

Summary of the Minutes of the 2nd Meeting of Sha Tin District Council (2009 Session)

The 2nd meeting of Sha Tin District Council (STDC) (2009 session) was held on 26 March 2009. The major issues discussed are summarized below:

Visit of Director of Water Supplies

2. Director of Water Supplies said that the Replacement and Rehabilitation Programme of Water Mains was expected to complete in 2015, with a cost of around 19.2 billion. After the completion of works, the supply of water would be more stable with less chance of leaking and pipe burst. To avoid affecting the public during the works period, measures would be implemented to reinforce communication between relevant departments and public utilities organizations, assess the impact on environment, set up liaison group at site and ensure the suspension of water would not last more than 8 hours.

3. Regarding a petition letter requesting Water Supplies Department (WSD) to reinforce the monitoring of Dongjiang water quality, he said that the Guangdong side would ensure the water quality meeting the national standard for Type II waters under the “Environmental Quality Standards for Surface Water (GB 3838-2002)”. While the water treatment processes in Hong Kong also complied with the World Health Organization’s Guidelines for Drinking-water Quality. He added that a multi-level monitoring mechanism would be activated to reduce or stop the supply of Dongjiang water upon detecting any problem.

4. Some members asked about the details of the Replacement and Rehabilitation Programme of Water Mains in Sha Tin, including the length of water mains for replacement, the type of pipe used, the excavation works and shortening the water suspension time. Questions concerning the water seepage problem, management of reservoirs, water quality of Yuet Ming Estate and Carado Garden, flushing water quality in Ma On Shan, the details of Sha Tin Water Treatment Works redevelopment, contingency plan for maintaining the stable supply of water, publicity and education on saving water as well the use of reservoirs and service reservoirs for recreational purpose were also raised by members. With regard to the Dongjiang water, some members asked the reason for adopting two different standards in monitoring the water quality and requested WSD to send more staff to carry out site inspection at Guangdong. They also suggested setting out provisions in the Water Supply Agreement to allocation a proportion of funds for conservation of Dongjiang water.

5. Director of Water Supplies replied that the work scope of WSD was confined to Hong Kong, however, the department would cooperate with Guangdong as far as practicable in protecting the environment and training. He said that according to the existing quota for Dongjiang water, it could cope with the demand of Hong Kong until 2030. He added that WSD announced a Total Water Management Strategy for Hong Kong last year, including measures for water supply and demand management and water saving. The Water Efficiency Labelling Scheme would also be implemented in the middle of this year. He remarked that other departments could submit application for using the space on top of the covered service reservoirs. However, WSD was cautious in the use of reservoirs for recreational purpose because it took a couple of years to reinstate the situation once it was polluted. For the water seepage problem, he said that a notice for ceasing water supply would be issued for not carrying out repairing work. Although WSD was not included in the Joint Office, engineer would also be sent to handle individual cases. Regarding the length of water mains for replacement in Sha Tin, he said that it should be a total of 46 km, with 36 km completed in Stages 2 and 3. However, Ma On Shan had not been included in Stage 4. He remarked that WSD would also try to shorten the water suspension time. Moreover, he said that WSD would liaise with Highways Department closely to ensure the works of both Sha Tin Water Treatment Works Redevelopment and Sha Tin to Central Link would fit in well. Finally, he stated that the salt-water quality was up to standard as reflected in the laboratory result of sample taken regularly from the salt-water pumping station.

Matter Arising from Last Meeting

6. The Chairman stated that some members were dissatisfied with the reply of Environmental Protection Department on the nuisance caused by wild monkeys. The Committee agreed to send a letter again to request Environment Bureau to follow up the issue.

Briefing on Heritage Conservation and Revitalizing Wong Uk Village – Development Bureau

7. Commissioner for Heritage briefly reported the updated heritage conservation work of the Commissioner for Heritage's Office and the revitalization projects in Sha Tin District, including the revitalization of Wong Uk Village. Representative of Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) said that the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) carried out a territory-wide survey on historic buildings in 1996-2000. Proposed grading was given to 1 154 historic buildings and 212, 366 and 576 buildings were accorded Grade I, Grade II and Grade III respectively. He

added that around 60 historic buildings in Sha Tin were assessed at stage I. He stated that a 4-month public consultation was conducted to collect opinion.

8. A member remarked that Wong Uk Village was not the only Qing dynasty building in Sha Tin and the village had moved to a new site in 1987. He worried that the government only preserved the hardware of the building but overlooked its historic and cultural background. Some members pointed out that Wong Uk Garden lacked ancillary facilities. They also asked about the arrangement for other historic sites in Sha Tin, such as the High Rock Christian Centre and the Ma On Shan Mine site. Questions were raised on the criteria in assessing the historic buildings, the cost for daily operation and maintenance of Wong Uk, the involvement of social enterprises in the management of Wong Uk, as well as the handling of ownership and maintenance of historic buildings.

9. Commissioner for Heritage clarified that Wong Uk should be the only Qing dynasty building in Yuen Chau Kok. He emphasized that the government would preserve both hardware and software of the historic buildings, including background and history. He added that ancillary facilities would be provided for Wong Uk to develop into a scenic spot. He quoted the case of King Yin Lei and said that consideration would be made on individual basis in handling the ownership of historic buildings. Regarding the funding for social enterprises, he said that an upper limit of 5 million would be granted and an additional 1 billion would be reserved for the refurbishment and maintenance of the building. As for individual historical building, he remarked that the upper limit of the maintenance subsidy would be 1 million.

10. Representative of LCSD replied that AMO would upload the details of the historic buildings to the website by batch. He said that buildings were assessed according to their historical interest, architectural merit, group value, social value, authenticity and rarity. He remarked that Wong Uk had undergone comprehensive reinstatement works and was managed by AMO under LCSD. For the mine site at Ma On Shan, he said that as it involved different aspects in the development of a theme park, AMO would render assistance as far as possible.

Building Energy Efficiency Funding Scheme under the Environment and Conservation Fund – Environment Bureau

11. Representative of Environment Bureau stated that the Building Energy Efficiency Funding Scheme was implemented in response to the recommendation of building a low-carbon economy in the Policy Address. She said that a total of \$450 million was reserved under the Environment and Conservation Fund to partially

subsidize building owners to conduct comprehensive energy and carbon audits as well as energy efficiency projects. Applications were invited for the above two subsidies starting from 8 April 2009.

12. Some members asked about the details on the application of both subsidies and whether the scheme would cover the replacement of energy-efficient lighting products in public housing estates and the energy saving system in public places.

13. Representative of Environment Bureau replied that the scheme would only subsidize the owners corporations and owners committees of private housings. Areas that were classified as public places, such as car park, were included in the scope of subsidy. Since the scheme was targeted at promoting energy saving, application regarding the installation of energy saving appliances would also be considered. She added that the upper limit would be \$150,000 and \$500,000 for the comprehensive energy and carbon audits and energy efficiency projects respectively. The former one could be applied by both owners corporations and owners committees, while the latter one only allowed owners corporations to submit application.

Confirmation of the Minutes of the 1st Meeting held on 22 January 2009

14. The Council endorsed the revised minutes of meeting.

2008/2009 STDC Draft Estimates

15. The Council endorsed the above estimates.

Financial Account of STDC (as at 17 March 2009)

16. The Council noted the above paper.

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

17. The Council noted the above reports.

Question put forward by Mr. LAW Kwong-keung on Youth Drug Abuse Problem

18. Regarding the replies of government departments on drug abuse problem, Mr. LAW suggested the reinforcement of enforcement action by the police and promoting anti-drug activities in schools. Some members asked about the details on student-related drug cases in Sha Tin in 2008, subsidizing the schools in organizing anti-drug activities and implementation of “one school one health care practitioner”.

19. Representative of Education Bureau (EB) replied that schools were requested to incorporate anti-drug element of the healthy school policy into the School Development Plan since 2009. She said that resource kits were preparing for parents and school staff in assisting them to handle drug abuse problem. She also promised to convey the proposal of “one school one health care practitioner” to EB. She added that after receiving drug abuse incident reported by the school, EB would liaise with the school and follow up closely.

20. Representative of Hong Kong Police Force replied that penalty was increased for deploying youth in committing drug-related crimes. He said that 16 students in Sha Tin were involved in 16 drug cases, 4 of them were arrested in schools and 12 outside schools. He stated that liaison officers of the police would liaise with schools regularly and collect opinion and intelligence.

21. The following provisional motion was passed with a vote of 20 in favour and 1 abstention:

“In view of the worrying situation arising from the increasing trend in the number of youth taking drugs, Sha Tin District Council strongly requests the government to look into the problem and explore measures in tackling drug abuse.”

22. Another provisional motion was passed with a vote of 17 in favour and 5 abstentions:

“Sha Tin District Council recommends the government to send a healthcare practitioner to station at each of the primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong as soon as possible for prevention work and education as well as rendering assistance in improving the drug problem, environment hygiene and health of students in schools.”

2009 Sha Tin Police District Policing Plan

23. The Council noted the above report.

2009/10 Sha Tin District Office Work Plan

24. Sha Tin District Officer stated that the work focus of 2009/10 would be national education, celebration of the 60th anniversary of the founding of People's Republic of China and 2009 East Asian Games.

Report of the District Management Committee

25. The Council noted the above paper.

Observation of Office of the Ombudsman on Complaints referred by District Council Members or District Councils

26. Sha Tin District Officer said that since the complaints referred by District Councils (DCs) and DC members increased over the years, the Office of the Ombudsman on Complaints requested District Offices to clarify the complaint handling procedures. She explained that the Ombudsman would not investigate any complaints lodged by third party on behalf of the aggrieved person. She added that complaints relating to defects in the system and procedure of government could be lodged for investigation. Regarding the enquiries of members on the failure of government departments to accede to the requests of DCs, she replied that members could communicate with the departments directly or even reflect the problem to the policy bureaux.

Next Meeting

27. The next meeting would be held at 2:30 p.m. on 21 May 2009.