

MEDIA RELEASE

CHARITY COUNCIL LAUNCHES ONLINE GOVERNANCE EVALUATION CHECKLIST FOR CHARITIES AND INSTITUTIONS OF A PUBLIC CHARACTER

The Code of Governance for Charities and Institutions of a Public Character (IPCs) was launched by the Charity Council on 26 November 2007 after three months of public consultation. The Code serves as the benchmark for charities and IPCs to adhere to good governance standards and best practices. All charities, including IPCs, are required to submit their extent of compliance with the Code to their respective Sector Administrators via the online Charity Portal (www.charities.gov.sg) from **1 March 2008 to 31 March 2008**.

2. To facilitate the online submission, the Charity Council has developed a Governance Evaluation Checklist on the Charity Portal. The Checklist is a simple tool designed to help charities and IPCs self-evaluate the extent to which they have complied with selected Code guidelines deemed to be of higher priority. The Checklist will not be disclosed to the public for now. However, the Checklist provides an option for charities and IPCs who wish to disclose their Checklist to the public and their stakeholders now to demonstrate their accountability and transparency.

3. Going forward, all IPCs will be required to publicly disclose their Governance Evaluation Checklist from **1 April 2009**. In addition, all IPCs should make reference to their online Checklist in their annual reports for financial years ending **31 March 2009 and thereafter**. On an annual basis, all charities and IPCs should therefore submit their online Checklists **by 31 March each year**.

4. To familiarise charities and IPCs with the online submission of the Evaluation Checklist, briefing sessions for charities and IPCs will be conducted in February and March 2008. The Council has also developed templates to help charities adhere to the Code guidelines. Charities can download the templates from the Charity Portal and adapt them for their use.

5. Mrs Fang Ai Lian, Chairman of the Charity Council, said, "We want to work in partnership with our charity sector to promote good governance. The Code of Governance is a first step. It is a good that many charities have actively contributed and shaped the Code during the public consultation. Going forward, we hope that more charities will take ownership of the Code and use it to help improve their governance standards. With the online Evaluation Checklist, the Charity Council will be able to better identify governance areas which need improvement and channel resources to charities which need help. As charities become more comfortable with the standards expected of them, public confidence will also be enhanced. This is our ultimate objective."

6. The Charity Council would also like to continue encouraging charities and IPCs to apply for the VWOs-Charities Capabilities Fund (VCF) grants in training, consultancy

and info-communications technology to enhance their governance capabilities. Depending on the type of grant, charities and IPCs will generally be able to enjoy a subsidy of 70% to 90% with each successful application. More information can be obtained on the MCYS's Charity Portal www.charities.gov.sg.

CHARITY COUNCIL

22 February 2008

About the Charity Council

The Council was administratively set up in October 2006 to promote a culture of good governance and self-regulation in the charity sector. It seeks to be a:

- i. **Promoter** - encourage adoption of good governance standards and best practices, enhance public confidence in the charity sector;
- ii. **Enabler** - help build the governance capabilities of charities to enable them to comply with regulatory requirements and enhance public accountability of charities; and
- iii. **Advisor** - advise the Commissioner of Charities (COC) on key regulatory issues where there may be broad-ranging impact on the charity sector.

Attachment:

Sample Governance Evaluation Checklist for IPCs and Large Charities

For media enquiries, please contact:

Name: Mr Gan Hock Chye
DID: 63548541
Email: gan_hock_chye@mcys.gov.sg