

(Translation)

Minutes of the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of  
Social Services and Community Development Committee (2/22-23)

Date : 25 August 2022  
Time : 2:30 p.m.  
Venue : Main Conference Room, Tsuen Wan District Office

Present:

Members

Mr MAN Yu-ming, MH  
Mr YAU Kam-ping, BBS, MH (Temporary Chairman)  
Mr CHAN Sung-ip, BBS, MH  
Mr CHAN Yuen-sum, Sumly  
Mr KOT Siu-yuen, MH

Government Representatives

Ms LEE Lai-kiu, Winnie	Senior Liaison Officer (2), Tsuen Wan District Office
Ms YUEN Mo-kuen, Monita	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Tsuen Wan/Kwai Tsing)3, Social Welfare Department
Ms CHAN Sui-wun, Wendy	Senior School Development Officer (Tsuen Wan)1, Education Bureau
Ms LIM Merry	Manager (New Territories South) Marketing & District Activities, Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Ms CHENG Tsz-ying	Assistant Manager (New Territories South) Marketing & District Activities, Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Ms TSE Sai-lin, Jasmine	Deputy District Leisure Manager (Tsuen Wan)1, Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Tsuen Wan District Council Secretariat Representatives

Mr LIM Kuen	Senior Executive Officer (District Council), Tsuen Wan District Office
Miss MAK Wing-yan, Wendy (Secretary)	Executive Officer (District Council) 3, Tsuen Wan District Office
Mr NG Cheuk-pong, James	Executive Officer (District Council) 4, Tsuen Wan District Office

Attendance by Invitation:

For discussion of item 3

Mr LEUNG Yau-tak, Richard	Housing Manager/Wong Tai Sin, Tsing Yi & Tsuen Wan 7, Housing Department
Mr CHOW Ching-chi, Alfred	District Operations Officer (Tsuen Wan), Hong Kong Police Force
Ms YUEN Mo-kuen, Monita	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Tsuen Wan/Kwai Tsing) <sup>3</sup> , Social Welfare Department
Ms TSE Sai-lin, Jasmine	Deputy District Leisure Manager (Tsuen Wan) <sup>1</sup> , Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Ms NG Shuk-ping	Senior Social Work Supervisor (Acting), Caritas Addicted Gamblers Counselling Centre
Mr Joshua WONG	Team Leader (Acting), Caritas Addicted Gamblers Counselling Centre
Ms Polly HO	Gambling Counsellor, Caritas Addicted Gamblers Counselling Centre

Absent:

Members

Mr LUK Ling-chung, Antonio  
Mr WONG Ka-wa (Chairman)  
Mr LAU Cheuk-yu

The Meeting

I Opening Remarks and Introduction

The Secretary said that the Chairman was unable to attend and chair the meeting because of illness. Therefore, according to section 35(3) of the Tsuen Wan District Council Standing Orders (the “Standing Orders”), Members of the Committee present should elect a Member from amongst themselves by a simple majority vote to act as Temporary Chairman and preside at the meeting. The Temporary Chairman should enjoy all the powers conferred on the Chairman by the Standing Orders for the purpose of presiding at meetings. Members unanimously agreed that Mr YAU Kam-ping should assume the role of Temporary Chairman of this meeting.

2. The Temporary Chairman said that for Members’ information, Mr LUK Ling-chung, Antonio and Mr LAU Cheuk-yu were unable to attend the meeting because of illness.

3. The Temporary Chairman reminded Members that according to section 28 of the Standing Orders, unless otherwise agreed by the Chairman, each Member might speak for each agenda item once at the meeting. For each agenda item, a maximum of four Members might speak and each of them might speak up to 1.5 minutes. Each

Member who had submitted a paper might have up to three minutes to introduce the paper and speak. Each representative from government departments might have up to three minutes for giving response.

## II Item 1: Confirmation of Minutes of the 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting held on 30.6.2022

4. The Temporary Chairman said that the Secretariat had distributed to Members earlier the minutes of the meeting of the Social Services and Community Development Committee (SSCDC) held on 30 June 2022. The Secretariat had received proposed amendments from Mr LUK Ling-chung, Antonio prior to this meeting as follows:

- (1) in line 4 of paragraph 8(2) in the captioned minutes, “滋擾引起的爭執” (nuisance that led to conflicts) should be added after “噪音” (noise);
- (2) in line 6 of paragraph 8(2) in the captioned minutes, “像勞工處般設立” (similar to the ones set up by the Labour Department) should be amended as “盡可能為不同服務範疇設定量化的” (draw up for different service areas as far as possible quantifiable);
- (3) in line 6 of paragraph 11 in the captioned minutes, “，並以更進取態度提供就業及輔導服務和培訓機會” (and provide employment and counselling services as well as training opportunities in a more proactive manner) should be added after “支援” (support); and
- (4) in line 2 of paragraph 17 in the captioned minutes, “增強地區性的就業服務” (enhance district-based employment services) should be amended as “加強其個人化就業支援服務” (enhance its personalised employment support services).

5. The Temporary Chairman asked if Members endorsed the minutes with the proposed amendments. Members unanimously endorsed the minutes with the proposed amendments.

## III Item 2: Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

6. The Temporary Chairman said that there were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

## IV Item 3: Request for Multi-Party Collaboration to Tackle the Problem of Street Gambling in Tsuen Wan District (SSCDC Paper No. 5/22-23)

7. The Temporary Chairman said that the representatives from the departments responsible for giving response were:

- (1) Mr LEUNG Yau-tak, Richard, Housing Manager/Wong Tai Sin, Tsing Yi & Tsuen Wan 7 (HM/WTT7), Housing Department (HD);
- (2) Mr CHOW Ching-chi, Alfred, District Operations Officer (Tsuen Wan) (DOO(TW)), Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF);
- (3) Ms YUEN Mo-kuen, Monita, Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Tsuen Wan/Kwai Tsing)<sup>3</sup> (ADSWO(TW/KwT)<sup>3</sup>), Social Welfare Department (SWD); and

- (4) Ms TSE Sai-lin, Jasmine, Deputy District Leisure Manager (Tsuen Wan)1 (DDLMTW)1), Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD).

Besides, the written replies of the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau and HD were submitted prior to the meeting for Members' perusal.

8. Mr CHAN Yuen-sum, Sumly introduced the paper.
9. The Temporary Chairman said that the representatives from the organisation responsible for briefing Members on the counselling services for gamblers provided by the Caritas Addicted Gamblers Counselling Centre (CAGCC) were:
  - (1) Ms NG Shuk-ping, Senior Social Work Supervisor (Acting), CAGCC;
  - (2) Mr Joshua WONG, Team Leader (Acting), CAGCC; and
  - (3) Ms Polly HO, Gambling Counsellor, CAGCC.
10. Senior Social Work Supervisor (Acting) and Team Leader (Acting) of the CAGCC introduced the paper.
11. HM/WTT7 of the HD responded that if a tenant was proved to have engaged in illegal gambling in public places of public rental housing (PRH) estates, the Estate Offices (EOs) concerned could allot penalty points to the offender without prior warning. If the tenant accumulated 16 penalty points within two years, the Housing Authority would issue to the tenant a Notice-to-quit and terminate the subject tenancy. Such an action could serve as a deterrent. To combat the abovementioned misdeeds, the EOs would install closed-circuit television cameras and monitoring systems at suitable locations in addition to strengthening patrols at the black spots of gambling, as well as maintain close liaison with the Police for joint efforts in combating illegal gambling in PRH estates. The EOs would step up publicity and education efforts through Estate Newsletters and putting up banners, posters and notices about prohibition of gambling/ gambling counselling hotline/ counselling services for gamblers at the black spots of gambling.
12. DOO(TW) of the HKPF responded that gambling was a long-standing problem and the HKPF had all along been carrying out law enforcement actions against such a problem. Apart from distributing leaflets and organising publicity and educational activities in general, the Police would formulate targeted operations against street gambling every month. The frequency of the Police's operations had been affected by the relatively unstable weather in July and August 2022. During the observation conducted in the past two months, the Police so far had not identified any problems of street gambling. On 23 August 2022, the Police had conducted an operation against street gambling at Lei Muk Shue Estate and issued 10 fixed penalty notices (FPNs), commonly known as "599J". The HKPF believed that the amount of the penalty of a FPN, i.e. \$5,000, was adequate to achieve a deterrent effect.
13. DDLMTW)1 of the LCSD responded that the LCSD had all along been

maintaining good communication with the Police and conducted several joint operations to combat illegal acts. Besides, slogans appealing for gambling cessation were shown in venues under the LCSD's management. On 15 August 2022, banners and posters displaying information on the gambling counselling hotline had been put up at Jockey Club Tak Wah Park and Shek Pik Resettlers' Playground.

14. ADSWO(TW/KwT)3 of the SWD responded that the SWD thanked the CAGCC for providing professional counselling services to the persons suffering from gambling disorder. The CAGCC was welcome to contact the welfare service units under the SWD for collaboration and mutual referral of cases if necessary, with a view to providing welfare services of different aspects to the persons in need.

15. The views and enquiries of Members were summarised as follows:

- (1) gambling had been a long-standing problem and was particularly rampant in PRH estates. He agreed that the HD's Marking Scheme and the Police's inspection operations were necessary, and appreciated the CAGCC providing psychological counselling for gamblers. He wished that the CAGCC would conduct site visits at the black spots of gambling, such as the gambling establishment kept watch by an "observatory" near the old market at Shek Wai Kok Estate, for an in-depth understanding of the situation. He hoped that the Police would take law enforcement actions against the lawbreakers operating the gambling establishments, "observatories" serving as lookouts of the gambling establishments, loan sharks and triad members. He also pointed out that the money lending activities had greatly troubled the gamblers in debt and their families. On education and publicity, he appreciated the slogan of "Enjoy the Game, Say No to Gambling", and cited the Tsuen Wan Chinese Chess Association (TWCCA) as an example. He pointed out that the TWCCA had all along been reminding its members not to include elements of gambling in chess activities. He wished that other organisations would educate members of the public through organising activities and citing examples to curb the spread of gambling. In his opinion, the prevalence of gambling might have a relationship with the organisers of the activities. If the organisers were steadfast in anti-gambling, participants would mostly follow and adhere to the rules stipulated by the organisers of the activities and refuse to participate in gambling activities (Mr MAN Yu-ming); and
- (2) he said that the problem of gambling was relatively serious in Shek Wai Kok Estate and Lei Muk Shue Estate. Situations of gambling were also spotted in Fuk Loi Estate which he had been serving. He thanked the Police's efforts in removing most of the gambling establishments in Fuk Loi Estate. He found that a relatively large number of gambling establishments had moved to upper floors at present, and the Police had also conducted several operations at Chuen Lung Street to crack down such establishments. He enquired of the HD about the approaches to

deal with gamblers who were not intimidated by its measures of Marking Scheme and flat recovery, and requested the HD to provide relevant data including the number of cases in which penalty points had been allotted to offenders for involvement in gambling and the number of referral cases. He appreciated the operations conducted and efforts made by the CAGCC, and wished that the CAGCC would take a further step by sharing examples of gamblers who successfully overcame their gambling addiction. Apart from the problem of gambling among elderly persons, he was concerned about the possible impact from the prevalence of football betting on the youths as the World Cup would soon kick off. He hoped that the organisations providing counselling services for gamblers would render support (Mr KOT Siu-yuen).

16. HM/WTT7 of the HD responded that regarding the recovering of PRH units of the tenants who had been allotted penalty points due to gambling in public places of PRH estates as mentioned by Members, there were very few such cases in Lei Muk Shue Estate which was within his management area. Regarding the problem of gambling and tenants' addiction to gambling, the HD would enhance communication and cooperation with the CAGCC and refer cases requesting for assistance.

17. Senior Social Work Supervisor (Acting) of the CAGCC responded as follows:

- (1) the CAGCC operated as a counselling centre. Most of the persons with gambling disorder sought for assistance from the CAGCC of their own accord, and so they had a relatively strong motivation to quit gambling. Counsellors of the CAGCC would regularly follow up on the situation of the assistance seekers and learn about their desire for "winning" through psychotherapy to assist them in debunking the myth of gambling and understanding that there was no guaranteed way to win. By doing so, gamblers could deal with their problem more easily. Since the motivation for quitting gambling of the persons seeking for assistance was relatively large and the wish of their families was pretty clear, they were willing to cooperate with the counsellors, thus enabling the counsellors to learn about their needs. To tackle the problem of street gambling more effectively, she suggested setting up more platforms for education and publicity purpose with a view to enhancing the gamblers' awareness about gambling cessation and encouraging them to make changes. In her opinion, collaboration with district organisations should also be strengthened to increase the accessibility of the channels to seek relevant assistance among the neighbourhood; and
- (2) regarding the World Cup which would kick off on 21 November 2022 mentioned by the Member, the CAGCC had started preparation for the situation. According to the data on the use of applications for spectating football matches, the number of users during the World Cup period was thirty to forty percent higher than that for the matches of other football leagues. This was a social issue that deserved attention.

However, considering its role as a counselling centre for gamblers, the CAGCC had only limited resources for allocation to education and community work. The CAGCC was concerned that the World Cup fever might drive the youths to participate in gambling, and consequently turning the situation into a long-standing problem of youth gambling. Regarding the promotion of gambling cessation among the youths, the CAGCC mostly used social platforms for reaching out to the youth population in Tsuen Wan district and Hong Kong to disseminate various relevant messages to the youths with a view to preventing the problem of gambling. When handling cases involving youth gambling, she found that there were many illegal gambling establishments related to Texas hold'em operating in industrial buildings. Although the situation was not the most serious in Tsuen Wan district, she called on relevant organisations to pay attention and wished that the trend of gambling in Tsuen Wan district would be halted.

18. Mr CHAN Yuen-sum, Sumly concluded by expressing gratitude to every party for their efforts and responses. Regarding the Police's response, he noticed that a majority of persons under arrest were elderly persons, but those controlling the gambling activities from behind, including the persons who offered food and beverages and those worked for the "observatories", were rarely arrested. He wished that the Police would step up its intelligence work and arrest the lawbreakers controlling the gambling activities from behind. He pointed out that the persons recently being arrested for violation of the prohibition of group gathering when hanging out in a group were mostly onlookers. He hoped that the Police would target resources to combat the problem of illegal gambling and make arrests. He suggested that when conducting operations, the Police should bring along leaflets produced by the CAGCC and take the initiative to provide the arrested gamblers with information on the gambling counselling hotline so that they could learn about where to seek help. As regards the HD's response, he hoped that the HD would work closely with the CAGCC as well as other organisations providing counselling services for gamblers. In respect of the LCSD, he thanked the department for distributing and displaying information about gambling cessation, and once again expressed his wish for the LCSD to work closely with organisations providing counselling services for gamblers including the CAGCC and take the initiative to distribute promotional leaflets. As for the CAGCC, he wished that it would liaise with the Police, HD and LCSD to visit the black spots of gambling in a more active manner to create greater synergy. He proposed that the CAGCC should hold exhibitions and activities at the black spots of gambling for publicity and public education on the harm of addiction to gambling. He believed that the HD and LCSD would assist the organisations providing counselling services for gamblers in identifying venues for organising activities, and that the SWD and other District Councillors were willing to support such activities. The CAGCC was welcome to provide publicity information to the Tsuen Wan District Council, Police, LCSD and HD for promotion of gambling cessation and channels for access to gambling counselling services among various organisations and persons in need.

(Post-meeting note: The LCSD had been distributing promotional leaflets at Jockey Club Tak Wah Park and Shek Pik Resettlers' Playground since early September 2022.)

19. DOO(TW) of the HKPF added that the Police would, subject to such factors as the evidence collected in the operations and whether the presence of elements of illegal gambling (for example, using money or dominoes as bets) could be proved, decide the approach of law enforcement to be adopted in compliance with relevant legislation and the offence to be charged. For example, it could issue FPNs for violation of the prohibition of group gathering or make arrests and institute prosecution for the offence of contravening the relevant legislation. In addition to following up the problem of street gambling in a persistent manner, the Police also conducted raids against upstairs gambling establishments primarily located in industrial areas. However, the number of arrests was relatively low.

20. The Temporary Chairman concluded that due to the lack of physical bets, it was often difficult for the Police to prove whether such persons were involved in illegal gambling. Therefore, he understood that the Police could only issue FPNs on the grounds of violation of the prohibition of group gathering.

V Item 4: Information Papers

21. Members noted the contents of the following information paper:

- (1) Items Endorsed by Circulation by the Social Services and Community Development Committee during the Period from 23 June 2022 to 17 August 2022  
(SSCDC Paper No. 6/22-23).

VI Item 5: Any Other Business

(A) Date of Next Meeting

22. The Chairman reminded Members that the next meeting was scheduled on 27 October 2022 and the deadline for submission of papers was 12 October 2022.

(Post-meeting note: The twelfth meeting of the SSCDC was rescheduled to 20 December 2022.)

VII Adjournment of Meeting

23. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:08 p.m.

Tsuen Wan District Council Secretariat

1 September 2022