

## **Progress Report of the 8th Meeting of the Kowloon City District Council**

### **Purpose**

This paper aims to report on the major issues discussed at the 8th meeting of the Kowloon City District Council (KCDC) on 22 January 2009.

### **Meeting with the Under Secretary for Home Affairs**

2. The Under Secretary for Home Affairs briefed the Members on her three major scopes of work, namely developing culture and the arts, encouraging the establishment of social enterprise and enhancing liaison with different sectors of the community. She also provided the latest information about local affairs which were issues of interest to the Members:

- (i) Community Hall – Judging from the current progress, the project of Government Offices Building in Bailey Street would be tabled for consideration by the Public Works Subcommittee of the Legislative Council and submitted to the Finance Committee for funding approval in 2010. The works would hopefully begin in the latter half of 2010. As to the community hall inside Kai Tak Government Offices Building, design work and approval procedures would commence upon the deliberation of the master layout plan by the District Council. According to the present schedule, the project was expected to start in 2010 and be completed after three to four years;
- (ii) Ko Shan Theatre – To support the development of Cantonese Opera, the Government launched a pioneer scheme by according priority to Cantonese Opera troupes to use the new annex of the Ko Shan Theatre. In daily operation, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department would accept applications from all organisations and bodies for using all the halls and rooms in the theatre so as to ensure full use of facilities. In light of the progress of the project, the new annex was scheduled for completion in 2012.
- (iii) Infrastructure Projects – The ten major infrastructure projects were

expeditiously implemented by the Government with the aim of stabilising the economy. Regarding Kai Tak Development, the Government prepared to submit works proposals of the first lot of development projects, such as the first berth of the cruise terminal, public housing estates and government office buildings, to the relevant subcommittee of the Legislative Council for study; and

- (iv) Power of District Council – The Government regarded the District Council as an important platform for conducting district consultation and valued highly the role of District Council Members in collecting public opinion. However, the Government should strike a balance between the demands of local residents and the overall interests of Hong Kong people when formulating policies and making decisions. If Members could reflect more the opinions of the public, the Government would be able to reach decisions most favourable to Hong Kong citizens.

### **Latest Development of Kai Tak Development Project Review and Detailed Design**

3. The Civil Engineering and Development Department stated that the planning arrangements for the Draft Kai Tak Outline Zoning Plan was already approved by the Town Planning Board in 2007. To tie in with the advance works for public housing estates and the cruise terminal, it was now undertaking preparatory work for seeking funding approval from the Legislative Council in mid-2009 to proceed with the detailed design of infrastructure projects. The environmental assessment report of Kai Tak Development was submitted to the Environmental Protection Department for consideration in late 2008 which covered the ways of tackling problems related to Kai Tak Approach Channel.

4. In recent years, government departments have been investing substantially in improving the quality of water at the upper part of Kai Tak Nullah. Among the attempts were cleaning up contaminated sediments from unknown sources and intercepting drains. Still, bad odor emanated from the Approach Channel as sediments kept accumulating in the area.

5. The environmental assessment report for Kai Tak Development

proposed to adopt sediment bioremediation to eliminate the stench. The technology adopted calcium nitrate to speed up the growth of aerobic bacteria in the sediments so as to prevent the bacteria from generating gas with bad smell. The same method was employed to solve similar problems in Shing Mun River and Sam Ka Tsuen. On-site tests at the Approach Channel confirmed that bioremediation could effectively and expeditiously reduced the stench emitted from sediments, and such effect could last for years as long as the quality of water was maintained.

6. The environmental assessment report also suggested that a hole as deep as 600 meters should be dredged at the end of the runway at Kai Tak Airport to help regulate the water flow and reduce the amount of sediments at the Approach Channel. When water pollution was successfully controlled, the hole would be dug through to allow the merging of water. Since the quality of water at the source bettered and the pollution caused by sediments would be remarkably improved, the merging of water along the seaside of To Kwa Wan and the Approach Channel would quicken water flow and likely lessen the accumulation of sediments along the coast of To Kwa Wan.

### **Early Implementation of Reconstruction of Old Buildings in 13 Street**

7. In view of the need to upgrade the deteriorating living environment of residents in 13 Street in To Kwa Wan and to carry out more infrastructure projects to stimulate the stagnant economy, Members passed the motion to urge the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) to incorporate 13 Street into the urban renewal scheme.

8. The URA expressed full appreciation of the appeal of Members and felt compassionate for the difficult situation of residents in 13 Street. However, it should be clarified that the then Land Development Corporation (LDC) did not make any declaration of redeveloping 13 Street as rumoured years ago. The misunderstanding of residents was attributed to the undertaking of a feasibility study of renewal by the LDC in To Kwa Wan, Hung Hom and Central in the year of 1988-89. In fact, notices about renewal plans of 13 Street in To Kwa Wan could not be found in the files of the LDC upon search. The five-year corporate plan drafted annually by the URA should be submitted to the Financial Secretary for approval. On account of the substantial benefits generated by the redevelopment projects, such highly sensitive information should be kept strictly confidential to rule out the possibility of corruption. To safeguard public interest, details about the renewal plan would not be disclosed in advance and hence, the URA would not give an instant reply to Members if 13 Street

would be included in urban renewal projects.

### **Strengthening Internet Monitoring and Providing Additional Guidelines**

9. Members raised concern about the increasingly wide application of the Internet and the lack of government supervision over the Internet community. As a result, improper conduct such as fraud and deception, exotic display and invasion of privacy became increasingly widespread on the Internet. Members beseeched the Government to establish a specific division to coordinate the work of related departments like the Office of Telecommunications Authority and to require internet service providers to filter out materials from overseas websites so as to prevent the youth from gaining access to undesirable information via the Internet. In addition, the Government should review current law and regulations as well as model on advanced countries to draft cyber law. By so doing, the law in Hong Kong would not grow outdated due to the rapid development of information technology.

Kowloon City District Office  
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