

**Motion on  
“Utilizing young people’s power of civic participation”  
at the Legislative Council meeting commencing  
on Wednesday, 7 July 2010**

**Progress Report**

**Purpose**

At the Legislative Council meeting on 7 July 2010, the motion on “Utilizing young people’s power of civic participation” moved by Hon Samson Tam Wai-ho was passed. The wording of the motion is at Annex.

2. This paper briefs Members on the work progress of the above motion.

**Encourage young people’s civic participation**

3. Young people are an important force for the long-term development of our society. It has always been our objective to encourage young people to actively participate in community affairs, equip themselves for contributing to the society and fulfill civic duties.

4. The Administration encourages public engagement and actively listens to views from people of all social strata, including youth. We agree to increase young people’s opportunities to participate in social affairs so as to enable them to actively participate in social development.

5. In particular, the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) in conjunction with the Commission On Youth (COY) have organised several Youth Exchange Sessions and invited government officials to share views with youth on various issues, including football development in Hong Kong, non-means-tested loans, green living, subsidising home ownership, Should Hong Kong bid to host 2023 Asian Games and Hong Kong’s Climate Change Strategy and Action Agenda. The feedbacks of previous sessions are positive and the participants agreed that the sessions help to enhance communication between youth and the Government.

6. In collaboration with the COY, HAB will continue to promote communication with young people regularly by engaging them through channels such as the Youth Summit or the Youth Exchange Session, thus

encouraging young people to air their views on matters of their concern and providing a channel for direct dialogue with government officials.

## **Access to Government Information**

7. As an open and accountable Government, we are committed to making available to the public as much government information as possible. To this effect, the Government has implemented the Code on Access to Information (the Code) in the whole Government since December 1996. Each bureau/department should appoint its own Access to Information Officer (AIO) to deal with information requests. The present arrangement also provides a review mechanism and a complaint channel through The Ombudsman.

8. Since the implementation of the Code in 1995, 98% of the requests for information have been met in full or in part, demonstrating that the Code provides an effective framework to provide access for members of the public to a wide range of information held by the Government. 2% of the requests have been refused and they were based on the reasons<sup>1</sup> stated under the Code. Generally speaking, the current administrative arrangement achieves the purpose of providing access for members of the public to government information.

9. The Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau (CMAB) has stepped up efforts in promoting the Code within the Administration. In 2010, the CMAB has organised more training for AIOs and issued an updated the General Circular on the Code to bureaux/departments in order to facilitate the AIOs in discharging their duties. The CMAB has also stepped up monitoring of compliance of the Code by requesting bureaux/departments to provide in the quarterly returns more detailed information to show whether sufficient explanation for not disclosing the requesting information in full or in part was given.

10. On publicity, the Administration will continue to broadcast the announcements in the public interest through various means, such as television, radio and the Internet, buses and railways. It will also place

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<sup>1</sup> The Code authorises and requires bureaux/departments (B/Ds) to provide the public with information requested unless there are valid reasons to withhold disclosure under specific provisions in the Code, such as those concerning defence and security; law enforcement, legal proceedings and public safety; management and operation of the public service; third party information and privacy of the individual.

advertisements at railway stations and put up posters in various government premises and public venues. To enhance publicity, all bureaux/departments have included in their websites a brief introduction on the Code and a hyperlink to the Government webpage on the Code.

11. Moreover, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) is embarking on a Public Sector Information (PSI) pilot scheme to allow free download and re-use of geospatial data and the traffic-related data to bring more convenient service for the public. This pilot scheme will be launched within 2010-11.

### **Using the Internet wisely**

12. The Administration will continue to use Web 2.0 tools to engage and communicate with youth and other members of the public. Recent examples include the Facebook Page set up by the Transport and Housing Bureau to consult the public on subsidizing home ownership and the Facebook Page set up by the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau to consult the public on proposals to enhance protection for consumers against unfair trade practices. Recently, the Chief Executive's Office set up the "Upper Albert Road" Facebook page to keep in touch with the public.

13. The OGCIO also continues to promote an ethical Internet culture and behavior among the youth through the Internet education campaign launched in September 2009. The campaign will last until the autumn of 2010. Activities such as large-scale promotion events, roving exhibitions and training, school talks, inter-school activities, telephone hotline support, home visits to provide technical assistance and family counselling service are being organised to promote safe and healthy use of the Internet.

14. All along, the Education Bureau (EDB) promotes students' whole-person development and proper use of information technology through a holistic school curriculum. EDB will continue to keep abreast of the social development to review and update the school curriculum, so as to fulfill the expectations from the society and to meet the needs of the students. For example, a new subject Life and Society will be introduced in the junior secondary level in 2012. Discussions on the topics related to the social implications as well as the ethical and social issues on the use of the Internet will be strengthened in this subject. Besides, EDB will continue to provide professional development

programmes for school principals and teachers to support them in helping their students to uphold positive values when handling issues relating to information technology, so as to achieve the goals of enhancing the quality of the network citizens and establishing a harmonious society. In this respect, two workshops for primary and secondary teachers regarding guidance to students on safe and proper use of the Internet had been organised by EDB in June 2010.

15. The Administration has attached great importance to engage the public including youngsters. We will continue to listen to views from people of all social strata in a modest and open-minded manner.

Home Affairs Bureau  
Constitution and Mainland Affairs Bureau  
Education Bureau  
Office of the Government Chief Information Officer  
November 2010

**Motion on  
“Utilizing young people’s power of civic participation”  
moved by Dr Hon Samson TAM Wai-ho  
at the Legislative Council meeting commencing on  
Wednesday, 7 July 2010**

**Wording of the Motion**

That in recent years, with the development of a knowledge-based society and dawning of the network era, the attitude of young people in Hong Kong towards the discussion of social issues has become increasingly active, and they have gradually become one of the major political commentary groups in society, and the ways of expression and actions of some of these young people have aroused extensive discussions and concerns in the community; some members of the public consider that the Government’s lack of effective internal and external communication of information, as well as the obvious inadequacies in its existing consultative framework has affected the formulation of public policies; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to make reference to the relevant experience of other countries or regions to formulate overall objectives and strategies, and allocate sufficient resources to enhance young people’s civic participation, as well as:

- (a) to formulate a clear public sector information access policy to make public government information and documents, so that members of the public have the right of access to or commenting on them;
- (b) to make use of the Web 2.0 interactive platform to enhance direct communication between policy-making government officials and young people, so as to listen to the views of young people;
- (c) government officials should change their mentality and mind to bravely deal with interactive communications and accept criticism; and
- (d) starting from education and social culture, to allocate resources to enhance the quality of the network citizens, and to promote a way of communication based on reasons, mutual trust and mutual respect, thereby bringing together social wisdom effectively.