

Minutes of the 1st Meeting in 2021
of the Administration and Finance Management Committee
of Tai Po District Council

Date: 18 March 2021 (Thursday)

Time: 10:10 a.m. – 3:38 p.m.

Venue: Conference Room, Tai Po District Council (“TPDC”)

<u>Present</u>	<u>Time of Arrival</u>	<u>Time of Withdrawal</u>
<u>Chairman</u>		
Mr. WU Yiu-cheong	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
<u>Vice-chairman</u>		
Mr. SO Tat-leung	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
<u>Members</u>		
Mr. AU Chun-ho	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. AU Chun-wah	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. CHAN Chun-chit, Richard	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Ms. CHAN Wai-ka, Olive	10:16 a.m.	End of the meeting
Mr. CHOW Yuen-wai	10:35 a.m.	2:10 p.m.
Mr. HO Wai-lam	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. KWAN Wing-yip	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. LAM Ming-yat, Nick	10:25 a.m.	End of the meeting
Mr. LAM Yick-kuen	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. LAU Yung-wai	10:13 a.m.	End of the meeting
Mr. LI Yiu-ban, BBS, MH, JP	1:43 p.m.	End of the meeting
Mr. LIN Kok-cheung, Dalu	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. MAN Nim-chi	10:40 a.m.	End of the meeting
Mr. TAM Yi-pui	10:20 a.m.	End of the meeting
Mr. WONG Siu-kin	1:40 p.m.	End of the meeting
Mr. YAM Kai-bong	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. YIU Kwan-ho	11:34 a.m.	End of the meeting
Mr. YIU Yeuk-sang	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting

Secretary

Mr. SO Ka-yu, Tel	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Executive Officer I (District Council) / Tai Po District Office (“TPDO”) / Home Affairs Department (“HAD”)		

In Attendance

Mr. WU Chi-hung, Derek	Senior Executive Officer (District Council) / TPDO / HAD
Ms. NG Ka-yue, Yui	Executive Officer (District Council) 2 / TPDO / HAD
Mr. LAU Chung-hin, Alvin	Executive Officer (District Council) 3 / TPDO / HAD
Ms. TANG Lok-man, Julie	Executive Officer (District Council) 4 / TPDO / HAD
Mr. NG Chi-keung, Barry	Senior Librarian (Tai Po) / Leisure and Cultural Services Department (“LCSD”)
Ms. CHEUNG Kwai-yan, Essar	Deputy District Leisure Manager (District Support) Tai Po / LCSD
Ms. LAW Wing-ying, Karen	Assistant District Leisure Manager (District Support) Tai Po / LCSD
Ms. SAM Fung-mei, Esther	Manager (New Territories East) Marketing and District Activities / LCSD

Announcement

The Chairman welcomed Members and departmental representatives to attend this Administration and Finance Management Committee (“AFMC”) meeting, and announced that Mr. WU Chi-hung, Derek, Senior Executive Officer (District Council) of TPDO, would attend the meetings from now on in place of Mr. LEE Yu-sau, Terence, who had been posted out.

I. Confirmation of the minutes of the 5th meeting in 2020 of the AFMC on 11 September 2020
(TPDC Paper No. AFM 3/2021)

2. The Chairman said that the Secretariat did not receive any proposed amendment, and no Members at the meeting had put forward any amendment either. As such, the minutes were confirmed with no amendment necessary.

3. Mr. AU Chun-wah said that this meeting was scheduled for 9:30 a.m. However, the Secretariat informed Members of the time change at such short notice that it did not send Members

the meeting papers until yesterday. He would like to know why the Secretariat had made such an arrangement.

4. The Chairman said that the Secretariat had been keeping an eye on the Budget while preparing for this meeting. He had been in contact with the Secretariat since late last month but had not been informed whether the District Council (“DC”) would receive funding for the next financial year and how much it would receive. To his understanding, it was not until last Tuesday was the Secretariat informed by the HAD how much funding the DC would receive for the next financial year. As such, the Secretariat could not confirm the agenda and time of this meeting until the last minute. While the situation was far from ideal, he hoped that Members would understand.

5. Mr. WU Chi-hung, Derek, said that it took a rather long time for the Secretariat to prepare for the papers for this meeting. He apologised and said that in the future, they would provide the agendas and meeting papers as early as possible so that Members could prepare well in advance.

6. Mr. AU Chun-wah said that they should inform District Officer (Tai Po) about it. He never had time to read the meeting papers in detail after receiving them yesterday. Some organisations often openly blamed DC Members for not approving funding. As DC Members did not have enough time to go through the applications, why did the Secretariat not postpone this meeting, but decided to vet the applications in such a hurry today? Even though he did not know whether the DC would approve the funding, he asked whether the funding application papers could be provided for Members’ reference in advance. He would like to know when the organisations submitted the funding applications before the meeting.

7. The Chairman indicated that if it happened again in the next financial year, i.e., the HAD did not inform the Secretariat of the funding arrangement for the coming year until the last minute, Members could review later how the DC should deal with it. If Members would like to inform District Officer (Tai Po) about it, and had comments on the HAD or Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) not co-operating with the DC in the past, it was not up to the AFMC to deal with it, and District Officer (Tai Po) was not at this meeting either. He suggested putting forward these comments at the next DC full council meeting.

8. Mr. KWAN Wing-yip agreed with the Chairman’s suggestion. He said that DC Members could bring up the situation at the agenda items related to the DC’s funding allocation at DC full council meeting. To his understanding, it was the same for other DCs which had their funding allocation confirmed one after the other this week.

9. The Chairman said that some of the funding applications were more urgent. Taking the use of DC funds to engage non-civil service contract staff as an example, as the contract of the existing staff would expire in late March, the application had to be approved as soon as possible. Otherwise,

it would affect the work of the Secretariat and the staff. Also, as the LCSD representatives had also reserved time for the meeting, this meeting would not be postponed.

10. Mr. AU Chun-wah said that he agreed to inform District Officer (Tai Po) about it at the DC full council meeting. However, the AFMC should also express their views for the arrangement of this meeting, and these two were at different levels. While District Officer (Tai Po) had nothing to do with the matter, and the Government had also been ignoring the DC, the DC should still take a stance and speak out. Also, he found it reasonable to hold the meeting as scheduled. They should first deal with the application for hiring contract staff, as well as the dragon boat activities application that was dealt with at the District Facilities Management and Culture, Recreation and Sports Committee (“DFMC”) meeting last week. He would like to know if any organisation had submitted the papers in advance before the meeting, and if some had submitted them later.

11. The Chairman asked Mr. AU Chun-wah if he wanted to move an ad hoc motion and then submit it to the full council so as to express their views to District Officer (Tai Po). Also, as regards dealing with some of the funding applications first, he considered that they could be dealt with in the original order, as the agenda of this meeting was not that complicated, especially the part about the activities that the LCSD suggested organising every year. When dealing with the agenda items concerned, he suggested DC Members decide immediately whether to approve them. If the AFMC did not agree with making a decision immediately, they could have further discussions on how best to deal with them. That would be an impartial approach.

12. Mr. AU Chun-ho said he did not want to move any ad hoc motion. He just wanted to know if other Members had anything to say. Also, he would like to know when the funding applications were submitted.

13. The Secretary responded as follows:

- (i) Agenda item V was an application submitted by the TPDO for hiring non-civil service contract (“NCSC”) staff. The TPDO knew the expiry date of the staff’s contract, and the papers were always in its possession.
- (ii) Agenda items VI, VII and VIII were applications submitted by the LCSD. The Secretariat received the papers for agenda items VI and VII yesterday and early this week respectively, and the papers for agenda item VIII weeks ago.
- (iii) Agenda item IX was an application for dragon boat activities submitted by the DFMC. Having been approved by the DFMC meeting last week, the application was immediately submitted to the AFMC for further action.
- (iv) Agenda item X did not include any newly submitted funding applications. The two applications that required action were approved by the AFMC in the previous

financial year. However, as the applications also involved funding for the next financial year, they had to obtain the AFMC's consent again.

14. The Chairman said that while the arrangement for this meeting was far from ideal, he understood the Secretariat's difficulties. Members having comments on the agenda was not an isolated incident. Instead, it was an example of the Government's unwillingness to co-operate and its attempt to deprive the DC of its power since DC Members assumed office more than a year ago. The same could also be said for other committees. Even if he had spent lots of efforts preparing a paper, government departments would only respond in a perfunctory manner. He would inform District Officer (Tai Po) about it at the DC full council meeting.

15. Mr. KWAN Wing-yip said that the Secretariat had yet to respond to Mr. AU Chun-wah's question about changing the meeting time in such short notice. He would like to know if all AFMC meetings from now on would be scheduled for 10 a.m.

16. The Chairman said he believed that as Members were informed of the meeting's agenda at such short notice, they did not notice that the time had been changed to 10 a.m. He asked Members if they agreed that the AFMC meetings from now on would be held at 10 a.m. instead.

17. Mr. AU Chun-wah said that he had no strong views about meeting time. However, as all other committee meetings would be held at 9:30 a.m., the meeting time for AFMC should also be the same. The information of this meeting was rather confusing that if not for the reminders of the Secretariat and Chairman, most Members would think that it would be held at 9:30 a.m. He would like to know if the meeting time of this meeting was a one-off arrangement, or all future meetings would be held at 10 a.m. instead.

18. The Chairman said that if Members would like to talk about the time of this meeting, he suggested doing so in Any other business. He asked the Secretariat to jot down the speaking order of Members who had raised their hands to speak.

II. Confirmation of the minutes of the 5th meeting (Extended Meeting) in 2020 of the AFMC on 24 September 2020

(TPDC Paper No. AFM 4/2021)

19. The Chairman said that the Secretariat did not receive any proposed amendment, and no Members at the meeting had put forward any amendment either. As such, the minutes were confirmed with no amendment necessary.

III. Financial position of DC funds for 2020-2021 as of 15 March 2021

(TPDC Paper No. AFM 5/2021)

20. The Secretary went through the captioned paper.

21. Mr. CHAN Chun-chit, Richard, said that the DC had approved 80% of the budget in the past year. He asked if the Secretariat could provide the relevant figures of other DCs so that Members could compare the funding approval level between TPDC and other DCs.

22. The Secretary said that the Secretariat did not have the figures of other DCs. The tables concerned were updated from time to time by the AFMC so as to update Members of the overall situation. If the HAD had compiled tables showing the relevant figures of the 18 DCs in the future, the Secretariat would provide them for Members' reference.

23. Mr. AU Chun-wah said that while the DC had allocated a funding of over \$18 million in total, some of the activities might be cancelled due to the epidemic. He would like to know the actual expenditure in total, and asked the Secretariat to provide the information after the meeting.

24. The Secretary said that while all the activities had concluded on 28 February, various procedures such as receipt collection and bookkeeping were still in progress. As such, the Secretariat could not provide the actual expenditure for the time being. Many activities that had secured funding had been cancelled altogether, and he expected that there would not be any expenditure. As such, the Secretariat expected that there would be a considerable difference between the actual expenditure and the funding approved. Once obtaining the figures concerned, the Secretariat would provide them for Members' reference.

25. Members noted the captioned paper.

IV. Authorising the TPDC Secretariat to deal with the problems faced by the recipients in reimbursement applications according to the established practices

(TPDC Paper No. AFM 6/2021)

26. The Secretary went through the captioned paper.

27. Mr. Richard CHAN asked whether the authorisation would be valid for the whole year or until 31 March 2021.

28. The Secretary said that the authorisation would only authorise the Secretariat to deal with the reimbursement applications up to 31 March.

29. The AFMC resolved to authorise the Secretariat to deal with the problems faced by the district organisations in reimbursement applications according to established practices

V. **Use of DC funds to engage non-civil service contract staff**

(TPDC Paper No. AFM 7/2021)

30. The Secretary went through the captioned paper.

31. The Chairman said that as the TPDO had submitted a total of two applications, he asked if Members agreed to exempt the TPDO from complying with the requirement on the maximum number of funding applications set out in Section 13 of the Guideline on Allocation of District Council Funds (“The Guideline”).

32. The AFMC agreed to the exemption.

33. Mr. AU Chun-wah asked the Secretariat about the number of NCSC staff hired in the current financial year, as well as how many more it would hire in the next financial year. He also asked if the Secretariat had carried out recruitment exercise due to staff departure in the previous financial year, if the posts had been vacant for a long time, and if there was enough manpower to deal with the Secretariat’s duties.

34. Mr. LAU Yung-wai said that with longer meeting times and an increasing workload such as writing meeting minutes, the Secretariat was under enormous pressure. As such, DC Members had suggested hiring more staff to deal with the Secretariat’s duties. The captioned paper stated that the TPDC hired 11 contract staff in the 2020-2021 financial year, and would continue to hire six NCSC Executive Assistants (“EAs”), three NCSC Project Coordinators (“PCs”) and two NCSC Project Assistants (“PAs”) in the 2021-2022 financial year without hiring more. He asked if it was because there was no candidate or the TPDC did not consider increasing the Secretariat’s manpower.

35. The Secretary responded as follows:

- (i) The Secretariat would maintain its 11 NCSC staff posts in the next financial year. While funding for the two EA posts had been approved by the AFMC earlier, recruitment turned out to be unsuccessful in the current financial year. As the demand still existed, the TPDO suggested also approving the funding in the next financial year for the Secretariat to hire those two EAs to help with the Secretariat’s duties.

- (ii) Of the 11 posts above, apart from the two EA vacancies mentioned just now, two PA posts had also been vacant since mid-2019 and late 2020 respectively. The staff concerned had left in pursuit of better opportunities. Due to the epidemic, many recruitment exercises had slowed down or even ground to a halt in late 2020. As such, it was hoped that DC funding for the next financial year would be secured to immediately resume the recruitment exercise.
- (iii) To help deal with the Secretariat's duties, the AFMC approved funding in 2020 to hire two more EAs, and the posts had been included in the proposal put forward on this occasion. Having secured DC's funding in November 2020, the Secretariat immediately began the recruitment exercise. Due to the epidemic and the Government's "Work from Home" arrangement, etc., however, recruitment for these staff was unsuccessful in the previous financial year, and the vacancies had also been included in this recruitment proposal.

36. Mr. AU Chun-wah said that these 11 posts were existing ones and Members wanted to hire one or two more staff to help the Secretariat write meeting minutes. In other words, there should be at least 13 NCSC staff. However, this proposal had not increased the Secretariat's manpower. The loss of the Secretariat's manpower had increased the work burden of its existing staff and prevented its smooth operation. Also, while recruitment exercise should be dealt with by the TPDO, it had been delayed by the Government's "Work from Home" arrangement. As such, he hoped that the Secretariat would expedite the process wherever possible and reduce the delay, or deploy some of the TPDO's manpower to help the Secretariat for the time being.

37. The Secretary said that there were only nine NCSC staff at the Secretariat in the previous financial year. The 11 posts set out in the paper had already included the two new EA posts. While the posts had been created, recruitment was unsuccessful. Also, the TPDO was responsible for recruitment exercises. The Secretariat would convey Members' views to the staff concerned so as to expedite them, with the hope of making good use of the funding approved by the DC to deal with DC duties.

38. The AFMC agreed to allocate \$2,091,000 and \$1,006,000 to the TPDO to continue to hire six NCSC EAs, three NCSC PCs and two NCSC PAs to help with the TPDC's duties.

VI. Recreation and sports activities to be organised in Tai Po District in 2021/22 by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department

(TPDC Paper No. AFM 10/2021)

39. The Chairman asked Members to declare interests where necessary in respect of the DC funds applications being vetted.

40. The Secretary reported that pursuant to Orders 48(9) and 48(10) of TPDC Standing Orders (“Standing Orders”), Members should declare interests if they found out that they had direct personal interests, pecuniary interests or other interests with the funding applications under consideration, or had links with the beneficiary or potential beneficiary. Based on the information collected by the Secretariat before the meeting, no Members had any links with the hosting, partnering or co-hosting organisations of the activities. Members could make revisions or give supplementary information where necessary. In addition, Members should also declare interests if they had any direct personal interests, pecuniary interests or other interests with the funding applications under consideration.

41. No Members at the meeting declared interests.

42. The Secretary went through the captioned paper. He said that this meeting needed to deal with four funding applications submitted by the LCSD, which involved the 2021/22 and 2022/23 financial years for taking forward recreation and sports programmes in Tai Po District, “Arts@18 – Tai Po Community Arts Programme” and promotion programmes in Tai Po Public Library. The funding accounts might change subject to the approval of funding allocation for the relevant financial years in the future. Details of funding approval had been set out in Papers No. AFM 10/2021, AFM 11/2021 and AFM 12/2021. Also, paragraph 10 of Paper No. AFM 10/2021 had been amended, which should be “March 2022” instead of “March 2021”. He asked Members to take note of it.

43. The Chairman said that as the LCSD had submitted four funding applications (including the applications in agenda items VII and VIII) in total, he asked if Members agreed to exempt the LCSD from complying with the requirement on the maximum number of funding applications set out in Section 13 of the Guideline.

44. Members agreed to the exemption.

45. The Chairman said that if Members were satisfied that the funding applications set out in the paper fell within the ambit of DC funds while benefitting people living, working or attending schools in the district, they could consider endorsing the applications.

46. The Chairman welcomed Ms. CHEUNG Kwai-yan, Essar, and Ms. LAW Wing-ying, Karen, Deputy District Leisure Manager (District Support) Tai Po and Assistant District Leisure Manager (District Support) Tai Po respectively for the LCSD to attend the meeting for this agenda item.

47. Ms. CHEUNG Kwai-yan, Essar, said that the epidemic had been changing so quickly that LCSD staff failed to keep track of all the changes. As such, they finished the papers later than usual. In light of the recent changes of the epidemic, the department had decided to cancel the

activities in April at a later date, and had to draw up the estimates for the activities from scratch. In addition, the department's staff learned of the date of this meeting at a later date. Once they did, they immediately submitted the papers to the AFMC. She apologised and hoped that Members would understand. She then went through Paper No. AFM 10/2021. The LCSD would resume the recreation and sports programmes in May 2021, and the number of these programmes would be halved so as to reduce the risk of spreading the virus through social contact. During the epidemic, the LCSD had also rolled out online exercise video clips and online interactive sports training programmes to encourage members of the public to exercise at home.

48. Mr. LAU Yung-wai would like to know the details of the online interactive sports training programmes, like if they were taught on a live and face-to-face basis, or if they were pre-recorded.

49. Mr. AU Chun-wah's comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) Government departments should comply with the Guideline's requirements on submission of papers, and should not make amendment one day before the meeting. To his understanding, as the LCSD used to submit applications for its annual regular activities sometime between February and March, it would not start drawing up the papers this month. Even if the department had to make an amendment afterwards, it would not submit the paper just one day before. It was a very serious issue. Did the department think that the AFMC would endorse the applications regardless?
- (ii) The department had resumed hosting some of the activities. In light of the epidemic at present, however, the full resumption of activities was unlikely. Given the emergence of a "gym cluster" not long ago, the premature resumption of activities was tantamount to the Government taking the lead to allow group gatherings, and that might give rise to new infection clusters.
- (iii) He asked about the number of activities cancelled in the past year due to the epidemic. Also, for the activities that had secured DC funds but were not held, would the funding be returned to the DC?

50. Ms. Essar CHEUNG responded as follows:

- (i) The online interactive sports training programmes covered ten disciplines, namely aerobic dance, fitness exercise, "Body-mind Stretch", parent-child fitness, Tai Chi, fitness yoga, "Hip Hop Dance", badminton, "Play Tennis" and table tennis. Each of them had about three sessions, and members of the public could sign up online for a fee of \$20. Participants had to download the Zoom application and joined the real-time online programmes to interact with the coaches at the lesson time by logging into the website. These programmes were at the elementary level and mainly taught

basic skills such as grip, ball control, footwork and physical co-ordination. The programme began in January and the new courses, to be held from April to June, would receive application from 17 March.

- (ii) The department had originally drawn up the recreation and sports programmes for the entire year (including those for April). Due to the ups and downs of the epidemic lately, however, the department eventually decided to cancel the programmes in April. While the department expected to resume the programmes in May, it would decide whether to do so according to the epidemic.
- (iii) A total of 798 recreation and sports programmes had been cancelled in the 2020/21 financial year. The number of participants had decreased by around 64 800 and the amount involved was around \$3,524,500. The unused funding had been returned to the TPDO.
- (iv) Due to the epidemic, the department would like to have an accurate budget. As such, when the department decided to cancel the programmes in April, it had also amended the budget concerned afterwards. That was why it had submitted the papers at a later date, and she hoped that Members would understand. The budget for this financial year was similar to last year's, except that some of the programmes had been cancelled.

51. Mr. AU Chun-wah did not accept the LCSD's explanation for the late submission of papers. The department indicated that the budget for this financial year was similar to last year's, except that the programmes in April had been cancelled. As such, the amendment should not be complicated. By submitting the papers one day before the meeting, the LCSD managed to keep track of the latest situation. However, it had failed to consider how much time Members needed to go through the papers, and the Secretariat had to make the arrangements as well. As it was not the first time something like this had happened, he hoped that the LCSD would comply with the Guideline's requirements on paper submission, so as to give Members enough time to go through the papers and the Secretariat to deal with them, instead of treating the DC like a rubber stamp that would definitely approve the applications. And that was not something the department should do when serving the public either. While the epidemic might have a certain impact on it, it was still a very serious issue. He hoped that the LCSD would make a record of it and regardless of staff changes in the future, they still had to remember to comply with the Guideline's requirements when submitting funding application papers to the DC, and giving Members time before the meeting to go through the papers in the future. He also indicated that the Secretariat should not put up with the LCSD again. If the LCSD did so again, he would vote against the department's applications.

52. Mr. LAU Yung-wai said that the online interactive sports training programmes would be held on a live basis. It meant that there was a limit on the number of participants. Also, most of these programmes were for traditional sports activities, such as table tennis, badminton, volleyball, etc.

A few years ago, he suggested the department include various activities that could enhance the public's physical fitness, mental toughness, skill level and physique, such as kendo, rowing, archery, etc. He hoped that the department would include these activities in its future recreation and sports programmes.

53. Ms. Essar CHEUNG responded as follows:

- (i) Each online interactive sports training programme could accommodate 50 people.
- (ii) She truly understood how Members felt and apologised again. The department would submit papers to the DC in accordance with the Guideline in the future.

54. Mr. LIN Kok-cheung, Dalu, said he agreed with Mr. LAU Yung-wai, and hoped that the department could include more activities, such as skateboarding, in its recreation and sports programmes in the future. Even though the department said that the sports associations in the district would provide different training programmes, he learned that other DCs had also put forward similar suggestions, and the District Leisure Services Offices might also be able to respond to the demand. For details of the proposed activities to be added, he opined that they could have a discussion after the meeting.

55. Mr. LAU Yung-wai said that the sports organisations in the district did not offer courses on kendo and archery, and members of the public needed to visit Sha Tin or Sham Shui Po to take part in these activities. As members of the public did not have much spare time after work, they might not join the activities held far away from home. As the programme aimed at serving the residents of this district, the LCSD could consider offering courses for activities that were not offered by the sports organisations in the district, so as to give the residents more choices.

56. Ms. Essar CHEUNG noted the AFMC's suggestions. The department would study whether different kinds of activities could fit in with the arrangement of the venues in the district.

57. Ms. CHAN Wai-ka, Olive, asked whether the department would host fun day and carnival activities as usual. As these activities would bring a lot of participants together, were they suitable during the epidemic? Did the department change the activities due to the epidemic? Meanwhile, Members received the papers at 8 p.m. last night, and did not have time to go through and think about them. As Secretariat staff also needed to work overtime to amend the papers, the department should apologise to the Secretariat.

58. Mr. MAN Nim-chi said that as Hong Kong was gradually losing its moral compass in recent years, he would like to preserve and promote the local culture. Apart from hosting recreation and sports programmes, he suggested the LCSD host activities related to district and local culture, such as activities on the history of Tai Po and the relationship between urban and rural areas.

59. Mr. LAM Ming-yat, Nick's comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) The LCSD used to host various activities in the past. He asked if the department would take into account public reaction and replace the unpopular activities with ones that were novel or could not be easily carried out on a daily basis. As there were many venues in the district for members of the public to take part in mainstream sports activities (such as football and basketball), they did not have to set out to take part in the LCSD's courses. If the department could host novel or niche activities the suitable venues of which were difficult to find (such as dodgeball), they could promote them to the public so that more people would participate in them.
- (ii) Would the department consult the community to find out what activities members of the public liked?
- (iii) Due to the epidemic, he opined that the activities hosted by the department should either have minimal physical contact among the participants, or ensure that they were socially distant so as to minimise the risk of spreading the disease.

60. Ms. Essar CHEUNG responded as follows:

- (i) The department had submitted the recreation and sports programmes for the entire year, and carnivals were expected to be held in the latter months. The department would take into account the epidemic at that time to decide whether to cancel them.
- (ii) Staff from the department's Culture Division would go through the cultural activities programmes later.
- (iii) The department would look into the enrolment of various programmes. If the enrolment rate was low, they could be cancelled so as to increase the number of popular activities.
- (iv) The department sought comments from members of the public from time to time while hosting the programmes, so as to look into and consider the programmes' arrangement.
- (v) The department expected that the recreation and sports programmes would resume in May. These were mainly individual activities (such as badminton and table tennis) and team activities (such as football and basketball) would not resume immediately. When hosting the programmes, the department would also make arrangements according to the guidelines from the health departments.

61. The Chairman said that it was far from ideal that they received the papers submitted by the department rather late this time around, and hoped that the LCSD representatives would convey

Members' comments to the department. Also, when discussing the programmes for 2020, Members unanimously opined that the programmes and funding could first be handed over to the DFMC for discussion. Due to the epidemic, however, the DC's operation was suspended for two months. There were also a lot of unknown factors in the funding for this year, and there were even comments that the Government would stop allocating funding to the DCs altogether. Fortunately, it had not happened yet. However, that was exactly why this sports programme was directly submitted to the AFMC for action without being vetted by the DFMC. He asked the Secretariat to take note of it.

62. Mr. Richard CHAN said that as regards the recreation and sports programmes for the entire year submitted by the department this time, the programmes were split into those held in the first half of the year and those in the second half of the year. He asked if the funding for the second half of the year was so urgent that the department needed to submit the applications on a whole year basis. For the funding for the second half of the year, could it be first discussed at the DFMC before handed over to the AFMC for vetting?

63. Mr. AU Chun-wah asked, if the applications were first discussed at the DFMC, whether they should be dealt with at the meeting in January or March. If they were to be discussed at the meeting in January, the department could amend the programmes after the meeting before submitting them to the AFMC for vetting. If they were to be discussed at the DFMC meeting in March, the department would only have a couple of days after the meeting to amend them, and there would barely be enough time. As such, he suggested that in the future, the department should first submit the applications to the DFMC meeting in January for preliminary discussion.

64. Ms. Essar CHEUNG responded as follows:

- (i) According to the Guideline, each programme could receive a funding of \$2.5 million at most. As such, the department needed to split the programmes for the entire year into two parts so as to apply for funding. She hoped that the funding would be allocated on a whole year basis so that the department could take immediate action.
- (ii) In the past, the department used to submit the applications in January and that was a better way to do so. If they could be discussed at the DFMC meeting in January and then submitted to the AFMC for vetting, the department would have more time to prepare for the work for the next financial year.

65. The Chairman said that the department had not responded to Mr. Richard CHAN's earlier question. If the funding for the activities in May to September were to be dealt with first, and the funding for the activities in October to March were to be dealt with later, would that affect the activities in May to September?

66. Ms. Essar CHEUNG said that as it was a whole year programme that required planning in advance, such as booking the venues, it would be better to allocate the funding on a whole year basis.

67. Mr. AU Chun-wah said that if the LCS D hoped that the vetting of the entire funding allocation would complete in January, so that there would be enough time to launch the work in April, the department's staff should have submitted the applications to the DFMC earlier in November, made amendments according to the DFMC's views, and submitted them to the AFMC meeting in January for vetting. Otherwise, there would not be enough time for the AFMC to vet the department's amendments made after the DFMC meeting in January.

68. Mr. Dalu LIN said he agreed with dealing with the funding applications separately according to the time of activities. He opined that there was still time to incorporate Members' comments just now into the programmes in May to September. Also, to his understanding, the DC also dealt with this funding applications separately in the previous financial year. If that was the case, they could also split the funding applications into two parts for action now.

69. Ms. Essar CHEUNG responded as follows:

- (i) The department might not have finished the programmes for 2022 in November. She needed to consult the department and look into the months when the applications were submitted.
- (ii) She hoped that this programme would receive funding on a whole year basis.

70. The Secretary said that the applications were dealt with by the AFMC meeting in January 2020. They were later amended by the LCS D and officially received funding at the meeting in March. When the department submitted the applications at that time, the activities were also split into two time periods, namely from April to September and from October to March, and received funding at the AFMC meeting in March. Members opined that the possible reasons why the applications had been dealt with separately was that, apart from the applications having been dealt with at the meeting in January, the DC had just started a new term and thus also had to pay for the applications that had been approved in principle by the previous term DC with the funding for the current financial year. It also had to deal with several LCS D's funding applications that involved a smaller amount.

71. Mr. Richard CHAN said that the DC was not a rubber stamp and it was crucial to correct its bad habits. The LCS D had been working hard to organise a lot of activities for the public, and had drawn up programmes on a yearly basis so as to facilitate the administrative work. However, it had also led to a lack of flexibility. He suggested dealing with the funding separately according to the time of activities and postpone the funding for the second half of the year. The AFMC could

discuss with the department how to deal with the programmes in a more flexible manner and it was not necessary to use the yearly basis, so as to provide more suitable services for the public.

72. The Chairman indicated that the department, when submitting the applications, had split the activities into two time periods, namely May to September 2021 and October 2021 to March 2022. Most of the Members would like to deal with the funding for the first half of the year first, and postpone dealing with the funding to the next meeting or handing them over to the DFMC for action, so that Members would have more time to read the papers and comment on them. The department could also amend the programmes and submit them to the AFMC again for vetting.

73. Mr. YAM Kai-bong said that if Members would like to discuss the applications in greater detail, they could hand them over to the DFMC for discussion. If the DFMC meeting in May could be held as scheduled, Members could suggest at the meeting slightly amending the programmes. Should there be major changes, Members should bring them up and inform the department as soon as possible. Some activities required the renting of venues which were in short supply. If Members would like to change the expenditure and sessions of activities in a substantial manner, they needed to discuss with the LCSD, so that the department could prepare well in advance, and the funding applications would conclude at that meeting. Otherwise, they would have to wait until the next meeting or convene a special meeting to deal with them, and that would be far from ideal.

74. The Chairman asked if the department could follow Members' advice just now and submit the amendments to the activities to be held in the second half of the year at the DFMC meeting in May.

75. Ms. Essar CHEUNG said that as regards Members' suggestions of adding new activities, the department had to consider the venues and other factors at the same time. As it would be rather difficult to take them forward in the 2021/22 financial year, the department would consider their views in the next financial year. She also thanked the AFMC for agreeing to allocate funding for the programmes in May to September. However, after receiving the funding for the entire year, the department would have to book the venues in advance so as to allow the organisations and public to apply for the venues. As such, she hoped that they would receive funding for the whole year.

76. The Chairman said that it was not the case that Members did not want to allocate funding for the activities to be held in the second half of the year. Instead, they hoped that there would be more time for the department and Members to exchange views so that the activities to be held in the second half of the year would be even better. According to Members' views, this meeting would not deal with the department's funding applications for the activities to be held in October 2021 to March 2022. He hoped that the department would respond to Members' views wherever possible, and follow-up action would be taken at the meeting in May.

77. The AFMC agreed to allocate \$1,679,990 to Tai Po District Leisure Services Office for organising recreation and sports programmes in Tai Po District in May to September 2021.

78. Mr. Richard CHAN said he was happy to see this arrangement, as it was crucial to correct the council's bad habits. He suggested hosting a non-official meeting before the next DFMC meeting so as to provide assistance for the DFMC Chairman.

VII. Proposal of “Arts@18 - Tai Po Community Arts Programme” by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department

(TPDC Paper No. AFM 11/2021)

79. The Chairman welcomed Ms. SAM Fung-mei, Esther, Manager (New Territories East) Marketing and District Activities of the LCSD to attend the meeting for this agenda item.

80. Ms. SAM Fung-mei, Esther, went through the captioned paper.

81. Mr. MAN Nim-chi said that the suggested venues of some of the activities were provided by the supporting organisations. He would like to know the details of these supporting organisations and venues.

82. Mr. AU Chun-wah said that the paper was submitted earlier this week. He hoped that the department would reserve more time when submitting meeting papers in the future.

83. Ms. Esther SAM said that the supporting organisations were mainly non-governmental organisations (“NGOs”). The department would contact the district organisations to provide venues for free, help with promotion and recruit participants, and the liaison work involved were in progress. Also, the department had noted Members' comments about the time for submitting meeting papers and would improve on it.

84. Mr. YAM Kai-bong said that he had discussed the programme with Mr. Dalu LIN at the DFMC meetings. They strongly supported activities that had incorporated local and community elements, as well as projects organised with the assistance of quality art groups and units. However, the paper did not say anything about the activity's arrangements under the epidemic. The workshops would be held in July to August at the earliest and it also included outdoor performances, while “Stories Crossing @Tai Po” included visits to the community and performances. As the epidemic was not yet under control and the group gathering ban was still in effect, he opined that some of the projects could be carried out online or in a multi-media manner. As for other activities (such as workshops, outdoor performances, etc.), the department would like to host them outdoors, at the parks or on the streets, such as inviting public participation on a busy street. As such, he would like to know the

activities' arrangement and contingency plans under the epidemic.

85. Mr. Dalu LIN thanked the department for coming up with the programme, which had various elements connecting to the community that could bring together stories and voices of the community and allow interaction among the participants. It was better than the unilateral activities in the past. He had earlier suggested the department include independent band performances. However, it was not included in this programme, and he hoped that the department would consider it in the future. Also, he suggested the department consider carrying out community activities by way of new media art form (such as digital art) in the future, as the visual would be very interesting. It would allow the residents and community to get to know the art development at present, and showcase different community issues in different forms and storytelling techniques. He supported this funding application.

86. Mr. LAU Yung-wai asked whether the programme was simply an artistic creation activity. He was more concerned about the legacy of oral history and the programme also had a lot of relevant activities. Did the department seek consultant's help as regards the techniques of oral history?

87. Ms. Esther SAM responded as follows:

- (i) The department took the anti-epidemic efforts seriously, and would definitely comply with all government anti-epidemic requirements. For activities held at indoor venues, the department would take the entrants' temperature, scan the QR codes using the Leave Home Safe mobile app, limit the number of seats, make the wearing of mask mandatory for the performers, etc. For outdoor activities, the department would decide the seating arrangement according to the group gathering ban requirements and the epidemic at that time. The department might postpone the outdoor activities (such as field visits, outdoor performances, etc.) not held due to the epidemic, and would take timely follow-up action according to the actual situation.
- (ii) The 12 different cultural and art programmes covered by the programme were one-off / "standalone" community art activities, and the department would invite quality art groups to participate in them. She would forward Members' suggestion of adding independent band performances and digital art to the Cultural Presentations Section for consideration when planning for activities in the future.
- (iii) The department would invite quality organisations and those with experience in organising activities to participate in the programme, and oral history would be the main theme of the programme as there was a lot of historical stories and culture in Tai Po District that people should know and pass along. She did not know if the activity had invited any oral history consultants, and would provide more information after the meeting.

88. Mr. Nick LAM said that the quality of participating organisations would be ensured if invited by the department. However, he suggested the department organise an open music contest to enhance public participation.

89. Ms. Olive CHAN said that the department planned to host the opening performance in May. However, the epidemic did not look good and could barely be kept under control, while the anti-epidemic measures would also pose difficulties to the activities' arrangement. As such, he hoped that the department would be well-prepared for it. The opening performance would be held at Fu Shin Community Hall in Tai Po, and the 200 expected participants would more or less fill up the hall. The department might need to adjust the number of entrants to ensure a suitable distance among the participants. As for some of the outdoor activities, such as Chit Chat Sessions, the estimated number of participants was around 120 to 1 200, and the department had to keep an eye on crowd control. While she hoped that the activities would be held successfully, the department could also consider hosting the activities in other manners, and people's health and safety should be their top priority.

90. Mr. LAU Yung-wai said that the activity was not just an artistic creation. Instead, it involved historical information and the legacy of oral history and should be taken seriously. To his understanding, artistic creation was the activity's main theme. He suggested the department contact the history professors at the universities in the district (the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the Education University of Hong Kong) to provide support.

91. Ms. Esther SAM responded as follows:

- (i) The Community Arts Scheme was divided into two parts, namely a one-year programme and "standalone" events. For the free district cultural programmes in the past, after members of the public had watched a standalone performance, the event would be over. To enhance the artistic vibe of the community, the department had launched a one-year programme which included various activities such as elementary courses, advance courses, workshops and performances, so that there would be a main theme for the programme which could be extended and enhanced. Also, the department knew that there was a limit on the number of activity participants, and many members of the public loved watching the free district cultural events in the past. As such, the department would invite higher quality art groups to provide members of the public with 12 "standalone" cultural and art events. However, the open music contest suggested by Members was not in line with the programme's objective.

- (ii) The department would keep a close eye on the epidemic and comply with the Government's anti-epidemic measures. On the day of activity, if the Government stipulated that Fu Shin Community Hall in Tai Po could only accommodate half of its capacity, the department would make the corresponding changes.
- (iii) She would convey Mr. LAU Yung-wai's suggestion of seeking the expert advice of consultants to the staff of the Cultural Presentations Section, and suggested the organisation consult the experienced (such as university professors) when carrying out research.

(Post-meeting note by the LCSD: The department had noted the suggestion, and would discuss with Dr. AU Yi-man, Artistic Director of Hong Kong Drama / Theatre and Education Forum which organised the programme, about recording and keeping the information collected. Dr. AU had done a lot of researches and had vast experience in collecting and keeping the oral historical stories of community, had organised a seminar on oral history with Chung Ying Theatre Company, and had organised monument theatres to showcase through dramas the oral historic stories of walled villages discovered during field visits.)

92. The AFMC agreed to allocate \$1.25 million to the LCSD's Performance Venues Office (New Territories East) for organising "Arts@18 - Tai Po Community Arts Programme" in Tai Po District in 2021-22.

VIII. Promotional activities to be organised in Tai Po Public Library in 2021/22 by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department
(TPDC Paper No. AFM 12/2021)

93. The Chairman welcomed Mr. NG Chi-keung, Barry, Senior Librarian (Tai Po) of the LCSD to attend the meeting for this agenda item.

94. Mr. NG Chi-keung, Barry, went through the captioned paper.

95. Mr. Nick LAM said that most of the activities were based on books which, however, were merely carriers to tell us what the story was about. He suggested adding movie elements to the activities. For instance, many scenes of the movie One Second Champion were shot in Tai Po. If those in the movie industry could be invited for activities and sharing sessions, it would give rise to a "movie star effect" that could attract members of the public to pay attention to the other activities of the programme. With the advent of technology, the new generation tended to watch multi-media content and read less. The activities might become the starting point to capture the attention of more people so as to arouse their interest in other activities.

96. Ms. Olive CHAN thanked the library for listening to and taking forward Members' comments. It was such a shame that during the epidemic, many parents dared not bring their children to participate in "Storytelling for Children". She suggested the library film and upload the storytelling onto the internet. It could also print the films' QR codes on the back of books so that parents who could not participate in the activity could watch the films online when they borrowed the books in the future, and that could also reduce the waste of resources. Also, the number of books borrowed by children had increased substantially, and the usage rate of ultraviolet ("UV") book sterilisers had also increased. She opined that each library should have at least one UV book steriliser, and would like to know if the library had enough UV book sterilisers for public use.

97. Mr. LAU Yung-wai's comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) The LCSD was excellent in its recreation work, but less so when it came to culture. He was happy to know that the library had increased the amount of funding it had applied for on this programme, so as to add new activities and elements, such as adding "Handicraft Workshops" and inviting professionals to talk about the district's history to capture the attention of more people on the activities. He hoped that the library continued to promote the reading habit so that more people could benefit from the library.
- (ii) To his understanding, the library had talked about hosting guided tours in 2020. However, the brief on the promotional activities in Tai Po Public Library in 2020 did not talk about them. He asked if the activities were cancelled due to the epidemic. Also, while this year's programme included guided tours, and the department had just said that the activities would be led by Mr. CHAN Chi-wa, the expenditure involved was not mentioned in the budget. He asked whether Mr. CHAN was a volunteer tour guide. If yes, he hoped that the library would give him basic allowance.

98. Mr. Dalu LIN's comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) Tai Po Public Library had organised reader club activities in 2020 but not in 2021. Why?
- (ii) The library had just said that the "Handicraft Workshops" included creative activities with a festive theme, such as making Christmas trees. However, the specific details had yet to be confirmed. He suggested using the traditional festivals in the community, such as Mid-Autumn Festival, as the theme and inviting the traditional paper offering shops in the district to participate in them so as to promote unity in the community, and giving the activities added significance in terms of tradition, culture and legacy.

99. Mr. HO Wai-lam praised the library for coming up with a lot of new activities, and its anti-epidemic measures were well-planned as well. Also, many parents told him that they were so disappointed that they did not know “Storytelling for Children” had been cancelled until arriving at the library. In light of the epidemic, many parents had got used to going to classes with their children through tele-conferencing or pre-recording. As such, he hoped that the library would consider hosting activities such as “Storytelling for Children” in the same way.

100. Mr. Richard CHAN commended the library for listening to Members’ comments for hosting more activities. In 2020, he also said that he was more than willing to increase the funding for these projects so as to launch more culture promotion activities. On the other hand, Man On Communal Grave in Tai Po was the biggest gratuitous grave in Hong Kong and a place with historical significance in the district. However, not that many people had heard about it, and there were other places in the district with historical value as well. He suggested the department apply for more funding to incorporate historical and cultural corridor activities under “Promoting the historical and cultural activities in the district”, where the route began from Tai Po Market MTR Station and went past many locations in Tai Po with historical value such as Tsat Yeuk Feng Shui well, Man Mo Temple, Kwong Fuk Bridge, etc.

101. Mr. Barry NG responded as follows:

- (i) As regards Mr. Nick LAM’s suggestion, the library would consider in 2022 inviting speakers to talk about the scenes and venues in Tai Po District where movies were shot. Also, if the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo could be held successfully, the library would invite elite athletes to attend seminars to share their experience. In 2020, Tai Po Public Library had also arranged for historical guided tour activities along the route that Mr. Richard CHAN had just suggested.
- (ii) As regards “Storytelling for Children”, the library was studying the feasibility of filming the storytelling process and uploading it onto the internet. However, they had to secure the speakers’ authorisation and approval first.
- (iii) The library had considered adding another UV book steriliser. However, as there were not that many users at present, it had not done so for the time being, but could go ahead if necessary in the future. Also, the library had bought some air cleaners to improve the library’s air quality and enhance air circulation.
- (iv) The guided tour led by Professor SIU Kwok-kin, Anthony, scheduled for September 2020, had been postponed to December due to the epidemic and was later cancelled. The route of that guided tour was similar to what Mr. Richard CHAN had suggested and was hugely popular among the public. This year, therefore, the library planned to arrange for Mr. CHAN Chi-wa (author of the Mini Encyclopaedia of Hong Kong’s History and Culture series) to organise similar seminars and guide tours again.

- (v) Wan Chai District and Southern District had also organised visits to cemetery. Man On Communal Grave that Mr. Richard CHAN was talking about was a place of historical significance but unknown to many. The library would carry out further studies and make arrangements and hoped that it would become a new guided tour destination.
- (vi) Tai Po Public Library hosted four handicraft workshops each year. The library would discuss with the instructors to see if they could host paper offering creation activities as well so as to tie in with the district's tradition.

102. Mr. Dalu LIN said that there were many district publications in Tai Po District, such as T-Post, Popost, 埔 Journ, etc. Would the library consider adding them to its collection? Meanwhile, the two old granite train bridges and the abandoned old railway tunnel in the district were also of historical significance. He suggested incorporating them into the guided tours, and he could also provide their exact locations after the meeting.

103. Mr. Barry NG said that the library highly welcomed the addition of district publications into its collection. Members could tell the library if they had the contact information of publishers. Meanwhile, he was not sure about the location that Mr. Dalu LIN was talking about. Members were welcomed to provide information, and the library would make the corresponding arrangements and look for the right speakers.

104. The AFMC agreed to waive the requirement that the activity had to be held at least 30 days after this meeting, and agreed to allocate \$86,418 to the LCSD's Tai Po Public Library for organising "District promotional activities at Tai Po Public Library in 2021-2022".

105. The Chairman announced that the meeting would be adjourned to 1:40 p.m.

106. The meeting resumed afterwards.

IX. DC funds application for activity co-organised with the District Facilities Management and Culture, Recreation and Sports Committee – Tai Po District Dragon Boat Race cum Carnival 2021

(TPDC Paper No. AFM 8/2021)

107. The Chairman welcomed Ms. TANG Lok-man, Julie, of the TPDC Secretariat to attend the meeting for this agenda item, and asked Members to declare interests where necessary in respect of the DC funds applications being vetted.

108. The Secretary reported that pursuant to Orders 48(9) and 48(10) of TPDC Standing Orders (“Standing Orders”), a Member should declare interests if he found that he had direct personal interests, pecuniary interests or other interests with the funding applications under consideration, or had links with the beneficiary or potential beneficiary. Based on the information collected before the meeting, the Secretariat had compiled a form which set out the links between Members and the hosting, partnering or co-hosting organisations concerned, while the executors of the activities concerned, as well as the substantive positions and non-substantive positions held by Members, were highlighted in different colours. The form had been put on the meeting table (see Annex). Members could make revisions or give supplementary information where necessary. In addition, Members should also declare interests if they had any direct personal interests, pecuniary interests or other interests with the funding applications under consideration.

109. Members declared interests according to the information on the form.

110. The Secretary said that with reference to the best practices on handling declarations of interests issued by the HAD in September 2017, the Chairman suggested the following ways to deal with Members who had declared their links with the hosting, partnering or co-hosting organisations of the activities:

- (i) If they held substantive positions in the hosting, partnering or co-hosting organisations of the activities without involving any pecuniary interests or other interests, it was suggested that they were not required to withdraw from the meeting while the funding applications concerned were being examined, but had to remain silent during the discussion and refrain from participating in the resolution or voting in connection with the funding applications concerned. However, the Chairman could ask them to provide supplementary information where necessary.
- (ii) If they held non-substantive positions in the hosting, partnering or co-hosting organisations of the activities without involving any pecuniary interests or other interests, it was suggested that they were not required to withdraw from the meeting and could participate in the discussion, resolution and voting in connection with the funding applications concerned.

111. Members agreed with the above approaches.

112. The Secretary went through the captioned paper.

113. The Chairman said that if Members were satisfied that the funding application set out in the captioned paper fell within the ambit of DC funds while benefitting people living, working or attending schools in the district, they could consider endorsing the application.

114. Mr. Richard CHAN said that many organisations used buoyancy aids instead of life jackets, but the two had different functions. According to Item 1(iii) in Annex 5 to the paper, “Manage and register the items borrowed by athletes and count them after use (dragon boat paddles / life jackets)”, athletes would borrow life jackets. As such, he would like to remind the organisation not to use life buoyancy aids at that time instead.

115. The Secretary said that he would remind the organisation to follow what was said in the paper and provide the participants with life jackets.

116. The Chairman asked Members to vote on whether to allocate \$1,678,838 to Tai Po District Dragon Boat Race Committee for organising “Tai Po District Dragon Boat Race cum Carnival 2021” with the DFMC and Tai Po Sports Association. Members agreed to vote by open ballot and the voting result was as follows:

For:	7 votes	Mr. SO Tat-leung, the Vice-chairman	Mr. AU Chun-ho
		Mr. AU Chun-wah	Mr. KWAN Wing-yip
		Mr. LAM Yick-kuen	Mr. LI Yiu-ban
		Mr. YAM Kai-bong	
Against:	4 votes	Ms. Olive CHAN	Mr. Nick LAM
		Mr. LAU Yung-wai	Mr. WONG Siu-kin
Abstain:	7 votes	Mr. Richard CHAN	Mr. CHOW Yuen-wai
		Mr. HO Wai-lam	Mr. Dalu LIN
		Mr. TAM Yi-pui	Mr. YIU Kwan-ho
		Mr. YIU Yeuk-sang	
Present without voting:	1 vote	Mr. WU Yiu-cheong, the Chairman	
<u>Absent without voting:</u>	<u>1 vote</u>	<u>Mr. MAN Nim-chi</u>	
Total :	20 votes		

117. The Chairman announced that this funding application was endorsed.

X. Applications for DC funds
(TPDC Paper No. AFM 9/2021)

118. The Chairman welcomed Ms. Ng Ka-yue, Yui, and Mr. LAU Chung-hin, Alvin, of the TPDC Secretariat to attend the meeting for this agenda item, and asked Members to declare interests where necessary in respect of the DC funds applications being vetted.

119. The Secretary reported that pursuant to Orders 48(9) and 48(10) of the Standing Orders, a Member should declare interests if he found that he had direct personal interests, pecuniary interests or other interests with the funding applications under consideration, or had links with the beneficiary or potential beneficiary. Based on the information collected before the meeting, the Secretariat had compiled a form which set out the links between Members and the hosting, partnering or co-hosting organisations concerned, and Members could make revisions or give supplementary information where necessary. In addition, Members should also declare interests if they had any direct personal interests, pecuniary interests or other interests with the funding applications under consideration.

120. No Members at the meeting declared interests.

121. The Secretary went through the captioned paper.

122. The Chairman said that if Members were satisfied that the funding applications set out in the captioned paper fell within the ambit of DC funds while benefitting people living, working or attending schools in the district, they could consider endorsing the applications.

(1) **Tai Po District Good Students Award Scheme 2020-2021**

123. The AFMC agreed to allocate \$9,250 to Tai Po School Liaison Committee in 2021-2022 to continue to organise “Tai Po District Good Students Award Scheme 2020-2021”.

(2) **Organising a district football team of the TPDC to participate in the youth league and other competitions organised by Hong Kong Football Association and other organisations in 2020-2021**

124. The AFMC agreed to allocate \$626,130 to Pak Hei Sports Association in 2021-22 to continue to “organise a district football team of the TPDC to participate in the youth league and other competitions organised by Hong Kong Football Association and other organisations in 2020-2021”.

125. The Chairman asked Members to take note of the changes to the 36 activities that had secured the DC’s funding set out in the paper.

126. Mr. YAM Kai-bong said he believed that many activities had been cancelled due to the epidemic. He would like to know the total amount of reimbursement that these activities had applied for.

127. The Secretary said that while many activities had been cancelled, no expenditure was involved at the early stages. After finishing the calculations later, if the Secretariat noticed any activities that had applied for the reimbursement of expenditure during the planning stages, it would first deal with the reimbursement procedures according to the authorisation set out in paragraph 29, and then submit the information to the AFMC for Members to consider if it was necessary to recover the amount concerned.

XI. Case discussion

128. The Chairman said that this agenda item would deal with one case that had violated the Guidelines. He asked Ms. NG Ka-yue, Yui, to detail the background of Case 1.

129. Ms. NG Ka-yue, Yui, detailed the background information of Case 1 as follows:

- (i) Organisation A hosted an activity where the participants uploaded movies of their daily lives onto the internet, and held a contest.
- (ii) Organisation A reported to the Secretariat that there was no participant in the activity. As such, the actual number of participants was zero and the attendance rate 0%.
- (iii) Organisation A had submitted a written explanation to the Secretariat, stating that the reason the number of participants had failed to meet the expected target was that it was the first time the organisation applied for DC funds. Also, after submitting the application, the information on the application form had to be amended many times as they were not in line with the Guidelines. As a result, there was a delay in submitting it to the AFMC for vetting. The activity, originally scheduled to be held from 21 December 2020 to 21 February 2021, had been postponed to the period between 28 December 2020 and 28 February 2021. The postponement had cost them the Christmas holidays, and affected the poster's design and social platform services, and thus undermined the effectiveness of their physical promotion posters.
- (iv) Organisation A also said that it had promoted on the relevant social platform pages of Tai Po District. During the activity, however, there was a leakage of users' privacy in that social platform. Some users, therefore, had used less or even stopped using it, and were less willing to participate in the activity. Website statistics showed that the hit rate of the activity's page was high. In the end, however, no one participated in the activity.
- (v) According to Order 19.6 of the Standing Orders, if the number of participants of an activity was at least 25% less than what the applicant organisation had estimated, and the applicant organisation could not offer any reasonable explanation, the DC would deduct the funding subsidy from the total amount of funding allocation according to

the actual number of participants.

(vi) Organisation had never breached the Guidelines' requirements.

130. Mr. AU Chun-wah asked whether it was the first time the organisation applied for DC funds. If no, it should have been aware of the Guidelines' requirements. As the activity would be held online only, the organisation should have foreseen that the participation rate would be lower than that of an actual activity. However, it had mishandled the situation and thus affected the activity's attendance rate.

131. Ms. Yui NG said that it was the first time the organisation applied for DC funds.

132. Mr. SO Tat-leung, the Vice-chairman, asked about the estimated number of participants of the activity.

133. Ms. Yui NG said that the estimated number of participants of the activity was 200.

134. Mr. LAU Yung-wai said he would like to know the actual arrangement of the activity, such as whether the organisation called for registration in advance and then allowed the participants to visit the website on that day to participate in the activity, or it had made the website public on the day of activity and allowed those who were interested to visit it to participate in the activity. If the organisation had taken the former approach, it should have realised at least seven days before the start of activity that not enough people had signed up, rather than did not find out that no one had signed up until the day of activity.

135. Mr. KWAN Wing-yip asked about the amount of reimbursement the organisation is applying for.

136. Ms. Yui NG responded as follows:

- (i) The activity called for participants to make a daily life video with their family during the epidemic and upload it onto a designated social platform. The organisation said that after the day of activity, no videos had been uploaded.
- (ii) The organisation had been allocated a funding of \$10,310, and was now applying for the reimbursement of \$7,544.

137. Mr. AU Chun-wah asked what expenditure was involved in the reimbursement it was applying for.

138. Ms. Yui NG said that the reimbursement it was applying for covered the expenditure for the design and management services for the activity's website, poster printing and miscellaneous items.

139. The Secretary said that prizes had been planned for the activity. As there was no participant, however, no expenditure had been incurred. The reimbursement the organisation was applying for at present covered the expenditure for its early preparation work.

140. Mr. HO Wai-lam asked if the organisation could foresee the number of people signing up for the activity in advance, or found out the number of video uploads only after the activity had started. He opined that if the organisation could foresee it, there should not be any reimbursement. On the other hand, if it became aware of it after the activity had started, half of the amount it was applying for could be reimbursed.

141. Mr. Nick LAM said that the information available at present lacked substance. Designing and managing the activity's website could be managing a Facebook page or creating an activity website, and they were considerably different. As for designing the poster, they could only determine if the amount was reasonable according to its style and quantity printed. While people had different standards, if there was more information, Members could make a better judgement.

142. The Chairman indicated that according to the Guidelines, Members should first consider if they would accept the organisation's explanation before discussing how much the reimbursement should be.

143. Mr. YAM Kai-bong said that as it was the first time the organisation applied for funding, it might have been too optimistic, and the participation rate might well be affected by the epidemic. While the idea of the activity might be a little "unrealistic" and failed to attract public participation, it was the kind of novel activities that met the DC's expectation. He tended to accept the organisation's explanation and opined that as no one had benefitted from the activity, they could deal with the matter leniently. However, as the organisation had made a major mistake in its estimate, it should be accountable for some of the expenditure. As such, he suggested reimbursing half of the amount it was applying for.

144. Ms. Yui NG said that the organisation was allocated with the funding in December. It then began the promotion immediately and set up a dedicated page and launched the poster design work in late December. The organisation originally expected to hand out the prizes after the activity ended in late February. As no video had been submitted for the contest, however, it had reported to the Secretariat that the number of participants was zero.

145. Mr. LAU Yung-wai asked how the activity called for entrants.

146. Ms. Yui NG said that the organisation had set up a social platform page and hoped that the participants would upload the videos onto it.

147. Mr. LAU Yung-wai asked if the activity had set a deadline for the participants to upload the videos, or it found out that there was no participant only after the activity had started. How the activity called for entrants had a huge impact on its outcome. If the organisation did not draw up any guidelines or set a deadline for the activity, the activity would be unmanageable. He would like to know the activity's timeline for the ease of discussion.

148. Ms. Yui NG said that the activity was a contest. It was open for registration on 28 December 2020, and the deadline was late February 2021. The organisation originally planned to hand out the prizes in March, i.e., after the end of the activity.

149. Mr. LAU Yung-wai asked if the activity was a mere award presentation activity. In other words, the organisation had not received any video in late February, and no prizes were handed out on the day of the activity eventually. When the organisation noticed that there was no participant in late February, did it inform the Secretariat? If no, when did the organisation inform the Secretariat, and did it inform the Secretariat before handing out the prizes? As a responsible organisation, it had a duty to inform the Secretariat as soon as possible when it knew that the activity was not going to have the expected outcome, so as to find out the best solution.

150. Mr. LAU Chung-hin, Alvin, said that the activity was not a mere award presentation activity. According to the activity's budget, the activity could be split into two main parts, namely advance preparation work (such as the expenditure for the design and management services for the activity's website, poster printing, etc.) and award presentation ceremony (such as the expenditure on medals, thank you awards for the judges, etc.). The date of the activity was between late December 2020 and late February 2021, and promotion was carried out through websites and posters to encourage some 200 Tai Po residents to upload the videos of their daily lives during the epidemic onto the pages concerned. As at late February 2021, however, no video had been uploaded onto those pages. It was only after the organisation had submitted the activity's report in March did the Secretariat realise that the number of participants was zero.

151. Mr. AU Chun-wah said that the organisation had enormous responsibilities. It should have informed the Secretariat in late January when it noticed that there was no participant, instead of doing so after the activity had ended, as that would be too little too late. While it was the first time the organisation applied for funding and it was not familiar with the procedures, the situation did not make sense. Meanwhile, as regards the explanation that people's willingness to participate had been affected by the leakage of users' privacy in the social platform while the activity was in progress, was it brought up by the organisation? Was the organisation aware of the situation a long

time ago but did not inform the Secretariat, and did it find out the problem only after the activity had ended? At present, he found it hard to accept the organisation's explanation.

152. Mr. LAU Yung-wai said that the expenditure for the activity's advance preparation work mainly involved the design and management of websites, and it might be the case that the organisation did not know that there was no participant only after it had finished designing the websites. However, even if the organisation put the blame on the activity's postponement, i.e., it had missed the Christmas holidays, the activity was held during public holidays such as the Lunar New Year Holidays. He was also of the view that the social platform the organisation was referring to should be Facebook, and he was also a Facebook user. However, he did not see any promotion for the activity. As such, he would like to find out how the organisation promoted the activity and where it put up the posters.

153. Mr. TAM Yi-pui could hardly accept the organisation's explanation. Based on the cases in the past, even if an activity's attendance rate had been adversely affected by the epidemic, it would still reach 50% to 60% and had never hit 0%. As the activity was an online video sharing contest and was not affected by the group gathering ban, the organisation's promotion strategies might have gone wrong. As such, he suggested the organisation, when organising similar activities in the future, consider exchanging views with district organisations and DC Members so as to enhance the attendance rate.

154. Mr. Alvin LAU responded as follows:

- (i) The Secretariat noticed that there were not enough participants when receiving the activity report submitted by the organisation. According to the Guidelines, an organisation had to provide an explanation if there were not enough participants in an activity. As such, the Secretariat had asked the organisation about it. Subsequently, the organisation provided the two explanations mentioned in paragraphs 129(iii) and (iv) above, namely, issues with the social platform and the activity's postponement affecting the promotion's outcome.
- (ii) The activity's promotion could be divided into two main parts, namely promotion by posters and Facebook. According to the receipts submitted by the organisation, it had sent posters to DC Members' offices as well as the secondary and primary schools in the district to help with promotion. It had also promoted in four Facebook groups of Tai Po, including Tai Po Group and Tai Po Community.

155. The Chairman said it appeared that most Members tended not to accept the organisation's explanation and opined that some of the funding should be deducted. According to the Guidelines, if the number of participants of an activity was at least 25% less than the estimated figure, and the organisation failed to provide a reasonable explanation, the DC would deduct the funding

accordingly. Meanwhile, Mr. YAM Kai-bong had just suggested deducting the reimbursement the organisation was applying for by half. He asked Members for comments.

156. Mr. HO Wai-lam opined that the organisation had to be held accountable, and thus suggested reimbursing half of the amount it was applying for just now.

157. Mr. Nick LAM said he agreed with deducting half of the amount it was applying for. If the organisation did not receive any video submission after a certain period of time, it was duty-bound to do more promotion work through other channels. However, it was the first time the organisation applied for DC funds. He was worried that if no reimbursement was made, other organisations might not have the courage to try organising new kind of activities, and would only organise conventional ones to ensure a certain attendance rate, and that would kill off creativity. He did not totally accept the reasons provided by the organisation, and opined that it had not done its best to resolve the problem. However, to avoid dampening the overall morale and to encourage more organisations to try something new, he suggested deducting half of the funding allocated as a token punishment.

158. The Chairman said that according to paragraph 19.6 of the Guidelines, if the AFMC opined that an organisation had failed to provide a reasonable explanation, it would deduct the funding subsidy from the total amount of funding allocated according to the actual number of participants of the activity. Also, according to paragraph 25.2 of the Guidelines, the AFMC could consider the actual situation and the explanation offered by the organisation receiving the funding to decide if any rules had been breached, if punishment should be meted out according to the established mechanism, or other punishments should be drawn up on a case by case basis. As such, Members' earlier suggestion of deducting half of the funding subsidy was in line with the Guidelines' requirements. He asked Members to comment on it.

159. Mr. AU Chun-wah said he agreed with deducting half of the amount it was applying for, and suggested writing to the organisation reminding it of the issues of this activity, suitable remedies and detailed arrangements, and indicating that if similar issues arose when applying for DC funds again in the future, they would not rule out the possibility that all the funding would be deducted by the DC.

160. Mr. LAU Yung-wai said he had no comments on how much funding should be deducted. He suggested that if other organisations adopted a new promotion approach in the future, the Secretariat could bring up the cases that had been discussed in Case Discussion in the past as a reminder, so that similar situation would not happen again. He opined that whether the organisation had done its best in promotion was the focal point behind Members' decision.

161. Mr. Richard CHAN asked if the organisation had applied to other DCs for organising similar activities. If it took several thousand dollars from every DC, that would be a considerable amount of money. Also, did the organisation provide the Secretariat with the hit rate of the activity's website?

162. Ms. Yui NG said that it was the first time the organisation applied for TPDC funds. However, it had neither mentioned if it had applied for funding in other DCs, or provided the hit rate of the activity's website.

163. Mr. HO Wai-lam opined that they could check if the organisation had applied for funding in other DCs to organise similar activities.

164. Mr. Richard CHAN said that the possible reason why the organisation applied for several thousand dollars as the expenditure for designing and managing the activity's website but could not provide the website's hit rate was that the actual hit rate was very low. He understood that some Members believed that they should be lenient to the organisations submitting an application for the first time. However, he was worried that it would set a bad precedence. At present, the expenditure that the organisation was applying for reimbursement was mainly service fees instead of money spent on purchasing physical items. As the organisation's explanation was not convincing either, he would not accept it. He opined that they should deduct the organisation's funding subsidy to \$0 according to paragraph 19.6 of the Guidelines.

165. Mr. LAU Yung-wai would like to know the breakdown of expenditure for which funding was being applied for at present.

166. Ms. Yui NG said that the various expenditure included the design service for the activity's website \$2,100; management service for the activity's website \$4,900; printing of posters (80 A3 size posters) \$400 and miscellaneous items \$144.

167. Mr. LAU Yung-wai asked if the activity's website was a Facebook page or a website set up by the organisation.

168. Ms. Yui NG said that managing the activity's website included managing the social platform page, managing Google online sign-up form, managing a voting website, responding to enquiries, reviewing the videos uploaded by participants, posting the videos uploaded by participants and recording the participants' particulars.

169. Mr. LAU Yung-wai asked if the activity's website only included a Facebook page, or it had to set up another website, which included applying for a domain name or purchasing other services. Creating a Facebook page and Google form were free.

170. Ms. Yui NG said that the organisation had not set up an independent website and had created a Facebook page only.

171. Mr. TAM Yi-pui said that most of the activity's expenditure was used on managing websites, and only several hundred dollars were spent on physical posters and other items. The organisation could not provide the website's hit rate. If the expenditure was only used on creating a Facebook page and Google form, reimbursing half of the amount it was applying for was still too much, and more or even full deduction should be made.

172. Mr. YAM Kai-bong said that according to the expenditure breakdown provided by the Secretariat just now, the activity's promotion expenditure included the printing of posters and postage only, and the rest was spent on the social platform page. However, that was a free service. Even if the wages for hiring people to create the website were included, the amount spent would still account for less than half of the reimbursement it was applying for. In this connection, he amended his earlier proposal and suggested reimbursing the amount spent on printing of posters and miscellaneous items.

173. Mr. SO Tat-leung, the Vice-chairman, asked if the design and management services for the website were provided by different companies, and would like to know the services' details.

174. Mr. LAU Yung-wai said that the organisation had not done its best in promotion and should have the biggest share of responsibilities for this activity. Creating a Facebook page did not cost much. Also, as no participant had uploaded any video, it was not necessary for the organisation to manage them. He opined that at least the expenditure spent by the organisation (i.e., the expenditure on printing of posters and miscellaneous items) should be reimbursed, and had no comment on Members' suggestion of deducting some of the amount.

175. Ms. Yui NG said that as the organisation estimated that there would be 200 participants, it had procured the design and management services for the activity's website from two companies. Website design service mainly included creating a promotion website on social platform and posting the participants' videos, creating a sign-up form in the activity's designated account on Google, creating a voting website, as well as teaching the usage and management plans for the website.

176. Mr. Nick LAM said that the proposed deduction of just half of the amount rested on the premise that there were worthwhile expenditures. However, the organisation's promotion outcome was far from satisfactory and the service charges unreasonable. As such, he suggested reimbursing the expenditure on physical promotion items only. While creating a Facebook page did not mean that no management was needed, it was not necessary to spend several thousand dollars. As for the remaining portion that was not reimbursed, it would serve as a reminder for the organisation to

do its best in promotion in the future.

177. Mr. AU Chun-wah asked whether Mr. Nick LAM's suggestion would scare the organisations so much that they dared not apply for DC funds.

178. Mr. Nick LAM said that if the deduction of reimbursement to \$0 would scare the organisations, he suggested reimbursing the expenditure on printing of posters and miscellaneous items.

179. Mr. AU Chun-wah said he did not have much to say about the deduction proposals put forward by Members. It was the first time the organisation applied for DC funds and it might not be familiar with the Guidelines' requirements. Hiring a professional company to operate the website, carry out promotion, monitor closely on a daily basis and promote in different ways could increase the website's hit rate. However, the company hired by the organisation did not do its job and therefore should be held accountable. He did not know the organisation's source of income. If the subsidy was fully deducted, the amount would be significant. He opined that as it was the first time the organisation made a mistake, it could be held accountable for some of the amount as a lesson learnt.

180. Mr. YAM Kai-bong asked if the company had provided receipts issued by information technology companies for the expenditure on website design and management services, or if the amount was calculated by the organisation based on the number of working hours.

181. Ms. Yui NG said that the website design and management services were part of the service plan provided by the companies.

182. Mr. YAM Kai-bong said that if the organisation could provide genuine receipts, but the services provided by the company was not good, it would not be appropriate for the organisation to be responsible for all the expenditure. As such, he once again amended his proposal and suggested deducting the reimbursement the organisation was applying for by half.

183. Mr. MAN Nim-chi asked about the promotion channels and quantifiable indicators the organisation had indicated when submitting the application.

184. Mr. LI Yiu-ban said that while he was not familiar with how things worked on the internet, he opined that the organisation had to be held accountable. As a two-month activity had a participation rate of 0%, the organisation should have done everything to come up with solutions, such as asking their friends and family to make videos, etc. He doubted if the organisation had done its best to organise the activity, or it had swept everything under the carpet after securing the funding. If it was the latter, he would not mind if the organisation never applied for funding again.

185. Ms. Olive CHAN said that if the organisation had hired a professional company to manage the activity's website, leakage of users' privacy in social platform should not have happened. Would the organisation claim damages against the company for the leakage of privacy? Also, she agreed with Mr. LI Yiu-ban that if the organisation noticed that the participation rate was low, it should have immediately considered how to make amends or informed the Secretariat. However, it did not take any action and that was truly irresponsible.

186. The Chairman said that to his understanding, the leakage of users' privacy in social platform during the activity that the organisation was talking about referred to the problems of Facebook, and not that there was any issue with the company managing the activity's website. As such, it was not necessary to claim damages against the company.

187. Ms. Yui NG said that when submitting the application, the organisation indicated that it would put up promotion posters at the secondary and primary schools in Tai Po District, and promote to specific groups on social websites.

188. The Chairman said that Members' suggestions for the time being could be classified into two proposals, namely deducting the amount applied for to \$0, and reimbursing the expenditure for printing of posters and miscellaneous items only.

189. Mr. Nick LAM suggested taking a vote.

190. Mr. MAN Nim-chi said that Mr. YAM Kai-bong had also put forward the proposal of deducting half of the reimbursement the organisation was applying for.

191. The Chairman said that he had noted Mr. YAM Kai-bong's proposal, but apparently it was not supported by other Members.

192. Mr. HO Wai-lam said that he had also put forward the proposal of deducting half of the reimbursement the organisation was applying for.

193. Mr. MAN Nim-chi asked how many activities in the past lasted for two months. Did the Secretariat ask the organisation about the activity's participation rate while it was in progress?

194. Mr. Alvin LAU said that most of the activities of the working groups under the Healthcare, Education and Social Services Committee ("HESC") lasted for more than two months. Funding was usually approved in May, and the activities usually held from June to February the following year. If the organisations needed to change the activities, including changing the number of participants, they had to submit an activity amendment report to the Secretariat in advance. After

receiving the report, the Secretariat would be informed of the eventual status of the activities.

195. Mr. MAN Nim-chi said that it was an isolated incident but a lot of time had been spent on case discussion. For organisations applying for DC funds for the first time, if the Secretariat could ask them about the activity's status midway through or two or three weeks after its launch, thus kind of situation might never happen again. He asked if this approach was feasible.

196. Mr. Alvin LAU noted Mr. MAN Nim-chi's comments and would study if it was feasible. Perhaps due to the epidemic at present, the number of activities receiving DC funds had been reduced to around 50. After the epidemic, the number of activities might rebound to over 200. If the Secretariat needed to ask every organisation about the progress of their activities, it would be rather exhausting.

197. Mr. LAU Yung-wai suggested the Secretariat remind the organisations when they submitted the applications. If the activity's recruitment period was as long as two to three months and if anything happened along the way, they should also take the initiative to inform the Secretariat.

198. The Chairman said that as Members had to vote on three proposals, according to the requirements of Orders 1(7) and 31(1) of the Standing Orders, the resolution would be done on a majority basis. In other words, an option had to receive over half of the valid votes (excluding abstain votes). In the first round of voting later, if no option had secured the majority of votes, a second round of voting would be carried out.

199. The Chairman went through the three options as follows:

- (i) Option 1: Reducing the funding subsidy the organisation was applying for at present (\$7,544) by half. In other words, there would be a reimbursement of \$3,772.
- (ii) Option 2: Reimbursing only the expenditure for printing posters and miscellaneous items. In other words, there would be a reimbursement of \$544.
- (iii) Option 3: Deducting all the funding subsidy according to the number of actual participants. In other words, there would be a reimbursement of \$0.

200. The Chairman asked Members to vote on the three options above. Result of the first round of voting was as follows:

Option 1:	8 votes	Mr. AU Chun-ho Ms. Olive CHAN Mr. KWAN Wing-yip Mr. LI Yiu-ban	Mr. AU Chun-wah Mr. HO Wai-lam Mr. LAU Yung-wai Mr. YAM Kai-bong
Option 2:	5 votes	Mr. SO Tat-leung, the Vice-chairman Mr. TAM Yi-pui Mr. YIU Yeuk-sang	Mr. Nick LAM Mr. YIU Kwan-ho
Option 3:	4 votes	Mr. Richard CHAN Mr. MAN Nim-chi	Mr. Dalu LIN Mr. WONG Siu-kin
Abstain:	1 vote	Mr. LAM Yick-kuen	
Present without voting:	1 vote	Mr. WU Yiu-cheong, the Chairman	
<u>Absent without voting:</u>	<u>1 vote</u>	<u>Mr. CHOW Yuen-wai</u>	
Total :	20 votes		

201. The Chairman said that as no option had secured the majority of votes, a second round of voting was necessary.

202. The Chairman asked Members to have a second round of voting for Options 1 and 2 that had secured the most votes. The voting result was as follows:

Option 1:	8 votes	Mr. AU Chun-ho Ms. Olive CHAN Mr. KWAN Wing-yip Mr. LI Yiu-ban	Mr. AU Chun-wah Mr. HO Wai-lam Mr. LAU Yung-wai Mr. YAM Kai-bong
Option 2:	8 votes	Mr. SO Tat-leung, the Vice-chairman Mr. Nick LAM Mr. MAN Nim-chi Mr. YIU Kwan-ho	Mr. Richard CHAN Mr. Dalu LIN Mr. TAM Yi-pui Mr. YIU Yeuk-sang
Abstain:	1 vote	Mr. LAM Yick-kuen	
Present without voting:	2 votes	Mr. WU Yiu-cheong, the Chairman	Mr. WONG Siu-kin
<u>Absent without voting:</u>	<u>1 vote</u>	<u>Mr. CHOW Yuen-wai</u>	
Total :	20 votes		

203. The Chairman said that according to Order 31(3) of the Standing Orders, the Chairman or DC Members chairing the meeting could cast his original vote, and make a decision where more than one option had the same number of votes. After the Chairman had cast his vote, the voting result

was as follows:

Option 1:	9 votes	Mr. WU Yiu-cheong, the Chairman	Mr. AU Chun-ho
		Mr. AU Chun-wah	Ms. Olive CHAN
		Mr. HO Wai-lam	Mr. KWAN Wing-yip
		Mr. LAU Yung-wai	Mr. LI Yiu-ban
		Mr. YAM Kai-bong	
Option 2:	8 votes	Mr. SO Tat-leung, the Vice-chairman	Mr. Richard CHAN
		Mr. Nick LAM	Mr. Dalu LIN
		Mr. MAN Nim-chi	Mr. TAM Yi-pui
		Mr. YIU Kwan-ho	Mr. YIU Yeuk-sang
Abstain:	1 vote	Mr. LAM Yick-kuen	
Present without voting:	1 vote	Mr. WONG Siu-kin	
Absent without voting:	1 vote	Mr. CHOW Yuen-wai	
Total :	20 votes		

204. The Chairman announced that the AFMC would reimburse the organisation half of the funding subsidy it was applying for (\$7,544). In other words, there would be a reimbursement of \$3,772.

205. Mr. AU Chun-wah asked if Option 1 had secured over half of the votes.

206. The Chairman said that as only the valid votes were counted, Option 1 had secured over half of the votes.

207. The Chairman said that a Member had just suggested writing to the organisation reminding it that if similar problems came up when applying for DC funds in the future, its DC funds would be deducted; it should inform the Secretariat as soon as possible if no one attended the activity; and it should avoid focusing on online promotion.

208. Mr. AU Chun-wah said that if similar problems came up when the organisation applied for DC funds again in the future, he would not rule out deducting all the DC funds.

209. Mr. Nick LAM said that the promotion not working effectively might stem from the organisation's failure to take any follow-up action. For instance, after sending the posters to DC Members, the organisation simply expected that DC Members would promote on their own. However, DC Members received so many documents every day that they might not be able to read them all in detail. He suggested the organisation taking the initiative to remind DC Members so show its sincerity.

210. The Chairman said he hoped that the organisation would have more variety in its promotion efforts so that more residents would be informed of the activity. He asked the Secretariat to write to the organisation after the meeting informing it of the AFMC's decision and conveying Members' views.

XII. Any other business

(1) Amendment proposal of the Standing Orders

211. The Chairman said that Members suggested amending the Standing Orders at the previous meeting. In this connection, he asked Members to put forward specific amendment proposals to him or the Secretariat. So far, neither he or the Secretariat had received any amendment proposals put forward by Members. As such, he would not deal with the issues at this meeting, and the current Standing Orders would be used for the next financial year.

212. Members agreed with the Chairman's arrangement.

(2) Time arrangement of AFMC meetings

213. Mr. Richard CHAN said that he did not have much to say about meeting time. Attending meetings on time was DC Members' responsibility. According to meeting minutes, however, many DC Members fared poorly in terms of when they attended meetings. Regardless of whether a meeting was held at 9:30 a.m. or 10 a.m., when the meeting was about to start, DC Members often had to wait for a quorum. He urged DC Members to attend meetings on time.

214. Mr. YAM Kai-bong said that at this meeting, some departments submitted the papers late and it was excusable for the Secretariat to make special arrangements. Meetings for DC full council and its committees were held in the first, second and third weeks of odd-number months, while the time of working group meetings was more flexible. If the time of various committee meetings was different, DC Members might mix them up. Even though there was not much to lose for DC Members to arrive early, they all had their own work arrangement. As such, it would be better to start all meetings at 9:30 a.m.

215. Mr. KWAN Wing-yip said he would like to know why this meeting was postponed to 10 a.m. The DC full council and Traffic and Transport Committee meetings chaired by him would still be held at 9:30 a.m. It would be hard for Members to remember the meeting time if committee meetings were held at different times. He would do his best to attend all meetings on time, and

understood that other DC Members' reasons for being late. He pointed out that even though this meeting was postponed for half an hour, it officially began only after a wait of ten to 15 minutes, and that was far from ideal.

216. The Chairman said that he did not have any specific ideas about meeting time, and had not considered if the time of committee meetings had become an established. He asked Members to comment on the time of AFMC meetings in the future, and decide whether to require that they had to be held at 9:30 a.m.

217. Mr. AU Chun-wah said that DC full council and committee meetings were more important. They were usually held at 9:30 a.m. or 2:30 p.m. probably because it would make it convenient for Secretariat staff to prepare for meetings. While he did not have a preferred meeting time, he hoped that the time of DC full council and committee meetings would be the same so as to make it easier to remember. Meanwhile, the time of working group meetings could be more flexible and decided by the Chairman.

218. The Chairman noted Members' comments. The AFMC meetings from now on were required to be held at 9:30 a.m. and the time could not be changed at will.

219. The AFMC agreed with the arrangement above.

(3) Following up on the suggestion to update the DC Conference Room equipment

220. Mr. MAN Nim-chi said that he had suggested replacing some of the DC Conference Room equipment, including charging cables, plugs, projector, etc., at the meeting in November 2020, and the projector had later been replaced. He would like to know if the Secretariat had replaced the plugs and charging cables provided for DC Members' use in the Conference Room. If no, he would like the Secretariat to replace or purchase them.

221. The Secretary said that Members brought up the suggestion of replacing equipment like projector, charging cables, etc., at the previous meeting. After that meeting, the Secretariat had applied to the HAD for funding to replace the projector in the Conference Room and purchase charging cables, plugs, etc., and had discarded the damaged cables and plugs. At present, there were many charging cables and plugs that came in different types to be used by different models. If Members opined that not enough had been purchased, the Secretariat could apply to the HAD for funding again to purchase more charging cables and plugs to be used by DC Members.

222. Mr. AU Chun-wah said that to his understanding, the projector installed at the Conference Room ceiling had not been used again after being used once or twice, and he guessed that it had

broken. Why would not they remove it and replace it with the new one?

223. The Secretary noted Mr. AU Chun-wah's comments and would look into the situation. For the projector in use at present, if someone walked in front of it, while the image might be blocked, it was still acceptable. If the projector was installed at the ceiling, it would be rather inconvenient as far as operation or maintenance was concerned. The Secretariat would check the projector installed at the Conference Room ceiling in the future to decide whether to discard it, so as not to affect the operation.

(4) Arranging for vehicles to send DC Members to attend site visits or activities

224. Mr. YAM Kai-bong said that in the previous financial year, most of the DC Members had attended visits or inspections. Not long ago, a dozen DC Members visited LCSD facilities together, but the LCSD could not arrange for vehicles to send them there. As the Secretariat also said that there was no budget for hiring vehicles, DC Members had to drive four to five private vehicles to the visit site. When DC full council arranged for DC Members to have a meeting at the Legislative Council, the Secretariat could arrange for vehicles to send them there. However, it could not do so when DC Members attended other group activities or visits. It was not environmentally friendly for DC Members to drive their own private vehicles, and parking their vehicles would also obstruct the traffic. To his understanding, other DCs would reserve an estimate of around \$10,000 to \$20,000 to hire vehicles to send DC Members to attend group activities. He suggested the Secretariat, when preparing the budget for 2022, refer to the practice of other DCs by allocating a suitable amount of money so that the DC or Committee Chairman could apply for use.

225. Mr. LAU Yung-wai said that he strongly agreed with Mr. YAM Kai-bong's views. For activities attended by more than ten DC Members, vehicles should be arranged to send them there. At present, it was so embarrassing that the Committee Chairman often had to ask the department to arrange for vehicles. When DC Members visited the Fish Marketing Organisation ("FMO") not long ago, they had to ask repeatedly before the FMO finally arranged for a coach to send them there. As there was just a handful of visits for DC Members each year, he suggested the Secretariat earmark a small amount of money for the hiring of coaches.

226. Mr. Derek WU said he had noted Members' comments. The Secretariat would look into the issue, and report to Members on any outcome.

227. The Chairman said that if the suggestion was feasible, the Secretariat could tell him or other Members who had voiced their views about the specific amount of the budget, so that they could discuss whether to make a decision at the next meeting.

(5) Workspace of Secretariat staff

228. Mr. AU Chun-wah said that there was no empty desk at the Secretariat at present, and the library had also been converted to be used by its staff. With more staff to be hired in the future, it would be even more crowded. He asked if there was enough room at the Secretariat to accommodate the newly hired staff.

229. Mr. Derek WU said that the Secretariat needed time to look into the arrangement. If Members had any comments about it, they could inform the Secretariat.

230. Mr. Nick LAM said that there were DC Members' mailboxes at the Secretariat for receiving outside correspondences to DC Members. He was not interested in most of these letters, and mainly used email to receive and send information. If any organisation would like to send information to all DC Members, it could consider sending them by email instead. It would not only save paper, but also make it unnecessary to continue to use the physical mailboxes, and the room released could also be used to provide more desks for staff.

231. The Chairman said that the Secretariat would discuss with the relevant Members about the office workspace. If there was not enough room, they could discuss the solutions again. Also, as regards Mr. Nick LAM's suggestion, the Secretariat could ask all DC Members after the meeting which letters could be replaced electronically. In fact, however, it was difficult to control how the organisations sent their correspondence. As such, the Secretariat still needed to reserve room for receiving mail.

232. Mr. AU Chun-wah said that as it was difficult to make it mandatory for organisations to send information to DC Members by email, it was necessary to keep the DC Members' mailboxes for receiving mail. Even if the mailboxes were removed, the area obtained would not be enough to set up a desk. There used to be a Chairman's room, Vice-chairman's room, DC Members' room and library at the Secretariat. The Vice-chairman's room and library were, however, now used by the Secretariat. Only the Chairman's room and library were left, and Secretariat staff would also use the computers in DC Members' room. If DC Members' room was also converted to be used by the Secretariat, there would be nowhere for DC Members to have meetings and discussion. As such, he would like to know if there was enough room at the Secretariat, if there were other solutions, and if it was necessary to seek the help of Architectural Services Department to change the office layout.

233. Mr. LAU Yung-wai said that some of the organisations would drop invitation to activities directly into DC Members' mailboxes. When DC Members went to pick up the mail, however, the activity was already over. As there was no datestamp, it was hard to find out when the organisation sent the mail, and the organisations all dealt with the matters differently. He suggested requiring

organisations and agencies send their correspondences directly to DC Members' ward offices so as to save DC Members' time in picking up mail at the Secretariat, while DC Members could also find out when the organisations sent the mail.

234. The Chairman said that if the Secretariat was asked to find out which organisations often sent information to DC Members by mail, it would increase the Secretariat's workload. He suggested making a record of which organisations had sent correspondences by mail to DC Members from the date of this meeting to the next, and then contacting and suggesting the organisations before the next meeting send the correspondences to DC Members' ward offices, so as to reduce the Secretariat's administrative costs.

235. Mr. LAU Yung-wai said that he could take the initiative to tell the organisations that often sent correspondences to DC Members' mailboxes by mail to send them to DC Members' ward offices.

236. The Chairman said that Members could tell the Secretariat they would like which organisations to send their correspondence to DC Members' ward offices.

XIII. Date of next meeting

237. The Chairman announced that the next meeting would be held at 9:30 a.m. on 20 May 2021 (Thursday).

238. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:38 p.m.

Tai Po District Council Secretariat
August 2021