

**Summary of the Minutes of
the 6th Meeting of the Sha Tin District Council (2013 Session)**

The 6th meeting of the Sha Tin District Council (STDC) (2013 session) was held on 21 November 2013. The major issues discussed are summarised below:

Comprehensive Waste Management Blueprint 2013-2022

2. Secretary for the Environment briefed members on the ten-year blueprint.
3. Members expressed their views on the ten-year blueprint.
4. Replies of Secretary for the Environment to members' questions and proposals were as follows:
 - (a) The Environment Bureau had all along been collaborating with other governments departments in the promotion of environmental protection and would continue to do so.
 - (b) Impact on low-income families would be considered in the consultation exercise on waste levies, which would last till mid-January 2014. According to the experiences of other countries, despite occasions of illegal dumping of waste, significant reduction in waste disposal had been achieved. Civic education was necessary but from an economic standpoint, charging was more effective than encouraging.
 - (c) Central treatment of food waste was adopted by most countries. It was more cost-effective to treat a large amount of food waste centrally than having it treated locally.
 - (d) Incineration had not yet been adopted by Hong Kong. The objective of the 2013-2022 Blueprint was to have 23% of waste being treated by incineration within ten years. Another major objective was to have a more long-term planning for the construction of waste-to-energy facilities.
 - (e) The Environment Bureau was going to launch large-scale educational and promotional activities in the coming year.
 - (f) In the next two months, the Education Bureau would continue to communicate with waste recyclers and would help draw up policies and measures for promoting the recycling business.

- (g) A fish meal factory was set up in Ecopark to convert food waste to fish meal. As demand for compost was low in Hong Kong, it was more appropriate to convert food waste to energy. A waste-to-energy plant was proposed to be built in Siu Ho Wan.
- (h) A bill on promotion of the Producer Responsibility Scheme on waste electrical and electronic equipment would be introduced the following year, and promotion on the recycling of glass bottles would be stepped up. As regards construction waste, 95% were sorted for recycling purposes instead of being disposed of at the landfill.
- (i) The planning for incineration lasted for more than ten years. The proposal to make Shek Kwu Chau an incineration site was still undergoing judicial proceedings, and after consulting the Department of Justice, the Environment Bureau planned to submit the proposal to the Legislative Council early next year.
- (j) The Producer Responsibility Scheme applied to all producers involved in the production process of a commodity on the basis of the Polluter Pays Principle.
- (k) The aim of setting up Community Green Stations was to promote environmental education at the local level and strengthen the recycling networks of various commodities. The first Community Green Station would be set up in Sha Tin.
- (l) A variable rate charging scheme for waste was expected to be launched in 2016 at the earliest. The successful experience of imposing a levy on construction waste showed that taking a quantity-based approach would have notable results.

Poverty Line and Strategy for Poverty Alleviation

- 5. Director (Special Duties) of the Chief Secretary's Private Office briefed members on the work in alleviating poverty.
- 6. Members expressed their views on the "poverty line".
- 7. Replies of Director (Special Duties) of the Chief Secretary's Private Office to members' questions and proposals were as follows:
 - (a) In the next stage of poverty alleviation, the main direction was to encourage

people below the “poverty line” to seek employment and offer them financial assistance. Poverty alleviation measures should not discourage people from seeking employment, and should take into account young people’s employment needs and children’s educational needs. The “poverty line” could be an indicator of the effectiveness of poverty alleviation measures.

- (b) One in three elderly people were living below the “poverty line”. The Old Age Living Allowance Scheme, which was launched as a supplement to the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme, was benefiting over 400,000 people.
- (c) A task force responsible for research on retirement protection was set up under the Commission on Poverty. Upon completion of the research, the Commission on Poverty would report the details and provide information for public discussion.
- (d) Since January 2013, one-stop employment assistance services had been provided under the Support for Self-reliance Scheme on a family basis. Moreover, a pioneer project would be launched by the Community Care Fund to offer employment assistance to CSSA recipients.
- (e) Assistance to low-income households as well as people not living in public housing and not receiving CSSA was provided under the Community Care Fund.
- (f) Education was essential in reducing skills mismatch among young people.
- (g) It was necessary to adopt a district-based approach to poverty alleviation. The Commission on Poverty would discuss this respect in detail at the next meeting.

Public Engagement Exercise on Population Policy

- 8. Director (Special Duties) of the Chief Secretary’s Private Office briefed members on public engagement exercise on population policy.
- 9. Members expressed their views on population policy.
- 10. Replies of Director (Special Duties) of the Chief Secretary’s Private Office to members’ questions and proposals were as follows:

- (a) In Hong Kong, the proportion of imported workers was low when compared with other countries.
- (b) In response to the labour shortage in some industries, the Steering Committee on Population Policy suggested devising ways to improve the current labour importation schemes while ensuring that the interests of local workers would not be jeopardised.
- (c) To encourage Hong Kong people to give birth, it was necessary to formulate long-term policies that were conducive to creating a favourable environment for giving birth. The government would also consider ways to lower the opportunity cost of giving birth.
- (d) Regarding ethnic minorities, besides providing training services, the government would encourage them to integrate into the community. Assistance would also be given in the learning of the Chinese language.
- (e) The rate of population growth in Hong Kong was relatively low. How an ageing population and a dwindling labour force affected the economy was a cause of concern.
- (f) Regarding new arrivals from the mainland, the Steering Committee on Population Policy suggested putting the focus on helping them to integrate into the community, as well as providing appropriate training and employment assistance. New arrivals from the mainland only accounted for 4% of all CSSA cases.
- (g) Regarding the unleashing of the labour force, it was suggested that child care services and other supporting services should be enhanced to encourage women to rejoin the job market.

Confirmation of the Minutes of the Meeting Held on 26 September 2013

- 11. Mr YUNG Ming-chau, Michael proposed to amend paragraph 11.
- 12. The amended minutes were confirmed unanimously.

STDC Matters

Signature Projects Scheme

13. District Officer (Sha Tin) informed members that the Home Affairs Department had approved the submission on the two proposed projects. The Civil Engineering and Development Department was conducting a feasibility study, hoping that the views collected at the Signature Projects Scheme forum would be incorporated into the study and the design. Upon completion of preliminary design by the consultant, the Sha Tin District Office would launch the Stage 2 Public Engagement, in which specific options and reference material would be provided for more in-depth public discussion.

14. The Council endorsed the above paper unanimously.

Regional Advisory Committee (New Territories) of the Hospital Authority – Representative of the STDC

15. Mr WONG Chak-piu, Philip, was elected unopposed as the STDC representative sitting on the Regional Advisory Committee (New Territories) of the Hospital Authority from 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2016.

Customer Liaison Group of the Hongkong Post – Representative of the STDC

16. Ms LAM Chung-yan was elected unopposed as a member of the Hongkong Post's Customer Liaison Group, representing the STDC, from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2015.

Updated Member Lists of the STDC Committees

17. The Council endorsed the above paper unanimously.

The STDC to Serve as Supporter of Events

18. The Council unanimously endorsed the STDC serving as supporter of the following two events:

(a) "HSBC Community Festival" organised by the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation; and

(b) "Hong Kong Water Race 2014" organised by the Wofoo Social Enterprises.

Reports of the STDC Committees

19. The Council noted the reports of the District Facilities Management Committee, the Culture, Sports and Community Development Committee, the Education and Welfare

Committee, the Development and Housing Committee, the Traffic and Transport Committee, the Health and Environment Committee, and the Finance and General Affairs Committee.

Financial Account of the STDC as at 12 November 2013

20. The Council noted the above paper.

Revised Budget for the STDC as at 12 November 2013

21. The Council noted the above paper.

Report of the District Management Committee

22. The Council noted the above paper.

Next Meeting

23. The next meeting would be held at 2:30 p.m. on 23 January 2014.