Minutes of the Third Meeting of the Seventh Term Central and Western District Council <u>Hong Kong Special Administrative Region</u>

Date:	9 May 2024 (Thursday)	
Time:	10:00 am	
Venue:	Central and Western District (14/F, Harbour Building 38 Pier Road, Central, Hong F	
Present:		
<u>Chairman</u> Mr LEUNG C	Chee-kay, David, JP I	District Officer (Central and Western)
<u>Members</u>		
Dr WONG Sin	n-man, Mandy	
Mr NG Yin		
Mr LUI Hung	-pan	
Mr LEE Chi-h	nang, Sidney, MH	
Mr QIU Song	-qing, MH	
Ms JIN Ling,	MH	
Mr SHIH Jan	Noel	
Mr WU Man-	hin	
Dr ZHANG Z	long	
Ms CHEUNG	i Ka-yan	
Dr CHAN Kir	n-keung, Eugene, SBS, BBS, JP	
Dr FUNG Kar	r-leung	
Mr YOUNG C	Chit-on, Jeremy	
Mr YEUNG H	Hoi-wing	
Mr YEUNG H	Hok-ming, MH	
Mr YIP Wing	-shing, SBS, BBS, MH, JP	
Mr IP Yik-nar	m, JP	
Ms CHIU Wa	h-kuen, MH	
Mr LAU Tin-o	ching	
Mr LAW Kan	n-fai	

Item 2 Ms YU Po-mei, Clarice, JP Mr KWONG Man-lam, Kenneth

<u>Item 3</u> Mr YUEN Wai-ki

Mr WONG Ka-hei, Daniel

Mr WONG Ka-chun, Tommy

<u>Item 4</u> Dr LAM Wai-kwok

Dr LEUNG Lai-kwan, Queenie

Mr KONG Chiu-kin, Felix

Ms CHEUNG Hoi-wun

Ms WONG Siu-mee, Erica

In attendance:

Mr WONG Wai-shun District Commander (Central District), Hong Kong Police Force Police Community Relations Officer (Central District), Mr KO Kwok-kuen Hong Kong Police Force District Commander (Western District) Mr LEUNG Lincoln Hong Kong Police Force Mr WAN Fu-kwan Police Community Relations Officer (Western District), Hong Kong Police Force Mr YUEN Wai-ki Senior Engineer / 7 (South), doubling up as Chief Engineer / South 3, **Civil Engineering and Development Department** Mr PAU Chung-on District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Central/Western), Food and Environmental Hygiene Department Ms TSE Wing-wah Health Inspector (Pest Control) Central/Western, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department District Leisure Manager (Central and Western), Ms LO Man-nin, Patty Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Director of Buildings Senior Building Surveyor / A4, Buildings Department

Senior Engineer / 7 (South), doubling up as Chief Engineer / South 3, Civil Engineering and Development Department Senior Executive Officer (District Management), Central and Western District Office Executive Officer (District Management) 1, Central and Western District Office

Senior Forensic Pathologist (Hong Kong Division) 2, Department of Health Medical and Health Officer (Emergency Preparedness and District Relations) 2, Department of Health Senior Project Manager 234, Architectural Services Department Project Manager 275, Architectural Services Department Senior Town Planner / Hong Kong 5, Planning Department Miss TSE Wing-ka, Angel Miss LIU Yuen-ting, Katherine

Secretary

Ms CHEUNG Kwok-ying, Sherry

Chief Transport Officer / Hong Kong, Transport Department Assistant District Officer (Central and Western) Assistant District Officer (Central and Western) (designate)

Senior Executive Officer (District Council), Central and Western District Office <u>The Chairman</u> said that <u>Miss TSE Wing-ka, Angel</u> would be transferred out from the Central and Western District Office (C&WDO) by the end of May, and the post of Assistant District Officer (Central and Western) would then be taken up by <u>Miss LIU Yuen-</u> <u>ting, Katherine</u>. <u>The Chairman</u> took the opportunity to thank <u>Miss TSE Wing-ka, Angel</u> for her hard work and dedication in the past two years.

Item 1: Confirmation of the minutes of the second meeting of the Central and Western District Council (C&WDC) held on 14 March 2024

(10:00 am to 10:01 am)

2. <u>The Chairman</u> said that the Secretariat had emailed the draft minutes of the second meeting of the C&WDC to Members. As Members did not have any comments on the draft minutes, <u>the Chairman</u> announced that the minutes were confirmed.

Discussion items

Item 2: Meeting the Director of Buildings

(10:01 am to 11:20 am)

 <u>The Chairman</u> welcomed <u>Ms YU Po Mei, Clarice</u>, Director of Buildings and <u>Mr</u> <u>KWONG Man-lam, Kenneth</u>, Senior Building Surveyor /A4 of the Buildings Department (BD) to the meeting for introducing the BD's work.

4. <u>Ms YU</u> introduced the BD's work with presentation slides (see Appendix 1).

5. <u>Mr YEUNG Hok-ming</u> said that there were more old buildings in the Central and Western District (C&W District). Despite multiple works carried out by the BD in the past, there were simply too many issues concerning these old buildings to be resolved. He hoped to raise the issue of signboards at "three-nil" buildings with the BD. In theory, the erection of all signboards must comply with the requirements set out by the BD. Nevertheless, merely satisfying those technical requirements did not necessarily mean that such an erection was a proper one. Incorporated owners (IOs) reflected that some erections of signboards satisfied the BD's technical requirements but prior consent from owners or IOs had not been obtained. If the shop tenants closed down their businesses and left, the IOs would become responsible for removing the signboards. The BD might refer to the practice of the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department, which required the erection of a signboard to satisfy technical requirements, to obtain approval of the external wall owner or the IOs, and, where necessary, to collect a deposit on removing the signboard in the future to safeguard the IOs.

6. Secondly, <u>Mr YEUNG Hok-ming</u> said that many "three-nil" buildings still lacked IOs by the application deadline of Operation Building Bright 2.0 (OBB 2.0). These buildings were thus unable to join BD's latest programmes. It was understood that there were two categories of buildings under OBB 2.0. Category 1 covered buildings whose owners were prepared to carry out the prescribed inspection and repair works on a voluntary basis. Category 2 covered buildings selected by the BD based on risk assessment. The BD would exercise its statutory power to arrange consultants and contractors to carry out the necessary inspection and repair works on behalf of these owners. He suggested that the BD should be more proactive in inspecting more "three-nil" buildings and carrying out repair works where necessary.

7. Besides, <u>Mr YEUNG Hok-ming</u> appreciated that the BD proactively arranged contractors to inspect "three-nil" buildings under OBB 2.0. But no similar service was provided under the Fire Safety Improvement Works Subsidy Scheme (FSW Scheme). Notwithstanding the presence of fire hazards, some "three-nil" buildings could not apply for the subsidy under the FSW Scheme due to the lack of IOs or the non-cooperation of some owners. Thus, he suggested that the BD should proactively carry out improvement works and charge the owners for the relevant cost to remove the hazards.

8. Lastly, <u>Mr YEUNG Hok-ming</u> also raised an issue over the departments' division of labour. Currently, the BD and the Fire Services Department (FSD) were responsible for the fire safety designs, and fire service installation and equipment of buildings. IOs or owners frequently had to contact these two departments at the same time. If the departments might cooperate to notify IOs or owners of the need to carry out improvement works at one go, it would be more effective and efficient in tackling the fire safety issues of "three-nil" buildings.

9. <u>Ms YU</u> responded that the BD had introduced new measures to deal with the issue. For example, there was a short text printed on the minor works application form

reminding applicants to take note of the relevant provisions in the deed of mutual covenant of the building, and to inform the IOs of the building before commencing the minor work. Regarding the removal of signboards, the BD would take law enforcement actions after receiving a report and issue a Dangerous Structure Removal Notice (DSRN) to the signboard owner. If the DSRN had not been complied with after its expiry, the BD might arrange a government contractor to remove the signboard concerned and recover any expenses incurred in the removal and in the disposal of the materials from the signboard owner afterwards.

10. Besides, Ms YU said that there was a time limit for making OBB 2.0 applications. There were also regulations on the number of subsidised buildings and the amount of subsidies given out. If a building did not apply for OBB 2.0 before the deadline, it would not be able to join this round of the subsidy programme. Regarding the fire safety improvement works required under the Fire Safety Directions (Directions), the existing law did not authorise the BD to carry out fire safety improvement works for and on behalf of the owners of the buildings not complying with the Directions. The BD had been working with the Security Bureau and the FSD to propose amendments to the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance, and to introduce an amendment bill into the Legislative Council as soon as possible. Ms YU hoped that, after the enactment of the amendment bill, the BD could work with the FSD to carry out improvement works for more "three-nil" buildings. But she remarked that owners remain responsible for complying with the Directions. Furthermore, it was understood that some individual owners had obstructed other owners from arranging fire safety improvement works. If there was evidence such as meeting minutes proving the same, the BD would consider this factor when carrying out prosecution in the future.

11. <u>Mr IP Yik-nam</u> raised three issues:

(i) The Joint Office for Investigation of Water Seepage Complaints (JO) investigated a water seepage complaint in three stages: Stage I was a moisture investigation, Stage II was an initial investigation, and Stage III was a professional investigation. Last year, the JO streamlined the investigation procedures to expedite the handling of water seepage cases. After Stage I was completed, Stage II and Stage III originally to be conducted sequentially were now carried out in parallel. This new set of procedures had been implemented in some districts on trial basis. He hoped that the BD could provide relevant information, such as the time and

effectiveness of handling a water seepage complaint under the new set of procedures, and share how the procedures might be enhanced in the long run;

- (ii) He understood that the BD handled water seepage with new testing technologies, such as infrared thermography and microwave tomography. The C&W District was one of the pilot districts for the application of these new technologies. He hoped that the BD could furnish information about the effectiveness of the pilot applications and a timetable for the territory-wide application of the new technologies. He also hoped that the BD would furnish more details of any newer technologies applied; and
- (iii) He understood that there were a quota and a time limit for OBB 2.0 applications. Under such time limit, owners and IOs tended to submit applications within a short period. In turn, contractors and consultants in the market had to deal with a skyrocketing number of works, creating a service shortage that might harm the interests of the owners and even the market at large. If the programme accepted applications on a recurrent basis, it would become a regular channel for buildings in need to apply for works subsidies. The market would thus function in a more orderly fashion.

12. <u>Ms YU</u> said that the BD did apply the new set of investigation procedures in the pilot districts. After Stage I was completed, Stage II and Stage III originally to be conducted sequentially were now carried out in parallel. Our record indicated that, previously, 90 days were required to handle 60% to 70% of water seepage complaints. After the procedures had been streamlined, only 64 days were required. Hence, the new set of procedures were quite effective in expediting the handling of water seepage cases. But <u>Ms YU</u> also highlighted that extra resources had been allocated for streamlining the investigation procedures, and the BD would continue to monitor its effectiveness.

13. Concerning other improvement measures, apart from promotion and education, the JO had been reviewing its operation procedures in an effort to expedite the work progress. The JO would also review the penalty for the defaulting consultancy firms so as to improve the investigation procedures.

14. Besides, the BD had been hiring service providers of the new testing technologies. But consultancy service fee had experienced a dramatic rise in recent years, which might indicate that there were insufficient service providers in the market to satisfy the huge service demand of the BD. Regarding OBB 2.0, <u>Ms YU</u> understood that the public would like to obtain government subsidy to carry out works in promotion of building safety. Nevertheless, owners remained responsible for the proper management and maintenance of buildings. Public resources should be well utilised to effectively help those buildings genuinely in need.

15. <u>Mr LEE Chi-hang, Sidney</u> said that it was time-consuming and costly to tackle water seepage cases by civil litigation. He suggested setting up a tribunal for adjudicating water seepages in buildings to streamline relevant procedures, to lessen the financial burden of members of the public, and to expedite the handling process. He added that the BD adhered to a very strict standard when conducting investigations, which might be way higher than the balance of probabilities, the standard of proof required in civil litigation. It might be more effective for water seepage cases to be adjudicated in a designated tribunal. He also hoped that the BD could indicate whether they supported the setting up of such a tribunal.

16. <u>Ms YU</u> said that the relevant tribunal had already been set up in the Judiciary to deal with water seepage cases. She pointed out that the public tended to ask for the JO's assistance, but the JO in fact acted as a law enforcer in handling a water seepage case. There were a range of requirements to ascertain the source of a water seepage case so that some cases, such as those with less severe conditions, remained unresolved. She suggested that property management companies could play a more proactive role in encouraging owners and occupants to cooperate in finding solutions, which would generate a better outcome than commencing a civil action. Since setting up a tribunal to deal with water seepages in buildings fell outside the scope of the Buildings Ordinance, the BD would not comment on the suggestion.

17. <u>Mr YEUNG Hoi-wing</u> suggested applying new testing technologies, including infrared thermography and microwave tomography, more often in the units affected by water seepage. This might prevent uncooperative owners or occupants of the units upstairs from obstructing the investigation progress. He also suggested referring to arbitration in Macao to handle water seepage cases without commencing a civil action. Besides, he suggested

that the Water Supplies Department (WSD) be included in the JO so that no further referral had to be made when handling fresh water seepages, streamlining the handling process.

18. <u>Ms YU</u> said that the BD would refer the suggestion of including the WSD into the JO for the WSD's consideration.

19. <u>Ms JIN Ling</u> inquired how many actionable unauthorised building works (UBWs) were new constructions located in the C&W District, and why there were UBWs being newly constructed. Secondly, she inquired why some owners in the C&W District did not comply with the requirements set out in the statutory notice under the Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme (MBIS), and whether Members were required to follow up on those cases. Thirdly, the briefing session on MBIS and Mandatory Window Inspection Scheme (MWIS) held by the BD in September 2023 was very effective. She suggested organising these sessions regularly to promote public awareness of the scheme. Fourthly, she suggested that property management companies, Members and Care Teams should help mediate neighbours' disputes in water seepage incidents. Lastly, there were cases where fire safety issues were yet to be resolved because of uncooperative contractors. She suggested that the Government provided owners with a list that indicated the performance of different contractors.

20. <u>Ms YU</u> said that the BD did not have any statistics for new UBWs. She pointed out that the BD would step up promotion to reduce the emergence of new UBWs, and hoped that reviewing and amending the Buildings Ordinance would help generate a stronger deterrent effect to UBWs. She added that those cases where building inspections and follow-up actions were yet to be completed would still be counted towards the number of cases not complying with the MBIS notice. The BD was still grasping the background of those complex cases with the C&WDO, and would consider prosecuting the non-compliant owners who had no reasonable excuse. She also agreed to organising briefing sessions district by district to promote public awareness. Besides, she encouraged Members to report to the BD those contractors who were suspected to be defaulting. The BD would look into the situation and offer necessary assistance.

21. <u>Dr FUNG Kar-leung</u> said that he and his assistant had repeatedly dialled the JO's hotline to inquire about water seepage problems, but mostly in vain. Instead of arbitration, he suggested solving the problems in mediation. If there was a smooth communication

between the BD and building management companies, a case might be handled by means of peaceful negotiation. Concerning the MWIS, he referred to a building of less than 30 years old in Sheung Wan that had recorded multiple cases of window falling, and highlighted the aching need for window inspection. Besides, he was concerned over how the Registered Qualified Persons (RQPs) charged their window inspection fees, and how they were regulated. He suggested that the BD clarified the fee charging standard and regularly assessed the qualification and performance of the RQPs. He reflected that some residents were not happy with the inspection method and the fee charged by the RQPs, so he hoped that the BD could set in place a more transparent and uniform standard.

22. Ms YU responded that management companies played a pivotal role in mediation. The Property Management Services Authority had provided the sector with a set of standard practice and promoted the professionalisation of building management personnel. The BD would continue to strengthen its cooperative tie with management companies, to provide assistance and professional knowledge, and to discuss with The Hong Kong Institute of Housing and The Hong Kong Association of Property Management Companies on how to better cooperate with one another. The BD would also contact contractors to explore the possibility of conferring more powers to management companies. For example, when relevant works were being conducted, management companies should be allowed to enter the unit in question for inspection so as to ensure that no structural walls were removed. As for the MWIS, she introduced the "WIN SAFE" mobile application launched by the BD. She encouraged the public to use the mobile application, and provide the fee data of window inspection and repair for reference. She pointed out that, while the charging of window inspection fee was driven by market mechanism, the BD had clear requirements as to the methods and skills of window inspection. Those requirements were included in the Code of Practice for the MWIS published on the BD's website for public inspection.

23. <u>Mr LAU Tin-ching</u> noted that the JO received 45 000 water seepage reports, more than 27 000 of which were screened out. He would like to know whether it was because the complaints were not clearly made, or the complainants were not familiar with the JO's scope of work. He suggested investigating water seepage cases with infrared thermography and microwave tomography. Furthermore, since the current measurement method might not be able to reflect the real situation, the BD could not follow up on some severe cases in a timely manner. Hence, he suggested lowering the moisture content required for commencing a water seepage investigation. As for building repair works, he agreed that the BD should offer assistance to "three-nil" buildings, which were not able to commence large-scale repair works on its own. He hoped that the BD would consider taking intervening actions in advance in buildings with malfunctioning IOs so that owners might ask for the BD's assistance in commencing repair works on their behalf.

24. Ms YU responded that the number of cases screened out by the JO increased because there were increasingly more cases not meeting the 35 per cent moisture content criterion. Nonetheless, the lower the moisture content, the lower the possibility to ascertain the source of water seepage. Lowering the moisture content required precipitately might lead to wastage of resources. Concerning the selection of target buildings under the MBIS, Ms YU said that there were many buildings in Hong Kong, so the BD would select those in need of the MBIS based on a range of objective parameters. If it was open for individual owners to choose whether to commence building inspection, dissenting views would be likely within the same building. She thought that it would be more reasonable to adopt a risk-based approach. The BD would consider a range of relevant factors, including the age, condition, and management of a building, when selecting target buildings for the This year, the BD also regularly carried out inspections of the external walls of MBIS. buildings by using drones, especially buildings with potentially higher risks including those with dilapidated external condition. If obvious hazards were found, the BD would arrange for government contractors to carry out emergency works to eliminate those hazards.

25. <u>Mr QIU Song-qing</u> acknowledged the BD's effort in promoting building safety. But he discovered that, although the BD was very efficient in removing dangerous structures, it was only responsible for removal but not repair. He referred to owners' views that since the BD would not carry out repair works after removal, they had to arrange for scaffold erection again when carrying out repair works on their own, wasting their repair cost. He suggested that the BD should consider repairing for the owners after removing dangerous structures. Owners would be happy if the BD could deal with both removal and repair works at a time.

26. <u>Ms YU</u> responded that under the current law, the BD might arrange for government contractors to remove the obviously dangerous parts of buildings. This type of emergency works did not involve repair. In the future, the BD would stick to its current practice to issue an order to owners for completing relevant repair works within a certain period of time. If the owners had practical difficulty in completing the works by the

deadline, the BD would consider providing assistance. When carrying out emergency works, the BD would try to avoid erecting a scaffold, which would usually not be re-used by contractors employed by owners afterwards, resulting in wastage of resources. Thus, the BD would explore other means that did not require a scaffold to remove loose external parts of buildings. For example, closing adjacent roads, cooperating with the police, and using an aerial work platform to carry out works at height. Under exceptional circumstances, however, some buildings were so dilapidated that the dangerous structures could not be partially removed. The BD would consider erecting a scaffold to cover those external regions that brought obvious hazards. If the building had outstanding repair orders, the BD would evaluate whether it was still possible for the owners to carry out repair works on their own. If it was not quite possible, the BD would consider carrying out repair works for the owners. But such practice was highly discretionary, subject to the degree of dilapidation of individual buildings.

27. <u>The Chairman thanked Ms YU</u> for attending the meeting and declared closure of this discussion item.

Item 3: Impact of delaying the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands project on the development of the Central and Western District harbourfront (C&WDC Paper No. 24/2024)

(11:21 am to 11:31 am)

28. <u>The Chairman</u> welcomed <u>Mr YUEN Wai-ki</u>, Senior Engineer / 7 (South), doubling up as Chief Engineer / South 3, Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD), <u>Mr WONG Ka-hei, Daniel</u>, Senior Executive Officer (District Management), C&WDO, and <u>Mr WONG Ka-chun, Tommy</u>, Executive Officer (District Management) 1, C&WDO to the meeting. The paper was submitted by <u>Mr LAU Tin-ching</u>, <u>Mr YEUNG Hok-ming</u>, <u>Mr YEUNG Hoi-wing</u>, <u>Mr IP Yik-nam</u>, <u>Mr SHIH Jan Noel</u>, and <u>Ms CHEUNG Ka-yan</u> with nothing to add. <u>The Chairman</u> welcomed Members' questions and discussions on the paper.

29. <u>Mr IP Yik-nam</u> said that the Government had announced that the Belcher Bay Promenade would be closed for five years for construction of roads of the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands project. The affected Belcher Bay Promenade would be temporarily reprovisioned to the Cadogan Street Promenade and the adjacent Site of Ex-Kennedy Town Incineration Plant/Abattoir. The Belcher Bay Promenade would only be closed after the reprovisioning work was completed. As announced in the Budget, the commencement of the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands project would be postponed. <u>Mr IP Yik-nam</u> was concerned whether the Cadogan Street Promenade would be opened in June this year as planned, and inquired about the latest development proposal of converting a part of the Site of Ex-Kennedy Town Incineration Plant/Abattoir into an open space. He also hoped that the reprovisioning could be expedited to promote district development.

30. <u>Mr WONG Ka-hei, Daniel</u> replied on the construction of Cadogan Street Promenade managed by the Home Affairs Department (HAD). He said that satisfactory progress had been made. The Promenade was expected to complete and open to public by the end of June this year. Members would be invited to attend the opening ceremony.

31. <u>Mr YUEN Wai-ki</u> said that at the moment there was no concrete timetable for closing the Belcher Bay Promenade. But the reprovisioning proposal remained unchanged. By the time when the Belcher Bay Promenade was closed, part of the Site of Ex-Kennedy Town Incineration Plant/Abattoir would have been converted into an open space.

32. <u>Mr IP Yik-nam</u> emphasised that he hoped the Site of Ex-Kennedy Town Incineration Plant/Abattoir could be developed as soon as possible without necessarily following the closure timetable of the Belcher Bay Promenade, so as to avoid further delay resulted from the postponement of the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands project. <u>Mr YEUNG</u> <u>Hoi-wing</u> agreed to <u>Mr IP Yik-nam</u>'s view on developing the site for public use as soon as possible, without necessarily following the closure timetable. Besides, <u>Mr YEUNG Hoiwing</u> suggested that the CEDD should consolidate a layout plan as soon as possible to provide a continuous promenade. He hoped that, for example, constructing boardwalks at the harbourfront opposite The Merton after amending relevant ordinances, and extending the Belcher Bay Promenade eastwards to provide a continuous walkway. <u>Mr YUEN Wai-ki</u> said that he would relay Members' concerns to the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands project team and relevant bureaux/departments for follow up.

33. <u>Mr LAU Tin-ching</u> hoped that the Site of Ex-Kennedy Town Incineration Plant/Abattoir could be developed as soon as possible. He was also concerned over the promenade connecting Belcher Bay harbourfront and Hill Road, Shek Tong Tsui. <u>Mr LAU</u> <u>Tin-ching</u> said that he previously invited the Under Secretary for Development to attend the residents' meeting that discussed the impact of the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands project to the harbourfront. During the meeting, the Development Bureau (DEVB) said that an open air platform or a pedestrian walkway would be constructed in the Western District Public Cargo Working Area to connect Belcher Bay harbourfront and Shek Tong Tsui harbourfront. He was concerned whether the project would be delayed by the postponement of the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands project. <u>Mr YUEN Wai-ki</u> said that he did not have relevant information in hand, but would ask the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands project team to contact <u>Mr LAU Tin-ching</u>.

34. <u>Mr NG Yin</u> said that some foreign residents had asked him about this issue. He hoped that the CEDD would furnish the English version of relevant documents. <u>Mr YUEN</u> <u>Wai-ki</u> said that he would ask the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands project team to contact <u>Mr NG Yin</u> for furnishing relevant documents.

35. As Members did not have any further comment, <u>the Chairman</u> declared closure of this discussion item.

Item 4: Request for expediting the relocation of Victoria Public Mortuary for the provision of a continuous promenade

(C&WDC Paper No. 25/2024)

(11:31 am to 11:45 am)

36. <u>The Chairman</u> welcomed <u>Dr LAM Wai-kwok</u>, Senior Forensic Pathologist (Hong Kong Division) 2, Department of Health (DH), <u>Dr LEUNG Lai-kwan, Queenie</u>, Medical and Health Officer (Emergency Preparedness and District Relations) 2, DH, <u>Mr KONG Chiu-kin, Felix</u>, Senior Project Manager 234, Architectural Services Department (ArchSD), <u>Ms CHEUNG Hoi-wun</u>, Project Manager 275, ArchSD, <u>Ms WONG Siu-mee, Erica</u>, Senior Town Planner / Hong Kong 5, Planning Department (PlanD) to the meeting. The paper was submitted by <u>Mr SHIH Jan Noel</u>, <u>Mr YEUNG Hok-ming</u>, <u>Mr IP Yik-nam</u>, <u>Mr LAU Tin-ching</u> and <u>Ms CHEUNG Ka-yan</u> with nothing to add. <u>The Chairman</u> welcomed Members' questions and discussions on the paper.

37. <u>Mr YEUNG Hok-ming</u> said that, based on the written replies by the Health

Bureau and the DH, the reprovisioning of Victoria Public Mortuary would be completed in 4.5 years upon obtaining funding approval from the Finance Committee (FC) of the Legislative Council (LegCo). He inquired whether relevant funding approval had been obtained. He said that Victoria Public Mortuary building was situated exactly between the proposed promenade and Sai Ning Street. He hoped that the Government would demolish the building as soon as possible after the Mortuary vacated it and cut short the time of completion to three to 3.5 years so that a continuous open space could be provided for public enjoyment earlier.

38. <u>Dr LAM Wai-kwok</u> responded that the funding proposal of reprovisioning Victoria Public Mortuary was currently under preparation. Subject to funding approval of LegCo FC, the works were expected to be completed in around 4.5 years. Right after the reprovisioned Victoria Public Mortuary opened, the existing one would cease operation. The DH would then arrange for the existing Mortuary building to be demolished and surrender the site to the Lands Department for harbourfront development.

39. <u>Mr KONG Chiu-kin, Felix</u> responded that the reprovisioning of Victoria Public Mortuary involved setting up relevant facilities in existing caverns, thus a longer time for completion than ordinary urban projects. He pointed out before constructing the new mortuary, enhancement works for the interior structure of caverns had to be carried out, which would last for a year. He said that this project was difficult because the site was not large, with a complex topography and surrounded by green belt slopes. Hence, it was reasonable to expect that the entire project would require 4.5 years to complete.

40. <u>Mr YEUNG Hoi-wing</u> inquired about the location of Victoria Public Mortuary after reprovisioning. He also appealed to the DH for arranging demolition of the Mortuary as soon as possible so as to connect that section of harbourfront with the Cadogan Street Promenade soon to be opened so that the public would not need to make a detour. He also said that, while the site area of the project was not large, a 4.5-year time for completion would be too long. He hoped that the DH would work out a comprehensive plan as soon as possible, and expedite the works accordingly.

41. <u>Dr LAM Wai-kwok</u> responded that Victoria Public Mortuary was still in service now and was responsible for handling dead bodies on Hong Kong Island. He said that based on previous experience in reprovisioning Fu Shan Public Mortuary, the DH would move existing facilities to the mortuary newly built. The old mortuary would not be demolished until the facilities in the new mortuary began operation to handle dead bodies. The present project would adopt such practice as well.

42. <u>Mr KONG Chiu-kin, Felix</u> responded that Victoria Public Mortuary would be reprovisioned at a site midway between Environmental Protection Department (EPD) Island West Refuse Transfer Station and The University of Chicago Campus in Hong Kong. He reiterated that the site was not large and was adjacent to hillside and green belt, so it would take a longer time to complete the project.

43. After Victoria Public Mortuary was reprovisioned, the current plan was that the site would be converted into a promenade and an open space, and be connected with Belcher Bay Promenade. <u>Ms JIN Ling</u> was concerned that this plan might not be comprehensive and the appearances of different sections of the promenade might not be consistent. She hoped that the whole promenade would have a consistent appearance, and be planned to promote public convenience, pet-inclusivity, and greening. She also thought that elements including night economy, food and beverage and special booths should be added to complement the harbour scenery and enrich the use of the promenade with commercial value and district characteristics.

44. Ms WONG Siu-mee, Erica said that the planning of Sai Wan harbourfront had been discussed at the C&WDC level for many years. Members, residents and the University of Hong Kong conducted a planning study a decade ago in an effort to provide a continuous and vibrant harbourfront in Sai Wan. Some of the land use concepts covered in the study had already been included in the outline zoning plan of the PlanD. There was currently no relocation plan for the Western District Public Cargo Working Area, in which a temporary promenade would be constructed. The Site of Ex-Kennedy Town Incineration Plant would be converted into an open space, enriched with food and beverage elements. The China Merchants Group had previously submitted a proposal to convert the use of the China Merchants Wharf site into a tourist attraction. A decade later, however, the China Merchants Group was still amending the proposal. In terms of land planning, the sites of Victoria Public Mortuary and the Salt Water Pumping Station in the vicinity were regarded as being inconsistent with the land uses nearby. It was decided that the mortuary would be relocated. Besides, the Salt Water Pumping Station would soon be relocated to the open space next to the Island West Transfer Station. After liaising with the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), the site of the new Salt Water Pumping Station would have multiple uses, which included facilities such as a lookout point and a changing room. In light of this, the Kennedy Town Temporary Recreation Ground would be closed until relevant works were completed. She said that, thanks to the efforts and practical suggestions made by Members previously, the above plans were being implemented progressively. Upon completion of the works, a more continuous and vibrant promenade would be provided.

45. As Members did not have any further comment, <u>the Chairman</u> declared closure of this discussion item.

Item 5: Request for adequate ancillary facilities before the implementation of municipal solid waste (MSW) charging

(C&WDC Paper No. 26/2024)

(11:45 am to 11:57 am)

Work report on collecting public views on MSW charging by the C&WDC Members

(11:57 am to 12:26 pm)

46. <u>The Chairman</u> said that the Secretariat had invited the EPD to send representatives to attend the meeting, before the EPD replied that they were unable to do so. The Secretariat would relay Members' views to the EPD. The paper was submitted by <u>Mr YEUNG Hok-</u><u>ming, Mr YEUNG Hoi-wing, Mr IP Yik-nam, Mr SHIH Jan Noel, Mr LAU Tin-ching,</u> and <u>Ms CHEUNG Ka-yan</u> with nothing to add. <u>The Chairman</u> welcomed Members' questions and suggestions on the paper.

47. <u>Mr YEUNG Hok-ming</u> said that, based on the EPD's reply, the Green Outreach service had already covered 70% of the C&W District residents. But he had not received any promotional content. He learnt that some "three-nil" buildings had put up MSW charging posters and received relevant letters, whereas Members' ward offices and non-profit-making organisations had received thousands of promotional flyers to be distributed. He inquired whether Members and these organisations had already been treated as members of the Green Outreach in the C&W District. He also pointed out that although there were a website and a hotline dedicated to the Green Outreach, there was no contact information of the Green Outreach in the C&W District. He added that the Green Outreach was set up in

all districts by the EPD two years ago in an effort to promote MSW charging and assist "threenil" buildings in resolving potential issues arising from the policy. But till now, no substantial progress or measures had been implemented. He hoped that the EPD would deal with and take enforcement actions against issues like littering and disposal of waste without using designated bags, and take practical actions to implement source separation of waste.

48. Regarding the MSW charging demonstration scheme, <u>Mr YEUNG Hok-ming</u> said that the EPD had implemented a pilot scheme about source separation of waste, MSW charging and distribution of designated bags in "three-nil" buildings and buildings with IOs and management companies in the C&W District before introducing the relevant bill into the LegCo. At that time, the EPD stated in the LegCo that the pilot scheme was effective in reducing and increasing the amounts of disposed waste and separated recyclables respectively. He questioned whether the pilot scheme was a failure so that the demonstration scheme had to be conducted. He hoped that the EPD would resolve the management issues of old and "three-nil" buildings, and take note of Members' views.

49. <u>The Chairman</u> said that Members' suggestions would be kept in record and would request the EPD to provide Members with a written reply.

[Post-meeting note: The EPD provided a written reply on the suggestions on 2 July 2024.]

50. <u>Mr YEUNG Hoi-wing</u> said that, apart from the demonstration scheme and the distribution of designated bags by the C&WDO through Members, it seemed that the EPD did not promote its programmes, such as collecting food waste with more smart recycling facilities. He inquired whether MSW charging would come into effect as scheduled on 1 August, or there were alternative means of implementation. He also hoped that the EPD could inform residents, buildings and relevant departments as soon as possible if new progress and proposals had been made for better execution and handling.

51. <u>Dr WONG Sin-man, Mandy</u> said that she had met the Green Outreach members in a MSW charging seminar. She hoped that the EPD would report on the effectiveness of the Green Outreach's work, including the number of buildings in the C&W District to which promotional flyers had been distributed, the number of IOs in contact, and its effectiveness. She also hoped that the Green Outreach could keep Members informed for better cooperation. Regarding MSW charging, she hoped that the EPD would consider two factors. First, concerning producer responsibility scheme, residents reflected that many products were overpackaged, so she hoped that the EPD would motivate the reduction of waste production from its source. Second, some residents would dispose of oversized waste at refuse collection points very late at night, whereas the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) would also reduce the number of refuse collection vehicles and other facilities very soon. She hoped that the EPD would assess the overall situation comprehensively in an effort to handle waste in a timely manner, preventing environmental hygiene problems.

52. <u>Mr YIP Wing-shing</u> said that he had been contacting many members of the public, IOs and management companies. Their major concerns were the disposal of food waste and the inadequacy of relevant recycling facilities. As single-block buildings in the C&W District were not suitable to hold smart food waste bins, he suggested placing recycling bins dedicated to food waste disposal in buildings for public convenience. He also hoped that the EPD could provide more relevant facilities.

53. <u>The Chairman</u> declared closure of this discussion item. <u>The Chairman</u> said that <u>Ms CHIU Wah-kuen</u>, <u>Mr QIU Song-qing</u>, <u>Mr LAU Tin-ching</u>, <u>Mr NG Yin</u> and <u>Mr YIP</u> <u>Wing-shing</u> had each collected views on MSW charging from more than 150 members of the public in the C&W District from January to April this year. The collected views and data were analysed, with relevant suggestions, and consolidated into a report. The C&WDO had relayed the report to the EPD. <u>The Chairman</u> invited Members to brief on the report one by one.

54. <u>Ms CHIU Wah-kuen</u> reported that her ward office commenced a survey on MSW charging on 22 February in an effort to relay policy information to the public, understand their concerns, and submit relevant views and suggestions to the government. A total of 150 questionnaires had been received in this survey by means of street counters, home visits and meeting the public. The results were excerpted as follows:

 (i) 97% of the interviewees knew that the Government planned to implement MSW charging; nearly 50% of the interviewees thought that MSW charging would help reduce the overall amount of disposed waste in Hong Kong;
 60% had developed a waste separation habit; nearly 80% knew about the waste disposal regulation coming into effect on 1 August; 63% thought that MSW charging would affect their purchasing activity.

- (ii) Regarding MSW problems, 60% of the interviewees hoped that more recycling management stations would be provided; 80% thought that there were not sufficient waste recycling and GREEN@COMMUNITY facilities;
- (iii) Regarding support for MSW charging, 49% of the interviewees hoped that the adaptation period could be extended; 56% hoped that more subsidies for purchasing designated bags could be provided; 65% hoped that more threecoloured waste separation bins, GREEN@COMMUNITY facilities and food waste collection points could be provided; 51% hoped that more attractive recycling incentives could be provided; 63% hoped that recycling education could be stepped up; and
- (iv) 60% of the interviewees had heard of "one bag for two uses;" 50% knew that oversized hard bones and soups should not be thrown into food waste bins; nearly 80% knew that persons disposed of waste illegally would be liable to a fixed penalty of \$1,500.

55. To summarise the views above, Ms CHIU Wah-kuen thought that most members of the public had certain understanding of MSW charging, proving the effectiveness of government's promotional effort. She suggested that the Government should: (i) step up promotion and environmental protection education to develop children's sense of environmental protection; (ii) send personnel to explain the policy in the community, actively guide the public to understand MSW separation and charging in a stepwise and convenient way; (iii) allow the public to understand the rationale and objectives of MSW charging in an effort to promote public awareness of environmental protection and reduce waste production from its source; (iv) enhance recycling facilities, food waste bins and GREEN@COMMUNITY facilities in the district and publicise the locations of these facilities for the public to handle waste at ease; (v) provide more recycling incentives to attract the public to separate their waste; (vi) abolish the requirement of designated bags to avoid causing nuisance to and confusing the public; (vii) set up an enquiry centre and an enquiry hotline for the public; (viii) step up surveillance and law enforcement actions to tackle illegal waste disposal; and (ix) promote home repair and organise relevant courses to

reduce waste production.

56. <u>Mr QIU Song-qing</u> reported that his ward office had set up street counters at the Central to Mid-Levels Escalator and Walkway System, Elgin Street, Graham Street Market, and the bus stop on Queen's Road Central near Hollywood Terrace, paid home visits and interviewed IOs from 24 February to 24 March to conduct a survey about MSW charging. A total of 156 questionnaires were received. More than 80% of the interviewees were above 50 years old. The results were excerpted as follows:

- (i) 97% of the interviewees knew about MSW charging; 46% agreed that MSW charging would effectively reduce the amount of overall waste disposed in Hong Kong; 62% had already been separating their waste;
- Regarding the support for MSW charging, 54% of the interviewees hoped (ii) that the adaptation period could be extended; 43% hoped that more subsidies would be provided for purchasing designated bags; 58% hoped that more three-coloured waste separation bins and GREEN@COMMUNITY collection points could be provided; 49% hoped that more food waste collection points could be provided; 38% hoped that more attractive recycling incentives could be provided, such as the gift items to be redeemed under GREEN@COMMUNITY; 51% hoped that education on waste separation for recycling could be stepped up;
- (iii) Regarding public awareness, 90% of the interviewees knew about MSW charging; nearly 80% knew that the fixed penalty for not complying with relevant regulation was \$1,500, as well as the three designated steps for proper waste disposal; and
- (iv) Regarding MSW problems, more than 60% of the interviewees agreed to set up more recycling facilities, 34% agreed to build an incineration plant, and 14% agreed to set up a new landfill.

57. <u>Mr QIU Song-qing</u> said that the survey revealed that residents generally considered existing waste collection facilities inadequate. The government should extend the adaptation period and provide more subsidies for purchasing plastic bags. Besides,

residents thought that designated bags were costly, of an inferior quality and not functional. The public also thought that the government should: (i) step up promotion and education to raise public awareness of details about MSW charging; (ii) not implement MSW charging because the elderly would not be able to adapt to the new policy; (iii) refer to the charging scheme of Shenzhen to charge according to water consumption; (iv) provide more three-coloured waste separation bins and recycling facilities for the public; and (v) set up points of sale of designated bags in public housing estates. To conclude, <u>Mr QIU Song-qing</u> thought that the government should: (i) step up promotion of the policy to inform the public of the detailed implementation of MSW charging; (ii) strengthen communication with IOs and provide more recycling facilities in buildings; (iii) provide the elderly and the underprivileged with more subsidies for purchasing plastic bags; (iv) set an adaptation period at an early stage after MSW charging came into effect, including distributing designated bags within the first three or six months; and (v) formulate a contingency plan to deal with emergencies in a timely manner.

58. <u>Mr LAU Tin-ching</u> said that he had learnt from the stakeholders of the demonstration scheme that cleaners had to spend two to three hours extra to handle waste in residential buildings. He thought that implementing MSW charging would increase their workload in the long run and hoped that compensation should be adjusted accordingly. <u>Mr LAU Tin-ching</u> had conducted a survey from January to March this year to collect public views on MSW charging from 211 residents in the C&W District, around 150 of which were living in private residential buildings with IOs, around 40 in public housing estates, and the remainder in private and other types of residential buildings without IOs. The results were excerpted as follows:

- 60% of the interviewees said they knew about MSW charging, whereas very few said they had completely no knowledge about it.
- (ii) 57% of the interviewees said that designated bags and labels were too costly, 40% said that they were not confident in developing the habit of using designated bags within the six-month adaptation period, whereas more than 80% worried that the city would be surrounded by garbage; and
- (iii) More than 65% of the interviewees said MSW charging could motivate them to recycle their waste, in the meantime, 55% considered existing

recycling facilities inadequate.

59. <u>Mr LAU Tin-ching</u> added that another study was conducted late last year. Contrasting results from the present survey with the last study, it was discovered that more members of the public knew about MSW charging details now. It was believed that this was because the government had stepped up relevant promotion and education. But there were still many unresolved problems, including the inadequacy of recycling facilities and the lack of support and guidelines given to buildings and management companies. He thought that, while the government had clearly informed the public of the details of MSW charging, more promotion work should be done to explain the policy's rationale and persuade members of the public to support the scheme despite the inconvenience it might give rise. He also pointed out that the government should step up complementary measures on recycling facilities, such as setting up recycling street counters in MTR stations during the morning and evening peak hours. Lastly, he suggested that the government should step up districtwide cooperation and work with C&WDC and Care Teams to disseminate information about MSW charging through Members.

60. Mr NG Yin said that he had collected views from 150 residents in home visits, on-street surveys and residents' workshops. 20% of the interviewees said they agreed to the implementation of MSW charging, 60% opposed, and 20% had no comments. He added that he had reached out to different groups of interviewees in this survey, ranging from residents, building management personnel and cleaners, who had different views on MSW Some thought that the policy would motivate the public to separate waste and charging. recycle food waste, reducing waste production and emission in the long run. The policy would also help promote public awareness of environmental protection. On the other hand, quite many members of the public thought that there were still obscurities concerning MSW charging details and worried that they might be penalised for not strictly complying with government regulations. Some others worried that the cost of designated bags would keep Some interviewees thought that MSW charging would bring them additional on rising. financial burden, relevant details remained not clear enough, and they lacked relevant knowledge and motivation to comply with the policy.

61. <u>Mr NG Yin</u> thought that some residents were not able to adapt to the policy within a short period of time. MSW charging would also increase household expenses and property management companies' workload. To conclude, most members of the public considered that the implementation of this policy at this stage would cause a certain degree of nuisance. He suggested that the government should provide more relevant facilities and step up promotion of the policy details. The government should extend the adaptation period and distribute free-of-charge designated bags for a certain period of time so that the public might smoothly adapt to the policy and reduce relevant expenses. <u>Mr NG Yin</u> believed that implementing MSW charging would contribute to Hong Kong's environmental protection efforts in the long run. But he understood that there were many members of the public who thought that relevant policies and procedures might still be enhanced. He thought that the government had to further enhance the policy to clarify the details and address public concerns, and step up promotion and education to obtain social consensus, in an effort to identify a better timing for a full implementation of the policy.

62. Mr YIP Wing-shing said that he had reached out to around 1 000 members of the public from January to March this year in site visits, on-street surveys, IOs meetings and residents' workshops. The results revealed that 20% of the interviewees said they agreed to MSW charging, who were mostly middle-class people and youths. They supported the government to implement environmental protection policies and identify waste reduction as a long-term objective. However, they thought that existing recycling facilities were inadequate, which were only opened for a limited period of time. Besides, 70% of the interviewees opposed MSW charging and thought that the government did not adequately promote the policy. They were also discontented with the implementation of the policy. They thought that the cost of government handling waste in buildings were already calculated into the rates payable. While Hong Kong was in the economic doldrums, the government did not consider the difficult situation shared by members of the public when implementing Interviewees opposing the policy came from different sectors, including the policy. caterers, operators of private residential care homes for the elderly, property managers, cleaners, housewives, retirees, grassroots, and the elderly. The survey also indicated that 10% of the interviewees had no comments on MSW charging. As ordinary citizens, they thought that they could only accept and comply with government policies to avoid being prosecuted. They worried that fake designated bags would emerge in the market, and the city might even be surrounded by garbage.

63. <u>Mr YIP Wing-shing</u> thought that members of the public who opposed MSW charging lacked full knowledge of the policy. He did explain to them that the policy aimed at motivating the public to reduce waste production and recycle waste with the aid of

economic incentives, in an effort to avoid the need to keep developing landfills and building more incinerating plants. But most interviewees disagreed to the policy because it was difficult for them to change their waste handling practice. Implementing MSW charging might also stir up conflicts between non-compliant residents and property managers, cleaners and law enforcement departments. Mr YIP Wing-shing thought that environmental protection education should start at an early age, in kindergartens and primary schools, to develop children's habit of waste reduction. The government should also step up promotion, and suggest implementing a full-year demonstration scheme in government offices, quarters for civil servants, public housing estates under the Housing Authority, and government-subsidised social welfare organisations. Whether MSW charging should be further implemented would depend on the outcome of the demonstration scheme. In the long run, the government should set up more waste recycling facilities and food waste bins. Under a gloomy economy, the operational cost of property management in Hong Kong had been rising. Management fees had thus increased drastically. Residents were already Therefore, he hoped that the government would suspend the quite discontented. implementation of MSW charging until more facilities were in place and the economic circumstances recovered.

64. As Members did not have any other comment, <u>the Chairman</u> declared closure of this discussion item and said that Members' views would be relayed to the EPD.

Item 6: Minutes reports of committees and working groups under the C&WDC (C&WDC Paper No. 27/2024) (12:27 pm to 12:28 pm)

65. <u>The Chairman</u> asked Members to take note of the paper. As Members did not have any question, <u>the Chairman</u> declared closure of this discussion item.

Item 7: Any other business

(12:28 pm)

66. Members did not raise any other item.

Item 8: Date of the next meeting

(12:29 pm)

67. <u>The Chairman</u> said that the next meeting would be held on 4 July 2024. The paper submission deadline for government departments and Members would be 18 June 2024.

The minutes were confirmed on 4 July 2024

Chairman: Mr LEUNG Chee-kay, David, JP

Secretary: Ms CHEUNG Kwok-ying, Sherry

Central and Western District Council Secretariat July 2024













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- 清拆超過41000個危險/棄置招牌
- 修葺超過 26 000 幢失修樓宇
 (截至2024年3月)







井及後巷僭建	物			
天台、平台、天井及 後巷僭建物的清折行動	目標樓宇 數目	發出的 法定命令 數目	已獲 遵從的命令 數目	
中西區	189	3 216	2 370	



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