

## **Summary of Minutes of the 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Commerce, Industry and Housing Committee (2014-2015)**

### **Meeting**

The Commerce, Industry and Housing Committee (“CIHC”) held its 8<sup>th</sup> meeting on 2 February 2015.

### **Provision of Services by the On Ting Post Office**

2. Members opposed the closure of the On Ting Post Office for the following reasons: (a) Members opined that there were a relatively large number of elderly people in On Ting Estate and Yau Oi Estate, who had got accustomed to using the services of the On Ting Post Office; (b) it was reckoned that the On Ting Post Office was more conveniently located despite the fact that its scope of services overlapped with that of the Tuen Mun Central Post Office; (c) it was considered that the On Ting Post Office, which served some 400 members of the public per day on average, had quite a large service volume and could help share the busy workload of the Tuen Mun Central Post Office; (d) the On Ting Post Office should be retained as the population of Tuen Mun kept rising; and (e) as online shopping and courier services were mushrooming, the Government should provide more resources for the Post Office to offer more value-added services, so that more people would be attracted to use post services. Deputy Postmaster General of the Post Office responded to the above views raised by Members and indicated that more data analyses would be conducted on this issue.

### **Enquiry on the Progress of the Revitalisation of Factory Buildings in Tuen Mun District**

3. Members raised the following views and enquiries on the above issue: (a) an enquiry was made as to what was meant by the so-called “toleration fee”, which was required to be paid by an owner who changed the use of a factory building; (b) an enquiry was made as to whether the Government had discussed the options for factory building revitalisation with the owners in a bid to optimise the use of factory building resources; and (c) it was suggested that a letter be written to the Planning Department inviting it to attend next CIHC meeting and provide more information for discussion on this issue.

### **Request for the Government’s Review of the Policy on the Sale of Public Housing Flats and Supply of More Land for the Provision of More Public Housing Flats and Home Ownership Scheme Flats**

4. Member opposed the sale of the 1 500 newly-built public housing units, opining that the original purpose of public housing was to address the housing needs of the grassroots, and that the waiting time for public housing would become even longer if public housing units were used for purchase and sale, as it took time to refurbish the units. Besides, Members called for expeditious construction of public housing and Home Ownership Scheme (“HOS”) flats with consideration given to supporting facilities in terms of transport and others. It was also suggested that the Transport and Housing Bureau be invited to send representatives to attend CIHC meetings for in-depth discussion.

### **Concern over the Home-purchase Difficulties Faced by Young People and Young Families**

5. Members reckoned that whether or not the youth could purchase their homes was not only concerned about their personal financial capacity but also affected by external factors such as property prices. They indicated that without government assistance, hardly could young families

secure their homes as they were neither able to afford high property prices nor eligible for public housing. They asked what support the Government could provide to help young people to purchase their homes. Moreover, a Member pointed out that some young people met the down payments for home purchase with the pensions of their parents, who subsequently applied for the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance. This arrangement helped young people to solve their home-purchase difficulties but brought about problems in retirement protection. It was thus suggested that (a) more HOS flats be built and property prices be put under regulation; (b) housing policies be relaxed, housing development be expedited and the waiting time be shortened; (c) concessionary loans or even down payment waiver be granted to first-time home buyers; and (d) a priority queue be provided for young families in order to shorten their waiting time for HOS flats.

### **Request for the Government's Re-launch of the "Operation Building Bright"**

6. Members suggested the "Operation Building Bright" scheme be re-launched to complement the Mandatory Building Inspection Subsidy Scheme with a view to enhancing minority owners' incentive to participate in major maintenance projects. Besides, an enquiry was made on what other schemes would be rolled out to provide financial support for building maintenance projects.

### **Request for the Securities and Futures Commission's Stronger Regulation of Securities Companies**

7. Members opined that regulation of the so-called "runner" securities companies should be stepped up to perfect the relating system and securities companies should disclose their real conditions to their clients. Moreover, it was suggested that following the practice in the tourist sector, a stamp should be affixed on a statement to show clearly that a trade was conducted as per a client's request, so as to protect investors.

### **Request for Enhanced Regulation of the Pre-payment Mode of Consumption**

8. Members requested formulation of operation guidelines on pre-payment mode of consumption. They also requested the Customs and Excise Department ("C&ED") to give an account of the above issue. Besides, the C&ED and the Consumer Council were invited to send representatives to attend CIHC meetings.

### **Work Reports by the Working Groups under the CIHC**

#### **(a) Working Group on Occupational Safety and Health**

9. Members noted the contents of the report by the working group.

#### **(b) Working Group on Economic Development in Tuen Mun**

10. Members noted the contents of the report by the working group.

#### **(c) Working Group on Building Management**

11. Members noted the contents of the report by the working group.

#### **(d) Working Group on Monitoring of Alteration Works of The Link**

12. On the issue concerning the smoke door, Members pointed out that the smoke door was difficult to push open and was thus kept open constantly, thus nullifying the fire prevention

function of the smoke lobby. It was requested that the smoke lobby should be restored as in Siu Hei Court. On the re-provisioning of the covered passageway, Members requested the District Lands Office and the Independent Checking Unit of the Housing Department to follow up on the relevant ordinance, and suggested writing to the Lands Department requesting exemption from the plot ratio requirements involved.

13. The CIHC agreed that the term of the Working Group on Monitoring of Alteration Works of The Link be extended until the completion of follow-ups on The Link's alteration works.

#### **Work Report on Private Building Management in the Tuen Mun District**

14. In view of the "statistics on assistance and consultation cases relating to building management - issue of sub-divided units", a Member enquired of the Tuen Mun District Office ("TMDO") how it followed up on requests for assistance and advice in relation to sub-divided unit issues. A representative of the TMDO indicated that such requests were received, the TMDO would contact the complainants and the building organisations concerned and refer the cases to the relevant departments for follow-ups.

#### **Report by the Buildings Department**

15. In response to Members' enquiries, the representative of the Buildings Department ("BD") said that the BD's report mainly covered data on special operations for large-scale demolition of unauthorised structures, and that the BD had received complaints on sub-divided unit issues and followed them up individually. In addition, the BD would take enforcement actions on sub-divided unit issues.

#### **Request for Adopting Effective Measures to Tackle Public Order Problems Posed by Cross-boundary Travellers**

16. Members discussed the problems caused by cross-boundary travellers in terms of traffic, street environment, public order in shopping centres and parallel traders. Representatives of the Transport Department, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and the Hong Kong Police Force reported on the measures taken on the problems.

17. The CIHC agreed to (a) write to the management companies of the shopping centres requesting them to step up measures on visitor flow management; (b) write to the C&ED requesting it to curb parallel trading activities; and (c) ask the District Management Committee to liaise with the departments concerned for discussion on the relevant measures.

Secretariat, Tuen Mun District Council  
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