

(Translation)

Islands District Council
Minutes of Meeting of
Community Involvement, Culture and Recreation Committee

Date : 6 August 2024 (Tuesday)
Time : 2:30 p.m.
Venue : Islands District Council Conference Room,
14/F, Harbour Building, 38 Pier Road, Central, Hong Kong

Present

Chairman

Mr WONG Man-hon, MH

Vice-Chairman

Mr HUI Chun-lung, MH

Members

Mr HO Siu-kei
Mr HO Chun-fai
Mr YU Hon-kwan, MH, JP
Mr NG Man-kit
Mr CHOW Yuen-kuk, Jonathan
Mr CHOW Yuk-tong, SBS, MH
Ms KWOK Wai-man, Mealoha
Mr WONG Hon-kuen, Ken
Mr YIP Pui-kei
Mr LAU Chin-pang
Ms LAU Suk-han
Ms LAU Shun-ting

Co-opted Members

Ms XIANG Ming-han
Mr NG Tak-wai

Attendance by Invitation

Mr AU Ho-yin, Gary

Senior Liaison Officer (1), Islands District Office

In Attendance

Ms AU YEUNG Wing-sum, Livia	Assistant District Officer (Islands)2, Islands District Office
Ms CHU Lai-ye, Agnes	Deputy District Leisure Manager (District Support) Islands, Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Ms CHUNG Chi-yuen, Candy	Senior Librarian (Islands) (Acting), Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Ms LEUNG Wai-nga, Viola	Senior Manager (New Territories South) Promotion, Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Ms LAM Fong-shing, Florence	Senior School Development Officer (Wanchai & Islands), Education Bureau

Secretary

Ms CHAN Ying-tung, Shadow	Executive Officer (District Council)1, Islands District Office
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Welcoming Remarks

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

I. **Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting held on 4 June 2024**

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

II. **Reports on Arts and Cultural Activities in the Islands District Organised by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department**
(CICRC Paper No. 14/2024)

3. The Chairman welcomed Ms LEUNG Wai-nga, Viola, Senior Manager (New Territories South) Promotion of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) to the meeting to present the paper.

4. Ms Viola LEUNG briefly presented the paper.

5. Members noted the content of the paper.

III. Question on lifesaving services at beaches in Lantau Island
(CICRC Paper No. 15/2024)

6. The Chairman drew Members' attention to the CICRC Paper No. 15/2024 and welcomed Ms CHU Lai-ye, Agnes, Deputy District Leisure Manager (District Support) Islands of the LCSD to the meeting to respond to the question.

7. Mr HO Chun-fai briefly presented the question.

8. Ms Agnes CHU briefly presented the written reply from the LCSD.

9. Members expressed their views as follows:

(a) In addition to the beaches in Lantau Island, the Tung Chung Swimming Pool was also unable to fully open due to insufficient lifeguards.

(b) The lifesaving service outsourcing scheme had officially commenced on a trial basis in September 2024, but swimming pools in the Islands District were not part of the trial. In light of this, Members enquired about the LCSD's plans to address the shortage of lifeguards at the beaches and swimming pools in the Islands District.

(c) The relevant department planned to implement the South Lantau Eco-recreation Corridor project, which included construction of water facilities in Cheung Sha. Members considered that even with the completion of such facilities in the future, the ongoing shortage of lifeguards could undermine the attractiveness to visitors. Therefore, Members called on the LCSD to promptly address the problem of insufficient lifeguards.

(d) Members enquired about the difficulties the LCSD faced in recruiting lifeguards. They also suggested that the LCSD should increase the number of civil service lifeguard positions, providing stable conditions of work to attract more qualified individuals to join the lifeguard team.

10. Ms Agnes CHU gave a consolidated response as follows:

(a) According to the departmental requirement, lifeguards should possess a valid Beach Lifeguard Award or Pool Lifesaving Award issued by the Hong Kong China Life Saving Society (HKLSS), alongside complying specified standards in physical fitness, vision and other skills. These entry requirements had posed certain difficulties and challenges for recruitment. It was understood that the Civil Service Bureau had increased the number of civil service lifeguard posts. In addition, in response to the severe manpower shortage, the LCSD had initiated year-round recruitment for these posts. Apart from civil service lifeguards, the LCSD had also been recruiting non-civil service contract lifeguards.

Despite such efforts, the LCS D had still been unable to hire a sufficient number of staff in the past two years.

- (b) As early as the first quarter of this year, the LCS D had issued tender notices to contractors on the trial scheme for outsourcing of lifesaving services. The trial scheme did not cover swimming pools in the Islands District. The LCS D would evaluate the effectiveness of the trial before deciding whether to continue with implementation of the scheme. If there was improvement in the shortage of lifeguards at swimming pools, the LCS D could arrange for longer opening hours of the swimming pools for public use and deploy the remaining staff to beaches, thereby allowing a flexible allocation of resources.

11. Members expressed their views as follows:

- (a) Given the long-standing issue of lifeguard shortage, Members considered that the trial scheme for outsourcing lifesaving services might not fully solve the problem. It was believed that the LCS D should formulate short, medium, and long-term solutions to fundamentally address the issue. In addition, Members suggested that the LCS D should draw reference from practices in industries such as healthcare, catering and construction, which had filled up vacancies through labour importation.
- (b) There was still a disparity between the remuneration of government lifeguards and those in the private sector. Members opined that the LCS D should increase the remuneration of lifeguards to attract job seekers. The LCS D had also launched the Combined Seasonal Lifeguard Training Scheme that allowed individuals without any lifesaving qualifications to participate. In this regard, Members enquired whether the LCS D required subsidised individuals to work at public beaches or swimming pools after obtaining the qualifications and whether other incentives were provided to encourage interested persons to participate in the scheme.
- (c) Despite the continual growth in population in the Islands District, there was currently only one public swimming pool in Tung Chung. Due to the shortage of lifeguards, the swimming pool could not be fully opened, rendering residents unable to fully utilise the facility. Members considered that the LCS D's allocation of resources and manpower tended to favour other districts, and hoped that the LCS D would review the allocation of resources and manpower to alleviate the problem of inadequate lifesaving services in the Islands District.
- (d) Members considered that lifeguards were generally reluctant to work in remote areas, hence they asked the LCS D whether additional allowances were provided for lifeguards deployed to the Islands District.

12. Ms Agnes CHU gave a consolidated response as follows:
- (a) The LCSD noted Members' suggestion about labour importation.
 - (b) The LCSD had been implementing a trainee programme to offer training and practice in a "hire and train" mode. After obtaining relevant qualifications, trainees could work at swimming pools or beaches under the management of the LCSD. The LCSD also collaborated with the HKLSS and district lifesaving associations to organise regular life saving training courses, offering a pathway for young people aspiring to become lifeguards to obtain the necessary qualifications.
 - (c) In light of the challenges for recruiting lifeguards, the LCSD had devised short, medium, and long-term measures to alleviate the shortage of lifeguards. The LCSD would assess the effectiveness of the trial scheme for outsourcing of lifesaving services before deciding whether to continue with the scheme. She said that the LCSD would closely monitor the manpower deployment for lifeguards at swimming pools and beaches in the Islands District.
 - (d) The remuneration of lifeguards at swimming pools and beaches differed. Beach lifeguards typically received slightly higher remuneration than swimming pool lifeguards due to the need to respond to weather variations and the requirement for additional lifesaving qualifications (such as the Canoe Rescue Basic Certificate).
13. Members enquired about the LCSD's channels for promoting recruitment activities and suggested that the LCSD should adopt a more proactive approach to recruitment, such as actively presenting job opportunities to suitable individuals by providing them with information about lifesaving training certification courses.
14. Ms Agnes CHU responded as follows:
- (a) The LCSD posted advertisements on lifeguard recruitment on its website. Additionally, the LCSD also visited schools to introduce students to the role of lifeguards, aiming to raise their interest in lifeguarding.
 - (b) To attract more suitable individuals to join the ranks of lifeguards, the LCSD provided a one-stop training programme and collaborated with non-governmental organisations and social welfare groups to promote the training programme to the ethnic minority community.
 - (c) Furthermore, the LCSD worked with the Employees Retraining Board to organise specialised lifesaving training courses and provided employment services to increase the supply of lifeguards.
 - (d) The LCSD aimed to enable more suitable individuals to acquire relevant

qualifications and join the career of lifeguards through these measures.

15. The Chairman considered that remuneration was one of the reasons behind the shortage of lifeguards. To attract young people to the profession, it was necessary to improve the remuneration of lifeguards (such as by providing overtime allowances) to fundamentally address the issue.

IV. Question on the Hospitality Campaign
(CICRC Paper No. 16/2024)

16. The Chairman drew Members' attention to the CICRC Paper No. 16/2024, the consolidated written reply from the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau (CSTB) and the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB), and the written reply from the Transport and Logistics Bureau. He then welcomed Mr AU Ho-yin, Gary, Senior Liaison Officer (1) of the Islands District Office (IsDO) and Ms LAM Fong-shing, Florence, Senior School Development Officer (Wanchai & Islands) of the Education Bureau (EDB) to the meeting to respond to the question.

17. Mr YIP Pui-kei briefly presented the question.

18. Mr Gary AU responded as follows:

- (a) The Hospitality Campaign coordinated by the CSTB had been officially launched on 3 June this year. The Home Affairs Department (HAD) had earlier announced that, in support of the campaign, the 18 District Offices, along with their respective District Youth Development and Civic Education Committees, would organise activities in their districts to promote hospitality and foster a friendly and courteous atmosphere in the community.
- (b) The IsDO had collaborated with the Islands District Youth Development and Civic Education Committee to organise the Islands District Youth Development Network (IDYDN) Orientation Camp from 29 to 31 July this year. Participants in the orientation camp had already taken part in the "Disney's Hospitality in Practice" organised by Disneyland, where they had learned about hospitality and the culture of courtesy. The IsDO would arrange for the participants to assist in promoting hospitality at suitable community events to foster a friendly and courteous atmosphere in the community.

19. Ms Florence LAM responded as follows:

- (a) To align with the Government's launch of the Hospitality Campaign, the EDB had issued a circular memorandum on 3 June 2024, titled "Promotion of 'Courtesy' in Schools", which encouraged all public sector schools and Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) schools to further strengthen the emphasis on "courtesy" among students through school-

based learning activities. The schools were also provided with relevant learning and teaching resources and information in this regard.

- (b) All along, schools had been cultivating students' proper values and good attitudes through diversified activities and arrangements, including practising courteous behaviour inside and outside of campus. The EDB advised schools to design school-based curriculum and learning activities on the theme of "courtesy" for teaching inside and outside the classroom, and to encourage students to practise "courtesy" in their everyday life, such as through student handbooks, weekly assemblies, morning assemblies, as well as different types of ceremonies, lessons of various subjects and various extra-curricular activities, etc. To help schools promote and build an atmosphere of courtesy and humility on campus, schools were encouraged to make good use of relevant learning and teaching resources provided by the EDB. Schools might also make reference to the publicity materials published by the HKTB on the theme of enhancing Hong Kong's hospitality and tourist experience according to school-based circumstances, so as to enhance the flexibility and diversity of the learning activities.
- (c) In addition, the EDB had been organising the programme "My Pledge to Act" for primary and secondary schools. Publicly-funded schools might submit applications to the Quality Education Fund to organise "courtesy"-related school-based learning activities. The EDB would also disseminate information on "courtesy"-related activities under the Hospitality Campaign to member schools of the Community Youth Club through its connection networks, so as to encourage their teachers and student members to actively participate in and support the relevant activities.
- (d) The EDB encouraged schools to showcase to the community and stakeholders the outcomes of their learning activities on "courtesy". The EDB also requested schools to review their learning activities and resources related to the theme of "courtesy", as well as the learning activities they had organised or were planning to organise, with a view to facilitating the EDB's understanding of the implementation of the activities and the promotion of good practices adopted by different schools.

20. Members expressed their views as follows:

- (a) Members suggested that schools should invite parents to participate in the relevant learning activities to enhance the interaction between students and parents.
- (b) Members hoped that the IsDO would provide more details on the arrangements for participants of the orientation camp to help promote hospitality in community events.

21. Ms Florence LAM noted Members' suggestions. She agreed that schools could invite parents to participate in relevant school-based learning activities together and incorporate the element of "courtesy" in regular parent education activities to enhance the effectiveness of learning.

22. Mr Gary AU said that the IsDO would consider allowing participants of the IDYDN to promote hospitality to local residents in large-scale district events, and would adopt different promotional approaches having regard to the themes, scale, number of participants and resources of the events. In addition, the IsDO would organise the Cheers to the National Day - Islands District National Day Seaside Hebei Province Xiaolunban Circus Performance cum Cheerleading Competition on 28 September this year, in which the IDYDN would set up two booths for the participants to promote hospitality to local residents.

23. Members expressed their views as follows:

(a) Members suggested that the relevant departments should organise ambassador activities, such as arranging primary school students and parents in the district to act as ambassadors and distribute stickers representing "hospitality" to tourists at Citygate in Tung Chung, so that they could practise what they had learnt and give tourists a taste of Hong Kong's hospitality.

(b) Members considered that hospitality and courtesy were related but not the same concept. They also pointed out that the reply of the relevant departments had focused too much on the promotion of courtesy and had deviated from the theme of hospitality. Moreover, the departments concerned had not responded on how to evaluate the effectiveness of the Hospitality Campaign.

24. Ms Florence LAM noted Members' suggestions and said that schools could design learning activities according to their school-based circumstances. She would convey the suggestion to appropriate schools.

25. Members considered that apart from teaching students about "courtesy" in class, schools could also provide students with opportunities to practise it, such as arranging volunteers to accompany students to answer tourists' enquiries on transport matters at the Citygate.

26. Ms Florence LAM said that the suggested activities would require students to dedicate more time and increased participation from schools. If the relevant departments needed support from schools or students, the EDB was willing to explore the feasibility of the proposed initiatives together.

27. Mr Gary AU considered that the promotion of hospitality was a long-term endeavour, making it challenging to quantify the effectiveness of the Hospitality Campaign at this stage. The IsDO would arrange for participants of the IDYDN to

assist in promoting hospitality, and would explore with the Islands District Youth Development and Civic Education Committee on providing more practical opportunities for the participants, such as appointing them as ambassadors to promote hospitality at tourist spots in Tung Chung.

28. Members expressed their views as follows:

- (a) Members considered that in addition to promoting hospitality through the IDYDN, the relevant departments should also invite other stakeholders in the district to participate, so as to further showcase the spirit of hospitality and attract tourists to visit the Islands District, thereby boosting the economy. To enhance the effectiveness of the Hospitality Campaign, Members called on the IsDO to relay the above suggestions to the CSTB and requested a response from the CSTB after the meeting.
- (b) Members considered that the reason for the Hong Kong people's keenness to go to the Mainland for spending in recent years was the good service attitude there. Years ago, the Government had made promotional videos to promote quality service attitude, which had led to improvement in the service attitude of people in various trades and industries. However, the quality of service in Hong Kong had declined in recent years due to various factors such as the pandemic. Members therefore suggested that the relevant departments should step up publicity in the media to actively promote quality service attitude.

29. Mr Gary AU said that the IsDO would work with the Islands District Youth Development and Civic Education Committee to explore diversified ways to reach out to different groups to promote hospitality. As for publicity, the IsDO would convey Members' suggestions to the HKTB.

(Post-meeting note: The IsDO relayed Members' suggestions to the CSTB and the HKTB on 28 August 2024. The consolidated written reply from the CSTB and the HKTB was forwarded to Members for perusal on 25 September 2024.)

V. Any Other Business

30. No further business was raised by Members.

VI. Date of Next Meeting

31. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m. The next meeting was scheduled for 8 October 2024 (Tuesday) at 2:30 p.m.

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