

## **Summary of the Minutes of the 1st Meeting of Sha Tin District Council (2009 Session)**

The 1st meeting of Sha Tin District Council (STDC) (2009 session) was held on 22 January 2009. The major issues discussed are summarised below:

### **Visit of Director of Civil Engineering and Development**

2. Director of Civil Engineering and Development briefly introduced the duties of Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD), which included the provision of land and infrastructure, harbour and marine works, slope maintenance and geotechnical works, greening and technical service as well as management of construction and demolition waste.

3. Some members supported the Greening Master Plan of CEDD and asked the department to improve the greening work in Sha Tin, especially the Shing Mun River Promenade. A member concerned about the decision on site selection for Geo Park. Another member requested the department to follow up the design of the cycling track under the Lion Bridge where bicycle accidents were frequently found. He also asked for the details on the construction of bicycle interchange at the University Station and Hang Tai Road recreational area. Some members asked whether the dredging works of Shing Mun River would affect the development of water sports. Questions were also raised on building a new highway to solve the traffic congestion at Kau To Shan, construction of a slip road leading to Mei Tin Estate, provision of interdepartmental mechanism in handling nuisances caused by road works, especially T3 road works, monitoring of contractors' work, progress of the landslide prevention programme and improvement works for the footbridge at Mei Tin Road Loop Road.

4. Director of CEDD replied that improvement on the water quality of Shing Mun River was required for the development of water sports. He said that the responsibility of slope maintenance was clearly stipulated in the title deed and the proposal on subsidizing slope maintenance should be considered according to individual situation. He stated that the department would review and improve the design, implementation procedure and time management based on the geographic condition of each works project. He said that the nearby area of Pak Shek was chosen as the destination for Geo Park. Regarding the traffic improvement for Tai Po Road and the usage of Ma On Shan Area 86, he said that the concerned staff would follow up the issues. He replied that further dredging work at Shing Mun River might affect the structure of the riverbank and detailed study was required. He stated that after the completion of the Greening Master Plan for urban area, CEDD would

review the greening work in new towns.

5. Representative of CEDD added that the design of the Lion Bridge subway was up to standard and a warning sign had been placed at the subway. He said that the department would continue to keep in contact with local community in handling members' proposals on T3 road works.

#### **Confirmation of the Minutes of the 8th Meeting held on 20 November 2008**

6. The Council endorsed the revised minutes of the 8th meeting.

#### **Financial Account of STDC (as at 13 November 2008)**

7. The Council noted the above paper.

#### **Proposed Ceiling for STDC Estimates 2009/2010**

8. The Council noted the above paper.

#### **Recreational and Sports Activities Programme in Sha Tin from April 2009 to March 2010 of Leisure and Cultural Services Department**

9. The Council endorsed the above funding and the amount was \$5,665,370.

#### **Reports of District Facilities Management Committee, Culture, Sports & Community Development Committee, Development and Housing Committee, Education and Welfare Committee, Health and Environment Committee, Traffic and Transport Committee and Finance and General Affairs Committee**

10. The Council noted the above reports.

#### **Report of the District Management Committee**

11. The Council noted the above paper.

#### **Member of Hong Kong Post Customer Liaison Group**

12. The Council endorsed that Mr. YEUNG Cheung-li would continue to be the member of Hong Kong Post Customer Liaison Group until 31 December 2009.

### **Spring Reception**

13. The Chairman invited members to attend the Sha Tin District Council and Sha Tin District Office Joint Spring Reception held at 4:45 pm on 10 February 2009.

### **Visit of Under Secretary for Home Affairs**

14. Under Secretary for Home Affairs stated that the work of the Bureau would be focused on three aspects, namely cultural development, promotion of social enterprise and enhancing communication with people from different sectors.

15. A member pointed out the limitation on allocating the funding of district minor works and suggested conducting a seminar to review the operation of the 18 districts as well as enhancing the efficiency of consultant in order to provide greater support to District Council. Another member asked about the community hall cum sports complex project at Area 14B and suggested developing Sha Tin into a sports city. Some members proposed to develop water sports at Shing Mun River. Regarding the arts and cultural development, suggestions were made to inject resources into 18 districts for building performing venues and promoting cultural development in local community. A member stated that the promotion of national education should be targeted at different age groups and parental involvement was important. Some members also raised questions on the use of vacant school premises for providing elderly home, helping Hong Kong people to ride out the financial tsunami, the building of Ma On Shan heated pool, reinforcing the control on internet and the implementation of minimum wage.

16. Regarding the cultural development, the Undersecretary for Home Affairs said that software would be provided through the promotion of cultural activities by local cultural organization. Arts element would also be enhanced in the new Senior Secondary Curriculum. She added that public libraries would be opened for seven days starting from April this year. She said that the Architectural Services Department was conducting a feasibility study on the project at Area 14B. She mentioned that priority of providing local facilities was considered according to the needs of local community as well as the overall plan of the whole territory. Regarding the issue of minimum wage, she said that the Minimum Wage Commission would collect opinion to formulate a feasible option acceptable to both employer and employee. Moreover, she stated that the greening work for Shing Mun River would be considered for inclusion in the district works. She emphasized that cross-border national education activities mentioned in this year's policy address could allow students to understand more about their mother country. Lastly, she agreed that the

basic value should be strengthened for the next generation.

Question put forward by Ms LAM Chung-yan on nuisance caused to the public by wild monkeys

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17. Ms LAM stated that the nuisance caused by monkeys in Hin Ka Area was serious and suggested the department to consider moving the monkeys to a place suitable for their living. A member complained that the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) was inefficient in handling monkey nuisance and asked for the termination of monkey feeding licence. Some members suggested the department to build a monkey island in the Centre of Shing Mun Reservoir, continue the sterilization work and train volunteers to feed monkeys.

18. Representative of AFCD replied that manpower was increased to expel the monkeys in Hin Ka Area. AFCD would keep in close contact with Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD), Housing Department and the management companies within the district in deterring monkeys from seeking food in the area. Apart from conducting sterilization, resources were put to catch monkeys in Sha Tin and reinforce prosecution against monkey feeding. He further said that a talk on prevention of monkey nuisance was held at Kai Tin Court and district council was advised to display warning sign in the area. He remarked that there were still 15 monkey-feeding permits in force and review would be conducted each year for the issuing of permit. He said that the permit would be canceled if the permit holder did not submit application upon expiration. He added that a special meeting had been held with experts to discuss the concept of monkey island, which was considered technically not feasible.

19. The Council endorsed the following provisional motion of Ms. LAM Chung-yan with a unanimous vote of 24 in favour:

“In view of the inability of AFCD in solving the long term nuisance caused by wild monkeys to Sha Tin residents, which led to a deteriorating situation, STDO requests the government to allocate more resources and adopt every possible means, including actively considering the option of moving the wild monkeys, to solve the nuisance caused to Sha Tin residents.”

**Question put forward by Ms YEUNG Sin-hung on Imported food from Mainland**

20. Ms YEUNG raised the issue of using fake vegetable origin label to import frozen chicken and suggested the department to conduct a comprehensive review on the

mechanism of food origin management, strengthen the border inspection, reinforce the cooperation between FEHD and the Customs and Excise Department (C&ED) in the inspection of imported food and increase the penalty by revising the Harmful Substances in Food (Amendment) Regulation 2008.

21. Representative of C&ED replied that 30 to 40 vegetable lorries would be inspected randomly each day and risk management and intelligence collection were the main tactics used in inspection. Apart from the cooperation with FEHD and AFCD, the department would also exchange information with relevant mainland authorities or even conduct joint operation. He added that staff was deployed to inspect shops and only two cases of smuggling by vegetable lorry were found.

22. Representative of FEHD said that mainland farms were strictly adhered to the requirements for supplying vegetables to Hong Kong. Staff was deployed to the mainland periodically for checking vegetables. Recently, mainland authority also reinforced the inspection of exported vegetables. He also stated that recommendations on revising the Food Safety Ordinance would be submitted to the Legislative Council in the middle of the year.

23. The Council endorsed the following provisional motion of Ms. YEUNG Sin-hung with a unanimous vote of 23 in favour:

“STDO strongly requests FEHD and C&ED to reinforce the inspection of imported food in order to protect the health of the public.”

### **By-election of Tai Wai Constituency**

24. Sha Tin District Officer said that the By-election of Tai Wai Constituency would be conducted on 29 March 2009.

### **Motion of Thanks**

25. The Council passed a motion to thank Mr. LAI Chi-wah, Sha Tin District Officer, for his contribution in Sha Tin during his term of office.

### **Next Meeting**

26. The next meeting would be held at 2:30 p.m. on 26 March 2009.