

Minutes of the 6th Meeting in 2024
of the Social Welfare, Housing and Development Planning Committee
of Tai Po District Council

Date: 8 November 2024 (Friday)
Time: 9:30 a.m. – 12:09 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. LO Hiu-fung, MH	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
<u>Vice-chairman</u>		
Mr. WU Cheuk-him	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
<u>Members</u>		
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. MUI Siu-fung	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. MUI Ching-hung	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. CHAN Cho-leung, MH, JP	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, SBS, MH, JP	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Ms. LOK Siu-luen	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Ms. LAU Shui-ping, Daisy	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Ms. WONG Yan-yan, Jannie	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
<u>Secretary</u>		
Miss FUNG Yu-kwan, Connie	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Executive Officer (District Council) 3 / Tai Po District Office (“TPDO”) / Home Affairs Department (“HAD”)		

In Attendance

Ms. CHAN Sin-yee	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Tai Po/ North) 1 / Social Welfare Department (“SWD”)
Mr. WONG Man-yum	Senior Housing Manager / Tai Po, North & Shatin 3 / Housing Department (“HD”)
Mr. LAU Ka-wing, Kevin	Senior Town Planner / Tai Po 1 / Planning Department (“PlanD”)
Mr. WONG Po-kit, Jeffrey	Senior Town Planner / Tai Po 2 / PlanD
Ms. LO Sik-chi, Cynthia	Engineer / 22 (North) / Civil Engineering and Development Department (“CEDD”)
Mr. TSUI Chun-sing	Administrative Assistant / Lands / District Lands Office, Tai Po (“TPDLO”) / Lands Department (“LandsD”)
Ms. CHAN Hoi-wing	Engineer / New Territories East (Distribution 1) / Water Supplies Department (“WSD”)
Dr. YUEN Cheuk-pun, Eddie	Deputy Hospital Chief Executive / Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital (“Nethersole Hospital”)
Dr. LEUNG Kwan-wa, Maria	Chief of Service / Department of Family Medicine / New Territories East Cluster (“NTEC”)
Ms. CHENG Ka-yan, Christine	Manager (Communications and Community Relations) / Nethersole Hospital and Tai Po Hospital
Ms. LING Wai-chi	Senior Youth and Education Officer (New Territories East) / Independent Commission Against Corruption (“ICAC”)
Mr. FUNG Ying-wai, Victor	Senior Liaison Officer (1) (Atg.) / TPDO / HAD
Ms. SING Hoi-shan, Wendy	Senior Executive Officer (District Council) / TPDO / HAD

Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed participants to the 6th meeting in 2024 of the Social Welfare, Housing and Development Planning Committee (“SHDC”).

I. Confirmation of the minutes of the 5th meeting in 2024 of the SHDC on 6 September 2024

2. No proposed amendments to the minutes had been received by the Secretariat prior to the meeting. The Chairman asked Members whether they had any proposed amendments.
3. No Members had put forward any proposed amendments, and the captioned minutes were confirmed.

II. Hospital Authority – Report on the provision of medical services in Tai Po District

4. The representative of Hospital Authority (“HA”) reported on the provision of medical services by HA in Tai Po District, details of which were as follows:

- (i) The number of people served by Accident and Emergency Department (“A&ED”) of Nethersole Hospital every day between 31 October and 6 November 2024 was between 229 and 310.
- (ii) The bed occupancy rate of medical wards ranged from 91% to 106%.
- (iii) The bed occupancy rate of paediatric wards ranged from 59% to 70%.
- (iv) The bed occupancy rate of orthopaedic wards ranged from 66% to 79%.
- (v) The HA was constructing a cover to walkway at the zebra crossing connecting Tai Po Hospital and Nethersole Hospital and a transfer linkage between the two hospitals to provide a safer walkway for patients and visitors, as well as to rationalise the patient transfer arrangements, thereby enhancing transfer efficiency and patient safety. In addition, the linkage concerned would also be used by staff for transporting hospital supplies between the two hospitals, which enhanced the occupational safety and health need of staff. The objective of the whole project was to enhance the experience of patients, visitors and staff in using the linkage. The hospital would implement road diversion in April next year to tie in with the said project. Traffic signs would be put up by then to remind motorists of the diversion arrangement. Members of the public seeking treatment at A&ED would have to alight at the main entrance of the hospital and follow the signs therein to A&ED.
- (vi) The HA was commencing the seasonal influenza vaccination programme and its public hospitals and outpatient clinics would start providing seasonal influenza vaccinations to eligible persons. With the coming of winter, the risk of influenza transmission increased. Vaccinations could help enhance immunity against influenza and greatly reduce the risk of serious illness or death from infection. Protection would develop in about two to four weeks after inoculation and last for at least six months, and the public was urged to get vaccinated as soon as possible.

5. A Member asked about the progress of improving the waiting facilities at Tai Po Jockey Club General Out-patient Clinic (“Jockey Club GOPC”). Some members of the public had reflected that the waiting time for consultation was long and had once waited for as long as five hours.

6. The representative of HA said that the HA was studying the feasibility of constructing a cover for the waiting area of Jockey Club GOPC and Members would be informed of any updates. In addition, members of the public could make appointments for GOPC services through the mobile application “HA Go” to save waiting time.

7. Members’ comments were as follows:

- (i) They said that elderly people might not know how to use the mobile application to make appointments for GOPC services.
- (ii) They would like to know about the community outreach services and activities of Nethersole Hospital.

8. The representative of HA responded that an outreach team was usually made up of nurses who handled and followed up on discharged cases, and made home visits to provide simple nursing care and medication counselling service to patients in need. In addition, the Patient Resource Centre provided support services for different patients, such as arranging activities for patients with diabetes.

9. The Chairman suggested that the HA should strengthen co-operation with the district in organising activities and talks and it could also recruit young people to assist elderly people in registering and using the mobile application “HA Go”.

III. Social Welfare Department – Report on the data on major social services in Tai Po District (TPDC Paper No. SHD 39/2024)

10. The representative of Social Welfare Department (“SWD”) went through the captioned paper.

11. Members did not raise any comments or questions.

IV. Social Welfare Department and Independent Commission Against Corruption – Report on the response to community activities held between September and October 2024 in Tai Po (TPDC Paper No. SHD 40/2024)

12. The representatives of SWD and ICAC asked Members to take note of the captioned paper.

13. Members’ comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) They thanked the SWD for its prompt handling of an emergency referral case and proper follow-up.

- (ii) Noting that the ICAC and District Services & Community Care Teams (“Care Teams”) had conducted joint visits earlier, they opined that volunteer teams set up by other government departments could also work with Care Teams in organising activities to serve the community.
- (iii) They asked about the date and venue of “Integrity Building Maintenance Seminar”. In addition, Members asked whether the ICAC had organised activities on a regular basis to provide information on building maintenance or advice to individual owners’ corporations (“OCs”).

14. The representative of SWD thanked Members for their appreciation, and the department would continue to provide services to those in need.

15. The representative of ICAC responded as follows:

- (i) The date and venue of “Integrity Building Maintenance Seminar” had yet to be confirmed and Members would be informed of any updates.
- (ii) The Commission had all along been providing information to building management bodies and OCs. Apart from taking the initiative to contact newly established OCs, the Commission would also introduce its services to OCs that had received statutory orders from the Buildings Department or Fire Services Department. If necessary, the Commission would also attend meetings of OCs/owners’ management committees to explain the relevant information and ordinances. The Commission had also been working closely with the District Offices by serving as presenters at events such as seminars or certificate courses.

16. The Chairman asked about the reasons for the single digit number of participants recorded in some of the activities in Appendix I to the captioned paper.

17. The representative of SWD responded that the number of participants depended on the nature of the activities. In general, the department conducted activities in groups in most cases to facilitate counselling intervention by social workers, and thus there were fewer places for such activities. The department would also organise large-scale activities with a larger number of participants in response to the various needs of the community.

V. District Lands Office, Tai Po – Report on matters relating to the illegal structures on and illegal occupation of Government lands

(TPDC Paper No. SHD 41/2024)

18. The representative of TPDLO went through the captioned paper.

19. A Member asked about the follow-up progress of the unauthorised building works (“UBWs”) at Nam Hang Tsuen and Chuen On Road.

20. The representative of TPDLO responded that the situation in Nam Hang Tsuen mentioned by Members had been referred to the Land Enforcement Team for follow-up. As for the UBWs found at Chuen On Road, the TPDLO had completed the clearance and referred the problem of accumulation of sundry items to the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department for follow-up.

VI. District Lands Office, Tai Po – Report on the progress of processing redevelopment applications of small houses and old houses in Tai Po District
(TPDC Paper No. SHD 42/2024)

21. The representative of TPDLO went through the captioned paper.

22. A Member asked about the reasons for not approving redevelopment applications of old houses.

23. The representative of TPDLO said that unsuccessful applications usually involved land title, lease or boundary problems.

24. A Member said that he had inspected the section of Cho Ma Wu in Nam Hang Tsuen with his contractor staff where soil erosion was serious, and asked the TPDLO whether reinforcement works or resurfacing of footpaths would be carried out.

25. The representative of TPDLO responded that he would revert to Members after getting a clear picture of the situation from colleagues of Slope Maintenance Section, adding that if the works fell within Tsuen Road improvement works, assistance from the TPDO should be sought.

(Post-meeting note: A Member asked about the slope in the vicinity of lamp post No. VA4847 with registration number 7NW-B/C 739, where determination of slope maintenance responsibility was in progress. The maintenance of the slope concerned would be undertaken by the responsible party for slope maintenance based on the determination result.)

26. The Chairman asked the TPDLO to follow up on the redevelopment applications of old houses in Lai Chi Shan and Pan Chung San Tsuen.

27. The representative of TPDLO had taken note of the opinions and would take follow-up action.

VII. Planning Department – Report on the progress of processing planning applications in Tai Po District by the Town Planning Board and its Rural and New Town Planning Committee
(TPDC Paper No. SHD 43/2024)

28. The representative of PlanD went through the captioned paper.

29. Members' comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) They would like to know about details of the minor relaxation of plot ratio ("PR") and building height restriction ("BHR") in respect of planning application (No. A/TP/700), and whether there was a preliminary timetable and design proposal as well as whether there would be an increase in public housing supply.
- (ii) They asked about the progress of the Land Sharing Pilot Scheme ("LSPS") application at Lo Fai Road, especially the entrance arrangements for the development project.
- (iii) The ex-Jockey Club Swimming Pool Site had been converted into a temporary car park recently and they asked about the expiry date of the tenancy agreement.
- (iv) They asked about the data on illegal parking in Tai Po District and whether the PlanD had any plans on the change of land use for the provision of additional car parks.

30. The representative of PlanD responded as follows:

- (i) Planning Application No. A/TP/700 – An application by the Hong Kong Housing Authority for minor relaxation of PR from 6.0 to 6.9, an increase of about 15%, and of BHR from 140 metres above Principal Datum ("mPD") to 172mPD, an increase of about 23%, for permitted public housing development at a site zoned "Residential (Group A)" at Chung Nga Road West. The number of storeys would be increased from about 43 to 52 with the estimated number of flats from 950 to 1 292. According to information provided by the HD, site formation works were underway at the site, and the project was expected to be completed in 2029-30, providing ancillary car parks, retail facilities, open space, and social welfare facilities. For details, please refer to the paper on the website of the Town Planning Board ("TPB") (https://www.tpb.gov.hk/en/meetings/RNTPC/Agenda/752_rnt_agenda.html).
- (ii) The question on the tenancy of the temporary car park would be replied by the TPDLO.

(Post-meeting note: The TPDLO replied that the short term tenancy in question was granted for a fixed term of 12 months with effect from 30 October 2024 and thereafter on a quarterly basis.)

- (iii) The PlanD did not have relevant data on illegal parking. In planning government projects, the Transport Department (“TD”) would consider whether there was a need to provide additional public car parks to cater for community development.

(Post-meeting note: The TD replied that the Government would provide more parking spaces for public use in suitable “Government, Institution or Community” facilities and public open space projects in accordance with the principle of “single site, multiple use”.)

- (iv) The department would relay Members’ opinions on the entrance arrangements for the development project to the applicant and Land Sharing Office of the Development Bureau for consideration. They were expected to consult the TPDC early next year and would explain the development plan. The department had specifically reminded the applicant to spare no effort in formulating a traffic improvement plan with regard to the traffic condition of Ting Kok Road.

(Post-meeting note: The PlanD would consult the TPDC on the development project concerned on 7 January 2025.)

31. Members’ comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) As there were no community halls in Fu Tip Estate at present, it was suggested that the school site reserved under the development project at Chung Nga Road West be converted for community facilities purposes.
- (ii) It was hoped that the department and TD would make road planning and provide comprehensive matching transport facilities for Chung Nga Road West, Fung Yuen and Lam Tsuen. At present, the traffic on Chung Nga Road was already very congested, and it was hoped that the department would make proper planning for the area.
- (iii) They asked when would the consultation paper on the planning of Pak Shek Kok be available and suggested that more community facilities be provided at Pak Shek Kok.
- (iv) It was hoped that the planning application procedures for a car park in the Village Type Development (“V”) zone could be streamlined.
- (v) Regarding the planning application (No. Y/TP/38), it was hoped that the department would consider proposals provided by the Village Office and village representatives in planning.
- (vi) The TPB had imposed a BHR of no more than 55mPD for Tai Po Hui in a given year. Quite a number of OCs and committees were worried that the room for building development in the event of redevelopment would be stifled as a result of the BHR, and they hoped that the department would re-determine or review the BHR for Tai

Po Hui.

32. The representative of PlanD responded as follows:

- (i) The department had consulted the Education Bureau, which considered it necessary to reserve the site for school use. The department would relay Members' opinions to the bureau for consideration.
- (ii) He clarified that in processing planning applications, it was the department's practice to submit all information and technical assessment reports submitted by the applicant to the relevant departments for vetting. The department would only suggest that the TPB approve the applications after obtaining the endorsement of the assessment reports of the relevant departments. Taking the public housing development at Chung Nga Road West as an example, all technical assessments submitted by the HD, such as the traffic impact assessment ("TIA"), were vetted and agreed by the TD and the relevant departments.
- (iii) The Mass Transit Railway Corporation Limited ("MTR") was conducting a study on Pak Shek Kok and would report to Members of any further information. As mentioned in the 2021 Policy Address, apart from the construction of MTR Pak Shek Kok Station, the Government would also make the best use of the development potential of the adjoining sites to provide more housing and parking spaces, shops and public facilities for local residents.
- (iv) The application in Fung Yuen (No. Y/TP/38) was still in processing stage, and the TPB had yet to approve the application. The tentative meeting date was 22 November, and it was expected that the applicant had to submit further information and hence the meeting would be postponed.

(Post-meeting note: Regarding planning application (No. Y/TP/38), the TPB acceded to the applicant's request for deferment on 22 November so that the applicant could prepare further information in response to the department's comments.)

- (v) He noted Members' comments on the traffic in Tai Po District. For some developments in the district, the project departments or developers of new development projects were required to conduct detailed TIAs, and to study and formulate appropriate traffic measures and public transport supporting facilities to ensure that the projects concerned would not adversely affect the local road network.
- (vi) In around 2010 to 2011, the PlanD had set BHRs for most of the urban areas or new towns in Hong Kong after taking into account various relevant factors, including air ventilation and visual impact. While the redevelopment of buildings had to comply with the BHRs stipulated in outline zoning plans, individuals or developers might still apply to the TPB for a minor relaxation of BHRs in respect of

redevelopment of buildings if necessary, and the TPB would consider them on a case-by-case basis.

- (vii) The department would adopt a lenient approach in handling planning applications for temporary car parks in “V” zones as far as possible, but applicants would still have to address the technical issues raised by other departments. With regard to applications for temporary car parks in “Agriculture” zones, the PlanD would consult the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (“AFCD”) on farmland conditions and agricultural rehabilitation potential. If the AFCD and other relevant government departments objected to or did not support the application, it would be more difficult for the planning application to be approved by the TPB.

33. The Chairman suggested that Members listen to details of the LSPS application at Lo Fai Road before submitting their views by then.

34. Members’ comments were as follows:

- (i) They added that their hope was to have relaxation of the BHR for the entire Tai Po Hui and not to apply to the TPB for such relaxation for each development or redevelopment case.
- (ii) They were concerned about the LSPS application at Lam Tsuen and hoped that the PlanD would provide details at future meetings.

(Post-meeting note: Regarding the LSPS application at Lam Tsuen, please refer to Annex II to the minutes of the meeting on 5 July 2024. The DC would be consulted on the development project in due course upon completion of the detailed technical study.)

35. The representative of PlanD responded as follows:

- (i) The department would inform Members in accordance with the existing mechanism upon receipt of a planning application. Members were welcome to contact them if they had any comments on individual planning applications without having to wait for the next meeting. Views submitted by Members would also be submitted to the TPB for consideration.
- (ii) Regarding the BHR in Tai Po Hui area, apart from applying to the TPB for a minor relaxation of the BHR for each individual site, the developer or landowner might also apply for amendment of plan under section 12A of the Town Planning Ordinance to relax the BHR for the entire zone.

36. Members' comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) As the section of cycle track near Lo Fai Road outside Tai Po East Fire Station was relatively steep, they asked whether diversion of the cycle track could be made and Ting Kok Road be widened to alleviate the traffic congestion problem.
- (ii) Members asked the Secretariat to enquire with the department about the reasons for setting BHR for Tai Po District back then.

(Post-meeting note: The Secretariat had conveyed the response of PlanD to Members on 18 December 2024.)

37. The representative of PlanD responded that the construction and widening of general roads or cycle tracks fell within "uses always permitted", which did not require application to the TPB.

38. The Chairman suggested that if Members had any thoughts on the widening of Ting Kok Road and the extension of cycle tracks, they might first submit papers for deliberation by the relevant departments before the next meeting.

VIII. Housing Department – Report on the information relating to the vacant housing units, execution of the Marking Scheme for Estate Management Enforcement, and the vacant storage rooms in the public housing estates in Tai Po District
(TPDC Paper No. SHD 44/2024)

39. The representative of HD went through the captioned paper.

40. Members' comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) They reflected that the policy of combating tenancy abuse was too harsh. There was a case in which the family member of a public rental housing ("PRH") tenant had signed a Provisional Agreement for Sale and Purchase, and mistakenly believed that he could wait until the handover of the property in question before going through the formalities of the application for deletion of a family member. However, he was regarded as suspected of having made false declarations on assets by the department and was served with a Notice to Quit ("NTQ"). Members asked the department to step up publicity and explain the ordinances relating to PRH and points to note in making declarations.
- (ii) There were currently no ordinances regulating the use of "electric mobility devices" ("EMDs") in the precincts of housing estates, and it was suggested that EMDs be covered by the Marking Scheme for Estate Management Enforcement.

- (iii) As the situation of throwing objects from height in PRH estates was serious, they asked whether the department had any prosecution figures on throwing objects from height and whether a list of black spots for throwing objects from height would be drawn up. In addition, it was hoped that the installation of additional close-circuit televisions (“CCTVs”) in Fu Tip Estate would be completed as soon as possible.
- (iv) Ways to deter the throwing objects from height in Tenants Purchase Scheme (“TPS”) estates should be explored, and they asked whether the department could enhance communication with OCs and install additional CCTVs.
- (v) Quite a number of tenants had reflected that they were unaware of the fact that the previous tenants had replaced their iron-framed windows with aluminium-framed ones and thus had to bear the replacement expenses. They hoped that the department would assist tenants with financial difficulties in repairing their windows.
- (vi) The HD had pointed out that members of the public on the PRH waiting list who wished to “switch from renting to buying” a flat had to move into a PRH flat before they could buy one. Members opined that this policy was inflexible.

41. The representative of HD responded as follows:

- (i) Combating tenancy abuse was the priority of the department recently, and the department would check whether the persons listed on the tenancy agreement had purchased their own flats. Under the new policy, PRH tenants were required to take the initiative to declare to the Hong Kong Housing Authority within one month after having acquired a domestic property in Hong Kong for reassessing their eligibility for continuous residence in the PRH flats. In case of receipt of a NTQ, the tenant might lodge an appeal within two weeks and the Appeal Panel would determine the appeal on its own merits. The department had also taken note of Members’ opinions and would step up publicity and review the policy.
- (ii) He had taken note of Members’ opinions and would explore the feasibility of regulating the use of EMDs.
- (iii) To enhance the evidence collection work for throwing objects from height, the department would install CCTVs at suitable locations in PRH estates (including black spots of throwing objects from height) as far as practicable and enhance enforcement by quick tracking of the time period, location and situation of incidents of throwing objects from height through a software. The prosecution figures for throwing objects from height would be supplemented after the meeting. In addition, he was also aware of the need to install additional CCTVs at suitable locations in Fu Tip Estate as soon as possible.

(Post-meeting note: A total of four cases of throwing objects from height in PRH estates in Tai Po District were recorded over the past year with each household being

prosecuted and allotted 7 penalty points. The four cases were still pending before court and the outcome of prosecutions was being awaited.)

- (iv) Regarding the situation of throwing objects from height in TPS estates, the department had sent representatives to advise OCs to install CCTVs.
- (v) If Members were aware of any special cases requiring assistance, they might reflect them to Housing Managers or Senior Housing Managers in the district and the HD would definitely make every effort to follow up on the repair works.
- (vi) If members of the public on the PRH waiting list would like to “switch from renting to buying” a flat, they might apply for the Green Form Certificate to buy a flat and skip the process of residing in PRH flats.

IX. Buildings Department – Report on details of work in handling illegal structures in private properties in Tai Po District

(TPDC Paper No. SHD 45/2024)

42. The Chairman asked Members to take note of the captioned paper.

X. Any other business

43. Members did not raise any comments or questions.

XI. Date of next meeting

44. The next meeting was scheduled to be held at 9:30 a.m. on 10 January 2025 (Friday).
45. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:09 p.m.