

**(Translation)**

**Minutes of Meeting of Islands District Council**

Date : 12 November 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**

Ms YEUNG Wai-sum, Amy, JP

**Members**

Mr HO Siu-kei  
Mr HO Chun-fai  
Mr YU Hon-kwan, MH, JP  
Mr NG Man-kit  
Mr NG Choi-wah  
Mr CHOW Yuen-kuk, Jonathan  
Mr CHOW Yuk-tong, SBS, MH  
Mr HUI Chun-lung, MH  
Ms KWOK Wai-man, Mealoha  
Mr WAN Yeung-kin  
Mr WONG Man-hon, MH  
Ms WONG Chau-ping, MH  
Mr WONG Hon-kuen, Ken  
Mr YIP Pui-kei  
Mr LAU Chin-pang  
Ms LAU Suk-han  
Ms LAU Shun-ting  
Mr LUO Chenghuan

**Attendance by Invitation**

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Dr LEE Chi-on, Clement     | Senior School Development Officer (Islands)1,<br>Education Bureau             |
| Ms LAM Sze-mei, Janet      | Chief Electrical and Mechanical Engineer/Bus Safety,<br>Transport Department  |
| Mr CHUNG Cheuk-ming, Derek | Senior Electrical and Mechanical Engineer/Bus Safety,<br>Transport Department |
| Ms WONG Shuk-man, Suman    | Engineer/Lantau Development,<br>Transport Department                          |

Mr FANG Fei

General Manager of Strategy Planning and Global Business, Baidu Intelligent Driving Group, Baidu  
Head of Project Development in Hong Kong, Baidu  
Head of Safety and Testing in Hong Kong, Baidu

Ms Claire HU

Mr Johnny CHAN

**In Attendance**

Mr MOK Mong-chan

Ms AU YEUNG Wing-sum, Livia

Mr LEE Sun-fu, Joe

Assistant District Officer (Islands)1, Islands District Office  
Assistant District Officer (Islands)2, Islands District Office  
Senior Executive Officer (District Management),  
Islands District Office

Ms LIU Pui-shan, Lis

Mr YEUNG Che-yuen, Patrick

Senior Liaison Officer (2), Islands District Office  
Senior Engineer/1 (Lantau),

Ms LAM Bun-gee

Civil Engineering and Development Department  
District Social Welfare Officer (Central Western, Southern  
and Islands), Social Welfare Department

Mr CHAN Fai

Senior Property Service Manager (Hong Kong Island and  
Islands), Housing Department

Mr FUNG Wai-nok

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

Mr LEE Cho-ming, Joe

District Commander (Lantau District),

Mr Clive WALTON

Hong Kong Police Force

Ms LI Ka-chai, Denise

District Commander (Marine Port District),

Hong Kong Police Force

Mr CHAN Sheung-yung, Cyrus

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

Mr YEUNG Chi-kit, Kenneth

Ms LIM Ting-ting, Sylvia

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

Senior Town Planner/Special Duties, Planning Department

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

Ms HA Chung-wan, Joanne

District Leisure Manager (Islands),

Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Mr AU Siu-fung, Kelvin

Chief Transport Officer/Islands, Transport Department

**Secretary**

Ms Kennis CHAN

Senior Executive Officer (District Council),  
Islands District Office

## Welcome remarks

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

- (a) Mr CHAN Fai, Senior Property Service Manager (Hong Kong Island and Islands) of the Housing Department (HD), who stood in for Mr TO Chak-foo; and
- (b) Mr YEUNG Chi-kit, Kenneth, Senior Town Planner/Special Duties of the Planning Department, who stood in for Mr KWONG Wang-ngai, Walter.

## I. Confirmation of the Minutes of Meeting held on 10 September 2024

2. 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 prior to the meeting. Members had no other amendment proposals and the minutes were confirmed unanimously.

## II. Baidu Autonomous Vehicle Trial Project in North Lantau (IDC Paper No. 53/2024)

3. The Chairman drew Members' attention to the IDC Paper No. 53/2024, and welcomed Ms LAM Sze-mei, Janet, Chief Electrical and Mechanical Engineer/Bus Safety, Mr CHUNG Cheuk-ming, Derek, Senior Electrical and Mechanical Engineer/Bus Safety and Ms WONG Shuk-man, Suman, Engineer/Lantau Development of the Transport Department (TD); and Mr FANG Fei, General Manager of Strategy Planning and Global Business of Baidu Intelligent Driving Group, Ms Claire HU, Head of Project Development in Hong Kong, and Mr Johnny CHAN, Head of Safety and Testing in Hong Kong of Baidu to the meeting to present the paper.

4. Mr Johnny CHAN introduced the captioned project with the aid of PowerPoint presentation and short videos:

- (a) Baidu had established its autonomous driving division for more than ten years ago and was taking the lead worldwide in the development of such technology. As of August this year, the autonomous vehicles (AV) of Baidu had provided over 7 million rides to the public in Mainland China. Baidu started introducing autonomous driving technology to stakeholders from various sectors in Hong Kong this year and submitted applications for AV pilot licences and automated

vehicle certificates to the TD in October.

- (b) To ensure the efficient and safe operation of the autonomous driving system, ten layers of redundancy were incorporated into the intelligent driving, vehicle execution and environmental operation systems of AVs of Baidu. In addition, AVs had been put into on-site trial and pilot use in over ten cities in the Mainland. With a cumulative trial mileage of more than 100 million kilometres, there had been no major safety incidents.
- (c) Baidu's sixth generation AVs were equipped with world-class sensors and computing power, and were certified to global automotive safety standards. A sixth generation AV would be used in the trial project in North Lantau. The trial route was between Hong Kong International Airport Car Park 4 and Chek Lap Kok South Road, via Cheong Tat Road, Airport North Interchange, Sky City Road, Third Sky Street, First Sky Street, Sky City Road East, Sky City Interchange, East Coast Road and Scenic Road.
- (d) To ensure safety during the trial, Baidu would make the following arrangements:

- (i) The tests would be conducted during 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and 1 a.m. to 5 a.m. Baidu would communicate with the Airport Authority (AA) and adjust the test time and routes based on actual traffic conditions, so as to avoid peak hours and road sections with works.

(Post-meeting note: After the meeting, Baidu clarified that according to the AV pilot licence issued, the test time slots would be 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and 1 a.m. to 5 a.m.)

- (ii) A backup operator would be sit in the driver's seat during the tests so as to take over the AV when necessary. The backup operators participating in the tests had to have more than 10 years of driving experience without committing any serious traffic offences in the past 10 years, and had received over 100 hours of training and passed the relevant assessments.
  - (iii) Baidu had set up a 24-hour emergency service hotline for its fleet. If an AV broke down during a test, a tow truck would be deployed immediately to tow the broken down AV away to ensure that the traffic would not be affected. In addition, Baidu would take out insurance for its AVs, so as to protect the interests of the public.
- (e) Baidu Intelligent Driving Group's establishment of a local team in

Hong Kong, recruitment and training of talents, and launch of a series of cooperation initiatives between the industry and academic and research institutes could bring value to the science and technology industry of Hong Kong, create employment opportunities, promote the development of artificial intelligence technology and innovation ecology and smart city, and facilitate the development of new quality productive forces in Hong Kong.

5. Mr LAU Chin-pang welcomed the AV trial by Baidu and expressed his views as follows:

- (a) He would like to know the detailed plan of the test, including how the data obtained from the tests would be applied, to tie in with the urban development of Hong Kong,
- (b) In-vehicle backup operators were not required for AVs in motion in the Mainland. He asked whether such practice was legal in Hong Kong and how Baidu would work with the various government departments to resolve the AV-related legal issues.
- (c) He asked about Baidu's plan to enhance the public's confidence in autonomous driving technology and to convince members of the public to accept the introduction of AVs.

6. Mr Jonathan CHOW thanked Baidu for the presentation and expressed his views as follows:

- (a) The population of Tung Chung would increase by 180 000 in the next six years, while the Government's expansion of the scale of the Airport City and the implementation of the concept of "tourism is everywhere in Hong Kong" would attract more tourists to Tung Chung. However, the existing traffic facilities in Tung Chung were inadequate, coupled with a shortage of the relevant manpower. He opined that the introduction of AVs would support the future development of Tung Chung.
- (b) With the development of the Airport City, there were a number of works underway on the road sections near the airport. He asked Baidu how it would handle if works were encountered during the tests. In addition, he asked how many phases were there in the trial and how the test results would be applied to the implementation of autonomous driving in Hong Kong.

7. Mr YIP Pui-kei thanked Baidu for the detailed presentation and expressed his views as follows:

- (a) The first phase of AV trial would be conducted within the airport area.

Considering that autonomous driving systems had been introduced to the airport in recent years, for example on baggage tractors, patrol cars and minibuses, and certain experience in operating the technology had been gained, he was confident about the trial.

- (b) He opined that the introduction of AVs could support the future development of Tung Chung and facilitate the development of a smart city. He would like to know the specific timetable of the above-mentioned trial project of Baidu and the detailed plan for introducing AVs to Hong Kong, such as whether the autonomous driving systems would be applied to public transport. In addition, he asked how the TD would support the above-mentioned trial.
- (c) In addition to the trial project, he asked whether Baidu would cooperate with local stakeholders in the promotion of autonomous driving technology.

8. Ms Claire HU made a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) To ensure safety during the trial, Baidu would first conduct the tests during time slots with relatively low vehicular flow, for example during 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and 1 a.m. to 5 a.m., and would then gradually extend the test period to other time slots depending on the actual conditions. Baidu would maintain close communication with the AA and the relevant stakeholders.
- (b) The trial routes were mapped out by engineers from both Baidu and the AA. Locations with heavy pedestrian and vehicle traffic would be avoided to minimise the impact on airport traffic. Baidu would first ensure that the first phase of the trial complied with the requirements of the Code of Practice for Trial and Pilot Use of AVs (the Code) before it would consider applying to the TD for other trial routes.
- (c) This trial had two objectives, namely to introduce AV technology to Hong Kong, and to enable members of the public to understand and experience autonomous driving technology through organising ecological activities on innovation and technology and science popularisation activities.
- (d) Baidu would enhance public confidence in autonomous driving technology through the following three aspects:
  - (i) The AVs of Baidu had been tested and used in the Mainland for many years on a pilot basis. They had also passed the preliminary simulation tests at the national autonomous driving test centre in the Mainland. The AVs to be used in the trial had been arranged to study the traffic rules in Hong Kong. In

addition, a backup operator would be sit at the driver's seat during the tests to monitor the operation of the AV and take control of it when necessary.

- (ii) The backup operator team was managed by Mr Johnny CHAN. Mr CHAN had extensive experience in handling unexpected traffic situations and was very familiar with the traffic rules in Hong Kong. During the tests, Baidu would arrange for ground staff to stand by in the test route areas. In case of emergency, they could arrive at the scene immediately to support the backup operator. In addition, if an AV broke down during a test and could not be driven away manually by the safety officer, a towing company would be arranged to tow the broken down vehicle away as soon as possible.
  - (iii) Baidu would organise a series of activities, such as sending staff to schools to introduce autonomous driving technology to students and organising science popularisation activities in the community, in order to educate the public about the operation of AVs.
- (e) Currently, Baidu would first ensure that the trial at the airport complied with the requirements of the Code before it made further planning subject to the trial results and market demand, such as applying for tests on other routes and with other AV models.

9. Mr FANG Fei made a supplementary response as follows:

- (a) The Apollo Go of Baidu had officially expanded to Hong Kong and kicked off a recruitment exercise, with a view to working with the youth of Hong Kong to develop artificial intelligence technology related to autonomous driving.
- (b) Mainland people had a very high acceptance towards AVs. Therefore, he was confident that members of the public in Hong Kong would accept the introduction of AVs.
- (c) Software technology was crucial to AV safety, therefore, Baidu hoped to rapidly improve its technology through the trial in Hong Kong, so as to meet the standards recognised by the TD.

10. Ms Janet LAM responded as follows:

- (a) Nowadays, AVs could use in-vehicle cameras, radar/lidar and global positioning systems to receive signals, thereby identifying road signs and analysing road conditions, instead of relying on signals emitted from traffic facilities.

- (b) The TD welcomed and supported the trial by Baidu in North Lantau. The Code came into effect on 1 March this year and all the AV trials conducted in Hong Kong had to comply with the requirements set out in the Code. In this trial project, Baidu would first conduct tests in a small area, and then extend the test area to the urban area in a safe and orderly manner after the vehicles had adapted to the road conditions and traffic arrangements in Hong Kong. The TD would consider the next steps after assessing the safety of the trial.

11. Mr NG Man-kit welcomed Baidu's introduction of the new technology to Hong Kong, and expressed his views as follows:

- (a) Given that inclement weathers such as typhoon would occur in Hong Kong from time to time, resulting in floods and tree falling incidents, he asked whether AVs could analyse road conditions in real time and make contingency responses accordingly.
- (b) The roads on Lantau Island were narrow and winding, he asked whether such roads were suitable for AV operation.
- (c) He asked whether Baidu would extend the application of autonomous driving technology to mass transport vehicles in Hong Kong in the future.

12. Mr HO Chun-fai opined that the captioned project would help promote the economic and tourism development in Tung Chung. He agreed that the AVs of Baidu were highly safe, but cast doubt on the emergency response capabilities of the vehicles. He pointed out that in the event of a traffic accident, if the AVs could not follow the instructions of the traffic police officers, a traffic standstill might be caused. In addition, he asked whether it was possible to change the route midway if the AV broke down while in motion.

13. Mr YU Hon-kwan expressed support for the captioned project and opined that it would drive Hong Kong's development into a smart city and help maintain Hong Kong's international economic status. He understood that Baidu was unable to respond on the future blueprint of the project at the time being. He suggested that Baidu could introduce its AVs to the Airport City Link project, which was being taken forward by the AA to link up the SKYCITY and Tung Chung. He also suggested that Baidu should explain the captioned project to industry representatives at the airport via the AA.

14. Mr LUO Chenghuan welcomed and endorsed the captioned project. He opined that if AVs could be used widely, it would greatly improve the traffic conditions in the Islands District (especially Tung Chung) and facilitate the development of new quality productive forces and tourism, therefore he was very supportive of the captioned project. He opined that Baidu needed to take into



consideration the differences in left-hand and right-hand driving systems and traffic regulations in Hong Kong and the Mainland when conducting the trial, and asked about the cost and maximum speed of AVs.

15. Mr HO Siu-kei encouraged Baidu to promote the development of local autonomous driving projects. He opined that there would be no big problem in the AV trial at the airport, but it might be difficult for the AVs to drive on the more complex and narrow roads in the urban area. He said Baidu should step up its publicity efforts to boost public confidence in AVs. In addition, Baidu should consider how to address local professional drivers' concerns about the possible unemployment problem arising from the introduction of AVs.

16. Mr HUI Chun-lung thanked Baidu for the presentation and said that given the complex road conditions in Tung Chung, he suggested that Baidu should step up science popularisation education on AVs in Tung Chung, so as to address the public's concern about road safety. In addition, Baidu could also consider stepping up public education and publicity in schools in Tung Chung.

17. Mr LAU Chin-pang expressed his views as follows:

- (a) He suggested that Baidu should provide systematic training on artificial intelligence and autonomous driving technology for the youth in Hong Kong, so as to help them join the related industries.
- (b) The widespread use of AVs might affect the employment of related trades (such as professional drivers), therefore he hoped that Baidu would provide retraining and employment opportunities for the affected trades.
- (c) As the trial was expected to extend to Tung Chung Town Centre, he asked whether the TD would communicate with the stakeholders on the test routes and the test arrangements, and expressed his hope for discussing the issue at the Traffic and Transport Committee meetings.

18. Mr NG Choi-wah said that as far as he knew, currently 5G/5.5G networks and the BeiDou Navigation Satellite System were used by AVs in the Mainland. In this regard, he asked what networks and satellite navigation systems would be used by AVs in Hong Kong. He opined that Baidu should take the above factors into consideration in conducting the trial.

19. Mr YIP Pui-kei expressed confidence in Baidu's first-phase trial. However, given the existing severe traffic congestion problem in Tung Chung during peak hours, he was worried that the district's transport and traffic infrastructure might not be able to support the future AV trial projects. He also pointed out that the network signals in some new development areas in Tung Chung were weak, which might affect the tests. In addition, he suggested that the TD and Baidu should report the project progress to Members on a regular basis, so that Members could raise their

views in a timely manner.

20. Ms Claire HU gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) The AVs of Baidu had extensive experience in dealing with inclement weathers and mountainous roads. The first phase of the captioned trial project would not be conducted under inclement weather, but Baidu would conduct tests in different weather conditions and on more complex driving routes in the future. In addition, when the AVs of Baidu took the closed tests at the national test centre in the Mainland, factors such as the differences in road condition, driving system and weather between Hong Kong and the Mainland had been taken into account. Baidu would further improve the adaptability of its autonomous driving system based on the test results in Hong Kong.
- (b) Baidu had earlier submitted its traffic accident handling procedures to the TD and the Traffic Branch Headquarters of the Hong Kong Police Force, and would strictly abide by the relevant laws and regulations of Hong Kong. According to the Code promulgated by the TD, each batch of AVs had to undergo a cumulative trial mileage over 2 500 kilometres before proceeding to the next phase of trial.
- (c) Baidu hoped to pass the tests in the first phase and gain recognition from the public and regulators before it planned for the next phase of trial. Baidu had also discussed with engineers from the AA on how to collaborate in promoting the application of AVs in the airport in the future. In addition, Baidu expressed its hope for the application of autonomous driving technology in the tourism of Hong Kong in the future, for example, transporting tourists to and from tourist attractions.
- (d) The maximum speed of Baidu's AVs complied with the speed limit of expressways in Hong Kong and the relevant information had been submitted to the TD. She said the cost of the AVs of Baidu could not be disclosed for the time being, but emphasised that AVs of Baidu were with high cost-performance value.
- (e) The AVs of Baidu had not caused any major safety incidents when operating in cities with more complex road conditions in the Mainland. Although the roads in Hong Kong were narrower, most drivers would strictly follow the traffic rules. Therefore, Baidu was confident that AVs could operate safely in Hong Kong.
- (f) Baidu would give priority to organising educational and promotional activities, such as seminars on autonomous driving technology, for Tung Chung residents or in schools. Baidu had also set up an office in Cyberport and expected to provide relevant training courses to the public in the future.

- (g) Baidu would recruit local professional drivers with extensive driving experience to serve as backup operators for AVs. It was expected that Baidu would need to hire more personnel in the future to support the development of the new industry.
- (h) Baidu had conducted substantial studies and collaborated with local network and navigation system providers as well as organisations that were using AVs (such as the AA) before the trial, so as to ensure the stability and safety of the technology.

21. Mr Johnny CHAN invited an AV safety officer, who used to be a bus driver, to share his experience at the meeting. When recruiting safety officers, Baidu would review the applicants' driving experience and require them to have no past record of driving-offence point deduction. In addition, Baidu would arrange for the safety officers to receive more than 14 days of training in cities with AV operation experience in the Mainland, so that they could gain a full understanding of the functions and operation methods of AVs before the safety tests.

22. The Chairman asked Baidu to respond on whether it would extend the application of autonomous driving technology to larger conveyances (such as minibuses and buses) in Hong Kong in the future and whether Baidu's AVs could follow the temporary traffic arrangements and diversions implemented by the Police in response to some unexpected traffic incidents. She also asked the TD to respond on the future test routes for AVs and the communication arrangements with stakeholders.

23. Ms Claire HU made a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) Baidu was confident about the application of autonomous driving technology on other vehicles types than private cars in the future. However, given that the licence application procedures varied for different vehicle types, Baidu would first complete the captioned trial project for private cars before it would consider extending the trial to other vehicle types and routes.
- (b) Baidu's emergency response team would confirm the test routes with the AA before the tests every day and set up a 24-hour emergency service hotline. In case of any unexpected situation during the test, the fleet manager would liaise with the backup operators and emergency response staff for immediate response. A similar mechanism would also be put in place when the AVs entered the operational stage in the future.

24. Ms Janet LAM said Baidu understood that the traffic conditions in the urban areas (including Tung Chung) were more complex, so the trial would be conducted at the airport in the first phase. The TD and Baidu would report the results of the

first-phase trial to Members and consult the stakeholders on the subsequent test routes in the urban area of Tung Chung before proceeding to the next phase of trial.

III. Question on the studying of Tung Chung students in their home district  
(IDC Paper No. 54/2024)

25. The Chairman drew Members' attention to the IDC Paper No. 54/2024, and welcomed Dr LEE Chi-on, Clement, Senior School Development Officer (Islands)1 of the Education Bureau (EDB) to the meeting to respond to the question.

26. Mr HUI Chun-lung briefly presented the question.

27. Dr Clement LEE responded as follows:

School building projects in Tung Chung

- (a) The Government consulted the IDC on 8 October 2024 on the proposed primary school project (Shue Yan) in Tung Chung Area 89 and thanked Members for their unanimous support. The Architectural Services Department was inviting tenders for the project. The EDB would endeavour to seek funding approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council and commence the proposed primary school project as soon as possible.
- (b) According to the latest school-age population projection of the EDB, the number of public sector primary school students in Tung Chung would increase from about 4 600 in the 2024/25 school year to about 6 200 in the 2029/30 school year. There were currently seven aided primary schools in Tung Chung. Based on the basic allocation of 25 students per class for small class teaching, the aided primary schools in the district could provide at least 5 400 school places (or 216 classes). The proposed new primary school would provide at least 750 additional school places, bringing the total number of public sector primary school places in the district to about 6 200 (or 248 classes).
- (c) According to the information provided by the HD to the IDC in March 2024, the first batch of public housing projects in the Tung Chung New Development Area (NDA) would be completed in 2025, whereas most of the subsequent public housing projects would be completed one after another between 2028 and 2030. The EDB expected that the seven aided primary schools in the district would be sufficient to cope with the increase in the school-age population in the district in the coming years.
- (d) Meanwhile, as the construction of primary school premises normally

took three to four years to complete, the Government was striving to seek funding approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in 2025 for the proposed primary school project, so that the Shue Yan Primary School could commence operation in the 2028/29 school year at the earliest, thereby providing sufficient school places in the long run for school-age children in Tung Chung to attend primary schools in the district under the prevailing “principle of vicinity” policy.

- (e) On the other hand, the EDB had commenced the preliminary work for the proposed secondary school (Hon Wah) project in Tung Chung Area 89. The Government thanked the IDC for its in-principle support for the proposed secondary school project to cater for the additional population in the NDA. The EDB would provide Members with a concrete works schedule after the project had gone through the Government’s internal vetting and approval process.
- (f) The reserved school site in Tung Chung Area 89 was the only education site currently available to the EDB in the area. The remaining eight reserved school sites in the NDA were expected to be handed over to the EDB between 2028 and 2029.

#### Secondary School Places Allocation System and Primary One Admission System

- (a) The EDB had been closely monitoring the supply and demand of public sector school places in various districts and liaising with schools to ensure the sufficient provision of public sector school places for eligible students under the Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) System and the Primary One Admission (POA) System. Both the current SSPA and POA Systems were divided into two stages, namely the “Discretionary Places Admission (DP)” stage and the “Central Allocation (CA)” stage. Parents might submit applications to any one and two public sector schools, irrespective of districts, during the DP stage of the POA and SSPA Systems respectively. They might also choose public sector schools in other districts under Part A “Unrestricted School Choices” at the CA stage of the POA and SSPA Systems.
- (b) The allocation of school places under Part B “Restricted School Choices” at the CA stage of the POA System was based on the assigned school nets in accordance with the residential address of respective applicant children. The demand for Primary One places in a school net was subject to various factors, such as whether parents chose to enrol their children in public sector primary schools or other private/Direct Subsidy Scheme primary schools, the number of new arrival children, and the resident intake schedule of new housing

developments and the school-age population involved. Regarding the allocation of school places under Part B “Restricted School Choices” at the CA stage of the SSPA System, the school net to which a student belonged was in principle the school net of the primary school he/she attended. The demand for Secondary One places in a school net was also subject to various factors, including the school-age population involved and parental choices, etc. For the aforementioned reasons, the demand for school places in individual school nets varied year on year.

- (c) The EDB had been adopting flexible measures at the CA stage of the POA System, such as using vacant classrooms in schools to operate additional classes, to flexibly increase the supply of school places in individual school nets. At the CA stage of the SSPA System, if there was a shortage of school places in a particular district, the EDB would make netting arrangements with other districts having regard to factors such as the demand and supply of school places in each district, the distribution of school types, the transport connections among school nets, and the established netting pattern, etc. The arrangements had all along been effective in ensuring a sufficient provision of school places and schools in each of the school nets for parents to choose.
- (d) Parents might refer to the Handbook for Application for Secondary One Discretionary Places to be distributed to participating primary schools in early December 2024 for the number of school places to be provided by secondary schools participating in the SSPA System 2025 in each district at the DP stage. The EDB would also distribute the Secondary School List to participating primary schools in early April 2025 for parents to refer to when completing Part B at the CA stage.

#### Other measures of the EDB

- (a) Under the existing mechanism, if students needed to arrange school transfer to continue their studies due to relocation to other districts, parents could apply for school places for their children at the preferred schools and seek assistance from the EDB. Upon the intake of new housing estates, the EDB would distribute application forms of school transfer through the HD to the relevant households, provide the parents concerned with information on schools with vacancies in the district, or provide placement services according to the needs of parents.
- (b) The EDB would continue to closely monitor the availability of school places in Tung Chung and maintain close liaison with the schools in the district and the HD, so as to take appropriate measures to ensure the provision of sufficient public school places for school-age children, including providing information on schools in the Islands District and relevant information to the HD for forwarding to prospective residents.

28. Mr NG Choi-wah said that it was learnt that about 10 000 residential units in Tung Chung Areas 99 and 100 would be ready for occupation in 2025. He asked the EDB about the future number of students in Tung Chung and whether the Bureau would increase the number of classes or the class size to cope with the future demand for school places.

29. Mr LUO Chenghuan said that with the rapid development of the Tung Chung New Town, many new housing estates would be completed. Among them, Chun Tung Estate and Cheung Tung Estate were ready for occupation, which would bring about a pressing demand for school places as a result of a significant number of new population. Although the EDB would construct a primary school and a secondary school in Tung Chung Area 89, he was concerned that the schools would not be able to cope with the above increase in demand for school places. The Bureau responded that it would make use of vacant classrooms in schools to operate additional classes. In this connection, he enquired about the number of additional school places that could be provided by the existing vacant classrooms in schools in Tung Chung and whether they would be sufficient to meet the future demand for school places. He hoped that the Bureau would make full use of the existing vacant classrooms and expedite the school building projects. He also suggested that the Bureau should announce the number of school places in the district as early as possible to facilitate advance planning by parents and students.

30. Mr LAU Chin-pang expressed his views as follows:

- (a) He was concerned that there would be a discrepancy between the EDB's estimate of the number of additional school-age children and the actual number. Although the Bureau replied that it would make use of vacant classrooms in schools to operate additional classes, Members were concerned that the schools might not have sufficient capacity to cope with the increase in school places. He hoped that the Bureau would communicate more with the local community.
- (b) He asked the Bureau why there were still students from Tung Chung district being allocated to schools in other districts and whether there were problems in the allocation process. He said that the long travelling distances to attend schools in other districts would impose a heavy burden on both the students and their parents. Also, he suggested that the Bureau should provide updates on the number of school places in Tung Chung in a timely manner.

31. Mr Jonathan CHOW expressed his views as follows:

- (a) He quoted from a paper of the Community Involvement, Culture and Recreation Committee dated 8 October 2024, which stated that "There are currently seven aided primary schools in Tung Chung, which provide about 5 100 school places with an enrolment of about

4 900 students in the 2023/24 school year, indicating that the enrolment rate is almost saturated. Even if all the surplus school places and vacant classrooms in the district are fully utilised, only about 500 additional public sector primary school places can be provided, which will not be sufficient to cope with the increase in the school-age population in the district in the long run.”

- (b) According to the question raised by Mr HUI Chun-lung and Mr LAU Chin-pang, the construction of a primary school (i.e. Shue Yan Primary School) in Tung Chung Area 89 would be completed in 2027 at the earliest, and the secondary school concerned was expected to be completed in 2035. He was concerned that before the completion of the above schools, even if the EDB made use of the vacant classrooms in the existing schools in Tung Chung to operate additional classes, the number of school places provided would still be unable to meet the demand for school places in the district.
- (c) He enquired whether Tung Chung could cope with an increase in population of 180 000 in six years. Moreover, how the Bureau projected the future school-age population in Tung Chung, and whether it was based on the territory-wide birth rate or the future additional population in Tung Chung. In addition, he asked the Bureau about the detailed arrangements for using vacant classrooms in schools to operate additional classes.

32. Mr YIP Pui-kei said that according to the “Projected mid-year school-age population aged 12 residing in Hong Kong by district from 2024 to 2029” released by the EDB in April this year, the school-age population aged 12 in the Islands District would be about 2 100, 2 000 and 1 900 in 2024, 2025 and 2026 respectively, which was expected to be on a downward trend. However, since the EDB had indicated at the meeting that the number of school-age children in the Islands District was expected to increase, he asked the Bureau about the future trend of the school-age population in the Islands District. Moreover, he was concerned that cross-district schooling would create a traffic burden and add to the financial pressure of parents. He hoped that the Bureau would explain the plan for increasing the number of classes.

33. Dr Clement LEE made a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) The EDB had asked the HD to provide information on the new intake residents (such as the number and distribution of school-age children) to learn more about the demand for school places in Tung Chung. The HD said that the information would be provided to the EDB after the new residents had confirmed acceptance of the allocated units. Members should address their enquiries to the representatives of the HD regarding its arrangements.
- (b) In the past, when new housing estates were completed in Tung Chung



(such as Yat Tung (II) Estate, Ying Tung Estate and Mun Tung Estate), the EDB had explored with the principals of primary and secondary schools in the district the feasibility of optimising the use of vacant classrooms in view of the increase in the number of students in the district, and had increased the number of classes of specified grades in some primary and secondary schools after the issuance of the Letter on Class Organisation and Staff Establishment to cope with the demand for school places in Tung Chung.

- (c) Despite the structural decline in the school-age population in Hong Kong, there might be an increase in the school-age population in Tung Chung as new housing estates would be completed one after another in the district.
- (d) According to the latest school-age population projection of the EDB, the number of public sector primary school students in Tung Chung would be about 4 600 in the 2024/25 school year. There were currently seven aided primary schools in Tung Chung, providing at least 5 400 school places. While the first batch of public housing projects in the NDA would be completed in 2025, most of the public housing projects would be completed one after another between 2028 and 2030. The EDB expected that the seven aided primary schools in the district would be sufficient to cope with the increase in the school-age population in the district in the coming years. Subject to the funding approval, the Shue Yan Primary School would commence operation in the 2028/29 school year at the earliest. As regards the Hon Wah Secondary School, the EDB would provide Members with a concrete works schedule after the project had gone through the Government's internal vetting and approval process. As for the remaining eight reserved school sites, the EDB would make timely arrangements.

34. Mr HUI Chun-lung expressed his views as follows:

- (a) The Bureau had clearly explained the supply and demand of public sector primary school places. He asked the Bureau to provide supplementary information on the secondary school sector to enable Members to analyse the issue more accurately.
- (b) Given the extensive coverage of the Islands District school net, he hoped that the Bureau would focus on the Tung Chung District when discussing the issue.
- (c) Members had requested the EDB to provide data on the number of students who had been allocated the first five choices at the last meeting. However, the Bureau did not provide the relevant information in the post-meeting written reply, hence Members were

unable to make further assessment.

- (d) As the HD was unable to provide data on the school-age population in new public housing estates, the lack of foresight in the Handbook for Application for Secondary One Discretionary Places was of concern. He hoped that the Bureau would conduct a comprehensive review of the issue of schooling within the home district.
- (e) Late commencement of classes would pose difficulties to the operation of schools in terms of the number of teaching staff, staff establishments and annual school plans, etc.

35. Mr Jonathan CHOW expressed his views as follows:

- (a) Members supported the provision of a new primary school in Tung Chung to meet the future demand for school places in the district, but considered that the number of school places should be based on statistics. He opined that the HD could project the data on the number of students who would move into the new housing estates in the future, so that the EDB could make corresponding arrangements for school places to ensure that the students could study in their home district.
- (b) In the absence of a concrete works schedule of the Hon Wah Secondary School, the Bureau should consider increasing the number of classes in the existing schools. However, as the application for increasing the number of classes involved complicated procedures, he hoped that the Bureau could elaborate on the relevant arrangements and procedures.
- (c) He hoped that the Bureau could provide data on the number of students who had chosen schools in their home district as their first five choices in the SSPA exercise but were allocated to schools outside the district in the past year. If the Bureau was unable to provide the information at the moment, it could provide a written reply after the meeting.

36. Mr YIP Pui-kei said that the population of the NDA would continue to grow from 2025 to 2028. To prevent students from having to attend schools in other districts due to insufficient supply of school places in their home district, the EDB should provide the data to the District Council to enable Members to explore the issue with the Bureau, so as to prevent parents and students from looking for school places in various districts during the summer holidays after the release of the allocation results.

37. Ms WONG Chau-ping said that the issue of schooling within the home district had been discussed in the Council for many years. On the premise that the future population of Tung Chung was known to be as high as 300 000, the Bureau should make early planning for the supply of school places after consolidating the

views of various parties, instead of exploring solutions only after the emergence of the problem.

38. Dr Clement LEE made a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) The EDB shared Members' concern about the public's aspirations and would continue to cater for the needs of students for schooling within the home district.
- (b) The EDB and the HD would maintain close liaison and take appropriate measures to ensure the provision of sufficient public sector school places for school-age children and the proper use of public funds.
- (c) Regarding the data on the number of students who had chosen schools in their home district as their first five choices in the SSPA exercise but were allocated to schools outside the district in the past year, the EDB was unable to provide the information at the moment and would provide a written reply after the meeting.
- (d) The POA System basically adopted the "principle of vicinity" in allocating school places, and the existing netting arrangements for the SSPA System had all along been effective. Parents might seek assistance from the EDB if necessary.
- (e) If there was a strong demand for school places in Tung Chung, the EDB would take appropriate measures to ensure the provision of sufficient public sector school places for school-age children. In the past, when new housing estates were completed in Tung Chung, the EDB had explored with the principals of primary and secondary schools in the district the feasibility of optimising the use of vacant classrooms in view of the increase in the number of students in the district, and had increased the number of classes of specified grades in some primary and secondary schools to cope with the demand for school places in Tung Chung.
- (f) Under Part B "Restricted School Choices" of the current CA stage, parents might choose up to 30 secondary schools from the school net to which a student belonged. Parents and students might consult school teachers on matters relating to students' promotion to secondary schools.

39. Mr LAU Chin-pang opined that whenever there was a shortage of school places, the EDB would try to solve the problem, but the Bureau's response plans were short-term measures. With the increasing population in Tung Chung, the demand for school places in the district would also increase accordingly. He hoped that the Bureau would formulate long-term solutions in advance to avoid causing problems in

the community. In addition, he asked the Bureau to provide data on the number of students who had chosen secondary schools in Tung Chung as their first five choices but were still allocated to schools in other districts last year after the meeting, so as to make adequate preparations for the future.

40. Mr YIP Pui-kei expressed his views as follows:

- (a) He understood that the EDB did not have an accurate grasp of the number of new arrival children and students who intended to study in their home district at this stage. Nevertheless, he hoped that the Bureau would take into account the past experience in increasing the number of classes and the views of the school authorities, so as to deal with the issue in a more flexible manner. He considered that the Bureau should maintain communication with various stakeholders and provide more information for Members to explain to the residents.
- (b) He said that in the past, he had found that some students were not provided with suitable arrangements when they transferred to other schools and eventually had to attend schools in other districts. He hoped that the Bureau could provide appropriate assistance in the future to reduce the occurrence of the above situation.
- (c) As the geographical location of Tung Chung was special and it was inconvenient to travel across districts for schooling, most of the students in the district preferred to study in their home district. In addition, some of the residents moving into Tung Chung were new immigrants, who might subsequently arrange for their children to study in primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong. If the Bureau only estimated the number of students on the basis of the current birth rate or the new population in Hong Kong, it might not be able to reflect the above demand for school places in the district. He considered that the figures could serve as reference but the policy should be flexible.

41. Dr Clement LEE made a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) In the 2023/24 school year, the number of public sector primary school students in Tung Chung was about 4 900. According to the latest school-age population projection of the EDB, the number of public sector primary school students in Tung Chung would be about 4 600 in the 2024/25 school year.
- (b) The EDB would consider in detail the views of stakeholders on the SSPA school net and the netting of school places, liaise closely with schools in the relevant districts, and consult the SSPA Committee on the arrangements for the netting of school places, with a view to formulating the annual plans.

- (c) Based on the current data, the EDB expected that there would be sufficient public sector school places for school-age children, including those in Tung Chung.
- (d) Regarding the data on the number of students who had chosen secondary schools in Tung Chung as their first five choices but were still allocated to schools in other districts, the EDB was unable to provide the information at the moment and would provide a written reply after the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The EDB's replies to paragraphs 35(c) and 39 above were forwarded to Members for perusal on 27 December 2024.)

IV. Reports on the Work of the IDC Committees / Working Group  
(IDC Papers No. 55-60/2024)

42. Members noted and endorsed the papers unanimously.

V. Any Other Business

43. Ms LAU Suk-han expressed her views as follows:

- (a) She thanked the Islands District Office (IsDO), the relevant government departments, the Care Teams and the property management companies for their contingency arrangements in relation to the water suspension incident in Tung Chung on 3 November.
- (b) She also appreciated the setting up of a messaging group by the IsDO to enable the Care Teams to receive immediate updates and reflect the situation of the district to the IsDO through the group, so that the relevant government departments could make corresponding arrangements.
- (c) She considered that the Care Teams had contributed considerably towards district care and social services in the incident and would like to take the opportunity to recognise the work of the relevant government departments, the Care Teams and the volunteers.

44. The Chairman responded as follows:

- (a) She thanked Ms LAU Suk-han on behalf of the IsDO for her recognition and commended Members for their proactive assistance in updating residents on the latest arrangements for the suspension of fresh water supply.

- (b) She expressed her heartfelt gratitude to the Care Teams of sub-districts T01 to T06 for their prompt attendance that night to assist the residents and for working continuously for nearly 30 hours from about 7:00 p.m. on 3 November to the early hours of 5 November. Moreover, the Secretary for Development and the Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs took to social media respectively to thank the Care Teams and Members for their efforts.
- (c) She said that in the incident, the Care Teams of sub-districts T07 and T08 took the initiative to go to Tung Chung to support the Care Teams of sub-districts T01 to T06, which fully demonstrated the team spirit of the Care Teams. She hoped that the experience would help strengthen the co-operation among the IsDO, the IDC and the Care Teams. She welcomed Members to reflect their views on the incident to her so that she could share them with the Care Teams to enhance work effectiveness.

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

- (a) She opined that it was attributive to the close liaison among all parties that the impact of the incident on the residents was minimised, and agreed that the Care Teams had played an instrumental role.
- (b) She said that Members and Rural Committee members were of the view that the District Officer (Islands) of the IsDO had played a leading role in the incident to address the urgent needs of the residents.

46. The Chairman hoped that Members would continue to remain steadfast in their duties. In case of emergencies, they should contact the IsDO in the first instance for follow-up.

## VI. Date of Next Meeting

47. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m. The next meeting would be held at 2:30 p.m. on 14 January 2025 (Tuesday).

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