

Summary of the Minutes of the 13th Meeting of the Tsuen Wan District Council

The 13th Meeting of the Tsuen Wan District Council (TWDC) was held on 26 November 2013. The major issues discussed were summarised as follows:

Comprehensive Waste Management Blueprint 2013-2022

2. The Secretary for the Environment visited TWDC and introduced the Comprehensive Waste Management Blueprint 2013-2022, “Hong Kong Blueprint for Sustainable Use of Resources 2013-2022” and the five major areas of the current waste management work, including waste reduction at source, Food Wise, clean recycling, waste-to-energy and hygienic landfill. He stated that these five areas of waste reduction work should start at the same time in order to achieve the target of reducing the Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) disposal rate by 40% in ten years. Moreover, the current recycling rate should be increased and the waste-to-energy approach should be included in waste handling so as to reduce the pressure of the landfills. Members put forth their views and enquiries on whether the amount of daily disposal of the incineration in Shek Kwu Chau could be increased to 6 000 tonnes, whether there were restrictions on the use of restored landfills, whether the government would consider the dual system for the levy scheme, a study on handling the food waste with higher economic efficiency by the government, effective handling of the recyclable green waste to reduce the pressure of waste handling and turn waste into energy, greater support and assistance to the recycling trade and recycling-related operations from the government, implementation of volume-based waste fee system and levy scheme of domestic waste, enhanced law enforcement work upon the implementation of the levy scheme of domestic waste, handling of construction waste and glass beverage bottles, enhanced promotion of the three-colour waste separation bins, recycling of food waste by districts and introduction of environmental protection to the school curriculum. The Secretary for the Environment duly responded Members’ enquires in detail. He also remarked that the policy on horticultural waste and legislation of electronic waste would be implemented and the law drafting work on glass beverage bottle was in progress. The Chairman thanked the Secretary for the Environment for attending the meeting.

Visit of Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation to Tsuen Wan District Council

3. The Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation (Ag.) visited TWDC and introduced the work of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

(AFCD), including the work of its five branches, namely the Agriculture Branch, Fisheries Branch, Inspection and Quarantine Branch, Country and Marine Parks Branch and Conservation Branch. Members expressed their views and recommendations on the review of the limit of \$130,000 of unsecured loan with low interest rate for farming, whether the relevant departments would take law enforcement work against non-local trawlers at the waters of Hong Kong boundary, how to handle the problem of stray cattle as well as the stray dogs in country parks at source and the related follow-up work, a study on amendment of existing legislation and provision of more cat cages to address the problem of stray cats at source, contraceptive treatment on wild pigs, strengthened support and assistance to fish culture farms from the government, enhanced training for mariculturists and loan offer with low interest rate for them to improve the quality of fish fry and facilities of rafts, addressing the problem of monkey nuisance around Shing Mun Reservoir, whether the government would impose restriction on the numbers of pet cats and dogs kept per square foot, whether the testing of pesticide residues included the growth drugs and genetic testing, whether the buyers of vessels could continue the fishing activities and how to apply for the licence, the policy direction of local fisheries, consideration of appointing the representative from district council to join the Country and Marine Parks Board, improvement of telecommunication network service in the section between Tin Fu Tsai and Tsing Fai Tong of Tai Lam Country Park, provision of additional facilities at the proper sites of Tai Lam Country Park, removal of *Mikania micrantha* in Tai Mo Shan Country Park, Shing Mun Country Park and Tai Lam Country Park, arrangement of land-based electricity supply for the rafts and expression of interest on setting up of the animal police. The Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation (Ag.) and the Assistant Director of AFSD duly responded to Members' concern in detail. The Acting Chairman thanked the Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation (Ag.) for attending the meeting.

Poverty Line and Strategy for Poverty Alleviation

4. The Chief Secretary for Administration's Office submitted the paper on poverty line and strategy for poverty alleviation. The Director of Chief Secretary for Administration's Office introduced the paper, including the background of setting the poverty line, functions of the poverty line, the five guiding principles on setting the poverty line, concept and limitations of the poverty line, impact of various poverty alleviation policies, an outline of poor population in Hong Kong, poverty in Tsuen Wan district, key analysis and observations of poor population statistics, and direction and strategy for poverty alleviation for consideration. Members put forth enquiries and recommendations on the measures assisting the middle class under the poverty alleviation policy, measures on assisting the poor children who were not the residents

of public housing estates, tracing the families on the poverty line in five to 20 years to explore the way they got out of the poverty line for stipulation of a more effective policy to assist these families, progress of the measures to encourage the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance households to secure employment, consideration of addressing the needs of “three have-nots” and even “N-have nots”, long-term policy for upward mobility of young people, provision of additional hospitals and enhanced training of healthcare staff for the healthcare policy, and stipulation of monitoring mechanism for each policy for better monitoring work. The Director of Chief Secretary for Administration’s Office duly responded Members’ enquiries and remarked that Members were welcome to express their opinions on the strategy for poverty alleviation so as to stipulate appropriate measures for proper use of public resources.

Public Engagement Exercise on Population Policy

5. The Chief Secretary for Administration’s Office submitted the paper on population policy to seek Members’ views. The Director of Chief Secretary for Administration’s Office introduced the background of public engagement exercise on population policy, four demographic challenges, relevant opportunities, five major policy strategies to deal with the challenges, and the stance of the Steering Committee on Population Policy on three topical issues of public concern, including a population cap was undesirable, no case for changing the One Way Permit Scheme and Type II Children were not a solution to the demographic challenge. Members expressed their views and concern on the population policy, including the leisure and recreational ancillary facilities, increasing the school places of international schools in Hong Kong, strategic long-term planning on the use of manpower resources, a strategic plan for the graduates of the middle schools, inclusion of healthcare policy when stipulating the population policy, long-term policy for betterment of the trading environment and ancillary facilities, development of professional sectors, enhanced support to the parents with children from the government, policy on the elderly, supporting measures on employment of people aged 60 or above and promotion of vocational training. The Director of Chief Secretary for Administration’s Office duly responded Members’ concern in detail. He also remarked that Members could express more opinions through different channels and that the public engagement exercise would end in late February next year.

Council for Sustainable Development’s Public Engagement on Municipal Solid Waste Charging – “Waste Reduction by Waste Charging • How to Implement?”

6. The Principal Consultant of the Hong Kong Productivity Council briefed

Members on the contents of the Invitation for Response Document of the Council for Sustainable Development, including our waste problem, Hong Kong's waste management strategy and the proposed details of the municipal solid waste (MSW) charging. He also stated that the Council for Sustainable Development would like to seek the public's views on, inter alia, the charging mechanisms of MSW charging, coverage of the charging scheme, charging level and recycling. Most Members supported MSW charging and its main direction. They also expressed their views and concern on the implementation of quantity-based charging from every household in Hong Kong which was dominated by high-rise buildings, quantity-based charging mode with pre-paid designated bags but not weight-based charging mode, charging at a lower or the lowest level, how the conclusion of over 60% of submissions supported the introduction of MSW charging was drawn, addressing various problems of law enforcement for better handling of illegal waste disposal, advanced commencement of publicity and education work for the public to get used to the separation of waste at home, provision of sufficient ancillary facilities for waste reduction and food waste by the government, participation of property management companies and housing estates, whether waste charging was the most effective option for waste reduction, whether there were any other more effective options for waste reduction, how to implement the charging on domestic waste in the "three have-nots" buildings, and how to determine the proposed charging level. The Principal Consultant of the Hong Kong Productivity Council duly responded Members' concern. The Chairman stated that a discussion forum would be held on 4 January 2014 in Tsuen Wan and local dignitaries would be invited to put forth their enquiries by the drawing of the slots. A special meeting for discussion of the relevant issues could be arranged by the Environmental and Health Affairs Committee before the end of the public engagement process (i.e. 24 January 2014) for Members who wished to put forth their views or enquiries after the discussion forum.

Tsuen Wan District Council Secretariat
January 2014