

Minutes of the 8th Meeting of
the Commerce, Industry and Housing Committee (2016-2017) of
the Tuen Mun District Council

Date: 6 February 2017 (Monday)

Time: 9:30 a.m.

Venue: Tuen Mun District Council (TMDC) Conference Room

<u>Present</u>		<u>Time of Arrival</u>	<u>Time of Departure</u>
Ms CHING Chi-hung (Chairman)	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr CHAN Manwell, Leo (Vice-chairman)	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr LEUNG Kin-man, BBS, MH, JP	TMDC Chairman	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr LEE Hung-sham, Lothar, MH	TMDC Vice-chairman	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Ms KONG Fung-yi	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr AU Chi-yuen	TMDC Member	9:54 a.m.	End of meeting
Ms HO Hang-mui	TMDC Member	9:37 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr LAM Chung-hoi	TMDC Member	9:51 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr TSUI Fan, MH	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr CHAN Man-wah, MH	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr CHEUNG Hang-fai	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
The Hon HO Kwan-yiu, JP	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	10:51 a.m.
Ms CHU Shun-nga, Beatrice	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr TSANG Hin-hong	TMDC Member	9:35 a.m.	End of meeting
Ms SO Ka-man	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr KAM Man-fung	TMDC Member	9:35 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr MO Shing-fung	TMDC Member	9:48 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr YEUNG Chi-hang	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr YAN Siu-nam	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr TAM Chun-yin	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Ms MA LO Kam-wah, Virginia	Co-opted Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr FUNG Pui-yin	Co-opted Member	9:30 a.m.	10:09 a.m.
Mr NG Ka-ho, Andrew	Co-opted Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr NG Kwok-yan, Akina	Co-opted Member	9:46 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr CHAN Tsim-heng	Co-opted Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr TSOI Shing-hin	Co-opted Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr HO Chui-wan, Ida (Secretary)	Executive Officer (District Council) 1, Tuen Mun District Office, Home Affairs Department		

Absent with Apologies

Mr TO Sheck-yuen, MH	TMDC Member
Mr NG Koon-hung	TMDC Member
Ms WONG Lai-sheung, Catherine	TMDC Member
Ms LUNG Shui-hing, MH	TMDC Member

In Attendance

Ms KOO Kit-yee, Angie	Senior Liaison Officer (1), Tuen Mun District Office, Home Affairs Department
Ms CHAK Man-ye, Rene	Liaison Officer i/c Building Management & Town Centre, Tuen Mun District Office, Home Affairs Department
Mr CHOI Chi-man, Michael	Senior Building Surveyor/E5, Buildings Department
Mr CHOW Chiu-leung	Station Commander, Castle Peak Bay Fire Station, Fire Services Department
Ms CHENG Chui-king, Christine	Housing Manager/Tuen Mun 4, Housing Department
Ms WA Lei-chun, Winnie	Senior Community Relations Officer/ICAC Regional Office (New Territories North West), Independent Commission Against Corruption
Mr HO Chik-tung, Dennis	Labour Officer (Workplace Consultation Promotion), Labour Department
Mr MOK Hing-cheung	Administrative Assistant/Lands, District Lands Office, Tuen Mun, Lands Department

I. Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed all present to the 8th meeting of the Commerce, Industry and Housing Committee (“CIHC”). In particular, she welcomed Mr LEUNG Kin-man, the Chairman of the Tuen Mun District Council (“TMDC”), who attended a CIHC meeting for the first time. And on behalf of the CIHC, she expressed gratitude to Mr TAI Yuk-sum, Sam, Senior Building Surveyor of the Buildings Department (“BD”), who had been transferred to another post, and extended welcome to his successor Mr Michael CHOI.

2. The Chairman reminded Members that any Member who was aware of a personal interest in a discussion item should declare the interest before the discussion. The Chairman would, in accordance with Order 39(12) of the TMDC Standing Orders, decide whether the Member who had declared an interest might speak or vote on the matter, might remain in the meeting as an observer, or should withdraw from the meeting. All cases of declaration of interests would be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

II. Absence from Meeting

3. The Secretariat received no applications from Members for leave of absence.

III. Confirmation of Minutes of the 7th Meeting Held on 5 December 2016

4. The above minutes were unanimously confirmed by the CIHC.

5. A Member said that while the CIHC had discussed at its previous meeting the service situation of Tuen Mun Central Post Office, she had recently been informed by residents that there was no improvement in the post office’s services as, for example, people often had to queue for services and breakdowns of stamp vending machines were not immediately dealt with by staff. She requested the Post Office to re-open On Ting Post Office to serve residents.

6. The Chairman asked the Secretary to help write to the Post Office expressing the above views of the Member.

[Post-meeting note: The above letter was issued on 17 March 2017.]

Secretariat

IV. Discussion Items**(A) Proposal to Improve Facilities of Pitches/Courts of Housing Department**
(CIHC Paper No. 1/2017)**(Written Response of Housing Department)**

7. A proposer of the paper said ball courts in public housing estates were the only outdoor activity venues for residents living there, but a number of residents had told him that basic facilities such as ball nets, lockers and drinking fountains were not provided in the ball courts of their housing estates. He suggested the department improve the facilities of ball courts in public housing estates by reference to the standards for recreational facilities managed by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (“LCSD”). Moreover, he pointed out that most young people nowadays were not interested in exercise and the department should upgrade the facilities of ball courts to attract them to do exercise. He had contacted the district offices of the department for the matter, but all the replies he received were ambiguous. Therefore, he urged the department to answer whether it could follow up on the improvements proposed in the paper.

8. Members’ comments in the first round of discussion are summarised as follows:

- (i) A Member indicated that the department should count ball nets among the standard facilities as ball nets were taken as one of the scoring standards in some ball games (e.g. basketball). Moreover, the department should disclose the details of standard facilities in public housing estates and seek improvement by reference to the criteria adopted by other government departments (e.g. the LCSD) providing standard ball court facilities;
- (ii) A Member said she had earlier been informed by some students through the Meet the Public Scheme of the TMDC about the following problems with ball court facilities in public housing estates: uneven ground surface that exposed sports players to the risk of injury, the department’s failure to arrange prompt repairs to the frequently damaged basketball stands, and the lack of lockers for use by the public, which gave rise to occasional theft. She hoped the department would accept the proposals in the paper and make prompt improvements;
- (iii) A Member questioned why the Housing Department (“HD”) was not able to provide such facilities as lockers and drinking fountains, which could nevertheless be provided by the LCSD. The Member hoped the HD could improve the facilities concerned as soon as possible; and

- (iv) Believing that a ball net could give a shooter a sense of achievement, a Member hoped the HD would care about the feeling of basketball players.

9. The Chairman said the department should move with the times to upgrade the facilities of ball courts in public housing estates. As the department stated in its response that ball nets would be put up in ball courts, she would like the department's representative to provide a timetable for the putting up of ball nets.

10. Ms Christine CHENG, Housing Manager of the HD, responded that the department would actively consider Members' proposals. She explained that the HD and the LCSD had different positioning with regard to recreational and sport facilities: the LCSD considered the needs of the whole district and assigned specific staff to manage its venues, some of which were even used for competitions and higher-level activities; whereas facilities provided by the HD were mainly used by residents for daily recreational purposes. Regarding the proposal to provide drinking fountains, the department had earlier explained at the Legislative Council ("LegCo") that drinking fountains were not among the standard facilities of public housing estates and residents could bring their own drinking water or purchase drinks from shops in housing estates. She added that to avoid the risk of cross transmission of diseases arising from residents' use of drinking fountains, the department did not recommend the provision of drinking fountains.

11. She further pointed out that the department had put up ball nets at its ball courts, but these nets often wore out quickly due to usage and weather. Regarding the proposal to pave ball courts with plastic as put forward by Members in the paper, she said that while the existing hard-surface ball courts of the department were up to scratch, the works section had undertaken to pave certain venues with plastic on a pilot basis. Besides, the department had provided lockers at a pilot ball court in Wu King Estate eight years before, but it was subsequently found that their usage was quite low. Yet, the department would actively consider Members' proposal and provide lockers at other pilot venues.

12. A Member said the HD's responses were not acceptable. She argued that if drinking fountains could lead to cross transmission of diseases, they were not supposed to be provided in all LCSD sports complexes by the same token. Besides, the department should not provide lockers at certain venues only.

13. A Member suggested the department upgrade facilities at ball courts using a step-by-step approach with simple issues being handled before difficult ones. For

instance, it might take reference from the materials of ball nets used by the LCSD in a bid to reduce wear and tear on its ball nets.

14. Ms Christine CHENG of the HD responded that the department would put up ball nets at its ball courts as soon as possible, and in case of damage, the relevant sections would arrange repairs promptly.

HD

15. Members' comments in the second round of discussion are summarised as follows:

- (i) A Member urged the department to pave all hard-surface ball courts with acrylic plastic as soon as possible, because plastic paving could reduce the chance of injury to sports players in ball courts;
- (ii) A Member said that many years before, the TMDC had requested the LCSD to provide drinking fountains at beaches and, similarly, the LCSD had claimed that it could not do so for various reasons. Yet, after a great deal of efforts to pursue the request, the LCSD had already provided drinking fountains at beaches. She opined that as the LCSD could manage to provide drinking fountains at outdoor beaches, the HD should be able to do the same at its venues;
- (iii) A Member pointed out that as some lockers provided by the department were designed in the form of storage cages with unsealed tops, objects kept in the lockers often got wet in rainy days. Moreover, rainwater could rust the lockers. He suggested the department consider using other designs and materials for provision of lockers, which might help mitigate the problem of low usage;
- (iv) A Member said that if the department decided to put up ball nets at its ball courts, it should ensure an adequate quantity of ball nets in stock, so that prompt repairs could be arranged in case of damage;
- (v) A Member suggested site inspections with HD representatives be arranged to examine the department's facilities in Tuen Mun, with a view to working out improvement measures;
- (vi) A Member said that if the facilities of certain public housing estates were not satisfactory, the TMDC Members of the constituencies concerned might express their opinions through the relevant Estate Management Advisory Committees; if

it was opined that the standards for the existing facilities of the department required improvement, the committee might have further discussion on this;

- (vii) A Member opined that it was difficult to arrange site inspections of all facilities in the district as the circumstances of each public housing estate varied. He said the department should consider whether the facilities concerned needed replacement; and
- (viii) A Member said the department should align the standards for facilities of its ball courts instead of providing facilities at certain pilot venues only, and it should also note that some people might occupy lockers. He believed that the department had adequate capacity and resources to provide such facilities and should thus arrange provision in a gradual manner.

16. The Chairman requested the HD to provide a timetable for implementing the proposal to put up ball nets, and to get in touch with TMDC Members of the constituencies of all public housing estates in Tuen Mun to understand residents' needs in terms of facilities for review. In her opinion, as most Tuen Mun residents lived in public housing estates, it was the department's responsibility to provide up-to-standard recreational facilities for use by residents. She said the CIHC would take this issue forward at the next meeting, and requested the department to prepare a report on the above proposals for discussion.

HD

17. Members' comments in the third round of discussion are summarised as follows:

- (i) A Member remarked that the department should align the standards for facilities instead of following things up with certain TMDC Members. The department might consider using Tuen Mun as a pilot place to upgrade all facilities in the district;
- (ii) A Member asked whether the department had explored the reasons for the low usage of lockers at the ball court in Wu King Estate. He suggested that, if most lockers at ball courts were used to keep wallets and mobile phones, the department should consider providing small lockers; and
- (iii) A Member who supported the CIHC in further discussing this issue hoped that the department would get in touch with TMDC Members of various constituencies to understand their respective situations and prepare a list in accordance with the needs of the constituencies for discussion at the next

meeting.

18. The Chairman invited the department to consolidate recommendations after its follow-ups with TMDC Members of various constituencies, and to implement them in a gradual manner subject to the availability of adequate resources. She said there might be different causes for the relatively low usage of lockers and the low usage recorded eight years before did not necessarily mean that there was no such a need at the present time. She would like Ms Christine CHENG of the HD to relay Members' views to the department and report on the progress at the next meeting.

HD

(B) Request for Setting-up of a Building Repair Works Authority

(CIHC Paper No. 2/2017)

(Written Response of Development Bureau)

19. A proposer of the paper was regretted that the Development Bureau ("DEVB") had sent no representative to the meeting and stated in its response that it had no plan to form the Building Repair Works Authority. She indicated that the main purpose of setting up the Building Repair Works Authority was not to offer financial support but to provide more relevant information and technical assistance in building maintenance matters, so as to prevent corruption and bid-rigging. She considered that it was necessary to set up the Building Repair Works Authority because the general public in today's society had strong demand for regulation of building maintenance works.

20. A Member reckoned that the Government was not taking the right measures to solve the problems with regulation of building maintenance. The building maintenance support offered by some government departments and public organisations, such as the Independent Commission Against Corruption ("ICAC"), the Urban Renewal Authority ("URA") and the Hong Kong Housing Society ("HKHS"), to owners was limited to education. As there was no designated department that oversaw matters relating to building maintenance, the Member urged the bureau to consider forming the Building Repair Works Authority.

21. The Chairman noted that most owners were not familiar with building maintenance although they were compelled to carry out maintenance works under the maintenance schemes launched by the Government, such as the mandatory building and window inspection schemes. Therefore, she supported the proposal in the paper and suggested that after the meeting, a letter should be issued to the DEVB for further elaboration on Members' views. She also opined that the LegCo should consider the proposal.

22. Mr Michael CHOI, Senior Building Surveyor of Buildings Department (“BD”), responded that the matter under discussion was a policy matter whereas the BD was a technical department that mainly provided owners with assistance in building maintenance, such as the Building Safety Loan Scheme which provided financial support for owners with financial difficulties. Moreover, the department had a list of professionals and registered contractors, from which owners might select suitable contractors to gain protection.
23. Members’ comments in the first round of discussion are summarised as follows:
- (i) Disagreeing with the department’s remark that the list could provide protection for owners, a Member said most owners were not familiar with building maintenance, so the Government had the responsibility to formulate relevant policies to regulate maintenance works and protect owners ;
 - (ii) A Member agreed that a letter should be issued to the DEVB, and said that it was also necessary to write to the LegCo to express voice since legislation was required before the establishment of the Building Repair Works Authority;
 - (iii) A Member reckoned that as many owners were facing the problem of bid-rigging, the Government should step up regulation and the LegCo should have discussion on this;
 - (iv) Noting that the Government had reviewed the Building Management Ordinance (Cap. 344) in 2014, a Member hoped the bureau would also report on the results of the ordinance review in its response;
 - (v) A Member who supported the setting up of the Building Repair Works Authority hoped that such departments as the BD, the URA, the ICAC, the Hong Kong Police Force and the Home Affairs Department would be invited to take part in the operation of the authority, so that professional advice from different aspects could be provided to protect minor owners. In addition, the authority might work with independent accountants and owners’ corporations to monitor the implementation of works;
 - (vi) A Member held the view that at this stage there was no need to set up the Building Repair Works Authority. He suggested information relating to building maintenance be promoted through the Working Group on Building Management of the CIHC. He said that as many government departments were offering assistance in building maintenance to owners, efforts could be

made first in this aspect so that owners could learn about the information;

- (vii) A Member said the problems of bid-rigging and sky-high maintenance costs still existed despite the various support currently offered by the Government, so it was necessary to set up the Building Repair Works Authority. Besides, noting that the ICAC had received more than 700 complaint cases relating to building maintenance, he wanted to know how many of these cases had been detected;
- (viii) A Member remarked that government departments did not give full play to their roles. The Member reckoned that building maintenance was a territory-wide matter, which the working group might not be able to handle;
- (ix) A Member considered it necessary to legislate for the setting up of the Building Repair Works Authority so that enforcement officers could act according to law;
- (x) A Member noted that at present, owners in different places had to contact different departments for assistance; for example, owners in New Territories had to contact the HKHS whereas those in urban districts had to contact the URA. The Member therefore considered it necessary to set up the Building Repair Works Authority to provide one-stop services for owners. In her view, building maintenance was a territory-wide issue and it was thus necessary to form an independent organisation to address it;
- (xi) A Member said buildings in his constituency were mainly private ones. Opining that government departments failed to offer effective support in combating bid-rigging, he said some contractors were so well-versed in building maintenance procedures that they could often procure owners' corporations to employ them without breaching the procedures, so law enforcement agencies such as the ICAC could not prosecute them successfully. For this reason, he agreed that problems with building maintenance required urgent solution;
- (xii) A Member opined that neither could the current legislation and the relevant government departments solve the problems with today's building maintenance, nor was there a creditable organisation that protected owners' right and interest. As there were more and more buildings aged over 30 in Tuen Mun, he urged the Government to pay serious attention to the situation; and
- (xiii) A Member who supported the proposal in the paper looked forward to the support of LegCo members and hoped that the related working group would

step up publicity and education for owners.

24. Ms Winnie WA, Senior Community Relations Officer of the ICAC, responded that the ICAC received about 700 or so complaints relating to building management each year. She added that despite the high number of complaints, prosecution figures were always on the low side when compared with those for other industries. In fact, building management problems were often more complicated and involved various areas, so the ICAC had been working closely with different building management organisations and the relevant government departments to offer assistance to owners.

25. The Chairman concluded by saying that the CIHC would write to the DEVB and the LegCo expressing the above views of Members. Besides, the Working Group on Building Management had arranged talks on building maintenance in recent years, and the CIHC would continue to promote the relevant information through the working group in the year ahead.

Secretariat

[Post-meeting note: The above two letters were issued on 17 March 2017.]

V. Reporting Items

(A) Work Reports by Working Groups under CIHC

(CIHC Paper No. 3/2017)

(i) **Working Group on Occupational Safety and Health**

26. Members noted the above work report.

(ii) **Working Group on Economic Development in Tuen Mun**

27. The Vice-chairman, who was also a member of the working group, gave a report to Members as follows: (a) the partner organisation in charge of the “Tuen Mun Travel” activity had trained tour guides and would organise 10 “Tuen Mun Festival” guided tours before March 2017, which were expected to have about 400 participants; and (b) the “Eco Shopping and Cultural Tour in Tuen Mun” mobile application would continue to be updated to promote featured shops and tourist spots in Tuen Mun.

(iii) **Working Group on Building Management**

28. The Chairman, who was also the Convenor of the working group, said the working group had produced a batch of towels and would later arrange delivery of them to the offices of TMDC Members for distribution to Tuen Mun residents. She said the above towels should be distributed as souvenirs in a timely manner to avoid overstocking.

(iv) Working Group on Monitoring of Link

29. Members noted the above work report.

30. The Chairman announced that the above four reports were endorsed.

**(B) Work Report on Private Building Management in Tuen Mun District
(CIHC Paper No. 4/2017)**

31. Members noted the above work report.

**(C) Report by BD
(CIHC Paper No. 5/2017)**

32. Members noted the content of the BD's report.

VI. Any Other Business and Date of Next Meeting

33. There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 11:46 a.m.
The next meeting would be held on 3 April 2017.

Tuen Mun District Council Secretariat

Date: 3 April 2017

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