

Minutes of the 6th Meeting of
the Social Welfare and Housing Committee (2024-2027) of
the Tuen Mun District Council

Date : 19 December 2024 (Thursday)
Time : 2:32 p.m.
Venue : Tuen Mun District Council (TMDC) Conference Room

Present

Ms LAI Ka-man (Chairman)	TMDC Member
Mr TSE Wing-hang (Vice Chairman)	TMDC Member
Mr CHAN Yau-hoi, BBS, MH, JP	TMDC Member
Ms CHING Chi-hung, MH, JP	TMDC Member
Mr CHAN Manwell, MH	TMDC Member
Ms SO Ka-man	TMDC Member
Mr TSANG Hin-hong, MH	TMDC Member
Mr HO Jun-hang, Benton	TMDC Member
Ms Chan Mang-yi, Vincci	TMDC Member
Mr Chan Ho-ting, Mac	TMDC Member
Ms MAK Mei-yee, Pamela	TMDC Member
Mr FUNG Pui-yin	TMDC Member
Mr FUNG Yuk-fung, MH	TMDC Member
Ms TSE Yuk-ling	TMDC Member
Mr KWONG Man-tik	TMDC Member
Mr CHUNG Kin-fung	TMDC Member
Mr TSOI Ping-lap	Co-opted Member
Mr CHEUNG Kin-sun Jackson	Co-opted Member
Miss WONG Wing-tsin (Secretary)	Executive Officer (District Council)1, Tuen Mun District Office, Home Affairs Department

By Invitation

Mr CHAN Tat-ming	Principal Tobacco and Alcohol Control Inspector, Department of Health
Mr LAU Kin-hang	Chief Inspector of Police (TACO), Department of Health
Mr CHEUNG Wai-wah	Assistant Police Community Relations Officer, Police Community Relations Office (Tuen Mun District), Hong Kong Police Force
Mr TSOI Chi-ho	Neighbourhood Police Co-ordinator, Police Community Relations Office (Tuen Mun District), Hong Kong Police Force
Mr WONG Ka-wai	Building Surveyor/Fire Safety 17, Buildings Department

In Attendance

Mr LI Chiu-hung	TMDC Member
Mr CHENG Yin-kwan	TMDC Member
Mr LAU Yu-hang, Henry	Senior Liaison Officer (1), Tuen Mun District Office, Home Affairs Department
Ms YAN Yuen-ning, Yenin	Liaison Officer i/c (Building Management and Town Centre), Tuen Mun District Office, Home Affairs Department
Mr KWOK Kin-man, Tony	Senior Building Surveyor/E5, Buildings Department
Mr MA Man-piu	Senior School Development Officer (Tuen Mun) 3, Education Bureau
Mr TSE Wai-kit	Assistant Police Community Relations Officer, Police Community Relations Office (Tuen Mun District), Hong Kong Police Force
Ms LO Kit-man	Senior Housing Manager/Tuen Mun & Yuen Long 1, Housing Department
Mr LI Mun-tong	Housing Manager/Tuen Mun 2, Housing Department
Mr KWOK Yu-yuen	Assistant Housing Manager/Sam Shing 2, Housing Department
Ms CHAN Shui-yum, Angel	Labour Officer (Employment Services) (Tuen Mun), Labour Department
Ms KO Man-lai	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Tuen Mun)2, Social Welfare Department

I. Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed all present to the 6th meeting of the the Social Welfare and Housing Committee (2024-2027) (SWHC).

II. Absence from Meeting

2. The Chairman reported that the Secretariat had received no applications for leave of absence from Members.

III. Confirmation of Minutes of the Last Meeting

3. No Member proposed amendments to the minutes of the last meeting; therefore, the Chairman declared the minutes of the 5th meeting of the SWHC (2024-2027) confirmed.

IV. Discussion Items

(A) Suggestion to Strengthen the Combat against Illicit Cigarette Leaflets in Public Housing Estates
(SWHC Paper No. 36/2024)
(Written Response from the Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department)
(Written Response from the Department of Health)

4. The Chairman welcomed Mr CHAN Tat-ming, Principal Tobacco and Alcohol Control Inspector, and Mr LAU Kin-hang, Chief Inspector of Police (Tobacco and Alcohol Control Office) (TACO) of the TACO of the Department of Health (DH), to the meeting.

5. The first proposer of the paper expressed concern about illicit cigarette promotional leaflets repeatedly found in public housing estates and the involvement of juvenile tenants in the distribution of leaflets. He pointed out that some people did not quite understand the criminal liabilities of distributing such leaflets and suggested that government departments step up enforcement and enhance publicity and education for youths.

6. Members provided various comments and enquiries on the topic, summarised as follows:

(i) Members reflected that complaints about illicit cigarette leaflets were frequently received in public housing estates, and pointed out that some of those who

distributed the leaflets were residents or young people of the housing estates. Therefore, Members hoped to understand the response from the Housing Department (HD) to this situation;

- (ii) Members enquired about the difficulties encountered by the Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department (C&ED) in taking enforcement actions in view of the fast-changing tactics of advertising illicit cigarettes, as well as the criminal liabilities for distributing illicit cigarette leaflets;
- (iii) Members enquired how long the cooperation and notification mechanism had been established by the TACO, the Police and the HD, as well as the number of cases in the Tuen Mun District notified by the staff of public housing estates for referral to law enforcement agencies and successfully investigated since the establishment of the mechanism. Members also suggested strengthening the cooperation mechanism;
- (iv) Members enquired the C&ED, the TACO, the Police and the HD about the numbers of enforcement actions, inspections and interceptions conducted to combat illicit cigarettes, as well as the number of times of allotting penalty points under the Marking Scheme for Estate Management Enforcement in Public Housing Estates (Marking Scheme) and the number of prosecutions relating to public housing estates in the Tuen Mun District;
- (v) Members enquired about the number of enforcement actions taken by the TACO in the Tuen Mun District against the distribution of illicit cigarette leaflets, the number of arrests, the duration of operations, the penalties for related prosecutions and the details of cases completed;
- (vi) Members enquired whether government departments would decide to intervene to handle cases based on the number of complaints, and under what circumstances the investigations would be initiated;
- (vii) Members reflected that the distribution of illicit cigarette leaflets was increasingly rampant at the year-end, and suggested departments strengthen communication with property management companies and distribute promotional leaflets to them on a regular basis and request their staff to assist in reporting cases;
- (viii) Members suggested allocating additional resources and manpower to the DH and the HD, while stepping up publicity and enforcement;
- (ix) Members enquired about the Police's enforcement actions against illicit cigarettes and inter-departmental joint actions, such as decoy operations, to combat illicit

cigarette syndicates recruiting others to sell illicit cigarettes;

- (x) Members suggested raising the penalty level under the Marking Scheme and utilising the electronic notice boards in public housing estates to promote the reporting channels, thereby strengthening deterrence and publicity efforts;
- (xi) Members suggested stepping up enforcement against illegal smoking in public housing estates; and
- (xii) Members suggested that on the publicity front, the public should be made more aware of the penalties for distributing illicit cigarette leaflets and the details of relevant cases, thereby enhancing the awareness of reporting.

7. Mr CHAN Tat-ming of the TACO gave a consolidated response to Members' enquiries as follows:

- (i) Between January and October 2024, the TACO received a monthly average of about 20 cases of distributing illicit cigarette leaflets in the Tuen Mun District. The majority of the cases were referred by the C&ED, with more than 90% of them relating to public housing estates and about 10% involving private buildings. Public housing estates with the most complaints were Ching Tin Estate and Po Tin Estate. There was a dedicated team responsible for following up on illicit cigarette leaflets in the Tuen Mun District, currently conducting most of the patrol work in plainclothes to enhance the effectiveness of enforcement actions;
- (ii) Between January and December 2024, the TACO conducted over 250 joint operations with the Police, the HD and the C&ED in a number of public housing estates across the territory. The TACO had also carried out ambush observations in public housing estates, which could last three to five hours each time;
- (iii) On prevention, the TACO had established a cooperation mechanism with the Police and the HD. When intelligence indicated that someone was distributing smoking product leaflets, staff of the public housing estate would immediately contact the Police for assistance, and the case would then be referred to the TACO for further investigation. Implemented at the end of 2022, the cooperation mechanism assisted the TACO in successfully prosecuting a person for illegally distributing smoking product leaflets in Wah Ming Estate in 2023;
- (iv) Regarding publicity, the TACO, in conjunction with the C&ED and District Council members, had reminded the public of anti-illicit cigarette messages through distribution of leaflets and direct communication, enabling citizens to understand the ways of handling upon discovery of relevant situations;

- (v) Under the Smoking (Public Health) Ordinance (Cap. 371), no person shall distribute any smoking product advertisement (including any promotion leaflets). Offenders were liable on conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000. Between 2021 and October 2024, the TACO successfully prosecuted 14 offenders (involving 15 cases) for distributing smoking product leaflets;
- (vi) The TACO and the C&ED launched a joint enforcement operation codenamed “Thunder” in various districts across Hong Kong between September and October 2024 to combat illicit cigarette telephone-ordering and distribution of illicit cigarette leaflets in public housing estates. The TACO would continue to conduct joint operations with disciplined services departments to enhance the effectiveness of enforcement actions; and
- (vii) The TACO conducted inspections targeting illicit cigarette leaflets at ten housing estates in the Tuen Mun District between January and October 2024, during which no one was intercepted distributing leaflets. The TACO would continue to step up patrols and collaborate with the HD to improve the situation through the established cooperation mechanism.

8. Mr LI Mun-tong of the HD gave a consolidated response to Members’ enquiries as follows:

- (i) Regarding publicity, the Department had put up posters provided by the C&ED about “Buying or Selling Illicit Cigarettes is Illegal” at the lobby of each block, and would remind residents through Estate Newsletters that buying or selling illicit cigarettes was a criminal offence and that they must not defy the law;
- (ii) On prevention, the Department would require security companies to deploy staff to step up patrols and intercept the individuals concerned in case of suspicious situations. Anyone found distributing illicit cigarette leaflets would be immediately stopped and the case would be reported to the Police. The Department would also remind security guards to be more vigilant and strictly enforce visitor registration;
- (iii) Regarding the cooperation mechanism, if illicit cigarette leaflets or activities of selling illicit cigarettes were found, the Department would, in accordance with the mechanism, refer the information to the TACO and the Police as soon as possible for follow-up; and
- (iv) Upon receiving notification from the C&ED about a successful prosecution against the use of public housing flats for storing illicit cigarettes or for hawking purposes,

the Hong Kong Housing Authority could take tenancy control actions under the terms of tenancy, including recovering the concerned flat.

[Post-meeting note: The HD added after the meeting that the distribution of illicit cigarette leaflets was not a misdeed under the Marking Scheme. Separately, in 2024, two public housing tenants in Tuen Mun were issued with a “Notice-to-quit” for storing illicit cigarettes in their public housing flats or using the flats for hawking purposes, and the flats had been successfully recovered.]

9. Mr TSE Wai-kit of the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF) said that the Police would continue to cooperate with the C&ED and other government departments, and would notify the C&ED of any intelligence received relating to illicit cigarettes, in order to combat illegal activities.

10. The Chairman invited the C&ED and the TACO to provide supplementary information to Members regarding their various enquiries after the meeting. The Chairman also hoped that the TACO, the HD and the Police would take note of Members’ views, and recommended that the relevant units increase manpower to facilitate inter-departmental cooperation and joint operations for combatting the distribution of smoking product advertisements. In addition, the Chairman suggested that HD should establish a set of standardised guidelines for all public housing estates in the Tuen Mun District and strengthen communication with District Council members and law enforcement departments to effectively combat illicit cigarette advertisements.

[Post-meeting note: The DH and the C&ED provided Members with post-meeting supplementary information through the Secretariat on 7 and 13 February 2025 respectively.]

(B) Concern about the Spread of “Space Oil” to Communities and Schools in Tuen Mun

(SWHC Paper No. 37/2024)

(Written Response from the Hong Kong Police Force)

(Written Response from the Education Bureau)

11. The Chairman welcomed Mr CHEUNG Wai-wah, Assistant Police Community Relations Officer, Police Community Relations Office (Tuen Mun District) of the HKPF to the meeting.

12. The first proposer of the paper expressed hope that the Police would launch more publicity materials targeting “space oil” to enhance the understanding of the TMDC and the community on the harmful effects of the drug. He noted that the ingredients of “space oil” would be brought under control of the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance (Cap. 134)

in the first quarter of 2025, and hoped that district stakeholders would assist in promotion beforehand. He also suggested strengthening combat against the source of “space oil” and enhancing youth education to reduce the exposure of young people to drugs.

13. Members provided various comments and enquiries on the topic, summarised as follows:

- (i) Members suggested enhancing publicity on the harmful effects of “space oil” in schools and expanding the target audience of seminars to cover kindergarten students, instilling proper values in them at an early age;
- (ii) Members suggested enhancing promotion of the harmful effects of “space oil” to parents and teachers, so that they could help monitor students and identify cases as early as possible;
- (iii) Members expressed concern about the gradual infiltration of “space oil” into the community. They hoped that the Department would actively strengthen publicity in the community on the information about “space oil”, and that District Council members and social welfare organisations would assist in promotion to people from all walks of life;
- (iv) Members suggested that publicity materials display the negative effects of taking “space oil” on the body, the impact of second-hand smoke produced on others and its side effects, so as to increase deterrence;
- (v) Members suggested that schools, in collaboration with the Narcotics Division of the Security Bureau, design teaching materials to remind students of the harmful effects of “space oil” in lessons such as civic education, and that more resources be allocated to schools for related publicity;
- (vi) Members cited news reports that “space oil” abusers were getting younger, and expressed concern about young people’s limited knowledge about “space oil” and their susceptibility to peer influence. Members hoped that the Police could increase the number of relevant seminars in the Tuen Mun District;
- (vii) Members enquired about the use of the additional resources mentioned in the written response from the Education Bureau (EDB);
- (viii) Members enquired about the support provided by social welfare organisations for the situation of “space oil” abuse;
- (ix) Members enquired about the notification mechanism for cases of drug-addicted

students and the channels for seeking assistance;

- (x) Members said that the issues of “space oil”, illicit cigarettes and e-cigarettes were correlated, and suggested that departments explore a one-stop publicity mode to systematically publicise the harmful effects of emerging drugs; and
- (xi) Members enquired that if young people were found to have taken “space oil” in schools, whether targeted publicity and enhanced counselling support would be provided to those schools and the neighbouring schools.

14. Mr MA Man-piu of the EDB gave a consolidated response to Members’ enquiries as follows:

- (i) The EDB had reminded schools to pay attention to the abuse of “space oil drugs” at regular meetings with the district school heads association;
- (ii) The EDB had been working closely with the Narcotics Division of the Security Bureau. For example, the Narcotics Division recently launched a new series of anti-drug programme “The-Talk. Detox.: Vaping ‘space oil’ is the same as taking drugs”, which would be aired on 20 December 2024. The Bureau had appealed to school heads to step up publicity in schools;
- (iii) Regarding teaching materials, the Bureau would release teaching materials targeting “space oil drugs” to schools as soon as possible for publicity and education. In addition, the Police would conduct regular anti-drug seminars in schools to promote anti-drug knowledge to students. The EDB also stood ready to cooperate with the Police and the Social Welfare Department (SWD) to step up publicity in schools; and
- (iv) Regarding the notification mechanism, schools should report to the Police upon discovery of any offences, and could seek advice from School Liaison Officers of the Police when there were doubts about the legislation or law enforcement. The EDB would strengthen cooperation with the Police, hoping to provide more training seminars on emerging drugs for teachers in the next school year as well as educate students and parents in the district about the harmful effects of “space oil drugs”.

15. Mr CHEUNG Wai-wah of the HKPF gave a consolidated response to Members’ enquiries as follows:

- (i) Three cases relating to “space oil” were received in the past 11 months in the Tuen Mun District, and initially a Secondary Two female student was arrested;

- (ii) Since September 2024, the Police conducted 11 anti-drug publicity activities in schools, with 200 students participating on each occasion. In November 2024, the Narcotics Bureau conducted a large-scale publicity campaign in West Kowloon on the harmful effects of “space oil”, with 300 students of the Tuen Mun District participating on that day. The Police would also arrange for a publicity vehicle of the Narcotics Division and the Narcotics Bureau to conduct publicity in the Tuen Mun District;
- (iii) The Narcotics Bureau would, through the Police Community Relations Office, provide schools with guidelines on handling students found to have taken “space oil”. The Police would also maintain close contact with the school heads association of the Tuen Mun District to share the latest information on “space oil”;
- (iv) Between September and December 2024, the Police conducted a total of 82 school seminars in the Tuen Mun District, of which 11 were on the subject of drug prevention, including publicity targeting “space oil”. Moreover, the Police recently reminded the public of the harmful effects of “space oil” in the “OffBeat 360” programme on 18 December 2024, and the relevant video would be shown to students during school visits; and
- (v) The Narcotics Bureau provided a dedicated webpage on the harmful effects of “space oil” for Members’ reference. The Police were willing to cooperate with District Council members and invite them as well as social workers to carry out publicity and education work at schools.

16. Ms KO Man-lai of the SWD gave a consolidated response to Members’ enquiries as follows:

- (i) Led by the Narcotics Division of the Security Bureau, the SWD operated 11 Counselling Centres for Psychotropic Substance Abusers (CCPSAs) and two Centres for Drug Counselling across the territory, mainly through subvention to non-governmental organisations, to provide comprehensive anti-drug services and support for residents of various districts;
- (ii) On anti-drug preventive education and publicity, the CCPSAs would organise anti-drug education programmes and publicity activities for students (mainly secondary schools, post-secondary colleges, and vocational training institutions) and members of the community. Furthermore, the CCPSAs would identify habitual drug abusers as early as possible and reach out to them through proactive approaches, including outreach services, advertisements and social media, and make timely intervention;

- (iii) The Planning and Co-ordinating Team of the Tuen Mun District Social Welfare Office, in collaboration with different service units, established a collaborative platform on youth drug abusers or high-risk youth services. Through exchanges with social welfare service units in the district, the platform served to keep abreast of the latest trend of youth drug abuse and youth gang activities, as well as develop support and service programmes in a timely manner. In view of the increase in the number of youths abusing “space oil”, the platform produced exhibition stands in November and stepped up education work in schools. Members of the working group visited a primary school in the district on 11 December 2024, giving a talk to teachers and students about the harmful effects of “space oil” on the body and the information for seeking help, which was attended by over 200 people. Two sharing sessions at two other schools in the district were also planned for mid-January next year;
- (iv) The SWD noted Members’ hope of enhancing publicity on the harmful effects of “space oil” among different sections of the community, and would reflect their views to various co-ordinating committees on social welfare services; and
- (v) Operated by the Caritas HUGS Centre, the CCPSA in the Tuen Mun District collaborated with different social welfare units in the district and engaged in cross-sectoral collaboration to reach out to service targets through diversified modes. The Centre was willing to co-organise parents’ seminars with District Council members, who could also refer cases to the Centre for follow-up if necessary.

17. The Chairman suggested that departments make use of virtual reality elements to publicise the information on “space oil”, presenting to students the substantial harms of drugs in a more comprehensive manner. She also invited the Police to maintain close liaison with various departments, and suggested that the HD assist in putting up posters in housing estates to enhance residents’ awareness and vigilance against “space oil” from multiple aspects.

(C) Enquiry about the Installation of Windows in Public Places of Public Housing Estates
(SWHC Paper No. 38/2024)
(Written Response from the Housing Department)
(Written Response from the Buildings Department)

18. The Chairman welcomed Mr WONG Ka-wai, Building Surveyor/Fire Safety 17 of the Buildings Department (BD) to the meeting.

19. The first proposer of the paper expressed concern about the HD's progressive installation of metal windows in some public housing estates. He reflected that some residents had mixed up the enclosure works for corridor-facing louvres at older public housing and the fire-resistant fixed window installation works, and he considered that the Department's written response would help clarify the various requirements under the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance. He also suggested the HD suitably adjusting the works during the coming Chinese New Year to minimise the impact on residents.

20. Members provided various comments and enquiries on the topic, summarised as follows:

- (i) Members enquired whether Tai Hing Estate had been included as a target old-style housing estate that requiring enclosure works for corridor-facing louvres, the timetable for its implementation and details of the works;
- (ii) Members suggested that the HD, through collaboration with District Council members or at locations where tenants paid rent, provide prior information to housing estates requiring fire safety improvement works, enabling residents to understand the contents and objectives of the Fire Safety Ordinance. Members also suggested providing as-built samples for residents' reference;
- (iii) Members suggested enhancing publicity, such as posting notices at lift lobbies to inform residents of the works schedule, so that residents could learn about the works arrangements at an early stage;
- (iv) Members enquired about the feedback from residents of housing estates where fire safety improvement works had been completed; and
- (v) Members said that some residents had raised concerns about the uneven floor surface near the fire doors, which prevented the retrofitted fire doors from closing properly, and therefore suggested that the HD pay more attention when carrying out fire safety improvement works and consider solving this problem concurrently.

21. Mr KWOK Yu-yuen of the HD gave a consolidated response to Members' enquiries as follows:

- (i) The installation of fire-resistant fixed windows and the enclosure works for corridor-facing louvres were not the same project;
- (ii) The Department's works contractor would not carry out metal window installation works during the Chinese New Year;

- (iii) Information on the enclosure works for corridor-facing louvres in Tai Hing Estate was not yet available. Once the estate office received information on the works, it would promptly inform Members and residents;
- (iv) Before carrying out the fire safety improvement works, the Department would construct sample floors according to the situation, post notices at the main lobby of the buildings concerned, and inform residents through Estate Newsletters. For example, the estate office of Sam Shing Estate would post notices at the main lobby and issue estate newsletters to inform residents that they could visit the sample floors to view the as-built condition;
- (v) He noted Members' suggestions of posting notices at estate shroff offices to enhance publicity on the works;
- (vi) Upon completion of the relevant fire safety improvement works at Sam Shing Estate, residents' views mainly included ventilation being affected by the installation of windows and movement of furniture being inconvenienced by the retrofitting of fire doors. However, after staff explained the relevant ordinances and the objectives of the works, the residents expressed understanding that the works could ensure fire safety; and
- (vii) He noted that Members' views on the uneven floor surface and would refer to the works section for follow-up to improve the situation.

22. Mr WONG Ka-wai of the BD gave a consolidated response to Members' enquiries as follows:

- (i) The Fire Safety Ordinance aimed to enhance the safety of means of escape and the fire resistance of buildings to protect the safety of citizens. At Oi Chi House in Yau Oi Estate, for example, the distance between the opening of the escape staircase and the corridor was less than six metres. Under paragraph 11.7 of the Code of Practice for Fire Resisting Construction 1996, the owner of the building was required to install a fixed window with sufficient fire resistance to protect the escape staircase, enabling residents to leave rapidly in case of fire;
- (ii) Regarding whether fire-resisting fixed windows were required to be retrofitted to escape staircases, it depended on the design and type of the building. A total of 20 buildings in the Tuen Mun District involving three housing estates required retrofitting fixed windows to escape staircases, including Yau Oi Estate, On Ting Estate and Sam Shing Estate; and
- (iii) The 19 blocks where corridor-facing louvres requiring enclosure involved five

estates, including Butterfly Estate, Yau Oi Estate, Tai Hing Estate, Sam Shing Estate and On Ting Estate.

23. The Chairman asked the HD to follow up on Members' views and convey the information on the fire safety improvement works to District Council members.

(D) Concern about the Maintenance of Public Housing Estates under the Housing Department
(SWHC Paper No. 39/2024)
(Written Response from the Housing Department)

24. The proposer of the paper added that she learnt that normal works would be commenced within 12 days upon receipt of a report by the estate office. In this regard, she enquired about how long would it take to handle maintenance works requiring more time to commence. Moreover, as the works under the Total Maintenance Scheme (TMS) were only carried out once every five years for estates aged 30 years or above, she hoped that the waiting time could be shortened, so as to conduct timely inspections for households in need of maintenance and refer them to receive TMS services subject to the conditions of their flats. She was also concerned whether elderly households could understand clearly the arrangements of the TMS, and enquired about the channels for obtaining relevant information about it.

25. Members provided various comments and enquiries on the topic, summarised as follows:

- (i) Members enquired about the timetable of the TMS and suggested that the HD give advance notice of the target estates under the TMS, allowing residents to learn about the year in which target estates would undergo maintenance as early as possible, so as to make proper preparations;
- (ii) Members suggested enhancing publicity on the differences between the TMS and the Responsive In-flat Maintenance Services, as well as utilising the notice boards and electronic notice platforms of public housing estates to provide residents with the relevant information;
- (iii) Members said that for some fixtures of old design in public housing flats, residents often needed to reinstate their flats during maintenance, such as iron-framed windows and iron bars that were prone to rusting. Therefore, Members enquired whether the HD could consider reviewing and replacing old fixtures during maintenance to avoid waste of resources;
- (iv) Members suggested providing designated referral forms for Care Teams;

- (v) Members enquired whether the TMS would overlap with other maintenance programmes, such as those under the “Well-being” project, and how these programmes were prioritised;
- (vi) Members suggested optimising the TMS and expediting the maintenance progress; and
- (vii) Members enquired about the HD’s monitoring of the efficiency and performance of maintenance contractors, such as whether a demerit point system was in place for under-performing contractors.

26. Ms LO Kit-man of the HD gave a consolidated response to Members’ enquiries as follows:

- (i) For cases in which repairs could not commence within 12 days upon receipt of a report, the actual time was subject to the type of works, for example, repairs for ceiling seepage involving co-ordination between residents of the upper and lower flats on the date of repair, as well as certain works that might involve the supply conditions of necessary materials. Regarding such cases, the Department would notify residents of the situation as early as possible;
- (ii) During the Department’s biennial flat inspections, apart from enquiring about the occupancy situation, staff would also enter the flats for inspection. If the occupant requested for repairs, or if the staff considered that the flat needed repairs during the visit, the estate office would also register the flat and arrange for repairs; and
- (iii) If a housing estate was included in the TMS, a notice would be posted to announce the information as soon as possible. Generally speaking, as the TMS would be carried out in phases, residents should have adequate preparation time. If residents found that their flats needed repairs, they were advised to promptly notify the estate office by phone or in person for inspection to prevent the situation from deteriorating.

27. Mr LI Mun-tong of the HD gave a consolidated response to Members’ enquiries as follows:

- (i) The Department would inform residents of the implementation schedule of the TMS as early as possible so that they could get prepared;
- (ii) After completing the pilot phase of the electronic notice board, the Department

would notify residents of regular notices and information through the electronic notice board to keep them informed of the latest situation;

- (iii) The Department would consider Members' views on providing referral forms for Care Teams;
- (iv) External wall painting works under the "Well-being" project and external wall refurbishment works under the TMS would normally be carried out at the same time. For example, the refurbishment of the external walls of Butterfly Estate would be conducted in conjunction with other works and in co-ordination with the TMS; and
- (v) For the performance pledges of commencing works within 12 days upon receipt of a report by estate offices and informing residents within five days of the reasons for works requiring a longer time to commence, the Department's achievement rate was 99%. Regarding the performance of contractors, the Department had put in place a warning system under which warning letters would be issued to contractors if the quality of their case handling was substandard, or if there were delays in the works. The Department might terminate the contract of individual contractors should there be no improvement.

V. Items for Information

(A) Report by the Buildings Department (SWHC Paper No. 40/2024)

28. Members noted the captioned paper.

(B) Report by the Housing Department (SWHC Paper No. 41/2024)

29. Members noted the captioned report.

(C) Report by the Tuen Mun District School Development Section of the Education Bureau (SWHC Paper No. 42/2024)

30. Members noted the captioned report.

(D) Report by the Social Welfare Department (SWHC Paper No. 43/2024)

31. Members noted the captioned report.

32. Members provided various comments and enquiries on the topic, summarised as follows:

- (i) Regarding the enhancement of support services for elderly singletons, Members suggested that the SWD allocate additional resources, make effective use of gerontechnology, and strengthen the supervision of social welfare services provided by non-governmental organisations;
- (ii) Members suggested enhancing collaboration among various co-ordinating committees on welfare services and establishing a crisis database to safeguard the elderly and their families; and
- (iii) Members enquired about the number of elderly individuals receiving Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) and those transitioning from the CSSA to the Old Age Living Allowance.

33. Ms KO Man-lai of the SWD said that when the Cold Weather Warning was in force, the Department would specifically remind non-governmental organisations and casework service units of the SWD to extend their care and concern to all ongoing elderly cases and members of elderly centres. Additionally, the SWD had been actively promoting the development of gerontechnology and assisting elderly residents in public housing estates to install the emergency alarm system (commonly known as “Safety Bell”) to enable them to seek help when needed. The Department noted Members’ suggestions and would take them into consideration when formulating the coming year’s work plan.

34. The Chairperson requested the SWD to follow up on Members’ enquiries regarding the figures for the CSSA via email after the meeting. Besides, she hoped the Department would consider Members’ views and explore ways to broaden the application of gerontechnology.

[Post-meeting note: The SWD added after the meeting that the Department did not keep the relevant figures regarding the CSSA.]

**(E) Report on Crime Figures in the Tuen Mun District
(SWHC Paper No. 44/2024)**

35. Members noted the captioned report.

VI. Any Other Business and Date of Next Meeting

36. There being no other business, the Chairman announced the meeting closed at 4:40 p.m. The next meeting would be held on 27 February 2025 (Thursday) at 2:30 p.m.

Tuen Mun District Council Secretariat

Date: February 2025

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