

**For discussion  
on 11 May 2021**

**LegCo Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene  
Subcommittee to Study Issues Relating to Animal Rights**

**Publicity and public education for promoting animal welfare and  
responsible pet ownership**

**PURPOSE**

This paper briefs Members of the Subcommittee on the publicity and education work in promoting animal welfare and responsible pet ownership.

**BACKGROUND**

2. The Government attaches great importance to animal welfare, with a policy objective to ensure that animals and people co-exist harmoniously in Hong Kong. Public education is an important part of our work. As pointed out by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), the promotion of responsible pet ownership can significantly reduce the number of stray dogs and the incidence of zoonotic diseases. In order to disseminate messages on caring for animals and responsible pet ownership etc, the Government adopts a multi-pronged approach to take forward the publicity work, through public education and publicity events, promotional videos and advertisements in various media, and school education.

**CURRENT MEASURES**

*Public Education and Publicity Events*

3. Since 2010, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has set up a dedicated team to implement public education and publicity programmes, actively promulgating that keeping an animal should be a lifelong commitment, promoting pet adoption, educating the public on how to be responsible pet owners and reminding the public to consider all factors before keeping a pet, such as household

environment, cost of keeping a pet and time needed to take care of a pet etc.

4. AFCD organises a range of activities every year, such as pet adoption events, dog training courses, school / housing estate talks and roving exhibitions around Hong Kong. The department also collaborates with other government departments on conducting publicity work, such as organising roving exhibitions at pet gardens under the Leisure and Cultural Services Department and other venues to promote proper control of dogs. There were over 16 000 participants at adoption day events organised by AFCD in 2018-19 and 2019-20 respectively and in both years, over 12 000 participants took part in school / housing estate talks<sup>1</sup>. AFCD produced 40 educational leaflets, posters, souvenirs, dog care guides and banners for distribution and display at various places.

5. In addition, animal welfare organisations (AWO) play an important role in promoting animal welfare. Apart from co-organising public events with AWOs, AFCD provides financial assistance through a funding scheme to support eligible organisations in undertaking various projects and educational activities that enhance animal management and promote animal welfare.

6. The Police Force has been working in partnership with AFCD, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and veterinary associations since the launch of the Animal Watch Scheme in 2011. The scheme combats animal cruelty cases through a four-pronged approach covering education, publicity, intelligence gathering and investigation. The Police also proactively organises a variety of publicity and education events, including partnering and co-organising events with stakeholders of animal welfare, conducting school visits, making timely case appeals and disseminating information of arrest and conviction etc.

### *Promotional Videos and Advertisements*

7. To enhance and promote messages on caring for animals and responsible pet ownership, AFCD produces and disseminates educational videos on animal welfare and television Announcements in the Public Interest (APIs) via a number of platforms (including the “Animal Management Channel” established by AFCD on the video-sharing platform YouTube, private housing estates, AFCD’s website, in-train television in MTR carriages and online advertisements through popular

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<sup>1</sup> Due to COVID-19, the scale of such events were significantly adjusted in 2020-21.

local streaming services). Furthermore, AFCD invited well-known animal lovers to produce these videos, contents of which include messages on caring for animals, responsible pet ownership and prevention of animal cruelty etc, as well as educating the public on proper care and management of their pets. Furthermore, to assist domestic helpers looking after dogs, AFCD produced an educational DVD in six languages (Cantonese, Putonghua, English, Tagalog, Thai and Bahasa Indonesia) and distributed it to domestic helper agencies in Hong Kong, to advise domestic helpers on things to note when walking dogs in public places.

8. To enhance the public's knowledge of pet keeping and provide information on animal-related commercial activities, AFCD set up a dedicated website on pet keeping and animal management ([www.pets.gov.hk](http://www.pets.gov.hk)). In addition to useful tips on caring for different animals, the website provides booking forms of AFCD educational seminars, interactive games related to animal welfare and management, and information on licensed pet shops, licensed boarding establishments and veterinary clinics etc. AFCD also publishes social media posts to promote messages on proper care of animals.

### *School Education*

9. The Education Bureau (EDB) has all along attached great importance to nurturing students' positive values and attitudes, and strives to support values education (including life education) in schools, so as to provide students with holistic learning experiences and foster their whole-person development. Learning contents related to life education, such as understanding, cherishing, respecting and exploring life, have already been incorporated into the curricula of kindergarten (KG), primary and secondary levels (the topic of animal protection is also covered) to cultivate positive values and attitudes, such as care for others and responsibility, among children and students.

10. On the curriculum front, "To respect, appreciate and care for nature" is one of the learning objectives of the learning area "Nature and Living" in the KG curriculum. Through daily learning activities and life-related themes, kindergartens guide children to care for and appreciate the beauty of nature, and to love animals and plants. Primary students learn to care for animals in General Studies, and develop relevant positive values and attitudes through different modules and units (e.g. "Keeping pets", "Respect for life") in English Language. Secondary students learn about how humans live in harmony with animals and show respect for all living

things and the environment in Science at the junior secondary level and Biology at the senior secondary level; explore the significance of co-existence between humans and animals in Ethics and Religious Studies at the senior secondary level; and learn about animal welfare and related regulations in the Applied Learning course “Animal Care” at the senior secondary level. Moreover, the moral and civic education curriculum for the primary and secondary levels also covers the priority values and attitudes, such as care for others, empathy, law-abidingness, respect for others and responsibility. At the same time, EDB encourages schools to identify themes relevant to students’ development and everyday life, and adopt a variety of approaches, such as morning assemblies, personal growth/life education lessons and life-wide learning activities (including visits and talks), to deepen students’ understanding of the relevant topics and encourage them to actively explore and consider the preciousness of life, thereby developing positive values and attitudes, as well as learning how to respect life and care for animals.

11. As regards teacher training, EDB organised a series of teachers’ professional development programmes with the theme “Love, Care and Respect”, which includes a virtual tour of the Homing Department of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and sharings with different animal-related organisations (such as the Hong Kong Animal Assisted Therapy Association, Hong Kong Guide Dogs Association) etc, to equip teachers with professional knowledge and skills in respect of animal welfare and life education, and support schools in organising diversified life-wide learning activities with the effective use of community resources to promote related positive values and attitudes among students.

## **NEW MEASURES AND WAY FORWARD**

12. In future, AFCD will step up efforts on public education and publicity events and the major new measures are as follows –

- (a) AFCD and EDB are each producing teaching resources related to animal welfare and responsible pet ownership, uploaded to AFCD’s dedicated website ([www.pets.gov.hk](http://www.pets.gov.hk)) mentioned above and EDB’s teaching resources webpage, providing teachers with teaching resources related to our daily lives;
- (b) AFCD has in recent years collaborated with Ocean Park for the

first time, providing seminars on responsible pet ownership and Quarantine Detector Dog demonstrations during their dog-themed events. AFCD will continue to liaise with Ocean Park and participate in such publicity and education work, striving to disseminate messages on caring for animals in an interactive and lively manner to visitors of Ocean Park, especially children;

- (c) In view that some pet owners may be affected by government development plans, AFCD plans to organise roving exhibitions at relevant locations, introducing AFCD's partnering AWOs that can assist residents in need of rehoming their pets, so as to reduce abandonment;
- (d) To further encourage animal adoption, AFCD plans to expand the scale of its adoption activities and increase the number of places of free dog training sessions provided to individuals who successfully adopt dogs through adoption events;
- (e) AFCD has invited a celebrity to produce the theme song "Let's Go Home" on the theme of caring for animals and film a music video for publicity, which will be released in the second quarter of 2021. The department has also planned a series of public education and publicity events for 2021-22, targeting different groups;
- (f) AFCD plans to enhance publicity at its facilities, such as adding publicity related to animal welfare to the Endangered Species Resource Centre located at Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices, to promote messages to visiting schools or members of public. More than 16 000 individuals visited the centre in 2019, many of whom primary and secondary students. Furthermore, the Animal Management and Welfare Complex in Kai Tak Development Area currently under construction will, for the first time, feature animal rehoming facilities that will be open to the public, library, classroom and exhibition facilities. These facilities can be used for publicity and public education, including publicity activities on rehoming services and learning about caring for the needs of different animals, enabling participants to see and handle animals first-hand;
- (g) AFCD plans to enhance promotion of messages on responsible pet ownership and animal welfare through veterinary clinics and

pet shops.

The latest public education and publicity event plan mentioned above is listed at **Annex**. Some of the events may need to be adjusted according to the COVID-19 pandemic situation.

13. Apart from the publicity and education events above, AFCD has recently assisted the Social Welfare Department to invite partnering AWOs to participate in the Community Service Order Scheme, under which an offender is required to perform unpaid community service work related to animal management. Through community service and guidance of a probation officer, the offender can make reparations to the community and reform himself. So far, two AWOs have already joined the scheme and offenders will conduct cleaning and refurbishing work for their premises.

14. Furthermore, the Police has been proactively taking forward the Animal Watchers Programme (AWP). The AWP Central Advisory Committee was established in 2020, comprising community leaders, representatives of AWOs, relevant academics and experts, etc. to provide professional advice and suggestions to the Police. The programme also recruited around 200 individuals as “AWP Captains” and “AWP Watchers”, for pooling together the efforts of animal lovers. Through planning and participating in various animal welfare-related publicity and education activities, participating Captains and Watches can disseminate messages on caring for animals and prevention of cruelty to animals to the community. The AWP Launching cum Award Presentation Ceremony was held by the Police in early 2021, signifying further steps to enhance efforts in organising publicity and public education activities<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Different themes for publicity and public education by the Police for each quarter in 2021 are “Guard and Start”, “Reaching the Community”, “Serving the Community” and “Communing with Nature”. Events already completed by the Police in the first quarter include the AWP Launching cum Award Presentation Ceremony, publication of Offbeat Special Edition and the Chinese New Year Slogan Competition. As for the second quarter, the Police has conducted the AWP Fight Poisoning Campaign, in which the Police has made use of social media platforms and mobilised AWP Captains and Watchers to visit popular pet sites across the territory, for publicising the message of preventing cruelty to animals, reminding dog owners on the points to note when taking their dogs out and encouraging the public to make timely reports etc.

## **ADVICE SOUGHT**

15. Members are invited to note and comment on the contents of this paper.

**Food and Health Bureau**  
**Education Bureau**  
**Security Bureau**  
**Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department**  
**Hong Kong Police Force**  
**May 2021**

**AFCD's public education and publicity event plan  
related to animal welfare for 2021-22\***

<b><u>Publicity Plan</u></b>	<b><u>Details</u></b>	<b><u>Timetable</u></b>
<b><u>Carnival and Events</u></b>		
Roving exhibition	Roving exhibitions at 18 Districts, with panels and game booths (may set up e-panels and Virtual Reality experience depending on operational feasibility)	In progress; to be conducted in various districts in different months
Pet Adoption Month – Pet Adoption Carnival	Adoption event at an outdoor venue, whilst disseminating messages on animal adoption via multiple channels throughout the month	Planned for December 2021
<b><u>Public Education</u></b>		
Seminars on responsible pet ownership		In progress
i. School seminar	For secondary, primary and kindergarten students	
ii. Others	For residents of housing estates and visitors of Ocean Park	
Education programme for domestic helpers and construction companies	1) To mail leaflets with the QR code of an educational video, titled "Do's and Don'ts for handling dogs in public places" to domestic helper agencies	In progress



<u>Publicity Plan</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Timetable</u>
	2) To mail Letter posters titled "Control Dogs on Construction Sites Properly" and leaflets titled "Code of Practice for Keeping Dogs on Construction Sites" to construction companies	
Dog training course	Each course consists of 1 theoretical session and 2 practical sessions	Planned to be resumed in third quarter of 2021 and held monthly as far as possible
Production of booklets about animal welfare for teachers	To produce a booklet about animal welfare for teachers to plan lessons	Planned for distribution to schools in mid-2022
APIs to promote responsible pet ownership	To broadcast "Keeping a pet is a lifetime decision" on TV and radio channels	Continue to broadcast on in-train TV of MTR, TV and radio channels
Inviting celebrity to produce the theme song "Let's Go Home" and film a music video	To promote messages on animal welfare and animal adoption	To be launched in various media in second quarter of 2021
Production of TV episode and radio programme	To promote responsible pet ownership, animal welfare and duty of care	Planned for fourth quarter of 2021 or 2022

<u>Publicity Plan</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Timetable</u>
<b><u>Advertisements on Public Transportation</u></b>		
i. Bus body advertisement	To promote themes related to responsible pet ownership and animal welfare	In progress
ii. Light bus body advertisement	To promote responsible pet ownership and animal welfare etc.	In progress
iii. Ferry pier advertisement	Themes include responsible pet ownership and animal welfare etc.	In progress
iv. Panel advertisement at bus stops	Themes include responsible pet ownership and animal welfare etc.	Planned for third quarter of 2021
v. Bus seat-back advertisement	Themes include responsible pet ownership and animal welfare etc.	Planned for fourth quarter of 2021 or 2022
vi. MTR promotion panel advertisement	To launch advertisement jointly with AWOs, promoting adoption of mongrels and adoption events  Phase I: 2 weeks during pet adoption month event Phase II: 2 weeks before the pet adoption event in mid-2022	Planned for fourth quarter of 2021 or 2022
vii. Advertisement at tram stops	Themes include responsible pet ownership and animal welfare etc.	Planned for fourth quarter of 2021 or 2022

<b><u>Publicity Plan</u></b>	<b><u>Details</u></b>	<b><u>Timetable</u></b>
viii. Advertisement on digital panels at MTR stations	Themes include responsible pet ownership and animal welfare etc.	Planned for fourth quarter of 2021 or 2022
<b><u>Others</u></b>		
Website advertisement to combat illegal animal trading and promote RPO	To launch advertisements on various social media platforms and online forums	In progress
Production and display of banners / posters at roadside railings, public piers and country parks	Banner production: 1) Dos and Don'ts for handling dogs in public places; and 2) Visitors & dogs enjoying the countryside together	In progress

\* Some events may need to be adjusted according to the COVID-19 pandemic situation