

CE chairs 10th meeting of Youth Development Commission (with photo)

The Chief Executive (CE), Mrs Carrie Lam, chaired the 10th meeting of the Youth Development Commission (YDC) today (June 8) to review the YDC's achievements since its establishment in 2018 with members, and thanked them for collaborating with the current-term Government to formulate and launch various policy initiatives to facilitate the diversified development of young people.

Mrs Lam said, "In my first Policy Address since assuming office in 2017, I announced the establishment of the YDC to enhance policy co-ordination within the Government so as to enable holistic and more effective examination of, and discussion on, issues of concern to young people. It is my pleasure to personally chair the last YDC meeting within this term of Government today in my capacity as the CE, and I am pleased to note that members have affirmed and commended the YDC's work over the past few years."

At the meeting, members reviewed the YDC's achievements since its establishment. They were also briefed by relevant policy bureaux about the latest progress of the work in promoting youth development under their policy areas. Members were pleased to note that the current-term Government has proactively sought stakeholders' views and recommendations through the YDC's platform and endeavoured to foster cross-bureau and interdepartmental collaboration to actively promote youth development, including facilitating young people's selection of suitable study pathways, assisting in their career development and upward mobility, strengthening communication with young people, as well as nurturing young people's positive thinking.

Members also noted the progress of the youth development initiatives undertaken by the YDC. Specifically, the YDC has earlier commenced review and enhancement work regarding the Funding Scheme for Youth Exchange in the Mainland and the Funding Scheme for Youth Internship in the Mainland. Subject to the developments of the pandemic, it will arrange for the resumption and enhancement of the exchange and internship activities when it is safe and practicable to do so. In addition, the YDC will introduce more enhancement measures in the new round of the Funding Scheme for Youth Life Planning Activities with a view to strengthening cross-sectoral collaboration. Moreover, the YDC will launch a new funding scheme to subsidise eligible non-government organisations to organise projects that are conducive to nurturing young people's positive thinking, particularly those projects which involve cross-sectoral efforts or are youth-led and could drive community building, with a view to promoting the physical and mental well-being of young people and nurturing young people's positive thinking and positive values.

Members also noted the implementation of the Member Self-recommendation Scheme for Youth (MSSY). As one of the measures announced in the 2017 Policy Address, the MSSY aims at providing more opportunities for young people to participate in policy discussions. Since its launch, the MSSY has received

over 8 200 applications and offered 131 seats in total covering 65 committees. So far, about 480 posts are held by young people who have been appointed to advisory and statutory bodies directly or indirectly through the MSSY. With the concerted efforts of policy bureaux, the ratio of youth members in these bodies has increased from 7.8 per cent in end-2017 to 15.4 per cent in end-2021, thereby successfully achieving the target of 15 per cent set by the current-term Government. Members fully supported the continued implementation of the MSSY and suggested expanding the scheme to cover more committees with a view to providing more opportunities for young people to participate in public affairs.

Mrs Lam expressed her heartfelt gratitude to the YDC for its valuable advice on different issues of concern to young people and its full collaboration in promoting the youth development work undertaken by the current term Government, namely addressing young people's concerns about education, career pursuits and home ownership, and encouraging their participation in politics as well as public policy discussion and debate. Looking into the future, she said, "Since the promulgation and implementation of the Hong Kong National Security Law, Hong Kong has restored order from chaos and got back on the right track. It is time to rethink how to unite society, in particular through refocusing on and repositioning youth policies and district affairs.

"In this regard, in the proposal for the reorganisation of the Government structure which I put forward earlier this year, it was mentioned that the Home Affairs Bureau should be reorganised into the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau to review and formulate in a more holistic manner an overall youth policy and a blueprint for youth development. The proposal has received broad support from society. I wish that the proposal for establishing the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau will be implemented smoothly on July 1 this year. I am confident that members of the YDC will continue to collaborate with the HKSAR Government and nurture the new generation of talents for Hong Kong."

The Chief Secretary for Administration (CS) is the chairperson of the YDC. As the post of the CS has been left vacant, the meeting today was chaired by the CE.

