

**Minutes of the Third Meeting of
District Facilities and Works Committee (2024-2025) of the
Seventh Term of the Central and Western District Council
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region**

Date : 23 May 2024 (Thursday)

Time : 10:00 am

Venue : Conference Room
14/F, Harbour Building
38 Pier Road, Central, Hong Kong

Present:

Chairman

Mr YIP Wing-shing, SBS, BBS, MH, JP

Vice-chairman

Mr IP Yik-nam, JP

Members

Dr WONG Sin-man, Mandy

Mr NG Yin

Mr LUI Hung-pan

Mr LEE Chi-hang, Sidney, MH

Mr QIU Song-qing, MH

Ms JIN Ling, MH

Mr SHIH Jan Noel

Mr WU Man-hin

Dr ZHANG Zong

Ms CHEUNG Ka-yan

Dr CHAN Kin-Keung, Eugene, SBS, BBS, JP

Dr FUNG Kar-leung

Mr YOUNG Chit-on, Jeremy

Mr YEUNG Hok-ming, MH

Ms CHIU Wah-kuen, MH

Mr LAU Tin-ching

Mr LAW Kam-fai

Guests:

Item 3

Ms LO Man-nin, Patty	District Leisure Manager (Central & Western), Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Ms BOW Lok-sin, Rosaline	Deputy District Leisure Manager (District Support) Central & Western, Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Item 4

Mr LAU Tak-yin, Philip	Senior District Engineer/HNW, Highways Department
Mr HO Hon-tung	District Engineer/West, Highways Department
Mr CHEN Tsun-yin	Engineer/LED3 (Central & Western), Highways Department

Item 5

Ms LO Man-nin, Patty	District Leisure Manager (Central & Western), Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Ms YAP Chun-yu	Deputy District Leisure Manager (Central & Western)1, Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Item 6

Ms LO Man-nin, Patty	District Leisure Manager (Central & Western), Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Ms BOW Lok-sin, Rosaline	Deputy District Leisure Manager (District Support) Central & Western, Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Item 7

Ms LO Man-nin, Patty	District Leisure Manager (Central & Western), Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Ms BOW Lok-sin, Rosaline	Deputy District Leisure Manager (District Support) Central & Western, Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Item 8

Ms LO Man-nin, Patty	District Leisure Manager (Central & Western), Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Ms BOW Lok-sin, Rosaline	Deputy District Leisure Manager (District Support) Central & Western, Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Item 9

Ms LO Man-nin, Patty	District Leisure Manager (Central & Western), Leisure and Cultural Services Department
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Ms BOW Lok-sin, Rosaline Deputy District Leisure Manager (District Support)
Central & Western, Leisure and Cultural Services
Department

In Attendance:

Ms CHEUNG Kwok-ying, Sherry Senior Executive Officer (District Council), Central and
Western District Office

Mr WONG Ka-hei, Daniel Senior Executive Officer (District Management), Central
and Western District Office

Mr WONG Ka-chun, Tommy Executive Officer (District Management)1, Central and
Western District Office

Miss LUK Ka-man, Carmen Executive Officer (District Management)2, Central and
Western District Office

Ms LEE Suk-han Chief Leisure Manager (HKW), Leisure and Cultural
Services Department

Ms LO Man-nin, Patty District Leisure Manager (Central & Western), Leisure and
Cultural Services Department

Ms BOW Lok-sin, Rosaline Deputy District Leisure Manager (District Support)
Central & Western, Leisure and Cultural Services
Department

Ms CHAN Suk-ha Senior Librarian (Central & Western), Leisure and Cultural
Services Department

Mr LI Yiu-kwan Librarian (City Hall Public Library) Lending, Leisure and
Cultural Services Department

Mr YUEN Wai-ki Senior Engineer/7(S), Civil Engineering and Development
Department

Mr HO Hon-tung District Engineer/West, Highways Department

Mr YEUNG Wai-shing, Wilson Engineer/W1, Drainage Services Department

Secretary

Mr HO Kai-yin Executive Assistant (District Council)7, Central and
Western District Office

Opening Remarks

The Chairman said that as the quorum was reached, he announced that the third meeting of the District Facilities and Works Committee (DFWC) (2024-2025) of the Seventh Term of the Central and Western District Council (C&WDC) would begin and welcomed the attendees to the meeting. He first welcomed Mr WONG Ka-hei, Senior Executive Officer (District Management) of the Central and Western District Office (C&WDO) and successor of Mr MOK Chi-kin, to the meeting on behalf of the DFWC. The Chairman said that in order to identify the attendees, staff of the Secretariat would check the staff cards of every person entering the Conference Room and obtain their respective business cards. Media reporters and assistants to Members should register their real names and mobile phone numbers for the Secretariat's record. In addition, he suggested that each discussion item should be proceeded

in the format of “four-minute question-and-answer inclusive” for a more effective discussion. Representatives present were reminded to deliver speeches and give responses as concise as possible. The Chairman reminded Members to pay attention to and make appropriate declarations of interest where necessary.

Item 1: Confirmation of the minutes of the second meeting of District Facilities and Works Committee (2024-2025) held on 21 March 2024

(10:01 am)

2. The Chairman said that the Secretariat did not receive before this meeting any suggested amendments of the minutes (draft) of the second DFWC meeting (2024-2025). Since Members present did not raise any other suggested amendments regarding the minutes (draft), the Chairman announced that the minutes concerned were confirmed.

Item 2: Chairman’s report

(10:01 am)

3. The Chairman said that there were no items to report.

Discussion Items

**Item 3: Naming proposal for a leisure venue to be completed shortly by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department – “Sai Ying Pun Harbourfront Park”
(C&W DFWC Paper No. 22/2024)**

(10:02 am – 10:15 am)

4. The Chairman welcomed representatives of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) to the meeting. He said that the paper had been submitted by the LCSD and invited representatives of the LCSD to introduce its content.

5. Representative of the LCSD said that the relevant background information had been set out in the discussion paper for Members’ reference. She asked Members to concur with the department’s proposal on naming the venue as “Sai Ying Pun Harbourfront Park” and support the imposition of a full smoking ban at the venue.

6. The Chairman said that he would open the floor for discussion. Members who delivered a speech concurred with the LCSD’s naming proposal and supported the imposition of a full smoking ban at the venue. Their views and enquiries were briefly consolidated as follows:

- (i) They recommended that the LCSD should enhance the accessibility and transport facilities of Sai Ying Pun Harbourfront Park and said that traffic conditions near Fung Mat Road Carpark adjacent to the park were rather chaotic. Hence, they asked whether the department could ensure that the venue could be commissioned by 2025 and whether the works could be expedited, such that the venue could be opened earlier.
- (ii) They would like to know whether signs could be set up in Connaught Road West and Des Voeux Road West to remind the public and tourists of the locations of various sections of the Central and Western District Promenade.
- (iii) They asked the department to provide detailed information on the venue facilities.
- (iv) They said that the venue was located at the waterfront and facilities for children, such as sand pits, were available. They were concerned about the situation where sand particles in the park would be blown away under adverse weather conditions, resulting in chaos.
- (v) They said that the C&WDC had all along been dedicated to converting the venue above into a permanent park and were pleased to know that the venue was finally expected to be completed. It was expected that the department could keep an eye on the repair and maintenance of the venue and consider building additional public fitness facilities there.
- (vi) They asked whether the department would forbid the public from fishing at the venue.

7. Representative of the LCSD first expressed her gratitude towards Members' support for the department's proposal on naming the venue as "Sai Ying Pun Harbourfront Park" and said that Members' recommendations, such as enhancing the transport facilities at the venue, setting up signs and expediting the works to open the venue earlier, would be relayed to the works departments and the relevant government departments for follow-up. She believed that the venue would be well-acclaimed by the public upon commissioning, and that the department would pay extra attention to its operation and maintenance. The department was open to the idea of building other popular facilities at the venue. Noting Members' views, it would heed advice from the public, with a view to optimising the venue facilities. She said that play equipment, such as sand pits, were already available in various venues managed by the LCSD. As the venue was located next to the waterfront, the LCSD and the works departments would refer to the experience of managing other venues and have a study on the relevant precautionary measures, such as covering the sand pits with canvas, such that sand particles would not be blown away under adverse weather conditions. In addition to the facilities mentioned in the discussion paper, a viewing terrace, a multi-purpose activity space and some inclusive play equipment would also be available at the venue. The LCSD and the works departments could provide Members with detailed information on the venue facilities in due course. She supplemented that members of the public could generally take part in various recreational and

leisure activities in parks managed by the LCSD. As fishing was a leisure activity, staff of the park would not intervene when members of the public fished in the park, provided that they did not cause any disturbance to other park users or obstruct the passageways. After the venue was opened, the LCSD would keep a close watch on how the venue was used and further optimise its facilities subject to various factors, such as the actual space, public opinion and operational needs.

8. A Member asked the LCSD to submit the design layout of the venue after the meeting, such that Members could give an account of the venue facilities to the public.

9. Representative of the LCSD replied that follow-up actions would be taken.

[Post-meeting note: On 13 June 2014, the Secretariat relayed the relevant information to Members by email.]

10. A Member said that some feedback had been received from the public who believed that the venue had been abandoned for a long time already, resulting in wastage. It was hope that the department could deploy additional workers and expedite the works.

11. Representative of the LCSD replied that Members' views would be relayed to the works departments.

12. The Chairman expressed his gratitude towards the efforts of the LCSD's staff and recommended that the department should arrange a site inspection for Members to visit the venue where appropriate. As no more Members indicated their intention to speak, he announced that the discussion would come to a close.

**Item 4: Concern over the injury of a pedestrian caused by the detachment of parts from a lamppost in Kennedy Town on 7 April 2024
(C&W DFWC Paper No. 16/2024)**

(10:15 am – 10:28 am)

13. The Chairman welcomed representatives of the Highways Department (HyD) to the meeting. He first invited representatives of the HyD to briefly introduce and respond to the content of the paper. The Chairman then opened the floor for Members to deliver their first round of speeches. Speeches by Members were briefly consolidated as follows:

- (i) They could barely understand why the existence of unknown gas inside a lamppost would lead the detachment of its column door and terminal block cover. As a result, it was expected that the HyD could have an investigation on the source of the unknown gas. Besides, they enquired about the details on the new lighting devices or the relevant equipment to be introduced by the department.
- (ii) They asked whether it was rare for the unknown gas to exist inside a lamppost

and whether an investigation on the incident was completed by the department. Besides, they would like to know whether the department would take any follow-up actions and whether any measures would be adopted in the future, such that similar events would not happen again.

- (iii) They asked whether an immediate and comprehensive inspection on other lampposts nearby was carried out by the HyD.

14. Representative of the HyD gave a consolidated response to Members' enquiries and said that as the unknown gas had already been dispersed when the department's staff arrived, it was not possible to identify its source. The department was aware that the Towngas had deployed its staff to have an inspection at the location that night, yet nothing had been detected. After the incident, the department deployed its staff to have a site inspection on the lamppost concerned. In the light of its internal conditions, it was confirmed that the streetlamp had not been on fire, nor had there been an explosion. It was suspected that the incident might be related to the existence of unknown gas inside the lamppost, resulting in the detachment of its column door and terminal block cover. As some parts of the column door of the lamppost concerned were deformed, it was believed that the unknown gas had infiltrated into its internal structure, creating an enormous pressure inside. Nevertheless, the terminal block, power supply cables and other parts of the lamppost were not damaged, whereas the electricity device of the streetlamp did not break down, so it could still function as normal. Deeply concerned about this incident, the department deployed its staff to inspect the lamppost concerned and the nearby lampposts on the following day and within two weeks after the incident, during which no irregularities were detected. While the incident was not caused by the operation of the streetlamp itself, the department was aware that Members were concerned about the incident. In the long run, the department would keep in view the availability of new lighting devices and designs. Should circumstances permit, it would consider introducing the relevant devices and designs.

15. The Chairman said that as no more Members had indicated their intention to speak, he announced that the discussion would come to a close.

Item 5: Concern over trialling an artificial intelligence drowning detection system developed in France at the Sun Yat Sen Memorial Park Swimming Pool in the second half of 2024

(C&W DFWC Paper No. 14/2024)

(10:28 am – 11:02 am)

16. The Chairman welcomed representatives of the LCS D to the meeting and said that the paper had been submitted by all Members of the DFWC. He first invited representatives of the LCS D to briefly introduce and respond to the content of the paper, then opened the floor for Members to deliver their first round of speeches. Enquiries and speeches by Members were briefly consolidated as follows:

- (i) They asked whether the LCSD would install different artificial intelligence drowning detection systems in other public swimming pools across the territory and would like to know the reasons for choosing to install the relevant detection system in Sun Yat Sen Memorial Park Swimming Pool.
- (ii) They asked whether installing a detection system could help alleviate the impact on the operation of the swimming pool arising from insufficient lifeguards.
- (iii) They asked whether the LCSD had referred to the experience of Kwun Tong Swimming Pool before making the decision to install the relevant detection system in Sun Yat Sen Memorial Park Swimming Pool. In addition, they would like to know whether the department had assessed the possibility of an over-reliance on the detection system by lifeguards in the future, resulting in a delay in rescue should the detection system be out of order. It was also mentioned that as the usage of the swimming pool would peak during summer vacation in July and August every year, they would like to know the reasons for completing the installation of the detection system in September this year. In addition, they asked the department to submit a trial report.
- (iv) They enquired about the costs of installing the relevant detection system in Sun Yat Sen Memorial Park Swimming Pool, as well as the necessary expenses payable to the supplier afterwards for technical support every year. They would also like to know the reasons behind such a lengthy installation period.
- (v) They asked the department to offer more statistics and information on the effectiveness of the relevant detection system and the likelihood of having a false alarm.
- (vi) Apart from cost-related considerations, they said that installing the detection system would provide the swimmers with extra protection. Citing the department's written reply where installing a detection system would not help reduce the demand for lifeguards, they asked the department to identify solutions to the issue with insufficient lifeguards to make sure that the swimming pools could be opened to the public as normal.
- (vii) They said that the Poseidon detection system was developed in France and asked the department to set out statistics to prove its applicability to Asians and indicate the likelihood of having a false alarm easily. They also asked whether the department had devised any training programme for lifeguards to use the relevant detection system, as well as how the department would minimise the impact posed to swimmers owing to the installation.

17. Representative of the LCSD gave a consolidated response to Members' views and enquiries and said that the artificial intelligence drowning detection system adopted by the

department in Kwun Tong Swimming Pool had been developed by The University of Hong Kong (HKU), and that its video-recording lens had been installed inside the lighting devices at the bottom of the pool. Meanwhile, the detection system in Sun Yet Sen Memorial Park Swimming Pool would function by monitoring the pool from a high position with its video-recording lens installed at the ceiling. Indoor and outdoor swimming pools managed by the LCSD had distinctive designs and each drowning detection system available at present was unique. Therefore, it was necessary for the LCSD to thoroughly understand their functions, applicable environment/circumstances and installation requirements in order to have an assessment on whether the relevant systems were applicable in public swimming pools. Previously, the department considered installing the detection system developed by the HKU in Sun Yet Sen Memorial Park Swimming Pool, but it did not take place owing to the thickness of the lighting devices at the bottom of the pool. At present, the detection system was used in four primary schools in Hong Kong and previously, the LCSD's staff had a site inspection at the swimming pool in one of the schools where the relevant detection system had been installed, during which the system contractor had a trial run of the system for the department to assess the performance and operational arrangement of the system. As observed at the location, the system was operating smoothly in good condition and the relevant school gave positive comments towards its operation and performance. After having an assessment, the LCSD decided to introduce the Poseidon system by installing it in Sun Yet Sen Memorial Park Swimming Pool for a trial run to step up lifeguard services in public swimming pools. Developed in and imported from France, artificial intelligence technologies would be applied in the Poseidon detection system to be installed in the main pool and training pool of Sun Yet Sen Memorial Park Swimming Pool where every corner of the swimming pool would be thoroughly monitored from a high position with the aid of the video-recording and infra-red lenses installed at its ceiling. In this way, movements of the swimmers would be tracked and analysed, with a view to determining whether any of them was drowning. If it was detected that someone was suspected of drowning, a warning would be issued by the system immediately and the location of the person suspected of drowning would be displayed on its monitor, such that lifeguards on duty would be able to locate the drowning person more quickly to expedite the rescue. It was expected by the LCSD that lifeguard services in public swimming pools could be stepped up with the aid of advanced technologies. The installation costs and annual regular maintenance fees of the detection system amounted to \$7.9 million and around \$1.1 million respectively. The drowning detection system could only assist lifeguards in monitoring real-time conditions of the swimmers, such that they could quickly locate a drowning person and expedite the rescue. Hence, the detection system could not replace their duties, nor could it reduce the manpower requirement. Nevertheless, the LCSD believed that the artificial intelligence drowning detection system could assist its lifeguards by monitoring real-time conditions of the swimmers. As a result, this would provide the swimmers with extra protection, thereby enhancing the safety of public swimming pools. The contractor of the Poseidon detection system would offer professional technical support and maintenance. Starting from March this year, the LCSD closed Sun Yet Sen Memorial Park Swimming Pool for annual maintenance, during which the artificial intelligence drowning detection system would be installed in its main pool and training pool. While the swimming pool would be re-opened on 30 June this year, the detection system had to undergo an eight-week smart learning process between July and August. This learning process would not have an impact on swimmers using the facilities.

18. The Chairman opened the floor for Members to deliver their second round of speeches. Speeches by Members were briefly consolidated as follows:

- (i) They found the high costs incurred in the installation of the relevant detection system by the LCSD unacceptable. Concerned about the costs, they asked the department to set out statistics to prove the effectiveness of the relevant detection system and asked whether the department had explored the possibility of installing a detection system developed in the Mainland.
- (ii) They said that it cost quite a lot to install the detection system. In this regard, they would like to know the reasons for the LCSD to install the detection system in public swimming pools at present and whether it was related to an increase in the number of drowning cases, which resulted in greater work-related stress for lifeguards. Also, they enquired about the costs of installing the detection system developed by the HKU in Kwun Tong Swimming Pool, as well as its annual maintenance costs. They would also like to know whether the Poseidon detection system would fail to function in an outdoor area.
- (iii) They believed that the costs incurred in the installation of the detection system, particularly the annual management and maintenance costs in the future, were substantial. They would like to know whether installing the detection system could materially reduce the number of drowning cases, whether a rescue operation could be carried out more quickly and whether it could help reduce the demand for lifeguards in the long run. They held reservations towards the LCSD's proposal on installing a detection system and found it difficult to support the proposal at the present stage. If the system failed to reduce the demand for lifeguards, the department should make use of the relevant financial resources by recruiting more lifeguards instead.
- (iv) They asked whether any tendering procedure was carried out by the department when it procured the relevant detection system and would like to know the procedures of having a market survey.
- (v) They asked whether the department had considered installing other detection systems, such as a system developed in the Mainland, during the tendering procedure. They also enquired about the maintenance period offered by the contractor and asked whether the operation and maintenance could be taken up by another contractor in the future. The LCSD was asked to prove that the number of drowning cases and the demand for lifeguards could be reduced upon installation of the detection system.
- (vi) They said that it simply cost way too much for the department to install the relevant detection system and believed that other suppliers could offer options that were less pricey. It was recommended that the department should have another round of market research.

- (vii) They enquired about the lifespan of the relevant detection system. Also, they would like to know whether it was necessary for the artificial intelligence of the system to go through a learning process every year and whether its service would be suspended for a certain period for repair.

19. Representative of the LCSD responded to Members' second round of views and enquiries and said that the department was committed to putting the safety of swimmers as its top priority, and that it had all along explored the application of artificial intelligence technologies to step up lifeguard services in public swimming pools. As a result, there was a trial run on the artificial drowning detection systems in Kwun Tong Swimming Pool and Sun Yet Sen Memorial Park Swimming Pool respectively. The department noted Members' views and concerns on the installation of the relevant detection system. In addition, it was mentioned by the department that the procurement procedures had been carried out in accordance with the department's prevailing guidelines. It was expected that the installation, system testing and optimisation of the Poseidon artificial intelligence drowning detection system would be completed by September this year. Once the relevant installation and system optimisation were completed, the LCSD would invite Members to have a site visit to the swimming pool in a timely manner, such that Members could learn about the operation of the relevant detection system.

20. The Chairman said that the lives and safety of the public were the most precious asset. While the lifeguards were responsible for preventing the occurrence of accidents, the detection system could assist them in noticing things that could not be observed with the naked eye. After the detection system was in operation, he hoped that the LCSD could invite Members to learn more about it and have a further discussion. He announced that the discussion would come to a close, and that the remainder of the meeting would be chaired by the Vice-chairman.

Item 6: Concern over trialling an artificial intelligence drowning detection system
Request for addition of inclusive play equipment for children in the Central and Western District by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department
(C&W DFWC Paper No. 15/2024)

(11:02 am – 11:11 am)

21. The Vice-chairman welcomed representatives of the LCSD to the meeting. He first invited representatives of the LCSD to briefly introduce and respond to the content of the paper, then opened the floor for Members to deliver their first round of speeches.

22. A Member said that restrictions on the use of the LCSD's venues had been more relaxed than before. It was hoped that the department could keep abreast of the times and take bold steps by building more innovative play equipment in its venues. Although the department should ensure that children could play and learn in a safe environment, users of the facilities should also take responsibilities for their own safety.

23. Representative of the LCSD replied that the department was indeed hoping to offer facilities that were more diversified, challenging and innovative through launching the scheme on Transformation of Public Play Spaces. After completing the transformation works in five venues in the Central and Western District, the department hoped that a more pleasant and cozy playing space would be created for children with various abilities.

24. The Vice-chairman opened the floor for Members to deliver their second round of speeches. Speeches by Members were briefly consolidated as follows:

- (i) They said that the Central and Western District Promenade could fulfil the principles of sustainable development. While different sections of the promenade were managed by the LCSD and the C&WDO respectively, it was hoped that in the long run, more inclusive play equipment for children could be set up as far as practicable, such that more children could use the facilities.
- (ii) They enquired about the time interval between the department's reviews on the venue facilities.

25. Representative of the LCSD responded to Members' second round of speeches and said that every play equipment had a certain lifespan upon installation. To meet the actual needs, the department would re-examine the need to refurbish or replace the facilities in the light of their lifespan, actual circumstances and safety conditions.

26. The Vice-chairman said that as no more Members had indicated their intention to speak, he announced that the discussion would come to a close.

**Item 7: Proposed conversion of park and government roadside benches in the Central and Western District into smart benches
(C&W DFWC Paper No. 17/2024)**

(11:11 am – 11:19 am)

27. The Vice-chairman welcomed representatives of the LCSD to the meeting and opened the floor for Members to deliver their first round of speeches. Views and enquiries by Members on the relevant item were briefly consolidated as follows:

- (i) They believed that the intelligent fitness bikes set up in the district by the LCSD were great facilities. Nevertheless, there was a substantial number of elderly citizens in the district and it would be challenging for them to charge their mobile phones whilst riding an intelligent fitness bike. It was mentioned that in Shanghai, park benches could serve multiple functions. In addition to charging a device, music could be played with the built-in monitor and loudspeaker. It was believed that the department could refer to the experience elsewhere, with a view to re-vitalising parks in the district and creating a more vibrant community.

- (ii) They asked upon which factors the department's decision was based when it identified the locations and the number of intelligent fitness bikes to be installed. They would also like to know whether the adverse weather would have an impact on the safety of the charging facilities and whether it would result in a breakdown.
- (iii) They recommended that the department should consider installing facilities with a wireless charging function.

28. Representative of the LCSD gave a consolidated response to Members' speeches and said that the department would install fitness bikes with wireless charging devices in Li Shing Street Playground. Generally, the department would install intelligent fitness bikes in locations with greater pedestrian flow and sufficient space for it was suitable and safe to use the relevant facilities in an outdoor environment. She supplemented that two intelligent fitness bikes in Smithfield Sports Centre were also available to the public.

29. A Member recommended that the department should explore the possibility of storing the electricity generated by the intelligent fitness bikes, such that it could be used by the lighting systems at the venue, with a view to saving energy and promoting the idea of environmental protection.

30. Representative of the LCSD replied that Members' views had been noted.

31. The Vice-chairman said that as no more Members had indicated their intention to speak, he announced that the discussion would come to a close.

Item 8: Concern over the aging and maintenance of public play facilities in the Central and Western District

(C&W DF WC Paper No. 18/2024)

(11:19 am – 11:30 am)

32. The Vice-chairman welcomed representatives of the LCSD to the meeting. He first invited representatives of the LCSD to briefly introduce and respond to the content of the paper, then opened the floor for Members to express their views and raise enquiries. Speeches by Members were briefly consolidated as follows:

- (i) They said that some feedback had been received from residents who mentioned that damaged playground facilities might pose a hazard to children, and that the department's staff had not been detail-minded enough during regular inspections on the venue facilities. As it always took a considerable amount of time for the department to order materials, the repair works of some damaged facilities could not be completed, resulting in lengthy closures. The situation was not satisfactory at all.

- (ii) They said that the design of various parks was more or less the same, therefore they did not understand why there would always be insufficient maintenance materials and asked whether there was a warehouse for the department to store standard materials. As many mats were loosened in Forbes Street Playground, it was recommended that the department should instead choose to place one single piece of mat, apply materials that were of a higher quality and adopt a new design. Furthermore, they would like to know whether the security staff at the venue would report any damages of the facilities to the department.
- (iii) They would like to know when the LCSD would have an inspection on the venue facilities, the number of inspections taken and the frequency of these inspections. As set out in the discussion paper, Members found that facilities in 16 public playgrounds in the district were ageing. In this regard, they enquired about the follow-up actions taken by the department.

33. Representative of the LCSD gave a consolidated response to Members' speeches and said that Members' views had been noted, and that the relevant staff would be reminded to be more detail-minded during regular inspections on the venue in the future. In response to the enquiry where a considerable amount of time was required to repair the children play equipment, she said that it would generally take longer if some spare parts had to be delivered from overseas or if a large-scale replacement of facilities was in place. On the other hand, it would take around two to three weeks for the works departments to complete small-scale repair works. Should venue staff be aware of any damages, the case would be referred to the relevant works departments for follow-up immediately, with a view to repairing the damaged facilities as soon as possible. As regards the relevant facilities to be repaired as mentioned in the discussion paper by Members, she said that while some of the facilities were expected to be repaired by June this year, it might take longer to complete the works involving ageing facilities as they might have to be refurbished or replaced entirely.

34. A Member asked the LCSD to enhance the transparency of the progress of its repair works by posting notices or uploading information on its website, such that members of the public could be aware of their completion time. In addition, they said that members of the public were not aware of the reasons behind the long-term closure of Sai On Lane Rest Garden and believed that it was a waste of precious space. After the improvement works on the facilities in Witty Street Children's Playground had been completed, some members of the public requested that additional shading facilities be set up there. As a result, they would like to know the rationale behind the department's decision when the works layout was planned and hoped that the department could consider the issue from a citizen's perspective.

35. Representative of the LCSD replied that the department had noted the views on setting up additional shading facilities in Witty Street Children's Playground. As the required construction period of repair works of various facilities was different, it was difficult to publicise the actual maintenance period. However, the department would inform the public upon receipt of information from the works departments as soon as possible.

36. The Vice-chairman said that as no more Members had indicated their intention to speak, he announced that the discussion would come to a close.

**Item 9: Request for alleviating the serious accumulation of water at Belcher Bay Park
(C&W DFWC Paper No. 20/2024)**

(11:30 am – 11:42 am)

37. The Vice-chairman welcomed representatives of the LCSD to the meeting. He first invited them to respond to the content of the discussion paper.

38. Representative of the LCSD said that in addition to the response set out in the discussion paper, she supplemented that the works departments had once again cleared the sewage in Belcher Bay Park on 17 May with satisfactory results. No accumulation of water was detected in the park even after the Hong Kong Observatory had hoisted the Red and Amber Rainstorm Warning Signals for a total of more than six hours on 21 May.

39. The Vice-chairman opened the floor for Members to raise enquiries and express their views. Speeches by Members were briefly consolidated as follows:

- (i) They said that in addition to Belcher Bay Park, an accumulation of water would be detected in various parks managed by the LCSD under adverse weather conditions. Some staff in Blake Garden, Sheung Wan would cover the water outlets with a basket before raining, such that they would not be blocked by fallen leaves. However, the baskets would be flushed away if the rain was too heavy. Therefore, it was recommended that some weighty objects be placed on top of the baskets to secure their position.
- (ii) As water did not flow into the sewage in Belcher Bay Park smoothly, they asked whether severe water accumulation in the park was caused by silting, which could be solved by clearing the sewage. If not, they asked whether this was related to the design of the sewage pipes, which could only be solved by re-installing the sewage pipes in future refurbishment projects.
- (iii) They said that Belcher Bay Park had been flooded at least twice when an Exceptionally Severe Rainstorm (ESR) and a typhoon struck Hong Kong last September. It was believed that there were issues with the design of the sewage pipes in the park, such that they were unable to effectively discharge rainwater brought about by an ESR under extreme weather conditions. It was recommended that the department should improve the design of the sewage pipes, enlarge the water outlets and place a filter on top of them to block fallen leaves.
- (iv) They enquired about whether the sewage in Belcher Park could effectively discharge rainwater brought about by an ESR. As there was an intense growth of trees in the park, it was recommended that the department should step up its

efforts in tree pruning by removing fallen branches and leaves, particularly before the rainy and typhoon seasons, such that the water outlets would not be blocked by fallen leaves.

- (v) They said that water would accumulate in Belcher Bay Park in case of a heavy rain. Hence, they asked whether that was due to an insufficient capacity of the pipes to discharge rainwater under a rainstorm or a blockage of the water outlets by silt or fallen leaves. They would also like to know how the department would tackle the issue in the long run.

40. Representative of the LCSD gave a consolidated response to Members' speeches and said that the department had invited the maintenance departments to clear the sewage pipes in Belcher Bay Park last October comprehensively where drainage trucks and devices were placed in the deeper areas of the sewage to clear the silt and fallen leaves, thereby enhancing their discharging capacity. Noting Members' recommendation on the installation of a filter on top of the drainage outlet to block fallen leaves, the department would contact the works departments to follow up on the issue and have a study on an enhancement proposal.

41. The Vice-chairman said that as no more Members had indicated their intention to speak, he announced that the discussion would come to a close, and that the remainder of the meeting would be chaired by the Chairman.

Information Items

Item 10: Report on the usage of the public libraries in the Central and Western District by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (C&W DFWC Paper No. 19/2024)

(11:42 am)

42. The Chairman said that the paper had been submitted by the LCSD and asked Members to note the paper concerned.

Item 11: Report on the management of recreational and sports facilities in the Central and Western District by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (C&W DFWC Paper No. 21/2024)

(11:42 am)

43. The Chairman said that the paper had been submitted by the LCSD and asked Members to note the paper concerned.

**Item 12: Briefing on district minor works by the Central and Western District Office
(C&W DFWC Paper No. 23/2024)**

(11:42 am)

44. The Chairman said that the paper had been submitted by the C&WDO and asked Members to note the paper concerned.

Written Question

**Item 13: Concern over the greening works in the Central and Western District (potted plants and large planters at roadsides)
(C&W DFWC Written Question No. 2/2024)**

(11:43 am)

45. The Chairman said that the C&WDO and the LCSD had given respective written replies in response to the written question submitted by Members. The Chairman asked Members to note the paper concerned.

Item 14: Any other business

(11:43 am – 11:45 am)

46. The Chairman asked whether Members would like to raise any other business for discussion.

47. A Member said that in a recent visit to a library in Nansha District, Guangzhou, it was found that members of the public were motivated to visit the library, equipped with advanced facilities, to enjoy reading in a pleasant environment. Deeply impressed by the rapid development in the Mainland, she encouraged everybody to have more site visits to the Greater Bay Area.

48. A Member recommended that the C&WDO should set out detailed information and the progress of each project in its next presentation session on the District Minor Works Programme.

49. Representative of the C&WDO replied that reference would be made to Members' views, and that the relevant information would be set out in the next report.

Item 15: Date of the next meeting

(11:45 am)

50. The Chairman said that the next meeting would be held on 11 July 2024. The paper submission deadline would be 25 June 2024.

51. The meeting ended at 11:45 am.

The minutes were confirmed on 11 July 2024

Chairman: Mr YIP Wing-shing, SBS, BBS, MH, JP

Secretary: Mr HO Kai-yin

Central and Western District Council Secretariat
July 2024