Department for information of interested NGOs. In existing estates, opportunity would be taken to convert surplus non-domestic premises for welfare purposes (e.g. car parks in Tin Heng Estate in Tin Shui Wai and Shek Pai Wan Estate in Southern District) or change the designated use of welfare premises in order to meet the new demand of services resulting from changing social profiles, for example, the change in population structure and age profile of residents of the public housing estates.

19. The Chairman thanked Members for the useful views and suggestions in deliberating how family perspectives could further be taken into account in the formulation and publicity of housing policies. He mentioned that new initiatives such as “My Home Purchase Plan” were being formulated with family perspectives in mind. He invited the HA and the Transport and Housing Bureau (THB) to take appropriate follow-up actions on Members’ proposals.

(Action: THB, HA)

#### **Item 5 – The Comprehensive Child Development Service (Paper FC 14/2011)**

20. Upon the Chairman’s invitation, the Assistant Director (Family and Elderly Health Services), Department of Health (DH) introduced the current scope and mode of operation of the Comprehensive Child Development Service (CCDS). Members were

informed that with an aim to identifying the varied needs of at-risk pregnant women, children and families at an early stage, the community-based CCDS utilized the Maternal and Child Health Centres (MCHCs) under the DH as a platform to enhance cross-sectoral collaboration and communication. Through better alignment of existing health, education and social welfare services, the CCDS had facilitated timely referral of identified clients to appropriate health and social service units for early intervention. Members showed appreciation to the work delivered through the CCDS, especially in the areas of early identification and early intervention. Members also expressed the following views -

- (a) under the current service scope of the CCDS, the target group was children from birth to aged five. This notwithstanding, attention was drawn to the fact that some international studies on child development defined children to cover those from birth to 18 years of age. As such, it was suggested that more work be done by the Government to cover those beyond the age of five;
- (b) the term of “drug abuse” (“濫藥”) should be avoided as the generic reference should be “abusing psychotropic substance” (“吸食危害精神毒品”). Insofar as cases of abusing psychotropic substances were concerned, collaboration with the Society for the Aid and Rehabilitation of Drug Abusers provided a good platform for early identification and intervention. However, to avoid the “labeling” effect, and to more effectively assist the psychotropic substance abusers in quitting the drug-taking behaviour without being labeled as drug abusers, Government might consider using more counseling services together with the provision of community medical services;
- (c) family education should be provided to parents as early as possible, preferably starting from the pre-natal stage; and

- (d) while the application and the outcome of the Postnatal Depression Screening Programme was found to be satisfactory, the gender perspective should not be ignored. The role of father should be suitably included.

21. Members were informed that family education was in place for parents at various MCHCs. Members were also informed that about 90% of children born to Hong Kong women had made use of the CCDS. Because of data privacy concern, DH was unable to identify the exact reasons as to why the remaining 10% did not use the CCDS. A likely reason could be that they had resorted to using private hospitals or clinics for such services.

22. The Chairman thanked Members for the useful views and suggestions. He invited DH to take appropriate follow-up action on Members' proposals.

(Action: DH)

**Item 6 – Progress Report on Implementation of New Family-related Initiatives by the Commission on Youth, the Elderly Commission and the Women’s Commission (Paper FC 15/2011)**

23. In response to the invitation of the Chairman, the Chairpersons of the three Commissions reported progress of implementation of the new family-related initiatives. The Chairperson of the Women’s Commission further supplemented that, apart from the initiatives set out in the paper, the Women's Commission would roll out a "Pilot Funding Scheme for Women's Development" by engaging its network of district women's groups to launch women related programmes. Subject to the outcome of the pilot scheme and the availability of funds in future, consideration might be given to promoting "sharing of family responsibilities" or other family-related theme as appropriate in the future funding scheme so as to bring the message to the entire community through partnering with the district women's groups.

24. The Chairman was pleased to note the pro-active initiatives of the three Commissions in helping to take forward the “Sharing family responsibilities in love and filial piety” campaign. He invited the Commissions to keep up their efforts.

(Action: the three Commissions)

**Item 7 – Progress of Work of the Sub-committees under the Family Council (Paper FC 16/2011)**

25. Members noted the progress of work of the three Sub-committees.

**Item 8 – Any Other Business**

26. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m. The next meeting would be held on 9 February 2012 (Thursday) at 3:00 p.m.

**Family Council Secretariat  
October 2011**