

**For discussion on
11 June 2018**

Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services

Work Progress of the Family Council

PURPOSE

This paper briefs Members on the work progress of the Family Council (the Council) since our last briefing at the Panel meeting held in June 2016.

BACKGROUND

2. Established in December 2007, the Council has been serving as a cross-sector and cross-bureau platform for examining family-related policies and promoting a culture of loving families in the community. It was reconstituted under a non-official Chairman with effect from 1 April 2013 with a view to strengthening its advisory role. Chaired by Professor Daniel SHEK, the Council currently comprises 15 non-official members from different backgrounds (including academia, legal, business, education, social welfare and community service), three ex-officio members (namely Chairpersons of Elderly Commission and Women's Commission as well as the Vice-Chairman of the Youth Development Commission) and four Government representatives (namely Secretary for Home Affairs, Secretary for Education, Secretary for Labour and Welfare, and Head of the Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office (PICO)). The current membership of the Council is at **Annex A**.

3. Members were briefed on the work progress of the Council at the Panel meeting on 13 June 2016. Since then, the Council has continued to collaborate with various sectors in the community to enhance the functions of families and create a pro-family environment.

PROGRESS OF WORK

4. The work of the Council mainly includes the following three aspects –
 - (a) advising Government bureaux and departments (B/Ds) on the application of family perspectives in the policy formulation process;
 - (b) advocating cherishing the family and promoting family core values as a main driver for social harmony through organising various programmes and activities; and
 - (c) conducting researches and surveys to foster a better understanding of the issues relating to the family.

Details of the Council’s major deliverables and work in the pipeline are set out in the ensuing paragraphs.

Family perspectives in policy formulation

5. With effect from 1 April 2013, a mandatory assessment of family implications has been introduced for all policies. 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 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. Since then, family impact assessment (FIA) has become an integral part of the policy making process within the Government. During the two-year period from May 2016 to May 2018, FIA was conducted for over 190 policy measures and programmes.

6. As part of the public consultation process, B/Ds are also encouraged to consult the Council on policies which may affect families. The Council was briefed and consulted on a number of family-related subjects, including child and elderly care, children and youth development, working hours policies, town planning policies, etc. A list of subjects on which the Council’s advice was sought during the period from June 2016 to May 2018 is at **Annex B**.

7. To further enhance the FIA system, the Council commissioned, through the then Central Policy Unit, a consulting team to conduct a study to evaluate the effectiveness of the FIA framework and develop a checklist tool as the basis for

assessing the impact of public policies on families. The consulting team developed and put into trial run a draft FIA checklist comprising 24 questions under six principles¹. According to the user feedbacks collected during the trial run, the checklist tool was useful in introducing an explicit family perspective to the policy-making process, providing a clear step-by-step framework for assessing family impact, and helping B/Ds to anticipate both intended and unintended effects of public policies on families. With the support of the Council, the Government has been adopting the refined FIA checklist as the basis for assessing family implications for public policies.

Advocacy for cherishing the family

8. Since its establishment, the Council has been collaborating with various stakeholders to organise programmes and activities relating to the promotion of family core values with a view to reaching out to different sectors of the community and benefitting the whole community in general. A list of programmes and activities organised or co-organised by the Council in 2016-17 and 2017-18 is at **Annex C**. Some major programmes are highlighted below.

2017/18 Family-Friendly Employers Award Scheme

9. The Council has been playing an active role in promoting wider adoption of family-friendly employment policies and practices (FFEPPs) in the community. Since 2011, the Council has launched “Family-Friendly Employers Award Scheme” (Award Scheme) on a biennial basis to give recognition to companies and organisations which attach importance to family-friendly spirit and encourage them to implement more diversified FFEPPs. The number of applications received for the previous Award Schemes showed an encouraging rising trend from 1 112 applications in 2011 to 1 814 in 2013/14, and 2 739 in 2015/16. The Council produced in 2017 a series of 12 videos showcasing a selection of innovative or impressive FFEPPs adopted by the awardees of the 2015/16 Award Scheme. The videos were uploaded onto the internet including social media and were shown during experience sharing sessions organised for employers and human resources practitioners in various sectors.

¹ The six principles are supporting the functions of families; strengthening family integrity and stability; promoting family harmony and balance between work and family; connecting families to the wider kin and community networks; encouraging families to participate in policy development, programme planning and evaluation; and supporting the vulnerable families.

10. The 2017/18 Award Scheme, launched on 3 December 2017, is featured with newly added award items of “Family-Friendly Employers – Grand Award” and “Outstanding Family-Friendly Employment Practices” to promote and encourage the adoption of more diversified and flexible FFEPPs. It was well received with a record high entries of over 3 530. Adjudication is underway and the award presentation ceremony will be held at a local theme park in December 2018 with distribution of complimentary admission tickets to a chartered event on the same day to awardees’ employees and family members.

Pilot Scheme on Thematic Sponsorship to Support Family-related Initiatives

11. With the aim of creating a pro-family environment, HAB and the Council launched a two-year Pilot Scheme on Thematic Sponsorship to Support Family-related Initiatives (Pilot Scheme) in March 2016. The Pilot Scheme provides one-off sponsorship to support non-profit making and worthwhile family-related initiatives which are able to meet the objectives of raising community awareness of family core values and the importance of families; creating and promoting a pro-family environment; and promoting family well-being. A total of \$6 million (i.e. \$3 million per year) was earmarked for the Pilot Scheme.

12. The 2016-17 Pilot Scheme was launched in March 2016 with two themes, namely “Parent Education” and “Divorce Education”, and a total of four applications were approved with a committed funding of \$2.97 million. These projects were completed in April 2018. For the 2017-18 Pilot Scheme, there were three selected themes, namely “ “Parent Education – Parenting Stress”, “Step and Split Families” and “Support for Carers”. A total of four projects were approved with a committed funding of \$3.27 million. These projects will be completed by April 2019. Upon receipt of the final reports from the organisers of the four approved projects in the 2016-17 Pilot Scheme, the Council will conduct an interim review of the Pilot Scheme in the third quarter of 2018.

Other publicity programmes and activities

13. In summer 2017, a snapshot competition entitled “Happy Moments of Family” (「一家心照」) Snapshot Competition was launched to mark the 10th

anniversary of the Council and promote inter-generational communication and extended family support. A total of 3 020 entries were received and the prize presentation ceremony was successfully held in December 2017.

14. In addition, the Council has been collaborating with the Radio Television Hong Kong to organise territory-wide publicity programmes in the past few years to promote family core values in the community. The themes for publicity campaign in 2017-18 and 2018-19 are “「家・多一點愛 – 同心一家親」” and “「家・多一點愛 – 在乎你」” respectively. The campaigns comprise a variety of programmes, including large-scale publicity events, radio programmes, video clips and family activity workshops, to encourage communication among family members and extended family support.

15. In February 2017, the Council launched a pre-marital family education package which aimed at inculcating a positive attitude towards marriage and family at an early stage. The education package was uploaded onto the Council’s website “Happy Info Hub” and broadcast on public transport and relevant venues such as the Integrated Family Services Centres under Social Welfare Department (SWD). In 2018-19, the Council will produce a new family education package on the family core value of “communication and harmony” that will cover communication problems encountered in different family relationships.

16. Furthermore, the Council collaborates with the Consortium of Institutes on Family in the Asian Region², the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Hong Kong, the SWD and the Hong Kong Council of Social Service to organise the Asian Family Summit (the AFS) in Hong Kong from 19 to 22 August 2018. The AFS will provide a regional platform for the public, private, academic and professional sectors to share knowledge and experience to further advance the well-being of families in the Asian region. Guest speakers and participants of the AFS will come from different economies in the Asia-Pacific region, including the Mainland China, Republic of Korea, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines etc.

² The CIFA is an independent non-profit making organisation inaugurated in 2008. It aims at serving as a regional platform for networking and collaboration among organisations and professionals who share the mission of “Converging Professional Wisdom for Family Well-Being”. Its function is to support and enhance mutual interest in research and training initiatives as well as to share clinical experiences and policy formulation on families that are unique to the Asian Region.

Family-related research work

17. To foster a better understanding of the issues relating to family, the Council has been engaging tertiary institutions or research organisations to conduct researches and surveys. The following survey and researches are in the pipeline and are expected to be completed within 2018 –

- (a) Family Survey 2017 – Following the completion of the Family Surveys in 2011, 2013 and 2015³, the Council decided to carry out similar surveys on a biennial basis to keep track of the changes and development of Hong Kong families in terms of family structures, attitudes and values, etc. Family Survey 2017 was commissioned to collect updated and empirical information on families in Hong Kong, covering topics such as the importance of family, parenthood, family functioning, satisfaction with family life, work-family balance, availability of social support network, awareness of and participation in family-related programmes.
- (b) A Study on Family Research in Hong Kong: A Critical Review and Annotated Bibliography (Bibliography Study) – In view of the lack of a repository or bibliographic database to record all major Hong Kong family studies and information systematically, the Council decided to conduct a study to build up a more comprehensive database of family-related studies and to identify the existing research gap.

18. In addition, the Council will commission a consultant to conduct a “Further Study in the Phenomenon of Divorce in Hong Kong”⁴ with a view to –

- (a) updating the demographic and socioeconomic landscape of divorce in Hong Kong including further examining the correlation between marriage age and divorce rate, the divorce rate of cross-boundary marriage and more background information of divorced families, including step and split families arising from divorce and remarriage;

³ The reports of Family Survey 2011, 2013 and 2015 have been uploaded onto the Council’s website (www.familycouncil.gov.hk) for public information.

⁴ The Council completed a “Study on the Phenomenon of Divorce in Hong Kong” in 2014 which aimed to identify the demographic and socioeconomic patterns, trend of divorce, the risk and protective factors, impacts of divorce as well as the needs of divorced families in Hong Kong. Members were briefed on the study findings at the Panel meeting in June 2014.

- (b) reviewing the existing systems of collection of maintenance payments and enforcement of maintenance orders, and collecting maintenance-related statistics and information in Hong Kong; and
- (c) examining the effectiveness of judgment summons proceedings in recovering default maintenance payments and identifying viable improvement measures that are in compliance with Articles 10 and 11 of the Hong Kong Bill of Rights Ordinance.

The study is expected to be completed in 18 months by the end of 2019.

19. The findings of all surveys and researches will be shared with relevant B/Ds when available to facilitate their formulation of policies and strategies for supporting and strengthening families. The reports will also be uploaded onto the Council's website for public information. The Council will, upon completion of the Bibliography Study, identify the existing research gap and commission further family-related studies where appropriate. In parallel, the PICO will continue to include family-related issues in the scope of study topics of its Public Policy Research Funding Scheme⁵.

WAY FORWARD

20. The Council firmly believes that family is the cornerstone of social harmony and the basic unit for community building. As family-related subjects straddle the policy areas of different B/Ds, the role of the Council is to provide a cross-sector and cross-bureau platform to examine family-related issues and advise the Government from an integrated and holistic perspective. The Council will continue to adopt a multi-pronged approach and collaborate with relevant stakeholders to carry out its functions.

⁵ The Public Policy Research Funding Scheme administered by PICO has a recurrent funding of \$30 million to support researches on public policy under various categories. At the request of the Council, family-related issues have been included in the scope of the Scheme from 2016-17 onwards.

ADVICE SOUGHT

21. Members are invited to note the work progress of the Family Council.

**Home Affairs Bureau
June 2018**

Membership List of the Family Council

Chairman

Prof. SHEK Tan-lei, Daniel

Ex-officio Members

Dr LAM Ching-choi, Chairperson of the Elderly Commission

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

Mr LAU Ming-wai, Vice-Chairman, Youth Development Commission

Non-official Members

Ms CHAN Suk-mei, May

Ms CHENG Chi-man, Sonia

Ms CHEUNG Lai-chu

Mrs CHU YEUNG Pak-yu, Patricia

Prof. LAM Tai-hing

Mr LEE Luen-fai

Mr LEE Tsz-king, Dominic

Prof. LEUNG Seung-ming, Alvin

Miss TANG Pui-yee, Phoebe

Dr TSUI Luen-on, Gordon

Mrs WONG NG Kit-wah, Cecilia

Miss WONG Siu-ling, Gabriella

Mr WOO Kin-man, Clement

Ms YIP Lai-wa, Emily

Ms YIP Yun-wan, Amarantha

Official Members

Secretary for Home Affairs or his representative

Secretary for Labour and Welfare or his representative

Secretary for Education or his representative

Head of the Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office or his representative

Secretary

Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs (Civic Affairs) 2

**List of subjects on which
the Family Council and its sub-committees were consulted
from 1 June 2016 to 31 May 2018**

No.	Subject	Bureaux/departments/bodies
1.	Final Report of the Committee on Prevention of Student Suicides	Committee on Prevention of Student Suicides
2.	Youth Development Work	Commission on Youth
3.	Youth Development Strategy for Hong Kong: Public Engagement Report	Commission on Youth
4.	Proposed Arrangement with the Mainland on Reciprocal Recognition and Enforcement of Judgments on Matrimonial and Related Matters	Department of Justice
5.	Public Consultation on Gender Recognition	Department of Justice
6.	Promotion of Active Ageing and Building of Age-friendly Community	Elderly Commission
7.	Are Families Given Equal Opportunities? Equal Opportunities Commission's Way Forward	Equal Opportunities Commission
8.	Findings and recommendations of the Family Focus Group of the Committee on Prevention of Student Suicides	Family Focus Group of the Committee on Prevention of Student Suicides
9.	Pilot Schemes on Mental Health Services	Food and Health Bureau
10.	2017 Policy Address - Family-Related Policy Initiatives of The Labour and Welfare Bureau	Labour and Welfare Bureau
11.	Progress of the Pilot Scheme on On-Site Pre-school Rehabilitation Services	Labour and Welfare Bureau
12.	Elderly Services Programme Plan	Labour and Welfare Bureau
13.	Establishment of a Commission on Children	Labour and Welfare Bureau

No.	Subject	Bureaux/departments/bodies
14.	Draft Code of Practice for Employment Agencies	Labour Department
15.	Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy Transcending 2030	Planning Department

**Programmes and Activities
Organised or Co-organised by the Family Council
in 2016-17 and 2017-18**

Year	Programmes/Activities	Co-organiser(s)
2016-17	(a) Territory-wide publicity programmes on promotion of family core values including “「家・多一點愛 – 順逆齊擔起，攜手返屋企」推廣運動”	Radio Television Hong Kong
	(b) Publicity campaign “Ready for Love” on promotion of positive messages and values on family formation including production of pre-marital family education package, radio programmes and various publicity programmes for engaged couples	Hong Kong Catholic Advisory Council and Radio Television Hong Kong
	(c) Providing funds to uniformed groups ¹ (UGs) for organising family-related programmes including carnivals, parent-child sports day, adventure-based training camps, orienteering, volunteer service, sharing sessions, etc.	UGs
	(d) Pilot Scheme on Thematic Sponsorship to support non-profit making and worthwhile family-related initiatives. The themes for 2016-17 are “Parent Education” and “Divorce Education”. Applications from four organisations were approved with a total committed funding of \$2.97 million. These projects were completed in April 2018.	-
2017-18	(a) Territory-wide publicity programmes on promotion of family core values including “「家・多一點愛 – 同心一家親」推廣運動”	Radio Television Hong Kong
	(b) “2017/18 Family-friendly Employers Award Scheme” ² to continue to give recognition to employers who attach importance to the spirit of family-friendliness and to raise awareness in the business sector of the importance of family core values. A series of twelve short videos featuring family-friendly employment policies and practices	-

¹ The UGs include the Scout Association of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Girl Guides Association, Hong Kong Air Cadet Corps, Hong Kong Sea Cadet Corps, Hong Kong Adventure Corps, Hong Kong Red Cross, Hong Kong St John Ambulance, Boys’ Brigade Hong Kong, Girls’ Brigade Hong Kong, Hong Kong Road Safety Association and Association of Hong Kong Flag-guards.

² The “2017/18 Family-friendly Employers Award Scheme” was launched in December 2017 with over 3 530 employers enrolled for the Award Scheme. Upon the completion of adjudication, the results will be announced in the last quarter of 2018.

Year	Programmes/Activities	Co-organiser(s)
	were produced to cultivate family-friendly culture in the community	
	(c) “Happy Moments of Family” Snapshot Competition to mark the 10th anniversary of the Council and promote inter-generational communication and extended family support	-
	(d) Co-organising the Exchange Programme on “Wofoo Asian Award for Advancing Family Well-being 2016” in collaboration with the Consortium of Institutes on Family in the Asian Region (CIFA)	CIFA
	(e) Providing funds to UGs for organising family-related programmes including parent-child water sports day, adventure-based training camps, sharing sessions, handicraft interest classes, dance and musical performance, etc.	UGs
	(f) Pilot Scheme on Thematic Sponsorship to support non-profit making and worthwhile family-related initiatives. The themes for 2017-18 are “Parent Education – Parenting Stress”, “Step and Split Families” and “Support for Carers”. Four projects, scheduled for completion in April 2019, were approved with a total committed funding of \$3.27 million.	-