

(Translation)

Minutes of Meeting of Islands District Council

Date : 4 September 2023 (Monday)
Time : 2:00 p.m.
Venue : Islands District Council Conference Room,
14/F, Harbour Building, 38 Pier Road, Central, Hong Kong

Present

Chairman

Mr YU Hon-kwan, Randy, MH, JP

Vice-Chairman

Mr WONG Man-hon, MH (Left at around 6:19 p.m.)

Members

Mr CHOW Yuk-tong, SBS, MH
Mr WONG Hon-kuen, Ken
Mr HO Chun-fai
Mr HO Siu-kei (Left at around 6:15 p.m.)
Ms WONG Chau-ping (Left at around 6:15 p.m.)
Mr NG Man-kit (Left at around 6:19 p.m.)
Mr WAN Yeung-kin
Mr KWOK Ping, Eric
Mr FONG Lung-fei
Ms LAU Shun-ting

Attendance by Invitation

Mr LAI Chi-wah, Andrew	Director of Lands, Lands Department
Mr HO Chi-kin, Eric	Senior Estate Surveyor/Training, Lands Department
Mr CHAN Wai-kuen	Senior Assistant Chief Ambulance Officer (New Territories Region), Fire Services Department
Mr TONG King-man	Assistant Chief Ambulance Officer (New Territories South), Fire Services Department
Mr AU YEUNG Wang-kin	Superintendent (Ambulance) (New Territories South West) (Acting), Fire Services Department
Mr CHUNG Chi-yan, Derek	Senior Engineer 1/ Hong Kong Port, Highways Department
Mr CHAN Tsin-ching, Jim	Senior Architect/22, Architectural Services Department
Mr TAM Wai-kit, Ricky	Project Manager 372, Architectural Services Department
Mr WAN Kai-fung	Senior Hospital Administrator, North Lantau Hospital
Mr Ricky LEUNG	Executive Director, Engineering and Technology, Airport Authority

Mr Collin CHAN

General Manager, Capital Works Management,
Airport Authority

Ms YAM Pui-wah

Coordinator, The Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council

In Attendance

Ms YEUNG Wai-sum, Amy, JP

Mr LI Ho, Thomas

Ms TSE Yik-ting, Ellie

Mr MOK Sui-hung

Ms LIU Pui-shan, Lis

Mr LEE Sun-fu, Joe

Mr YEUNG Che-yuen, Patrick

Mr KWONG Wang-ngai, Walter

Ms LAM Bun-gee

Mr LING Ka-fai

Mrs RADFORD Kit-yee, Kitty

Mr AU Siu-fung, Kelvin

Mr Clive WALTON

Ms LI Ka-chai, Denise

Mr CHAN Sheung-yung, Cyrus

Mr CHAN Ka-leong

Mr YAN Ka-kit, Ric

Ms CHEUNG Suk-man

Mr TO Chak-foo

Ms LIM Ting-ting, Sylvia

Ms HA Chung-wan, Joanne

District Officer (Islands), Islands District Office

Assistant District Officer (Islands)1, Islands District Office

Assistant District Officer (Islands)2, Islands District Office

Senior Liaison Officer (1), Islands District Office

Senior Liaison Officer (2), Islands District Office

Senior Executive Officer (District Management),
Islands District Office

Senior Engineer/1 (Lantau),

Civil Engineering and Development Department

Senior Town Planner/Islands 2, Planning Department

District Social Welfare Officer (Central Western/
Southern/Islands), Social Welfare Department

District Lands Officer/Islands, Lands Department

Administrative Assistant/Lands (District Lands Office,
Islands), Lands Department

Chief Transport Officer/Islands, Transport Department

District Commander (Marine Port District),

Hong Kong Police Force

Police Community Relations Officer (Lantau District),
Hong Kong Police Force

Police Community Relations Officer (Marine Port District),
Hong Kong Police Force

District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Islands),
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Chief Health Inspector (Islands)1,

Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Chief Health Inspector (Islands)2,

Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Chief Manager/Management (Hong Kong Island and
Islands), Housing Department

Chief Leisure Manager (New Territories West),
Leisure and Cultural Services Department

District Leisure Manager (Islands),

Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Secretary

Ms Kennis CHAN

Senior Executive Officer (District Council),
Islands District Office

Welcoming remarks

The Chairman welcomed Members and representatives of government departments to the Islands District Council (IDC) meeting and introduced the following representatives of departments:

- (a) Ms RADFORD Kit-ye, Kitty, Administrative Assistant/Lands (District Lands Office, Islands (DLO/Is)) of the Lands Department (LandsD), who replaced Mr TSANG Wai-man;
- (b) Mr YEUNG Che-yuen, Patrick, Senior Engineer/1 (Lantau) of the Civil Engineering and Development Department, who stood in for Mr CHENG Yuk-lung, Stanley;
- (c) Mr KWONG Wang-ngai, Walter, Senior Town Planner/Islands 2 of the Planning Department (PlanD), who stood in for Ms TANG Tsui-ye, Caroline;
- (d) Ms LAM Bun-ngee, District Social Welfare Officer (Central Western/Southern/Islands) of the Social Welfare Department (SWD), who replaced Ms YAN Lai-ming, Jenny; and
- (e) Mr AU Siu-fung, Kelvin, Chief Transport Officer/Islands of the Transport Department (TD), who replaced Ms KWAN Ka-mun, Karen.

I. Visit of the Director of Lands to Islands District Council

2. The Chairman welcomed Mr LAI Chi-wah, Andrew, Director of Lands, to the meeting to meet and exchange views with Members. He was also pleased to welcome to the meeting Mr LING Ka-fai, District Lands Officer/Islands, Mr HO Chi-kin, Eric, Senior Estate Surveyor/Training and Mrs RADFORD Kit-ye, Kitty, Administrative Assistant/Lands of the District Lands Office/Islands (DLO/Is).

3. Mr Andrew LAI briefed Members on the department's work, including disposal of land, handling of lease modification and short-term tenancy, processing of land and lease enforcement, surveying of land and making of mapping, etc. He then highlighted the main duties of the DLO/Is.

4. Mr WAN Yeung-kin said it took five to ten years for applications for construction of small houses and redevelopment of old buildings to obtain approval. After the approvals were granted, the issuance of Certificates of Exemption and Certificates of Compliance would take another long time. He hoped the time required for the vetting and approval process could be shortened.

5. Mr HO Siu-kei was concerned about the squatter control policy on stilt houses in Tai O. There were many stilt houses in Tai O which needed to apply to the DLO/Is for repairs due to fires, but the approval process would take several years, resulting in delays in the works. In addition, the stilt houses could be flooded easily

when the sea level at Tai O rose during typhoons, and it was necessary to apply for repairs. He hoped the DLO/Is would expedite the approval process to solve the problem.

6. Mr Eric KWOK said over the past two decades, deserted agricultural lands in South Lantau were often used for land filling, erection of structures, or placement of tents and coaches. He hoped the DLO/Is would explain how enforcement actions would be taken in response to the situation.

7. Mr NG Man-kit said there were no small houses in Cheung Chau and the applications were for redevelopment of old buildings. There was an application submitted in 2011 that had not yet been approved, while several other applications submitted in 2012 and 2013 were finally approved after the incumbent Chief Executive took office. However, after the completion of the redevelopment works, it would take another four to five years for the Occupation Permits to be issued. He opined that the procedures took excessively long time to complete. He added that in the 1980s, it took only ten months to complete all the procedures when applying for the redevelopment of an old building and only four months to apply for an Occupation Permit. He opined that the Lands Department (LandsD) should increase its manpower to expedite the processing of applications.

8. Mr Andrew LAI made a consolidated response as follows:

(a) The LandsD had optimised its work procedures to expedite the vetting and approval of applications for construction of small houses and redevelopment of old buildings. Taking the Islands District as an example, the number of small house applications in hand was 732 in early 2019 and had decreased to about 590 by the end of March 2023. To further shorten the processing time, the department had streamlined the procedures for processing small house applications and granting Certificates of Compliance in the past two years. In the past, if there were any local objections to a small house application, the District Lands Officer would need to invite the applicant and the objector(s) to a meeting to provide their views. This procedure was dispensed with at the end of last year. Instead, the District Lands Officer would make a judgement based on the written materials obtained, and determine whether to approve the application or to entertain the objection. In addition, in the past, the department had to visit the site to inspect and check the construction works for several times before issuing a Certificate of Compliance for a small house or the redevelopment of an old building, but now it only needed to send personnel to the site to inspect and confirm the compliance of the completed building in the critical stages of approval. This approach could speed up the approval process, and also facilitate the allocation of manpower for handling other important tasks.

(b) The District Lands Officer/Islands would respond to Mr HO Siu-kei's

question in relation to the stilt houses in Tai O later.

- (c) With regard to the cases of private lands in South Lantau being used for the construction of holiday camps or land filling, he believed that apart from the LandsD, other government departments concerned would also take enforcement actions. If the land filling activities or holiday camp development were in breach of the Town Planning Ordinance, regulatory actions would be taken by the PlanD. The LandsD would investigate whether the land uses were in breach of the leases. If a breach of lease conditions was detected, the LandsD would take enforcement actions in conjunction with other departments concerned. In general, land filling activities on a private agricultural land would not be considered as a breach of the land lease. However, for holiday camp development, the land owner had to apply to the Home Affairs Department (HAD) for a Guesthouse (Holiday Camp) Licence. On the other hand, the LandsD would determine whether there was a breach of land lease conditions based on the situation of individual cases. For example, if the owner of a private agricultural land erected a structure on the land without submitting an application to the LandsD and obtaining a waiver in advance, the structure concerned would be regarded as an unauthorised structure and the LandsD had the right to take lease enforcement actions.

9. Mr LING Ka-fai said stilt houses at Tai O were mainly divided into two categories: stilt houses controlled under the squatter control policy and stilt houses controlled under the Government Land Licences issued by the Government. Repairs that were conducted according to the original dimensions of a squatter structure did not constitute an irregularity. According to the current streamlined procedures, if residents wanted to repair stilt houses controlled under the squatter control policy, they only needed to fill in a notification form and carry out the repairs following the terms on the form (such as the dimensions and building materials of the squatter structure). There was no need to obtain the DLO/Is' approval in advance.

10. The Chairman asked whether the above arrangement of filling in the notification form was applicable to squatters and licensed stilt houses.

11. Mr LING Ka-fai replied that for the repairing of stilt houses controlled under Government Land Licences, applications had to be submitted to the LandsD. If an application complied with the terms and conditions of the relevant Government Land Licence, the time for the LandsD to grant the approval would generally not be too long.

12. Mr Ken WONG expressed his views as follows:

- (a) The vetting and approval of applications for redevelopment of old buildings took at least five to six years, which was not ideal.

- (b) He asked about the number of redevelopment projects approved by the LandsD each year. He said that only two or three applications for redevelopments in Peng Chau had been submitted to the department, but the applications had not yet been approved after six years and the projects remained at the price quotation stage.
- (c) The LandsD was in lack of unified standards for the issuance of works permits. He said that a works permit was granted for a redevelopment project in Peng Chau in 2016. However, when the owner submitted to the department an application for another building in the vicinity, the owner was requested by the Government solicitors to amend the application for three times. It had been four years since the submission of the application, but the project had not yet been approved.
- (d) For the projects for which the owners had paid the land premium, the Occupation Permits were issued by the LandsD very quickly and it did not require five to six years for the processing.
- (e) The Islands District Office (IsDO) had conducted joint operations at Peng Chau harbourfront for many times to deal with the problem of illegal placement of vessels along the seawall, but the situation had no substantial improvement. He opined that the one-week notice period was too long and suggested that the period should be shortened.
- (f) He asked how long it would take to apply for a short-term tenancy. At present, there were many cases of illegal occupation of government land. The reason was that it took too long to apply for a short-term tenancy. Therefore, members of the public could only place their articles outdoors. The situation was unsatisfactory. He hoped the department could streamline the process and provide a simple short-term tenancy application form for members of the public, so as to allow them to place articles underneath their balconies.

13. Mr HO Siu-kei asked if a stilt house needed to be repaired due to a fire, whether it was necessary to fill in an application form, and from which department the application forms could be obtained. He suggested that the forms should be made available at the relevant offices in Tai O for the convenience of residents.

14. Ms WONG Chau-ping expressed her views as follows:

- (a) Due to the shortage of manpower, the LandsD was slow in vetting and approving applications for construction of small houses, redevelopment of old buildings, Certificates of Exemption and Certificates of Compliance. She hoped the department could explain how it would clear the backlog of work resulted from the shortage in manpower.

- (b) The Government often zoned rural and village lands for greening and conservation purposes, thus reducing the market value of the lands. It was unfair to the land owners. She hoped the department would make a response in this regard.
- (c) The new town extensions involved land resumption and compensation, but the payment of compensation was in slow progress. Some land owners had not yet received the compensation after the commencement of the works. She hoped the LandsD would give a response in this regard.

15. Mr WAN Yeung-kin asked whether the three-tier mechanism for handling objections to small house applications was abolished and whether the LandsD was able to complete the vetting and approval of a small house application within 18 months as specified in the performance pledge.

16. Ms LAU Shun-ting said that currently, there was only one contractor dealing with the problematic trees in the Islands District, Kwai Tsing District and Tsuen Wan District, and the work progress was slow. Upon receipt of reports on problematic trees from the public, the LandsD needed to first contact the contractor, who would then arrange an inspection by an arborist and report back to the department. Afterwards, the department would arrange the contractor to carry out the relevant works. The whole process would take half a year to two years. Some trees would fall down before treatment was carried out, posing a danger. The problem had existed for many years and members of the public were deeply dissatisfied with it. She opined that the tree care work should not be undertaken by one single contractor and the department should review the policy.

17. Mr HO Chun-fai expressed his views as follows:

- (a) While it took only five to seven years for the Government to complete all the processes of a housing project, including land disposal, planning, construction and population intake, the processing of a small house application would take more than ten years. Residents of South Lantau were discontented with the situation. They opined that the LandsD should take a square look at the problem and expedite the processing of applications.
- (b) When processing an application, the LandsD should specify to the applicant in one go all the matters and requirements for which follow-ups were required, so that the applicant could conduct follow-ups and the progress of the application could be expedited.
- (c) A villager in Pui O had obtained from the authority in the 1960s a license for using a piece of land for farming and had spent more than HK\$1 million on the renovation works. However, the LandsD later

pointed out that the license was for another piece of land in Cheung Sha, therefore, the renovation works constituted unauthorised cultivation. He opined that the positioning technology back then was less advanced and errors were prone to occur, he therefore requested the department to handle the case with flexibility.

- (d) The coast of South Lantau was zoned as Coastal Protection Area by the PlanD, but the area covered was too large.

18. Mr Andrew LAI made a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) The DLO/Is would contact the concerned Members after the meeting to follow up on the individual cases mentioned.

(Post-meeting note: The DLO/Is had contacted Members for the details of the cases and follow-up actions had been taken.)

- (b) He noted Members' view that the processing time for applications for small house construction and old building redevelopment was too long. He agreed that it was not satisfactory if it took five to seven years to process a case. The LandsD would address the issue from the work mechanism perspective, including streamlining the procedures for handling objections and building inspections. The department had implemented measures to streamline its work procedures and hoped to see the effect in the next one or two years. During the epidemic, due to the special work arrangements implemented by the Government, it was inevitable that the processing of cases took a longer time. Now with the resumption of normalcy in Hong Kong, the department's top priority was to expedite its work progress under the streamlined mechanism.
- (c) He agreed that when vetting and approving applications, the LandsD should make clear to the applicants all its requirements, including the required documents. The department would explore ways to improve the relevant process.
- (d) The LandsD was aware that there were mechanised vessels illegally placed on the government land in the vicinity of the Peng Chau Waterfront Promenade from time to time. The Land (Miscellaneous Provisions) Ordinance (Cap. 28) (the Ordinance) empowered the LandsD to take enforcement actions when government land was occupied for the erection of unauthorised structures, including requesting the persons occupying the land illegally to demolish the unauthorised structures on their own within a reasonable period of time. If the situation did not improve, the department could take further enforcement actions and clear the occupied government land. However, the Ordinance could not be effectively used to combat

unauthorised occupation of government land of a mobile nature, such as unlicensed hawking and the unauthorised placing of movable devices in front of shops. He opined that it would be more appropriate for other government departments to deal with such problems.

- (e) With regard to the repairing of squatter structures, the LandsD had streamlined the procedures two years ago. In the past, residents were required to submit an application to the department for approval before carrying out repairs. Now the procedures had been streamlined by the department and the requirements for repair works were explicitly specified on the notification form. For example, building materials that conformed with the squatter control survey records should be used and the squatter structures should maintain the original registered dimensions. Residents could immediately commence the repair works in accordance with the requirements specified on the notification form after the form had been submitted. There was no need to wait for the approval by the department. The department would carry out inspections upon completion of the repair works. If the works were found to be non-compliant with the relevant squatter control survey records, enforcement actions would be taken. The DLO/Is would distribute the notification forms to the Rural Committees (RCs) after the meeting. He hoped Members would promote the relevant arrangements to the residents of squatter structures.

(Post-meeting note: The DLO/Is had informed the RCs that the Notification for Repair/Rebuilding of Surveyed Squatter Structure(s) could be accessed and downloaded from the website of the LandsD (<https://www.landsd.gov.hk/tc/land-mgt-enforce/squatter-control.html>). The DLO/Is had also arranged the distribution of the notification forms to the RCs in early October 2023 for members of the public to obtain.)

- (f) Since the Town Planning Board and the PlanD were responsible for land use planning for private lands, the issue of the implication on the market value of private lands caused by the zoning of the lands for greening purpose could be referred to the relevant departments to follow up. When carrying out land resumption, the LandsD would ensure that land owners would receive reasonable compensation. The department obtained the approval of the Legislative Council in May 2022 for merging the four zones under the “Ex-gratia Zonal Compensation System” into two zones and increasing the compensation amount.
- (g) As the Government had maintained zero growth in the civil service establishment in the past four years, the LandsD was unable to increase its manpower. However, the workload of the department had been

increasing, including the land resumption work for the new development area in Tung Chung. The department would improve its efficiency by streamlining work processes, such as simplifying the procedures for land resumption and processing of small house applications, and would allocate its limited human resources to the crucial tasks, so as to handle the increasing workload by a reasonable and risk-based approach.

- (h) Tree management was mainly undertaken by nine government departments including the LandsD. The LandsD was responsible for the management of a large number of trees over an extensive area. Currently, its tree management work was covered by five regional contracts and with three companies undertaking the management work through tendering. The Islands District had a vast area, and the tree management work for the district was particularly onerous. The department would study whether it was necessary to split the contracts in the light of the geographical conditions of the Islands District. However, Hong Kong had a keen demand for landscape architects and arborists, but there were only over ten qualified arboricultural contractors who were responsible for the tree management contracts of different government departments. Therefore, it was inevitable that the tree management work of the department would be hampered by the shortage of manpower in the sector. In view of the long handling time of tree-related complaints, the department had conducted a review early this year. On the one hand, it had streamlined the procedures for handling tree-related complaints and removing hazardous trees. On the other hand, the department introduced the use of electronic log books in June 2023 for the contractors to submit tree inspection reports, photos and other information to the department for follow-up actions via electronic means. If a contractor identified a tree with immediate dangers during an inspection, unless the tree in question was included in the Old and Valuable Trees Register, the contractor could exercise his professional judgment to remove the tree immediately without having to wait for the department's approval so as to expedite the work process. In the past three years, the department had received more than 10 000 complaints related to trees and vegetation each year. The number would be even higher if complaints caused by typhoons were included. Therefore, the department and the contractors would adopt a risk-based approach to set priorities to handle cases or complaints involving immediate dangers first.

19. The Chairman raised the following questions:

- (a) Mr Ken WONG had just suggested that the LandsD should streamline the process to allow villagers to rent government lands near their village houses or shops for placing articles by short-term tenancies.

Was the suggestion feasible?

- (b) Mr WAN Yeung-kin asked whether the LandsD had set a performance pledge to complete the vetting and approval of small house applications within 18 months.

20. Mr Andrew LAI responded as follows:

- (a) With regard to short-term tenancies, the LandsD was processing the applications in accordance with the established procedures. However, there were different types of short-term tenancies, such as those for car parks and open storage facilities. When processing some complex applications, the LandsD needed to consult other departments concerned and the processing time would be longer. As for simple short-term tenancies for the purpose of using government lands next to village houses legally, the department would explore the possibility of expediting the processing of such applications by streamlining the process and formulating uniform standards.
- (b) The LandsD had set a performance pledge to complete the processing of straight forward small house applications within 18 months. However, since most of the applications received by the department were non-straight forward which required more time to process, the department had endeavoured to streamline the process and had dispensed with the previous arrangement requiring the District Lands Officers to hold meetings to approve all the applications, thereby shortening the processing time.
- (c) The reason for compensation for land resumption being not released timely was mainly because the land owners concerned were unable to provide sufficient information to prove their land ownership. In addition, for a land that belonged to a Tso/Tong, if the Tso/Tong manager(s) passed away without a successor(s) being appointed, the department would also need more time to process the case before release of the land compensation. According to the current practice, if any objections were raised by the Tso/Tong members after a land resumption notice had been posted by the LandsD, the department would ask the Tso/Tong manager(s) to reach a consensus with the members before arranging the payment of land compensation. He noted that the HAD and the Heung Yee Kuk were working to streamline the arrangement for Tso/Tong manager election. By then, the time required to release land compensation would be shortened as the LandsD's decision on the payment of land compensation would be based on the Tso/Tong manager's consent to the land resumption arrangement.

21. Ms WONG Chau-ping said the RCs acted as a bridge of communication

between villagers and the Government and played the role of a coordinator. She opined that the slow progress of the land resumption was not a problem of the Tso/Tong, but a problem of land ownership. Therefore, she hoped the department would optimise the procedures. Many land owners had indicated that the current pace of land resumption was slower than that before 1997. The Government always started the construction immediately after the land was resumed, but the land owners would experience prolonged delays in the receipt of compensation. Therefore, they would express their dissatisfaction through different channels, thus hindering the progress of the works. The RCs hoped the LandsD would expedite the payment of land compensation, so that the RCs could give an account to villagers.

22. Mr Ken WONG expressed his views as follows:

- (a) As the Islands District was large in area and the LandsD did not carry out tree pruning and weeding at a sufficient frequency, the RCs received many complaints. The terms of the existing tenders of the department needed to be improved. At present, a contractor could only receive a remuneration of about HK\$20 for each clearing work performed. As a result, a certain number of clearing work needed to be accumulated in an individual area in the Islands District before a contractor could be arranged to carry out the work. Otherwise, the contractor might refuse to dispatch personnel to clean up. He suggested that the department should follow the practice of the HAD by splitting the tree treatment and weeding work and requiring the contractors to carry out clearing every three months, or adding a clause to the contracts requiring the contractors to deal with the complaints within a specified timeframe, so as to optimise the arrangement.
- (b) He opined that it took too long for the LandsD to process applications for small house construction and old building redevelopment. He received a complaint from a villager in 2018. The villager had purchased a piece of land for constructing a small house, but after submitting all the required documents to the department, the department had not arranged for him to pay the administrative fee after a prolonged period of time. As a result, the works could not be commenced and the construction fee had already increased from HK\$2 million to HK\$4 million. This situation was unacceptable.

23. Mr WAN Yeung-kin asked whether the three-tier mechanism for handling objections to small house applications was abolished.

24. Mr NG Man-kit opined that the application for Certificate of Compliance for small houses took a long time because the LandsD did not inform the owners of all the matters that required follow-ups in one go when processing the applications, thus prolonging the application time. He suggested that the department should list all the matters that needed to be followed up in one go. As long as the matters were dealt with, a Certificate of Compliance would be issued. Otherwise, the problems would

never come to an end.

25. Mr HO Chun-fai said that the coastline of South Lantau was very long. If the entire coastline was designated as the marine reserve, farmers in the district would be affected. The LandsD allowed villagers to place containers on private land, but recently some villagers had reflected that the department prohibited the installation of windows in the containers. Since the installation of water and electricity supplies was not allowed in the marine reserve, the containers would be in total darkness without windows. He opined that the guidelines were outdated and should be revised. In addition, the containers had been used for many years and needed to be repaired, but the department had not given any clear guidelines in this regard. He opined that the department should draw up some guidelines to avoid illegal repairs by villagers. In addition, since there was no electricity supply for the containers, he asked if the villagers could be allowed to install solar panels on the containers.

26. Mr Andrew LAI made a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) The District Councils and the RCs were important working partners of the LandsD. With the collaboration of the District Councils and the RCs, the Government would be able to achieve greater results in land resumption and clearance work. There would be many development projects in the Islands District in the future. He hoped that the RC Chairpersons and Members would continue to support the work of the DLO/Is.
- (b) The main reason for the relatively long processing time for the payment of land resumption compensation was land ownership. Where the land was privately owned and was not related to any Tso/Tong, the time required for the payment of land compensation depended on whether the land owners could provide all the required information to prove their ownership. In the past, the department required owners to provide the land transaction records for the past decades, including the time when the land was purchased and the period during which the land was held. However, in view of the increase of land resumption work, the department was working with the Development Bureau to optimise the relevant arrangements with a view to streamlining the procedures by the end of this year and focusing on the land transaction records in the past 15 years for ownership verification, thereby speeding up the land resumption work.
- (c) On the proposal of splitting the tree pruning and vegetation management contracts to expedite the work progress, the LandsD needed to explore whether the market was able to cope with the split of contracts since there were only about a dozen contractors in the market to provide the services.
- (d) The three-tier mechanism for handling objections to small house

applications was still in place, but the LandsD had streamlined the complaint handling process by dispensing with the arrangement to hear objections through meetings. Instead, the objectors were only required to clearly state the reasons and justifications for their objections in writing. Therefore, the chance to use the three-tier mechanism was slim. The department had received many complaints about the “selling of small house rights” in the past two years. In the past, the department interviewed the persons involved in such a complaint to understand the situations. However, under the streamlined workflow, if a complainant failed to provide concrete evidence, such as the information on the sale and purchase of the small house rights, the complaint would not be handled further.

- (e) The LandsD noted that Members hoped the department could handle their proposal for a more flexible approach for handling installation of solar panels and canopies on containers on agricultural land in the marine reserve. However, according to the conditions of the relevant land lease, no structure could be constructed on agricultural land. The LandsD only allowed the use of those containers placed on agricultural land for storage purpose. Converted containers were considered as structures and hence the department could not adopt the Member’s proposal.
- (f) He hoped that after the meeting, Members would brief the RCs and the indigenous villagers of the Islands District on the streamlined procedures for small houses application and the handling of objections. As for small house applications, the LandsD agreed that the applicants should be informed in one go about all the matters requiring their follow-up actions so as to expedite the processing of the applications.

27. The Chairman made a conclusion and expressed his views as follows:

- (a) He thanked Mr Andrew LAI for attending the meeting and welcomed the LandsD’s streamlining of the process for small house construction and old building redevelopment applications.
- (b) With regard to applications for squatter structure repairing, he opined that in addition to the distribution of the new notification forms to the public, the LandsD could also publicise the latest application arrangements among local stakeholders and stilted house residents through the Tai O Rural Committee.
- (c) He understood that the number of contractors providing tree and weed management services was limited, but the LandsD could still urge the contractors to expedite the treatment of problematic trees in the Islands District by modifying the contract terms, for example, by increasing the unit price for work at locations where large cranes could not be

used for tree removal, such as Lamma Island and Tai O.

- (d) He suggested that the LandsD should provide small house applicants with a list of issues for which follow-ups had to be made, and request the applicants to respond within a specified period, so as to speed up the vetting and approval of applications.

II. Confirmation of the Minutes of Meeting held on 19 June 2023

28. 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.

29. Members had no other amendment proposals. The minutes were confirmed unanimously

(Members who voted in favour included: the Chairman Mr Randy YU, the Vice-chairman Mr WONG Man-hon, Mr CHOW Yuk-tong, Mr Ken WONG, Mr HO Chun-fai, Mr HO Siu-kei, Ms WONG Chau-ping, Mr NG Man-kit, Mr WAN Yeung-kin, Mr FONG Lung-fei and Ms LAU Shun-ting.)

III. Review of the Catchment Area of Tai O Jockey Club General Out-patient Clinic (Paper IDC 38/2023)

30. The Chairman welcomed Mr CHAN Wai-kuen, Senior Assistant Chief Ambulance Officer (New Territories Region), Mr TONG King-man, Assistant Chief Ambulance Officer (New Territories South) and Mr AU YEUNG Wang-kin, Superintendent (Ambulance) (New Territories South West) (Acting) of the Fire Services Department (FSD), and Mr WAN Kai-fung, Senior Hospital Administrator of the North Lantau Hospital (NLTH) to the meeting to present the paper.

31. Mr TONG King-man briefly presented the paper with the aid of PowerPoint presentation.

32. The Vice-chairman Mr WONG Man-hon was pleased to learn about the latest planning of the catchment area of the Tai O Jockey Club General Out-patient Clinic (the Catchment Area), but he was worried that there was a serious shortage of ambulances serving South Lantau (such as Mui Wo). He asked the FSD about its detailed arrangements for ambulance services and how it would handle ambulance calls received in quick succession. He opined that while the Catchment Area was under review, the ambulance services had to be strengthened at the same time.

33. Mr HO Siu-kei said Tai O residents supported the revision of the Catchment Area. He agreed with the Vice-chairman Mr WONG Man-hon that the FSD had to review whether the number of ambulances was sufficient to meet the demand.

34. Ms WONG Chau-ping pointed out that Tai O was at a remote location. She asked the FSD that in the event of an emergency case (such as a heart attack case) in the Catchment Area, whether the FSD would send the patient to the NLTH for treatment according to the patient's conditions.

35. Mr TONG King-man made a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) The number of ambulances of the FSD serving Lantau Island had increased gradually since 2010. The number of day shift ambulances had increased from 14 to 19 and the number of night shift ambulances had increased from 10 to 14, representing an increase of about 40%. The Fire Services Communications Centre would temporarily deploy the ambulances nearest to the scene of incident to provide emergency ambulance services. If the ambulances serving the district were all performing duties, the Fire Services Communications Centre would deploy ambulances from nearby fire stations and ambulance depots to provide operational coverage for the district on an ad hoc basis. To give an example, he said if the ambulances serving Mui Wo were on duty, the FSD would deploy ambulances from other districts to Mui Wo to stand by, which meant ambulances from Cheung Sha, Tai O or Tung Chung could be deployed to Mui Wo to provide operational coverage, so as to ensure that timely ambulance services were provided in each district. The FSD had been reviewing the ambulance resources of Lantau Island to ensure that residents' needs for emergency ambulance services could be met.
- (b) The catchment area of the Tung Chung Ambulance Depot covered Tung Chung, Cheung Sha, Mui Wo and Tai O. The FSD had been maintaining communication with stakeholders in various districts to understand residents' demand for emergency ambulance services.
- (c) When residents called for emergency ambulance services, they would be sent to hospitals within the catchment areas concerned as specified in the agreement between the FSD and the Hospital Authority. If a patient was in critical condition, in view of the patient's urgent need for immediate treatment, the FSD and the Hospital Authority had reached a consensus that the ambulance of the FSD could send the patient to the nearest hospital even if it was not the designated hospital.

36. Mr FONG Lung-fei opined that the revision of the Catchment Area could effectively improve the emergency ambulance services for remote areas. He noticed that there were only a few doctors in the Accident and Emergency Department of the NLTH, but the population of Tung Chung was increasing. If the ambulances serving Tung Chung needed to provide support to South Lantau, he was worried that the resources were insufficient to meet the demand. He opined that the FSD and the NLTH had to increase the resources.

37. The Vice-chairman Mr WONG Man-hon said there was a chronic shortage of ambulances in Mui Wo. The doctors felt powerless for the situation and could only advise residents to go to the clinics for medical treatment by car or public transport in emergencies. Although there were more than ten ambulances in Lantau Island, it took time for the ambulances to travel from other areas to Mui Wo. He pointed out that there had been a case of an ambulance spending more than an hour travelling from the Hong Kong Disneyland to Mui Wo. He opined that the FSD had to review the ambulance services for Mui Wo. While increasing the number of ambulances, the FSD should also examine ways to shorten the response time of ambulances.

38. Ms WONG Chau-ping asked the FSD whether the fleet of more than ten ambulances mentioned above served the entire Lantau Island or only Tung Chung. Due to the limited healthcare resources at the clinics in Mui Wo and Tai O, patients often had to be transferred to the NLTH for further treatment. If the number of ambulances was insufficient, the timely rescue of emergency patients would be affected. Moreover, it was not ideal for patients to go to the hospital on their own without on-board support. She opined that the FSD had to increase the ambulance service resources for remote areas. In addition, the NLTH, after upgrading the service scope of its Cardiology Division, should strengthen the ambulance conveyance services from South Lantau and Tai O to the hospital.

39. Mr HO Chun-fai said if the ambulances serving South Lantau were deployed to other areas, there would be a shortage of ambulances. Despite the operational coverage arrangement of the FSD, it would directly increase the travel time of the ambulances and delay the patients' arrival at the hospital, resulting in a vicious cycle and affecting the ambulance services. He suggested that one or two ambulances should be stationed in South Lantau to cope with emergencies.

40. Mr NG Man-kit said that Cheung Chau had a population of more than 30 000, but there was only one ambulance for taking patients to the Accident and Emergency Department or to the helicopter pad for a transfer to hospitals in the urban area. In view of the shortage of ambulances, he learnt that three fire trucks had been used to convey patients to the hospital, but the firefighters were unable to provide emergency medical services. He opined that the number of ambulances serving Cheung Chau needed to be increased. He added that there were two ambulances stationed in Cheung Chau a few months ago, but recently there seemed to be only one. He asked the FSD to confirm the information.

41. Mr HO Siu-kei pointed out that at present the population in remote areas of Lantau Island was increasing, but the response time of ambulances was more than 40 minutes. He opined that in addition to the revision of the Catchment Area, the FSD also needed to review the ambulance services for remote areas.

42. Mr TONG King-man responded that the FSD would review the demand for ambulance services in the New Territories every year. As the demand of individual

districts would vary according to circumstances, the FSD would deploy ambulance service resources flexibly, for example, dispatching first responders to the scene to provide immediate emergency ambulance services in response to the demand.

43. Mr CHAN Wai-kuen responded that the FSD would arrange for more ambulances and ambulancemen to provide operational coverage for some large-scale events (such as the bun scrambling contest of Cheung Chau). In addition, first responders, who were frontline fire personnel, would provide immediate emergency medical services to emergency patients before ambulances arrived at the scene. According to past data, emergency move-ups of ambulances to provide operational coverage had achieved remarkable results. The FSD would regularly review the efficiency of ambulance services and the use of resources, so as to improve its service quality.

44. Mr WAN Kai-fung said that after the discussions between the FSD and the NLTH on the revision of the Catchment Area, the NLTH had examined the data and was of the view that the revision would not have a significant impact on the hospital's service capacity. The NLTH would closely monitor the changes in the demand for medical services and make manpower deployment and planning accordingly.

45. The Chairman opined that the revision of the Catchment Area would help shorten patients' journeys to the NLTH and improve the efficiency of ambulance services. However, he opined that the FSD should take note of the above-mentioned issues and suggestions raised by Members, including the ambulance response time and the dispatch of Emergency Medical Assistant Motorcycles, and actively explore ways to improve the ambulance services.

46. Members voted by a show of hands and endorsed the revision unanimously.

(Members voted in favour included: the Chairman Mr Randy YU, the Vice-chairman Mr WONG Man-hon, Mr CHOW Yuk-tong, Mr Ken WONG, Mr HO Chun-fai, Mr HO Siu-kei, Mr NG Man-kit, Mr WAN Yeung-kin, Mr Eric KWOK, Mr FONG Lung-fei and Ms LAU Shun-ting. Ms WONG Chau-ping left the meeting temporarily.)

IV. Update on the "Airport City" projects at Hong Kong International Airport (Paper IDC 39/2023)

47. The Chairman welcomed Mr Ricky LEUNG, Executive Director, Engineering and Technology and Mr Collin CHAN, General Manager, Capital Works Management of the Airport Authority (AA); and Mr CHUNG Chi-yan, Derek, Senior Engineer 1/Hong Kong Port of the Highways Department (HyD) to the meeting to present the paper.

48. Mr Ricky LEUNG briefly presented the paper with the aid of PowerPoint presentation.

49. Mr Eric KWOK expressed his views as follows:

- (a) He commended the “Airport Tung Chung Link (ATCL)” autonomous transportation system, and asked the AA whether the above system could cope with the passenger flow when large-scale events were held at SKYCITY, 11 SKIES and AsiaWorld-Expo (AWE), as well as the passenger demand at Tung Chung MTR Station and Tung Chung Station Bus Terminus. Moreover, given that the journey time of the system would take eight to ten minutes, he asked whether there would be bottlenecks in the service.
- (b) He suggested extending the ATCL to the Air Passenger Terminal.
- (c) Tat Tung Road was often congested with heavy traffic, especially during holidays, and he believed that the addition of a station near Tat Tung Road for the ATCL would aggravate the traffic congestion at the road section concerned. He also hoped that the relevant departments would solve the traffic congestion problem at Tat Tung Road.
- (d) At present, there were only two car parks in Tung Chung Town Centre (i.e. the car parks at Citygate and Fu Tung Plaza), parking spaces were in acute shortage. He hoped that the relevant departments would make reference to the automated car parks of the AA and provide similar facilities in Tung Chung Town Centre to solve the problem of acute shortage of parking spaces.
- (e) As for the vehicular bridge, pedestrian walkway and observation deck of the Airport City Link, he suggested that the AA should beautify the pedestrian walkway and set up a “time tunnel” at the walkway to display the development history of the airport and Tung Chung, or provide advertising spaces there to increase advertising revenue.

50. Ms LAU Shun-ting asked whether the AA planned to further extend the ATCL to other areas in Tung Chung.

51. Mr FONG Lung-fei believed that the “Airport City” projects would attract many people to the airport in the future. However, he expressed concern that after the commissioning of the ATCL, there would be more people visiting Tung Chung, thus increasing the traffic load in the district (especially at Tung Chung MTR Station). He suggested offering concessions to passengers to encourage them to take the Airport Express to Tsing Yi MTR Station so as to achieve traffic diversion.

52. Mr Ricky LEUNG gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) The maximum passenger capacity of the ATCL autonomous transportation system would be about 5 000 persons per hour. The

passenger capacity of each vehicle would be about 19 persons with reference to that of a minibus.

- (b) There would be 2 700 private car parking spaces, 12 coach parking spaces and a public transport interchange at 11 SKIES. The Authority had taken into account the relevant ancillary transport facilities in designing SKYCITY, so that the pedestrian flow would not concentrate in Tung Chung. The ATCL autonomous transportation system would provide passengers with an alternative transport option.
- (c) SKYCITY would utilise a platform and ten bridges to connect to all the relevant facilities, including Terminals 1 and 2, SKYCITY Pier, the AWE, AWE and Airport MTR Stations, and the ATCL. The ATCL could facilitate passenger access to Tung Chung MTR Station. The Authority noted and would take into account Members' views.
- (d) In designing the above project, the Authority was concerned about the traffic congestion problem at Tat Tung Road and submitted a traffic impact assessment report to the TD. According to the above report, the introduction of the ATCL would be able to alleviate the traffic load on roads.
- (e) Upon completion of the Three-Runway System project, the car parks at the airport would provide about 7 000 parking spaces, and an additional 2 700 parking spaces would be provided upon completion of the 11 SKIES shopping mall to meet the parking needs of the airport.
- (f) As for the design of the pedestrian walkway, the Authority noted and would take into account Members' views.
- (g) Regarding whether there was any plan to extend the ATCL to other areas in Tung Chung, the planning of such areas was outside the purview of the AA. The Authority would reflect the views to the government departments concerned.
- (h) Regarding the demand for transport services after large-scale events were held at the AWE, the MTR Corporation Limited and bus companies would arrange special departures for passengers, some of which would head to other districts via the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Link to alleviate the traffic load in Tung Chung.

53. Mr HO Siu-kei asked about the conditions for the hire of venues at the AWE for organising large-scale public events in the future.

54. Mr Eric KWOK expressed his views as follows:

- (a) The compartment design of the autonomous transportation system was

based on that of a minibus, with a carrying capacity of about 19 passengers. He asked whether the compartment would become crowded if space was reserved for luggage storage.

- (b) In response to Mr Ricky LEUNG's remark that the commissioning of the ATCL would not aggravate the traffic congestion at Tat Tung Road, Mr Kwok said, currently, serious traffic congestion often occurred at Tat Tung Road during long holidays, and parking spaces at the car parks at Citygate and Fu Tung Plaza were in short supply. He believed that the ATCL autonomous transportation system would attract many visitors. Although 11 SKIES would provide a lot of parking spaces, some drivers might still choose to park their vehicles in Tung Chung and then travel to and from the airport by the ATCL autonomous transportation system. As such, he hoped that the Authority and the HyD would take into account various considerations in dealing with the problem, so as to avoid aggravating the traffic congestion at Tat Tung Road and Shun Tung Road.
- (c) He suggested extending the ATCL to the Air Passenger Terminal to facilitate passengers travelling to and from the airport.

55. The Chairman expressed his views as follows:

- (a) He asked whether the ATCL would provide 24-hour service for the convenience of people working at the airport.
- (b) The future development of the airport would be highly prosperous. It was estimated that the airport would handle 120 million passenger trips every year with an increase in the cargo throughput, resulting in a growing demand for manpower resources. On the other hand, since the population in Tung Chung would increase by over 100 000 by 2029, the labour force in the district would also increase accordingly. He hoped that the AA would recruit manpower from Tung Chung as far as possible, so that residents of Tung Chung could work and live in the same district and new facilities such as the ATCL could be utilised effectively.
- (c) Although he believed that some drivers driving to the airport would park their vehicles at the airport, he hoped the Authority would take note of and make reference to Mr Eric KWOK's views.

56. Mr Ricky LEUNG gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) Both Phases I and II of the AWE were managed and operated by companies under the AA. As for the conditions for the hire of venues at the AWE, he would explain to Mr HO Siu-kei in detail after the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The AA referred Mr HO Siu-kei's enquiries to the AWE. The AWE contacted Mr HO and provided information on the hire of the venues.)

- (b) Currently, the compartment design of the autonomous transportation system was still at the development stage. In the current phase of design, the carrying capacity was about ten to twelve passengers. He hoped that the supplier would provide vehicles with larger compartments by 2028. Moreover, he believed that the supplier would reserve space for luggage in the compartments. The speed of the autonomous transportation system would be about 40 kilometres per hour and the journey time was about eight to ten minutes. He believed that with more mature technology and legislation in the future, space for standees could be provided in the compartments to increase the passenger capacity.
- (c) Tat Tung Road was currently a two-lane carriageway. Under the ATCL project, the Authority would re-provision the cycle tracks and bicycle parking spaces and might consider freeing up space to widen Tat Tung Road in order to help alleviate the traffic there. The Authority would take Members' views into consideration in the detailed design of the project.
- (d) Although some visitors might choose to park their private cars in Tung Chung and take the ATCL to and from the airport, the Authority would step up publicity on the car parks at 11 SKIES shopping mall after its opening to encourage those driving to the airport to park at 11 SKIES. In addition, the Authority would review the development of Tung Chung in coordination with the departments concerned in order to improve the transport facilities at the airport and in Tung Chung.
- (e) Regarding whether the ATCL would extend to the Air Passenger Terminal, he said that the ATCL would mainly serve those working at the airport, going to the airport for shopping or departing from the airport. The Authority encouraged visitors to Hong Kong to take taxis, airport buses or the Airport Express to the urban areas.
- (f) Since the Authority needed to allow time for the maintenance of the relevant vehicles and roads, it had no plans to arrange the ATCL to provide 24-hour service at the current stage. Nevertheless, the AA would not rule out the possibility of extending the service to 24 hours in the future in the light of demand or other technical factors.
- (g) The Authority was facing a shortage of manpower. The airport had 70 000 staff members before the epidemic, but now only had less than 60 000. The Authority was making efforts to recruit manpower, and

some companies were applying for the recruitment of imported workers. The Authority estimated that upon the full commissioning of the Three-Runway System, the airport would handle 120 million passenger trips every year, requiring about 120 000 staff members. The Authority was pleased to see that the population growth in Tung Chung would provide more labour force to support the development of the airport.

V. Question on the columbarium service in Tai O
(Paper IDC 40/2023)

57. The Chairman welcomed Mr CHAN Ka-leong, District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Islands), Mr YAN Ka-kit, Ric, Chief Health Inspector (Islands)¹ and Ms CHEUNG Suk-man, Chief Health Inspector (Islands)² of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) to the meeting to respond to the question. The written reply of the FEHD had been distributed to Members for perusal before the meeting.

58. Mr HO Siu-kei briefly presented the question.

59. In response to the FEHD's written reply, Mr CHAN Ka-leong supplemented that if Lung Ngam Monastery required more time to handle the cremated ashes and claims for the return of cremated ashes in the implementation of the ash disposal procedure, they could apply to the Department for an extension of the on-site claim period. The Department would consider the applications on a case-by-case basis to facilitate the return of cremated ashes to eligible claimants.

60. Mr Eric KWOK pointed out that in response to the Alliance for the Concern over Columbarium Policy (ACCP), the FEHD had said it would study the feasibility of using different sites for columbarium purposes with the departments concerned, and would conduct various technical assessments. He asked the Department about the progress of the studies and technical assessments. He said that the ACCP would like to meet with the Department, and he asked whether the Department would make such an arrangement.

61. Mr HO Siu-kei said that family members of the deceased whose ashes were kept at Lung Ngam Monastery thanked the FEHD for the arrangement of extending the on-site claim period to 2024, and Lung Ngam Monastery would closely follow up the situation. In addition, he considered it necessary to construct a public columbarium in Tai O to increase the supply of columbarium niches on Lantau Island. He asked the Department about the timetable and details of the construction works.

62. Mr CHAN Ka-leong would refer the views of Mr Eric KWOK and Mr HO Siu-kei to the sections concerned for follow-up after the meeting and would provide a written reply. The FEHD would liaise with the ACCP after the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The FEHD would provide a written reply to Mr Eric KWOK, Mr HO Siu-kei and the ACCP on the construction of a public columbarium in Tai O.)

63. The Chairman said that Lung Ngam Monastery was different from other columbaria. He opined that the FEHD's extension arrangement was very humane, and he thanked the Department for its effort in identifying suitable sites in Tai O for the columbarium development. He also hoped that the Department would solve the columbarium problem effectively during the extended period.

VI. Question on the provision of community support services for mentally ill patients with a propensity to violence
(Paper IDC 41/2023)

64. The Chairman welcomed Ms LAM Bun-ngee, District Social Welfare Officer (Central Western/Southern/Islands) of the SWD and Ms YAM Pui-wah, Coordinator of the Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council (NAAC) to the meeting to present the paper. The Housing Department (HD) had provided a written reply for Members' perusal.

65. Mr Eric KWOK briefly presented the question.

66. Ms LAM Bun-ngee responded as follows:

- (a) She thanked Mr Eric KWOK for referring the case to the HD and the SWD for follow-up so that the patient could receive support.
- (b) The SWD understood residents' concerns. Since the address of the patient involved in the case was within the service boundary of the NAAC Tung Chung Integrated Services Centre (Centre), the Department referred the case to the Centre. Upon receipt of the referral, the Centre immediately contacted the HD and subsequently approached the household concerned to introduce welfare services and take appropriate follow-up action. Since the follow-up action involved the privacy of the family, the details could not be disclosed. Eventually, the patient and his/her family members received appropriate services.
- (c) The Centre aimed to provide one-stop welfare services to persons in need (including persons in mental recovery and persons with suspected mental problems). Persons with welfare needs could approach the Centre directly for enquiries and applications for the required welfare services. The Centre also welcomed referrals from other organisations or individuals to receive welfare services. Nevertheless, upon receipt of referrals, the Centre would check whether consent from the persons concerned or their family members had been obtained for the referrals. If the persons concerned or their

family members refused to receive referral services, the Centre would try to step in by other means, including visits to the households in collaboration with the referring organisations or individuals, so as to build up relationships with the persons concerned and identify the welfare services that met their needs.

- (d) As for cases involving violence or emergency situations, the Department suggested reporting to the Police for assistance. The Department and the Centre would follow up the cases as appropriate.

67. Ms YAM Pui-wah thanked Members and the public for making referrals, so that the Centre could provide services to those in need in the district. If the persons concerned refused to receive services, the Centre would identify the entry points to assist them through various channels, such as conducting joint operations with the HD and members of the local community.

68. Ms LAM Bun-gee continued to respond as follows:

- (a) As for whether the SWD regularly reviewed and looked into the situation of the mentally ill patients living in Yat Tung Estate, the Department responded at two levels. First, in terms of case handling, if persons in mental recovery were receiving treatment, medical social workers of the Department would maintain close communication with the professional psychiatry team of the Hospital Authority (HA) and would contact the patients and their family members to monitor their medication status, while encouraging them to receive medical and community support services. For cases where patients discontinued treatment, the Department would maintain close liaison with the HA and would encourage the patients to receive treatment again. Second, in terms of community support services, the Department set up 24 Integrated Community Centres for Mental Wellness (ICCMWs) across the territory to provide services to persons in mental recovery, persons with suspected mental health problems and their family members, secondary school students under mental stress and residents of the serving district. The ICCMWs provided one-stop services, including individual counselling, therapeutic groups, occupational therapy, outreaching services, as well as mental health talks and publicity activities in the community. Currently, New Life Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association The Wellness Centre (Islands) (TWC), with its office located on the ground floor of Luk Yat House of Yat Tung (I) Estate in Tung Chung, was the ICCMW serving the Islands District (including Tung Chung). If necessary, the TWC would collaborate with the HA to assist those in need in seeking medical treatment.
- (b) As for the manpower of psychiatric social workers in the Islands District, the Department responded that the ICCMWs provided holistic

services through a multi-disciplinary team to persons in mental recovery, and persons with suspected mental health problems and their family members. Apart from social workers, members of the multi-disciplinary team included psychiatric nurses, occupational therapists, clinical psychologists, mental health educators and ex-mentally ill persons as peer counsellors, etc. The team encouraged patients who were unwilling to receive treatment to do so, and guided them to build up self-confidence and to learn life skills.

- (c) In addition to the ICCMWs, the Government set up five Mobile Vans for Publicity Service on Mental Wellness (Mobile Van) to promote mental health. The Mobile Van serving the Islands District was called “(M:) Drive”, which was operated by St. James’ Settlement. “(M:) Drive” visited different areas of the Islands District to promote mental health information, conduct initial assessment and provide referral services for those in need. In general, the Mobile Van would visit Tung Chung once a month.
- (d) The SWD was aware that the population in Tung Chung would continue to increase, so it had reserved space at the public housing development site in Tung Chung Area 100 for setting up a new ICCMW.

69. Mr Eric KWOK expressed his views as follows:

- (a) He thanked the District Social Welfare Officer for the detailed explanation. He also understood that the NAAC had been dedicated to serving the residents of Yat Tung Estate and the Islands District, but the outcome was far from satisfactory. Regarding the case of Hong Yat House, the affected persons had already reported to the Police. However, since no one was injured and no objects were damaged in the incident, the Police could not take further follow-up action. He had also written to the HD and the SWD, and he was perplexed that the NAAC serving the district said it could not follow up the case because no consent had been obtained from the patient or his/her family members. He said that mentally ill patients were often unwilling to receive assistance because they did not want to be restrained. He emphasised that the above case was just the tip of the iceberg, and he hoped it would arouse SWD’s concern.
- (b) Moreover, he had earlier followed up another case that took place at Chau Yat House, in which a teenager was held at knifepoint and assaulted by a mentally ill patient with a propensity to violence. Fortunately, the victim escaped in the end. He hoped that the Department would face up to the issue of mentally ill patients and take early follow-up action.

70. Mr FONG Lung-fei expressed his views as follows:

- (a) He understood that it was important to help ex-mentally ill persons to integrate into the community. However, some ex-mentally ill persons with a propensity to violence were like “time bombs” and might commit violent acts against others at any time.
- (b) Although he had handled the above two cases of violence, the HD replied that there had been no cases of violence and family tragedy in Yat Tung Estate. He opined that even though no one was injured in the incidents, the HD should classify them as cases of violence as long as the act was harmful to others. In addition, currently, Members wishing to refer cases to the SWD had to obtain signed consent of the persons concerned, and such consent could not be signed by their family members on their behalf, which he considered lack flexibility.
- (c) He understood the difficulties faced by the SWD in handling cases of violence and family tragedy that involved mentally ill patients. Even if the family members of the patients agreed to refer the patients to the Department for follow-up, the Department was unable to handle the cases without the patients’ consent. Consequently, the Police had to send the patients to hospital for treatment. Nevertheless, it could not be ruled out that patients who had completed the treatment might relapse and commit violent acts again after they returned to society. He noticed that when social workers visited the patients concerned, they often responded fluently, causing the social workers to misjudge their mental conditions. He asked the Department how members of the community should handle the above situation.

71. Ms LAM Bun-ngee gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) The SWD understood that the public was concerned about the situation of persons in mental recovery, which was exactly the reason for the establishment of the ICCMWs. The ICCMWs promoted their services and identified those in need of mental health services through various channels, and received requests for assistance from the patients’ family members. The ICCMWs also encouraged patients to consent to services through various means (including peer counsellors) and provided them with one-stop support services ranging from early prevention to risk management. After participating in casework counselling and various group activities organised by the Centre, many persons in mental recovery successfully enhanced their self-confidence and life skills. They were also able to take medication and stabilise their conditions according to doctors’ instructions, and even became peer counsellors at the Centre. During her visits to the ICCMWs, some service recipients told her that the ICCMWs helped them understand and develop themselves, build up self-confidence and

stabilise their conditions, so that they could embark on the road to recovery.

- (b) As for the few cases involving violent acts, the Department suggested reporting to the Police for assistance. When the persons concerned were receiving treatment, the Department would provide appropriate assistance in collaboration with the HA, including arranging for them to be admitted to halfway houses, or to receive follow-up assistance from the ICCMWs or other follow-up services in the community after discharge from hospitals, so as to provide them with sustained rehabilitation support.

VII. Question on the noise problem at the roundabout in Yat Tung Estate
(Paper IDC 42/2023)

72. The Chairman said that the written replies of the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) and the Link Asset Management Limited (Link) had been distributed to Members for perusal before the meeting.

73. Mr FONG Lung-fei briefly presented the question.

74. Mr FONG Lung-fei expressed his views as follows:

- (a) The noise problem at the roundabout in Yat Tung Estate had been a nuisance to residents for over a decade but had remained unsolved. Under the existing legislation, complaints about the noise generated by goods vehicles loading and unloading cargoes next to the roundabout during late night hours would be referred to the Police for action. Nevertheless, he queried that the EPD also had the responsibility to enforce the law.
- (b) Even though free parking was available for 30 minutes, goods vehicle drivers would have to spend several minutes to make multiple manoeuvres to turn around to leave the car parks, so they would opt to load and unload their goods at the roundabout rather than taking the risk of having to pay the parking fees, thus generating noise during the late night hours. He suggested that the Link should provide a free parking time of, say, one hour that would be long enough for vehicles to load and unload goods in the car parks, so as to minimise the noise at the roundabout. Moreover, since many drivers drove to Yat Tung Estate to buy late night food during late night hours, he suggested that private cars should be prohibited from entering the roundabout during the said hours.
- (c) Since there were one to two large goods vehicles entering the roundabout every night, he suggested installing noise barriers at the

unloading area to help reduce the nuisance to residents caused by goods vehicles loading and unloading late at night. He hoped that the Link and the HD would consider the above suggestion.

75. Ms Denise LI said that from January to August 2023, between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m., the Police received one complaint about the noise problem at the roundabout in Yat Tung Estate, which involved several women talking loudly. After being advised by the police officers, they left on their own. The Police had not receive any complaints about the noise generated by goods vehicles when loading and unloading goods as mentioned by Mr FONG. As for the procedures for handling noise complaints, upon receipt of a complaint, the Police would send officers to inspect the relevant location. If the source of the noise was identified, the police officers would generally handle the complaint through coordination and advice-giving. If such ways of handling were not effective, the Police would collect the noise information, including the location where the noise was created, the licence plate number and the particulars of the complainant, etc., and then notify the EPD via a memorandum. After investigations, the EPD would issue a Noise Abatement Notice (NAN) to the persons or organisations concerned under section 13 of the Noise Control Ordinance (Cap. 400), requiring them to abate the noise to within the statutory limits within a given time period. Failure to comply with the NAN would be liable to a maximum fine of \$100,000 for the first conviction and \$200,000 for each subsequent conviction.

76. Mr FONG Lung-fei said that even though the residents had reported the noise problem at the roundabout to the Police for assistance, the goods vehicles had already left before the Police arrived at the scene, and hence the Police was unable to handle the relevant cases. In addition, since the roundabout in Yat Tung Estate was under the purview of the Link and the HD, the Police's enforcement actions were ancillary in nature. He hoped that the EPD could step up enforcement at the roundabout in accordance with the Noise Control Ordinance, and he urged the relevant departments to work together to solve the problem.

77. The Chairman said the EPD and the Link had provided written replies, and he thanked the Police for the reply. He suggested that if residents were subject to noise nuisance, they should call the Lantau North Divisional Police Station for assistance, so that the Police could accumulate more complaint cases for the EPD to take follow-up action to solve the problem. As for the feasibility of installing noise barriers at the unloading area, he asked the Secretariat to request the Link to provide an assessment and study on the feasibility of installing the noise barriers before the next District Council meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The Secretariat forwarded the post-meeting written reply of the Link to Members on 29 September 2023.)

VIII. Question on the improvement of the services of the customer service centre at Tung Chung Station

(Paper IDC 43/2023)

78. The Chairman said that the written reply of the MTR Corporation Limited (MTR) had been distributed to Members for perusal before the meeting.

79. Mr FONG Lung-fei briefly presented the question.

80. Mr FONG Lung-fei, after enquiring with the Octopus Cards Limited, was informed that persons with disabilities (PWDs) could borrow a Temporary Octopus with “Persons with Disabilities Status” at the MTR Customer Service Centres to continue to enjoy the \$2 concessionary fare during the period when their Octopus card photos were being updated. He opined that some individual MTR frontline staff did not understand the definition of PWDs and confined the meaning of disability to visible physical disabilities, ignoring the fact that impairment of the internal body functions was also regarded as a disability. He queried why the MTR staff knew that PWDs could borrow the Temporary Octopus with “Persons with Disabilities Status” but did not take the initiative to offer it to them. In view of this, he suggested that the MTR should step up the training for its frontline staff to enable them to understand the definition of PWDs. In addition, since the general public’s understanding of PWDs was confined to physical disabilities, he suggested that the IsDO should further explain the definition of PWDs at the meeting with the Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education.

81. The Chairman responded that the Islands District Officer agreed that the relevant authorities should step up publicity and education on the definition of PWDs. He asked the Secretariat to write to the MTR requesting enhanced training for its frontline staff so that they could be more sensitive and empathetic when identifying PWDs.

(Post-meeting note: The Secretariat wrote to the MTR on 20 September 2023.)

IX. Question on the progress of the construction of the Community Hall-cum-Home Affairs Enquiry Centre in Cheung Chau

(Paper IDC 44/2023)

82. The Chairman welcomed Mr CHAN Tsin-ching, Jim, Senior Architect/22 and Mr TAM Wai-kit, Ricky, Project Manager 372 of the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) to the meeting to respond to the question.

83. Mr NG Man-kit briefly presented the question.

84. Mr Ricky TAM said that at the early stage of the project, the Department had carried out ground investigations to ascertain the basic geological conditions of the site. However, the investigations could only preliminarily assess the rockhead levels and could not accurately detect the locations of all large rocks within the site. During the construction period, when the contractor carried out excavation works,

large rocks were found in the peripheral areas of the site, which had not been detected during the preliminary ground investigations. As such, the contractor needed to adopt other construction methods and equipment for the foundation and excavation works, thus increasing the time required for the project. In addition, the construction works were carried out during the COVID-19 epidemic and the project was located on an outlying island, making it difficult for the contractor to arrange manpower and equipment. The progress of the works was further delayed due to insufficient material supply chains and manpower resources. Moreover, factors such as the contractor's limited risk management capability, insufficient internal resources and lack of experience also affected the team's ability to catch up with the progress of the project. The contractor had currently completed the construction of foundations and all pile caps and the associated excavation works, and had commenced the underground drainage works and the ground and superstructure works. The Department strived to complete the project within 2024.

85. Mr NG Man-kit opined that the construction time should not be that long since the scale of the project was not large. With reference to the previous construction of two ten-storey schools of Ling Liang Church in Tung Chung which involved over 500 piles and took 18 months to complete, it was unacceptable that the construction of this two to three-storey community hall had to take several years for completion.

86. Mr Ricky TAM said that the Department had issued multiple warning letters to the contractor regarding the delay of the project, and had met with the management of the contractor in the hope that they would improve the workflow, allocate more resources and implement feasible solutions to catch up with the progress of the project. The Department also assigned resident site staff to conduct daily site inspections during the construction period to monitor and scrutinise the progress of the project.

87. The Chairman believed that the ArchSD understood Mr NG's concern and dissatisfaction, and he hoped that the Department and the contractor would complete the project as soon as possible in 2024.

(Mr HO Siu-kei and Ms WONG Chau-ping left at around 6:15 p.m.)

X. Transport Department Traffic and Transport Working Plan 2023-24
(Paper IDC 37/2023)

88. The Chairman welcomed Mr AU Siu-fung, Kelvin, Chief Transport Officer/Islands of the TD to the meeting to present the paper.

89. Mr Kelvin AU briefly presented the paper.

90. Mr Eric KWOK expressed his views as follows:

- (a) The TD failed to achieve the work objectives as set out in the paper. Temporary parking spaces for non-franchised buses and other vehicles had been provided at the section of Yu Tung Road between Yat Tung Estate and Mun Tung Estate for 12 to 15 years. However, the above parking spaces were still temporary in nature. He had repeatedly raised the relevant questions in the previous terms of the District Council to request the Department to improve the parking problem at the above road section and provide additional parking spaces, but the problem had not yet been solved.
- (b) He suggested that the Department should take into account the traffic congestion problem at Tat Tung Road when dealing with the proposed pedestrian crossing at Tat Tung Road near Tung Chung Station Bus Terminus.
- (c) Regarding the extension of the bus bay on Chung Yan Road near North Lantau Hospital, he proposed in the previous term of the IDC to widen the above bus bay, and at the same time requested for the construction of bus stop shelters. He hoped that the Department would consider the proposal of constructing the shelters.
- (d) Regarding the construction of a bus lay-by on Chung Yan Road near Yu Tai Court, he suggested that double-decker buses should be allowed to travel along the relevant road section so that more bus routes could make use of the above lay-by.
- (e) Since there were currently insufficient bus services with frequent occurrences of lost trips, he requested the Department to ensure proper monitoring of franchised bus services. He also suggested improving bus facilities. Regarding the frequent failure of the estimated bus arrival time system and the inaccuracy of the arrival time of route 3M, the New Lantau Bus Company (1973) Limited (NLB) had indicated that it would follow up on the problem, but the problem had not yet been solved.
- (f) In response to the intake of residents at Yu Nga Court, routes E36A, E21A, E21D, E21X, E11A, E11B and E22S had been routed via Yu Nga Court since 30 July this year. However, Citybus Limited and Long Win Bus Company Limited (Long Win) had not increased the frequency of the routes during the morning peak hours, resulting in frequent full occupancy of buses and causing dissatisfaction among residents of Yu Nga Court, Mun Tung Estate and Yat Tung Estate. Also, since there were lost trips of the above routes, he requested the Department to follow up.
- (g) He had requested the NLB to retrofit upper-deck seats with seat belts on buses of route 3M, and he hoped the Department would follow up.

91. Mr FONG Lung-fei expressed his views as follows:
- (a) The journey time of route E21A from Mong Kok to Yat Tung Estate was one hour and forty minutes, of which 20 to 30 minutes were already taken up by the detour via the road sections in Tung Chung North, and it currently had to route via Yu Nga Court, which further lengthened the journey time. Routes E11A and E11B also had the same problem. Taking the journey from Mun Tung Estate to Sheung Wan as an example, the journey time of the routes concerned was one hour, given that the routes currently had to make a detour via Tung Chung North. If the routes no longer had to make a detour via Tung Chung North, the journey time would be 40 minutes only. With the increasing population in Tung Chung, residents' demand for route E11S had increased accordingly. In view of this, he suggested that the TD should split the route for the convenience of residents.
 - (b) He hoped that the Department and the bus companies would explore the provision of inter-company bus-bus interchange schemes, so that residents could have more route choices.
92. Ms LAU Shun-ting asked whether the TD would construct shelters for the bus stops at Tung Chung North, Tung Chung West, Ying Hei Road, Yu Nga Court and Man Tung Estate. Moreover, regarding the implementation of the Bus Route Planning Programme 2023-2024 of Islands District, she asked the Department about the progress of the implementation of the proposal on route E28 and the latest update of the enhancement of the service of route E11.
93. Mr Kelvin AU said the TD noted Members' views and would have regular meetings with the bus companies to follow up. The Department would also report to Members in due course.
94. Mr Eric KWOK hoped that the TD would follow up the construction works of bus shelters for the bus stop at Yung Yat House of Yat Tung Estate. At the meeting of the Traffic and Transport Committee held on 24 July this year, the Department said it had approved the application for the above construction works. Nevertheless, Long Win reflected to him after the above meeting that when it applied to the HyD for an excavation permit, the HyD said the permit could not be granted since the ownership of the above location had not yet been clarified. He had written to the TD to request for follow-up action on it, and he hoped that the Department would clarify the ownership of the above location and grant the excavation permit as soon as possible.
95. Mr Kelvin AU said the Department would follow up the above issue.
96. The Chairman suggested that the TD should include in its future working plans the projects which had been proposed by Members but were still being followed

up by the Department or where progress had been made.

(Post-meeting note: The TD replied to Members' questions via email on 27 September 2023.)

XI. Report on the Work of the Islands District Management Committee (August 2023)
(Paper IDC 45/2023)

97. Members noted the paper.

(The Vice-chairman Mr WONG Man-hon and Mr NG Man-kit left at around 6:19 p.m.)

XII. Reports on the Work of the IDC Committees
(Papers IDC 46-49/2023)

98. Members noted and endorsed the papers unanimously.

(Members voted in favour included: the Chairman Mr Randy YU, Mr CHOW Yuk-tong, Mr Ken WONG, Mr HO Chun-fai, Mr WAN Yeung-kin, Mr Eric KWOK, Mr FONG Lung-fei and Ms LAU Shun-ting.)

XIII. Date of Next Meeting

99. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:20 p.m. The next meeting would be held on 16 October 2023 (Monday) at 2:00 p.m.

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