

**For discussion on
24 October 2017**

Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services

2017 Policy Address

Policy Initiatives of the Home Affairs Bureau

INTRODUCTION

This paper briefs Members on the policy initiatives in respect of the Family Council (the Council), the Community Care Fund (CCF) and social enterprises (SEs) in the Chief Executive's Policy Address and Policy Agenda.

OUR VISION

2. Cherishing the family is a core value of our society. We would strive to collaborate with various sectors in the community to foster a pro-family environment. CCF will also take account of the needs of different groups and launch more assistance programmes to support the underprivileged and low-income families. As for the development of SEs, the Government would continue to support the diversified and sustainable development of SEs along the principle of "community-driven, government support".

Family Council

Family perspectives in policy formulation

3. With effect from 1 April 2013, a mandatory assessment of family implications has been introduced for all policies. Bureaux and departments (B/Ds) are required to use the three sets of family core values (i.e. "Love and Care", "Respect and Responsibilities" and "Communication and Harmony") as identified by the Family Council (the Council), as well as the impact on family's structure and functions, as the basis for assessing the impact of the relevant policies on families. They are also encouraged to consult the Council on policies which may

affect families.

4. We have been working with the Council to ensure that family perspectives are duly considered in the policy making process. The consultancy study on Family Impact Assessment commissioned by the Council through the Central Policy Unit in mid 2016 will be completed by the end of 2017. A more elaborated checklist will be introduced as the basis for assessing the impact of public policies on families upon completion of the study.

Advocacy for cherishing the family

5. The Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) and the Council will continue to collaborate with various stakeholders to organise programmes and activities relating to the promotion of family core values to foster a pro-family culture.

6. The 2016/17 “Family-Friendly Employers Award Scheme” will be launched in December 2017 for enrolments from January to March 2018. Riding on the success of the previous three rounds of award scheme, we will introduce a new category of “Family-friendly Employers - Grand Award” to give recognition to companies and organisations which consistently receive “Distinguished Family-friendly Employers” awards as well as a new “Outstanding Family-Friendly Employment Practice” Award for those that have adopted exceptionally meritorious family-friendly practices to support their employees.

7. The two-year Pilot Scheme on Thematic Sponsorship to Support Family-related Initiatives (Pilot Scheme) launched in March 2016 provides one-off sponsorship to support non-profit making and worthwhile family-related initiatives under specific themes. The themes for 2016-17 are “parent education” and “divorce education”. Four projects with a total sponsorship of about \$3 million were approved and are expected to be completed by mid-2018. For the 2017-18 Pilot Scheme, so far two projects were approved under the themes of “Parent Education – Parenting Stress” and “Step and Split Families” and a second round of applications are being invited. We will conduct an interim review of the Pilot Scheme in the second half of 2018.

Family-related research work

8. To foster a better understanding of the issues relating to the family, the Council has been engaging tertiary institutions or research organisations to conduct researches and surveys. Apart from the study on “Family Impact Assessment” as mentioned in paragraph 4 above, the following survey and researches are now underway –

- (a) Family Studies in Hong Kong : A Summary Analysis and Annotated Bibliography – to identify the existing research gap and build up a more comprehensive database of family-related studies; and
- (b) Family Survey 2017 – to collect updated and empirical information on families of Hong Kong.

9. The Council also plans to commission a Further Study on the Phenomenon of Divorce in Hong Kong so as to gather more quantitative and qualitative data to examine various issues relating to marriage and divorce. The findings of the above studies/survey, when available, will be shared with relevant B/Ds to facilitate their formulation of policies and strategies for supporting and strengthening the family.

Community Care Fund

10. Since its establishment in 2011, the CCF has launched 44 assistance programmes, involving a total commitment of around \$8.4 billion, to identify those who cannot benefit from the existing social safety net or the Government’s short-term relief measures and to provide them with assistance. Rolled-out programmes have offered benefits for over 1.5 million cases. In addition, the CCF may consider implementing measures on a pilot basis to help the Government identify those initiatives that have been proven effective for incorporation into the regular assistance programmes. So far, the Government has incorporated 12 programmes under the CCF into its regular assistance programmes and plans to incorporate the Dementia Community Support Scheme into its regular assistance programmes after the pilot period.

11. The CCF Task Force will continue to draw up new programmes in collaboration with other Task Forces under the Commission on

Poverty to assist more people-in-need. The Policy Address mentioned that the Government would invite the CCF to consider providing subsidy to needy primary and secondary students for purchasing tablet computers to facilitate the practice of e-learning.

Social Enterprise

12. The Government is committed to promoting the development of SEs and the sector has been growing steadily. Currently, there are about 610 SEs in Hong Kong, and the scope of services provided and service target have become more diversified. The number of SE platforms and supporting organisations is also growing and there are now over 30 of them.

13. HAB will keep supporting the continuous development of SEs through various means including the provision of start-up funds and strengthening support platforms to promote cross-sector collaboration and build up the capacity of SEs. The work is set out in paragraph 14 to 17 of the paper.

(a) Providing funding support for individual SEs

14. The Enhancing Self-Reliance Through District Partnership Programme (the ESR Programme) provides grants to eligible organisations for setting up SEs targeting at the socially disadvantaged to enhance their self-reliance and integration into the community. Since its launch in 2006, it has approved grants of around \$260 million for 205 SEs projects. About 5 000 persons have been directly employed by the funded SEs and about 80% of those employed were socially disadvantaged. Also, around 80% of the SEs remains in operation after completion of the funding period. The Home Affairs Department (HAD) will continue to implement the ESR Programme to encourage establishment and business expansion of SEs.

(b) Supporting capacity building of SEs

15. Since 2008, HAB has been providing funding support to the Center for Entrepreneurship of the Chinese University of Hong Kong for the organisation of the “Hong Kong Social Enterprise Challenge”, a SE business plan writing competition for tertiary students with provision

of relevant training. So far, more than 6 700 students have participated in the programme. Of the 58 grand finalists, 27 have established their own SEs which are in active operation. We will continue to support the programme this year to nurture the new SEs and young social entrepreneurs.

(c) Enhancing public awareness and support of SEs

16. HAB promotes the social benefits of SEs through a wide range of channels with the view to enhancing the public's recognition of SEs and encourage them to support SEs. For example, HAB organises the "Social Enterprise Award Scheme" this year to recognise local SEs with outstanding performance, and also commend the efforts of individuals and organisations in supporting SEs. Apart from having the organisers to assess and select outstanding SEs, there is a new award titled "The Most Popular SE" this year. Members of the public may cast their vote for their favourite SE on a designated website and they may learn more about SEs during the voting process. We will continue to identify suitable opportunities for enhancing the publicity work.

(d) Promoting cross-sectoral collaboration for SE development

17. Since 2008, HAB has been providing funding support to the industry for the organisation of the Social Enterprise Summit (the SE Summit) to facilitate cross-sectoral collaboration for SE development. To step up the efforts in promoting SEs at the district level, the SE Summit in 2017 will organise community forums, tours and bazaars in six districts (including Central and Western District, Southern District, Wong Tai Sin District, Sham Shui Po District, Tuen Mun District and Yuen Long District). Leaders from the business and SE sectors in each district join hands with the local community bodies to set up exchange platform for SEs, with a view to promoting the concept and spirit of SEs and social innovation.

ADVICE SOUGHT

18. Members are invited to note the initiatives in respect of the the Council, CCF and SEs as set out above.

Home Affairs Bureau
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