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20 December 2016

Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP
Chairman of the Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Mr Ma,

Approval of Grant to the Hong Kong Army Cadets Association

In the letter dated 22 November 2016 to the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB), the Secretariat conveyed the respective concerns of Hon Claudia MO and 25 other Legislative Council Members about the donations received by the Hong Kong Army Cadets Association (HKACA). Regarding the issues mentioned in the letter, a consolidated reply is given below:

Long-term Support to Youth Uniformed Groups by the HAB

Youth uniformed groups have all along been close working partners of HAB in the promotion of youth development. We understand that these uniformed groups are in need of suitable sites to arrange various training programmes and activities for their members in order to foster confidence, team spirit, sense of responsibility and discipline among young people.

We have been actively assisting youth uniformed groups to identify government land suitable for youth development. For years, various uniformed groups have, from time to time, requested our assistance in and support to their applications for using vacant government land and buildings. Apart from giving appropriate policy support in response to the requests of

various youth uniformed groups after examining their applications for the use of land and buildings, we will, taking into account their ever-increasing venue demand, proactively send information on vacant school premises suitable for other land uses to the 12 uniformed groups¹ for reference. For example, we took the initiative last year to issue letters to the 12 uniformed groups to provide basic information of 53 vacant school premises. However, we did not receive any formal applications from the uniformed groups for using these vacant school premises.

The 12 uniformed groups are usually active in organising various youth development activities according to their own merits and work in partnership with the HAB in the promotion of youth development. They often jointly organise large scale territory-wide events, or are invited to participate in our youth development activities such as the 70th Anniversary of the Victory Day of the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression Parade in August 2015, the Uniformed Groups cum Youth Development Day in October 2015, the Visit of the Mainland Olympians Delegation – Exchange with Youth of Hong Kong in this August, the May Fourth Flag Raising Ceremony at the Golden Bauhinia Square in May every year and the “10 000 Miles Friendship Trek” exchange programme organised during the school summer vacation annually.

Invitation to Submit Proposals for the Vacant School Premises in Kowloon Bay

Noting that the vacant school premises in Kowloon Bay and the campsite in Tuen Mun may be made available for short term lease by uniform groups early this year, the HAB has issued letters in May this year to inform the 12 aforementioned youth uniformed groups and invite their submission of proposals for using the two vacant sites.

With a view to benefiting youth uniformed group members at large as soon as possible and avoiding prolonged idleness of the relevant sites, we have set out clearly the assessment criteria in granting the vacant school premises and campsite (including facilities currently in use by uniformed groups, the knowledge about the technical and works requirement for the conversion programme, the financial plan for proposal implementation and the expected date for completion) in the invitation letter to the 12 uniformed

¹ The 12 youth uniformed groups include the Scout Association of Hong Kong; The Hong Kong Girl Guides Association; the Hong Kong Air Cadet Corps; the Hong Kong Sea Cadet Corps; the Hong Kong Adventure Corps; the Hong Kong Red Cross (uniformed groups); the Hong Kong St John Ambulance Brigade Cadet Command; The Boys' Brigade, Hong Kong; The Girls' Brigade Hong Kong; the Hong Kong Road Safety Association; the Association of Hong Kong Flag-guards and the HKACA.

groups for submission of proposals. Setting out clearly the assessment criteria could not only facilitate their drafting of proposals, but also could enable a more efficient assessment process. Upon receipt of three applications by the deadline on 6 June, we have immediately assessed the applications, made careful deliberations, compared the details of those proposals according to the disclosed assessment criteria, and finally gave policy support to the selected one with a more comprehensive and practicable proposal.

After detailed assessment, we decided to support the HKACA as its application proposal to use the vacant school premises as a training and activities centre is more commendable under various assessment criteria mentioned above, and notified the organisation our support as soon as practicable. We have also informed the two unsuccessful youth uniformed groups about the assessment results in late June. According to our usual practice of respecting the internal information of applicant organisations, we will not disclose the detailed assessment and analysis of their proposals to the public.

Charitable Donations of the Board of Management of the Chinese Permanent Cemeteries

The Board of Management of the Chinese Permanent Cemeteries (BMCPC) is established under the Chinese Permanent Cemeteries Ordinance (Cap. 1112) (the Ordinance). It operates on a non-profit-making basis, providing burial lots, niches and ash scattering services for Chinese people in Hong Kong.

All along operating on a self-financing basis, the BMCPC has not received any government subsidies. According to the Ordinance, the BMCPC may donate to any charity operating for the benefit of the community of Hong Kong or any sector of that community any moneys vested in it which are or may become surplus. Upholding the principle of promoting public good, the BMCPC has all along been donating to local non-profit-making organisations for the implementation of meaningful initiatives to benefit the community.

Every year, the BMCPC supports non-profit-making organisations to carry out improvement works and procure equipment through the Annual Donation Scheme and to organise activities through the Annual Thematic Donation Scheme. In general, the BMCPC openly invites interested and needy non-profit-making organisations to submit applications according to the respective guides of the two annual schemes, under which the funding ceiling for each works project is usually set at \$3 million. The BMCPC generally accepts applications under the Annual Donation Scheme and the Annual Thematic Donation Scheme in March or April every year. In the past few

years, over 200 applications were received annually. After considering each and every application, the BMCPC usually notifies the applicants of the two annual schemes about the results in the third quarter of the same year.

The BMCPC also gives individual consideration to proposals submitted by non-profit-making organisations outside the two annual schemes from time to time. Unlike applications under the annual schemes, these applications for charitable support requiring individual consideration are not capped by a pre-set funding ceiling. The BMCPC will examine the information submitted by each applicant organisation, taking into account such factors as the feasibility and benefits of the project as well as its competency in implementing the project, and determine the amount of funding support having regard to the format, content and scale of the project, as well as BMCPC's financial situation. Past examples of funding support granted by the BMCPC on occasions other than the two annual schemes include a donation of \$32.5 million to the Ruttonjee Hospital in 2002, a donation of \$30 million to the Haven of Hope Holistic Care Centre and \$30 million to TWGHs Wong Tai Sin Hospital in 2003 for the construction of a hospice centre; a donation of \$10 million to East Asian Games (Hong Kong) Limited in 2009 for the organisation of related activities; a donation of \$8.2 million to the Hong Kong Association of Youth Development for the setting up of the Youth Training Centre.

Since 1991, the BMCPC has donated a total of over \$950 million to support the implementation of nearly 3 000 charity projects and activities. Details of these projects and the honorary titles accepted by government officials in recipient organisations are set out at **Annex**.

Donation Application from the HKACA

The application submitted by the HKACA for BMCPC's donation to renovate the vacant school premises in Kowloon Bay into a training and activity centre was one of the donation applications requiring individual consideration of the BMCPC under occasions other than the annual schemes as described in paragraph 11 above. The BMCPC has long been making donations to non-profit-making organisations for them to run youth services, including "life and death education" programmes targeted at young people. On 21 June 2016, the BMCPC Secretariat received HKACA's proposal indicating that it had obtained HAB's policy support to use the said vacant school premises as its training and activity centre. The HKACA applied for a sum of \$30 million from the BMCPC to support half of the cost for the renovation of the premises into a training venue to nurture young people as future leaders with the qualities of self-enhancement, self-discipline, self-confidence, commitment and willingness to serve the community. The proposal is beneficial to youth development in Hong Kong and in line with the established direction of the BMCPC to benefit the community and promote

public good through donations. In the proposal, there is detailed and concrete information setting out the implementation plan of the renovation works, suggestions for venue uses, as well as a future activity calendar and operational arrangements. It is also stated in the proposal that the BMCPC may send representatives to participate in the steering committee so as to monitor the progress of the project. The information provided has shown that the project is viable and can generate social benefits. As all donation applications are subject to the approval of the BMCPC, the Secretariat put forward HKACA's application for donation at the BMCPC's half-yearly general meeting previously scheduled for 27 June for members' consideration. At the meeting, members of the BMCPC considered the proposal beneficial to youth development and worth supporting. They agreed to allocate an amount of \$30 million from the annual surplus to support the project and asked the Secretariat to finalise funding arrangements with the applicant organisation. The conditions of grant for the project are similar to those set for the Annual Donation Scheme of the BMCPC.

The procedures of processing the donation application from the HKACA by the BMCPC are no different from its established principle of handling other donation applications received under the annual schemes (as described in paragraph 11 above). In the future, the BMCPC will also follow the same principle to process and assess donation applications received under occasions other than the annual schemes.

The Role of the Secretary for Home Affairs (SHA)


The SHA is the Honorary Advisor to the HKACA, where the title is honorary in nature without any concrete functions and the SHA has never participated in the actual operation of the HKACA. Hence no personal interests are involved in the vetting of the HKACA's application for using the vacant school premises or in chairing the BMCPC's discussion about the HKACA's donation application. SHA's withdrawal from the meeting was also not warranted. In fact, to support youth initiatives and encourage the development of uniformed groups, SHA has been, upon invitation by various uniformed groups, assuming honorary titles, including the Honorary President of the Hong Kong Road Safety Association, the Honorary Vice President of The Hong Kong Girl Guides Association and a member of the Advisory Board of the Hong Kong Red Cross.

Other Statutory Organisations under the HAB

Apart from the BMCPC, there are other statutory bodies and trust funds under the HAB that can provide funding support to non-profit-making organisations for purchasing equipment or conducting construction and

maintenance works. These funding schemes and trust funds have different requirements and procedures according to their own objectives upon establishment. There is no place for generalisation. Relevant organisations may make an application according to their own needs.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gloria Lo', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

(Miss Gloria Lo)
for Secretary for Home Affairs

Annex

Projects supported by donations granted by the Board of Management of the Chinese Permanent Cemeteries since 1991
(Note: Pre-2006 projects were projects supported under the annual donation schemes and major development projects supported outside the annual donation schemes according to available records.)

Year	Recipient Organisation/ Donation Scheme	Project Particulars	Approved Donation (\$ '000)
1991	Annual Donation Scheme	6 projects	5,350
1992	Annual Donation Scheme	20 projects	8,090
1993	Annual Donation Scheme	34 projects	13,000
1994	Annual Donation Scheme	59 projects	16,010
1995	Annual Donation Scheme	64 projects	19,290
1996	Annual Donation Scheme	83 projects	23,720
	The Hong Kong Girl Guides Association ²	Redevelopment of a camp site	1,000
1997	Annual Donation Scheme	97 projects	32,280
	Home Affairs Bureau	Development of the Youth Square	200,000
1998	Annual Donation Scheme	131 projects	32,000
1999	Annual Donation Scheme	169 projects	34,960
	The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups ³	Leadership 21	10,000
2000	Annual Donation Scheme	147 projects	35,000
2001	Annual Donation Scheme	135 projects	34,620
2002	Annual Donation Scheme	139 projects	31,000
	Kwong Wah Hospital, Tung Wah Group of Hospitals (TWGHs) ^{4,5}	Setting up of a dental clinic	2,660
	Ruttonjee Hospital ⁵	Setting up of a hospice centre	32,500
2003	Annual Donation Scheme	86 projects	21,220
	Our Lady of Maryknoll Hospital ⁵	Setting up of a hospice centre	6,200
	Haven of Hope Holistic	Setting up of a hospice centre	30,000

² The wife of the Chief Executive is its President, while the Secretary for Education, the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, the Secretary for Home Affairs, the Permanent Secretary for Education, the Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs, the Commissioner of Police and the Director of Leisure and Cultural Services are Honorary Vice Presidents.

³ The Chief Executive is its Patron.

⁴ The Secretary for Home Affairs is the ex-officio Chairman of TWGHs Advisory Board, while the Secretary for Food and Health is an ex-officio member.

⁵ The Permanent Secretary for Food and Health, the Director of Health and the Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury are ex-officio members of the Hospital Authority.

Year	Recipient Organisation/ Donation Scheme	Project Particulars	Approved Donation (\$ '000)
	Care Centre ⁵		
	TWGHs Wong Tai Sin Hospital ^{4,5}	Setting up of a hospice centre	30,000
2004	Annual Thematic Donation Scheme ⁶	26 projects	4,520
	Annual Donation Scheme	49 projects	12,000
2005	Annual Thematic Donation Scheme	17 projects	4,050
	Annual Donation Scheme	53 projects	12,000
	Annual Thematic Donation Scheme	15 projects	2,690
	Community Participation Scheme ⁷	75 projects	1,750
	Community Participation Scheme for Organising Exchange Tours to the Mainland ⁸	53 projects	2,710
2006	The University of Hong Kong ⁹	Design on the Cemetery and Memorial Park	100
	Summer Youth Programme Committee	Summer Youth Exchange Programme	2,000
	Ruttonjee & Tang Shiu Kin Hospitals ⁵	Setting up of a hospice centre	4,430
	Celebration Fund for the 10 th Anniversary of Establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region ¹⁰	Celebration activities for the 10 th Anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR)	20,000
	Annual Donation Scheme	45 projects	11,160
2007	Annual Thematic Donation Scheme	20 projects	6,920
	Community Participation Scheme ⁷	95 projects	2,660
	Community Participation	66 projects	3,270

⁶ The BMCPCC first introduced the Annual Thematic Donation Scheme in 2004.

⁷ The scheme is supported by the BMCPCC. Applicant organisations submit their donation applications directly to the Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education for processing and approval.

⁸ The scheme is supported by the BMCPCC. Applicant organisations submit their donation applications directly to the Commission on Youth for processing and approval.

⁹ The Chief Executive is the Chancellor of The University of Hong Kong.

¹⁰ Set up by the Government of the HKSAR.

Year	Recipient Organisation/ Donation Scheme	Project Particulars	Approved Donation (\$ '000)
	Scheme for Organising Exchange Tours to the Mainland ⁸		
2008	Annual Donation Scheme	45 projects	14,410
	Annual Thematic Donation Scheme	22 projects	5,380
	Community Participation Scheme ⁷	80 projects	2,320
	Community Participation Scheme for Organising Exchange Tours to the Mainland ⁸	47 projects	2,620
2009	Annual Donation Scheme	46 projects	7,230
	Annual Thematic Donation Scheme	21 projects	1,700
	Community Participation Scheme ⁷	76 projects	2,410
	Community Participation Scheme for Organising Exchange Tours to the Mainland ⁸	41 projects	2,600
	Society for the Promotion of Hospice Care ¹¹	Special life and death education programme	1,570
	Hong Kong Association of Youth Development ¹²	Youth Training Centre	8,200
	2009 East Asian Games (Hong Kong) Limited	Activities related to East Asian Games	10,000
2010	Annual Donation Scheme	28 projects	8,550
	Annual Thematic Donation Scheme	19 projects	1,820
	Community Participation Scheme ⁷	49 projects	2,240
	Community Participation Scheme for Organising Exchange Tours to the Mainland ⁸	38 projects	2,500
	Society for the Promotion of Hospice Care ¹¹	Special life and death education programme	1,780
2011	Annual Donation Scheme	52 projects	12,200

¹¹ The wife of the Chief Executive is its Patron.

¹² The Chief Executive is its Patron, while the Chief Secretary for Administration and the Secretary for Education are Honorary Advisors.

Year	Recipient Organisation/ Donation Scheme	Project Particulars	Approved Donation (\$ '000)
	Annual Thematic Donation Scheme	25 projects	2,520
	Community Participation Scheme ⁷	19 projects	2,460
	Community Participation Scheme for Organising Exchange Tours to the Mainland ⁸	22 projects	2,500
	Society for the Promotion of Hospice Care ¹¹	Publications on life and death education	230
2012	Annual Donation Scheme	34 projects	11,280
	Annual Thematic Donation Scheme	14 projects	1,630
	Community Participation Scheme ⁷	16 projects	2,440
	Community Participation Scheme for Organising Exchange Tours to the Mainland ⁸	18 projects	2,490
	Asian Youth Orchestra	Concert to celebrate the 15th Anniversary of the establishment of the HKSAR	350
	Hong Kong United Youth Association	Parade and singing contest to celebrate the 15 th Anniversary of the establishment of the HKSAR	1,700
2013	Annual Donation Scheme	47 projects	13,270
	Annual Thematic Donation Scheme	24 projects	3,620
	Community Participation Scheme ⁷	17 projects	2,450
	“Hong Kong: Our Home” public participation campaign ¹³	27 projects	3,390
	St. James’ Settlement ¹¹	Special life and death education programme	2,450
	Po Leung Kuk ¹⁴	Elderly support centre	4,760
2014	Annual Donation Scheme	57 projects	21,150

¹³ The campaign was supported by the BMCP. Applicant organisations submitted their donation applications directly to the Home Affairs Department for processing and approval.

¹⁴ The Secretary for Home Affairs is the ex-officio Chairman of the Advisory Board of Po Leung Kuk, while the Secretary for Labour and Welfare and the Director of Social Welfare are ex-officio members.

Year	Recipient Organisation/ Donation Scheme	Project Particulars	Approved Donation (\$ '000)
	Annual Thematic Donation Scheme	18 projects	1,940
	Community Participation Scheme ⁷	17 projects	2,490
2015	Annual Donation Scheme	17 projects	9,010
	Annual Thematic Donation Scheme	45 projects	7,320
	Community Participation Scheme ⁷	17 projects	2,490
	Society for the Promotion of Hospice Care ¹¹	Special life and death education programme	800
	Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council	Special life and death education programme	1,100
	Po Leung Kuk ¹⁴	Special life and death education programme	1,610
2016	Annual Donation Scheme	35 projects	10,430
	Annual Thematic Donation Scheme	33 projects	4,330
	Community Participation Scheme ⁷	15 projects	2,460
	Po Leung Kuk ¹⁴	Special life and death education programme	1,060
	Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council	Special life and death education programme	1,550
	Hong Kong Army Cadets Association ¹⁵	Youth training and activity centre	30,000

¹⁵ The Chief Executive is its Honorary Patron, while the Chief Secretary for Administration, the Secretary for Security, the Secretary for Education and the Secretary for Home Affairs are Honorary Advisors. The wife of the Chief Executive is the Commander in Chief.