

Minutes of the 1st Meeting in 2025 of Tai Po District Council

Date: 7 January 2025 (Tuesday)

Time: 9:33 a.m. – 1:13 p.m.

Venue: Conference Room, Tai Po District Council

<u>Present</u>	<u>Time of Arrival</u>	<u>Time of Withdrawal</u>
<u>Chairman</u>		
Ms. CHAN Hau-man, Eunice, JP	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
Ms. LEE Sai-yin, Jeanne, BBS, JP	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. LI Yiu-ban, BBS, MH, JP	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. MUI Ching-hung	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. CHAN Tsz-kin	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. CHAN Cho-leung, MH, JP	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Ms. CHAN Kin-kwan	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. CHAN Yung-wa	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. CHAN Siu-kuen, MH, JP	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. CHAN Pok-chi, 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
Mr. LO Hiu-fung, MH	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
<u>Secretary</u>		
Ms. SING Hoi-shan, Wendy	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Senior Executive Officer (District Council) / Tai Po District Office (“TPDO”) / Home Affairs Department (“HAD”)		

In Attendance

Mr. MA Wai-hing, Adrian	District Commander (Tai Po) / Hong Kong Police Force (“HKPF”)
Ms. CHOI Ying-tung	Police Community Relations Officer (Tai Po) / HKPF
Ms. CHAN Sin-yee	District Social Welfare Officer (Tai Po / North) (Atg.) / Social Welfare Department
Mr. FUNG Hon-wa, Harris	District Leisure Manager (Tai Po) / Leisure and Cultural Services Department (“LCSD”)
Ms. WONG Yee-fang, Eva	Chief Transport Officer / New Territories East / Transport Department
Mr. CHOW Man-hong, Mann	Head of Land Sharing Office / Development Bureau (“DEVB”)
Mr. TSANG Wing-keung, Rico	District Planning Officer / Sha Tin, Tai Po and North / Planning Department (“PlanD”)
Mr. LAU Ka-wing, Kevin	Senior Town Planner / Tai Po 1 / PlanD
Mr. WONG Po-kit, Jeffrey	Senior Town Planner / Tai Po 2 / PlanD
Ms. CHENG Nga-see, Ellen	Chief Engineer / N3 / Civil Engineering and Development Department (“CEDD”)
Mr. LIU Sin-hing, George	District Lands Officer / TP (District Land Office, Tai Po (“TPDLO”)) / Lands Department (“LandsD”)
Mr. TUNG Wai-lam	Senior Land Executive / Land Management / TPDLO / LandsD
Ms. SZETO Hau-yan, Esther	Chief Manager / Management (TNS) / Housing Department (“HD”)
Mr. MA Hing-sum, Patrick	District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Tai Po) / Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (“FEHD”)
Miss FAN Wing-man	Senior Health Inspector (Cleansing & Pest Control) Tai Po 2 / FEHD
Ms. SIOW Ying-hung, Bonnie	Chief School Development Officer (Tai Po) / Education Bureau (“EDB”)
Ms. LAU Wai-kwan, Natalie	Principal Assistant Secretary 8 / Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (“CEDB”)
Ms. LI Yin-yee, Vivian	Senior Executive Officer (8)B / CEDB
Mr. NG Sau-tak, Eddy	Assistant Director (Market & Competition) / Office of the Communications Authority (“OFCA”)
Ms. CHIM Kin-ning, Christine	Head of Market & Competition 1 / OFCA
Mr. LEUNG Chui-choi, Dennis	Principal Regulatory Affairs Manager (Market & Competition 12) / OFCA
Mr. YUNG Lik-tsing, Eric	Senior Regulatory Affairs Manager (Market & Competition 12)1 / OFCA
Mr. TAM Chun-yip, John	Regulatory Affairs Officer (Market & Competition 12) / OFCA
Ms. CHOR Kin-lan, Anna	Principal Assistant Secretary (Food)3 / Environment and Ecology Bureau (“EEB”)
Mr. LAI Chuen-chi, Patrick	Deputy Director / Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (“AFCD”)
Mr. MA Wai-chung, Peter	Assistant Director (Agriculture) / AFCD
Mr. LOK Wai-shing, Edward	Senior Agricultural Officer (Agri-Park & Land) / AFCD

Mr. HO Siu-tao	Head of Service / Jockey Club Tai Po Integrated Children & Youth Services Centre / Hong Kong Children & Youth Services
Mr. HO Lik-fai, Eric	Co-founder & Director / Neighbourhood Innovation Lab (“NIB”)
Ms. Leung Ka-hei, Kristin	Design Strategist / NIB
Ms. Shum Yin-nok, Theodora	Design Strategist / NIB
Mr. KWOK Chun-chai, Johnny	Assistant District Officer (Tai Po) / HAD
Mr. LUI Kan-man, Raymond	Senior Liaison Officer (1) / TPDO / HAD
Ms. WONG Sze-man, Queenie	Senior Liaison Officer (2) / TPDO / HAD
Miss CHAN Sui-king, Madeline	Senior Executive Officer (District Management) / TPDO / HAD
Ms. HUEN Lai-yan, Sara	Senior Executive Officer (District Council)(Designate) / TPDO / HAD
Mr. CHOW Tsz-yan, Daniel	Executive Officer I (District Council) / TPDO / HAD

The Chairman welcomed District Council Members (“Members”) and representatives of government departments to the first meeting of the 7th Tai Po District Council (“TPDC”) in 2025.

I. Confirmation of the minutes of the 6th meeting in 2024 of TPDC on 5 November 2024

2. Neither had the Secretariat received any proposed amendments before the meeting, nor had any participants put forward amendments at the meeting. The minutes of the captioned meeting were confirmed without amendment.

II. Commerce and Economic Development Bureau and Office of the Communications Authority – Subsidy Scheme to Extend 5G Coverage in Rural and Remote Areas (Tai Po District)

(TPDC Paper No. 1/2025)

3. The Chairman welcomed Ms. LAU Wai-kwan, Natalie and LI Yin-ye, Vivian, Principal Assistant Secretary and Senior Executive Officer of CEDB respectively, as well as Mr. NG Sau-tak, Eddy, Ms. CHIM Kin-ning, Christine, Messrs. LEUNG Chui-choi, Dennis, YUNG Lik-tsing, Eric and TAM Chun-yip, John, Assistant Director, Head of Market & Competition, Principal Regulatory Affairs Manager, Senior Regulatory Affairs Manager and Regulatory Affairs Officer of OFCA respectively, to attend the meeting for this agenda item.

4. Mr. NG Sau-tak, Eddy went through the captioned paper.

5. Mr. Lam Yick-kuen supported the implementation of the captioned subsidy scheme (“Subsidy Scheme”) in Tai Po District, and hoped that it would help resolve the problem of non-reception of mobile network signals in some villages in the district. He said that the Tai Po Rural

Committee (“RC”) would render full support and assistance.

6. Ms. LEE Sai-yin, Jeanne asked about the amount of estimated provision for the Subsidy Scheme.

7. Mr. LI Wah-kwong, Rex supported the Subsidy Scheme and would like know whether Tap Mun was within the signal coverage area of the radio base station (“RBS”) at Ko Lau Wan Public Toilet.

8. Ms. LOK Siu-luen suggested that the department invite Members to a site visit prior to the commissioning of RBS, and strengthen communication with Members on the safety of RBS.

9. Mr. WU Cheuk-him asked whether mobile network signal coverage and 5G service in the district would be improved on the commissioning of RBS, and hoped that the bureau would monitor the service quality of and charges by mobile network operators (“MNOs”) in rural areas.

10. Mr. CHAN Cho-leung supported the Subsidy Scheme but opined that the installation of only 50 RBSs would not be sufficient. He asked how the department would handle the situation if the RBS site locations were met with opposition. In addition, he hoped that the OFCA would boost and monitor the services of and charges by various MNOs in rural areas.

11. Mr. CHAN Siu-kuen said that some of the RBS site locations fell short of the expectations of village heads and residents. The Tai Po RC hoped to fine-tune the RBS site locations with the OFCA for expeditious rolling out of the Subsidy Scheme.

12. Mr. LI Yiu-ban supported the Subsidy Scheme, but hoped that the department would answer Members’ questions on the coverage of RBSs, minimise obstruction to the coverage due to ground profile or other buildings, and consider the installation of solar panels to support the day-to-day operation of RBSs. He hoped that the department would carefully assess the RBS site locations.

13. Mr. LEE Hon-cheung supported the Subsidy Scheme and hoped that the department would provide data on signal coverage and the number of users at popular countryside spots during weekends.

14. Mr. WAN Koon-kau asked whether only 14 RBSs would be installed in Tai Po District and would like to know whether the signal coverage of RBSs could cover the surrounding area of Lam Tsuen.

15. Mr. CHAN Yung-wa would like to know whether the RBSs would be tower stations or transmission stations.

16. Ms. WONG Pik-kiu hoped that the OFCA would review the mobile network signalling service in Tai Po urban area.

17. Mr. LO Hiu-fung welcomed the Subsidy Scheme and would like the department to provide a map showing the mobile network coverage rates. In addition, he suggested the early commencement of the feasibility study of stage two of the Subsidy Scheme, such that rural residents could use 5G network service as soon as possible.

18. Mr. Eddy NG responded as follows:

- (i) The department was grateful to Members, Tai Po RC and Sai Kung North RC for their support to the Subsidy Scheme. Upon commencement of the Subsidy Scheme, the department would continue to coordinate with MNOs and maintain liaison with village representatives and villagers through the RCs with a view to implementing the Subsidy Scheme as soon as possible.
- (ii) On the proposed sites, RBSs would preliminarily be installed first at existing government buildings with infrastructure available nearby (e.g. with electricity supply and optical fibre network).
- (iii) The department had been exchanging views with MNOs on the technical issues related to the construction of RBSs. According to the information provided by MNOs, given the high electricity demand of RBS, the proposed RBS site locations might not have enough room for the installation of solar panels to meet the corresponding electricity demand.
- (iv) As regards the amount of subsidy, it would be capped at \$2 million for each RBS project and might be increased to \$4 million for certain sites involving more complex works (e.g. sites that were extremely remote lacking appropriate infrastructure and, therefore, requiring additional civil engineering works). The subsidy would be granted on a reimbursement basis.
- (v) Regarding the monitoring of the Subsidy Scheme, the Government would require MNOs to complete the construction works and provide services within 12 months after the approval of the application under the Subsidy Scheme. In carrying out the advance work for the construction of RBS, the department would coordinate with MNOs and keep in touch with the relevant local communities through the RCs for expeditious roll-out of the Subsidy Scheme.
- (vi) RBS would be installed at about 50 site locations under the Subsidy Scheme in rural and remote areas over the territory and 14 of which would be in Tai Po District. The department would communicate with MNOs on an on-going basis and, through various facilitation measures, encourage MNOs to install RBSs at appropriate locations, thereby providing mobile network coverage. Should

Members find the mobile network coverage insufficient in individual rural or remote areas, and they had identified suitable spots for the installation of RBSs in the vicinity, they were welcome to provide the department with relevant information for referral to MNOs for follow-up action.

- (vii) Regarding the specific coverage of each RBS under the Subsidy Scheme, in general, the coverage of RBS was relatively wide (up to several kilometres) under the ideal situation where there was no obstruction, but in practicality would be affected by nearby mountain terrain and topography, and could only be accurately calculated after its completion. In addition, the department would require MNOs to submit detailed technical proposals (including the proposed coverage of RBS) in their applications for subsidy to ensure that the proposals concerned were reasonable and that the subsidy would be put to effective use.
- (viii) Regarding the estimated number of beneficiaries and the mobile network coverage to be enhanced under the Subsidy Scheme, more than 500 000 trips were made to the countryside for outings in the first quarter of 2024. It was anticipated that villagers in the vicinity would also benefit upon completion of the installation of RBS. The mobile network coverage along government hiking trails was currently over 90 per cent, and it was expected that the coverage would be further enhanced upon completion and commissioning of all RBSs.
- (ix) In response to Members' comments on individual RBS site locations (such as Ko Tong Ha Yeung, Tai Tan and Hau Tong Kai), the department would review the location and design of the relevant RBSs with MNOs.
- (x) Regarding the timetable for implementation of the Subsidy Scheme, as the installation of RBS had to meet certain requirements and entailed technical arrangements, the requirement for completion of works and provision of services within 12 months after the approval of the application was reasonable. The RBS completion stages as provided in the paper were merely preliminary estimates by MNOs, which would complete the relevant works as soon as possible having regard to actual circumstances.
- (xi) The RBS sites under the Subsidy Scheme were mainly located at existing government buildings, including several hilltop radio sites managed by the Government, and the construction of RBSs thereat would involve relatively complex works and take longer time.
- (xii) The department had undertaken a number of initiatives to enhance mobile network service in urban areas, including, inter alia, amending the Telecommunications Ordinance to ensure that appropriate space was made available in new buildings for MNOs to install and maintain mobile communications facilities, and would, through other measures, continue to encourage MNOs to look into ways to further improve the mobile network coverage at various places, such as urban buildings.

19. Mr. LI Yiu-ban suggested that the department explore the use of existing radio site facilities, (including the one near Section 4 of the MacLehose Trail) for the installation of RBS.

20. Mr. CHAN Cho-leung said that he would liaise with the department on the situation of Lam Tsuen RBS after the meeting.

21. Mr. Eddy NG said that both the department and Members were keen to enhance the mobile network coverage in rural and remote areas. The department would continue to keep in contact with MNOs and RCs to expedite the provision of 5G services to rural and remote areas through the Subsidy Scheme and other facilitation measures.

22. The Chairman thanked the representatives of CEDB and OFCA for attending the meeting.

**III. Environment and Ecology Bureau and Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
– Proposed delineation of quality farmland as Agricultural Priority Areas
(TPDC Paper No. 2/2025)**

23. The Chairman welcomed Ms. CHOR Kin-lan, Anna, Principal Assistant Secretary of EEB, as well as Messrs. LAI Chuen-chi, Patrick, MA Wai-chung, Peter and LOK Wai-shing, Edward, Deputy Director, Assistant Director (Agriculture) and Senior Agricultural Officer (Agri-Park & Land) of AFCD respectively, to attend the meeting for this agenda item.

24. Mr. LAI Chuen-chi, Patrick said that the Government published the Blueprint for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Fisheries (“A&F”) in late 2023, with a view to promoting the modernisation and intensification of the A&F industries, thereby achieving an overall upgrading and transformation of the industries, as well as boosting the sustainable development and industrial diversification of local A&F. The Government proposed to delineate quality farmland as Agricultural Priority Areas (“APAs”) through administrative means to encourage putting the relevant land into active agricultural use, and at the same time, to roll out support measures to facilitate long-term active farming use for APAs. This administrative measure would not change the existing planning application approval system and outline zoning plans (“OZPs”). The Government would like to listen to the views of members of the local community so as to enhance the said proposal.

25. Mr. LOK Wai-shing, Edward went through the captioned paper.

26. Mr. LAM Yick-kuen hoped that the department would conduct consultation at the RCs and visit the district to get to know the views of stakeholders, so as to study how the policy could be enhanced. It was not easy to develop agriculture in Hong Kong, and the Government had not included remote farmland into APAs. In addition, the Government might consider the needs of

owners and resume the land at Tier One rate of the ex-gratia compensation system for land in the future.

27. Mr. CHAN Pok-chi said that his ward office had collected the following questions and suggestions, including: whether suitable land for farming could be identified; whether the Administration would take the initiative to lease government land to farmers for growing commercial crops; how to encourage owners to offer stable and long-term tenancies; suggesting that the Government take the lead in conducting research and development (“R&D”) in high-tech farming (such as farm shelters and farm sheds) and transforming R&D outcomes for the use of the industry; suggesting that brands be built together with the industry; suggesting that inter-departmental efforts be taken to deal with flooding blackspots and relaxation of the policy on the erection of agricultural structures; suggesting that a multi-pronged approach be adopted in the development of urban farming; suggesting that real resources be injected to promote the integrated development of urban areas and farming; suggesting that education, publicity and promotion be conducted and suitable land be identified in Tai Po (such as the rooftops of government buildings and Tai Po Waterfront Park) for the setting up of urban farms; and discussing with the Hong Kong Green Building Council (including the BEAM Society Limited) as soon as possible the setting of urban farming as an indicator of green buildings.

28. Mr. Rex LI said that should the land be delineated as an APA, once the owner applied for a change of land use, the AFCD might raise objection, making it difficult to change the use of land.

29. Mr. CHAN Siu-kuen said that the rural areas were facing problems in ancillary transport facilities, electricity and water resources, as well as the destruction of crops by wild animals, etc. At present, it was already very difficult to rezone sites from “Green Belt” (“GB”) to “Village Type Development” (“V”). If the land was to be further delineated as an APA, rural development would be stifled.

30. Mr. LI Yiu-ban said that if the farmland was delineated as an APA, it could not be developed into a “V” zone. Even though the department pointed out that the proposal was merely an administrative measure, it would in fact influence the decision of the Town Planning Board (“TPB”). He opined that there was no need for large-scale agriculture development in Hong Kong, and suggested that disused factories could be used for agricultural activities. The initiative would be ineffective if land was to be delineated as an APA while the Government was planning to develop the Northern Metropolis (“NM”).

31. Mr. LO Hiu-fung said that Hong Kong was currently lack of manpower and capital, which made the delineation of farmland as APAs self-contradictory. While the vision of the NM was to develop tertiary industries such as the Technopole and UniTown, APAs proposed by the department were of primary industry, and represented a retrogression in the overall town planning. Moreover, it was pointed out in the paper submitted by the department that owners might submit

planning applications in accordance with established procedures, which would then be decided on by the TPB after integrated consideration of various views. Yet, it was stated in its paper to the Legislative Council (“LegCo”) that the department would oppose such applications. As such, he asked the department to clarify its stance.

32. Mr. WU Cheuk-him said that the Government should increase the amount of subsidies and provide incentives to promote agricultural development. Rural land must be opened up for different uses, and restriction on its development would hinder industrial diversification in Hong Kong.

33. Mr. CHAN Cho-leung said that the delineation of farmland as APAs would lead to depreciation of land value, making it hard to gain owners’ support. As the Agricultural Park itself was sufficient for farming by local farmers, he suggested that the PlanD approve all previous applications from villagers for building houses or change of land use. As for other land for which no planning application had been made in the past, it would continue to be used as farmland.

34. Ms. WONG Pik-kiu asked whether the department would convey Members’ views expressed at this meeting to the Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene of LegCo, and consult the Liaison Office of the Central People’s Government in the Hong Kong S.A.R. or the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council on the long-term use of the land concerned. In addition, the ten selection criteria proposed by the department included road connectivity of farmland, yet the rural public transport ancillary facilities were scarce and roads were narrow. She also added that the TPDC should not give advice on APAs in other districts.

35. Mr. YU Chi-wing said that owners would find it difficult to agree with the said measures if the department rolled them out without conducting sufficient consultation.

36. Mr. MUI Siu-fung said that restricting the development of land with value would be of no help to the economy, and coupled with the fact that only a small number of people in Hong Kong were currently engaged in agriculture, the effect of the said measures in encouraging agricultural development would be limited.

37. Mr. WAN Koon-kau suggested a relaxation of catchment area for use by farmers.

38. Mr. LI Yiu-ban pointed out that in the past, quite many farmland and villages were abandoned as roads could not be constructed following their inclusion into the boundary of country park. Once farmland was delineated as APAs, the development of villages would be restricted.

39. Mr. Patrick LAI responded as follows:

- (i) The agriculture industry was an asset shared by the public at large. The local agriculture industry had brought about many intangible benefits. For instance, the consumption of local agricultural products by the general public could reduce the carbon footprint generated during transportation, and the retention of agricultural land could help protect rural landscape that members of the public could get in touch with nature and the agricultural land could serve as a place for leisure, as well as the next generation could be educated on the source of food.
- (ii) According to the statistics of AFCD, there were a total of 4 000 hectares of agricultural land in Hong Kong. Upon objective scientific analysis, it was proposed that around 900 hectares (including some 700 hectares of agricultural land and some 200 hectares of ancillary facilities), i.e. less than a quarter of agricultural land be selected and delineated as APAs. As such, the proposal was not to make great efforts in developing agricultural land but an attempt to support the overall sustainable development of the local agriculture industry. Previously, the Government did not focus on the management of the said agricultural land. If attention could be paid on managing the APAs where quality farmland was managed in an intensive and modernised manner, as well as adequate supporting facilities were provided, the existing problems faced in farming (e.g. the presence of wild animals or sale of agricultural products) could be addressed.
- (iii) There were currently more than 3 000 hectares of deserted agricultural land and only about 700 hectares of active farmlands, the area of which was similar to the 700 hectares of land proposed to be delineated as APAs for agricultural purposes in Hong Kong. If people who were interested in engaging in commercial agricultural production could be pooled and the existing manpower and capital could be utilised to tally with the assistance of the department, there would be huge development potential. The AFCD had noted Members' comments and concerns, and would discuss with the bureau on how to improve the proposal and explain it more clearly to the public.

40. Mr. MA Wai-chung, Peter, responded as follows:

- (i) The APAs currently proposed by the department had excluded land that had been planned for development. Generally speaking, land in the New Development Areas would not be involved and the development of small houses in the New Territories ("NT") would not be affected. The New Agriculture Policy aimed at enhancing the competitiveness of local agriculture industry. Most of the land delineated as APAs were located on land which had been zoned for use as "Agriculture" and "GB" on the OZPs. The consultancy study had, based on objective criteria, selected 980 hectares of land (including 760 hectares of land that was proposed for farming, the area of which was similar to some 730 hectares of

the existing active farmland) out of 4 000 hectares of agricultural land in Hong Kong. Under the existing mechanism, owners could submit planning applications to the TPB whenever necessary. The delineation of APAs could enhance the transparency of the work of the Government, and through a series of support measures (including the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund), the scattered agricultural land could be clustered into agricultural areas to enhance competitiveness and further addressed the problems faced by existing farming, thereby achieving a win-win situation with rural areas (e.g. using the Fund to enhance the construction of cross-field footpaths in rural areas).

- (ii) The department would like to strengthen communication and explain clearly that the said measures could benefit farmers and land owners. The said measures could be used to encourage owners to unleash undeveloped land for agricultural use. Farmers would be more confident in injecting resources to build modernised farms and apply agricultural technology in long term, so as to tie in with the modernisation of agriculture and increase in the production value of agricultural output promoted by the Motherland, thereby enhancing the contribution of agriculture to Hong Kong community at large.

41. Mr. LI Yiu-ban said that Hong Kong's agriculture industry had to overcome the problem of wild animals, and suggested that smart-tech farming be developed in factory buildings to produce quality agricultural products. The Government could also resume agricultural land and lease it to farmers for cultivation so that owners could get back the due value of their land. Active consideration should also be given to how to compensate for losses incurred as a result of land being delineated as APAs.

42. Mr. LAM Yick-kuen said that investment was required for the use of land for agricultural purposes and losses might incur. He hoped that the bureau and department would not restrict the diversified development of agricultural land and land in the NT.

43. Mr. CHAN Cho-leung said that it was hard for owners to support a policy option that would result in depreciation of land value. The PlanD previously rejected applications for development in rural areas on the ground of agricultural land. He hoped that the department would strengthen communication with the PlanD.

44. The Chairman thanked the department for relaying Members' comments to the bureau and conducting studies. The department was welcome to discuss at the DC meetings again if there was further information on the development.

IV. Land Sharing Office of Development Bureau and Planning Department – The Proposed Amendments to the Approved Tai Po Outline Zoning Plan No. S/TP/30, the Proposed Housing Developments and the Proposed Road and Sewerage Works under the Land Sharing Pilot Scheme at Lo Fai Road and Ting Kok Road, Tai Po
(TPDC Paper No. 3/2025)

45. The Chairman welcomed Mr. CHOW Man-hong, Mann, Head of Land Sharing Office of DEVB, as well as Messrs. TSANG Wing-keung, Rico, LAU Ka-wing, Kevin and WONG Po-kit, Jeffrey, District Planning Officer / Sha Tin, Tai Po and North, Senior Town Planner / Tai Po 1 and Senior Town Planner / Tai Po 2 of PlanD respectively, to attend the meeting for this agenda item. She said that the DEVB and PlanD had conducted a briefing and consultation on the matter at the Tai Po RC last month.

46. Mr. WONG Po-kit, Jeffrey, briefed on the captioned paper.

47. Ms. LOK Siu-luen said that some residents of Lo Fai Road and Ting Kok Road were worried about the captioned proposed housing developments (“Developments”). They considered that the selected sites were not good because of the presence of many burial grounds for indigenous inhabitants, inadequate ancillary transport facilities and high development density, which would also affect the areas of Plover Cove and Wong Yue Tan. She hoped that the department would listen to the residents’ views.

48. Mr. LAM Yick-kuen said that the poor site selection of the Developments would significantly affect traffic, law and order as well as landscape. As traffic congestion often occurred on Ting Kok Road at present, it was necessary to carry out road improvement works (“RI works”) at the eight junctions along Ting Kok Road and the widening of the road. In addition, the two transitional housing projects at Ting Kok Road had low occupancy rates, reflecting that it was not suitable to build residential premises there. Coupled with the serious inadequacy of ancillary facilities, the district resources would be used up. The Government expected that the NM could accommodate a population of 2.5 million and there was no urgency in constructing public housing (“PH”). As such, he did not support the Developments.

49. Mr. LEE Man-kit said that residents were worried that the Developments would aggravate the problem of inadequate ancillary facilities in the district, such as healthcare facilities and school places, and it would be difficult to solve the congestion problem on Tolo Highway (northbound). He hoped that the department would conduct re-planning.

50. Mr. WONG Wai-tung said that there was serious traffic congestion on Ting Kok Road which had overloaded the existing public transport system. In addition, there were inadequate ancillary livelihood facilities in the vicinity of Lo Fai Road that it might not be suitable for PH construction there.

51. Mr. MAK Shing-ho, Gary, said that the selected sites of the Developments were not good. If there were any developments at Fung Yuen Road and Wong Yue Tan in the future, it would increase the burden on Ting Kok Road significantly. The department should first address the overloading of roads in urban areas, as well as the inadequacy of ancillary facilities such as healthcare and recreational facilities. In addition, if the Developments could not be implemented in the end, he still hoped that RI works would be carried out at Ting Kok Road as soon as possible.

52. Mr. WU Cheuk-him said that the selected sites of the Developments were not good as the retail facilities of merely 1 000 square metres could hardly meet the demand of residents, and the supporting facilities of primary and secondary schools in the vicinity were not complementary. In addition, the Government should not approve the Developments on the condition that the developer had to finance the RI works. When basic transport demand had yet to be solved, the development of housing projects would aggravate the problems of traffic congestion and illegal parking. He pointed out that the current Government had identified sufficient land for providing 410 000 PH units. As the Hong Kong Housing Authority and Hong Kong Housing Society had forecast that the total PH production in the coming five years could meet the needs of Hong Kong people, coupled with the development of the NM and Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands, it would not be necessary to take forward the Developments. He hoped that the department would review afresh the feasibility and benefits of the Developments.

53. Mr. MUI Siu-fung expressed his support for housing production but the selected sites of the Developments were not suitable. He suggested that the Traffic and Transport Committee (“TTC”) continue to follow up on the RI works.

54. Mr. CHAN Cho-leung said that traffic accidents often occurred on Ting Kok Road. After the widening of junctions, vehicles might speed up there. He opined that the departments concerned should reconsider the site selection of the Developments.

55. Mr. CHAN Siu-kuen supported the construction of PH but found the selected sites of the Developments not good, and hoped that the Government would listen to the voices of local community and practically improve the traffic at Lo Fai Road and Ting Kok Road.

56. Mr. CHAN Tsz-kin said that there was only one supermarket in the vicinity of the Developments and traffic congestion would bound to occur at Ting Kok Road when the RI works were underway. He hoped that the Government would consider the problems of traffic and ancillary facilities and select the site anew.

57. Mr. CHAN Pok-chi said that the traffic speed reflected the level of traffic congestion. He would like to know about the data such as the average speed and number of vehicles on busy sections of Ting Kok Road.

58. Mr. LO Hiu-fung expressed his concern about the selected sites of the Developments. The traffic congestion problem on Ting Kok Road had persisted for years. Under the circumstances of serious lack of transport and ancillary livelihood facilities, the department should put the Developments on hold and re-consult the DC after obtaining the understanding of the local community and residents of the relevant housing estates alike and study of enhanced options.

59. Mr. WAN Koon-kau supported housing development by the Government but opined that reconsideration could be given to the site selection.

60. Ms. WONG Pik-kiu said that there was a beautiful landscape in the area of Lo Fai Road and it was not suitable for construction of buildings there. The selected sites of the Developments were far away from urban areas, which would not only fail to meet the demand of residents but would also increase the traffic load. She suggested that the department redevelop Kwong Fuk Estate and build additional blocks instead.

61. Ms. CHAN Kin-kwan said that she supported in principle the increase in housing supply but the selected sites and ancillary transport facilities of the Developments were far from satisfactory. As residents in the district were highly concerned about the Developments, she suggested that the department put the project on hold and carry out more macro and detailed planning so that residents could have a clear picture of the arrangements for various ancillary facilities.

62. Mr. TSANG Wing-keung, Rico, responded as follows:

- (i) There was a tight supply of land and housing in Hong Kong, and private developers were unable to unleash the development potential of land due to various reasons. The Government had adopted a multi-pronged approach in increasing land supply, including, inter alia, the Land Sharing Pilot Scheme (“LSPS”) proposed in the 2018 Policy Address. The Developments was one of the projects under the LSPS which aimed to unleash the development potential of private development sites to increase the supply of public and private housing. It was expected that the Developments would provide around 2 000 units.
- (ii) Regarding the selected sites of the Developments, the applicant had submitted technical assessment reports on areas such as traffic, environment, landscape and infrastructure, which had been examined by the departments concerned and found it technically feasible.
- (iii) The department intended to widen the section of Ting Kok Road between Wong Yue Tan and Tai Mei Tuk, subject to detailed planning with the TD. In view of the serious traffic congestion on Ting Kok Road, it was believed that traffic

condition would be improved significantly after carrying out RI works under the Developments.

- (iv) Permitted burial grounds were located near Site B of the project. The department and developer had to obtain approval from departments concerned before proceeding with any works of the Developments, and the works would not be carried out beyond the site boundary impacting the neighbouring areas.
- (v) There were currently a total of 21 secondary schools and 21 primary schools in Tai Po District, and the number of primary and secondary school places in the district was suffix to meet the population demand.
- (vi) Around 1 000 square metres would be set aside for non-domestic use in the Developments.

63. The Chairman said that Members had had adequate discussions on the subject matter. The TTC would follow up on matters relating to RI works and Tai Po North Area Committee (“TPNAC”) would also hold discussions.

64. Mr. LO Hiu-fung said that Members were concerned about the selected sites, traffic and ancillary livelihood facilities of the Developments, and hoped that the department would put on hold and revisit the project.

65. Ms. LOK Siu-luen said that the department’s reply had failed to address public needs and suggested that the Developments be put on hold.

66. Mr. WU Cheuk-him would like to write to the PlanD to express his concerns.

67. The Chairman said that the department had noted Members’ comments and requests. Members could continue to follow up on the spin-offs from this agenda item at the relevant committees. The department would continue to conduct public consultations.

68. Mr. CHOW Man-hong, Mann, said that the bureau had fully understood the problems associated with the selected sites mentioned by Members, and would conduct a consultation at the TPNAC next Thursday.

69. Mr. LO Hiu-fung hoped that the public would participate actively in the public consultations conducted by the TPB. As many Members found that the selected sites were far from satisfactory, he suggested putting the Developments on hold, providing additional ancillary livelihood facilities and carrying out detailed transport planning, as well as providing supporting data to allay public concerns.

70. The Chairman thanked the departmental representatives for attending the meeting.

V. Follow-up on the improvement proposal for facilities on both sides of Lam Tsuen River
(TPDC Paper No. 4/2025)

71. The Chairman welcomed Mr. HO Siu-tao, Head of Service of Jockey Club Tai Po Integrated Children & Youth Services Centre of HKCYS, and Mr. HO Lik-fai, Eric, Ms. Leung Ka-hei, Kristin, and Shum Yin-nok, Theodora, Co-founder and Director and Design Strategists of NIB respectively, to attend the meeting for this agenda item and report on the survey results of the views of young people in the district on the suggested improvement measures along Lam Tsuen River.

72. Mr. HO Lik-fai, Eric, said that NIB and HKCYS had led a visit with young people in the district to Lam Tsuen River to explore the possibilities of enhancing the facilities along the river sides. They had also set up street booths and staged exhibitions at Tai Po Arts Centre to gauge the level of support of young people for the different recommendations. He briefed on the four major recommendations as follows:

- (i) Enhancing sitting-out facilities on both sides of Lam Tsuen River and providing additional water-friendly facilities;
- (ii) Consolidating the public space along Tai Wo Road and the banks of Lam Tsuen River;
- (iii) Providing boat moorings and viewing facilities at Lam Tsuen River; and
- (iv) Widening the deck of a footbridge near Tolo Harbour to provide a public viewing space or an elevated cycle bridge.

73. Mr. MUI Siu-fung hoped that the Highways Department (“HyD”) would complete the road resurfacing testing at the footpaths on both sides of Lam Tsuen River as soon as possible and apply the tested materials on the entire footpaths.

74. Mr. CHAN Cho-leung said that the improvement proposal was very detailed, and young people’s suggestion of cross-bank ancillary cycling facilities was worth considering.

75. Ms. WONG Pik-kiu said that she had inspected the section where road resurfacing testing was launched with the HyD. She suggested removing loose granite railings and providing distinctive rain shelters there.

76. Mr. WU Cheuk-him asked whether the HyD would carry out levelling works on the cycle track, and hoped that the department would provide information for Members’ reference.

77. The Chairman responded as follows:

- (i) The HyD was conducting a material testing for the resurfacing of footpaths, and would arrange for the relevant Members to a site visit later, where they could give their views by then. If the materials were found to be effective, their application would be extended.
- (ii) The TPDO was actively following up on a Member's suggestion of providing distinctive rain shelters on both sides of Lam Tsuen River. The TPDO was discussing with the Citybus Limited and might install bus-themed rain shelters. Members might give their views on the site selection of rain shelters during the inspection next time.
- (iii) She asked the HyD to follow up on whether it was necessary to level the surface of the said cycle track.
- (iv) She commended the department for its prompt provision of additional dog excreta collection bins at different locations.

78. The Chairman thanked the representatives of HKCYS, NIB and departments concerned for attending the meeting.

VI. Reports of Committees and Working Group under TPDC **(TPDC Paper No. 5/2025)**

District Facilities and Works Committee

79. Ms. WONG Pik-kiu reported that the sixth meeting in 2024 of the District Facilities and Works Committee was held on 6 November 2024, and the discussions on major items were set out in the paper. Members noted the contents of the report.

Food, Environment and Hygiene Committee

80. Mr. CHAN Siu-kuen reported that the sixth meeting in 2024 of the Food, Environment and Hygiene Committee was held on 6 November 2024, and the discussions on major items were set out in the paper. Members noted the contents of the report.

Community Involvement, Culture and Recreation Committee

81. Mr. CHAN Cho-leung reported that the sixth meeting in 2024 of the Community

Involvement, Culture and Recreation Committee was held on 7 November 2024, and the discussions on major items were set out in the paper. Members noted the contents of the report.

Traffic and Transport Committee

82. Mr. LI Yiu-ban reported that the sixth meeting in 2024 of the TTC was held on 7 November 2024, and the discussions on major items were set out in the paper. Members noted the contents of the report.

Social Welfare, Housing and Development Planning Committee

83. Mr. LO Hiu-fung reported that the sixth meeting in 2024 of the Social Welfare, Housing and Development Planning Committee was held on 8 November 2024, and the discussions on major items were set out in the paper. Members noted the contents of the report.

Working Group on Boosting Local Economy

84. Mr. LAM Yick-kuen reported that the fourth meeting in 2024 of the Working Group on Boosting Local Economy (“WG”) was held on 5 November 2024, and the discussions on major items were set out in the paper. Members noted the contents of the report.

VII. Working Group on Boosting Local Economy **(TPDC Paper No. 6/2025)**

85. The Chairman said that the term of the WG was originally scheduled to last until 31 December 2024. To tally with the DC’s activities to boost the local economy in the coming year, the term of the WG was now extended to 31 December 2025. The terms of reference and membership list of the WG were set out in Annexes I and II to the captioned paper respectively. Mr. LAM Yick-kuen would continue to serve as the Chairman of the WG and hold office until 31 December 2025. She thanked the Chairman and members of the WG for their contribution in the past year.

VIII. Any other business

86. Members did not raise other business.

IX. Date of next meeting

87. The next meeting was scheduled to be held at 9:30 a.m. on 4 March 2025 (Tuesday).

88. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:13 p.m.

**Tai Po District Council Secretariat
February 2025**