

Minutes of the 1st Meeting in 2024
of the Community Involvement, Culture and Recreation Committee
of Tai Po District Council

Date: 10 January 2024 (Wednesday)
Time: 9:30 a.m. – 10:36 a.m.
Venue: Conference Room, Tai Po District Council (“TPDC”)

Present

Time of Arrival

Time of Withdrawal

Chairman

Mr. CHAN Cho-leung, MH, JP	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
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Vice-chairman

Ms. LEE Sai-yin, Jeanne, BBS, JP	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
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Members

Mr. YU Chi-wing, MH	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. LEE Man-kit	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. LI Wah-kwong, Rex, MH	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. LEE Hon-cheung	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. LAM Yick-kuen, MH	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. WU Cheuk-him	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. MUI Siu-fung	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. CHAN Tsz-kin	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. CHAN Yung-wa	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Ms. CHAN Kin-kwan	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. CHAN Siu-kuen, MH, JP	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. MAK Shing-ho, Gary	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. WAN Koon-kau	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. WONG Wai-tung	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Ms. WONG Pik-kiu, BBS, MH, JP	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. LO Hiu-fung	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting

Secretary

Miss LO Tin-wai, Tiffany	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
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Executive Officer (District Council) 1 /
Tai Po District Office (“TPDO”) /
Home Affairs Department (“HAD”)

In Attendance

Mr. CHU Ka-chun, Gordon	District Leisure Manager (Tai Po) / Leisure and Cultural Services Department (“LCSD”)
Mr. YAU Wan-po, Wallace	Deputy District Leisure Manager (District Support) Tai Po / LCSD
Ms. OR Hiu-man, Stella	Senior Manager (New Territories East) Promotion / LCSD
Ms. LAU Fung-yi, Connie	Manager (New Territories East) Marketing & District Activities / LCSD
Miss LEE Mei-yee, May	Senior Librarian (Tai Po) / LCSD
Ms. CHAN Lai-tak	Senior School Development Officer (Tai Po) 3 / Education Bureau (“EDB”)
Ms. SING Hoi-shan, Wendy	Senior Executive Officer (District Council) / TPDO / HAD
Ms. WONG Sze-man, Queenie	Senior Liaison Officer (2) / TPDO / HAD

Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed participants to the 1st meeting in 2024 of the Community Involvement, Culture and Recreation Committee (“CCRC”).

2. The Chairman welcomed the following officers who would attend the CCRC meetings as representatives of core departments (i.e. departments with regular attendance):

- (i) Ms. SING Hoi Shan, Wendy, Senior Executive Officer (District Council) of TPDO;
- (ii) Ms. WONG Sze-man, Queenie, Senior Liaison Officer (2) of TPDO;
- (iii) Ms. CHAN Lai-tak, Senior School Development Officer (Tai Po) 3 of EDB;
- (iv) Mr. CHU Ka-chun, Gordon, District Leisure Manager (Tai Po) of LCSD;
- (v) Mr. YAU Wan-po, Wallace, Deputy District Leisure Manager (District Support) Tai Po of LCSD;
- (vi) Ms. OR Hiu-man, Stella, Senior Manager (New Territories East) Promotion of LCSD;
- (vii) Ms. LAU Fung-yi, Connie, Manager (New Territories East) Marketing & District Activities of LCSD;
- (viii) Miss LEE Mei-yee, May, Senior Librarian (Tai Po) of LCSD.

3. The Chairman asked Members to note that the Secretariat had not received any notification of leave from Members so far.

I. Leisure and Cultural Services Department — Report on the participation in community activities held between September and December 2023 in Tai Po and proposed community activities to be held in January and February 2024 in Tai Po

(TPDC Paper No. CCR 1/2024)

4. The representative of LCSD reported on Appendix I to TPDC Paper No. CCR 1/2024 that LCSD had organised 340 recreational and sports activities between September and December 2023 in Tai Po District with a total of about 22 000 participants, and that a total of 153 recreational and sports activities were proposed to be held between January and February 2024 in Tai Po District with an estimated number of about 17 000 participants. Details of the above were set out in Annexes I and II respectively for Members' reference.

5. The representative of LCSD reported on Appendix II to TPDC Paper No. CCR 1/2024 regarding attendance report of cultural programmes held and sponsored in Tai Po District between August and December 2023, and programmes proposed to be held between January and February 2024. Details of the above were set out in Annexes I and II respectively for Members' reference. For enhancement of the cultural facilities and services for venue users, the Tai Po Civic Centre ("TPCC") had been closed from 1 December 2021 onwards for facility upgrading works, and was expected to serve the public with a brand new look from the first quarter of 2025.

6. The representative of LCSD reported on Appendix III to TPDC Paper No. CCR 1/2024 regarding details of the extension activities of Tai Po Public Library and the usage of mobile library service points in Tai Po District between September and December 2023, as well as the extension activities proposed to be held between January and February 2024. Details of the above were set out in Annexes I and II, as well as Annex III respectively for Members' reference.

7. A Member indicated that the refurbishment of TPCC would be completed in 2025, and suggested that the department should furnish Members with details by then.

8. The representative of LCSD said that TPCC, which was equipped with an auditorium, a black box theatre and a function room before the refurbishment, would be reprovisioned with two function rooms, an expanded foyer as well as additional toilets and passenger-goods lifts after the refurbishment.

(Post-meeting note: The LCSD provided the Secretariat with a briefing paper on the facility upgrading of TPCC on 15 February 2024 and the relevant information was set out at *Annex I*.)

9. Members' comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) They opined that the refurbished TPCC could benefit the public and hoped that the department would arrange a site visit for Members to give their views before its official opening.
- (ii) They hoped that the department would furnish Members with the timetables for the mobile library service points in Tai Po District.

10. The representative of LCSD said that the relevant service timetables could be provided to Members via the Secretariat after the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The LCSD provided the Secretariat with the information on the mobile library service points in Tai Po District on 24 January 2024 and the relevant information was set out at *Annex II*.)

11. Members' comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) Regarding the proposed construction of a library at the basement of the ex-Jockey Club site on On Pong Road, they asked whether the implementation of the relevant plan had been confirmed.
- (ii) Some members of the public had reflected that the service of mobile libraries was inadequate and the collections available for loan were outdated. They hoped that the department would consider increasing the service hours and expanding the collections.
- (iii) The department would construct a sports centre at Ma Wo Road in Tai Po. They asked about the progress and timetable of the project.
- (iv) As the Hong Kong Games ("HKG") would be held soon, they hoped that the department would provide more information so that Members could learn about and support the event.

12. The representative of LCSD responded as follows:

- (i) In order to encourage active public participation in sports, thereby improving sporting standards at the district level, the Government would organise HKG biennially, and the 9th HKG would be held in 2024. A working group in Tai Po District had also been formed, comprising representatives from TPDO, Tai Po Sports Association and LCSD. The district athlete selection would be completed soon. The working group would draw up a list of district delegates at a later time and invite the local community to assist in promotion, so as to make the sports atmosphere in Tai Po District more exuberant. The LCSD had also invited a

school in the district to participate in Cheering Team Competition for the 18 Districts and cheer for the athletes from Tai Po District. Inter-district competitions would be held from March to June 2024, while the opening ceremony would be held in April, details of which would be announced to Members at a later time.

- (ii) “Sports Centre, Social Welfare Facilities and Public Vehicle Park in Area 6, Tai Po” project was a “single land, multiple use” project primarily led by the Transport Department (“TD”) covering a carpark, social welfare facilities and a sport centre. The District Council (“DC”) was consulted on, and gave support to, the brief of the project earlier, and the TD was working on the detailed design. The relevant departments would update Members on the progress in a timely manner.

13. The representative of LCSD responded as follows:

- (i) Regarding the proposed construction of a new district library in Tai Po North that was planned to be built on a development site of the Health Bureau (“HHB”), the LCSD had submitted a proposal for the provision of an additional district library to the HHB and commissioned the Architectural Services Department (“ArchSD”) to conduct a technical feasibility study (“TFS”).
- (ii) The department would review the collections of mobile libraries, relay the comments to the relevant section and take follow-up actions. Currently, there were 12 mobile libraries in total, serving more than 100 service points over the territory. If additional service hours were required, the department had to co-ordinate the service hours of various service points in the district. She recognised the demands and support of local residents for the relevant services. The department would continue to take note of the community development, review and adjust the services with regard to the circumstances, and meet the needs of the public as far as possible subject to the availability of resources.

14. A Member asked the department whether the construction of the new district library in Tai Po North at the above site had been confirmed.

15. The representative of LCSD said that the department had earlier proposed to construct a sizable district library there but it could only be confirmed upon completion of the TFS.

16. Members’ comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) They asked whether the current types of collections in libraries in Tai Po District were same as those in Hong Kong Central Library (“HKCL”).

- (ii) Appendix III to the paper contained reading activities for children and young people. They hoped that elderly reading activities could be introduced so as to benefit people of different ages.

17. The representative of LCSD responded as follows:

- (i) At present, there were a total of 71 public libraries and 12 mobile libraries over the territory, among which HKCL was the largest, followed by major and district libraries. Tai Po Public Library, which was a district library, was smaller in terms of area and library collections compared to HKCL. Readers could view the collections of all libraries and reserve books through Library Automation System. The types of collections in libraries were more or less the same, with HKCL having a larger number of reference and thematic books.
- (ii) The department had organised elderly reading activities. It had also organised activities to tie in with the Senior Citizens Day earlier and the name of the relevant activities could be provided at a later time.

(Post-meeting note: Elderly Reading activities organised by LCSD included:

- (i) Subject Talk Series on End-of-Life Care in Hong Kong: (I) Active Ageing and Care for the Elderly and (II) Good Death and Peaceful Farewell;
- (ii) Subject Talk Series on Elderly Health: (I) Safe Swallowing and (II) Assistive Devices for Daily Living.)

18. Members' comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) As the libraries had plenty of online resources, they opined that the department could be more proactive in educating the elderly and promoting online reading.
- (ii) They asked the department whether e-books would be provided in addition to the existing printed books.

19. The representative of LCSD responded as follows:

- (i) The department organised user education sessions, such as educating the public on the use of Internet and online resources, on a regular basis. Members of the public of all ages and sectors were welcome to participate in these sessions and library staff were willing to answer questions on the use of online resources.
- (ii) At present, the libraries provided over 500 000 e-books and different e-databases.

Members of the public could access the relevant online resources and e-books at any time upon login to the library website.

- (iii) The department would organise “Not Just a Child’s Play” - Reading & Cantonese Opera Fun Day at Fu Heng Neighbourhood Community Centre on 21 January 2024, with activities including parent-child storytelling theatre, workshop and Cantonese opera costume booth. There would also be a Resources of Hong Kong Public Libraries@Reading Corner to introduce the online resources of the libraries to the public and provide guidance on the use of Internet and online resources.
- (iv) The department would prepare for and organise activities of different themes and types for the public of all ages every year.

20. A Member opined that libraries had little direct contact with the community in the past, and hoped that the department would consider furnishing DC Members with information and details of various activities and mobile libraries on a regular basis so as to reach out to community groups and members of the public through DC Members.

21. The representative of LCSD said that libraries had been organising different activities to maintain liaison with different stakeholders in the community. For example, libraries would organise a series of Reader Liaison Group gatherings in October each year to exchange views with the public. In addition, exchange sessions had also been held with teachers of schools in Tai Po District recently to learn about the schools’ needs for library services, and at the same time introduce and provide them with relevant library services. Furthermore, libraries would contact community organisations and groups in the district on a regular basis to gauge views and provide relevant library services.

22. A Member said that the World Book Day was celebrated on 23 April every year, and hoped that the department would organise activities covering people of different ages and sectors.

23. The representative of LCSD said that library activities would be organised during the World Book Day, which was also one of the major thematic activities every year and the relevant section of libraries was in preparation for the activities.

24. The representative of LCSD said that as TPCC was still under construction, the department had to discuss with ArchSD on the arrangements for the site visit to which Members would be invited to join at a later time. As the foyer would be expanded, the overall layout would be different from that before the refurbishment. The department would centralise the handling of the new directional signs.

25. CCRC noted the above report.

II. Education Bureau – Report on the education matters in Tai Po District

26. The representative of EDB said that since the Healthcare, Education and Social Services Committee (“HESC”) meeting on 11 September 2023 of last DC term, the overall operation of schools in the district had generally been smooth.

27. A Member said that during a visit to Valtorta College earlier, he found that there was only one entrance/exit to the school. In case of fire, the blockage of the entrance/exit might affect the evacuation of teachers and students. As such, he wished to reflect the situation to EDB. The school intended to set up another entrance/exit near the former National Education Centre (“NEC”), and would like to make an appointment with representatives of the bureau for a site visit to examine and discuss the feasibility of setting up an alternative emergency entrance/exit for the safety of teachers and students.

28. The representative of EDB said that as the bureau was aware of the frequent illegal parking in front of Valtorta College, it had advised the school to reflect the situation to the Hong Kong Police Force and Highways Department, and learnt that the school had maintained liaison with the relevant departments. The site of the former NEC was currently rented to another government department up to early 2025. As such, it would be necessary to further look into whether a fire escape could be provided there for use by the school.

29. A Member said that there was a fire at Valtorta College before and students fled to the rooftop at that time. The then Member had also immediately informed Divisional Officer and Station Commander Tai Po Fire Station to inspect the scene, during which they had also inspected the routes that could be used as means of escape near Immaculate Heart of Mary Church. At that time, some Members opined that it was more appropriate to refer the matter to the District Facilities and Works Committee for discussion as relevant representatives of government departments would be in attendance and the discussion could be focused on the improvement and provision of fire escape at the school.

30. The Chairman said that the above problem had existed for a long time and hoped that the bureau would communicate with the school to learn about the need for additional fire escape. The matter could be referred to an appropriate committee for discussion as necessary.

31. A Member said that a new school would be completed in Fu Tip Estate in future. The principals in the district had reflected that the date of admission of that school did not align with the date of intake of flats in the estate, where the school had already started to admit students but the intake of flats in the estate had not yet commenced, therefore residents might not be able to

enrol in the school. At present, other schools in the district were facing under-enrolment, and the opening of a new school would further deflect the enrolment of other schools, making them unable to operate sufficient classes. As such, it was hoped that the bureau would examine the situation. In addition, some of the school premises in the district were dilapidated, and some principals suggested that those schools should be relocated to new school premises upon completion and public fund should be spent on refurbishing the old school premises gradually.

32. The representative of EDB responded as follows:

- (i) The primary school located in Fu Tip Estate had been completed and would apply for school registration upon inspection. It was expected to officially commence operation in the 2024/25 school year (i.e. September 2024). At present, residents who had received “offer letter” had already called to ask about the allocation of school places.
- (ii) The bureau was also asking the Housing Department (“HD”) about the number of residents in Fu Tip Estate so as to know about their age distribution, and it had learnt that there was a demand for school places by residents nearby. Based on the number of students in early September 2023, only one primary school in the district had fewer classes than before. Tai Po District was not a district that mainly admitted cross-boundary students. As the community was developing and there would be residents moving into new housing estates, the issue of serious under-enrolment had not yet emerged. The bureau expected that the population in Tai Po District would increase after the intake of flats in Fu Tip Estate. As such, the increase in the number of students would drive the demand for school places.

33. A Member indicated that with the current low birth rate and the ageing population, schools would face under-enrolment. Many primary and secondary schools in Tai Po District had been constructed for many years. The design of the school premises and their facilities were outdated. As such, it was hoped that the bureau would allocate additional resources to rebuild these school premises in the district and consider merging schools to increase the number of school facilities. The ancillary facilities of several schools under the Heung Yee Kuk N.T. were obsolete and the schools were small in size. As such, it was hoped that the bureau would upgrade the hardware facilities of the schools in the district.

34. The Chairman said that as Social Welfare, Housing and Development Planning Committee (“SHDC”) meeting would be held on the day following immediately the date of meeting, he suggested that Members reflect their views to the relevant departments.

35. A Member said that the current student enrolment situation of primary schools was fairly satisfactory but kindergartens were facing serious under-enrolment. He hoped that the bureau would examine the number of students and demand for school places in the long term, and asked about the situation of implementing small class teaching mode in schools in the district.

36. The representative of EDB responded as follows:

- (i) The bureau would provide funding for schools to carry out major repairs works each year and would also assist in emergency repairs in case of unexpected damage.
- (ii) The bureau anticipated that there would be a structural decrease in school-age population in future. To cope with the challenges brought by the structural change in student population in the long term, priority would be accorded to the reprovisioning of schools or expansion of school premises in future school allocation exercises so as to improve the quality of school premises.

37. Members' comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) They asked about the number of students of a time-limited primary school in Tai Yuen Estate which would cease operation in 2026 and its subsequent handling.
- (ii) They asked whether the bureau had any plans to identify sites in the district for school operation.
- (iii) The basketball court of S.K.H. Yuen Chen Maun Chen Jubilee Primary School ("Jubilee Primary School"), once used by nearby residents, was owned by the neighboring Fu Heng Estate. As there were frequent incidents of objects being thrown from a height from the neighboring buildings, the school had contacted the incorporated owners ("IOs") of the housing estate with the assistance of DC Members a few years ago for the proposed installation of safety nets for the court but to no avail eventually as the IOs had taken into consideration the repair and maintenance issues. As such, the school did not dare to use the court, and it was hoped that the bureau would pay attention to the situation.

38. The representative of EDB responded as follows:

- (i) At present, only three schools in the district had not implemented small class teaching. The bureau would closely follow up on the situation.
- (ii) As for the time-limited primary school, namely the N.T.W.J.W.A Christian Remembrance of Grace Primary School ("Remembrance of Grace Primary School"), the bureau would ensure that students of the school could complete the six-year primary education in the same school. Remembrance of Grace Primary

School had ceased operating P1 classes starting from the 2022/23 school year, and was operating three P3 classes, four P4 classes, five P5 classes and five P6 classes, totalling 17 classes, in the 2023/24 school year. It had commenced operation since the 2018/19 school year to cope with the transient demand for primary school places in Tai Po District at that time and would operate until the 2026/27 school year.

- (iii) To the understanding of the bureau, the site at Chung Nga Road West would be earmarked for the construction of a primary school, and the school building programme was subject to the specific timetable for implementing the public housing development at Chung Nga Road West by the HD. At an earlier HESC meeting, the then Members held different views on the planning of the site. The bureau had reflected the views to the School Building Section, and there was no updated information for the time being.
- (iv) The bureau would follow up with Jubilee Primary School on the arrangements for using the court in due course.

39. A Member said that as Tai Yuen Estate had a history of nearly 50 years, it was expected to be due for redevelopment in the near future. It was suggested that the Government should reserve the site after the cessation of the operation of Remembrance of Grace Primary School and incorporate it into the redevelopment projects of estates so that residents could be resettled in the current locality gradually.

40. The Chairman concurred with the suggestion, and hoped that Members would raise it for discussion at the SHDC meeting for the information of representatives of HD and relevant departments.

41. A Member opined that national education was a top priority, and hoped that the EDB would introduce at the next CCRC meeting on how the bureau would support the implementation of national education in primary and secondary schools in Tai Po District, including teacher training, funding for schools and teaching progress.

42. The Chairman hoped that the Secretariat would discuss with the EDB and arrange for the bureau to report on the matter at the next meeting.

43. A Member said that the Education University of Hong Kong (“EdUHK”) had already established the National Security and Legal Education Research Centre earlier to assist in promoting the national security law and related legislation. It was believed that EdUHK would fully support the commencement of national education in Tai Po District, and the bureau could liaise with the centre to take forward the relevant work.

44. CCRC noted the above report.

III. Any other business

45. Members did not raise other business.

IV. Date of next meeting

46. The next meeting was scheduled to be held at 9:30 a.m. on 7 March 2024 (Thursday).

47. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:36 a.m.

**Tai Po District Council Secretariat
February 2024**