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**Minutes of Meeting of Islands District Council**

Date : 14 January 2025 (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**

Mr WONG Chun-yip, Mike	Senior Land Executive/Land Enforcement 3 (District Lands Office, Islands), Lands Department
Mr CHAU Kin-po, Paul	Senior Architect 4, Housing Department
Ms KAN Wai-chi	Deputy Chief Occupational Safety Officer (Operations Division)(Hong Kong and Islands Region), Labour Department
Mr LEUNG Hon-man	Deputy Chief Occupational Safety Officer (Operations Division)(Mega Projects Office), Labour Department

Mr MA Wai-chung, Peter	Assistant Director (Agriculture), Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
Mr LOK Wai-shing, Edward	Senior Agricultural Officer (Agri-Park & Land), Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
Ms CHOR Kin-lan, Anna	Principal Assistant Secretary for Environment and Ecology (Food)3, Environment and Ecology Bureau

**In Attendance**

Mr MOK Mong-chan	Assistant District Officer (Islands)1, Islands District Office
Ms AU YEUNG Wing-sum, Livia	Assistant District Officer (Islands)2, Islands District Office
Mr LEE Sun-fu, Joe	Senior Executive Officer (District Management), Islands District Office
Ms LIU Pui-shan, Lis	Senior Liaison Officer (2), Islands District Office
Mr YEUNG Che-yuen, Patrick	Senior Engineer/1 (Lantau), Civil Engineering and Development Department
Ms YIP Pui-yi, Alice	District Lands Officer/Islands (District Lands Office, Islands), Lands Department
Mrs RADFORD Kit-ye, Kitty	Administrative Assistant/Lands (District Lands Office, Islands), Lands Department
Ms LAM Bun-gee	District Social Welfare Officer (Central Western, Southern & Islands), Social Welfare Department
Mr TO Chak-foo	Chief Manager/Management (Hong Kong Island and Islands), Housing Department
Mr YAN Ka-kit, Ric	District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Islands) (Acting), Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Mr LEE Cho-ming, Joe	District Commander (Lantau District), Hong Kong Police Force
Mr Clive WALTON	District Commander (Marine Port District), Hong Kong Police Force
Ms LI Ka-chai, Denise	Police Community Relations Officer (Lantau District), Hong Kong Police Force
Mr CHAN Sheung-yung, Cyrus	Police Community Relations Officer (Marine Port District), Hong Kong Police Force
Mr KWONG Wang-ngai, Walter	District Planning Officer/Sai Kung & Islands, Planning Department
Ms LIM Ting-ting, Sylvia	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
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## 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 representative of department:

- (a) Mr YAN Ka-kit, Ric, District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Islands) (Acting) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD), who stood in for Mr FUNG Wai-nok.

## I. Confirmation of the Minutes of Meeting held on 12 November 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. Question on the enhancement of occupational safety and health measures in the Islands District (IDC Paper No. 3/2025)

3. The Chairman drew Members' attention to the IDC Paper No. 3/2025, and welcomed Ms KAN Wai-chi, Deputy Chief Occupational Safety Officer (Operations Division) (Hong Kong and Islands Region) and Mr LEUNG Hon-man, Deputy Chief Occupational Safety Officer (Operations Division) (Mega Projects Office) of the Labour Department (LD); and Mr CHAU Kin-po, Paul, Senior Architect 4 of the Housing Department (HD) to the meeting to respond to the question. The written replies of the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) and the Airport Authority Hong Kong (AA) had been distributed to Members for perusal before the meeting.

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

5. Ms KAN Wai-chi responded as follows:

- (a) Fatal industrial accidents referred to deaths arising from industrial activities in industrial undertakings as defined under the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance.
- (b) The data on fatal industrial accidents in the Islands District over the past three years (2022 to 2024) were as follows:
  - (i) No fatal industrial accidents occurred in 2022.
  - (ii) In 2023, three fatal industrial accidents occurred: the first case

involved a worker falling from height at a construction site in Chek Lap Kok; the second case also took place at a construction site in Chek Lap Kok, and the accident was categorised as contact with electricity or electric discharge; the third case occurred at a construction site in Tung Chung, where a worker was killed when he was struck by a falling object.

- (iii) According to the provisional figures from the LD, a total of four fatal industrial accidents occurred in 2024, three of which took place at construction sites in Chek Lap Kok: the first case involved a worker being struck against or struck by a moving object; the second and third cases involved two workers falling from height; the fourth case occurred at a construction site in Tung Chung, where a worker was trapped in or between objects and died.
- (c) The LD did not keep record of the statistics and information on non-fatal industrial accidents by region (including the Islands District), and was therefore unable to provide such data.
- (d) The LD had been, pursuant to the risk-based principle, keeping close tabs on the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) risk levels and their changes of various industries (particularly the construction industry) and would formulate and adjust the strategies of inspection and enforcement, publicity and promotion, as well as education and training in a timely manner in order to promote the OSH culture and prevent accidents from happening.
- (e) Apart from routine inspections and enforcement, the LD had adopted a series of targeted measures. These included conducting Special Enforcement Operations with the view of curbing unsafe work activities; conducting holistic and in-depth surprise inspections targeting construction sites with high-risk processes or poor safety performance; as well as strengthening area patrols to focus on combating violations related to scaffolding works. In addition, the Department actively promoted the adoption of the Smart Site Safety System (4S) in the construction industry and would take note during inspections of whether the sites issued with the 4S Labels had applied the system properly. If any improper application was found, the Department would notify the Development Bureau (DEVB) for follow-up action.
- (f) The LD had been maintaining close collaboration with relevant government departments (including the DEVB) and organisations to provide a safer working environment for employees.

6. Mr Paul CHAU responded as follows:

- (a) The HD attached great importance to work site safety and therefore required the principal contractor to employ safety officers in the contract to oversee work site safety. The Department also assessed the principal contractor's safety plan and its implementation on a quarterly basis and conducted surprise inspections to enhance vigilance among construction personnel, further strengthening safety management.
- (b) The HD adopted the use of "Modular Integrated Construction" in multiple projects, where prefabricated components were assembled in a factory in advance to reduce processes involving work at height. In the next five years, the HD would adopt the use of "Modular Integrated Construction" in more suitable projects to enhance site safety standards.

7. Mr YIP Pui-kei thanked the LD and the HD for their replies and expressed his views as follows:

- (a) To align with the development of the "Airport City" and Tung Chung New Town, the Islands District would undertake many construction projects in the future. According to the figures provided by the LD, over half of the fatal industrial accidents in the Islands District in the past three years occurred at the airport. Therefore, he opined that the AA should enhance construction safety management to reduce the risk of accidents.
- (b) Construction workers came from different cultural backgrounds, and some might not understand Chinese. He enquired what measures the LD had taken to enhance communication with construction workers to ensure their clear understanding of the importance of site safety.
- (c) The 4S had been applied to the CEDD's work projects to monitor site safety through smart safety devices, thereby significantly reducing the risk of accidents. He enquired with the LD about the assessment criteria of the 4S Labelling Scheme and the proportion of sites that had been issued the labels.

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

- (a) Apart from the application of smart safety devices to monitor site safety in the construction industry, he opined that other industries (such as the catering industry) should also adopt approaches which were more advanced and effective to improve workplace safety. In addition, he believed that the relevant departments should strengthen the publicity, promotion, education and training of OSH.
- (b) Due to manpower shortages, employees in some industries had to work long hours continuously and insufficient rest directly increased the risk

of accidents. In this regard, he hoped that the relevant departments would explore solutions.

9. Mr NG Choi-wah expressed his views as follows:

- (a) He opined that the LD should strengthen the publicity, promotion, education and training of OSH to comprehensively raise safety awareness among all stakeholders (including property owners, architects and workers).
- (b) He believed that surprise inspections were not effective in reducing accident risks. He suggested that the relevant departments should enhance communication with stakeholders, such as providing construction workers, contractors and professionals with advice on improving site safety.

10. Mr LEUNG Hon-man gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) The LD collaborated with the Occupational Safety and Health Council (“OSHC”), the Construction Industry Council and various media to produce different types of publicity videos. In addition, the Department would disseminate OSH information through channels such as the “OSH 2.0” mobile application. The Department would also issue “Work Safety Alert” to the industry and the public after serious accidents, reminding the industry to adopt safety precautionary measures to prevent accidents.
- (b) To ensure the structural safety of bamboo scaffolds, the LD revised the “Code of Practice for Bamboo Scaffolding Safety” to enhance safety measures for scaffolding work, such as requiring Truss-out Scaffolders to hold valid safety training certificates and explicitly stipulating the supervision duties of competent persons.
- (c) The LD had continued to improve the Mandatory Basic Safety Training courses to strengthen trainees’ awareness of risks and emergency procedures. In addition, the Department would continue to organise free OSH legislation training courses and talks and would co-organise seminars with relevant organisations to explain safety knowledge and legal requirements to the construction industry.
- (d) The LD worked closely with relevant government departments and organisations (such as the OSHC, the Construction Industry Council, trade associations, workers’ unions and professional bodies) and was committed to strengthening employers’ and employees’ awareness of OSH and promoting OSH culture. In addition, the Department would strengthen its liaison with the AA and urge the contractors of the Three-runway System project to enhance the supervision of high-risk work.

11. Ms KAN Wai-chi gave a supplementary response as follows:
- (a) The 4S Labelling Scheme was launched by the DEVB and the Construction Industry Council. Sites would be issued the labels after on-site inspections and assessments of the proper adoption of the system.
  - (b) The LD actively promoted the aforementioned scheme and would take note during inspections of whether the sites issued with 4S Labels had applied the system properly. If any improper application was found, the Department would notify the DEVB for follow-up action.
12. The Chairman asked the LD to respond to Mr YIP Pui-kei's question on how the LD would enhance communication with construction workers from different cultural backgrounds.
13. Ms KAN Wai-chi responded as follows:
- (a) All workers working at construction sites were required to complete the Mandatory Basic Safety Training courses to ensure that they had the safety awareness and the ability to avoid accidents.
  - (b) The LD had been using diversified publicity channels to ensure construction workers from different cultural backgrounds received information about OSH, such as producing promotional videos, advertising on public transport and displaying banners.
14. Mr YIP Pui-kei thanked the LD for its response and expressed his views as follows:
- (a) The relevant departments should study how to further enhance OSH measures to reduce the chances of accidents. He hoped that the LD could further promote the application of the 4S, such as adopting smart measures like the use of 360-degree collision-avoidance cameras, smart distribution boxes, automatic self-monitoring devices and so on. He suggested the LD should strengthen communication with the AA particularly in airport projects with higher accident rates.
  - (b) Some construction workers might not understand Chinese or might even be illiterate, resulting in communication difficulties. He hoped that the LD would strengthen communication with construction workers from different cultural backgrounds.
15. Ms KAN Wai-chi acknowledged and noted Mr YIP Pui-kei's comments. As the 4S was not implemented by the LD, she suggested that the matter should be referred to the relevant government departments (e.g. the DEVB) for follow-up action.

16. The Chairman asked the Secretariat to forward Members' comments on the 4S to the organisations and departments responsible for development projects, with the aim of encouraging them to increase the use of high-tech facilities to enhance site safety.

(Post-meeting note: Members' comments on the 4S were forwarded to the DEVB and the LD for their information on 26 February 2025.)

III. Question on the illegal placing of vessels on Peng Chau Island  
(IDC Paper No. 4/2025)

17. The Chairman drew Members' attention to the IDC Paper No. 4/2025, and welcomed the following guests who attended the meeting to respond to the question: Mr WONG Chun-yip, Mike, Senior Land Executive/Land Enforcement 3 (District Lands Office, Islands) of the Lands Department (LandsD); Mr YAN Ka-kit, Ric, District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Islands) (Acting) of the FEHD; and Mr Clive WALTON, District Commander (Marine Port District) and Mr CHAN Sheung-yung, Cyrus, Police Community Relations Officer (Marine Port District) of the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF). The written replies of the LandsD, the Marine Department (MD) and the FEHD had been distributed to Members for perusal before the meeting.

18. Ms LAU Suk-han briefly presented the question.

19. Mr Mike WONG elaborated on the written reply of the LandsD, and added that the District Lands Office, Islands (DLO/Is) would continue to actively explore feasible solutions with relevant departments (such as the MD) and would seek legal advice, with a view to studying the possibility of further shortening the reasonable notice period for the statutory notices.

20. Mr Ric YAN stated that the core duties of the FEHD was to address issues related to environmental hygiene. In addition to routine street cleaning and pest control work, the Department would take appropriate actions on environmental hygiene issues based on the actual situation.

21. Ms LAU Suk-han said that at present, the notice given by the LD to the occupier of a land in accordance with the Land (Miscellaneous Provisions) Ordinance (Cap. 28) was seven days, which meant that the persons concerned had seven days to remove their vessels before further enforcement actions by the Department. In this regard, she enquired with the Department about the possibility of shortening the notice period to three days and suggested adopting methods, such as email, which were more efficient and effective than the current registered mail approach, to notify vessel owners.

22. Mr Ken WONG expressed his views as follows:



- (a) He hoped that a proposal to shorten the aforementioned notice period would be worked out at this meeting. He said that he, along with the Police, conducted an on-site inspection in Peng Chau that morning and found that there were currently 73 illegally placed vessels on the island, far exceeding the number reflected in the aforementioned question.
- (b) Not long ago, a fire broke out at a shipyard in Aberdeen. The illegally placed vessels on Peng Chau carried a large amount of fuel. He was concerned that if pedestrians smoked near these vessels, it could easily cause a fire, endangering nearby residents.
- (c) As the LD had explained that the Cap. 28 Ordinance could not effectively resolve the captioned issue and the MD had also indicated that the placing of vessels on shore fell outside its jurisdiction, he suggested that the relevant departments should consider enacting a new ordinance to address the situation.
- (d) He suggested that the MD should impose additional conditions when issuing or renewing vessel licences, such as prohibiting the occupation of government land, in order to create a deterrent effect on vessel owners. The MD had earlier indicated that it would seek legal advice regarding this suggestion. In this regard, he asked the Secretariat to write to the MD for further follow-up.

23. Mr YIP Pui-kei expressed his understanding of the constraints faced by the departments under the current legislation but hoped that the relevant departments could work together to resolve the captioned issue, enhance the effectiveness of the current legislation and impose stricter penalties. He agreed with Mr Ken WONG's suggestion to the MD and hoped that the MD would study corresponding measures in respect of the licensing system, regulatory ordinances and regular inspections.

24. Ms LAU Shun-ting said that the illegal placing of vessels on the island was a long-standing, big and difficult issue. In addition to Peng Chau, this issue also appeared in other parts of the Islands District and in Hong Kong, drawing significant attention from residents. She thanked the departments for proposing multiple suggestions regarding the captioned issue and hoped that the relevant departments would make amendments to the legislation. She also hoped that the Chairman would communicate with the relevant departments to devise interim solutions.

25. The Chairman consolidated the views expressed by Members to the MD and LD and reiterated that the purpose of enacting the Cap. 28 Ordinance was not to deal with movable things. At the same time, she also noted that the LD was currently seeking legal advice on shortening the notice period and the methods of notifying vessel owners other than by registered mail in order to expedite enforcement and management actions.

26. Mr Mike WONG responded that the original intent of enacting the Cap. 28 Ordinance was to provide land occupiers with a reasonable period to remove the relevant things themselves. As for Members' suggestion to notify occupiers by other means, such as by email, the LD would further seek legal advice. In addition, in order to contact vessel owners, the LD would maintain close communication with the MD to ensure that relevant information could be swiftly obtained from the MD when handling vessel matters.

27. The Chairman said that the Islands District Office (IsDO) had previously discussed solutions to the captioned issue with the relevant departments and had explained to Members the constraints faced by each department within its respective jurisdiction and under the current legal framework. Given that the aforementioned restrictions should not hinder the enforcement of the relevant departments, she hoped that, after seeking legal advice and considering the various suggestions, the relevant departments could identify ways to expedite the enforcement actions and enhance the effectiveness of such actions. She said that she would write to the relevant departments after the meeting regarding the suggestions raised by Members and would also discuss swift and effective solutions with the relevant departments at the District Management Committee and other platforms.

28. Mr YU Hon-kwan expressed his views as follows:

- (a) In the past, Cheung Chau also experienced the issue of illegal placing of vessels on the island. The issue was eventually resolved because the LD conducted frequent enforcement actions in accordance with the Cap. 28 Ordinance, resulting in vessel owners ceasing to place vessels on the island within a few months. In this regard, he suggested that the departments should refer to this approach to address the current issue in Peng Chau.
- (b) As the relevant departments needed time to conduct an in-depth study on the aforementioned proposed legislative amendments, and the District Management Committee also needed time to discuss solutions, he suggested setting a date to conduct an on-site inspection, such as three months after the joint operation, to review the effectiveness of the relevant operation. Alternatively, he proposed holding an informal meeting for department representatives and Members to discuss the feasibility of various measures.

29. Mr Ken WONG expressed his views as follows:

- (a) The current Ordinance had loopholes that allowed offenders to move their vessels to another location after the relevant departments had posted notices, affecting residents in multiple areas. He said that offenders, upon receipt of the notices from the relevant departments, would move the vessels from the waterfront to Peng Lei Road, then from

Peng Lei Road to Tung Wan, and finally to Nam Wan, creating an endless cycle.

- (b) He hoped that the relevant departments could increase the frequency of enforcement actions; otherwise, conducting enforcement actions once every two months as per the current practice would not solve the problem and would be a waste of government resources.
- (c) He had followed up on the captioned issue for ten years, during which the notice period stipulated under the Cap. 28 Ordinance was shortened from 14 days to 7 days. However, the problem remained unresolved. He believed that further shortening the notice period to 2 to 3 days would be a reasonable approach.
- (d) If the aforementioned solutions proved ineffective ultimately, he suggested that the relevant departments should communicate with the complainants directly, and that all the departments should seriously review and re-amend the Ordinance to avoid wasting manpower and resources on handling the aftermath caused by the offenders.

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

- (a) She thanked the departments, particularly the IsDO and the FEHD, for their proactive coordination and response to the captioned issue. She hoped that all the departments would reach a consensus and work together to discuss solutions to the problem.
- (b) She agreed with increasing the frequency of joint operations to raise the cost for offenders, thereby making enforcement actions more effective. Meanwhile, she hoped that the actions of the relevant departments in the next three months would effectively reduce the cases of illegal placing of vessels.

31. The Chairman summarised as follows:

- (a) The IsDO was exploring effective and feasible solutions with the relevant departments, hoping to concretely alleviate the current situation. One solution that could be considered in the short term was increasing the frequency of enforcement and management actions, as mentioned by Members.
- (b) Notifying offenders by registered mail was the most time-consuming part of the current enforcement actions, as it took at least two to three days for the letters to reach the recipients. Therefore, she hoped that after seeking legal advice, the relevant departments could devise more effective means to expedite the enforcement process.

- (c) In addition to the District Management Committee, the IsDO would discuss with the relevant departments on ways to strengthen joint operations and enhance enforcement effectiveness on other platforms, such as specially arranged meetings.
- (d) In response to Members' reference to Cheung Chau where there were similar cases of illegal placing of vessels in the past, the IsDO stated that it was necessary to consider factors such as the differences in geographical environments between Cheung Chau and Peng Chau to explore whether Cheung Chau's successful example was applicable to Peng Chau. The IsDO and the Police would refer to the practices in Cheung Chau and conduct further studies.
- (e) The IsDO would closely follow up with the relevant departments regarding the suggestions for legislative amendments.
- (f) It was hoped that in the short term, the situation of illegal placing of vessels could be alleviated through strengthening joint operations. Approximately three months later, an on-site inspection with Members would be conducted again to further review the effectiveness.

(Post-meeting note: The post-meeting written replies from the DLO/Is of the LandsD and the MD regarding the issue were forwarded to Members for perusal on 26 February 2025.)

#### IV. Proposed delineation of quality farmland as Agricultural Priority Areas (IDC Paper No. 1/2025)

32. The Chairman drew Members' attention to the IDC Paper No. 1/2025, and welcomed Ms CHOR Kin-lan, Anna, Principal Assistant Secretary for Environment and Ecology (Food)<sup>3</sup> of the Environment and Ecology Bureau (EEB); and Mr MA Wai-chung, Peter, Assistant Director (Agriculture) and Mr LOK Wai-shing, Edward, Senior Agricultural Officer (Agri-Park & Land) of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) to the meeting to present the paper.

33. Ms Anna CHOR briefly introduced the captioned paper and Mr Edward LOK presented the paper with the aid of PowerPoint presentation.

34. Mr WONG Man-hon declared his interest that he held land in Mui Wo. Regarding the captioned proposal, he was concerned that if private land was delineated as "Agricultural Priority Areas (APAs)", when the landowners applied to the Town Planning Board (TPB) for rezoning the land for non-agricultural use in the future, the AFCD would certainly object to it, resulting in the land being left vacant. Moreover, given the limited land resources in Hong Kong and the fact that food supply in the territory mainly came from the Mainland, there were not many farmers in Hong Kong.

Therefore, he considered that the delineation of nearly 1 000 hectares of land as APAs would not help much in promoting the development of local agriculture.

35. Mr HO Siu-kei said that the majority of the stakeholders in Sham Wat were opposed to the captioned proposal and considered that it would not be meaningful to take forward the proposal as the landowners had all along been allowed to farm on private land. While he agreed that local agriculture should be conserved, it was impractical to allocate a large amount of resources and land to take forward the proposal at a time when the industry was shrinking and the number of farmers was decreasing significantly. Also, he enquired about the current number of farmers in Hong Kong.

36. Ms LAU Shun-ting invited the AFCD to explain the concept of “urban farms”.

37. Mr NG Choi-wah opined that the income from farming was low and thus could not attract the public to the industry. In addition, he said that at present, the Mainland’s agricultural industry mainly made use of machinery and artificial intelligence technology for mass production of agricultural products. Therefore, he suggested that the Government should step up the development of agricultural technology to reduce the need for manual farming and consider focusing on cultivating local agricultural products with higher competitiveness.

38. Mr NG Man-kit declared his interest that he held land in Lantau Island and Mui Wo. He had reservations about the captioned proposal and considered that there was no obvious difference between “quality farmland” and ordinary farmland. He also opined that at present, the cost of farming was high in Hong Kong, so it was not feasible for the public to make a living by farming.

39. Ms WONG Chau-ping was of the view that it was not necessary for agricultural land to be delineated as “quality farmland”. At present, most of the land owned by residents of the New Territories was inherited from their ancestors. Although the departments concerned stressed that the captioned proposal was an administrative measure and would not affect the value of the private land concerned, some residents of the New Territories had in the past expressed that zoning of private land for greening/conservation purposes would lead to depreciation of the value of the land. Therefore, the residents were concerned that the captioned proposal would affect the development and value of private land.

40. Mr Ken WONG did not support the captioned proposal. He considered that the delineation of ordinary farmland as “quality farmland” would restrict other developments on the land, which was unfair to the landowners concerned, and opined that the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund (SADF) was unable to directly benefit the farmers. He considered that as the agricultural industry in Hong Kong was in decline, other measures should be taken forward to make more comprehensive use of the limited land resources and public funds.

41. Ms Anna CHOR made a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) The Government was conducting consultation on the proposal. Since 10 December 2024, representatives of the EEB and the AFCD had been visiting the relevant District Councils and Heung Yee Kuk to consult the stakeholders.
- (b) Although Hong Kong's agricultural industry was relatively smaller in scale and was not a major industry in the economy, it still played a role in local food supply. Therefore, it was believed that the captioned proposal would help promote the diversified development of Hong Kong's economy.
- (c) The development of agro-technology was one of the key initiatives under the Blueprint for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Fisheries, which aimed to promote the upgrading and transformation of local agricultural industry towards modernisation and sustainable development.

42. Mr Peter MA made a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) The captioned proposal would help promote the sustainable development and industrial diversification of the local agricultural industry. In addition, he said that "quality farmland" referred to land that was more suitable for farming purposes. He also noted Members' objection to the delineation of APAs.
- (b) The Consultancy Study on Agricultural Priority Areas (Consultancy Study) had drawn up specific proposals with regard to the locations and areas of the APAs based on ten selection criteria, after excluding the land with specific development plans or zoned "Village Type Development". Of the land proposed to be delineated as APAs, about 760 hectares were intended for farming uses, which was comparable to the area of the existing active farmland in Hong Kong. The sites were located in the North District, Yuen Long, Tai Po and Islands respectively, all of which were areas where farming activities had traditionally been carried out.
- (c) The delineation of APAs did not impose mandatory restrictions on the use of private land. Rather, it aimed to provide a guiding direction for the relevant stakeholders on the planning of the relevant land use, with a view to striking a balance between agricultural development and private land development. Therefore, even if the private land was located in APAs, landowners might still submit planning applications in accordance with the established procedures, and the TPB would then make a decision after holistic consideration of relevant factors as well as opinions of various Government departments and the public.

- (d) According to the statistics of the AFCD, there were currently more than 4 000 farmers and farm workers in Hong Kong.
- (e) In view of Hong Kong people's demand for local agricultural products, the Government had established the SADF to provide financial support for the modernisation and sustainable development of the local agricultural industry. The SADF could provide funding to non-governmental organisations or agricultural organisations for encouraging landowners to release their farmland and promoting agricultural rehabilitation of fallow agricultural land.
- (f) Through the delineation of APAs, the Government hoped to promote the use of quality farmland for farming purposes and upgrade the existing access roads and ancillary agricultural facilities, so as to develop agriculture-related tourism, thereby attracting more tourists and improving the rural economy.

43. Mr Edward LOK gave a consolidated response that at present, a relatively common agricultural activity in the urban areas of Hong Kong was community farming, i.e. the provision of venues (including parks and outdoor public spaces) for farming by residents in the community. As for urban farming, the overall concept is to integrate agriculture into urban lives and to provide urban dwellers with local agricultural products to reduce the carbon footprint generated by the transportation of food, and to offer venues for agriculture-related public education and leisure tourism. He said that urban farming could help promote the sustainable development of the local agricultural industry and was therefore supported by the agricultural sector.

44. Mr HO Chun-fai suggested that only suitable government land should be delineated as APAs and no private land should be involved. Moreover, he opined that the SADF would be of little practical help to the relevant stakeholders and a waste of government resources.

45. Mr WAN Yeung-kin considered that the captioned proposal lacked economic benefits. Moreover, he said that at present, over 90% of the agricultural land on Lamma Island was deserted, and small houses had been built in the vicinity of the agricultural land. He therefore suggested that the agricultural land concerned could be used for the construction of small houses for the indigenous residents.

46. Mr Ken WONG opined that the delineation of agricultural land as "quality farmland" would lead to a depreciation of the value of the land concerned and would not be able to benefit the farmers. He suggested that consideration should be given to using the land for other purposes. In addition, he opined that the Government should assist farmers in applying for the SADF in order to effectively help them, instead of allowing only academic organisations to successfully apply for the fund.

47. Ms WONG Chau-ping enquired whether the statement in the paper, namely, the delineation of APAs did not impose mandatory restrictions on the use of private

land, meant that the landowners concerned could refuse to delineate the private land as APAs.

48. Mr YU Hon-kwan said that at present, the local agricultural industry mainly relied on manpower. Taking the outlying islands as an example, since the land was not extensively cultivated, it was not suitable for the use of machinery. However, the labour force in Hong Kong was insufficient, making it difficult to attract new entrants to the industry. He agreed to the development of urban farming as it required less labour, was educational in nature and could supply agricultural products to the public, but the concept was different from what was being discussed today and should not be confused. Moreover, he pointed out that the construction of the Shek Pik Reservoir required the interception of water supply, resulting in a lack of irrigation water for the farmland in the Mui Wo area, but the captioned proposal was unable to help the farmers concerned. He suggested that the Government should implement the relevant measures in phases, including first delineating 80 hectares of government land as APAs and reducing the SADF from \$1 billion to \$100 million, and then, depending on the number of applications for the use of the relevant government land for agricultural purposes and the output of the relevant agricultural products, deciding whether to further delineate private land as APAs, so as to achieve a balanced and long-term development.

49. Mr HUI Chun-lung asked the relevant departments to clarify the definition of community farming and make suggestions on the types of agricultural products to be cultivated in APAs. He pointed out that according to the information of the AFCD, Hong Kong produced an average of 43 tonnes of vegetables per day in 2023, while the amount of vegetables imported from the Mainland was more than 2 600 tonnes per day, which meant that the local supply only accounted for less than 1.9% of the total amount of vegetables required in Hong Kong. As such, he considered that Hong Kong could not rely on local agriculture for the supply of vegetables, and the captioned proposal could hardly be effective in promoting the sustainable development of local agriculture. He also pointed out that hydroponic farming did not require the use of soil and was therefore not subject to farmland constraints. In addition, he suggested that existing agricultural landowners should be allowed to apply for the SADF, so as to reduce unnecessary administrative costs.

50. Ms Anna CHOR made a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) The Government had established the SADF long before the captioned proposal was put forward to provide funding support to projects that could help promote the modernisation and sustainable development of the agricultural industry, and had so far provided financial support to many farmers.
- (b) At present, there were about 730 hectares of active farmland in Hong Kong, indicating that there was still a certain need for the development of agriculture in Hong Kong. Through the captioned proposal, the Government hoped to provide farmland to farmers affected by land



resumption for Government development projects and provide the agricultural sector with greater confidence in making long-term investment to develop modernised farms and apply agro-technology.

- (c) She stressed that the objective of the captioned proposal was not to expand the scale of local agriculture to achieve self-sufficiency in food supply, but to promote the sustainable development and industrial diversification of the local agricultural industry.
- (d) During the consultation period, the Bureau hoped to listen to Members' views, so that the Bureau and department could enhance the relevant proposals.

51. Mr Peter MA stressed that “quality farmland” was the land suggested in the Consultancy Study that was more suitable for farming purposes. He reiterated that the captioned proposal did not involve any land use rezoning procedure under the town planning system.

52. The Chairman thanked the representatives of the relevant departments for visiting the District Council to discuss the issue and invited the departments to consider Members' views.

V. Working Group on Boosting Local Economy  
(IDC Paper No. 2/2025)

53. The Chairman drew Members' attention to the IDC Paper No. 2/2025, and said that the term of the Working Group on Boosting Local Economy (WGBLE) would be extended for one year to 31 December 2025 to tie in with the relevant follow-up work of the District Council in the coming year. The terms of reference and membership list of the WGBLE were set out in Annexes I and II to the above paper. The WGBLE would continue to be chaired by Mr NG Choi-wah.

VI. Islands District 2025 Year-end Clean-up  
(IDC Paper No. 5/2025)

54. The Chairman drew Members' attention to the IDC Paper No. 5/2025, and invited Mr YAN Ka-kit, Ric, District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Islands) (Acting) of the FEHD to present the paper.

55. Mr Ric YAN briefly presented the paper.

56. Ms Mealoha KWOK thanked the Department for stepping up the cleaning of rear lanes of food premises in view of the increase in the number of tourists visiting Cheung Chau near the Lunar New Year. She said that as the rear lanes of food premises were close to residential areas, she had received complaints from residents

from time to time in the past. Recently, she had inspected some of the rear lanes and found that although the hygiene conditions of the rear lanes had improved after the Department had stepped up the cleaning work, odour still emanated from the areas, so she hoped that the Department would step up the cleaning work during the Year-end Clean-up campaign. Moreover, she commended the Department's efforts in providing cleaning services to keep the public toilets clean at all times. As regards the problems of refuse disposal and bird droppings which she had earlier reflected to the Department, she appreciated that the Department had taken prompt follow-up actions.

57. Mr LUO Chenghuan supported the Year-end Clean-up campaign and considered that the objectives of the campaign clear and unambiguous and the preparatory work adequate. However, he suggested that the Department should arrange for staff to clean up refuse regularly to prevent waste accumulation, thereby improving environmental hygiene and the cityscape. He also suggested that the Department should invite more local organisations, including the Care Teams, Rural Committees, owners' corporations and owners' committees, etc. to participate in the campaign, so as to raise stakeholders' awareness of maintaining a clean and hygienic environment.

58. Mr NG Man-kit thanked the Department on behalf of Cheung Chau residents for its efforts in the past year. He said that the Department had been working closely with the Cheung Chau Rural Committee and commended the Department for actively following up on the views of the public, which had resulted in more effective anti-rodent and street cleaning work.

59. Mr HO Siu-kei thanked the Department on behalf of Tai O residents for actively following up the mosquito problem. He noted that the Department had stepped up anti-mosquito efforts during periods of severe mosquito infestation to minimise the impact on the residents. In this connection, he commended the Department for its work attitude and efficiency.

60. Ms WONG Chau-ping commended the Department on behalf of Tung Chung Heung residents for its work in hygiene and cleanliness, rodent control and maintenance of refuse collection points.

61. Mr Ric YAN thanked Members for their commendation and would convey Members' views to the relevant staff of the Department. With the encouragement from the Members, staff of the Department surely would go the extra mile to maintain the environmental hygiene of Islands District in the coming year.

62. The Chairman invited the representative of the FEHD to reflect to the Department the two suggestions made by Mr LUO Chenghuan to ensure that the frequency of refuse removal could be increased and more organisations could be invited to participate in the campaign.

63. Ms WONG Chau-ping enquired about the details of the activities of the clean-up operation to be held on 23 January (such as whether floor washing would be

included), so that she and other guests could attend the event in appropriate attire to enhance the publicity effect.

64. Mr Ric YAN said that the main task of that day would be to publicise the Year-end Clean-up campaign to the residents.

65. The Chairman suggested that the Department should inform the participants of the details of the activities after the meeting to facilitate their preparation.

VII. Reports on the Work of the IDC Committees / Working Group  
(IDC Papers No. 6-11/2025)

66. Members noted and endorsed the papers unanimously.

VIII. Any Other Business

67. The views of Mr LUO Chenghuan were as follows:

- (a) He considered that the new term of the District Council, under the leadership of the Chairman, had fully demonstrated the new paradigm of patriots administering Hong Kong, enabling Members to serve the public wholeheartedly. In addition, he took the opportunity to recognise the work of Members.
- (b) He considered that the District Council had succeeded in raising public awareness of national security through publicising the national security law via different channels.
- (c) As for issues relating to people's livelihood, under the leadership of the Chairman, Members had conducted in-depth studies on the traffic congestion and bicycle parking problems in Tung Chung and had made recommendations to the relevant departments. At present, the problems were greatly improved.
- (d) In addition, he commended Members and the Care Teams for their responsiveness to contingency situations. In the past year, the Care Teams had performed well in response to typhoons and the water supply suspension incident in Tung Chung, giving full play to their role in caring for the underprivileged.
- (e) With regard to boosting the economy, Members put forward a number of proposals in the District Council. The IsDO also organised a number of activities, such as the bazaar at the Tung Chung East Promenade and the Beach Music Festival in Mui Wo, which had attracted the participation of many business operators and members of

the public, and had won wide acclaim.

- (f) He hoped that the work of the District Council could be taken forward smoothly in the coming year, so as to address the difficulties and concerns of the public.

68. The Chairman thanked Members for their hard work in the past year and hoped that they would keep up their efforts.

IX. Date of Next Meeting

69. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:53 p.m. The next meeting would be held at 2:30 p.m. on 11 March 2025 (Tuesday).

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