

Part 4

People's Livelihood and Social Development

Introduction

With the goal of promoting people's well-being, the HKSAR Government will continuously enhance policies on education, healthcare, housing, social welfare, labour and elderly care, and boost the sense of fulfilment, satisfaction, and security amongst citizens. Hong Kong's Five-Year Plan should, on the foundation of maintaining social stability and increasing public service efficiency, address the challenges of changes in manpower supply as well as the diversification of economic and social needs, etc., so as to provide more comprehensive and sustainable safeguards for people's livelihood.

Current Situation

Hong Kong has established relatively sound systems in areas such as education, healthcare, social security and public housing, etc. However, it is facing considerable challenges arising from factors such as ageing society, changes in manpower supply, housing needs, growing healthcare demand, and pressures on social services and public finance, etc. On education, there is a need to further promote diverse pathways for further studies and career development, and nurture talents to meet future development needs; in respect of healthcare, it is necessary to continuously strengthen hospital services, primary healthcare in the community, specialist services as well as healthcare manpower; as regards housing, there is strong demand from the public for affordable and adequate accommodation, and the supply of public housing still requires acceleration; social welfare, labour, and manpower policies, as well as elderly care services should also be continuously optimised in response to an ageing society and the stress arising from family caregiving.

The HKSAR Government has introduced and continued to take forward various measures to improve people's livelihood, which include expanding primary healthcare services, increasing public housing supply, introducing the Basic Housing Unit regime to eradicate substandard subdivided units in an

orderly manner, continuously enhancing the quality of basic education, and strengthening community and residential care services for the elderly. These endeavours have effectively addressed the challenges of an ageing society, healthcare, and housing, actualising a policy direction that is people-oriented and seeks to continuously improve people's livelihood. At the same time, the HKSAR Government will ensure fiscal prudence and sustainability as required by the Basic Law.

Policy Directions and Key Proposals

This document sets out the following preliminary and forward-looking policy directions for public discussion and refinement:

1. Education

- Continuously enhance the quality of basic education, strengthen students' literacy in language, humanities, sports and arts, mathematics and science, STEAM, and digital technology, etc., and reinforce the promotion of national education and values education.
- Promote better articulation across primary and secondary education, post-secondary education, and vocational and professional education and training, and provide students with diverse pathways for further studies and employment.
- Strengthen the internationalisation of higher education, collaboration across industry, academia and research sectors, and applied research, to nurture talents that meet the needs of Hong Kong, the country, and the international community.

2. Healthcare

- Enhance the primary healthcare system, and strengthen community health management as well as prevention, and early diagnosis and treatment of chronic diseases, so as to improve public health.
- Deepen public healthcare reform, expedite the increase of public healthcare service capacity and efficiency, and develop healthcare infrastructure, so as to enhance the sustainability of the healthcare

system; and enhance the quality and efficiency of private healthcare services.

- Promote the development of smart healthcare and healthcare information infrastructure to enhance service efficiency and quality.
- Strengthen Chinese medicine services and Chinese-Western medicine collaboration, medical education, as well as health and medical innovation, nurture healthcare talents, and drive the application of medical technology.

3. Housing

- Increase supply and advance public housing projects continuously by constructing more public rental housing units and subsidised sale flats and providing Light Public Housing, so as to meet the housing needs of families with different income levels, and continuously enrich the housing ladder for home ownership.
- Eradicate substandard subdivided units in an orderly manner to ensure the provision of a safe, hygienic, and adequate living environment for grassroots tenants.
- Accelerate land development and old district renewal, enhance land use efficiency and the sustainability of housing supply, and improve the living environment and quality of life.

4. Social welfare

- Comprehensively and steadily advance a multi-tiered and financially sustainable social security assistance system; provide upward mobility opportunities for children and young people from disadvantaged families; and proactively identify individuals and families in need and provide them with targeted assistance.
- Strengthen family support services, enhance support for working families in childbearing, and expand community childcare and after-school care services.

5. Labour and manpower

- Enhance employment services, support the training, retraining and upskilling of the local workforce, and assist citizens in adapting to emerging industries and job roles.
- Strengthen the protection of labour rights, foster harmonious labour relations, and continuously improve occupational safety and health, labour remuneration and protection, and employment relationships.
- Provide territory-wide training opportunities for continuous skills upgrading, so as to bolster impetus for economic development and competitiveness.
- Optimise the balance between the importation of labour and the promotion of local employment with regard to an ageing society and changes in manpower supply.

6. Elderly care

- Continue to follow the principle of “ageing in place as the core, with institutional care as back-up”, and continuously strengthen community and residential care and support services, so that the elderly can receive appropriate services that suit their circumstances and needs; and optimise cross-boundary elderly care measures to provide more choices for Hong Kong elderly persons who wish to retire in the Mainland.
- Encourage the “young-olds” to participate in social affairs to achieve active ageing; and strengthen respite and carer support services to alleviate the burden on caregivers.
- Support elderly employment, encourage the elderly to participate in social affairs, and develop the silver economy and build age-friendly communities, so as to address the needs of an ageing society.

Matters for Consultation

Bearing in mind the obligation of the HKSAR Government to maintain sustainable fiscal prudence, members of the public may offer views on the aforementioned policy directions, viable policy tools, and the areas of greatest concern to Hong Kong in education, healthcare, housing, social welfare, labour, and elderly care.