

## Youth Development Commission convenes 13th meeting (with photos)

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Chan Kwok-ki, chaired the 13th meeting of the Youth Development Commission (YDC) today (June 30). As the Chairperson of the YDC, Mr Chan welcomed members of the new term. He said that the current-term Government attaches great importance to youth development and he looks forward to working closely with the members to draw the community together to nurture a new generation of young people with an affection for the country and Hong Kong, and equipped with global perspective, an aspiring mind-set and positive thinking.

At the meeting, members were briefed on the implementation progress of the Youth Development Blueprint (the Blueprint) promulgated by the Government in December last year. Members were pleased to note that policy bureaux and departments have been actively implementing more than 160 concrete actions and measures as stated in the Blueprint, covering various areas such as strengthening young people's national identity, enhancing life planning of youth, enabling young people's integration into the overall development of the country, supporting youth innovation and entrepreneurship, addressing young people's housing needs, nurturing young people's positive thinking, promoting sports, arts and culture, strengthening mental health support for youth, and enhancing youth participation in public affairs.

Amongst them, the progress of the major youth development initiatives under the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau (HYAB) and the YDC are as follows:

(1) Following the full resumption of normal travel of persons between Hong Kong and the Mainland as well as overseas regions, the HYAB has resumed various internship and exchange activities outside Hong Kong. In the year 2023-24, the HYAB's internship and exchange programmes outside Hong Kong will together provide more than 41 000 places. Young people who are interested in visiting the Mainland and overseas this summer to broaden their horizons and achieve self-enhancement may visit the YDC website ([www.ydc.gov.hk/en/programmes/introduction.html](http://www.ydc.gov.hk/en/programmes/introduction.html));

(2) The second youth hostel project under the Youth Hostel Scheme commenced operation this May, providing 1 680 hostel places. Furthermore, the HYAB launched the Subsidy Scheme for Using Hotels and Guesthouses as Youth Hostels under the Youth Hostel Scheme this January and has approved two projects so far, providing around 400 hostel places in total;

(3) The HYAB and YDC jointly launched the new Funding Scheme for Youth Positive Thinking Activities and the Funding Scheme for Youth Adventure Training Activities at the end of last year. About \$51 million in total will be granted to 11 non-government organisations to organise activities promoting young people's positive thinking. Subject to the implementation of individual projects, it is expected that the sponsored organisations will

start rolling out relevant activities from this summer for two years, benefiting around 29 000 participants in total;

(4) Recruitment under the Member Self-recommendation Scheme for Youth Phase VI was conducted from end-May to end-June this year, covering multiple committees that are relevant to Hong Kong's strategic positioning of the "eight centres" as promulgated under the National 14th Five-Year Plan. Young people could nominate themselves as members. Over 1 800 applications were received under this phase, which is the highest ever number; and

(5) The HYAB provides recurrent subvention to 12 youth uniformed groups in the community and enhances the national education promotion in youth uniformed groups through different measures, for example, jointly organising a total of four rounds of a Chinese Drill Instructors Workshop for youth uniformed groups this year together with the Hong Kong Police College and the Civil Aid Service. The first two rounds of the workshop have already been completed and around 100 instructors have been trained.

Mr Chan said, "Young people are the future and hope of Hong Kong. The current-term Government has formulated the Blueprint with the objectives of continuously promoting long-term youth development work and addressing the development needs of young people of different background and at different stages of life in a comprehensive manner. To strive for youth work, we must give full play to the synergies of cross-bureau and cross-sector collaboration, and pull together talent from different sectors to tap on their suggestions and advice and harness their collective wisdom and insights. Therefore, the co-ordination role of the YDC is crucial. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the members for their staunch support of the Blueprint. I hope they will continue to work hand in hand with the Government in promoting and implementing various concrete actions and measures therein to support the comprehensive growth and development of young people."

