

(Translation)

**Islands District Council
Minutes of Meeting of the
Community Affairs, Culture and Recreation Committee**

Date : 10 May 2022 (Tuesday)

Time : 2:00 p.m.

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

Present

Mr WONG Man-hon, MH (Chairman)

Ms LAU Shun-ting (Vice-Chairman)

Mr YU Hon-kwan, Randy, MH, JP

Mr CHOW Yuk-tong, SBS, MH

Mr YUNG Chi-ming, BBS, MH

Mr CHAN Lin-wai, MH

Mr HO Chun-fai

Mr HO Siu-kei

Ms WONG Chau-ping

Mr KWOK Ping, Eric

(Left at around 2:47 p.m.)

Mr FONG Lung-fei

Attendance by Invitation

Mr LEE Sun-fu, Joe

Senior Executive Office (District Management),
Islands District Office

Mr LEE Lap-chi, Alfred

District Secretary, Islands District Office

In Attendance

Mr LI Ho, Thomas

Assistant District Officer (Islands)1, Islands District Office
Deputy District Leisure Manager (District Support) Islands,
Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Ms CHOW Yuen-on, Alice

Senior Librarian (Islands),

Ms CHU Po-yee, Polly

Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Ms Merry LIM

Senior Manager (New Territories South) Promotion,
Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Ms LAM Fong-shing, Florence	Senior School Development Officer (Wan chai & Islands), Education Bureau
Mr WONG Chi-leung	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Central Western/Southern/Islands)2, Social Welfare Department
Ms KWOK Man-lai	Representative, Association of School Heads of Islands District
Mr WONG King-chuen	Vice-Chairman, Islands District Sports Association
Ms CHOI Kwok-por	Chairman, Hong Kong Islands Cultural & Art Association

Secretary

Mr YEUNG Chiu-cheong, Mark	Executive Officer (District Council)1, Islands District Office
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Absent with Apologies

Mr WONG Hon-kuen, Ken

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**Welcoming Remarks**

The Chairman welcomed representatives of government departments, organisations and Members to the meeting.

2. The Chairman noted that Mr Ken WONG had tendered apology for not being able to attend the meeting due to other commitments.

3. The Chairman wished to take the chance to mourn the death of serving Member, Ms Josephine TSANG, with Members and attendants of the meeting before proceeding to agenda items. Ms Josephine TSANG grew up in Peng Chau and was devoted to serving residents of the district by providing local services for years. She began her service as an Islands District Council (IDC) Member since 2014, and her enormous contribution to the district and the IDC had won her acclaim. Her passing on 1 May this year was regrettable and was a great loss to the IDC. The Chairman requested that Members remain standing to observe one minute's silence to mourn her passing.

I. Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 3 January 2022

4. The Chairman said that the captioned minutes had incorporated the amendments proposed by the government departments and Members, and had been distributed to Members for perusal before the meeting. The captioned minutes were confirmed unanimously without other amendment.

II. Social Welfare Department Central Western, Southern and Islands District Social Welfare Office 2022-23 Annual Work Plan  
(Paper CACRC 8/2022)

5. The Chairman welcomed Mr WONG Chi-leung, Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Central Western/Southern/Islands)2, Social Welfare Department (SWD), to the meeting to present the paper.

6. Mr WONG Chi-leung briefly presented the paper.

7. Mr Eric KWOK provided opinions as follows:

- (a) To alleviate the financial stress faced by families in Tung Chung district during the pandemic, the SWD regularised the Short-term Food Assistance Service Projects. The general public welcomed such initiative.
- (b) As far as he knew, the projects in the Islands District were carried out by the St. James' Settlement. He once asked the organisation how the service would be rendered for the entire Islands District. The St. James' Settlement replied that the Ladder Mission was responsible for the service in Tung Chung and Islands District. In response to his previous enquiry to the Ladder Mission about how they would provide the service to residents in Tung Chung and other areas in Islands District where the population was huge, the organisation replied that their resources were indeed limited. Members of the public had told him that the Ladder Mission had only one hotline in Tung Chung District and the calls could seldom go through. It was evident that the Ladder Mission failed to meet the demand of numerous large-scale estates in Tung Chung.
- (c) Members of the public who were eligible for the Working Family Allowance Scheme or Student Grant had to fill in application forms for verification of their eligibility. It would take the social workers of the organisations two weeks to process the applications. He opined that the SWD should simplify the procedures and shorten the processing time.
- (d) He said that elderly persons living alone or with disability found it

difficult to apply for the scheme. He asked whether there were non-governmental organisations that could render assistance in this regard.

- (e) He also said that some members of ethnic minorities were unaware of the scheme. He requested the Department to strengthen the publicity of the scheme.

8. Mr WONG Chi-leung gave the following consolidated responses:

- (a) Being the operator of the Short-term Food Assistance Service Project in Islands district, St. James' Settlement worked closely with its partner organisations to provide the services to local residents. The agency's partner organisations in Tung Chung included the Ladder Mission and the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Tung Chung Integrated Services.
- (b) As for families with genuine difficulties, the service units would take into account the special circumstances of the cases and expedite the approval process as far as possible.
- (c) The Department noted the other opinions from Mr Eric KWOK and would relay them to relevant organisations.

### III. Islands District Office Community Service Partnership Programme (Paper CACRC 9/2022)

9. The Chairman welcomed Mr Joe LEE, Senior Executive Office (District Management) and Mr Alfred LEE, District Secretary of the Islands District Office (IsDO), to the meeting to present the paper.

10. Mr Joe LEE briefly presented the paper.

11. Ms CHOI Kwok-por said she had visited the new Tung Chung Community Services Complex (new complex) in person. She commended the new complex for its architectural beauty. Yet, many members of the public did not know that the complex had been in operation. She hoped the relevant departments could step up the publicity.

12. Mr Eric KWOK made the following comments:

- (a) He had also visited the new complex himself and recognised its architectural splendour and comprehensive facilities.
- (b) Some ethnic minorities groups, such as Sikh and Islamic organisations, were registered under Section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance. However, it was difficult for them to secure an office in Tung Chung. He asked IsDO whether these organisations could rent an office in the

new complex so as to offer services to residents of ethnic minorities in the district, including the provision of language training or employment programmes for women and teenagers, etc.

- (c) He said that years ago, he had helped the organisations concerned rent village houses as venues for short-term courses for teenagers in collaboration with the Employees Retraining Board. He asked IsDO whether venues could be provided for their long-term use. If so, what were the procedures; if not, what were the reasons; and what solutions were available.

13. Mr Joe LEE replied as follows:

- (a) In regard to enhancing the publicity of the services of the new complex, IsDO would relay the opinions to the tenant organisations.
- (b) Tenant organisations of the new complex also rendered support services to ethnic minorities. IsDO would explore with the tenant organisations on whether the ethnic minority groups could hire the facilities of the new complex.

14. Mr Eric KWOK requested IsDO to provide information on the hiring of the facilities.

15. Mr Joe LEE said that the three organisations commenced operation at the new complex on 1 March. He would provide the relevant information to Mr Eric KWOK after the meeting.

16. Mr Eric KWOK stressed that the crux of the issue was whether the relevant organisations could be provided with places that could be regularly rented for community service purposes, instead of one-off rental.

17. Mr Randy YU hoped to visit the new complex in the name of Community Affairs, Culture and Recreation Committee (CACRC) so as to learn more about the use by NGOs in the building and their opinions. Members could then have a better understanding of their services and assist in promoting such services to residents.

18. Mr CHAN Lin-wai opined that IsDO should pay attention to the needs of other areas of the district. He observed that a police post on Lamma Island had been abandoned since the 1960s. He had written to IsDO to request that the old police post be converted for the use of local groups by drawing on the new complex's usage arrangements for NGOs. He said district facilities were insufficient on Lamma Island and there was not even a community hall. When he learned about the government's plan to demolish the old police post, he wrote to IsDO and requested that the police post be reserved for groups on Lamma Island. He hoped IsDO would address to the demands of the locals and make the best use of resources.

19. Mr Thomas LI gave a consolidated reply as follows:

- (a) IDC started the discussion of the Community Service Partnership Programme as early as a dozen years ago and at IDO's suggestion, a transitional arrangement was made by offering the vacant Police Ex-traffic New Territories South Lantau Operational Base in Tung Chung to NGOs in the district as venues for resident services. The said piece of land would be returned to the Government for public housing construction in accordance with the original plan.
- (b) In the long run, given a large number of public housing estates under construction in the Tung Chung New Development Area, he believed that there would be rental spaces available for use by social welfare organisations. As mentioned in the paper, the YMCA, an organisation that used to operate in the Police Ex-traffic New Territories South Lantau Operational Base in Tung Chung, had moved to Ching Yat House. If the ethnic minority groups mentioned by Mr Eric KWOK were non-profit-making organisations, they should be eligible for applying for the associated spaces in public housing estates.
- (c) Regarding the abandoned police post on Lamma Island, IsDO would further explore with Members and relevant departments on the possibility of other uses after the meeting.

20. Mr Eric KWOK said he had, on behalf of the Sikh and Islamic groups mentioned, applied for premises in Yat Tung Estate and Mun Tung Estate for the provision of services on a regular basis. Unfortunately, the space available for social welfare organisations had already been rented. As the new complex was put into service, he would like to discuss whether it was possible to provide space for these ethnic minority groups. If possible, he requested for relevant information from IsDO so that he could relay it to the groups.

21. Mr CHAN Lin-wai said he wrote to IsDO two months ago and requested for the preservation of the abandoned police post on Lamma Island. Recently, he just learnt that the police post was about to be demolished and he therefore urged IsDO to promptly consider his suggestion.

22. Mr Thomas LI gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) According to his understanding, the new complex used to be a two-storey office built by the Highways Department (HyD) for the Tung Chung New Town development. The building could be temporarily retained for other purposes after the relocation of the HyD. Hence, IsDO, in coordination with relevant departments, arranged for three NGOs to move into the building temporarily to continue their services for residents.

- (b) All the spaces in the new complex had been rented. Organisations could consider renting other suitable locations in the district, such as the associated spaces of public housing estates. If there were similar vacant government premises in other locations, IsDO would consider offering assistance to the relevant organisations in renting them. However, to his knowledge, there was no such place in the urban area of Tung Chung at present.

23. Ms LAU Shun-ting said there was a lack of public facilities on Lamma Island and the old police post in Lamma was well suited for leisure facilities and hence worth preserving. The Hong Kong Police Force had returned the old police post in Lamma to the Government Property Agency, which had reserved a provision for the demolition of the building. She opined that the provision should be used for preservation and renovation of the building to provide more district facilities, rather than for the demolition. She added that the Chairman, Mr CHAN Lin-wai and Mr CHOW Yuk-tong had already written to IsDO on this matter. She asked IsDO to follow up on the request and assist in preserving the building so as to create more district facilities for Lamma Island.

24. The Chairman asked IsDO to assist in the land use issue regarding the old police post on Lamma. As for the lack of publicity of the services available at the new complex as reported by members of local community, he hoped the departments concerned could step up promotion. He had also visited the new complex and commented that directional signs to the nearby new pier were inadequate. He thus asked IsDO to enhance the publicity.

25. Mr FONG Lung-fei provided the following opinions:

- (a) The new complex was less accessible and it was not easy to locate it. According to his visit, he observed that there was no directional sign to the new complex. Even residents of Tung Chung had no idea how to get there.
- (b) He commented that the new complex did not look like a community service centre, but rather like a leisure venue. Besides, the location was inaccessible. For example, it would be too far away for residents of Ying Tung Estate to walk to the complex but too close to go by car; those of Yat Tung Estate would have to walk a bit after getting off the bus; as for other residents of nearby areas in Tung Chung, they did not need the services provided. Therefore, he doubted how the new complex could provide services to the grass roots.
- (c) He could understand that the new complex was merely a temporary measure and the NGOs might return to Tung Chung in the future. He opined that the new complex failed to provide community services due to its remote location. To optimise the use of space, IsDO should open the complex to visitors and assist NGOs in securing other premises

within public housing estates where they could continue to serve residents.

26. Ms CHOI Kwok-por commented that any person could use the new complex and its use should not be limited to merely the provision of services to the grass roots. She considered that with more publicity, the new complex would be a suitable tourist spot.

27. The Chairman hoped the Secretariat would arrange a visit for the interested Members and local groups to the new complex later in order to gain a better understanding of the subject matter.

(Post-meeting note by the Secretariat: The Secretariat would arrange a site visit of the new complex for Members of the CACRC and representatives of organisations. The tentative date of the visit was 18 July.)

#### IV. Any Other Business

28. Mr YUNG Chi-ming mentioned that beaches were recently reopened but some residents of Cheung Chau told him that there was no lifeguard service at either of the beaches. He thus requested the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) to resume the service as soon as possible.

29. Ms Alice CHOW replied that the Appointments Support Services Unit of LCSD had been proactively recruiting lifeguards. She observed that many members of the public visited the Tung Wan Beach in Cheung Chau in the past two long weekends. The Department was aware of the great demand for lifeguard service. She would keep close contact with the Appointment Support Services Unit. Should there be any lifeguards deploying to the Islands District, the Tung Wan Beach would be prioritised.

30. Ms LAU Shun-ting said it would be very dangerous to open beaches without lifeguard service. She asked the LCSD whether they would assume responsibility for any accidents happened.

31. Mr YUNG Chi-ming requested that the LCSD should determine the schedule for lifeguard service and opined that the Department should make immediate arrangements to avoid accidents.

32. Ms WONG Chau-ping asked whether there were any beaches in Tung Chung that were already open. She commented that the Department should take into account the safety of swimmers when deciding whether to open a beach. Otherwise, it should remain closed.

33. The Chairman asked the Department the number of beaches and swimming



pools which remained closed due to manpower shortage.

34. Ms Alice CHOW gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) There were altogether nine gazetted beaches in Islands District. With further relaxation of social distancing measures, the Department gradually opened the gazetted beaches from 5 May. Regarding the current manpower at beaches, lifeguard service was provided at three beaches in the Islands District, including Hung Shing Yeh Beach, Silver Mine Bay Beach and Pui O Beach.
- (b) As for swimming pools, Tung Chung Swimming Pool and Mui Wo Swimming Pool were undergoing water testing. Subject to the fulfilment of water quality standards, the said swimming pools would be reopened on 12 May.
- (c) Apart from recruiting lifeguards, the LCSD would study the feasibility of deploying other manpower resources and hiring hourly-waged lifeguards.
- (d) Regarding training of lifeguards, the Hong Kong Life Saving Society (HKLSS), as one of the national sports associations subvented by the LCSD, was mainly responsible for organising the relevant training and attract different individuals to join the lifeguard profession. As far as she knew, HKLSS would offer Life Saving Training Course (Bronze Medallion) (Beaches) at the Tung Wan Beach in Cheung Chau in June so as to attract residents of the island who were interested in joining the profession.

35. Mr YUNG Chi-ming provided the following comments:

- (a) He had earlier suggested that the LCSD should organise lifesaving training courses. He complimented lifeguards in Cheung Chau on their diligence and that they never went on strike.
- (b) He opined that the LCSD was in a better position to organise lifeguard lifesaving training courses in Cheung Chau than the HKLSS.
- (c) There were a lot of swimmers in Cheung Chau no matter on weekdays or weekends. He urged the Department to provide lifeguard service as early as practicable.

36. Mr HO Siu-kei gave the following comments:

- (a) Lifeguard service is crucial to swimmers' safety. In view of the serious shortage of lifeguards, he asked the LCSD about the recruitment and training criteria for lifeguards and whether there were any special

strategies.

- (b) Many youngsters in Hong Kong loved swimming. Considering the attractive salary of lifeguards, it should not be difficult to recruit part-time and full-time lifeguards. He asked the LCSD how long it would take to complete the recruitment procedures.
- (c) Beaches would close in November and reopen only in April. During the period, lifeguards would have no income, and it was not easy to attract young people to the profession. He therefore deemed it necessary to review the policy.

37. Ms WONG Chau-ping understood the urgency of lifeguard service mentioned by Mr YUNG. In case of an accident, it was impossible to predict the conditions of the sea. Without lifeguards, it would be very dangerous. Therefore, the Department should take immediate action, rather than dragging its feet by using recruitment difficulties as a reason.

38. Ms Alice CHOW noted the opinions of Members and would keep Mr YUNG updated on the matter.

(Post-meeting note from the LCSD: The Department proactively deployed new recruits of lifeguards to Islands District. The lifeguard service at the Tung Wan Beach in Cheung Chau had resumed with effect from 2 June.)

39. Mr HO Siu-kei reiterated that it was a matter of life and death. He requested the LCSD to provide details of the current recruitment of lifeguards.

40. The Chairman requested the LCSD to increase manpower when opening other beaches.

41. Ms Alice CHOW supplemented that the Tung Chung Swimming Pool and the Mui Wo Swimming Pool would be reopened on 12 May.

(Mr Eric KWOK left the meeting at around 2:47 p.m.)

## V. Date of Next Meeting

42. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m. The next meeting would be held at 2:00 p.m. on 4 July 2022 (Monday).

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