

(Translation)

Minutes of Meeting of Islands District Council

Date : 1 September 2020 (Tuesday)
Time : 10:30 a.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

Members

Mr CHOW Yuk-tong, SBS, MH
Mr YUNG Chi-ming, BBS, MH
Mr CHAN Lin-wai, MH
Mr WONG Hon-kuen, Ken (Arrived at around 10:40 a.m.)
Mr Ho Chun-fai
Mr Ho Siu-kei
Ms WONG Chau-ping
Ms YUNG Wing-sheung, Amy
Ms TSANG Sau-ho, Josephine
Mr KWOK Ping, Eric
Mr TSUI Sang-hung, Sammy
Mr FONG Lung-fei
Ms LAU Shun-ting
Mr LEE Ka-ho
Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho
Mr WONG Chun-yeung

Attendance by Invitation

Mr IP Wai-man, Raymond	Chief Engineer/Lantau 2, Civil Engineering and Development Department
Mr LAM Chun-tak	Senior Engineer/3 (Lantau), Civil Engineering and Development Department
Mr LI King-sang, Kingson	Engineer/27 (Lantau), Civil Engineering and Development Department
Ms CHU Wai-sze, Fiona	Chief Transport Officer/Planning/Ferry Review, Transport Department

Mr WAN King-ming, Alex	Engineer/Islands 1, Transport Department
Ms HUI Shuk-yee	Engineer/Islands 2, Transport Department
Mr YIU Men-yeung	Senior Divisional Officer (Divisional Commander of Marine and Diving Division), Fire Services Department
Mr WONG Yu-fai	Acting Divisional Officer (Divisional Officer of Southwest Division/New Territories), Fire Services Department
Mr CHUNG Tao-fung	Acting Assistant Divisional Officer (Station Commander of Tung Chung Fire Station), Fire Services Department
Mr YEUNG Tak-hoi	Senior Engineer/HK 3, Water Supplies Department
Ms CHUNG Sau-mui	Engineer/HK (Distribution 7), Water Supplies Department
Mr CHEUNG Chi-hing	Senior Land Executive/Cheung Chau, Peng Chau & Lamma (District Lands Office, Islands), Lands Department
Mr IP Sai-yau	Senior Land Executive/Land Control (District Lands Office, Islands), Lands Department
Mr LO Tsz-him, Andrew	Principal Regulatory Affairs Manager (Market & Competition 13), Office of the Communications Authority
Ms WONG Nga-ting, Alice	Project Manager (Market & Competition 13), Office of the Communications Authority
Mr HAU Chi-leung, Arnold	Property Service Manager/S(HKI) 4, Housing Department
Mr YAN Man-chi, Robin	Property Service Manager/S(HKI) 3, Housing Department
Ms WAN Chui-shan, Ada	Housing Manager/HKI8, Housing Department
Mr KAO Hsi-chiang	Chief Health Inspector (Islands)2, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Mr MAK Tak-ming, Stephen	Director, Meinhardt Infrastructure & Environment Ltd.
Mr LEE Chi-kin, Samuel	Technical Director, Meinhardt Infrastructure & Environment Ltd.

In Attendance

Ms YEUNG Wai-sum, Amy, JP	District Officer (Islands), Islands District Office
Mr LI Ho, Thomas	Assistant District Officer (Islands)1, Islands District Office
Ms LEUNG Tin-yee, Christy	Assistant District Officer (Islands)2, Islands District Office
Mr MOK Sui-hung	Senior Liaison Officer (1), Islands District Office
Mr CHAN Yat-kin, Kaiser	Senior Liaison Officer (2), Islands District Office
Mr LO Siu-keung	Senior Engineer/15 (Lantau), Civil Engineering and Development Department
Mr SIU Yee-lin, Richard	Acting District Planning Officer/Sai Kung & Islands, Planning Department
Ms IP Siu-ming	District Social Welfare Officer (Central Western, Southern and Islands), Social Welfare Department
Ms LEE Sin-man	Chief Manager/Management (Hong Kong Island and Islands), Housing Department
Mr LING Ka-fai	District Lands Officer/Islands, Lands Department
Mr TSANG Wai-man	Administrative Assistant/Lands (District Lands Office, Islands), Lands Department
Ms CHEUNG Hoi-yan	District Commander (Lantau), Hong Kong Police Force

Mr WONG Wai-yin	Deputy District Commander (Marine Port District), Hong Kong Police Force
Ms KWOK Sze-wai	Police Community Relations Officer (Lantau District), Hong Kong Police Force
Mr LEONG Seong-iam	Police Community Relations Officer (Marine Port District), Hong Kong Police Force
Ms KWAN Ka-mun, Karen	Chief Transport Officer/Islands, Transport Department
Ms LAI Wing-sau, Winsy	District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Islands), Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Mr KWAN Chung-wai, David	District Leisure Manager (Islands), Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Secretary

Ms Dora CHENG	Senior Executive Officer (District Council), Islands District Office
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Welcoming Remarks

The Chairman said that according to the guidelines of the Home Affairs Department (HAD), in view of the epidemic, the number of meetings held each week was limited to two and the meetings should not exceed two hours each time. He proposed that today's meeting be held from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. so as to comply with the guidelines. He asked Members to be succinct and make good use of time to discuss the items on the agenda.

2. Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho questioned why the restriction on meeting time was imposed but measures such as keeping a distance of 1.5 metres from others were not.

3. The Secretary said that to her understanding, District Council (DC) meetings could be exempted from such restrictions and the meetings were no longer open to the public.

4. Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho said that meetings should of course be allowed but opined that more measures should be adopted during the epidemic to prevent viral transmission through respiratory droplets for the safety of everyone.

5. Mr Sammy TSUI expressed dissatisfaction with the arrangement. He said that the number of meetings was reduced during the epidemic and now the meeting time was shortened without scientific evidential support. He reckoned that it would suppress public opinion and found this disappointing.

6. Ms Amy YUNG questioned on what basis was the limit of two meeting sessions of two hours each determined. She indicated that there were as many as 23 agenda items today, and although the agenda items were even more in previous

meetings, there was sufficient time for discussion while the meeting today was limited to two sessions of two hours each. She said that the purpose of meeting was to solicit views for the Government's consideration and it was inappropriate for the Chairman to cut short the meeting time when the epidemic situation now eased slightly.

7. Mr WONG Chun-yeung proposed that the questions of the Chairman and Ms LAU Shun-ting be discussed at a later time, and that agenda items such as the epidemic and security which were related to important livelihood issues be discussed first.

8. Mr Eric KWOK agreed with the views of Members. He asked the Secretariat to listen to Members' views on appropriate arrangement of meeting venue and proper anti-epidemic measures. He suggested that if the discussion was not finished at 4:00 p.m., the Chairman might extend the meeting by 1.5 hours at his discretion to discuss more items.

9. Ms Josephine TSANG also agreed with the views of Members. She said that although the epidemic situation was slightly improved at present, Members were worried about matters relating to district affairs not being discussed soonest at the meeting. As such, she hoped that a suitable venue would be arranged to hold a meeting again with longer meeting time. She indicated that apart from Members, representatives of departments also attended the meeting today and no one would want to see that infection occurred because there was no break at the meeting to allow time for disinfection. She asked the Chairman to think twice and arrange another suitable venue for a meeting so that everyone might attend the meeting at ease.

10. Ms Amy YUNG said that she had invited the media to come at 4:00 p.m. to observe the discussion of agenda item 17 that she raised, and would miss it if the meeting ended at 4:00 p.m. which would not be desirable.

11. Mr LEE Ka-ho could not understand how the length of meetings was related to anti-epidemic measures. With the discharge of DC duties being affected as meetings could not be held earlier due to the epidemic, he said that if the meeting today had to end at 4:00 p.m. and there was no follow-up meeting, many agenda items could not be discussed. Members could then only read the written replies and could not enquire of the departments at the meeting about the follow-up actions and progress. Therefore, he hoped that a meeting would be held to discuss all items on the agenda.

(Mr Ken WONG joined the meeting at around 10:40 a.m.)

12. Ms Amy YEUNG thanked Members for their valuable input on meeting arrangement. While understanding that the setting of the venue today was not perfect, she indicated that there were many people attending the meeting but the conference room had limited capacity. The Secretariat would review the venue setting and endeavour to make improvement to ensure the safety of everyone with appropriate anti-epidemic measures.

13. Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho indicated that the epidemic did not happen yesterday and questioned why no review was conducted and the guidelines of HAD had not been observed until now. He had proposed conducting web meetings but was told that the proposal would be studied.

14. Mr HO Chun-fai said that he endeavoured to attend the meeting despite the epidemic but only irrelevant matters were discussed at the meeting. He considered it inappropriate and decided to walk out of the meeting.

(Mr HO Chun-fai left the meeting at around 10:44 a.m.)

15. Ms Amy YUNG said that she had submitted questions long time ago and queried why the Islands District Office (IsDO) only provided responses last night. She said that DC meeting had not been convened for a long time and now the time for discussion today was cut short, which went against the purpose of the establishment of DC.

16. Mr YUNG Chi-ming said that he came today to attend the DC meeting and not to participate in questioning. He decided to walk out of the meeting.

(Mr YUNG Chi-ming left the meeting at around 10:45 a.m.)

17. Ms Josephine TSANG said that while Members gave it a facelift as fighting for the rights of residents, what they did were actually pinpointing people but not matters. She decided to walk out of the meeting.

(Ms Josephine TSANG left the meeting at around 10:45 a.m.)

18. Ms Amy YEUNG said that when a meeting was convened, a balance should be struck between the needs of the meeting and the venue space constraints. She indicated that the Secretariat would strive to improve the arrangement in the future.

19. The Chairman said that the Government established public health policies and work guidelines based on various consideration factors. The attendees today included Members, their assistants, staff and representatives of departments, etc. If the meeting time was extended in breach of the guidelines and any Member was infected, Members would have to bear substantial responsibilities for they were unable to serve the public and failed to live up to public expectations. As such, he preferred to follow the guidelines and asked Members to be succinct as far as possible. For items that could not be discussed at the meeting and if Members were discontented with the written replies of the departments concerned, they might raise written questions to departments through the Secretariat; if they opined that department representatives should attend the meeting to give response even though a written reply was provided, they might submit the item again at the next meeting for follow-up discussion. He announced that the meeting was open.

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

(Mr HO Chun-fai joined the meeting at around 10:50 a.m.)

I. Confirmation of the Minutes of Meeting held on 22 June 2020

21. 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.

22. Members voted by a show of hands, and the minutes were confirmed with 16 votes in favour, none against and none abstention.

(Members voted in favour included: the Chairman Mr Randy YU, the Vice-chairman Mr WONG Man-hon, Mr CHOW Yuk-tong, Mr CHAN Lin-wai, Mr Ken WONG, Mr HO Chun-fai, Mr HO Siu-kei, Ms WONG Chau-ping, Ms Amy YUNG, Mr Eric KWOK, Mr Sammy TSUI, Mr FONG Lung-fei, Ms LAU Shun-ting, Mr LEE Ka-ho, Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho and Mr WONG Chun-yeung.)

(Mr YUNG Chi-ming and Ms Josephine TSANG left the meeting temporarily.)

23. The Chairman said that as he just said, the meeting today had used up the weekly quota of four hours' meeting and asked Members to be succinct.

II. Improvement Works at Tai O, Phase 2 Stage 2
(Paper IDC 89/2020)

24. The Chairman welcomed Mr IP Wai-man, Raymond, Chief Engineer/Lantau 2, Mr LAM Chun-tak, Senior Engineer/3(Lantau) and Mr LI King-san, Kingson, Engineer/27(Lantau) of the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD), and Mr MAK Tak-ming, Stephen, Director and Mr LEE Chi-kin, Samuel, Technical Director of Meinhardt Infrastructure & Environment Ltd. to the meeting to present the paper.

25. Mr Raymond IP briefly presented the paper with the aid of PowerPoint Presentation.

26. Mr WONG Chun-yeung said that according to the PowerPoint Presentation, CEDD had consulted Tai O Rural Committee (RC) and Tai O Cultural Association on the improvement works, and he enquired whether the department sought the views of Tai O residents regarding the locations of proposed car park and footbridges and transformation of historic buildings, etc. He pointed out that the current consultation exercise did not reach out to residents and lacked credibility. He hoped that the department would brief the views of residents at the next meeting.

27. Mr Eric KWOK expressed his views as follows:
- (a) Residents of Tai O had reflected to him that in the event of emergencies in the vicinity of Yim Tin Footbridge, many people would gather at the rear of Sun Ki Street. He enquired of the department whether the connection point of the proposed footbridge had sufficient space for emergency vehicles to make turns and pedestrians to pass through.
 - (b) Noting that a dockyard was located near Sun Ki Street and at the other side of the footbridge was a mangrove stand, he enquired whether the implementation of works would affect the structure of the dockyard and mangroves ecosystem.
 - (c) He enquired of the department whether the bridge deck was wide enough for access by emergency vehicles, and whether it was designed for shared use by vehicles and pedestrians or the latter were prohibited from use when an emergency vehicle was passing through.
 - (d) The responsible persons of the dockyard had enquired of him about the design of the footbridge. Learning that the mid-span of the bridge deck was openable, he enquired when a vessel was approaching, whether relevant personnel should be informed immediately to press the button to open the bridge and instruct pedestrians from both sides to wait or if there were other arrangements.
 - (e) He said that he had discussed the works with the department prior to the meeting. While understanding that resident consultation meeting could not be conducted in the district due to the epidemic, he hoped that street counters would be set up to collect the views of residents and to distribute leaflets. Moreover, some residents reflected that they were not clear about the improvement works and the information available was different from the actual situation. He proposed that when conducting resident consultation meeting in the future, the department should explain the works with graphic and textual illustrations.
28. Mr HO Siu-kei noted that CEDD gathered the views of Tai O residents from survey questionnaires some time ago and requested the department to report the progress.
29. Mr LEE Ka-ho said that the PowerPoint Presentation revealed that Yim Tin Footbridge extension works might encroach on part of the river, and with mangrove standing at Yim Tin, he enquired of the department whether the works would have any impact on the environment. He said that government departments generally conducted public consultation prior to commencement of works, such as organising talks to answer the public's questions. He noted that organisations including Tai O RC were consulted and their views were given, but the general public was not consulted. He requested the department to arrange to collect public views to allay concern.

30. The Chairman understood that Members had great concern about public consultation, and noted that the department had conducted consultation in various forms during the epidemic and asked Members to consider whether further consultation was necessary. Moreover, some wheelchair users in Tai O reflected to him that parking spaces in Tai O were insufficient and many vehicles were parked on pavements. Although Members had timely informed the Police for enforcement action, the police officers could not stand guard at the location concerned at all times. He reckoned that there was a keen demand for parking spaces in the district, in particular in the vicinity of Lung Tin Estate, and proposed that the department should give priority to expedite the works of providing parking spaces. He said that as the existing parking spaces might be used to meet the parking demand during works, additional parking spaces should be made available soonest to address the pressing parking problem, divert vehicular flow and to ensure smooth implementation of the remaining works.

31. Mr Raymond IP made a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) CEDD had consulted various local and environmental groups in the past few months. Two resident consultation meetings were originally scheduled for mid-July this year but postponed due to the epidemic. When the epidemic subsided, resident meetings would be held in Tai O as soon as possible. Meanwhile, the department would continue to gather views of Tai O residents about the improvement works.
- (b) Regarding the enquiry of Mr HO Siu-kei, CEDD set up a street counter in Tai O in mid-July this year to distribute questionnaires and explain the works details to the residents. The exercise was originally intended to run for two weeks, but owing to the severe epidemic situation, it lasted for only two days and would be resumed later. During the two days, the department received a total of 343 submissions from the residents, 330 of which expressed support and hoped that the works project would commence soonest.
- (c) He indicated that the connection point of Yim Tin Footbridge and Sun Ki Street had sufficient space for small emergency vehicles to make turns. In addition, after discussion between the department's consultant and the Fire Services Department (FSD), it was confirmed that the width of the bridge deck was sufficient for access by small emergency vehicles.
- (d) Regarding the design of Yim Tin Footbridge, the mangrove stand would not be encroached on as far as possible and impact on the ecology would be minimal. A study on the dockyard structure was conducted to make sure that it would not be undermined by the works. Close monitoring would be carried out during the works to minimize impacts on the surrounding environment.

(e) The department would proactively explore the feasibility of providing parking spaces first, and would set the work priorities.

32. Mr Eric KWOK enquired again about the opening and closing time of the footbridge.

33. Ms Josephine TSANG said that when she was Security Manager of the management company of Lung Tin Estate, many wheelchair users reflected to her that there were vehicles being parked on the pavements in the estate for a long period, obstructing their passage. She indicated that she had resigned and could not arrange security personnel for assistance, and hoped that Members and relevant departments would pay attention to the issue of shortage of parking spaces in Lung Tin Estate and Tai O.

34. Mr WONG Chun-yeung enquired of the Transport Department (TD) about the applications for Lantau Closed Road Permit (LCRP). He said that in late August this year, there were reports of fraudsters falsely claiming that they could apply for LCRP on behalf of private car owners for an annual fee of \$9,800. Learning that the works involved provision of a public car park, he requested TD to process LCRP applications in a prudent manner such that residents of Tai O might be given priority to use the public car park to prevent fraud.

35. Mr Raymond IP said that regarding the opening and closing time of the footbridge, it was understood that some vessels of the dockyard, though not often, could only pass through when the footbridge was open. The department said, when contacting the responsible persons of the dockyard, that after the footbridge was completed, it would provide the contact number of maintenance unit so that request could be made direct for opening the footbridge when necessary. As for the problem of vehicle obstruction in Lung Tin Estate, it was suggested that more parking spaces might be provided to relieve obstruction caused by vehicles and to facilitate the movement of wheelchair users.

36. The Chairman said that the related matter of LCRP application was not included in the agenda, and suggested TD to provide a simple written reply to Mr WONG Chun-yeung after the meeting, with copy to other Members.

37. Mr WONG Chun-yeung asked CEDD to take note of his views. Regarding LCRP application, as there was no Police roadblock in the district at night, many vehicles were speeding when heading towards Tai O. He was worried that when the public car park in Tai O was completed in the future, those vehicles would occupy the parking spaces therein. He proposed that the department should consult Tai O residents.

38. Mr Raymond IP said that the department noted the views of Mr WONG Chun-yeung. He indicated that the Tai O improvement works aimed to provide a convenient access to local residents and asked Members to give support. When the epidemic subsided, the department would arrange resident meetings as soon as possible to listen to the views of Tai O residents.

39. Ms Josephine TSANG enquired of the Chairman whether a vote should be taken on Improvement Works at Tai O, Phase 2 Stage 2.

40. The Chairman said that voting was not required and pointed out that the works had been discussed at previous meetings and received the support of Members of the last term. Since the department wanted to secure the support of Members of this term, he asked Members to vote by a show of hands on the latest progress reported by the departmental representative earlier.

41. Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho said that the Chairman, in response to the enquiry of Ms Josephine TSANG, indicated earlier that it was not necessary to take a vote on the works but later asked Members to vote by a show of hands which perplexed him. Since the Chairman mentioned that items not on the agenda should not be discussed at the meeting and a presentation was given by the representatives of CEDD, he opined that Members needed not indicate their stance on it which was not on the agenda, lest the Standing Orders be violated.

42. The Chairman clarified that since paragraph 9 of the paper mentioned that Members' views and support were sought, and representatives of the department also indicated that residents' meeting would be arranged for detailed consultation when the epidemic subsided, he asked Members to consider providing support for the works conditionally.

43. Mr Eric KWOK said that the meeting mainly discussed whether to provide support for the construction of two footbridges under Improvement Works at Tai O, Phase 2 Stage 2. Members had expressed their views at the meeting and requested the department to hold a consultation meeting with residents, while the department pledged that the arrangement would be made accordingly in due course, indicating that the works were supported by Members. He asked the Chairman to explain what it meant by supporting the works conditionally so that Members could obtain more information before voting. Moreover, he hoped that the works would be endorsed soonest so that the department could proceed with the gazettal and related work to avoid unnecessary delay.

44. Mr Sammy TSUI understood that the voting would be taken subject to conditions. He enquired, if residents proposed changes such as provision of certain facilities during local consultation in future, whether the department would heed public opinions or stick to the original design endorsed. He reckoned that even though the department pledged to conduct a public consultation, it would be meaningless if it did not listen to public opinions.

45. The Chairman said that the meeting mainly discussed the Improvement Works at Tai O, Phase 2 Stage 2, and consultations on Phase 1 and Phase 2 Stage 1 works were conducted in the district in the past. When anyone expressed views, the Tai O residents present would give response, and he opined that the department should accept proposals if they were reasonable and did not involve substantial changes. Regarding Mr Eric KWOK's enquiry about the width of the footbridge, he

believed that the department had carried out technical study to ensure that the footbridge had sufficient space for emergency vehicles to make turns. In case anything went wrong after works commencement, Members might raise questions and object. He hoped that the department would accede to Members' request for conducting sufficient consultation after the epidemic subsided, as it did in the past. He asked Members to vote on implementation of works on the condition that the department pledged to consult the residents.

46. Members voted by a show of hands. There were 14 votes in favour, one against and three abstentions. The works were supported by DC.

(Members voted in favour included: the Chairman Mr Randy YU, the Vice-chairman Mr WONG Man-hon, Mr CHOW Yuk-tong, Mr YUNG Chi-ming, Mr CHAN Lin-wai, Mr Ken WONG, Mr HO Chun-fai, Mr HO Siu-kei, Ms WONG Chau-ping, Ms Amy YUNG, Ms Josephine TSANG, Mr Eric KWOK, Ms LAU Shun-ting and Mr LEE Ka-ho; Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho voted against whereas Mr Sammy TSUI, Mr FONG Lung-fei and Mr WONG Chun-yeung abstained.)

(Since the guests of agenda item III had not arrived yet, the Chairman said that agenda item IV would be discussed first.)

(Ms Josephine TSANG and Mr YUNG Chi-ming joined the meeting at 11:00 a.m. and 11:10 a.m. respectively.)

IV. Question on fire fighting equipment in rural areas of Islands District (Paper IDC 91/2020)

47. The Chairman welcomed Mr YIU Men-yeung, Senior Divisional Officer (Divisional Commander of Marine and Diving Division), Mr WONG Yu-fai, Acting Divisional Officer (Divisional Officer of Southwest Division / New Territories) and Mr CHUNG Tao-fung, Acting Assistant Divisional Officer (Station Commander of Tung Chung Fire Station) of the Fire Services Department (FSD); as well as Mr YEUNG Tak-hoi, Senior Engineer/HK 3 and Ms CHUNG Sau-mui, Engineer/HK (Distribution 7) of the Water Supplies Department (WSD).

48. The Chairman briefly presented the question.

49. Mr YIU Men-yeung responded as follows:

- (a) FSD reviewed the fire fighting equipment in rural areas from time to time. To enhance the operational efficiency, FSD maintained contact with WSD regularly and had provided additional 25 and 22 fire hydrants for rural areas and places without water supply in Tai O and Tung Chung respectively with the assistance of WSD.

- (b) FSD reviewed the fire fighting and rescue strategies of Tai O from time to time and had placed in the area fire fighting equipment niches which comprised hoses, keys of the fire hydrants, nozzles and portable water pumps to enable firefighters to obtain the equipment swiftly after arriving at the scene.
- (c) FSD would provide floating bridges near the pumping station in Tai O for accommodating fire fighting and rescue speedboats for use to curb the spread of fire when the stilt houses in Tai O were on fire.
- (d) Regarding the fire at the squatters at Kat Hing Back Street, Tai O on 20 July, when the firefighters arrived at the scene four minutes after receipt of the report, a squatter had been completely destroyed and the fire spread to three squatters nearby. FSD had deployed three breathing apparatus teams and mobilised three 70mm fire hoses to get water from three fire hydrants for fighting the fire. Despite unstable water pressure and insufficient water occasionally, the rescue work was not affected. The fire was curbed in 30 minutes and put out at 8:18 p.m. eventually.

50. Mr YEUNG Tak-hoi responded as follows:

- (a) Regarding improvement to the water pressure and flow of the fire hydrants at Kat Hing Back Street, Tai O, the department would connect them to a fire hose with a diameter of 150mm laid a few years ago for improvement in water quantity.
- (b) Regarding proposed provision of fire hydrants in Ngau Au Village, the department was planning to lay hoses with a larger diameter and install hydrants in the village. Hose alignment had also been planned. However, some hoses would run through private lands so consent of the villagers must be obtained before commencement of the hose laying works.

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

- (a) It was stated in the question that the power cubicles of CLP in Ngau Au Village, Tung Chung malfunctioned and exploded on 19 June and 2 July respectively, resulting in two serious fires in a month. She had inspected the scene after the first fire accident and found that firefighters borrowed hoses for fire fighting. She pointed out that there was a river near Ngau Au Village adjacent to Mun Tung Estate and was not lacking in water, and queried if relevant departments had reviewed the fire fighting equipment of the villages.
- (b) Some rural representatives said that they had applied to WSD for installation of fire hydrants for emergency rescue before 1997 but was rejected due to the size of the hoses in the village and the problem

remained unresolved. She queried that WSD did not accord priority to people's lives and urged the department to resolve the problem of hose size. She had written to FSD, copying to Tung Chung Fire Station to propose a number of sites for installing fire hydrants. The departments concerned immediately approached her to understand the situation and deployed staff to the proposed sites of feasibility for site inspection. Considering it unreasonable to leave the problem unresolved for over 20 years, she hoped that WSD would co-operate pro-actively and IDC follow up on the matter seriously.

- (c) She pointed out that there were 19 villages in Tung Chung. The representative of FSD mentioned that 20 additional fire hydrants had been installed. However, to her understanding, vehicles or fire services vehicles could not enter the villages normally so she enquired about the location of the fire hydrants. She pointed out that only a few villages were situated on the roadside while Mok Ka Village, Shek Lau Po Village, Lim Che Village and Nim Yuen Village were close to mountains. She queried if the department had a clear idea of the actual environment and enquired how it would cope when serious fire accidents occurred.
- (d) She criticised several departments for failing to take care of the village facilities and safety of villagers during New Town extension. She was disappointed at the attitude of WSD and would organise a signature campaign to express dissatisfaction.

52. Mr HO Siu-kei said that Tai O was a fire-prone place where a number of fire broke out in the past 20 years. In July this year, over 80 stilt houses in San Sha and Sha Chai Min were burnt and around 300 residents were affected. A fire broke out near Sun Ki Bridge in 2013 which destroyed 12 stilt houses and left 14 families homeless. Although FSD deployed staff to the scene swiftly and had studied improvement to fire fighting equipment, the Government failed to coordinate, resulting in a serious shortage of relevant equipment. If stilt houses extending over a larger area were on fire, it would be difficult to handle with the existing equipment and all stilt houses in the vicinity might be burnt eventually. The relatively high temperature this year accompanied by strong winds might aggravate the fire and cause casualties. He thanked FSD for maintaining close liaison with Members and paying attention to fire prevention work in the district but other departments should give support. He also urged IDC to follow up on matters related to provision of additional fire fighting equipment pro-actively.

53. Ms Amy YUNG said that every District Office (DO) had a District Fire Safety Committee (DFSC) whose members were appointed by the District Officer. She discovered that despite the huge population in Discovery Bay, there was no representative from the area sitting on DFSC (Islands District) of the last term. She had reflected the problem to the then District Officer (Islands) and was later invited to join the committee. Noting the importance of fire safety issues, she proposed that the District Officer (Islands) appoint Mr HO Siu-kei and Ms WONG Chau-ping as

members of DFSC (Islands District) and opined that IDC should maintain close liaison with DFSC (Islands District) and other committees under IsDO.

54. Ms Josephine TSANG expressed her views as follows:

- (a) Regarding the malfunction of the power cubicles of CLP in Ngau Au Village, Tung Chung on 19 and 22 June respectively which caused a fire, she enquired of FSD if a recurrence was possible. She considered WSD's refusal to install fire fighting equipment due to inappropriate size of the hoses unacceptable and was dissatisfied that the problem remained unresolved for 20 years. She attributed the delay of fire hose installation in a number of villages to the passiveness of the department.
- (b) She commended the fire services of Peng Chau as among the best in Islands District. Apart from conducting fire fighting operations, fire stations provided support to relief work and livelihood matters. Pointing out that some remote areas with residential dwellings were not yet installed with fire hydrant, she hoped that Mr YIU Men-yeung would inspect the areas with officers of Peng Chau Fire Station and study if collaboration with WSD on provision of fire hydrants was feasible.

55. Mr WONG Chun-yeug enquired if electricity supply for each household was independent, or a power cubicle was shared among a few households in Ngau Au Village. He agreed that improvement should be made to the fire fighting equipment along Sheung Ling Pei, Tung Chung to Tai O and enquired if the fires in Ngau Au Village were caused by substandard power cubicles and irrelevant to the conduct and ways of handling matters by the department in charge. In the absence of proof that the fires were caused by overburdened power cubicles being shared by the villagers, it would be meaningless to pursue the liability at IDC if similar accidents occurred again.

56. The Chairman asked Ms WONG Chau-ping to give a brief response.

57. Ms WONG Chau-ping pointed out that to her preliminary understanding, electricity would be supplied to small houses via fuses after the main cable was connected to the villages and there was a power cubicle on each storey in three-storey small houses. According to CLP's initial response, insufficient electricity supply was the cause for the explosion and fire and no accident report was available for the time being.

58. Ms Josephine TSANG opined that as the issue was related to CLP, it should be requested to send representatives to the meeting to give response to avoid a breach of the Standing Orders.

59. Mr Ken WONG agreed with the views of Ms Josephine TSANG and opined that the Chairman should not give leave to Ms WONG Chau-ping to give response after her speaking time was used up.

60. The Chairman admitted to failing to request CLP to send representatives to the meeting and would write to CLP to ask for a written reply to Mr WONG Chun-yeung's query. In addition, he agreed with Members' views on the number of times a Member might speak.

61. Mr YIU Men-yeung said that the operational division of FSD reviewed which villages were prone to fire or required installation of fire hydrants from time to time. He said that Tai O and other villages were high risk areas whose architectural style was different from that of the urban area. The works would be implemented expeditiously after discussion with relevant department to protect public safety.

62. Mr YEUNG Tak-hoi said that water usage in villages was relatively low so hoses with a smaller diameter were used in general. The use of hoses with a larger diameter might lead to stagnant water and affect water quality. Regarding the case in Ngau Au Village, hoses of a relatively large diameter would be laid to facilitate installation of fire hydrants. After completion of the works, the department would clean the hoses regularly as necessary to resolve the problem of stagnant water.

63. Mr Ken WONG enquired if WSD had taken any follow-up actions after receiving the complaints or it did not know the above problem existed.

64. Ms Amy YUNG asked the District Officer (Islands) to respond to her proposal for appointment to DFSC (Islands District).

65. Ms Amy YEUNG noted the views of Ms Amy YUNG and said that the Government upheld the principle of meritocracy and cast their net wide for people to participate as committee members, which would also be the case for appointment to IDC committees.

66. Mr Ken WONG enquired why WSD responded to the issue after 20 years.

67. Mr YEUNG Tak-hoi said that the department would pro-actively follow up on the case of Ngau Au Village and commence hose laying and the installation of fire hydrants after obtaining villagers' consent on hose alignment.

(Post-meeting note of WSD:

The department conducted a site inspection with the representative of Ngau Au Village on 9 September. Having regard to the actual condition and as recommended by FSD, the department planned to install three fire hydrants at the above location and lay new hoses for connection. It wrote to the village representative on 15 September to enquire about villagers' views on laying hoses at private lands.)

68. The Chairman asked Mr YEUNG Tak-hoi to find out the cause of leaving the problem unresolved for over 20 years after the meeting and provide a written reply to IDC. He opined that many rural areas were prone to fire risk and hoped that Members of rural constituencies and the Chairmen of RCs could inspect the villages

to identify places which required particular concern and report to FSD and WSD to determine the factor of safety of such places.

(Post-meeting note of WSD:

According to the information of the department, the representative of Ngau Au Village had requested installation of fire hydrants at the above location via Islands District Office in 2002. The department installed a goose neck-shaped fire hydrant at the hose with a relatively large diameter at the entrance of Ngau Au Village (near lamppost VA0831). Due to low water usage in the village, hoses of a relatively small diameter were generally in use. Installation of fire hydrants in the village would require hoses with a larger diameter which might result in stagnant water. The department had reviewed the case of Ngau Au Village and contemplated laying hoses with a relatively larger diameter for installation of fire hydrants.

V. Question on bicycle parking area of Yung Shue Wan, Lamma Island
(Paper IDC 92/2020)

69. The Chairman welcomed Mr WAN King-ming, Alex, Engineer/Islands 1 of TD, Mr LO Siu-keung, Senior Engineer/15 (Lantau) of CEDD and Mr CHEUNG Chi-hing, Senior Land Executive/Cheung Chau, Peng Chau & Lamma of District Lands Office, Islands (DLO, Islands) to the meeting to respond to the question. TD and CEDD had provided a consolidated written reply for Members' perusal.

70. Ms LAU Shun-ting briefly presented the question.

71. Mr Alex WAN briefly presented the consolidated written reply of CEDD and TD.

72. Mr CHAN Lin-wai expressed his views as follows:

- (a) Bicycle was the major mode of transport for the residents of Lamma Island, Cheung Chau and Peng Chau so the bicycle parking spaces near the pier were often fully occupied. The capacity of the bicycle parking area in Yung Shue Wan managed by TD saturated soon after its completion in July 2015. RCs and residents of the islands had been monitoring its use since its completion and noticed that the saturation of parking spaces was manmade, attributable to improper management of TD.
- (b) There was a sign near the pier setting out points to note whilst parking:
 - (1) The bicycle parking area was for use by bicycles only;
 - (2) Parking of bicycles for a continuous period of over 24 hours was prohibited;
 - (3) Bicycles must be parked on the U-type racks; and
 - (4) The parking area would be closed for clearance of bicycles from time to time. TD had never monitored parking management or patrol work despite empowered by law. Bicycle clearance operations were conducted three to four times per year by a number of departments including DLO,

Islands, the Police and Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD). In his opinion, the saturation of bicycle parking spaces was caused by the poor management of the Government and TD had the duty to tackle the problem. He proposed that the department should draw reference from overseas bicycle parking equipment and practices such as provision of parking spaces in open space as well as high-rise buildings and on the periphery. He said that he had written to TD a few times but the department had no intention to discuss with the residents.

73. Mr WONG Chun-yeng believed that the problem was commonly found across the territory. He pointed out that multi-deck bicycle parking racks with lifts installed for users to get bicycles were provided in Northern District to save space, hence the number of bicycle parking spaces increased from 300 to 600 and the safety of bicycles was guaranteed. He proposed that Lamma Island adopt the practice of Northern District. Although the problem of abandoned bicycles might not be resolved, it could help alleviate the parking saturation. He asked TD to note the views.

74. Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho expressed his views as follows:

- (a) He agreed that the legislation concerned was outdated and amendment should be made. He pointed out that the Commissioner for Transport, during her visit to IDC, pledged to draw reference from overseas practices and develop bicycle parking spaces vertically, which should be implemented as soon as possible. He had paid a site visit and discovered that the said location and roads nearby were fully parked with bicycles.
- (b) He proposed removal of the abandoned bicycles to resolve the problem, such as posting a notice on bicycles remained at the pier after 9:00 or 10:00 p.m. to identify abandoned bicycles. He opined that the department should deploy staff to various islands to understand the situation. It was learnt that people abandoned the damaged bicycles after purchasing a new one or purchased another after their bicycles got towed to avoid going to the court and paying a fine for claiming the bicycles.

75. Mr Ken WONG expressed his views as follows:

- (a) He said that TD was very passive in handling the issue, claiming that law enforcement was out of its purview when being requested to do so and that it should be undertaken by DLO, Islands. He pointed out that no one knew how TD enforced the law for illegal parking. It failed to address the community's pressing needs and left the problem unresolved. To his understanding, the Yung Shue Wan Pier Improvement Programme was in progress but it took years to complete. It was stated in the written reply that the proposed bicycle parking area

was on an enclosed sea deck out of the boundary of the Outline Zoning Plan, which suggested that it had no specified uses. As such, he proposed studying the use of the deck. He pointed out that 300 parking spaces were provided at the bicycle parking area currently which he believed was outnumbered by bicycles on Lamma Island. He enquired if the department could open the sea deck for parking bicycles under safe conditions.

- (b) He opined that TD should study how to enforce the law in the long run. He pointed out that the procedures for clearing abandoned bicycles lasted for two weeks but DLO, Islands only conducted one or two relevant operations per year which could not completely resolve the problem. Being dissatisfied with TD's claim that it had no authority to take enforcement actions against bicycles at the bicycle parking areas, he proposed that a task force should be formed to request TD to undertake law enforcement directly rather than referring the cases to other departments as collaboration among four departments was required when bicycle clearance operation was conducted each time which was ineffective.

76. Ms Josephine TSANG expressed her views as follows:

- (a) She criticised TD for failing to manage the bicycle parking areas properly, prevent bicycles remaining at the bicycle parking areas at night and to remove objects including wooden carts and strollers that occupied the bicycle parking racks. She opined that relying on IsDO and DLO, Islands to remove bicycles could not resolve the problem. The owners could simply move their bicycles slightly away from the original position to prevent them from being removed. She opined that TD should clear abandoned bicycles regularly or bicycle parking spaces would be in short supply.
- (b) She criticised the statutory procedures for clearing bicycles as being complicated. Given that a considerable amount of damaged bicycles had accumulated at the bicycle parking areas, she queried if government departments was procrastinating in the matter. She reiterated that the problem could not be solved even if additional parking spaces were provided should the department continue with the current practice of bicycle clearance. She supported forming a task force to handle the relevant matter.

77. Mr WONG Chun-yeung expressed his views as follows:

- (a) He considered formation of a task force unnecessary, and said that the removal of illegally parked bicycles earlier by FEHD in Tung Chung South without prior notice was justifiable and lawful. He proposed reporting the problem to FEHD which might be able to address it in one or two weeks.

- (b) He proposed posting notices to disseminate the latest news of the Government and IDC during clearance of bicycles. He noticed that since the commencement of bicycle clearance operations in Tung Chung, the residents became more self-disciplined and would keep abreast of government information and park their bicycles at specified locations. He proposed that other areas should draw reference from the above.

78. Mr LEE Ka-ho said that the problem of abandoned bicycles existed in every bicycle parking area in Islands District, including those near Tung Chung North which were filled up with abandoned bicycles uncleared for a long time. He had attempted to approach different government departments but the problem remained unresolved as different legislations had to be invoked. He opined that abandoned bicycles on the roadside should be easier to handle but those at government parking spaces were not the case. He originally planned to raise relevant questions at the meeting of the Traffic and Transport Committee (TTC) but the meeting was not convened as scheduled. He said that the problem had existed for years and studies should be conducted on ways to handle the matter such as formation of a working group.

79. Mr Eric KWOK said that the bicycle-related problem was not as easy to solve as Mr WONG Chun-yeung suggested. He said that DLO, Islands was responsible for posting a notice on abandoned bicycles and could only clear them after the specified deadline. However, a bicycle could not be cleared under the relevant regulations if it was moved slightly away from its original position. The bicycle clearance operations were constrained due to rigidity of provisions. He pointed out that the Legislative Council (LegCo) endorsed the formulation of bicycle-friendly policies including a number of improvement proposals on 14 June 2017. He supported formation of a bicycle task force to discuss relevant issues.

80. The Chairman said that there were a number of working groups under TTC and proposed discussing the issue at the meetings of those with fewer members which he considered would allow more flexibility. A task force would be formed later if there was a genuine need.

81. Mr Alex WAN responded as follows:

- (a) He said that the bicycle parking areas were set up on public roads so they were managed by different departments according to their purview. He learnt that IsDO would handle the complaints received in accordance with the established mechanism and TD would give support in the relevant operations.
- (b) He noted Mr WONG Chun-yeung's views on provision of multi-deck bicycle parking racks. To fully utilise land resources near the pier, the Government would further consider providing double-deck bicycle parking racks, taking into account the construction and repair expenses and the needs of the community. The department was discussing with

the Civil Engineering and Development Department the feasibility of freeing up space at the pier for bicycles parking under the Yung Shue Wan Pier Improvement Programme and would consult the stakeholders in due course.

82. The Chairman said that the Assistant District Officer (Islands) (ADO) had assisted in coordinating the work of various departments in clearance of abandoned bicycles and invited him to give a briefing.

83. Mr Thomas LI said that a major area of work under the District-led Scheme was to clear illegally parked bicycles. IsDO was responsible for coordinating interdepartmental joint operations at different locations in Islands District including the black spots of illegal parking near the bicycle parking area in Yung She Wan, Lamma Island. IsDO would continue relevant work and increase the number of operations subject to availability of resources of relevant departments.

84. The Chairman proposed that Members should, on their own initiative, provide the locations which required clearance of bicycles to IsDO via relevant working groups to enable ADO to coordinate interdepartmental bicycle clearance operations more effectively.

85. Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho said that the problems raised by Members were related to management. He opined that Lamma Island should not follow the practices of other areas. As the Commissioner for Transport pledged to utilise space by developing the facilities vertically, he considered it unnecessary to set aside resources to study other solutions.

86. Mr Sammy TSUI said that the proposals raised that day treated the symptoms but not the root cause. He opined that the problems should be resolved by changing the policies and holding relevant departments accountable. The District Officer (Islands) could also reflect the problems to the Government. At present, the clearance of bicycles, motor cycles and other objects was undertaken by various departments including the Police, DLO, Islands, the Highways Department and FEHD which led to fragmentation of responsibilities. He opined that it was time consuming and inefficient if removal of an object required division of work and cooperation among four departments. He proposed review of the policies and purview for implementation of work by a single department. If FEHD was in charge, it could get down to work after receiving a complaint without coordinating with other departments. The current practice in that a complaint had to be made before some abandoned bicycles which were seriously damaged and fit for scrap could be handled was ineffective. He concluded that fragmentation of responsibilities was the cause for delay in resolving the problem and proposed that various departments should review their purview to facilitate implementation of work by a single department.

87. The Chairman agreed with the views of Mr Sammy TSUI. He noted the difficulties IsDO was facing in coordinating bicycle clearance operations as various departments including DLO, Islands, FEHD, TD and IsDO were involved, each acting

within its own purview. He understood Members' discontent with the government bureaucracy but hoped that they could continue to fulfill their duties.

III. Question on severeness of COVID-19 and community outbreak
(Paper IDC 90/2020)

88. The Chairman welcomed Ms CHU Wai-size, Fiona, Chief Transport Officer/Planning/Ferry Review of TD to the meeting to respond to the question.

89. Ms LAU Shun-ting briefly introduced the question.

90. Ms Fiona CHU responded as follows:

- (a) To prevent and control the spread of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), the Government introduced the Prevention and Control of Disease (Wearing of Mask) Regulation (Cap. 599I) in mid-July this year. Section 4(1)(a) of the Regulation stipulates that wearing of a mask is required for any person who is boarding or on board a public transport carrier (including ferries), and a person who contravenes the Regulation commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of \$2,000. However, the Regulation does not apply to certain circumstances, e.g. if it is reasonably necessary for the person not to wear a mask in order to eat or drink and take medication, etc. but a reasonable excuse must be given.
- (b) She pointed out that since the Regulation came into effect, the ferry operators had been co-operative and adopting a series of measures to prevent the spread of virus, including arranging staff to station at the ticketing turnstile barriers to remind passengers of wearing a mask before boarding, putting up notices at the piers and in the cabins, and making special broadcasts to urge the passengers to avoid eating and drinking on board. In addition, the ferry operators deployed crew members to conduct inspections during the sailing and advise passengers to wear a mask if they did not. As far as TD understood, most passengers complied with the rule and wore a mask on board; for some passengers who forgot or willfully refused to wear one, they would immediately put on a mask upon advised by crew members.
- (c) Moreover, the ferry operators had stepped up disinfection and cleaning work in the cabins, in particular objects frequently touched by passengers, such as railings, floor, seats, toilets and rubbish bins, as well as cleaning of air conditioning system. The air conditioning system in the cabins was currently equipped with fresh-air extraction function, which would be activated instantly when the vessel set off and the air conditioning system was in operation so as to maintain good ventilation in the cabins.

- (d) The department would continue to maintain close liaison with the ferry operators and step up measures as appropriate to effectively prevent and control the spread of virus.

91. Ms Josephine TSANG asked TD not to let up amid a drop in the number of confirmed cases but to step up efforts to implement relevant regulations more effectively. Noting that crew members did not have the substantive authority to prohibit passengers from eating on board, she indicated that eating on board not only gave rise to the risk of virus spread during the epidemic but also affected hygiene under normal circumstances, as evidenced by passenger complaints that food debris in the cabin attracted cockroaches. Even though the epidemic subsided, if the department did not make amendments to relevant regulations as appropriate soonest to prohibit passengers from eating on board, it would be too late to do so when there was another outbreak. She hoped that the department would squarely face the problem of eating on board and make legislative amendment to provide for the power that crew members could exercise to enforce the law.

92. Ms Amy YUNG indicated that crew members faced difficulties in law enforcement and would even be scolded for advising non-compliant passengers to wear a mask, which was unfair to them. She had proposed that Tung Chung Police Station should deploy one to two police officers equipped with full gear to conduct inspection on ferries to enhance the deterrent effect to require passengers to wear a mask on board. She hoped that the Police would deploy one to two police officers who were currently patrolling shopping malls to assist in law enforcement and conduct inspection on ferries.

93. Mr YUNG Chi-ming said that the ferry operators had arranged crew members (including captains) to educate passengers and conduct inspection on ferries, reminding passengers to wear a mask and not to eat on board. He considered the arrangement satisfactory. He proposed to TD in March this year that thermometers should be provided at the piers for use by passengers or pedestrians, and passengers found having a fever should be advised against boarding. He said that although outlying islands were small, there had already been several cases of COVID-19, and hoped that the ferry operators or the department would provide thermometers at the piers. Many shopping malls had already installed thermometers and the installation cost was not high. He questioned why such arrangement could not be made at the piers and opined that if this resulted in the spread of virus, the department should be held responsible. He had proposed at the beginning of the epidemic provision of sanitising carpets and handrubs for public use, but no thermometer had yet been provided. Many restaurants and shopping malls had already made arrangements for checking customers' temperatures and the cost of installing thermometers was low, so he opined that such measure should be considered to protect the health of Islands District residents.

94. Ms LAU Shun-ting said that while the ferry operators had taken appropriate measures, Cap. 599I provided an exemption that passengers did not commit an offence if they ate and drank on board, so they might still not wear a mask and continue to eat on board despite advice given by crew members. Apart from eating,

passengers might also drink alcohol on board and there had been cases of drunk and disorderly behaviour, which was worrying. Given that there was no regulation in place that prohibited passengers from eating on ferries, she had written to the Office of the Chief Executive requesting amendment of relevant regulation.

95. Mr WONG Chun-yeung reckoned that prohibition of eating and mask requirement on board should not be made mandatory on a long-term basis but only be put in place during the epidemic. He proposed that TD should arrange staff to conduct inspection on ferries to monitor whether any passengers were drunk and disorderly, drinking alcohol and not wearing a mask, and if such situations persisted, an open area should be designated as smoking, eating and drinking area on ferries where passengers should clean up after eating. It would be unfair to residents of Islands District if the prohibition of eating and drinking on board continued after the epidemic.

96. Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho expressed his views as follows:

- (a) Regarding the question which mentioned that there were always passengers consuming food and beverage including alcoholic drinks in the cabin, raising concerns that virus would be spread, he reckoned that if the passengers carried no virus, their eating in the cabin would not easily spread virus, thus an appropriate approach should be adopted to handle the matter of eating on board.
- (b) He said that drinking alcohol on board was not necessary and should be banned. As for eating and drinking, some Islands District residents used to buy food to eat on the ferry when commuting to work or school in urban area in the morning. As far as he knew, during the epidemic, some residents left home earlier and refrained from eating on board, while some had a habit of eating on the ferry. He hoped that relevant departments would understand that.
- (c) He said that he had earlier discussed with the department the installation of thermometers at the piers. Since there was no legislation in place prohibiting anyone from taking public transport and the body temperature might vary among individuals after walking in the heat, it was hard for ferry operators to determine whether passengers with a higher temperature should be allowed to board the vessel. Given that ferry service was public transport service, the taking of body temperature of passengers before boarding could not be compared with customer temperature check before entry to shopping malls. Detailed discussion should be conducted on how to render support to staff of ferry operators in taking body temperature of passengers after installation of thermometers.
- (d) He reiterated that the lifestyle of Islands District residents should be considered and passengers should not be indiscriminately prohibited

from eating in the cabin. He agreed that an eating area be designated on ferries as a transitional measure amid the epidemic.

97. Mr HO Chun-fai indicated that at present many restaurants requested customers to have body temperature check before entry, and considered that installing thermometers at the piers in all districts was desirable as it could help detect persons with fever and thus reduce the risk of community outbreak. He hoped that the ferry operators would consider installing thermometers.

98. Mr Eric KWOK said that in view of the severe epidemic situation, the Government had previously implemented cessation of whole day dine-in services, which had serious repercussions. If related arrangement was to be extended to cover ferries, he reckoned that designation of an eating area on ferries would facilitate management and be deemed appropriate under the circumstances of Islands District. He indicated that light refreshment kiosks were available at most of the Islands District ferry piers, and passengers might buy food and drink for consumption on board, chatting at the same time. If passengers were indiscriminately prohibited from eating on board due to the epidemic, he was afraid that it would cause a great outcry, as the cessation of dine-in services for the entire day did. He opined that even if TD stepped up regulation, it would be difficult to completely prohibit passengers from eating on board. To facilitate management, designation of an eating area would be a compromise option. After the designation of an eating area, consumption of food outside the area would be unjustified. In addition, he proposed that a certain distance should be kept between persons in the eating area to create a new eating culture.

99. Ms Fiona CHU made a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) Noting that some Members proposed amendment to existing regulation while some raised objection, she said that indiscriminately prohibiting passengers from eating on board might make impacts on the habits of Islands District residents. The department agreed that relevant factors in various aspects should be considered, including the habits of Islands District residents and passengers with special needs, etc. She reckoned that it was of utmost importance that members of the public exercised self-discipline to fight the epidemic.
- (b) Regarding the designation of eating areas on ferries, she said that a number of factors should be considered in the implementation process. At present, different types of vessels were used by the operators to provide ferry services to cater for passengers' need, e.g. triple-deck ordinary ferry and double-deck fast ferry with different carrying capacity. After designation of eating areas, the crew members would advise passengers to eat therein but there was no relevant legislation in place empowering ferry operators to implement the arrangement. She reiterated that owing to different vessel types and passengers' need etc., the designation of eating area involved a number of technical issues.

Nevertheless, she would relay the proposal to the ferry operators for consideration.

- (c) Regarding passengers being drunk and disorderly on board, she said that the crew members would try their best to handle such situation and if things got out of control, they would report to the Police for follow-up.
- (d) She said that most ferry passengers complied with the regulation. As for individual passengers who did not wear a mask on various pretexts, ferry operators were suggested to give advice to those passengers and observe their behaviour, such as whether they had not been wearing a mask for a long time or affected other passengers. If repeated advices were ignored, a report should be made to the Police for deploying police officers to intercept the passengers concerned at the pier and institute prosecution if necessary. To her understanding, New World First Ferry Services Limited (NWFF) had adopted this approach and achieved satisfactory result.
- (e) Regarding installation of thermometers, the department studied the proposal with the ferry operators in March this year and considered factors mainly relating to the daily operation and ferry service which was public transport service whereas the cost of thermometers was not their concern. With a high passenger flow in ferry piers of outlying island routes, in particular Central-Cheung Chau route every day, she said that even if a passenger was found to have a fever, the ferry operator had no sufficient legal basis to refuse him boarding and that having a fever did not necessarily mean that the passenger carried the virus. Therefore, after examining various technical issues, the department and the ferry operators considered that it would be more appropriate to adhere to existing practice and step up publicity, including reminding passengers to seek medical treatment when feeling unwell. Moreover, since there was legislation in place requiring passengers to wear a mask before boarding, thermometers would not be installed at the piers for the time being.

100. Mr WONG Wai-yin said that if a passenger did not wear a mask on the ferry according to Cap. 599I without a reasonable excuse, having regard to the circumstances and urgency of each case and the operational arrangement, the usual and more effective approach was to inform the police officers to wait at the pier and intercept the passenger concerned according to the evidence gathered by the crew members. Prosecution could be initiated if there was sufficient evidence that an offence was committed.

101. Mr WONG Chun-yeung pointed out that before the epidemic outbreak, many passengers, including the Mainland and foreign tourists and Indian and Pakistani people, smoked in the open area on ferries. They would pretend not to understand when advised by crew members not to smoke and keep on speaking

foreign languages. Crew members had no choice but to turn a blind eye to it, hence the problem remained unresolved. He proposed that apart from intercepting offenders at the piers, the Police should arrange personnel to conduct inspection on ferries to enhance the deterrent effect and boost the morale of crew members, thereby improving the situation.

102. Ms WONG Chau-ping said that while Members disagreed that passengers be indiscriminately prohibited from eating on board during the epidemic, stringent regulation might not be bad. Since the epidemic outbreak, members of the public shared the same belief to fight the virus. She believed that passengers who used to eat on ferries would understand the on-board food ban.

103. Ms Amy YUNG indicated that the third wave of the epidemic emerged because the Government allowed sea crew and air crew members to undergo crew change in Hong Kong, resulting in gathering of people and infection of over 100 persons. The number of infections reduced and the epidemic subsided only when the Government tightened the testing and quarantine arrangement for sea crew and air crew members. She believed that when the universal testing was implemented, the epidemic situation in Hong Kong could only be considered as under control if another wave of the epidemic had not occurred due to close contact. She proposed that in the face of the epidemic, people should maintain equanimity and that the Police should arrange personnel equipped with full gear to conduct one to two inspections on ferries to enhance deterrent effect.

104. Mr YUNG Chi-ming disagreed with the view of the representative of the department that fever might not be a symptom of COVID-19. He said that symptoms at the initial stage included fever and even if it was impossible to prohibit passengers found to have the symptom of fever from boarding, they should be advised to seek medical treatment. He hoped that the department would understand that there was a need of installing thermometers at the piers.

105. Mr Ken WONG made a declaration of interest indicating that he had relatives engaging in ferry transport. While the representative of the department said it would explore with the ferry operators the designation of eating area on ferries, he considered that the department was shirking the legislative responsibility. Despite posting of notices on ferries, eating in an open area was not subject to regulation, as MTR passengers might eat in train compartments disregarding the MTR By-laws. He considered that it was necessary to make legislation to grant authority to ferry operators and to avoid conflicts with the passengers.

106. Ms Josephine TSANG said that members of the public should not let up even though the epidemic had subsided. She pointed out that not every vessel had enough space for an eating area and took the NWFF as an example, saying that if the eating area was located on the third deck of the ferry, passengers would have to pay for the deluxe-class fare in order to eat in the eating area. As for smaller ferries (e.g. the ferries and fast ferries of Hong Kong & Kowloon Ferry Co. Ltd.), there was no suitable space in the cabin for an eating area. Coupling with the social distancing of at least 1.5 metres from others, there was no sufficient space on the ferry for

passengers to keep their distance of 1.5 metres. The patronage of most ferry routes was approaching saturation at present, if passengers had to sit in the eating area due to no other vacant seats, how should the crew members handle the situation? She questioned whether it was necessary to designate an eating area for passengers who had a habit of consuming food and alcoholic drink on board.

107. The Chairman opined that eating on ferries was subject to supervision by TD under Cap. 599I, and it might need to assess the risk involved with the Department of Health (DH). He hoped that the department would consider Members' views and discuss with other departments stopgap measures including setting up an eating area, imposing a temporary ban on eating and protecting the interests of minorities, etc. so as to protect the rights and safety of various parties. To protect public health and enhance public hygiene, he proposed temporary ban on short sailings and that the department conduct a study and provide a written reply to Members afterwards. Members who wanted to raise questions to relevant departments or committees might make a request at the next meeting. Moreover, Mr WONG Wai-yin said earlier that upon receipt of reports from crew members, police officers would intercept non-compliant passengers at the piers. Members hoped that police personnel would be arranged to patrol the pier of every route one to two times during the peak hours and he enquired whether it was feasible with the existing police strength.

108. Mr WONG Wai-yin said that it was difficult to provide a broad brush response as consideration should be given to the trend of relevant crimes, overall operational needs and manpower arrangement. He pointed out that starting from March the Police had received from outlying islands (i.e. Cheung Chau, Lamma Island and Peng Chau) over 100 complaints made under Cap. 599. To effectively deploy manpower to handle pressing cases and serious crimes, whether to conduct inspection at individual locations for long period would depend on the situation. He cited the example of the Police cracking a case of burglary in progress in Lamma Island in late August, saying that if police officers had been deployed to conduct inspection on ferries at that time, there might not be sufficient manpower to arrest the suspect on the spot since it took time to get there and back. He hoped that Members would understand the overall policing requirement.

109. Mr WONG Chun-yeung enquired, if there was no burglaries, sex crimes or emergency cases, apart from apprehending non-compliant passengers at the piers, whether the Police could deploy three to four policemen to conduct inspection on ferries and assist crew members in giving advice to passengers (e.g. those who smoked on board) in order to avoid the situation from worsening.

110. Mr YUNG Chi-ming enquired of TD again whether it would consider installation of thermometers.

111. Ms Amy YUNG indicated that she had written to the Police on 20 July this year requesting deployment of manpower to conduct surprise inspection on ferries to serve as a warning to urge the residents to take appropriate anti-epidemic measures but the Police replied that "the message was received and follow up action would be

taken as appropriate” and she had yet to receive further reply from the Police. She reckoned that the Police had not made good use of the manpower to handle livelihood matters. Since the Police had not yet responded to her question, one could hardly believe that it would take enforcement action amid the epidemic. She questioned why the Police was reluctant to conduct inspection and distribute leaflets on ferries, and asked the Police to give a response.

112. Ms Fiona CHU said that she would relay Members’ views to the ferry operators and a written reply would be provided.

113. The Chairman asked Mr WONG Wai-yin to explain further regarding his reply that the deployment of police officers to conduct one to two inspections on ferries would affect policing work. He also asked the Police to respond to the letter of Ms Amy YUNG in July.

114. Ms CHEUNG Hoi-yan said that regarding the complaints about Discovery Bay ferry and bus services, Police Community Relations Officer (Lantau District) Ms KWOK Sze-wai had contacted Ms Amy YUNG by phone and said that the Police had distributed leaflets on Lantau Island 22 times in the past two months to urge the public to observe the regulation on group gathering prohibition in public places and wear a mask.

115. Mr WONG Wai-yin said that he had nothing to add regarding deployment of police officers to conduct inspection on ferries.

116. The Chairman asked TD to respond to Members’ questions in writing.

VI. Question on progress of Subsidy Scheme to Extend Fibre-based Networks to Villages in Remote Areas for Islands District
(Paper IDC 93/2020)

117. The Chairman welcomed Mr LO Tsz-him, Andrew, Principal Regulatory Affairs Manager (Market & Competition 13) and Ms WONG Nga-ting, Alice, Project Manager (Market & Competition 13) of the Office of the Communications Authority (OFCA) to the meeting to respond to the question. The written reply of OFCA had been distributed to Members for perusal prior to the meeting.

118. Ms LAU Shun-ting briefly introduced the question.

119. Mr Andrew LO responded as follows:

- (a) At present, fixed broadband services in Cheung Chau, Peng Chau and Lamma Island were provided by a fixed network operator (FNO). Given the small number of households and the high cost of rolling out submarine fibre-based cables, in the absence of any economic incentives, other FNOs were not active in extending networks to the said outlying islands.

- (b) To meet the demand for high-speed broadband networks in remote villages in the New Territories and the outlying islands, OFCA, in support of the Government's policy initiative, implemented the subsidy scheme to encourage FNOs to extend fibre-based networks to villages in remote areas. In 2018, OFCA consulted LegCo, nine relevant DCs (including IDC) and 27 RCs on the arrangement of the subsidy scheme and the list of villages proposed to be covered. Approval of funding was granted by Finance Committee of LegCo in the same year for implementation of the subsidy scheme.
- (c) The 235 villages covered under the subsidy scheme were grouped into six tender projects (i.e. Projects 1 to 6). Villages in Lamma Island were covered under Project 5 and villages in Lantau Island, Peng Chau and Cheung Chau were covered under Project 6, with a combined total of 67 villages under these two projects. The selected FNOs were required to roll out lead-in connections to the vicinity of the entrances of the villages concerned and three submarine fibre-based cables connecting Lamma Island from Hong Kong Island, Cheung Chau from Lantau Island and Peng Chau from Lantau Island respectively. To introduce competition, the selected FNOs were required to open up at least half of the capacity of the subsidised network facilities for use by other FNOs for free.
- (d) After conducting two tender exercises in June 2019 and January 2020 respectively, OFCA awarded the projects to two FNOs. Project 5 and Project 6 were awarded to Hong Kong Telecommunications (HKT) Limited (HKT).
- (e) For Project 5 and Project 6, HKT had commenced preparatory work, including application for various statutory permits and approvals for excavation works as well as roll-out of fibre-based networks and submarine fibre-based cables. OFCA would closely monitor the implementation progress and continue to co-ordinate with the relevant government departments on matters relating to applications of HKT for permits and approvals with a view to expediting the network rollout. The Government would only release the subsidies and the performance bond upon completion of relevant milestones of works by HKT in accordance with the tender specifications and commitments made in its proposal.

120. Mr WONG Chun-yeung said that while service was provided to 13 villages in Lamma Island by PCCW at present, no tender had been received from FNOs for 54 villages in Lantau Island and other outlying islands. He enquired whether the 54 villages in South Lantau, Mui Wo, Tai O, Tung Chung, Cheung Chau and Peng Chau were still not covered by fibre-based service.

121. Mr Andrew LO said that the 54 villages in Lantau Island and other outlying islands were covered under Project 6 (Lantau Island, Cheung Chau and Peng Chau). Although no tender was received from FNO during the tender exercise in June 2019, OFCA made appropriate adjustments and successfully awarded the project through the re-tender exercise conducted in January 2020. OFCA informed IDC in writing of the tender result in June 2020. Regarding the villages covered by the subsidy scheme, they were remote villages located far away from the existing fibre-based backbone networks of FNOs. Taking into account the comments received during consultation with LegCo, relevant DCs and RCs and upon verification of the latest network coverage information with FNOs, OFCA finalised the list of villages covered by the subsidy scheme.

122. Mr WONG Chun-yeung said that according to news reports and resident feedback, although certain villages were covered under the subsidy scheme, fibre-based connections only reached the village entrances without improvement in broadband speed, reflecting poor planning of the authority. Many small house owners disregarded the tenants' demand for Internet service, repeatedly impeding progress of the scheme. He enquired whether OFCA received similar complaints from Tung Chung villages or Lantau Island.

123. The Chairman said that under the subsidy scheme, fibre-based networks reached only the entrances of the villages, and fibre connection would be further extended to the households by FNOs with the introduction of competition. He enquired whether fibre-based services would be made available to the villagers by 2026.

124. Mr Andrew LO responded as follows:

- (a) Under the subsidy scheme, FNOs were subsidised to roll out lead-in connections to public places or unleased government lands in the vicinity of the entrances of the villages concerned, excluding private land areas within the villages. However, OFCA had taken into account in tender evaluation whether the bidding FNOs would make additional service commitment of providing high-speed broadband services to the villages, and those making additional service commitment would score additional points, thus boosting their chance of success in the bidding. The selected FNO for Project 5 and Project 6 had made commitment of providing high-speed broadband services to the relevant villages. Apart from adopting the option of rolling out fibre-based networks in the villages, the selected FNO might also provide high-speed broadband services to the villagers through alternative technologies such as wireless technology (including 5G mobile and Wi-Fi services).
- (b) Regarding the timetable, HKT was required to complete Project 5 and Project 6 by the first and third quarter of 2026 respectively according to the terms of the contract. If works were completed ahead of schedule, HKT might receive the Government's subsidies and recover the performance bond earlier; on the contrary, if works were not completed

as scheduled, the Government might defer payment of subsidies, deduct the amount of subsidies, or call on the performance bond pursuant to the terms and conditions of the tender documents. Taking Project 5 as an example, the entire project would be implemented by four milestones and HKT was required to complete the roll-out of submarine fibre-based cables in the first milestone (i.e. by the first quarter of 2024). The first milestone of Project 5 constituted the most fundamental and important part of works of the project because the broadband services in Lamma Island at present was provided by microwave links. In the absence of submarine fibre-based cables, the broadband speed would be restricted by the capacity of microwave links even after the roll-out of fibre-based networks within the island. Moreover, under the subsidy scheme, HKT was required to open up half of the subsidised network facilities (including the submarine fibre-based cables) for use by other FNOs for free. The subsidy scheme would not only improve broadband services in the villages but also promote market competition so that the service charges could be expected to maintain within a competitive level.

125. Mr WONG Chun-yeung said that residents of Islands District had a keen demand for fibre-based network services. Residents of Shui Hau Tsuen indicated that the Internet speed in the village was very slow, below 2 or 3 megabits per second (Mbps). He said that fibre-based services could not be extended to the village due to resistance of small house owners against excavation and underground works and installation of cables. He proposed that the Chairman should liaise with Heung Yee Kuk for discussion and negotiation so as to rolling out fibre-based network soonest; and if not, switching to 5G service which would be more practical.

126. Mr Ken WONG expressed his views as follows:

- (a) He enquired whether the submarine fibre-based cables would be open up for use by other FNOs after works completion. At present, PCCW was the FNO of Islands District providing broadband services with a speed below 300 Mbps for a monthly fee ranging from \$298 to \$318. He said that the high services fees that PCCW, an enterprise with a social conscience, charged were unreasonable. Moreover, in view of the edge the selected FNO had in network service in the area, other FNOs might be reluctant to enter the market, and the need of excavation works on the entire street for provision of fibre-based services would also reduce the incentive substantially. He enquired what incentives OFCA would provide for other FNOs and was worried that even if it opened up half of the network facilities to other FNOs, there would not be enough incentive and the residents would still have to pay a high fee for network service.
- (b) He said that the subsidy scheme only benefitted residents of remote areas but not those places that already had network coverage and thus were not covered under the scheme. He hoped that remote villages

would no longer need to rely on slow but expensive Internet service in the future.

127. Ms Amy YUNG concurred with Mr Ken WONG, indicating that PCCW was previously the only FNO in Discovery Bay since the high toll fee had deterred other FNOs. She proposed to seek legal advice, pointing out that PCCW could not charge such a high fee since most of the Discovery Bay Tunnel was government land according to the Discovery Bay Tunnel Link Ordinance. She believed that PCCW would improve its service if other FNOs were introduced, thereby bringing benefits to residents of Discovery Bay. In view that monopolistic situations were common in Discovery Bay, such as in the supermarket and telecommunications sector, she opined that introducing competition could enable adjustments of service quality and price under the market mechanism. She hoped that the Government would open up the market to more operators and believed that introduction of competition to all service industries would benefit the residents. She pointed out that the issue had been under discussion by the DC and Area Committees for as long as 10 years.

128. Mr Andrew LO responded as follows:

- (a) The works of milestone 1 of both Project 5 and Project 6 included roll-out of submarine fibre-based cables and lead-in connections to some villages. Upon completion of milestone 1, the subsidised network facilities could be opened up to other FNOs for providing services.
- (b) Hong Kong's telecommunications market has been fully liberalised and the provision and the service charges of the telecommunications services was basically the commercial decision of individual FNOs. However, in view of the slow progress of broadband network coverage to villages in remote areas, the Government had implemented the subsidy scheme to provide FNOs with financial incentives in the form of subsidies to encourage the extension of fibre-based networks to villages in remote areas.
- (c) Upon completion of the subsidy scheme, there would be an overall improvement on the telecommunications infrastructure of Islands District, not only bringing direct benefits to the villages covered under the scheme, but also improving the fixed broadband services in the locations nearby. Given that the subsidy scheme had subsidised the most costly part of the construction work of the fibre-based network, there should be sufficient economic incentives for other FNOs to provide services to villagers. The Government had considered the provision of subsidies to FNOs carefully with the principle of prudent use of public funds in order to avoid their over-reliance on government subsidies.

129. Mr WONG Chun-yeung proposed that the Chairman should hold discussions with Members of rural areas and RCs to standardise the arrangement for

all villages throughout Hong Kong and notify the small house owners in the areas concerned.

130. The Chairman noted the proposal of Mr WONG Chun-yeung.

VII. Question on distributing and collecting specimen bottles at general out-patient clinics of Hospital Authority to address COVID-19 epidemic
(Paper IDC 94/2020)

131. The Chairman said that the Hospital Authority (HA) had provided a written reply for Members' perusal. He indicated that the question was submitted on 30 July this year and had become outdated after the launch of the Universal Community Testing Programme (UCTP). Since HA had provided a written reply, he said that he would waste no time in introducing the question here and asked Members to refer to HA's written reply. Moreover, the paper outlining UCTP and the latest arrangement of the Government was tabled at the meeting. The Chairman asked if DO had anything to add.

132. Ms Amy YEUNG added that given that certain areas in Islands District were remote and it was inconvenient for villagers to travel to urban area for tests, special arrangements would be made for Islands District under the UCTP and relevant details would be finalised in due course. Members would be informed immediately upon finalisation of the details or when further information was available.

133. The Chairman hoped that special arrangements could be made soonest. Reiterating that the question was outdated and the UCTP was underway, he asked Members to take note of the special arrangements for remote areas.

134. Ms Amy YUNG said that lots of paper was on the table and Members usually left the paper behind after the meeting. She urged Members to give support for environmental protection and read information paper on mobile phones and computers as far as possible. She requested the Secretariat to upload the papers to DC website once they were ready and provide update promptly if there were any changes for Members' perusal. She originally thought that the departments had not provided written replies to the three questions she raised at this meeting and only saw the written replies when rummaging through the paper on the table. She asked the Secretariat to upload the replies of departments onto the website as soon as possible upon receipt. Moreover, she had submitted the questions long ago but DO only issued written replies yesterday after office hours. She expressed discontent with this.

135. The Chairman reminded Ms Amy YUNG that the meeting time was tight.

136. Ms Amy YUNG said that Members' time and resources were precious and information should be sent to Members once available rather than wait until the last

minute. She indicated that to prepare for the meeting, she started preparation at 4:00 a.m. on the meeting day, reading and drafting response to meeting papers.

137. The Chairman said that as far as he knew, the Secretariat emailed the written replies to Members immediately upon receipt. He asked the Secretary to supplement.

138. The Secretary responded that the Secretariat sent all written replies to all Members by email. She said that arrangement might be made to improve the way for uploading papers to DC website.

139. The Chairman opined that the proposal of Ms Amy YUNG was worthy of consideration. He asked the Secretariat to keep record of the number of papers distributed to Members and paper consumption at this meeting and the meetings of the four committees, so that adjustment might be made at the next meeting to minimise printing, thus avoiding paper waste and environment degradation. He appealed for resources conservation and noticed that several attendees read on electronic devices and not the hard copy.

140. Mr WONG Chun-yeung said that he received only seven written replies from the Secretariat via email and two were outstanding, and enquired whether only some of the written replies were emailed to Members. He said that he only got the remaining written replies today from the printouts on the table, and indicated that he would not need the printed version if the Secretariat had emailed all written replies to him. He hoped that the Secretariat could email the meeting papers to Members one to two days before the meeting so that Members had more time for preparation instead of reading the papers at the meeting, thus facilitating the discussion of the issues with the guests present.

141. Mr LEE Ka-ho said that while he had some opinions on the arrangement of the Secretariat for sending emails to Members, he would not give his opinions here as other Members had already expressed views. He said that the question focused on lack of distribution and collection points of deep throat saliva specimen collection bottles in Islands District. The written reply of HA stated that the distribution points of specimen collection packs were selected by HA and hospital clinics would be avoided for epidemic prevention, but clinics including primary care clinics were among the 22 distribution points. He did not understand why specimen collection packs were not distributed in North Lantau Hospital and primary health clinics in Tung Chung. Since HA had not arranged representatives to attend the meeting, he asked the Secretariat to relay his views to HA for a reply. He said that the testing service would be extended for three months, meaning that HA recognised the need to undergo testing. He urged HA to consider setting up distribution points of specimen collection packs in Tung Chung during the three-month extension period and not to disregard the request with the launch of UCTP.

142. Mr LEUNG Kwok-ho requested to put on record that DO agreed at 3:20 p.m. today at the meeting to inform Members of the details of special arrangements under the UCTP in Islands District as soon as possible.

143. Mr Eric KWOK expressed his views as follows:

- (a) He enquired of the Secretary whether the Secretariat did not forward the papers to Members early because of late reply by government departments. If that was the case, he asked IsDO to urge the government departments to fulfill their responsibilities and avoid being perfunctory in district affairs.
- (b) He considered that the Chairman had raised a question. HA's written reply stated that "it was learnt that the Centre for Health Protection under the Department of Health would follow up on confirmed cases in individual districts as appropriate". He was dissatisfied that HA did not give a detailed account on the epidemic situation in Mun Tung Estate and Yat Tung Estate and simply replied that "would follow up as appropriate". He had written to other departments asking why confirmed patients had not been sent to hospital for treatment and quarantine after staying home for a few days or even a week, causing infections among family members. He opined that it was because of manpower shortage in HA that no arrangement could not be made. While he did not oppose to the UCTP, he was worried that if the problem of manpower shortage could not be resolved and 3 000 to 4 000 confirmed cases were identified under the UCTP, the hospitals would be overloaded and confirmed patients could only stay at home and wait for admission to hospital.

144. The Chairman asked the Secretary to explain the process of requesting departments to provide written replies and the difficulties encountered.

145. The Secretary said that upon receipt of questions from Members, the Secretariat would contact and invite relevant departments to arrange representatives to attend the meeting, and no matter whether the representatives would be able to attend, would email all the written replies received to all Members and not just provide printed copies at the meeting instead of via email. Since the written replies were submitted at different times, the Secretariat emailed written replies to Members by batches. The written replies for this meeting were emailed by three batches. The first batch was sent on 28 August, the second in the afternoon of 31 August, and the last one, that is, a joint written reply of the Food and Health Bureau and DH was sent to Members immediately upon receipt in the morning of the meeting. The Secretariat would try its best to appeal to relevant departments to provide written replies the soonest possible.

146. The Chairman expressed his views as follows:

- (a) He believed that the Secretariat had performed its duties diligently and efficiently. He agreed with Mr Eric KWOK that the delay of the Secretariat sending out mails was due to the delayed response of departments.

- (b) He asked the Secretariat to write to HA to follow up on the following. First, given that the testing service would be extended for three months but no distribution points of specimen collection packs were set up in Islands District, a request should be made to set up a distribution point in Islands District during the three-month extension period to provide convenience to people in need. Second, regarding the cluster infection of family members in Mun Tung Estate and Yat Tung Estate mentioned by Mr Eric KWOK, HA's written reply only stated that "would follow up as appropriate". HA was requested to respond as to how arrangement would be made "as appropriate" in Islands District or North Lantau Hospital to avoid recurrence of similar incidents.

VIII. Question on impact of paragliding on air navigation
(Paper IDC 95/2020)

147. The Chairman said that the Civil Aviation Department (CAD) and the Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK) had provided a written reply respectively for Members' perusal.

148. The Chairman said that he raised the question because he saw paragliders in Tai O, and was afraid that air navigation might be affected. He noted the written reply of CAD and said that he would follow up further if similar incidents happened again. He enquired whether Members had any comments on the replies of CAD and AAHK.

149. Mr HO Chun-fai enquired at which areas could paragliding activities be conducted, and whether there was legislation in place to regulate the paragliding route, for example, taking off from Cheung Sha of South Lantau and flying in the direction of Tung Chung, Tai O or Chep Lap Kok.

150. The Chairman said that CAD's written reply stated that the activities were subject to regulation pursuant to Article 48 of Cap. 448C of the Laws of Hong Kong. Since CAD had not arranged representatives to attend the meeting, Mr HO Chun-fai might approach CAD if he had any question on its written reply.

151. Ms WONG Chau-ping said that paragliding activities were conducted frequently above a large grassland opposite Tung Chung Hau Wong Temple facing the airport. She found it very dangerous but there were currently no clear guidelines regulating such activities. She asked CAD to take note of it.

152. Ms Josephine TSANG was dissatisfied that relevant departments always did not attend meetings and only provided written replies, rendering Members unable to raise follow-up questions. She hoped that the Chairman or the Secretariat would request the departments to arrange representatives to attend meetings as far as possible.

153. The Chairman said that the situation of departments not arranging representatives to attend the meeting was commonplace. Some departments were very co-operative and willing to send representatives to the meeting, while some were not and the Secretariat could only try its best to invite departments to send representatives to the meeting. In case a department only provided a written reply and did not attend the meeting, Members could only express their regret or issue a reprimand to the department. He indicated that the matter had been reflected during meetings with relevant bureau secretaries, and while the secretaries said that follow-up action would be taken, no improvement was seen.

154. Mr WONG Chun-yeung said that after being reprimanded by DC in January this year, AAHK arranged representatives to attend the following meeting. He reckoned that the departments should attend the meetings of DC, an advisory body and to respond to the questions. He proposed that letters be sent to CAD and AAHK in the name of IDC to issue reprimands for not attending the meeting and failing to answer Members' questions in the written replies; for example, CAD had not replied at which areas paragliding activities could be conducted, or explained relevant regulations and guidelines. As for AAHK, the media recently uncovered that it had secretly been occupying the site of the second runway.

155. Ms Amy YUNG said that the same went for the developer of Discovery Bay Hong Kong Resort Company Limited besides the government departments and statutory bodies. Throughout her 20 years of service in DC, the company had never sent representatives to the meeting. Recently, the Tourism, Agriculture, Fisheries, Environmental Hygiene and Climate Change Committee issued a letter to invite the company to attend the meeting and only received a written reply that was largely beside the mark. She said that the company attended the meetings of T&TC only because it was a standing representative of the committee. She reckoned that dealing with such commercial organisation was a great challenge for DC.

156. The Chairman noted Members' concern. He said that after reading the written reply of CAD again, he found that paragraph 3 had responded to the issue of airspace management raised by Mr HO Chun-fai and Ms WONG Chau-ping, with information that the safety guidelines listed out eight airspace areas for paragliding which could be found at CAD website.

IX. Question on relaunching "Tenants Purchase Scheme"
(Paper IDC 96/2020)

157. The Chairman welcomed Ms LEE Sin-man, Chief Manager/Management (Hong Kong Island and Islands) of the Housing Department (HD) to the meeting to respond to the question. HD had provided a written reply for Members' perusal.

158. Mr Eric KWOK briefly presented the question.

159. Ms LEE Sin-man expounded the written reply of HD.

160. Mr Eric KWOK opined that the government policies were contradicting in this respect. Under the Green Form Subsidised Home Ownership Scheme (GSH), public rental housing (PRH) households were required to surrender their flats. Those who had adapted to the living environment and wanted to purchase the flats they occupied could apply for the Home Ownership Scheme. Despite an all-out effort by the Government in promotion, GSH was not very successful and should be abandoned so that the Government could construct more PRH and enhance the Tenants Purchase Scheme (TPS) to allow PRH tenants who were financially capable to purchase their flats without affecting the number of PRH flats available. The Government should only provide PRH but not GSH housing. It was puzzling why they insisted on going down the wrong path. He hoped that the Housing Authority (HA) would consider his views and enhance PRH units for sale to the tenants to foster social stability and harmony.

161. Ms LEE Sin-man said that the mixed tenure of TPS estates complicated the estate management. HA would focus on selling unsold units in the existing 39 TPS estates in future and had no plan to re-launch TPS. She would relay Members' views to HA.

X. Question on provision of free testing of COVID-19 for residents of Yat Tung Estate and Mun Tung Estate and installation of automated body temperature measuring devices in the lobby area of each building
(Paper IDC 97/2020)

162. The Chairman welcomed Mr HAU Chi-leung, Arnold, Property Service Manager/S(HKI) 4 of HD to the meeting. The Food and Health Bureau (FHB) and DH had provided a joint written reply for Members' perusal.

163. Mr Eric KWOK briefly presented the question.

164. Mr Arnold HAU said that since the epidemic situation became more serious in early July, HA had stepped up cleaning and disinfection of public facilities. The frequency of cleaning and disinfection of common areas with high visitor flow including the entrance and security gates of all buildings, the buttons, panel boards and interior of lifts as well as lobbies, corridors, staircases, handrails and surface of letter boxes had been increased. Alcohol hand sanitiser and sanitising mats were also provided on the ground floor of residential buildings and at shopping malls as well as the entrance lobby of estate office to step up anti-epidemic work. To maintain public hygiene, all people entering the estate offices must receive body temperature measurement and the staff would take measures at the lobby to control the numbers of visitors and maintain the order of people during queuing as necessary. In addition, HD had stepped up promotion by putting up notices and health information of the Centre for Health Promotion at the lobby of each building to remind residents to maintain personal hygiene and keep both hands clean with soap and water or alcohol hand sanitiser before touching their mouth, nose or eyes. Most recreational and community facilities had been temporarily closed and all large-scale activities were cancelled to minimise the spread of novel coronavirus in the

community. The above anti-epidemic measures should be able to prevent community outbreak of the virus. In view of the significant drop in the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19, HD had no plan to install the automated body temperature measuring devices at the lobby of each building.

165. Mr Eric KWOK said that the question was raised at the peak of the third wave of infections with over 100 confirmed cases daily, about which residents of Mun Tung Estate and Yat Tung Estate had great concern. He criticised delay in sending infected persons to hospitals for isolation, which resulted in the spread of virus to their family members. Although HAD announced that it would conduct virus tests for residents of high-risk buildings, Man Tung Road Sports Centre, Tung Chung was fully booked on the first day for the universal testing programme. It was clear that the residents were deeply concerned about the situation. Although the epidemic situation subsided, the department had not yet provided body temperature measurement devices for the residents. He urged the department to be well prepared to prevent the fourth wave of the epidemic, likening the epidemic to a war that everyone should stay vigilant. If the necessary anti-epidemic measures were not put in place, the department should take the blame if the fourth wave broke out.

166. Mr HO Chun-fai agreed with Mr Eric KWOK that testing should be arranged for residents of housing estates with confirmed cases to identify the chains of transmission as soon as possible and ease the residents' anxiety. He proposed that Mr Eric KWOK should reprimand medical groups opposing universal testing for disregard of the safety of Tung Chung residents.

167. Ms WONG Chau-ping agreed with Mr Eric KWOK that the tightening of anti-epidemic measures was to remind people to stay vigilant at all times. She queried why anti-epidemic measures were not taken seriously once the situation slightly improved, which might result in the fourth or fifth wave of the epidemic. She opined that it was necessary to install body temperature measuring devices in each building in Tung Chung and would be more desirable if such equipment was provided in village offices as well.

168. Mr Sammy TSUI said that the new body temperature measuring devices which only measured palm temperature was user-friendly and inexpensive, and hoped that the department would consider the proposal seriously. He opined that provision of the body temperature screening system helped the residents keep track of their body condition which was conducive to enhancement of personal anti-epidemic awareness.

169. Ms Amy YUNG was aware that some patients were not immediately sent to hospitals for isolation after being tested positive and their family members were infected. Such incidents revealed government policy failures and the flaws in policy directions. Due to limited resources, the testing programme should target high-risk persons and not be conducted universally. She opined that the major problem of the Government lay in the lack of transparency in formulating policies without thorough consideration and listening to the advice of experts. She attributed the outbreak of the first wave of the epidemic to the Government's rejection of medical staff's call for

border closure and the second wave to the compulsory quarantine exemption arrangement for sea and air crew as suggested by some commercial organisations and stakeholders. She pointed out that the critical factor was the Government launched universal testing without listening to the views of experts, which she disapproved.

170. Mr WONG Chun-yeung supported installation of the automated body temperature measuring devices and hoped that HD could implement the arrangement expeditiously. With the outsourcing of the management service of Fu Tung Estate, Tung Chung, to everyone's dismay, the response of HD to whatever suggestions or requests of IDC Members or the outsourced company would be that the estate was outside its purview. He hoped that Mr Arnold HAU noted the problem and install the automated body temperature measuring devices in the three buildings starting from Tung Shing House to Tung Ma House. As mentioned by Ms Amy YUNG, the Government often created confrontations leading to DC Members dividing into two camps arguing over political and livelihood issues. He opined that all Members endeavoured to fulfil their duties. For example, IDC had endorsed reprimanding the HKSAR Government regarding mask issue in February. He hoped that Members would oppose universal testing as the fundamental cause of the prevailing chaotic situation was the Government's failure to close all border control points.

171. The Chairman requested Mr Arnold HAU to note and study the proposal of installation of automated body temperature measuring devices to prevent the outbreak of the fourth wave of the epidemic. He believed that the system would not be too expensive and hoped that HD could deploy staff for installation.

172. Mr Arnold HAU said that he would relay Members' views to the department and study enhancement of the current anti-epidemic measures. However, HD had to take into account other factors such as the practical operation of the body temperature measuring devices.

173. Mr Eric KWOK said that Mr HAU needed not worry about manual operation as there were security guards on duty round the clock in each building who would be responsible for operating the system. The automated body temperature measuring devices could achieve the effect of "early identification, early isolation and early treatment" which could break the community transmission chain.

174. Ms Josephine TSANG hoped that Members would understand that not all persons took kindly to have their body temperature taken. Some people might refuse to undergo temperature check after entering food premises, as visitors considered it unnecessary to strictly comply with the regulations on the prohibition of group gatherings in Peng Chau. Even if the automated body temperature measuring devices was provided in public rental housing, the security guards had no authority to request people entering the buildings to undergo body temperature check, which could only rely on self-discipline.

(In view of time constraints on the meeting amid the epidemic, agenda items XI to XXII could not be discussed.)

XXIII. Date of Next Meeting

175. Ms Amy YUNG said that the arrangement of splitting a meeting into two sessions of two hours each was undesirable that only one-fourth of agenda items were discussed. She was discontented with the written replies of some departments and their failure to send representatives to the meeting to respond to the questions. She hoped that the Chairman would arrange a follow-up meeting or extend the meeting time.

176. The Chairman responded that the duration of a meeting was stipulated in the guidelines. As he was not a public health expert, he could not comment on whether the guidelines were scientific. However, it would be unfair to the attendees if they had to undergo quarantine and were unable to go to work in case someone was infected due to non-compliance with the guidelines. He noted the views of Ms Amy YUNG but as both the vetting working group and Community Affairs, Culture and Recreation Committee would hold meetings, there would be no available time slot for a follow-up meeting the following week. He pointed out that it was uncertain whether any changes would be made to the current guidelines and whether the universal testing programme launched that day would affect the meetings the following week. A follow-up meeting could be considered if there were available time slots before the next DC meeting in October. It was now 4:08 p.m. and the meeting was adjourned according to the aforementioned arrangement. Members could make further enquiries, if any, to the departments in writing regarding the written replies via the Secretariat. If discussion at the next meeting was considered necessary in addition to written replies, Members should submit the original or amended questions again as soon as possible. In addition, he said he would try to look for a time slot to arrange a follow-up meeting if possible at Ms Amy YUNG's request.

177. The Chairman said that for reports and financial arrangements in the agenda, the Secretariat would consult Members on the proposals concerned by circulation of papers if necessary. The next meeting would be held on 19 October 2020 (Monday) at 10:30 a.m. unless the date of a follow-up meeting was set.

-END-