

**Summary of the Minutes of
the 7th Meeting of Sha Tin District Council (2008 Session)**

The 7th meeting of Sha Tin District Council (STDC) (2008 session) was held on 25 September 2008. The major issues discussed are summarised below:

Visit of Director of Drainage Services

2. Director of Drainage Services said that the Drainage Services Department (DSD) was mainly responsible for flood control and sewage treatment. He stated that the main drainage works undergoing in Sha Tin include the storm water drainage system improvement works, renewal of 3.8km of sewer within the district, provision of sewage system for 53 villages, expansion of the sewage pump rooms at Chinese University and Yuen Wo Road, the last phase of Sewage Treatment Plant expansion project and the sewage system improvement and expansion works in Ma On Shan. He hoped that the department could cooperate with the district council in improving the sewage system of Sha Tin.

3. Some members complained about the water quality of Shing Mun River. A member suggested to improve the Tai Wai Section of Shing Mun River by changing the nullah into culvert. They said that effluent of some restaurants and garages were discharged into Shing Mun River via storm water drain. Another member suggested that the problem of refuse in Shing Mun River be handled by a single department to enhance efficiency. Some members requested the government to speed up the sewage system project in the villages in order to solve the problem of stream pollution. A member pointed out that frequent maintenance of flushing system in a private housing estate in Ma On Shan was required as a result of the pollution of flushing water and objected to the discharging of effluent to Tolo Harbour. A member opined that the government should coordinate the excavation works of different projects to minimize the inconvenience caused to the public. Another member remarked that the trenchless method used for the storm water drain improvement works in Sha Tin City One caused repeated pipe bursting. He requested the department to finish the project as soon as possible. Some members asked about the flow of water collected by storm water drain and the amount of sewage sludge produced daily by the sewage treatment plant.

4. Director of Drainage Services replied that pump rooms had to be built for villages in remote area and some road sections were privately owned resulting in a more complicated procedure but DSD promised to finish the project as soon as possible. He added that the effluents from villages were discharged to the septic

tank before going into the stream and the Environmental Protection Department would monitor the effluents. He said that the sewage treatment plant expansion project also included measure to eliminate the bad smell of Shing Mun River. Flushing water in the private housing estate in Ma On Shan should be monitored by Water Supplies Department but DSD would be willing to assist to improve the situation. He remarked that the effluent treated by the Sewage Treatment Plant would only be discharged to Tolo Harbour under very special circumstances. DSD had reminded nearby construction contractors not to discharge unfiltered water into storm water drain. For the suggestion to improve Tai Wai Section of Shing Mun River, he said that the main concern would be flood control. He pointed out that both Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) and DSD would handle the refuse and sludge of Shing Mun River. He said that excavation work had to obtain permit from Highways Department (HyD) and HyD would coordinate different excavation works to minimize the nuisance caused to the public. The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) was responsible for monitoring the water quality of Shing Mun River and DSD would assist EPD in implementing water quality improvement work. He said that DSD had detected 4 cases of illegal connection of drains this year and informed FEHD to follow up. He further said that a dry weather flow interceptor would be set up in storm drain to divert polluted water to Sewage Treatment Plant via sewage drain during dry weather. The sludge produced by the sewage treatment plant would be transported to landfill. He stated that after the completion of the sewage treatment plant expansion project, an ultraviolet sterilizer would come into operation to improve the water quality. He added that organic matter existed in natural environment and the existing standard was acceptable. The design of the sewage treatment plant had already taken into consideration of the characteristic of Tool Harbor. The current in Tolo Harbour would also dilute the effluent and lower the bacteria level.

5. The council passed the following revised motion of Mr. LEE Chi-wing with a vote of 10 in favour, 9 abstentions and 7 against:

“Sha Tin District Council concerns about the effect of the effluent discharged to Tolo Harbour on nearby residents and urges DSD to speed up the study and implement solution to improve the environment and hygiene.”

**Building an inclusive society with social cohesion –
To support full integration of people with disabilities into the community**

6. Chairman of the Employment Sub-committee under the Rehabilitation Advisory Committee (RAC) said that the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

of the United Nation came into effect in China on 31 August this year, which would also be applicable to Hong Kong. He briefly introduced the strategic directions of the Rehabilitation Programme Plan and hoped that the District Council would support and assist the disabled in integrating into the society.

7. Members suggested RAC to provide support and training to help the disabled to be self-reliant, render more assistance to the families of the disabled, promote the employability of the disabled to the business sector, reinforce the service of rehaus, encourage public transport to provide concessionary fare to the disabled, offer concession for the disabled in running business, formulate guidelines to assist district councilors to organize activities for disabled person, eliminate discrimination by educating the public, consider training professional in the long run for identifying children with mental problem, identify suitable places for the provision of one-stop rehabilitation service, provide recreational and cultural facilities for disabled person, use information technology to improve the living of disabled and consider offering support in the development of barrier free access.

8. Commissioner for Rehabilitation of Labour and Welfare Bureau said that the government was actively promoting barrier free access and injected \$68 million to improve 130 government buildings in the past few years. Recently, the “Design Manual: Barrier Free Access 2008” was passed in the Legislative Council with revised standard applicable to new building. He remarked that Housing Department had formulated work plan to improve barrier free access facilities of their housing estates to meet the new standard. Moreover, the Transport Department also set out a design standard for transport facilities and would provide barrier free facilities according to priority. He added that the government already provided disability allowance that varied with the disability level and subsidized 80% of the operating cost of Rehaus. Moreover, from 1 July 2008, a \$200 traffic subsidy had already been provided for the disabled whom were receiving disability allowance and Comprehensive Social Security Assistance. Besides, a website would be set up at the end of this year to provide one-stop employment support for the employers and the disabled. He said that large-scale activities would be launched to encourage the employment of the disabled. Moreover, Sha Tin Regional Social Welfare Officer would also render support to the activities held for disabled within the district.

9. Chairman of the Employment Sub-committee under the Rehabilitation Advisory Committee added that voluntary organizations, like Corporate Volunteer Team and Scout Association of Hong Kong, could offer support to activities organized for the disabled. The Committee also actively reflected the needs of the disabled and their families to the Government and public transport organisations.

10. A member of RAC said that the Working Group on the International Day of Disabled Persons of Kwun Tong District Council visited 143 places in Kwun Tong District including hospitals, Government departments and bus terminals etc. and found that most of the places needed improvement. LCSD and HD had subsequently provided positive response by carrying out some improvement works in Kwun Tong. The working group also promoted the concept of employing the disabled to the business sector and introduced the service provided by rehabilitation organizations. She hoped that a partnership relation could be built up between RAC and the District Council to promote social cohesion.

Confirmation of the Minutes of the 6th Meeting held on 24 July 2008

11. The Council endorsed the revised minutes of the 6th meeting.

2009 District Council Meeting Schedule

12. The Council endorsed the above paper.

Funding Application for “CI activities in Sha Tin” from November 2008 to March 2009 of Leisure and Cultural Services Department

13. The Council endorsed the above funding application at the amount of \$1,470,420.

Financial Account of STDC (as at 16 September 2008)

Progress Reports of Committees

14. The Council noted the above reports.

Development and Housing Committee

15. The Chairman of the Committee said that since the proposed date of meeting on 28 December 2008 was close to the New Year Day, the meeting date would be changed to 5 January 2009.

Education and Welfare Committee

16. A member asked the Education Bureau (EDB) about the arrangement for the

contract teachers affected by the cancellation of “time-limited capacity enhancement grant” and the updated situation of school closure within the district.

17. The Chairman asked the representative of EDB to submit papers on the above enquiries.

Funding Application for 2008/2009 Sha Tin Festive Lighting

18. The Council endorsed the above funding application at the amount of \$1,805,000.

Motion put forward by Mr. LEE Chi-wing – “Request the Government to reduce fuel tax for relieving hardship”

19. Mr. LEE said that the coverage of mass transport was not comprehensive and residents in rural area and new towns still had to drive on their own. The government should therefore reduce the fuel tax to relieve their burden. Some members asked the government to monitor the oil price of oil companies being “fast to raise and slow to cut”.

20. The Council endorsed the following revised motion of Mr. YIU Ka-chun with a vote of 22 in favour, 0 against and 5 abstentions:

“Sha Tin District Council strongly requests the government to reduce fuel tax for relieving the pressure of inflation and to reinforce the monitoring of oil retail price of oil companies against the unfair phenomenon of “fast to raise and slow to cut.”

Question put forward by Mr. KAN Chung-nin on Maintenance of dangerous slope and handling sewage blockage

21. Members noted the paper on the above issue.

Report of the District Management Committee

22. The Council endorsed the above report.

Next Meeting

23. The next meeting would be held at 2:30 p.m. on 20 November 2008.