

**For discussion
on 17 July 2017**

Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs

Latest Progress of Youth Development Work

Purpose

This paper updates the Panel on Home Affairs on the latest progress of the Home Affairs Bureau's (HAB) work on youth development.

(I) Youth Development Policy

2. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government (the SAR Government) attaches great importance to youth development work. Over the past few years, we implemented a variety of new measures to foster a culture of multi-faceted excellence and provide opportunities of learning, training and personal development to young people with different aspirations and talents. To enable our young people to develop a positive attitude towards life and a commitment to serving the community, a number of bureaux have been implementing an array of youth development measures, covering education, employment and whole-person development. We hope that our young people, in the face of various opportunities and challenges, will have a global outlook while paying attention to the development of both Hong Kong and our country. We also hope that they are prepared to assume social obligations while fully understanding their individual rights.

(II) Commission on Youth

3. The Commission on Youth (CoY) has always been HAB's important partner in facilitating youth development (The membership list is at **Annex**). With members' participation and support, we closely liaise with community organisations, youth organisations, universities and other stakeholders and provide funding for youth development initiatives, including organising the

Youth Summit and Youth Exchange Sessions.

(III) Specific Initiatives

(1) Helping young people broaden their horizons and embrace globalisation

4. Globalisation has provided young people in Hong Kong with opportunities but it has also brought about many challenges. Facing the new era, young people need to equip themselves, enrich their life experience and hone their critical thinking skills. Therefore, we have been putting much effort in offering overseas exchange opportunities. In the past years, HAB and CoY co-organised the International Youth Exchange Programme (IYEP), providing young participants aged 18-24 with opportunities to conduct in-depth exchanges with their overseas counterparts and broaden their horizons. However, given that IYEP emphasises bilateral exchange, its success depends upon cooperation from other countries and their willingness in arranging local youth to attend exchange visits in Hong Kong. Consensus with partner countries must be reached regarding the travel itineraries and operational details. This limits the number of available exchange tours and participants. In 2015/16, the total number of local participants was only 66.

5. In order to allow more young people to participate in international exchange activities and complement our country's Belt and Road Initiative, HAB and the Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education (CPCE) launched the pilot Funding Scheme for Exchange in Belt and Road Countries (the BnR Scheme) last year. Community organisations, through matching fund arrangements, are supported to organise in-depth youth exchanges to BnR countries. The scheme promotes in-depth exchange between our young people and their counterparts in the BnR countries, fostering the "people-to-people bond". Over 600 young people benefited from the scheme. In view of the encouraging results, HAB and CPCE have decided to continue with the BnR Scheme in 2017. After assessment, 38 projects were approved and over 1 000 young people are estimated to participate in the

Scheme.

6. Meanwhile, the Financial Secretary announced in the 2017/18 Budget that an additional provision of \$100 million would be allocated to enhance support for overseas youth exchange activities. We used this provision in late June to launch the new “Funding Scheme for International Youth Exchange”, so as to support community organisations in organising in-depth overseas exchange programmes, targeting local young people. We expect the number of young people to take part in overseas youth exchange programmes supported by HAB’s funding this year to reach 1 360.

7. We anticipate that the number of participants and funding sizes of overseas youth exchange programmes will rise steadily in the coming years. We will continue to require sponsored organisations to organise purposeful exchange tours. We will also look into consolidating our various funding schemes, in order to streamline the funding allocation process and cater more to the needs of young people.

8. On the other hand, we have always been committed to providing more exchange and internship opportunities in the Mainland. We continue to allocate additional resources to the “Funding Scheme for Youth Exchange in the Mainland” and the “Funding Scheme for Youth Internship in the Mainland” for community organisations, youth organisations, schools, uniformed groups, etc., to organise more exchange and internship programmes. Between 2015/16 and 2017/18, we have sponsored 800 exchange programmes and 293 internship programmes, benefiting around 56 000 Hong Kong youth.

(2) Fostering Multi-faceted Excellence

9. HAB offers a range of schemes to promote multiple pathways and give young people more opportunities to explore their potential and develop their talents. In late 2014, we launched the “Funding Scheme for Youth Life Planning Activities”. More than \$50 million has since been provided to

sponsor non-governmental organisations (NGOs) under 37 projects to jointly organise life planning activities with secondary schools, with a view to enhancing the understanding of students, parents and teachers of life planning and multiple pathways. So far, over 300 secondary schools have participated in the scheme, with over 200 000 participants of students, teachers and parents benefitting from the scheme.

10. In addition, to promote a culture of multi-faceted excellence and convey to society the message that academic results are not the sole criterion for measuring the success of young people, HAB launched the “Multi-faceted Excellence Scholarship” in 2014, providing full sponsorship for local universities and tertiary institutions to admit students who excel in areas such as sports, arts and community services. 41 local students have since received our scholarship. In light of the additional provision of \$200 million announced in the Budget, starting from the university academic year 2018-19, we will double the annual quota for the scholarship from 20 to 40 to benefit more young people. We expect that the whole scholarship programme can support eight cohorts of awardees (about 300 awardees) to pursue undergraduate studies.

(3) Youth Development Fund

11. Last year, we set up the \$300 million Youth Development Fund (YDF), with an aim of working with NGOs to help young people start their own business. The results of the first round applications for the YDF matching grant were announced in February 2017. Matching grants totaling \$24.31 million have been approved for nine NGOs to implement their youth entrepreneurship projects. We will continue to implement this initiative to help more young people take part in entrepreneurship through NGOs’ support.

(4) Funding Scheme on Life Education for Young People

12. In March 2017, we set up the “Funding Scheme on Life Education for

Young People” on the invitation of the Board of Management of the Chinese Permanent Cemeteries. The scheme aims to promote Chinese traditional values, thereby giving young people an understanding of life values and cultivating positive attitudes towards life among them. A total of 58 applications were received during the application period and the assessment exercise will be completed shortly.

(II) Future Direction of Youth Development Work

13. Under the concerted efforts of the SAR Government and CoY, the SAR Government has introduced various new initiatives on youth development and yielded positive results over the past few years. Youth development work spans a wide spectrum and involves a variety of policy areas. In order to further examine and better understand public views towards youth development, HAB and CoY have launched the Public Engagement on Youth Development Policy, inviting young people and other stakeholders involved in youth development work to contemplate the future direction of youth development work.

14. The new-term SAR Government is considering setting up a “Youth Development Commission”, to be chaired by the Chief Secretary for Administration, to steer the relevant bureaux and departments to take forward youth development initiatives. CoY will be incorporated into the new Commission. HAB and CoY will analyse public opinion collected during the Public Engagement on Youth Development Policy and draft a report by the end of this year, providing the Youth Development Commission with views from the public and stakeholders. HAB will collaborate with the Youth Development Commission in future to formulate policies and initiatives on youth matters and continue to closely liaise with community organisations and various NGOs to take forward youth development initiatives.

Advice Sought

15. Members are invited to express their views on the above matters.

Home Affairs Bureau

July 2017

**Commission on Youth
Membership List**

Chairman:

Mr LAU Ming-wai, BBS, JP

Members:

Mr FOK Kai-kong, Kenneth, JP

Mr SIU King-wai, Kyrus

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Mr CHAN Pok-chi, Jonathan

Mr CHEUNG Yun-hang, Stanley, MH

Mr FAN Hoi-kit, Alex

Mr KWOK Wing-leung, Andy

Dr. TO Siu-ming

Dr CHOI Yuk-lin, JP

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Mr LEUNG Yuk-wai, Kenneth

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Mr YIU Kwok-wai

Miss LAM Lam, Nixie

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Mr CHOI Tak-shing, Stanley

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Dr LAM Ho-yi, Evelyn

Ms CHAN Sin-man

Mr CHAN Ho-ting, Mac

Mr LI Tsz-shu, James
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Government Representatives:

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Representative of Education Bureau
Representative of Labour and Welfare Bureau
Representative of Security Bureau
Representative of Home Affairs Department Headquarters

Secretary:

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