

立法會

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Panel on Home Affairs

Updated background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat for the meeting on 17 July 2017

Youth development policy

Purpose

This paper summarizes past discussions of the Panel on Home Affairs ("the Panel") on the Government's youth development policy.

Background

Youth development policy

2. According to the Administration, its policy objectives on youth development are:

- (a) to foster a culture of multi-faceted excellence and to provide diversified learning, training and development opportunities to young people who have different aspirations;
- (b) to encourage young people to develop an active approach to life and a positive sense of social awareness;
- (c) to deepen their understanding in the developments of Hong Kong and our country;
- (d) to broaden their global perspectives; and
- (e) to allow them to thoroughly understand their individual rights and be happy to take on social obligations.

3. The Administration has advised that, in order to achieve the above objectives, the Home Affairs Bureau ("HAB") will continue to work closely with the Commission on Youth ("COY"), the Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education ("CPCE"), community organizations and various

non-governmental organizations ("NGOs") in fostering youth development work.

New and on-going initiatives on youth development launched by the Home Affairs Bureau as announced in 2017 Policy Address

New initiatives

4. The Administration advised that it would invite COY to explore the future direction of the youth development policy in Hong Kong in collaboration with the relevant policy bureaux, young people and other stakeholders involved in youth development. In addition, HAB published a booklet summarizing the initiatives in youth development introduced by various policy bureaux during the past years.

On-going initiatives

5. The Administration undertook to:
- (a) collaborate with NGOs, in the form of matching grants under the \$300 million Youth Development Fund ("YDF") set up in July 2016, to assist young people in starting their own business and subsidize innovative youth development projects which are not covered by existing schemes;
 - (b) continue to implement the Funding Scheme for Exchange in Belt and Road Countries to promote in-depth exchange between young people in Hong Kong and those in the Belt and Road countries, to achieve the target of fostering "people-to-people bond";
 - (c) continue to expand the International Youth Exchange Programme ("IYEP") and Summer Exchange Programme to cover more Belt and Road countries;
 - (d) continue to implement the six projects¹ under the Youth Hostel Scheme ("YHS") and liaise with other interested NGOs with a view to assisting them to launch new YHS projects;

¹ The six projects include Po Leung Kuk's project in Yuen Long, the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups' project in Tai Po, the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals' project in Sheung Wan, the Hong Kong Association of Youth Development's project in Mong Kok, the Hong Kong Girl Guides Association's project in Jordan and the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited's project in Yuen Long.

- (e) double the volunteer places from 10 to 20 each year under the United Nations ("UN") Volunteers – Hong Kong Universities Volunteer Programme launched in 2015 to allow more university students to participate in overseas voluntary work;
- (f) continue to implement the Service Corps and the Guangdong – Hong Kong Youth Volunteer Service Programme to provide more opportunities for young people to work as volunteers in underprivileged areas in the Mainland to serve those in need; and
- (g) continue to work with CPCE to promote civil education outside schools, focusing on the core values of "Respect and Inclusiveness", "Responsibility" and "Love".

Additional resources announced in the 2017-2018 Budget

6. The Financial Secretary announced in the 2017-2018 Budget that to further promote the culture of multi-faceted excellence, the Government would inject \$200 million to expand the scale of the "Multi-faceted Excellence Scholarship" ("the Scholarship"). Starting from the university academic year 2018-2019, the annual quota for the Scholarship will be doubled to about 40. Moreover, the Government will allocate an additional \$100 million to expand IYEP. The Administration planned to launch the "Funding Scheme for International Youth Exchange" to sponsor community organizations in organizing international exchange programmes for more young people to join and broaden their horizons.

Deliberations of the Panel

Commission on Youth and communication with the youth

7. Some members suggested that as COY was tasked to advise the Government on matters relating to youth development, consideration should be given to reforming its composition with a view to enlisting more young people as its members. There was, however, another view that COY should have a balanced mix of representatives of various age groups and backgrounds to facilitate the exchange of views from different perspectives.

8. According to the Administration, all members of COY were appointed by the Government, and most of the existing members were under the age of 35 on their first appointment. As in the case of other advisory and statutory bodies, the suitability of a candidate for appointment to COY was mainly considered on the basis of merits such as ability and experience. Members of COY would be

drawn from a wide spectrum of sectors in the community in order to promote the expression of views from different perspectives. The Administration assured members that their views and suggestions on the composition of COY would be further considered.

9. Some members considered it important for the Administration to strengthen communication with young people and solicit their views on policy initiatives or social issues. They commented that the existing initiatives to strengthen the networking and communication with young people were far from adequate. There was a view that the Administration should actively disseminate information on Government policies through public media and the Internet so that young people could have a better understanding of the rationale behind the policies. Besides, District Officers should play a more proactive role in reaching out to the youth and explaining to them the Government policies on various fronts. There was another view that young people should be encouraged to make use of their creativity to promote Government policies, and they should also be engaged in the publicity of the sports and cultural activities organized by the Government or COY. Some members considered that the Administration should support the continuous operation of district youth forums, in addition to the territory-wide Youth Summit, so that young people could express their views on matters of their concern and participate in social affairs on a more regular basis. Consideration should also be given to appointing more young people as members of the Area Committees.

10. According to the Administration, it was committed to enhancing communication with young people and had all along encouraged young people to give views on Government policies through consultation at different levels and through different channels, including District Councils, COY and the appointment of young people with different backgrounds as members of various advisory and statutory bodies. The Administration advised that COY had explored how to make better use of social media and websites on the Internet to communicate with young people so as to better understand matters of concern to them. The Administration advised that with the support of COY, it would continue to collaborate with community organizations, universities and other stakeholders to promote various youth development activities.

11. Some members considered that the Administration should study the needs of young people and formulate effective youth policies to address their needs. The Administration advised that HAB and various bureaux had been performing their respective duties in implementing diversified youth development measures which covered education, employment and whole-person development. HAB had implemented measures such as funding schemes for youth life planning activities, youth exchange and internship programmes as well as YDF to cater for young people's development needs.

Youth Square

12. In response to members' concern about the utilization rate of the facilities in the Youth Square ("YS"), the Administration advised that the Youth Square Management Advisory Committee had introduced measures to promote YS's mission as a focal point for territory-wide youth development activities. To encourage youth entrepreneurship and support the development of social enterprises, YS would offer rental discount to young entrepreneurs and social enterprises that operated youth-related business at a concessionary level equivalent to that offered to registered non-profit making organizations.

13. Members were also advised that the Administration had engaged a consultant to carry out a review of the management and operation mode of YS, in order to assess whether the existing management and operation mode was the most cost-effective and appropriate arrangement. The consultancy study had recommended a number of measures for promoting the popularity of YS, attracting patronage and improving usage of its facilities. Members also noted that the Hong Kong Art School ("HKAS") had moved into YS from June 2013, taking up some of the spaces of the minor facilities. It was envisaged that HKAS would bring in organic changes in the use of YS as a whole.

Youth Hostel Scheme

14. The Administration consulted members on the capital works proposals for the youth hostel development by Po Leung Kuk in Yuen Long and the youth hostel development by The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups ("HKFYG") in Tai Po in the 2015-2016 legislative session. Members in general expressed support for the two projects. In response to members' concern about the progress of the three YHS projects in Sheung Wan, Mong Kok and Jordan, the Administration advised that the funding approval to commence the construction works for the Sheung Wan project would be sought in 2017. For the two projects in Mong Kok and Jordan, the preparation of the technical feasibility studies was in the final stage. Both projects had secured support from the Yau Tsim Mong District Council. Another one currently under planning is the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited's project in Yuen Long. The Administration advised that the six projects together would provide about 2 800 places for young people. The construction of the first youth hostel (i.e. the one developed by HKFYG in Tai Po) was expected to be completed in 2018.

Uniformed groups

15. Regarding the Administration's support for uniformed groups, there was a view that the Administration should increase the funding for uniformed groups so as to promote positive values and proper life attitude among young people. There was, however, another view that the Administration should provide more support for young people to organize programmes and activities independently, which would be more effective in promoting their growth and development. The Administration advised that it had been the Government's policy to encourage the involvement of young people in the planning and organization of youth activities, including those initiated by HAB-subvented uniformed groups and NGOs, and those administered by CPCE.

16. Some members enquired how the effectiveness of services of uniformed groups was evaluated. The Administration explained that apart from submitting audited financial reports, participating uniformed groups were required to provide reports of activities with feedback from participants to COY and HAB. Members of COY and HAB officers might also attend the activities as observers and meet with participants.

Youth exchange and internship programmes

17. Some members considered that the exchange and internship schemes jointly operated by HAB and COY could broaden the horizons of young people and they expressed support for increasing the funding for organizing more such programmes of longer duration. Some members suggested that HAB might consider encouraging ethnic minority students in Hong Kong, many of whom coming from the Belt and Road countries, to take part in the youth exchange schemes under the Belt and Road Initiative. The Administration advised that it had all along provided support for youth organizations to organize activities promoting the appreciation of different cultures. The Administration would provide resources for them to organize exchanges and activities relating to the Belt and Road Initiative.

18. Noting that a similar exchange programme had been launched by the Education Bureau, there was a suggestion that HAB should coordinate and avoid the launching of too many exchange programmes to Belt and Road countries by various bureaux at the same time. Some members expressed concern that, after implementing the proposal to expand IYEP, IYEP and the Funding Scheme for Exchange in Belt and Road Countries would overlap. The Administration advised that under the existing IYEP, youth exchange activities were organized with overseas partners on a reciprocal basis. With the additional funding allocation, HAB planned to launch a new funding scheme under IYEP to sponsor community organizations to organize overseas youth

exchange activities, which might focus on outbound exchange visits only so that more young people could gain international exchange opportunities to broaden their horizons. The Administration explained that the scope of the proposed funding scheme would be much wider than that of the Funding Scheme for Exchange in Belt and Road Countries, covering all overseas countries instead of being restricted to Belt and Road countries.

Latest development

19. The Administration will report to the Panel on the progress of youth development work conducted by HAB, including progress of ongoing initiatives, programmes launched in the past year and the way forward for youth development at the next meeting on 17 July 2017.

Relevant papers

20. A list of relevant papers on the website of LegCo is in the **Appendix**.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
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Relevant papers on youth development policy

Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Home Affairs	18.2.2013 (Item VI)	Agenda Minutes
Legislative Council	8 & 9.1.2014	Official Record of Proceedings (8.1.2014) Pages 334 to 390 (9.1.2014) Pages 1 to 79 (Members' Motion on "Assisting young people in their development on all fronts") Progress Report
Panel on Home Affairs	24.1.2014 (Item I)	Agenda Minutes
	24.3.2014 (Item IV)	Agenda Minutes
	6.2.2015 (Item IV)	Agenda Minutes
	17.7.2015 (Item III)	Agenda Minutes
	17.2.2016 (Item III)	Agenda Minutes
	14.6.2016 (Item II)	Agenda Minutes
	20.1.2017 (Item IV)	Agenda Minutes
	27.3.2017 (Item VI)	Agenda Minutes