

(Gist Translation)

**Summary of Minutes of Meeting of Islands District Council**

Date : 20 February 2012 (Monday)  
Time : 2:00 p.m.  
Venue : Conference Room, Islands District Council, 14/F., Harbour Building,  
38 Pier Road, Central, Hong Kong.

I. Public Consultation on Licensing Scheme for Private Columbaria

The representative of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said that the Department was appreciative of the Tourism, Agriculture, Fisheries and Environmental Hygiene Committee (TAFEHC) of the Islands District Council (IDC) in its support of the proposal of construction of about 1 000 additional niches in Cheung Chau Cemetery. Funding had been approved and preliminary work had begun. The project was scheduled to complete in 2013. She then briefed the meeting of the contents of the consultation.

A member proposed that applicants for licences should possess the right to use the relevant premises/land permanently, instead of five years as proposed in the consultation paper, so that the interests of consumers would be better protected because most of them would purchase rather than rent the niches. With reference to the arrangements of winding up of business as described in the paper, he enquired whether interests of those who had purchased niches would be adequately protected if winding-up was carried out in accordance with the procedures laid down in the Companies Ordinance. On the establishment of "Maintenance Fund", he proposed the levy of a higher percentage to enhance protection of consumers. It was proposed in the consultation paper that if disputes should arise between operators and consumers, the matter should be resolved through civil litigation. The member worried that if large-scale operators were involved, the workload of relevant courts or tribunals would be substantially increased. He also proposed that the time period of temporary storage of cremains with licensed undertakers of burials should be stipulated. He further enquired that if patrons violated the prohibition of burning of joss papers and incense, whether the operator or the patrons would be held responsible.

The representative of the FEHD said that columbaria established after the licensing system went into effect had to be property of the operators. After taking into consideration of prevailing actual conditions, it was proposed that operators had to prove that they had the right of usage of the relevant premises for at least five years. For operators with long term lease or tenancy, purchasers should be informed of the remaining period of usage so that they could decide whether to purchase or otherwise. With regard to protection of consumers' interests, it was stipulated in the consultation paper that operators had to make proper arrangements in winding up of business and failure to do so would be an offence. The requirement should have considerable deterrence effect. As there was a shortage of supply of government columbaria niches, temporary storage of cremains at undertakers of burial services might be longer. It was hoped that after the gradual completion of new public columbaria, the storage time could be shortened. The Department would also consider whether the length of storage period had to be specified. The FEHD had all along carried out enforcement actions in accordance with legislation in regard of burning of joss papers and incense. If it was stated in the conditions of licence that operators were not allowed to conduct such activities, the Department had the right to revoke the operator's licence in case of violations found.

Another representative of the FEHD said that should members of the public conduct worshipping services after receiving cremains and apparatus from undertakers and nuisances were caused, the Department might impose penalty on the undertaker in accordance with conditions laid down in the licence.

A member asked where would the Department stand if residents nearby objected to an application for licence.

The Vice-chairlady supported the Government's regulating private columbaria through licencing as it would help avoid confusion and avoid consumers' buying illegal niches. She hoped that the Government would be mindful of protecting the interests of consumers (by setting up funds, for example), so that even if operators' applications for licence were turned down, those who had made purchase would be protected. She held the view that the confusion caused by private columbaria at present was a result of inadequate supply of public niches. The IDC was very supportive of plans to build niches in Lai Chi Yuen Cemetery in Mui Wo and Cheung Chau Cemetery. The extension project of the former was hindered by land boundary and usage issues despite years of discussion conducted. There were already two places in the Islands District suitable for extension of columbaria, and she hoped that the FEHD would make relevant decisions sooner.

The representative of the FEHD said that it was stated in the consultation paper that the Licensing Board would have to be satisfied that granting the licence would not be contrary to public interest. "Public interest" would include factors such as overall supply of niches in the territory, opinions of residents and local groups, and interests of people who had made purchase before the licensing system came into effect. For the case of Lai Chi Yuen Cemetery, applications had to be submitted to the country park and marine reserve authorities if change of usage and construction of new facilities were involved. Barrier-free access had also to be installed. After conducting site inspection, it was found that persons wheel-chaired bound would not be able to arrive at the place without assistance. However, geographical limitation of the site would make the installation of barrier-free access and slope works very costly (in excess of \$20 million), and the number of niches provided would be around a few hundreds only. The cost of construction of niches there would be a few times higher than the average and the project was not cost-effective. She hoped that the Council would understand the actual difficulties encountered, and the Department would try to identify other suitable locations for building niches.

Another member hoped that the FEHD would conduct comprehensive consultation of residents' opinions before issuing licences. She was also concerned about the supervision of sales of private niches before the licensing system was put in place. The project of constructing 990 new niches in Cheung Chau Cemetery was scheduled for 2013. However, only around 100 niches were left available at present. The member worried that demand would exceed supply quite soon and thus she proposed that the project would be implemented at an earlier date.

A member was not satisfied with the reply given about Lai Chi Yuen Cemetery. He said that around two-third of land on Lantau was delineated as country park area. The population of Tung Chung was more than 100 000 and there was an urgent need for the construction of public columbaria on Lantau. He urged the Government to conduct planning earlier, so as to meet the demand of residents of the Islands District. He criticized the Government for encouraging the practice of cremation on one hand, yet failed to provide adequate public niches on the other. This had led to the issue of private columbaria. He further said that transportation fees were high for residents of the Islands District to travel outside the area to pay tribute to their ancestors. The residents only demanded the construction of about 400 niches in the Lantau area and the member hoped that the FEHD would reconsider the proposal.

Another member said that only around 140 niches were left available on Cheung Chau and he also urged the Department to bring forward the project of constructing niches on the island.

The representative of the FEHD reiterated that the Licensing Board would take into account resident's opinions in considering application for licences. The Department had reminded consumers via various channels to be prudent and discussion would be conducted with the Consumer's Council to step up education of consumers. The Department understood members' demand for earlier construction of niches, and it was following up pro-actively in order to arrive at solutions. She clarified that the planning of country park was not an excuse. Rather, it was an actual difficulty encountered and the Department had also explored various possibilities to solve the problem. In the 2011 projections, there were an adequate number of niches in the Islands District to meet the demand for the ten years to come. She said that the Government would actively identify suitable land for the construction of niches, and encourage other sustainable methods of burials, such as scattering cremated human ashes at sea or in gardens of remembrance.

## II. Question on road safety of Cheung Tung Road

The representative of the Hong Kong Police gave some traffic accident figures at Cheung Tung Road in 2010 and 2011. He pointed out that while there were increase of accidents involving light goods vehicles and buses, the biggest increase was those involving bicycles. In response, the Police had strengthened enforcement actions at that road section, including the use of laser guns to detect speed of vehicles and prosecution of speeding drivers. In addition, the Police had also stepped up road safety education in the area and verbal warnings were issued to minor offenders. In the coming year, safe cycling campaign would remain the prime action target of the district. As Cheung Tung Road was a hotspot for cycling on Lantau, the Police would endeavour to reduce traffic accidents through enforcement actions and education.

The representative of the Transport Department briefed the meeting of the figures of traffic accidents at Cheung Tung Road from 2007 to 2011, which showed that there was no significant increase of accidents that did not involve bicycles. However, there was a significant increase of those which involved bicycles. The Department had all along monitored the traffic conditions of that road section, and it believed that its visibility and the design of road bend met the required standards. The Department was designing a new road sign to remind road users to beware of cyclists.

The Department would also request the Highways Department to step up maintenance of Cheung Tung Road, including trimming of plants at the road side that might block drivers' visibility.

A member said that according to the figures provided by the Police, accidents that involved bicycles at Cheung Tung Road had multiplied in two years. She did not concur with the Transport Department's view that Cheung Tung Road was an ordinary road. She had asked the Department ten years before and the Department had replied that it was a service road, and that the road section would be used when there was/ were accidents at North Lantau Expressway. Thus there were many railings that could be opened if and when necessary, and there were many facilities underground and maintenance works might be required at any time. There would be many major infrastructures to be built in the district in the near future, and thus there would be much traffic of heavy vehicles. Thus Cheung Tung Road should not be viewed as an ordinary road and extra caution should be exercised. She pointed out that Cheung Tung Road was a section of double yellow lines, no sidewalks, with only a few parking and passing places and many bends. If accidents should occur, it would be very serious. She had some information about black spots of the road and she would be pleased to provide it to the Transport Department which she hoped would be used to improve the safety of the road section. If the number of vehicles using that road increased, it would be dangerous and she hoped that the Transport Department would monitor the situation.

III. Question on MTR concessions for ferry passengers &  
Question on concessions for ferry passengers

The Chairman said that the Mass Transit Railway (MTR) and the Transport Department could not send representatives to attend the meeting, but written replies had been provided.

A member said that the interchange concessions provided by MTR for residents of Islands District should be permanent, rather than for six months only. The company should understand that the costs of transportation of the Islands District were high, and that the expenditure for MTR in continuing the interchange concessions was not great.

A member said that the concessions were first provided when ferry fares were raised. The Transport Department thus arranged the concessions with MTR in

response to demands in the district. He said that it was duty bound for the Transport Department to fight for the concession for residents of the Islands District.

A member was not satisfied with the MTR and the Transport Department in providing written replies only time and again. He concurred with the previous member's opinion that the responsibility belonged to the Transport Department. He said that the Department would roll out concessions every time ferry service licences were renewed, only to have it cancelled six months later.

Another member also criticized the MTR and the Transport Department in their failure to send representatives to the meeting, which was a great disrespect of the Council.

A member said that the MTR had reaped great profits in the first half of 2011. As its operational and financial conditions improved, the company thus should not cancel the concessions. He was not satisfied with the reply provided by the Transport Department, which did not fall in line with the figures of MTR.

#### IV. Question on frequency adjustment of bus route E31

The representative of the Transport Department said that the Department had conducted an investigation in August of the previous year after receiving a complaint, and found that the bus frequencies were normal on the whole. Another investigation was conducted on 9 February of the current year which revealed that there were indeed lost trips on four occasions. The Department thus issued a letter to Long Win Bus Company Limited and demanded that remedy had to be effected. The Department would investigate again to see that improvement had been made.

The representative of Long Win Bus Company Limited explained that vehicles breaking down and driver's sick leave had caused the lost trips. The Company would actively hire more drivers and recruit retired drivers to work part time to improve the shortage of manpower. The Company would strive to maintain stability of service of E31.

A member said that he received many complaints about bus frequencies of routes no. E31 and S64. He drew the Company's attention to the inadequate frequencies of S64 departing from the airport to Yat Tung Estate between 3 to 5pm.

Another member expressed his appreciation to the Department for taking prompt actions. He said that there were lost trips despite the Company's having knowledge of an investigation taking place that day. He thus believed that situations would be much worse on other days. He said that frequencies should be more precisely stated instead of just requiring one bus trip in every 8 to 12 minutes interval.

The Vice-chairlady expressed her disappointment with the Company's responses. The explanations of vehicles breaking down and shortage of manpower given by the Company raised her concern about safety of passengers and that performance pledges were not followed through. She urged the Company to conduct a review.

V. Question on safety of Ngong Ping 360 Skyrail service

The representative of the Tourism Commission said that the Government was very concerned of the operation and service quality of Ngong Ping 360 and that a high degree of safety and stability of service had to be maintained, while due regard had to be paid to needs of passengers. Apart from supervising its operation, rescue and travel arrangements in emergencies and provision of advice and assistance by the Company were also closely monitored. Existing notification mechanism required that Ngong Ping 360 should inform the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD), the Tourism Commission, the Transport Department, Hong Kong Fire Services Department and the Hong Kong Police in case of suspension or delay of services in excess of 30 minutes. In the case of service suspension on the third day of the Lunar New Year, the notification mechanism had indeed been triggered in the afternoon of the day and staff of the various government departments had responded. On the following day, the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, the Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services and the Commissioner for Tourism had jointly met the management of Ngong Ping 360 in order to have a thorough understanding of the incident. The Company was urged to conduct an overall review of the notification mechanism, its mechanism of communication with passengers, including dissemination of the most updated to passengers in cable cars through live broadcasts in case of incidents. The Tourism Commission had recently held a meeting with EMSD, the Transport Department, Hong Kong Fire Services Department and the Hong Kong Police to review the contingency measures, methods of conducting rescue, notification and traffic arrangements on the part of Ngong Ping 360 in order to complete the improvements before service was to be resumed.

The representative of the EMSD said that the Department had conducted an independent investigation of the incident and experts had been commissioned to examine and analyze the causes of bearing erosion. Staff members were sent to Ngong Ping 360 everyday to examine operational records and maintenance schemes so as to determine the cause of the incident and to implement remedial measures. Results would be announced as soon as the investigation had been completed. The Department would also closely monitor the replacement of bearings, annual examination and other tests to ensure safety before resumption of service.

The representative of Ngong Ping 360 gave an account of the incident of 25 January and follow-up actions of the Company:

- a. After service was suspended on 25 January, the Company had started investigation alongside with cable car system experts. Preliminary results revealed that irregular scratches on the inside of the bearing had affected the smooth operation of the cable car system. The bearing had been removed and would be examined by an independent laboratory. Detailed analyses would then be handed over to experts and results would be publicized as early as possible. The Company understood that there would be high expectation of the reliability of service once the system was to be re-opened to the general public. Ngong Ping 360 thus decided to replace the bearings of all seven sets of bullwheels and advance the annual examination for 2012. The annual examination would be comprehensive and would take about a week. The whole period, with replacement of bullwheel bearings, tests and annual examination included, would take a total of two months approximately.
- b. Ngong Ping 360 attached great importance to repairs and maintenance and there was strict safety, quality and asset management systems. Apart from instructions from the manufacturers, requirements of local legislations, expert advice would be followed through and acquired experiences would also be taken into account, so as to improve, devise and implement relevant schemes. Maintenance included preventive measures, day-to-day examination and actual repair works. In the past few years, service would be suspended for one day in every two to three months to conduct enhanced maintenance. Annual examination included cable car stations, cabins, ropeways and supporting towers.



- c. There were preventive and automatic safety monitoring systems to give alarms when there were irregularities in operation. Independent experts had been commissioned to conduct a comprehensive review of the maintenance and operational systems. With regard to the bearing in question, it had been in use for a total of 25 000 hours, which was much less than the 90 000 hours recommended by the manufacturer.
- d. Shop tenants of Ngong Ping Village were long-term partners. During suspension of cable car service, special allowances would be disbursed to tenants. Promotions would be held to attract visitors. When the cable car system would be resumed, services would be enhanced at four various contact points, namely Tung Chung cable car stations, inside the cabins, Ngong Ping Village and places where passengers traveling to Ngong Ping 360 would pass through. Live broadcasts would be conducted to passengers in the cabins. He emphasized that the Company laid great importance to safety and reliability of service and he apologized for the inconvenience brought about by the incident of 25 January.

A member asked whether it was the loading of the bearing, or it was the problem with the automatic monitoring system that had been the cause of the 25 January incident. He proposed the provision of warming facilities in the cabin in the future, in light of the very cold weather on the day of the incident.

A member enquired whether there was timetable for replacement of bearings before the incident. As many travelers went to Ngong Ping by bus, he was concerned about whether bus service on Lantau and Tung Chung would be affected by sudden increase of bus passengers. He urged relevant authorities to formulate measures to avoid disruption of bus services on Lantau.

The representative of Ngong Ping 360 replied that the automatic system had detected irregularities at the bullwheel and thus the system was halted, and that investigation was being conducted to determine the cause of the incident. He said that in the future, warming facilities would be provided in cold weather and drinking water and shadings would be provided in hot weather. He further explained that the bearing in question was not due for replacement according to guidelines for maintenance. However, if irregularities were detected, replacement would be made regardless. Ngong Ping 360 had liaised with the bus company and had learnt that it had sought assistance from its mother company and that the Transport Department had also implemented measures to ease the deployment of buses.

VI. Question on destruction of coastal protection area in Sam Pak Wan

The member who raised the enquiry briefed the meeting of the destruction of the area with the aid of computer slides.

The representative of the Planning Department said that the area in question was planned to be coastal protection area in Discovery Bay Outline Zoning Plan (OZP), but not covered by the Development Permission Area Plan (DPA Plan), and thus the Director of Planning was not empowered by law to carry out enforcement actions. For enforcement actions for areas outside DPA Plans, government departments such as the Planning Department, the Lands Department, Building Department, etc, would handle the situation by various means. In the reply to the Planning Department given by the owner on 1 February of the current year, enclosures were set up in the area to prevent trespassing. The Department would continue to monitor the situation in close liaison with other departments to see that any work that required planning permission would follow proper procedures.

The representative of District Lands Office/Islands, said that some government land at the spot had been illegally excavated and cleared, and enforcement actions were being carried out. The Lands Office also found that some plants on private land had been cleared which in itself was not a violation of the lease conditions. No development proposal had been received but the Department would monitor the situation closely.

The representative of the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) said that on-site inspection was conducted in February and no illegal dumping of construction materials and violations against anti-pollution legislations were found. As such, law enforcement actions on the part of EPD had not been conducted, but the Department would closely monitor the situation.

The representative of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department said that the Department had conducted on-site inspection on 19 January of the current year and found that there were signs of illegal clearing on government land. The Department had started an investigation and witnessed had been asked to come forward. HKR International Limited had been contacted but no information in relation to damage of trees had been obtained. Investigation would continue and legal actions would be pursued if and when there was sufficient evidence.

The representative of Highways Department said that on 10 January of the current year, an enquiry of why signs and enclosure of the Department's work in the Kowloon area were found at the location was received. The relevant contractor replied that part of the enclosure was found stolen and a report had been made to the police on 17 January. The Department currently did not have any work being conducted in Discovery Bay and the matter was being dealt with as a theft.

The representative of the Hong Kong Police said that the Police was assisting to look for people responsible for causing destruction on the government land at the location. Owner of the nearby private land (HKR International Limited) had denied being related to the matter. The Police would continue to investigate and provide assistance to various departments. He further clarified that the Police had received report of lost notice posted on the enclosure, rather than that of lost enclosure.

A member said that it was very obvious that the stolen notice was being transplanted at the location to give people an impression that the Government was conducting work there. Photographs taken by residents showed that workers and vehicles were found working at the location on various days and times and she would hand over these photographs to relevant departments. She hoped that the various departments would actively carry out law enforcement actions and prosecution, and the Police would take action against those committed theft and vandalizing public property.

VII. Question on proposed relocation of Hong Kong Jockey Club's off-course betting centre in Yat Tung Estate

The Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC) and the Link were not able to send representatives to attend the meeting, but written replies had been provided.

The member who raised the enquiry was not satisfied with the repeated absence of HKJC at various District Council meetings, and that he would continue to exert pressure with those who were concerned with the matter.

A member strongly objected to the setting up of gambling facilities in area where there were many educational institutions. Three kindergartens had been long established nearby before the Link leased the Off-Course Betting Centre's present

location to HKJC. He also rejected to HKJC's reply and opined that Off-Course Betting Centre needed not be provided in a community. It was the responsibility of the HKJC to look for location for its Off-Course Betting Centre, rather than being provided with suitable location before agreeing to relocation. He hoped that both the HKJC and the Link would follow up on the matter.

The Vice-chairlady requested the Link to give a reply on whether it had extended its tenancy agreement with the HKJC from 2009 to 2015 without notifying members of the District Council.

VIII. Question on relocation of Peng Chau Clinic &  
Question on improvement works of Peng Chau Health Centre

A member said that the proposal of installing a lift for Peng Chau Clinic was first put forward by the Rural Committee in 2008, and that the Hospital Authority had turned down the proposal on various excuses, such as it was not their area of jurisdiction and that geographical conditions had rendered it impossible. In July 2011, the proposal was included in the Transport Department's letter to the Subcommittee on Improving Barrier Free Access and Facilities for Persons with Disabilities, so as to make an assessment on its feasibility and priority. In the January 12 of the current year, he and another member had conducted a meeting with the Hospital Authority and the Transport Department. The representative of the Hospital Authority said at the meeting that the proposal of swapping the location was too large scale and was not feasible. The representative of the Transport Department said that the score given to the project of lift installation was too low and thus the proposal was not considered. He said that the above two replies were unacceptable, and that the present proposal of including the item in the list of assessment of provision of hillside links and elevator system was just a stopgap measure on the part of the Government. He therefore suggested that the authorities should concentrate on discussing the proposal of relocating the clinic, so as not to waste time and resources. The costs of the two proposals were limited and he hoped that the two departments would put themselves into the elderly's shoes and be sympathetic to their difficulties.

The Assistant District Officer (ADO) said that the District Office had along maintained liaison with various government departments to explore solutions for the problem. An on-site inspection was conducted and an inter-departmental meeting was convened recently. Members of this Council and persons concerned with the matter were also kept informed of the latest progress.

The representative of the Hospital Authority said that various means of assistance had been provided to those in need in the past to go to the clinic. The Hospital Authority agreed that there was a need to make a comprehensive improvement and it also welcomed the proposal of installing a lift and hoped that it could be implemented the earliest possible. However, the Hospital Authority opined that the existing police post was only one third in size of the existing clinic, and thus it would not be adequate for accommodating its present workload and would also limit future development. However, the Hospital Authority welcomed any proposal of a more suitable location.

Members gave their views as follows:

- a. A member asked whether the Hospital Authority would take into consideration of the proposal to install lift. He disagreed with the saying that the police post was only one third in size of the original clinic. The proposal of swapping locations required limited funds and it was not a very large scale move. He hoped that the Hospital Authority would reconsider the proposal.
- b. Another member also queried the methods of measurement adopted by the Hospital Authority. As far as he understood it, the Police did not object to the swap of locations if no extra cost would be incurred. He was critical of the Hospital Authority to turn down the proposal two years after it was raised on the ground that the location was not suitable. He was also critical of the departments concerned in not coordinating among themselves to tackle the issue, and that the Food and Health Bureau did not send representatives to the meeting. He proposed the establishment of a working group to deal with the matter.
- c. The Vice-chairlady said that it was stated in the written reply of the Food and Health Bureau that suitable primary care service would be provided. She urged the Hospital Authority to review whether the pledge had been fulfilled in case of Peng Chau Clinic. She hoped that the Hospital Authority would be concerned of the resident's needs and that the District Office would assist in the matter.
- d. Another member said that the issue had been discussed in various meetings for more than ten years. Peng Chau's population was aging

but the Hospital Authority and Food and Health Bureau each acted on its own and would not be responsible. She urged the authorities to deal with the matter squarely.

- e. A member gave his personal experience of witnessing the difficulties of an ambulance in negotiating its way to the clinic. It was very risky and the matter had to be dealt with. He believed that it was technically feasible to install a lift and the cost was not substantial.
- f. A member reminded the Hospital Authority that in case of mishap, medical staff might have legal liabilities.
- g. Another member said that the existing road to the clinic was not a barrier-free access as wheelchair users would not be able to arrive at the clinic on their own.
- h. A member also proposed the setting up of a working group to deal with the matter.

The Chairman concluded that the meeting agreed to set up a working group to deal with the matter.

IX. Question on beautification of seaside promenade in Nam Wan, Peng Chau

The member who raised the enquiry said that the seaside promenade itself was a beautiful place but rather worn out. He proposed murals be painted to make the place more attractive and amenities be provided to make it more pleasurable.

The representative of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) said that the Department was responsible for maintenance of the promenade and gardening works nearby. Common flowering plants had been planted in the area and thus greening conditions were satisfactory. An on-site inspection was conducted with the member. Proposal such as installing seats, covers and murals would necessarily involve other government departments. It was suggested that a proposal be made to the District Facilities Management Committee (DFMC) so that funding could be provided.

The ADO said that the District Office would endeavour to look for a lead department after studying the proposal together with LCSD.

X. Question on Government's decision/proposal to construct the Integrated Waste Management Facilities at Shek Kwu Chau

The representative of the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) gave responses to the enquiries as follows:

**The Government should reduce the quantity of solid waste at source and implement a comprehensive waste recovery programme**

- To provide a more comprehensive and timely solution to the imminent waste problem in Hong Kong, the Government announced on January 4, 2011 a long-term action agenda to tackle the waste management problem of Hong Kong. With "reduce, recycle and proper waste management" as the objective, the action agenda put forward the following three core strategies and the specific implementation timetable:
  - (i) strengthening efforts in promoting waste reduction at source and recycling at source;
  - (ii) introducing modern facilities for waste treatment; and
  - (iii) extending the existing landfills in a timely manner.

It should be noted that all these three strategies were essential to effectively resolve our waste management problem.

- The Government had put forward a series of initiatives with the target to improve the recovery rate to 55%. It would expedite the process of legislative proceedings to implement producer responsibility scheme and to extend the existing scheme, and to reduce waste at source. It would explore the options of municipal solid waste charging scheme.
- Hong Kong compared favourably with many other major cities in terms of recovery rate. Our recovery rate of industrial waste was 66% and that of domestic waste was 40%. There was still room for improvement and the Government would aim its endeavours at the following aspects:

- (i) producer responsibility scheme: the producer responsibility scheme was a major policy initiative in the "2005-2014 Policy Framework for the Management of Municipal Solid Waste" (the Policy Framework). Progress had been achieved in implementing responsibility scheme in respect of plastic bags and electrical and electronic products. The Government would expend effort to extend the scheme on a voluntary basis to charging batteries, compact fluorescent lamps, fluorescent lights and glass bottles, etc.
- (ii) to enhance waste reduction and recycling: in 2009, the municipal solid waste was 1.28 kilogram per capita, which represented a 7% decrease of 2005's figure. The EPD would work towards lowering the rate even further.
- (iii) recovery facilities had been placed in buildings covering 80% of our population. Another 4 000 sets were provided in public areas. Work was constantly devoted to achieve better recovery and waste reduction effects.
- (iv) food waste: one third of municipal solid waste in Hong Kong was food waste. In 2010, schools were invited to sign a "Green Lunch Charter" and encouraged not to use disposal lunch containers and to adopt the "central portioning approach", and to recover food waste in schools. In 2009, the "Food waste recycling partnership scheme" was jointly formulated by EPD and the commercial and industry sector and guidelines were set up. Eleven housing estates had joined a food waste recovery scheme and more were expected to participate.

**About the proposal of looking for various feasible sites for the construction of hi-tech minor incinerators**

- The installation of advanced waste treatment facilities was one of the major action agenda, which included the sludge treatment being constructed, the Integrated Waste Management Facilities (IWMF) being proposed and the organic waste treatment facilities for handling food waste. These were facilities used by advanced nations which could effectively reduce the size of waste by 90%, and to turn waste into energy and compost. The technological and environmental monitoring records showed that these facilities were good and reliable.



- In considering the capacity of waste management facilities, the Government had analyzed in detail various relevant factors, including Hong Kong's geographical features, the quantity of waste produced and the unique situation of the territory. The treatment capacity of similar facilities in comparable cities such as Singapore, and the overall strategy of transport and treatment in Hong Kong had also been taken into consideration. It was after such consideration that the construction in stages of IWMF was put forward. The treatment capacity of the first stage was set at 3 000 tonnes per day. The sea route of transport would lie to the south of Cheung Chau, and thus the route to the north of the island would not be affected. Transport of waste on sea would take only four trips and thus the impact on sea traffic would be minimal. Advanced radar system would be used for navigation to ensure safety.
- The cost effectiveness of smaller facilities was far less favourable compared with large scale ones and the area of land the former needed was also considerably large. The development of smaller facilities would have to face the same issues as those of large ones, such as site selection. After taking into consideration of various factors, the scale of the facilities was proposed as presented.

**Facilities' impacts on ecology, black finless porpoises, water quality and fishery industry**

- The waters where the artificial island would be built did not belong to any statutory or proposed ecological conservation area. To avoid affecting the ecology on Shek Kwu Chau and the coastal area and the marine habitat along the island's coastline, the integrated facilities would not be connected to the island.
- Environmental impact assessment conducted revealed that waters near Shek Kwu Chau were not actively frequented by Chinese white dolphins, which usually had a very large area for habitat. To avoid possible effects on the dolphins, noisy works would be kept to the minimum in seasons during which dolphins would be most active. Monitoring of the work area would be conducted and sea traffic would follow fixed routes.
- The construction of the integrated facilities would only have local and minor impacts on water quality, ecology and the fishery industry. Reclamation would

be reduced to the minimum and no dredging would be required for installation of electric cables.

A member said that Cheung Chau residents were still very worried despite repeated explanations of the EPD. They demanded that better recovery and sourcing separation of waste be effected in the first place. Their concerns were:

- Air and environmental pollution would be caused and residents' health would be affected. Shek Kwu Chau lay to the southwest of Cheung Chau and south-westerly was the prevailing wind in summer. Bad odour and other pollutants emitted from the facilities would be blown to Cheung Chau, whose 30 000 strong residents made up mostly of the elderly and children.
- Tourism was the mainstay of Cheung Chau's economy. If air quality was compromised, the tourist industry of the island would be seriously affected.

A member said that not much commendable work had been done by the EPD in terms of site selection and construction planning. She cast doubt on the decision to build the incinerator and proposed that methods of waste management adopted by other advanced countries should be studied. She said that the construction cost was too high. Harmful substances would be emitted from the facilities and residents' health would be affected. She did not agree with EPD's reply that dredging of seabed could be conducted as the area was not any statutory or proposed ecological conservation area. She further said that assessment of the impacts on the fishery industry, local economy, water quality and marine ecology from the beginning of construction to 2018 had not been conducted. The decision of building the facilities at Shek Kwu Chau was not fair to the residents and she urged the authorities to think again.

Another member said that residents had relayed their concerns to the Town Planning Board, but the Board still approved the reclamation and dredging works. She requested the EPD to clarify whether the old or new air quality objectives would be adopted in respect of the incinerator. It was not fair for residents of the Islands District alone to shoulder the responsibility of waste management of the whole territory.

A member said that it was unscientific for EPD to claim that substances emitted from the facilities were not harmful. He was also worried about the potential problems brought about by the facilities which might not be foreseen at this stage. He hoped the EPD and the mass media would understand that residents of the district

objected to the plan not out of selfishness, rather they had doubts about whether the incinerator should be built at all.

A member said that Po Toi Island was more suitable for the construction of the facilities, but the Government did not provide any explanation in turning down the proposal.

A member raised three questions for EPD to follow up on. First, the EPD should provide information about the time and cost of transporting ashes from the facilities to the landfill site. Second, the EPD should provide information about cost effectiveness of small scale incinerators. Third, whether the most stringent standard would be adopted to handle emission from the incinerator. He also proposed that two local universities would be invited to conduct independent assessment on the environmental impact of the incinerator.

A member criticized the EPD for not conducting adequate consultation with residents of Lantau South. He proposed the setting up of a working group to deal with the issue and that the Chairman should be the convenor.

The Vice-chairlady concurred with the proposal of setting up a working group and hoped that high ranking officials from the Bureau would be appointed as representatives to conduct dialogue on equal footing on a long term basis.

A member asked for the Chairman's consent, in accordance with Clause 17 of the Standing Orders of the IDC, to move a motion to postpone the construction of the IWMP.

The Chairman did not agree to the request, and the member expressed her regret to the decision.

The Chairman said that the issue was a complicated one and time was needed to cultivate a better understanding of public opinions and to conduct discussion with the Government. He thus agreed to the setting up of a working group to follow up the matter. He hoped that the Government would deploy officials of bureaux level to take part and he urged members to join the working group too.

The meeting agreed to set up a working group on the matter.

The representative of the EPD said that members' concerns and requests would be related to the Bureau, and that comprehensive co-operation would be expended to tie in with the work of the working group.

XI. Question on the quality of public medical services of Tung Chung

The representative of the Hospital Authority said that the Food and Health Bureau was studying the feasibility of relocating the general out-patient clinic of Tung Chung Health Centre to North Lantau Hospital, as stated in its written reply. The proposal of setting up a Chinese medicine clinic at the then vacated site of the general out-patient clinic was also being studied. The demands of members of this Council were being followed up on, but there had yet been any substantial plan. North Lantau Hospital would be open for service in stages starting in the third season of 2013. The Hospital would be ready for the general out-patient clinic to move in while awaiting the decision of Food and Health Bureau. This Council would be informed of any progress and plans made.

The Vice-chairlady hoped that the matter would not be affected by the upcoming handover of the Government's administrations.

A member asked when the 24-hour Accident & Emergency (A&E) service of North Lantau Hospital would be operable.

Another member proposed that if there was a shortage of manpower, resources of specialist clinics should be deployed to the A&E department. He also proposed that limited dental clinic service be provided at North Lantau Hospital.

The representative of the Hospital Authority said that 24-hour A&E service was scheduled to begin work at the beginning of 2014. The request in respect of dental service would be relayed to the Food and Health Bureau.

XII. Installation of South-East Asia Japan Cable System from Sha Shek Tan Beach in Chung Hom Kok to Eastern Boundary of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

The representative of the consultant briefed the meeting of the contents of the project. No objections had been received during public consultation, and that Southern District Council and Sai Kung District Council both supported the project.

A member enquired about the date of gazetting and whether fishermen groups had been consulted.

The representative of District Lands Office/Hong Kong West and South, said that the project had been gazetted on 20 January of the current year and anyone could raise opinions to the Lands Department.

The Chairman concluded that IDC supported the project.

XIII. Improvement Works for Mui Wo Facelift - Phase I Works

A member expressed his appreciation to the Civil and Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) for its expeditious completion of the study report and he hoped that the project would be implemented the soonest possible.

A member proposed that parking spaces for goods vehicles be set up in the town centre of Mui Wo.

The Vice-chairlady was not satisfied with the progress of the project. She hoped that works of Phase I could begin as soon as possible so that those of the latter phases could follow. She also enquired about the progress of widening Silver Mine Cave and Tung Wan Tao Road.

The representative of CEDD said that the Department would follow up on members' opinions and expedite the works.

The Chairman concluded that IDC supported the project and hoped that works could be implemented as soon as possible.

XIV. District Football team

The Chairman said that the other seventeen districts had set up their own football teams. He asked members to consider whether IDC Council should set up a district football team to join the Third Division League of the Hong Kong Football Association.

Members gave their opinions as follows:

- a. A member said that he was in favour of setting up a district football team, and that the Islands District Sports Association (IDSA) could be given the responsibility to organize a team, in the same mode of other districts.
- b. Another member also supported the idea, but enquired whether accounts of the IDSA would be publicized so that the general public would have knowledge of how public funds were spent.
- c. A member proposed the establishment of a youth team as well.
- d. A member supported the idea and proposed that the Community Affairs, Culture and Recreation Committee would be asked to follow up on the matter.
- e. A member proposed that members of this Council could join the IDSA.
- f. A member proposed the construction of an artificial turf football pitch on Cheung Chau for training purpose. He asked which organization would provide the \$500,000 fund and he was concerned whether the amount would be adequate.
- g. A member was concerned about to whom the voting right at the Hong Kong Football Association belong.

The ADO gave replies as below:

- a. The IDSA had received sponsorship from the community participation scheme of the IDC. The District Office would scrutinize the accounts and receipts of relevant activities.
- b. The fund in case was a new initiative provided by the Home Affairs Bureau. In each football season, teams in division one would be provided with \$500,000, and those in division three \$250,000 .

The Chairman said that the voting right would be handled in accordance with relevant stipulations.

The Chairman concluded that the meeting agreed to the establishment of a district football team for this term of IDC to join in the third division league of the Hong Kong Football association. The IDSA would be appointed to organize the team on behalf of IDC.

XV. Progress Report of Major Works Projects in Islands District

Members gave their opinions on various major works projects in the district, and the representative of the CEDD responded to their concerns and enquiries.

Islands District Council Secretariat

April 2012