

Minutes of the 2nd Meeting of
the Social Services Committee (2016-2017) of
the Tuen Mun District Council

Date: 8 March 2016 (Tuesday)

Time: 9:31 a.m.

Venue: Tuen Mun District Council (TMDC) Conference Room

<u>Present:</u>		<u>Time of Arrival</u>	<u>Time of Departure</u>
Ms SO Ka-man (Chairman)	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr TSANG Hin-hong (Vice Chairman)	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr SO Shiu-shing	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr TO Sheck-yuen, MH	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	10:55 a.m.
Ms KONG Fung-yi	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr CHAN Yau-hoi, MH, JP	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Ms WONG Lai-sheung, Catherine	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Ms HO Hang-mui	TMDC Member	9:40 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr LAM Chung-hoi	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	10:25 a.m.
Ms CHING Chi-hung	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	12:33 p.m.
Ms LUNG Shui-hing	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	12:36 p.m.
Mr CHAN Man-wah, MH	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	12:27 p.m.
Mr CHEUNG Hang-fai	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	12:06 p.m.
Ms CHU Shun-nga, Beatrice	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr KAM Man-fung	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	12:22 p.m.
Mr MO Shing-fung	TMDC Member	9:41 a.m.	12:29 p.m.
Mr YIP Man-pan	TMDC Member	9:32 a.m.	12:29 p.m.
Mr YEUNG Chi-hang	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr TAM Chun-yin	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Ms NG Dip-pui	Co-opted Member	9:57 a.m.	12:00 p.m.
Mr YU Tai-wai	Co-opted Member	9:36 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr CHU Wai-ming	Co-opted Member	10:06 a.m.	End of meeting
Ms TSANG Ka-lai	Co-opted Member	9:30 a.m.	2:05 p.m.
Mr CHAN Ho-ting	Co-opted Member	9:30 a.m.	12:36 p.m.
Mr TSANG Hing-chung	Co-opted Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Ms LAI Ka-man	Co-opted Member	9:32 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr SO Wai-luen	Co-opted Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Miss CHOI Nga-ling, Angela (Secretary)	Executive Officer (District Council)1, Tuen Mun District Office, Home Affairs Department		

Absent with Apologies:

Mr TSUI Fan	TMDC Member
Mr HO Kwan-yiu	TMDC Member
Mr YAN Siu-nam	TMDC Member

In Invitation:

Mrs CHAN NG Ting-ting, Elina	Principal Assistant Secretary (Infrastructure & Research Support), Education Bureau
Mr LAU Chau-shan	Senior Education Officer (School Building), Education Bureau
Ms WONG Chi-wai, Theresa	Senior Inspector (Special Education Support 1)2, Education Bureau
Ms WONG Fung Ping	Project Manager (School Building)3, Education Bureau
Mr LAM Chin Yat, David	Project Officer (School Building)31, Education Bureau
Mr CHAN Pak Cheung	Senior Project Manager 129, Architectural Services Department
Mr CHAN Cho Sing, Joel	Director, Palmer & Turner Group
Ms LO Wai Ming	Senior Assistant Director, Palmer & Turner Group
Mr CHEUK Tak Kan	Principal, Tung Wan Mok Law Shui Wah School
Mr CHAN Yiu Lun	Director, Island Hostel
Mr MOK Hing-cheung	Administrative Assistant/Lands, District Lands Office, Tuen Mun

In Attendance:

Mr CHAU Ka-nin, Eric	Senior Liaison Officer (2), Tuen Mun District Office, Home Affairs Department
Mr LEUNG Cheuk-fai	Senior School Development Officer (Tuen Mun)1, Education Bureau
Ms KWAN Yuen-yuk, Rosemary	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Tuen Mun)1, Social Welfare Department
Mr SIU Kim-wai	Police Community Relations Officer (Tuen Mun District), Hong Kong Police Force
Mr Vincent CHEUNG	Senior Community Relations Officer, Independent Commission Against Corruption

I. Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed all to the 2nd meeting of the Social Services Committee (“SSC”).

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 Tuen Mun District Council (“TMDC”) Standing Orders, decide whether the Member who had declared the 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 reported that it had not received any applications by Members for leave of absence.

III. Confirmation of Minutes of the 1st Meeting of SSC (2016-2017)

4. The above minutes of meeting of were confirmed.

IV. Discussion Items

**(A) Terms of Reference for Social Services Committee (2016-2017)
(SSC Paper No. 1/2016)**

5. The Chairman said that the terms of reference of the current SSC had been endorsed by the TMDC on 5 January 2016. As there were no amendments, the Chairman asked Members to note the above terms of reference.

**(B) Formation of Working Groups under Social Services Committee (2016-2017)
(SSC Paper No. 2/2016)**

6. The Chairman invited Members to offer their views on whether to retain the working groups stated in the paper.

7. As there were no objections, the SSC endorsed the formation of the Working Group on Community Care, Working Group on Medical and Rehabilitation Services and Working Group on Education and Youth Services. The above three working groups were standing working groups with a tenure expiring on 31 December 2017.

8. The Chairman invited Members to nominate convenors of the working groups.

9. Mr SO Shui-shing nominated Ms SO Ka-man as the convenor of the Working Group on Community Care. Mr TO Shek-yuen seconded and Ms SO Ka-man accepted the nomination.

10. As there were no other nominations, the Chairman announced that she herself was elected ipso facto. She thanked Members for their supports and hoped members of the working group would often exchange views to promote community care.

11. Ms. CHING Chi-hung nominated Mr TSANG Hin-hong as the convenor of the Working Group on Medical and Rehabilitation Services. Mr SO Shiu-shing seconded and Mr TSANG Hin-hong accepted the nomination.

12. As there were no other nominations, the Chairman announced that Mr TSANG Hin-hong was elected ipso facto.

13. Mr SO Shiu-shing nominated Mr KAM Man-fung as convenor of the Working Group on Education and Youth Services. Mr CHAN Yau-hoi seconded and Mr KAM Man-fung accepted the nomination.

14. As there were no other nominations, the Chairman announced that Mr KAM Man-fung was elected ipso facto.

15. The Chairman asked the Secretariat to write letters to Members inviting them to join the above working groups, and called on Members to show active participation and attend meetings of the working groups on schedule.

(Post-meeting note: the Secretariat sent letters on 8 March 2016 inviting Members to join the above three working groups)

(C) **Cooperation Scheme of Civic Education with 18 District Councils 2016-2017**
(SSC Paper No. 3/2016)

16. The Chairman said the SSC used to co-organise the above activity with the Tuen Mun Civil Education Committee with a good co-operation between the parties. Therefore, it was recommended that the same arrangement should be followed to participate in the scheme and co-organise the activity with the Tuen Mun Civic Education Committee.

17. As Members did not have any objections, the SSC endorsed the participation in the

scheme and would co-organise the activity with the Tuen Mun Civic Education Committee. The Chairman asked the Secretariat to assist by inviting the said committee to co-organise the activity and have a proposal prepared. As it was necessary to submit the proposal to the Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education for perusal on or before 13 April, the Chairman asked the Secretariat to send it to SSC members for reference by email after receiving the proposal. If Members have any comments on the proposal, please raise so before 8 April. If Members have no special comments on the contents of the proposal, it would be submitted to the Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education before the deadline of 13 April 2016.

18. A Member hoped that the Tuen Mun Civic Education Committee would send a representative to the next SSC meeting to report on the activities in the last tenure.

19. The Chairman asked the Secretariat to invite the Tuen Mun Civic Education Committee to send a representative to the next SSC meeting.

(Post-meeting note: the Secretariat had sent the two proposals submitted by the Tuen Mun Civic Education Committee to Members for reference by emails on 24 March 2016. As no Member offered any comments on the above proposals, they were submitted to the Committee of the Promotion of Civic Education on 11 April 2016)

Secretariat

(D) Invitation for Joining the District Co-ordinating Committees of the Social Welfare Department
(SSC Paper No. 4/2016)

20. Ms KWAN Yuen-yuk, Rosemary, Assistant District Social Work Officer of the Social Welfare Department (“SWD”) said that the department set up coordinating committees for five working areas under the Tuen Mun Social Welfare Office to promote the collaboration on local social welfare affairs. The coordinating committees were chaired by the Tuen Mun District Social Work Officer and its major duty was to co-ordinate, promote and plan local social welfare affairs. Committee members comprised welfare organisations, government department representatives, district council representatives, other organisations and local people in Tuen Mun. In order to promote inter-discipline collaboration and listen to views from different parties, the department hoped the SSC would recommend not more than two Members to each coordinating committee. The tenure would begin in April 2016 and expire in March 2017. As the end of 2015 saw the district council election so this invitation would not be made until the new TMDC resumed its meeting.

21. The Chairman enquired whether the Members who were members of the coordinating committees in the last tenure would like to be re-elected.
22. The Vice-chairman said a co-opted member had interest to become a member of the Coordinating Committee of Family and Child Welfare Services.
23. The representative of the SWD said the secretariat could give the recommended list to the department after the meeting.
24. A Member suggested inviting Members to the coordinating committees at the meeting. Another Member said if Members were absent from the meeting, other members should not inform the meeting of their intention to take up any appointment on their behalf. It was suggested that the list should be decided at this meeting.
25. The Chairman suggested that Members who were members of the coordinating committees in the past should first indicate whether they would like to be re-elected.
26. Members offered their views, which were summarised as follows:
 - (i) The former list could be used as reference. It was suggested asking Members whether they had any interest to join the coordinating committees. Member who was absent would be allowed to join if vacancy existed;
 - (ii) It was hoped that Members who would attend the meeting of the coordinating committees should pay attention to attendance. Another Member said the date of meeting of the coordinating committees could go with the dates of TDMC meetings to avoid the dates of the meetings from overlapping;
 - (iii) It was recommended that Members who were present at the meeting should be allowed to state their intention of joining the coordinating committees. Another Member said Members should try to attend meetings. Any Member who was absent should not run for any appointment because it was not known whether the Member was willing to accept nomination unless there was an written application; and
 - (iv) A Member said that it was not the first time a Member who was absent was appointed to be a member of a working group or coordinating committee.

Action

She was also nominated as a convenor of a working group although she was absent from meeting. She said that the Standing Order did not have any provisions on this aspect. She opined that it could be discussed at the meeting of the Finance, Administration and Publicity Committee if necessary. Members who were present now should be asked whether they would like to join the coordinating committees. If a vacancy existed, Members who were absent could be asked after the meeting if they would like to join.

27. The Chairman asked Members about their intentions on the coordinating committees, and said the Secretariat would inform the Members who were absent by emails if there was any vacancy. After discussion, the list was as follows:

Tuen Mun District Coordinating Committee on Family and Child Welfare Services	Mr SO Wai-luen, Ms NG Dip-pui
Tuen Mun District Coordinating Committee on Elderly Services	Ms KONG Fung-ye, Mr TSANG Hing-chung
Tuen Mun District Coordinating Committee on Rehabilitation Services	Ms CHING Chi-hung, Ms KONG Fung-ye
Tuen Mun District Coordinating Committee on Promotion of Volunteer Service	Mr YU Tai-wai, Ms TSANG Ka-lai
Tuen Mun District Local Committee on Services for Youth People	Mr CHU Wai-ming, Mr TSANG Hin-hong

28. Ms KWAN of the SWD thanked Members for their joining the coordinating committees. She said she would try her best to coordinate the dates of the coordinating committees meeting so they would not overlap with those of the TMDC meetings as far as possible.

29. The Chairman would like the SSC representatives who joined the coordinating committees to attend the meetings of the coordinating committees on schedule.

(E) **School for Social Development cum Residential Home for Boys in Tuen Mun Area 2B**
(SSC Paper No. 5/2016)

30. The Chairman welcomed Mrs CHAN Ng Ting-ting, Elina, Principal Assistant Secretary, Ms LAU Chau-shan, Senior Education Office, Ms. WONG Chi-wai, Theresa, Senior Inspector, Mr WONG Fung-ping, Project Manager and Mr. LAM Chin-yat, David, Project Officer of the Education Bureau, Mr CHAN Pak-cheung, Senior Project Manager of the Architectural Services Department, Mr. CHAN Cho-sing, Joel, Director and Ms LO Wai-ming, Senior Assistant Director of Palmer & Turner Group, Mr CHEUK Tak-kan, Principal of the Tung Wan Mok Law Shui Wah School and Mr Chan Yiu-lun, Director of the Island Hostel to the meeting.

31. Ms NG and Ms WONG of the Education Bureau and Mr CHAN of the Architectural Services Department briefed Members on the paper. On paragraph 8 of the paper, Ms NG of the Education Bureau added that the update referred to the main complex which was 8-storey high to maximise the space.

32. Mr CHAN, Principal of Tung Wan Mok Law Shui Wah School introduced the school with video.

33. Mr CHAN of the consulting firm briefed on the design of the proposed school premises with a slideshow (see Appendix).*

34. Members offered their views in the first round, which were summarised as follows:

- (i) As a local councillor, a Member said that the schools next to the proposed school premises had known this project six months ago. He was appreciative of the vision and missions and contribution of the Tung Wan Mok Law Shui Wah School. The school, built on the picturesque Lantau Island some 50 years ago, could provide students who had special needs with a better environment for their learning and living. The two secondary schools near the site of Area 2B in Tuen Mun were conventional schools and the light rail station would generate noises so the students would not be provided with an environment suitable for learning. He enquired why the school did not have the premises re-built at the original location;

*Appendix only available in Chinese

- (ii) Although there were many students waiting for admission to the schools for social development, the current site was smaller in area than the original school. Tuen Mun was in remote area and it was worried that students had no intention of coming to study in Tuen Mun. Besides, there were 190 places provided by the proposed school but there were 144 hostel places only. It was suggested that the number of hostel places should be increased;
- (iii) In principle, the project was supported but it was hoped that the Bureau should fully consult local residents' representatives before the commencement of the project to avoid prejudices from the residents arising from a misunderstanding of the school for social development. Moreover, she requested that students in Tuen Mun should have the priority to study in that school. Another Member pointed out that the school was a public resource so all the students should wait for school places impartially;
- (iv) A Member quoted a doctor who was a graduate of the school that his/her current achievement was attributed to the school. She said that teachers were more important than locations. Tuen Mun was not remote and transportation was good. If the school could be built in Tuen Mun, more residents would be benefited. If there was any land in Tung Wan, however, the school could be redeveloped there. She hoped the government could enhance education service in this area and assist the students whose family background had affected their psychological and intellectual growth so they would be included in the society. She supported the construction of the school premises as soon as possible and opined that the 18 district councils should have an understanding of these schools;
- (v) With the presence of so many officers from the departments, the consultations were sincere. The construction of a school for social development was supported. According to the sketch plan, the area of the school for social development was similar to that of a conventional school. It was suggested that the Education Bureau should consider refurbishing or making additions to the vacant school premises in Tuen Mun. This could not only provide education service sooner, but it could also save construction cost and use vacant school premises properly. If the facilities in the vacant school premises could not meet the needs of the school, there could be improvements. Another Member asked why not to redevelop a vacant

school premises in Tuen Mun but looked for another location to re-build the school;

- (vi) With continuous improvement in the education in Hong Kong, schools for social development could target at students' behavioural and emotional problems not provided by conventional schools. Redevelopment of the school was supported. She asked why the school hoped to build the school premises in Tuen Mun;
- (vii) Basically, the project was supported. Another Member said it was believed the school had been built on Lantau Island because of the quiet environment so any students who had problems of adaptation on emotion and behaviour could study and learn. If the new school was relocated to Tuen Mun, it was worried the outcome might not be achieved;
- (viii) The Education Bureau should consult local district councillors and organisations in advance. Another Member opined that the Education Bureau's consultations could have been better so district councillors would have ample time to explain to the residents about the vision and missions of a school for social development. Then the developments would go smoother;
- (ix) The sponsoring body's effort was appreciated and the sponsoring body's application for a suitable location to continue the provision of education service was also supported. Besides, she enquired the Education Bureau about the siting process of the current location. The Education Bureau was asked whether other sites had been considered, like the vacant school premises in Tuen Mun;
- (x) It was hoped that the school could be re-developed at suitable locations to improve the condition of the school. He enquired the Education Bureau how many sites had been considered and the characteristics of the schools for social development in different districts. Moreover, he said the number of students in a 7-storey proposed school premises was 144. If it was 8-storey high, would the number of new students change; and

- (xi) The re-development of the school for social development was supported. It was good to have one more school. She also said she had requested that Tuen Mun Hong Chi Morninghill School (“Morninghill”) should have separated premises with Tuen Mun Hong Chi Morninglight School but the authorities concerned said that there was no place for building one more school.

35. Ms NG of the Education Bureau made responses, which were summarised as follows:

- (i) Consultations could be improved. District councils, local district councillors and residents would be consulted as soon as possible in future. It was believed this would make the developments of the project smoother. She said she knew that Members supported this project from their views. Members also considered that the vision and missions of the school were good;
- (ii) The school was currently situated at Tung Wan where there were a lot of slopes. Subject to the terms and conditions of the lease, only a 2-storey (8-storey for a conventional school) school premises could be built. The built-over area was some 2000 square metres only and it was difficult to have more classrooms and hostel places. As it was not feasible to re-build or redevelop the school premises at the original location, it was necessary to look for another location for the relocation of the school;
- (iii) The Hong Kong Planning Standard and Guidelines of the Planning Department designated lands for different users according to the population development in Hong Kong. The whole piece of land at that location was planned for a special school. As the implementation of the time table for building a school needed an overall planning and the consideration of the population development, the land had been used by the Water Authority for other purposes for a short period of time before the school project began;
- (iv) The Education Bureau had maintained communications with the school for the school redevelopment project. The school agreed that the site was suitable and it could improve the quality of teaching and learning. Besides the school, parents and students understood the design of the proposed school premises. They said they hoped to have the school relocated to the new premises as soon as possible;

- (v) There were only two vacant school premises under the Education Bureau in Tuen Mun District, namely the former Buddhist Lau Tin Sang School (now used as an assessment centre by the Hong Kong Examination and Assessment Authority (“HKEAA”) and the former Salvation Army Sam Shing Tsuen Lau Ng Ying School (“Lau Ng Ying School”) (the Education Bureau had reserved the vacant premises for special education purposes. Members knew and supported it). Therefore, the Education Bureau did consider proper use of vacant school premises. In fact, the two vacant school premises had other purposes or had been reserved for other purposes; and
- (vi) The two special schools in Tuen Mun mentioned by Member for relocation in the original district did not satisfy the criteria for relocation. The Education Bureau would try the best to improve the facilities of the schools. Besides, they would continue maintaining communications with the schools to assist with the improvement of the teaching and learning quality. If necessary, the Education Bureau would take note of suitable locations to build the schools.

36. Mr CHAN, Director of the Island Hostel, said the founders of their organisation found the bungalows for the workers who built the Shek Pik Reservoir when they had a hiking with students on Lantau Island some 50 years ago. As there were a lot of homeless children in the society at the time, the founders applied to the government for building a hostel there. In the 1970s, the Tung Wan Mok Law Shui Wah School was established after an application was made to the then Education Department for subvention

37. According to Mr. CHEUK, principal of the Tung Wan Mok Law Shui Wah School, the government provided a lot of assistance for the project such as holding field trips activities and meetings. The school had been communicating with the sponsoring body, school managers, parents and teachers association, parents, students and staff for a long time at different meetings. They said the site was suitable for the school development and students’ growth. He said their students came from conventional schools by referrals. Their intellectual and physical development was normal but they just lacked family support and care. Eventually, they had to go back to conventional schools for learning and growth so they needed strong community support. He said that there were two schools for social development on Hong Kong Island and four in Kowloon. A school of social development in urban area could assist with the students’ growth because teachers, complementary facilities in urban

area and school premises were also important. He pointed out that the site was suitable as it was very helpful to the students in their entering the community life to do such learning activities as group projects, physical education activities and appreciation of art, etc. He said he welcomed Members to visit the school to understand the current conditions of the school and have more exchanges.

38. Mr CHAN of the Architectural Services Department responded that the 7-storey proposed school premises as set out in the Paper was a typographic error only. It should be 8 storeys, which did not affect the whole project.

39. Ms WONG of the Education Bureau expressed gratitude to Members' supports on the project. On the process of referring a student to a school for social development, a conventional school which wanted to refer a student who had emotional and behavioural problems to a school/hostel for social development needed consent from parents. Then the student's case would be referred to the Central Coordinating Referral Mechanism processed by the Education Bureau and the Social Welfare Department together. The Vetting Committee under the mechanism would consider the student's problems in school, family and personal and social life to assess whether the student was suitable for admission to a school for social development. Students suitable for admission to a school for social development would then be arranged to study in a day school and stayed in a hostel according to their needs. Parents could express their wish as to which school the students would go. They could choose one from five boys' schools and two girls' schools but it depended whether the schools had places available.

40. A Member said that the waiting time for admission to a school for social development was about three months. These three months had profound influence on the student. The teacher-student ratio and the social workers' experience were good for the teaching of these students. Students in some of the conventional schools needed support on their behaviour or family so it would be beneficial to the education circles if there was an expansion of such area of education service. Therefore, in which district the school should be built did not matter. He said the user of the land in Tsz Tin Village was reserved for two schools. He asked if they were special schools.

41. Another Member said he did not object to the construction of a school for social development in Tuen Mun. He opined that the site had to be in a sparsely populated area to avoid affecting residents. He suggested other places (like the vicinity of Tsing Wan Road) for building special schools together. He objected to building a special school in Sam Shing

Estate. He said he had pointed out that there were not enough parking spaces in Sam Shing Estate and there was traffic congestion in the Castle Peak Road. It was suggested the Education Bureau should consider another siting and the TMDC had not approved the project. Besides, he said he worried the residents would have fears if a special school was built in Tsz Tin Village. He suggested providing security facility for proper management.

42. The Chairman said that there was no consensus on the vacant school premises at Sam Shing Estate in the last TMDC. She opined that Members should focus on the discussion of the captioned project.

43. Members offered their views in the second round, which were summarised as follows:

- (i) It was enquired whether there would be more hostel places and traffic problem should be considered. She said the Social Welfare Department had hoped to use the vacant school premises at Leung King Estate for special service. At the time, the Social Welfare Department had fully consulted the incorporated owners and mutual aid committees in the neighbourhood and that project gained acknowledgement and consent from the residents. She said that special service like mental health rehabilitation service was not well received. But if it was implemented well, it would be a valuable resource to the district;
- (ii) It was believed that no Member would object to the building of a school for social development. A Member said that there were many schools near the site and it was close to the light rail station and bus terminus. It was enquired whether there was any better site;
- (iii) The Education Bureau responded that the vacant school premises had been reserved for other purposes. However, in a written reply submitted by the Education Bureau for another discussion item, there were eight vacant school premises in Tuen Mun district and six of them were not reserved for any use, which was different from what the representative of the Education Bureau had just responded;
- (iv) It was too late for the Education Bureau to allocate land to the school after some fifty years. It should have provided the school with the land allocated to Harrow International School Hong Kong several years ago. The general

public might not understand the meaning of the word “special”. It was hoped that the school would explain the conditions of the school and its impact on the community. He enquired whether the activities held by the school had achieved community inclusion. It was also enquired that according to the experience of other schools for social development, how the school managed the students and how the students assisted with the development of the community. He said Members’ worries would be removed if the above information was provided. It could also help Members pass on to the residents the reasons for supporting the building of the school in that area; and

- (v) Although there were enquiries from the Members, it did not mean they objected to this project. They were in favour of building this school. She also enquired what other sites had been provided by the Education Bureau for the school to consider

44. Ms NG of the Education Bureau made responses, which were summarised as follows:

- (i) The two vacant school premises just mentioned were under the Education Bureau. There were eight vacant school premises in Tuen Mun and six of them belonged to the Lands Department. She said that there were different planning uses for government lands. The government has to examine the vacant school premises, land or other vacant government buildings with an overall consideration of different needs. For example, the vacant school premises at Leung King Estate had been allocated to the Social Welfare Department for social welfare services. Therefore, the Education Bureau currently had two vacant school premises available only. One was used for education purposes and the other one was reserved for education purposes. The Education Bureau hoped Members would support the project and she was glad to continue communicating with Members to remove Members’ worries;
- (ii) The time of building a school and the related arrangements would depend on the population growth so there was no specific plan for the construction of schools at the school land in Area 54;
- (iii) The area of the land at the proposed site was about 7,000 square metres, which was similar with that of other schools. It was almost three times the

built-over area at the current location of the school. Although the area of the land was similar to that of a conventional school, there were 24 to 30 classrooms for an average primary school with 20 to 30 students in a class. The students of a school for social development needed more attentions from teachers and social workers. According to the policy, the number of students in each class was reduced to 12 from 15. There would be 16 classrooms in the new school premises. It was hoped that there would be more spaces for student activities. Although Tuen Mun was situated in the New Territories, the transport was good and it was easy for teachers to take students to participate in community inclusive activities. There was no school for social development in the New Territories so the site was suitable; and

- (iv) When the Education Bureau discussed with the school for a new premises, only the site of Area 2B in Tuen Mun was provided. After the Education Bureau and the school paid a site visit, the school expressed satisfaction so it was not necessary to do another site search.

45. According to Mr CHEUK, principal of the Tung Wah Mok Law Shui Wah School, the students of the school did not have mental problem or commit any crime. They just lack family care thus having behavioural problem (like attention deficiency). This had made them teased and rejected in conventional schools so they were under very great pressure. In a school for social development, they could learn to observe rules and adapt to school education. Although the school was called a special school, the curriculum was the same as that of a conventional school. He said that the students lacked social development, so the school arranged a lot of activities for them to participate in community inclusive activities. For example, they had voluntary services, visits to the homes for the elderly and invitations to perform in opening ceremonies. Besides, the school was a special school with a resource centre. There would often be experience sharing with conventional schools in teaching. He said that many teachers in many conventional schools still lack experience in teaching students. Therefore, the teachers of the school would organise talks and class observations for conventional schools and provide advice in order to help enhance teachers' discipline ability on students in conventional schools.

46. Mr CHAN, Director of the Island Hostel said boarders would stay in the hostel for growth activities provided by a team of social workers. He said that a hostel could help students gain confidence and provide many different growth trainings, students would be

taken out of the community and face the people in the society. He added that the school provided a family environment for the students to get on well with others. If there was support from the community, students would be helped to go back to conventional schools to learn and could really go into the society.

47. Ms KWAN of the Social Welfare Department said the school provided both school and hostel places as complementary measures in order to help those students who had special needs. According to several years of experience of the Social Welfare Department and the Education Bureau, about 75% of the students of the school for social development needed boarding services. Day school students would also receive supports from school social workers and teachers. In light of different factors like the use of resources and considering the data of several schools for social development, the new school for social development and hostel in Area 2B would provide 192 places and 144 hostel places. The Social Welfare Department would review the demand for overall hostel service from time to time.

48. Ms NG of the Education Bureau said that as there were not more than 192 students in the school and it was expected that there would be 144 boarders, and most of the time they would stay in the school. There were only 50 day students. Moreover, classes began at 9 am and ended at 4:30 pm, which was different from those of the schools nearby. The traffic demand caused by the 50 day students and their parents escorting them was very low so there would not have any impact on the traffic. Although school construction was exempted from the environment assessment report under the Environment Impact Assessment Ordinance, the movement of construction vehicles would be monitored. She added that the Education Bureau was pleased to continue communicating with Members.

49. Members offered their views in the third round, which were summarised as follows:

(i) A school for social development needed inclusion with the society badly so the school needed to have close contacts with the community. She said that there were teachers who were alumni of the school. In the school for social development in Kwun Tong, 60 percent of the students came from the New Territories West. If a school for social development was built in Tuen Mun, it would be convenient for the students going home and the parents visiting them. Moreover, she said the sponsoring body had inspected the site and considered that the environment was suitable. Therefore, she believed the project was practicable;

(ii) The vision and missions of the school for social development were

supported. It was hoped that the Education Bureau could provide information on the number of students waiting for admission to the school for social development and the residential addresses of the students studying in the school for social development. It was also enquired whether the proposed school for social development could meet the demand in the New Territories West. He said that there was no school for social development in the New Territories except Lantau Island. He did not agree that students in Tuen Mun had the priority to be admitted to a school for social development. If there was a strong demand in the New Territories West, he agreed that the school should first satisfy students' demand in the New Territories West first;

- (iii) There would be housing development under the Home Ownership Scheme near the site. Another site was at a roundabout, which could be accessed through the bus terminus in Shan King Estate only. There would be a lot of vehicles to and from the school for social development, thus causing traffic problems in the long term. He also said that the school and the hostel would be affected by noise as they were near a light rail station;
- (iv) It was hoped that the Education Bureau and the sponsoring body should continue discussing the details of transport with local Members. She said that community harmony and inclusion needed everybody's support. It was reiterated that the vision and missions of the sponsoring body were supported with recognition. It was hoped that more students were benefited. She said that there were a lot of youth people who needed care in the community. If they could receive care from schools, there might not be any news on suicide; and
- (v) It was recommended that the Education Bureau and other departments should discuss the use of the current vacant school premises and consider whether they were suitable for re-development.

50. Ms NG of the Education Bureau said that there had to be communication with local Members and residents nearby on transport. She added that if the classroom or activity venue of the new school premises would be affected by noise in future, there would be improvement measures taken such as double-glazed windows and air-conditioners. Although there was a light rail station near the school premises, the school would be built by the hillside and the

construction section would provide the best design in order to reduce the level of noise as much as possible.

51. Ms WONG of the Education Bureau said that on the demand for school places at the school for social development, the Education Bureau provided 850 places for boys and 300 places for girls in 2015-2016. In light of the demand, the Education Bureau had confirmed to build a girls' school for social development in Kwun Tong. If the demand for places increased during the relocation of the Tung Wan Mok Law Shui Wah School, the current facilities in the school would be used. For example, there would be additional classroom in the special room to cater for the students in need.

52. Mr CHEUK, principal of the Tung Wan Mok Law Shui Wah School said there were 63 students studying in the school although the school was in remote area. As the students would go back to conventional schools, their places would be filled by other students. He added that most of the students came from the New Territories West and students came to school at 8 am and left for Tung Chung at 5:30 pm by school bus.

53. Mr CHAN, director of the Island Hostel, said that goods were not delivered every day at the hostel.

54. The Chairman said many people especially local Members showed concerns about this issue as it was a major one on education in Tuen Mun district. After listening to the views from many parties, Members supported the vision and missions of the school for social development. As local Members opined that there should be full consultations, the Education Bureau should conduct full consultations locally and continue this issue in the next SSC meeting. Besides, the Chairman recommended a site visit e.g. a visit to the school for social development in urban area.

55. A Member said that the meeting had fully discussed this issue and the SSC did not have any objections so there was no need to continue the discussion. She said the decision on site visit could be made later.

56. The Chairman enquired Members whether they agreed to continue the discussion about this issue or not. No Member objected to such arrangement so the Chairman said the SSC unanimously agreed not to continue discussing this issue but the Education Bureau was asked to make full consultations locally.

57. A Member said that the Tuen Mun District Land Office (“DLO”) replied to the next issue that the vacant premises of St. Simon Primary School was open for application but it was not mentioned by the Education Bureau. He opined that vacant school premises in Tuen Mun should be properly used and the sponsoring body or the Education Bureau should consider this.

58. The Chairman said that there were worries locally. Although this meeting supported the vision and missions of the school, it was difficult to say that this project had been endorsed.

59. Members offered their views in the fourth round, which were summarised as follows:

- (i) Members did not object to the building of a school for social development in Tuen Mun or elsewhere, but enquired why the use of the vacant premises of St. Simon Primary School was not considered. A Member suggested that discussion about this issue should continue;
- (ii) There was no objection to the project. If necessary, the Education Bureau could report again in the district council. Another Member opined that it was not necessary to continue the discussion. It was recommended that the school for social development should be visited to understand the characteristics of a school for social development; and
- (iii) It was queried whether it was feasible to use a vacant school premises to build a school for social development as a school for social development provided boarding but other schools did not. She opined that the site was fine and she just worried about the impact on traffic. It was hoped that a voting for or against this project could be made today.

60. The Chairman said that the direction of the SSC was in favour of this project. She asked the Secretariat to arrange a visit and requested the Education Bureau to make a full report at the SSC meeting on the information obtained after consulting residents.

61. Ms NG of the Education Bureau responded, which were summarised as follows:

- (i) Members were thanked for their support on the project of building the new school. She said the Education Bureau did consider using vacant school premises not managed by the Education Bureau. Although it was hoped that vacant school premises could be properly used, the government had to

consider the land use for education, social welfare and medical services from a macroscopic view together with a priority on urgency;

- (ii) Using vacant school premises to redevelop a conventional school was relatively easy but the space for a school for social development was different from a conventional school. It also needed a hostel. It was not possible to build a hostel only by redeveloping the classrooms. This created limitations on the use of vacant school premises. If a vacant school premises was demolished for a new school, it did not make any difference with seeking a new land to build a school premises as far as time was concerned; and
- (iii) If the SSC considered it necessary, the Education Bureau could submit supplementary documents to Members to account for the views obtained after communicating with local councillors and residents. If the district council supported this project, the Education Bureau hoped to build the school as soon as possible. It was believed that the school also hoped to begin the project as soon as possible.

62. The Chairman said the SSC agreed with a site visit and did not object to this project. If necessary, the Education Bureau could report at the next SSC meeting. She said the Education Bureau had to make full consultations locally especially from local councillors and residents.

(Post-meeting note: the SSC would pay a site visit to the Tung Wan Mok Law Shui Wah School and the Island Hostel on 31 March 2016 and to the Society of Boys' Shing Tak Centre on 18 April 2016)

(F) **The Education Bureau Should Address the Problem of Vacant School Premises As Soon As Possible**
(SSC Paper No. 6/2016)
Written reply from Tuen Mun District Land Office

63. The Chairman welcomed Mr MOK Hing-cheung, Administration Assistant of the Lands Office to the meeting.

64. The proposer of the paper made comments as follows: (a) the government did not

take note of the use of vacant school premises in Tuen Mun district. The vacant school premises were not returned to the Education Bureau but managed by the Lands Department; (b) at the last meeting of the District Facilities Management Committee, a paper said cultural and recreational venues like community halls were fully reserved. There was not enough cultural and recreational complex locally. On this, vacant school premises should be used by local organisations so vacant school premises could be used properly; (c) it was enquired about the number of vacant school premises in Tuen Mun district and the number of vacant school premises managed by the Education Bureau; (d) it was enquired about the reason why vacant school premises had not been used for a long time. The Education Bureau and the Lands Department were asked for active co-operation in deciding the use of vacant school premises as soon as possible; and (e) the Working Group on Education and Youth Services should show concerns and explore on the issue of vacant school premises.

65. Mr LEUNG Chuek-fai of the Education Bureau responded that there were eight vacant school premises in Tuen Mun district according to the Education Bureau's record as at February 2016. The Education Bureau would examine whether the vacant school premises were suitable for education purposes or the premises would be re-allocated as schools or other education purposes in light of such factors as the area and location of the vacant school premises and the conditions of the buildings, etc. If it was confirmed that the vacant school premises would not be allocated as schools or other education purposes, the Education Bureau would refer them to the Planning Department through the Central Allocation Mechanism so the department might consider other suitable purposes.

66. Mr MOK of the Lands Department responded that the Lands Department had accepted Audit Commission's recommendation that vacant school premises would be put in a register for citizens' perusal. Besides, the Lands Department would inform the Tuen Mun District Office ("TMDO"), district council and the Social Work Department of the information of vacant lands and school premises every three months so organisations might apply and use them for community purposes if necessary.

67. Members offer their views in the first round, which were summarised as follows:

- (i) The paper was supported;
- (ii) St. Simon Primary School was the first primary school that was built with a hostel with a beautiful environment. It was recommended that the location should be considered for the extension of the school for social development/Morning Hill School/Morning Light School. She pointed out

that the Education Bureau said the vacant school premises would be considered whether it was suitable for education purposes. Somehow, the vacant school premises had been allocated for education purposes originally. It was enquired about the approval criteria on the application to use the vacant school premises. Resources should be properly used;

- (iii) It was a waste that the school premises had been vacant for a long time. He said that cultural and recreational grounds were particularly lacking in Tuen Mun. It was suggested that the vacant school premises should be used on short/long term/temporary basis to meet the residents' demand for cultural and recreation facilities. The general public should be allowed to use vacant school premises as soon as possible. It was hoped that cultural and recreation complexes should be built at different locations of Tuen Mun. He opined that the redevelopment of vacant school premises needed in-depth consideration and had to satisfy teaching needs. If vacant school premises were redeveloped into a new school, it did not meet the needs of the society;
- (iv) When the representative of the Education Bureau discussed the previous issue, the vacant school premises of St. Simon Primary School were not mentioned. The vacant school premises had a hostel so interior refurbishment could enable it to be used as a school for social development. A Member asked the Lands Department how to deal with the vacant school premises. The demolition of the school would be a waste of resources. He also enquired whether a millennium school (Shi Hui Wen Secondary School) in Tuen Mun district would be closed in 2017 and whether any organisation had applied for the use of the school premises. It was learned that the school hoped to retain the school premises for other extra-curricular activities. It was enquired whether the department would approve it;
- (v) It was not appropriate for the Education Department to consider whether vacant school premises would still be used for teaching purposes. As school-age children would not increase until several years later, there would not be a shortage of schools in the short and medium term. He opined that the Education Bureau should consider using the vacant school premises for the extension of a school for social development. Members would accept only if the decision that the vacant school premises were not suitable for the extension of a school for social development was made after consideration.

He also said that there were basketball courts, a hall and classrooms in vacant school premises that were suitable for redevelopment into cultural and recreational facilities like indoor basketball court, badminton courts or dancing rooms. On this, it was hoped that the department would consider allowing residents to rent the facilities of the vacant school premises. In the long run, vacant school premises should be redeveloped to increase cultural and recreational facilities in Tuen Mun district;

- (vi) There were several vacant school premises and the general public would be consulted every three months for their uses. On this, the Lands Department was enquired whether there were any vacant school premises which had been used for other purposes successfully. If there was none, there should be more publicity;
- (vii) There was no objection to the building of special schools and community inclusion was supported. Somehow, there were already four special schools in Tuen Mun district. There would be five if the proposed school for social development was included. The lands reserved at Lau Ng Ying School and Tsz Tin Village might also be used for special education purposes. She queried whether the change of land user would meet the needs of the residents in Tuen Mun district. It was opined that if any schools would have more classes or students, they should be allowed to use (the vacant school premises) or build new school premises, and
- (viii) The vacant school premises should be retained so that they would be used when the student numbers increased in the future. He said he did not oppose redeveloping the Lau Ng Ying School into a special school out of discrimination. It was because he had received some 80 percent residents who raised objections. Insufficient parking space was also a limitation. On this, the Education Bureau should first consider providing the vacant school premises at the St Simon Primary School to the schools which needed extension like the Morninghill School or Morninglight School.

68. Mr LEUNG of the Education Bureau responded that the Education Bureau managed two vacant school premises in Tuen Mun district only. One had been used for education purposes. Another had been reserved for a school or other education purposes. He said that the former St Simon Primary School was not managed by the Education Bureau. If there were

any vacant school premises which could be used for short term purpose, the Education Bureau would continue releasing a list of vacant school premises which could be used for short term purpose to the policy bureau/departments every six months. In this way, short term purpose could be identified when the vacant school premises were being waited for short term use purpose. Then land resources would be used properly.

69. Members offered their views in the second round, which were summarised as follows:

- (i) It was enquired when the St Simon Primary School was returned to the Education Bureau and how it was planned. Another Member enquired whether the site at the school premises of the St Simon Primary School was better than that of the school for social development;
- (ii) The Education Bureau gave the vacant school premises to the Lands Department. Now there were more primary pupils, there might be a need for more classrooms. Music rooms might also be used as classrooms. It was enquired why the vacant school premises were not used. The use of vacant school premises should be considered for the long term. Besides, she opined that the Education Bureau should not put the vacant school premises into the Central Allocation Mechanism lest other departments would use them and there would be no more vacant school premises. It was recommended that the Education Bureau should re-possess some vacant school premises to ease the pressure increased on the primary pupils; and
- (iii) It was hoped that discussion about this issue would continue.

70. The Chairman invited Mr LEUNG of the Education Bureau to reflect Members' views to the Education Bureau.

71. Mr LEUNG of the Education Bureau responded that the Education Bureau had reserved two lands for schools in Area 54, Tuen Mun. However, there was no plan for school development in the area. The Education Bureau would continue communicating with the Association of Headmasters of Tuen Mun Primary Schools. Both parties understood that current resources should be properly used, including the use of vacant classrooms in schools for more classes to meet the demand. He said the Education Bureau paid great attention to the long-term and stable development of schools. When deciding the use of vacant classrooms of individual schools, they would consider the conditions of the schools with great care. He also

said the school premises of the Shi Hui Wen Secondary School were still in use. After the school was closed, the school premises had to be returned to the Education Bureau.

72. The Chairman said the SSC supported this issue and hoped the Education Bureau would use the vacant school premises properly. She asked the Secretariat to write to the Lands Department and enquired whether St Simon Primary School could be used for education purposes.

73. Mr MOK of the Lands Department responded that the audit report asked the Lands Department for better use of land. In the lands managed by the Lands Department, the vacant school premises of St Simon Primary School could be used temporarily. If there were new vacant school premises available for use, the Lands Department would inform the District Council, Home Affairs Department and the Social Welfare Department so all district councillors would know.

74. The Chairman said the SSC could write to the Education Bureau and the Lands Department to reflect Members' views. Therefore, it was not necessary to continue the discussion about this issue. She said she hoped the above departments would use the resources of vacant school premises properly.

75. A Member said the discussion about this issue should continue and the Education Bureau should report on the current use of vacant school premises in the next meeting.

76. Another Member enquired what happened to the vacant school premises that had not been allocated for any use among the eight vacant school premises. The Lands Department was asked whether the school premises would be demolished for housing development.

77. The Chairman said that it was believed the Lands Department and the Education Bureau had noted Members' views. After the above departments had prepared more information, they would respond in the next SSC meeting.

78. Mr MOK of the Lands Department responded that among the eight vacant school premises, two were managed by the Hong Kong Housing Authority, three were on a short-term lease for community purposes and other long-term development. The fourth was the former St Simon Primary School. Since part of the land of the two premises was situated in a private land, it was not possible for the general public to apply for using it. Therefore, only St Simon Primary School was available for use.

79. The Chairman said the SSC would continue the discussion about this issue.

(G) **Suggestion to Abolish the Primary 3 TSA**

(SSC Paper No. 7/2016)

Written Response from the Education Bureau

80. The proposer of the paper said that the intention of the Territory-wide system Assessment (TSA) was good but the P 3 TSA had lost its original intention. The culture of drilling had become rampant so a lot of parents objected to it. He said the government had launched a trial scheme. Some of the parents who had raised objections changed to support the trial scheme causing conflicts between parents. Now the Education Bureau decided to resume the P 3 TSA next year before the implementation of the trial scheme. There was a logical problem in the trial scheme. Besides, it was adequate to have P 6 TSA and S 3 TSA. He pointed out that he had asked primary six pupils about their views on the P 3 TSA in a talk. Of them, 85 percent of pupils said they supported the cancellation of the P 3 TSA. He hoped the Education Bureau should listen to their views and cancel the P 3 TSA accordingly. He added that the response document said there had been consultations on the trial scheme from the stakeholders but there were no details of the views. From newspapers, some schools indicated they would not participate in the trial scheme.

81. Mr LEUNG of the Education Bureau responded that the TSA was designed to test the basic competency of pupils or students as a whole in Chinese, English and Mathematics when they completed primary three, primary six or secondary three for learning at an advanced level. The data provided by the TSA would help the Education Bureau to work out the emphasis and direction of the supporting measures on learning. At the end of October 2015, the Director of the Education Bureau announced that the Coordinating Committee on Basic Competency Assessment and Evaluation Literacy (“Committee”) would make a full review of the TSA. The Education Bureau accepted the recommendations of the Committee including the adjustment of the papers and questions, and different forms of report for schools. It should be implemented in 2016 on trial basis. After concluding the results of the trial test, it would then be fully implemented in Hong Kong in 2017. During the review process, the Committee had sought consultations from different stakeholders by interviews on the recommendations of the trial study scheme. The stakeholders included organisations of teachers’ representatives, Hong Kong Subsidised Primary Schools Council, Union of Heads of Hong Kong Aided Primary Schools of Hong Kong and parents’ associations. The Committee would continue considering the views collected from different channels and examine the development and enhancement of evaluation literacy of TSA for the medium and long term

directions and to make recommendations.

82. Members offered their views in the first round, which were summarised as follows:
- (i) Some parents or secondary school students said that P 3 TSA made pupils lose their interest in learning. Primary school pupils should not do so much homework and supplementary exercises. She agreed with the cancellation of the P 3 TSA. It was a pity that the authorities concerned cancelled it for one year only. She said that not all the schools participated in the trial scheme. During this year when the TSA was suspended, schools still focused on drilling pupils. On this, the Education Bureau should take note of this problem and evaluate whether P 3 TSA was really needed.
 - (ii) If the Education Bureau would be sincere enough to accept citizens' views, it should first make a review next year after the trial scheme was implemented this year. It could then decide whether the TSA should continue and not fully resume the TSA next year. She added that the quality of the supplementary exercises was bad and nothing beneficial to the pupils;
 - (iii) What the Committee said might not be fully observed. She said ethics was the most important but it was ignored. The general public only hoped their children could become elites through continuous drillings; and
 - (iv) People in the education circles held different views. Although the intention of the TSA was good, the original intention gradually changed after it was implemented: schools wanted pupils to do more exercises and more difficult item types to raise the pupils' grades. A world research report said that the academic results of the students in Hong Kong were very high but the marks on self-confidence, reading ability and interest were very low. She said that the functions of schools were not giving marks. However, the TSA report had to be submitted to the board of directors and the board also had to account for the results. The schools had pressure to put a lot of time on improving students' results with the training on ethics becoming relatively less. Therefore, she said the TSA should be reviewed. There was a logical problem on the trial scheme this year so it should be suspended. The problem of the TSA did not just lie on the item types and forms of report. The test targets and years of implementation should also be considered together. There should be an in-depth and long-term planning before

implementation.

83. The Vice-chairman said that examination was designed to enhance students' overall ability. Therefore, it should not focus on results only. Students' life skills and interpersonal skills should be enhanced. The Education Bureau had accepted the recommendations to improve the TSA as soon as possible. Different stakeholders should have better discussion at this stage. There was once an Academic Aptitude Test long time ago. If students had interest in doing the questions on reasoning and logics, they would take initiative to do them without being told.

84. Mr LEUNG of the Education Bureau said that to reduce excessive drilling targeted at system assessment and reflect more specifically the original intention of the basic competency evaluation, the Committee raised several targeted improvement recommendations and supportive measures, including the improvement of papers and question designs, trial test of different forms of report to schools, provision of training on the enhancement of evaluation literacy for people in education cycles, on-line teaching tools and examples, and the promotion of communication with different stakeholders. Besides, the Education Bureau would step up internal guidelines and indicate specifically that Education Bureau would not use the evaluation data of system assessment to evaluate school performance. Starting in the academic year of 2016/17, system evaluation would be removed from the key question of 8.1 Academic Achievement in Performance Indicators for Schools. In 3.3 Assessment for Learning, it was furthered emphasised that schools should properly use the evaluation information as a feedback for teaching and learning. During the discussion, Members were open-minded and would not dismiss any recommendations, and consider different proposals from different aspects.

85. The Proposer of the paper said he did not object to the implementation of P 6 TSA and S 3 TSA. The original intention of the TSA was not bad and he offered views on P 3 TSA only. He opined that the TSA had been implemented for many years and caused so many echoes. Although the Education Bureau raised improvement recommendations, citizens just did not accept. Further, schools did not accept the trial scheme this year. On this, he hoped the Education Bureau should re-consider suspending P 3 TSA and not adopting the trial scheme. There should be improvements on the system and public consultations. He added there should not be more social conflicts because of P 3 TSA.

86. Another Member said that there would not be so many objections if the TSA was a good policy. On this, she hoped the TSA would be cancelled.

87. The Chairman said that this issue had been discussed in the Legislative Council and even 18 districts. She would like the representative of the Education Bureau to reflect Education Members' views. Bureau

(H) **Calling for Strengthening in the Promotion of “Living Subsidy for Households Not Living in Public Housing and Not Receiving CSSA” Assistance Programme (SSC Paper No. 8/2016)**
(Written Response from the Home Affairs Department)

88. The proposer of the paper and Vice-chairman said that the written response from the Home Affairs Department was mostly online material. As he had received enquiries from many people, it was hoped that there would be more publicity of information on the Scheme of Living Subsidy for People not Living in Public Housing or Receiving CSSA. It was enquired whether there was any publicity information packs for local people to understand the above scheme. He felt sorry that the department did not send any representative to the meeting. There was a lack of opportunities for direct exchanges. She said she would continue recommending that the projects of the Community Care Fund should be boosted. It was hoped that the department would pay more attention to the demand of the citizens.

89. The Chairman said the Secretariat was asked to write to the Home Affairs Department to reflect Members' views.

(Post-meeting note: the above letter was sent on 11 April)

(I) **Calling for Expeditious Increase of Places in Subvented Residential Care Homes for the Elderly to Meet the Demand of the Society**
(SSC Paper No. 9/2016)
(Written Reply from the Social Welfare Department)

90. The proposer of the paper and Vice-chairman said that there were a lot of people waiting for residential places at the homes for the elderly. It was hoped the Social Welfare Department would provide a more accurate time table for different development projects on the residential places at the homes for the elderly.

91. Ms KWAN of the Social Welfare Department responded that the department had always been communicating with the SSC on the progress of different development projects. She said the Social Welfare Department managed to increase residential places by different

measures. Apart from the rise in quantity, there was an enhancement of quality including gradually upgrading 1200 EA2 residential places in the place purchase project to EA1. Besides, the government was actively studying the implementation of Trial Scheme of Residential Care Service Voucher of the Elderly (“Voucher”) and had reserved eight hundred million dollars for more subvented residential places.

92. A Member said that continuous increase of residential places at the Homes for the Elderly would shorten waiting time. It was hoped that the Social Welfare Department would continue showing concerns about the situation.

93. The proposer of the paper and Vice-chairman enquired the department when the projects would be announced.

94. Ms KWAN of the Social Welfare Department responded, which were summarised as follows:

- (i) The department had been increasing the supply of residential places. For example, the average waiting time for the residential places at the homes for the elderly in January 2015 was reduced from 38 months to 26 months in December 2015. The department hoped the EA1 subvented residential places would be increased by the improvement of place purchase arrangements so there would be more residential places for the elderly to choose from. On the waiting time for the purchase of residential place, the average waiting time in December 2015 was eight months, a reduction compared with January 2015; and
- (ii) From the financial year of 2016/17, the department had reserved money to upgrade suitable EA2 residential places to EA1 in order to enhance the service quality. It would be reported to Members when the details concerned were confirmed.

95. A Member said the elderly expected that they could live in a public home for the elderly. From the news report, there were often reports on the problems of the private homes for the elderly. She pointed out that private homes for the elderly had good performance and treated the elderly well when they were inspected by the department. However, their attitude changed after the department had finished the inspection. On this, she opined that the department officers should be in “plain-clothes” if the department wanted to turn a private home for the elderly into a public one. Then real problems could be seen.

96. Another Member said that it was hoped that public homes for the elderly would be built to provide professionals to look after the elderly. It was pointed out that people who wanted to live in a public home for the elderly needed to be assessed for several times. The government should review this again.

97. The Chairman said the SSC supported these two issues and hoped the representative of the Social Work Department would reflect Members' views to the department.

98. Ms KWAN of the Social Welfare Department responded that the government had been actively provided subvented homes for the elderly, and increase residential places at the homes for the elderly in difference ways in the short, medium or long term direction. In Tuen Mun district, there would be 1700 new residential places upon completion of several proposed projects. Of them, most were subvented residential places. Besides, the department would increase manpower and re-structure the Licensing Office of Residential care and Homes for the Elderly in order to strengthen the overall supervision, including more inspections, etc. The department would set up a Service Quality Unit for Homes for the Elderly in 18 districts from this year, covering private homes for the elderly, subvented and subsidised homes for the elderly and self-financing homes for the elderly. By visits and collection of views, the service quality of the homes for the elderly would be enhanced.

(J) Calling for Review of the Money Lenders Ordinance to Combat Loan-sharking Activities

(SSC Paper No. 10/2016)

(Written reply from the Company Registry)

99. The proposer of the paper said that there were finance companies which made use of legal loopholes to operate in the name of a loan intermediary company or even to carry on scam activities. For example, they would mislead the citizens who had financial difficulties to sign documents. Although the citizens decided not to borrow any money at last, they had to pay hefty fees. For this, she recommended an amendment to the ordinance to have such fees like consulting fees and administration fees included in the interest to order to avoid loan shark activities. She added that quite a few loan intermediaries closed down after they had just been established. Although the citizens who were affected made reports to the police, the matter could not be pursued.

100. A Member pointed out that the profit gained by the loan intermediaries accounted for quite a large part of the repayment amount. Although they had not borrowed any money, these citizens had to pay the fees because they had signed legal documents. The matter could not

be pursued even though they reported to the police for assistance. She opined the government should take note of this. Otherwise, there would be more and more loan intermediaries and the number of victims would also be on the increase.

101. Another Member said that there was a flat under the Home Ownership Scheme for which land premium had not been paid. The owner of the flat borrowed money from a loan intermediary and used the flat as the security. The loan intermediary then had the loan document registered with the Land Registry. He said an owner under the Home Ownership Scheme who used the flat as the security without paying the land premium was in breach of the current law. On this, he opined that the Hong Kong Housing Authority (“HA”) should amend the ordinance concerned to void the loan document signed by owner who had not paid the land premium. He said the Land Registry should not allow such loan documents to be registered with the Land Registry, thus making the owner being unable to sell the flat for loan repayment.

102. A Member said that the current law could not curb loan shark activities. He enquired the police about the debt collection problem associated with the loan shark activities. He asked the police whether they had reflected the problem to the department concerned so the law would become excellent.

103. The proposer of the paper said the Company Registry was an executive department only. Although a written response was provided, they had not responded to the contents of the discussion paper. She asked to write to the Department of Justice to reflect the views and seek a review and amendment to the Money Lenders Ordinance.

104. Another Member said the police could do nothing if the law was not amended.

105. The Chairman said the departments connected with the Money Lenders Ordinance were the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau and the Company Registry. The Chairman asked the Secretariat to write to the above departments to reflect Members’ views.

106. Mr SHIU Kim-wai of the Hong Kong Police Force responded that the police provided publicity and education to teach citizens not to fall prey to loan sharks or financial companies out of once urgency. The police would alert property management companies to be aware of any visits by debt collectors. If any crime took place, the police would enforce the law and conduct investigation.

Action

107. The Vice-Chairman said that the paper's involvement was wide. The Legislative Council was also discussing this issue. On this, he said the SSC should focus on local education and publicity. For the amendment to the law, the Secretariat was asked to write to the departments concerned to reflect Members' views.

108. The Chairman said she hoped the police would boost publicity. She asked the Secretariat to write to the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau and the Company Secretariat Registry to reflect Members' views.

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109. The Chairman said she agreed with the police launching more publicity activities and suggested writing to the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau and the Company Secretariat Registry to send representatives to the SSC meeting and answer related questions.

Company
Registry

110. The Vice-Chairman said he would not object to continuing the discussion about this issue if necessary. He knew that there would be a discussion paper on the commercial part of the Money Lenders Ordinance to be submitted to the Commerce, Industry and Housing Committee ("CIHC"). He suggested the discussion about non-publicity and education should be made at the CIHC meeting.

111. The proposer of the paper said that the Money Lenders Ordinance involved commercial activities. It was hoped that there would be amendment to the law so the paper was submitted to the SSC for discussion. She said she welcomed the departments to send representatives to the next SSC meeting. It was suggested writing to the above departments to reflect the views, and invited the above departments to send representatives to the next SSC meeting.

112. The Chairman said that what the Vice-chairman meant was the paper for another committee. The paper for the SSC should be discussed here. She asked the Secretariat to write to the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau and the Company Registry inviting them to the next SSC meeting to continue the discussion about this issue.

(Post-meeting note: the above letter was sent on 31 March)

(K) **Objection to the Implementation of Using Putonghua as the Medium of Instruction for Teaching the Chinese Language Subject & Objection to the Compulsory Implementation of Teaching Simplified Chinese Characters**
(SSC Paper No. 11/2016)

(Written Response from the Education Bureau)

113. The proposer said that traditional Chinese characters evolved from oracle and the characters were formed from six principles. Simplified characters were against the original intention of character formation. Some scholars in the mainland hoped to reuse traditional characters. She said primary school pupils did not have a certain foundation on words. It was difficult to learn traditional characters. If they learned one more word system, there would be confusions easily. The Curriculum Council of the Education Bureau mentioned earlier that simplified characters were included in the teaching materials of the secondary and primary schools in order to allow students in Hong Kong to communicate with the people in the mainland and overseas. However, she opined that if one had mastered traditional characters, one could read and write simplified characters so there was no need to learn simplified characters. She said the mother tongue of most of the people in Hong Kong was Cantonese. Students would have problems in learning if Putonghua was used to teach Chinese starting in primary schools.

114. Members offered their views and made enquires in the first round, which were summarised as follows:

- (i) The school curriculum had included the teaching of simplified characters and they were not deliberately included in the curriculum at the moment. He said that both traditional characters and simplified characters should be learned and that “traditional first and simplified next” was the competitive edge of Hong Kong. As there were 1.3 billion people using simplified characters in China, students in Hong Kong would find it difficult to live in a Chinese society if they did not know simplified characters. Therefore, traditional characters should be learned first in primary schools and then simplified characters in secondary schools. On the other hand, the implementation of using Putonghua to teach Chinese was not successful for many years because teachers were not well equipped. Success depended on whether students and teachers were able to learn or teach in Putonghua. He took Taiwan as an example. Students might speak Southern Fujianese at home and Putonghua or even English or Cantonese at school. The mastery of several languages was the edge of students so there was no need to oppose or launch the use of Putonghua to teach Chinese compulsorily;
- (ii) All words developed by evolution. In the mainland, simplified characters came to use because it was hoped to get rid of illiteracy at the time. The use of traditional characters in Hong Kong had the edge but as students had to

come into contact with 1.3 billion people, learning one more skill to boost competitiveness was nothing but beneficial. She said that it was not compulsory to use simplified characters. Teacher training was not adequate so teachers might not be able to teach simplified characters. On the other hand, several primary schools in Tuen Mun had begun using Putonghua to teach Chinese in individual classes with flexibility. Some schools began in P 1 while some in P 3. Whatever form of implementation in the schools was, the parents could choose. It showed parents opined that using Putonghua to teach Chinese was necessary. On this, the teaching of simplified characters or using Putonghua to teach Chinese would bring learning motivations to the students if there was a need. There should not be any one-sided opposition or compulsory implementation. The schools should be given freedom so the best education outcome could be achieved. She said English proficiency in Hong Kong was not good. If students' Putonghua was lagging behind, students' competitiveness would drop;

- (iii) Simplified characters did not have the forms, pronunciation and senses of traditional characters. Mei Lanfang's son advocated the reuse of traditional characters in the mainland at the meeting of the National People's Congress. She said that there was a call to reuse traditional characters in the mainland so Hong Kong should not act the other way round. It was not suitable to allow primary pupils to learn simplified characters;
- (iv) Students would find it difficult to learn both traditional and simplified characters when they were recognising characters. It was not suitable for them to learn simplified characters in primary schools and then learned traditional characters when they grew up. Hong Kong and China were closely connected. If students in Hong Kong did not learn simplified characters, they would lose competitiveness. She agreed that students should learn more words or languages so she suggested the provision of Putonghua and simplified characters courses so they could learn Putonghua and simplified characters. She opined that traditional characters should not be abolished. Simplified characters should be used gradually;
- (v) Hong Kong had been handed over to China and became a special administrative region of the People's Republic of China. It was surprising to find views opposing the use of Putonghua to teach Chinese. He said that the

mother tongue in Hong Kong was Cantonese but he agreed it was necessary to learn Putonghua, which was one of the major languages in the world. He opined the learning of Putonghua could go with the development of Hong Kong and was also beneficial to communications between the two places. For example, Singaporeans could speak several languages. He said that traditional characters would not be abolished so learning more simplified characters would be no problem;

- (vi) The need to abolish traditional characters had never been heard. With the signing of the Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement between the mainland and Hong Kong (CEPA), having bilingual literacy and trilingualism could meet the needs of the society. He said he respected the decision of the teaching organisations and respected students' learning opportunities. Apart from having bilingual literacy and trilingualism, students might learn other languages to boost their competitiveness; and
- (vii) The paper did not oppose the learning of one more set of words system or language. There were political factors involved. He said a lot of linguists objected to the use of Putonghua to teach Chinese because it might not be useful to the learning of Chinese. He enquired the Education Bureau whether they would evaluate the difference in the mastery of Chinese between the use of Putonghua or Cantonese to teach Chinese. Then people would know which medium to learn Chinese was more effective.

115. Mr LEUNG of the Education Bureau said the Education Bureau did not require that students had to recognise and read simplified characters or take assessment on simplified characters. There was no implication or intention of replacing traditional characters with simplified characters or abolishing traditional characters. On language education, the government had been endeavouring to encourage students to cultivate effective communications skills in English, Cantonese and Putonghua. Under the central curriculum framework, the learning areas of the Chinese language education provided Chinese language learning in primary and secondary schools. The central curriculum framework could allow schools and teachers to plan flexibly and develop different strategies in order to meet different needs of the students. On the medium of teaching the subject of the Chinese language, secondary and primary schools could use Cantonese and/or Putonghua to teach Chinese in light of their school-based situations. No matter whether the school used Putonghua or Cantonese to teach the subject of the Chinese language, the Education Bureau would provide

related professional support and training to the schools in order to boost the effectiveness of the Chinese language teaching.

116. Members offered their views and made enquiries in the second round, which were summarised as follows:

- (i) There was no objection to learning something beneficial to oneself. If the provision of Putonghua and simplified courses was good, it was better than doing the TSA exercises;
- (ii) It was pointed out that schools had two sessions of Putonghua each week. Allowing students to use Putonghua as a medium of communication and using Putonghua to teach Chinese were two different things. When it was proposed to use Putonghua to teach Chinese, it was hoped to “write what one thinks”. Learning Putonghua could help us write Chinese more fluently with ease and grace. Whether such outcome could be achieved was not known. Moreover, the learning focus of the subjects of Chinese and Putonghua was different. The subject of Chinese taught the use of words and how to write, not how to speak Putonghua. If the students’ proficiency in Putonghua was not good, the subject of Putonghua should be enhanced and not using Putonghua to teach Chinese;
- (iii) A school asked parents by questionnaires to see how many classes of Putonghua should be provided each year. Some schools had used Putonghua to teach Chinese for six years according to the parents’ wish. She said schools would consider the students’ ability and continue learning mother tongue in S 1, pronunciation in S 2, and begin to use Putonghua to teach Chinese in S 3. To learn a language, just by listening, speaking, reading and writing would not work. A lot of strategies were required to go with it. When a school set up a system, evaluations were needed. Therefore, students would be transferred to another class if they were found not suitable to study in a class in which Putonghua was used to teach Chinese. If it was assessed that their ability was not suitable to study in a class in which Putonghua was used to teach Chinese in S 3 or S 4, they would be transferred to a class in which Cantonese was used to teach Chinese in S 5 or S 6. The school would emphasise the learning outcome in the interest of students’ learning;

- (iv) Using Putonghua to teach Chinese was not only a problem as a tool in the society. He enquired the Education Bureau whether there would be any scientific evaluations to assess which one was better for teaching Chinese: Putonghua or Cantonese;
- (v) Schools seldom taught knowledge which was not needed. Learning mother tongue was a must but there was also a need to learn simplified characters. On this, it was hoped that the Education Bureau would communicate and discuss with schools more;
- (vi) Putonghua could “write what one thinks” better. If students had the need and ability to learn Putonghua, they should make some arrangements. Schools had their professional judgement so it should be decided by the schools. He said even foreigners learned Putonghua. Students in Hong Kong should add value themselves; and
- (vii) The government had been advocating bilingual literacy and trilingualism. Cantonese as a mother tongue was often used but it was necessary to learn Putonghua and launch the use of Putonghua to teach Chinese in order to make contacts with the people in the mainland. The Education Bureau had no intention of replacing traditional characters with simplified characters. There was no need to worry.

117. The Chairman said that this was a territory-wide issue. Mr LEUNG of the Education Bureau was requested to reflect Members’ views to the Education Bureau. Members opined that one should be equipped with both traditional and simplified characters. Mother tongue was important. It was hoped that the Education Bureau would allow schools to consider whether it was necessary to launch the use of Putonghua to teach Chinese. As the use of Putonghua to teach Chinese had great impact to the society, it was recommended that the Education Bureau should strengthen contacts with schools.

Education
Bureau

V. Reporting Items

(A) Final Report on “Clean Election Project in Tuen Mun2015/16” (SSC Paper No. 12/2016)

118. The Chairman said the Independent Commission Against Corruption hoped to become a department in attendance at the SSC meeting. She said she welcomed and thanked Mr CHEUNG Kam-wai, Senior Community Relations Officer of the Independent

Commission Against Corruption for attending the meeting.

119. Mr CHEUNG of the Independent Commission Against Corruption thanked Members for supporting the above activity.

(B) Report by the Tuen Mun School Development Section of the Education Bureau (SSC Paper No. 13/2016)

120. Members noted all the contents of the report of the Education Bureau.

(C) Report by the Social Welfare Department (SSC Paper No. 14/2016)

121. A Member enquired about the progress of redevelopment of former the CCC Kei Leung Primary School (“Kei Leung Primary School”). The consultations of the Social Welfare Department were adequate and the redevelopment was indeed necessary.

122. Ms KWAN of the Social Welfare Department said that consultations had been sought from the departments concerned about the technicalities of the redevelopment project of the Kei Leung Primary School. She said the department completed the technical feasibility study at the end of 2015 and had sought further advice from the departments concerned (including the Lands Department and the Housing Department, etc.) on the findings of the proposal. Then there would be a request for funding from the Financial Committee of the Legislative Council. She said one of the social welfare facilities in the main complex was the permanent office address of the Sheng Kung Hui Mental Health Centre. In fact, the centre had been providing service (including community education work and outreach service) to the residents of Leung King Estate and the neighbourhood. The office of the centre was situated at a temporary location on the ground floor of the Providence Garden for Rehabilitation so a permanent address was needed badly. If Members received requests from the residents for the service concerned, the department could help contact the Sheng Kung Hui Mental Health Centre so it could communicate with the residents. If there was any referral case, the department would be pleased to help refer it to the centre.

123. A Member said that applications for the Low-income Working Family Allowance Scheme would be accepted in May. He said that as there were a lot of grass-roots in Tuen Mun, collection points for the forms in Tuen Mun should be considered.

124. Ms KWAN of the Social Welfare Department said that the Low-income Working Family Allowance Scheme did not fall within the responsibility of the Social Welfare

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Department. Residents could obtain application forms from the Composite Family Service Centre of the Social Welfare Department. There was contact information on the form. If Members wanted to make enquiries about the contents of the above scheme, please contacted the departments concerned.

125. A Member said a lot of residents wanted to obtain the above application forms. Although the scheme did not fall within the responsibility of the Social Welfare Department, the residents still wanted to obtain the application forms.

126. Ms KWAN of the Social Welfare Department said that application forms were left by the department concerned at the Social Welfare Department and other departments like the offices of the Home Affairs Department. She suggested the Secretariat should contact the department concerned and enquired if the application forms could be sent to Members.

127. The Chairman said the Social Welfare Department should contact the Secretariat. If there was a decision, the form could be sent to Members by emails.

128. A Member suggested the provision of e-application forms.

Social
Welfare
Department
Secretariat

129. The Chairman said it would be handled by the Social Welfare Department and the Secretariat.

(Post-meeting note: the above application form was sent to Members by emails on 15 April)

(D) Report on Crime Figures in the Tuen Mun District
(SSC Paper No. 15/2016)

130. Members noted all the contents of the report of the police.

VI. Any Other Business and Date of Next Meeting

131. The Chairman said the Secretariat received a letter from the Hong Kong Paralympics Committee and Sports Association on 4 March in relation to the Hong Kong Paralympics Day 2016. They said they acknowledged receipt of TMDC's reply of 1 March in which TMDC agreed to be a supporting organisation for the Hong Kong Paralympics Day 2016. The Association hoped to recruit 10 or more disabled people in Tuen Mun to take part in the activity through the SSC. If Members agreed to assist with the recruitment of disabled people to take part in the activity, it was suggested that the Working Group on Medical and

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Rehabilitation Services would take follow-up action and write letters to the organisations in Tuen Mun inviting disabled people to take part in the activity.

132. As there were no objections from Members, the SSC resolved that the Working Group on Medical and Rehabilitation Services would take follow-up action.

133. There being no further business, the Chairman announced that the meeting was closed at 2:14 pm. Date of next meeting would be 10 May 2016.

Tuen Mun District Council Secretariat

Date: 20 April 2016

File: HAD TM DC/13/25/SSC/16