

Minutes of the 4th Meeting of the
7th Term of Wong Tai Sin District Council of the
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

Date: 9 July 2024 (Tuesday)
Time: 2:30 p.m.
Venue: Conference Room, Wong Tai Sin District Council,
6/F, Lung Cheung Office Block,
138 Lung Cheung Road,
Wong Tai Sin, Kowloon

Chairman:

Mr. WU Kui-wah, Thomas, JP District Officer (Wong Tai Sin)

Present:

Mr. CHAN Wai-kwan, Andie, MH	WTSDC Member
Mr. CHAN Ying, Leonard, MH	WTSDC Member
Mr. FUNG Kin-lok	WTSDC Member
Mr. HUNG Chor-ying, Edmond	WTSDC Member
Mr. LAI Wing-ho, Joe, MH	WTSDC Member
Ms. LAU Yuen-ye, Janus	WTSDC Member
Mr. LEE Tung-kong	WTSDC Member
Mr. LEUNG Tang-fung	WTSDC Member
Mr. LI Dennis	WTSDC Member
Ms. LUI Kai-lin, Wendy, MH	WTSDC Member
Mr. MOK Kin-wing, MH	WTSDC Member
Mr. NGAI Shi-shing, Godfrey	WTSDC Member
Mr. POON Cheuk-bun	WTSDC Member
Ms. TAM Mei-po	WTSDC Member
Ms. TANG Man-wai	WTSDC Member
Mr. YAU Yiu-shing, MH	WTSDC Member
Mr. YEUNG Nok-hin	WTSDC Member
Ms. YEW Yat-wa, Deannie	WTSDC Member
Mr. YUEN Kwok-keung, MH	WTSDC Member
Mr. YUET Ngai-keung	WTSDC Member

In Attendance:

Ms. CHAN Wing-shiu, May, JP	Commissioner for Labour	LD	} Re: Item I
Miss FUNG Lai-hing, Karen	Senior Labour Officer (Employment Services)(Operation)	LD	
Mr. YEUNG Chun-po, Carmelo	District Commander (Wong Tai Sin)	HKPF	
Mr. WONG Ka-lun, Brandon	Police Community Relations Officer (Wong Tai Sin)	HKPF	
Ms. CHING Oi-ho, Sandy	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (WTS/SK)3	SWD	
Mrs. LAI CHAN Wai-fan, Clara	Chief Manager/Management (WTT)	HD	
Mr. CHAN Wing-yin, Albert	Chief Engineer / East 3	CEDD	
Mr. CHAN Chi-man, Chapman	Chief Transport Officer/Kowloon 1	TD	
Ms. LAM Yee-mei, Evelyn	District Leisure Manager (Wong Tai Sin)	LCSD	
Ms. TONG Shuk-ting	District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Wong Tai Sin)	FEHD	
Mr. HO Kin-yip	Acting Senior Electrical and Mechanical Engineer/Nuclear and Utility Safety	EMSD	} Re: Item V
Mr. LAM Tin-sheung, Timmy	Electrical & Mechanical Engineer /Nuclear & Utility Safety/3	EMSD	
Mr. Lo Kwok-yau	Director – Corporate Affairs (External Relations)	CLP	
Mr. Chu Chi-wah (Transliteration)	Principal Operation Manager (East and West District)	CLP	
Mr. LI Louis	Principal Corporate Affairs Manager	CLP	
Miss HO Wing-tung, Bonnie	Assistant District Officer (Wong Tai Sin)	WTSDO	
Ms. WONG Man-sau, Susana	Senior Liaison Officer (1)	WTSDO	
Miss WONG Wai-fong, Bonnie	Senior Liaison Officer (2)	WTSDO	
Ms. TANG Kit-wah, Fanny	Senior Executive Officer (District Management)	WTSDO	
Mr. LAU Hak-keung, Eric	Executive Officer I (District Council)	WTSDO	

Secretary:

Ms. CHAN Wai-chi, Ida

Senior Executive Officer
(District Council)

WTSDO

Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed all Members and representatives of government departments to the 4th meeting of the 7th term of Wong Tai Sin District Council (“WTSDC”).

Items for discussion

- I. Visit of the Commissioner for Labour to Wong Tai Sin District Council

2. The Chairman welcomed Ms. CHAN Wing-shiu, May, JP, the Commissioner for Labour and Miss FUNG Lai-hing, Karen, the Senior Labour Officer (Employment Services) (Operation) of the Labour Department (“LD”) to the meeting.

3. The Chairman gave Ms. CHAN an overview of the situation of Wong Tai Sin District and a brief introduction on the structure of WTSDC. Wong Tai Sin District had a population of around 400 000, of which around 200 000 were in the labour force. WTSDC had a total of 20 Members, including eight appointed Members, eight District Committees constituency Members, and four District Council geographical constituency Members. WTSDC Members had been actively participating in community affairs and serving the public, and they had taken the initiative to visit the scene in times of emergencies such as flooding, fire disasters and power failures to learn about the situation and provide immediate and adequate support and assistance to the public.

4. Ms. CHAN said that she was pleased to be invited to WTSDC to exchange views with Members. She said that the Government had always attached great importance to promoting the employment of local workers and safeguarding the rights and benefits of employees. LD would continue to pursue suitable measures to better

protect employees, provide diversified employment and recruitment services for job seekers and employers with different needs, and at the same time continue to promote awareness of occupational safety and health among workers. She then presented the latest development of major labour issues with the aid of PowerPoint. Her presentation is summarised as follows:

Overview of the Labour Market

- (i) The labour market closely correlated with economic performance. As the local economy and inbound tourism recovered, the labour market was improving gradually, with the latest seasonally adjusted unemployment rate maintaining at around 3%. As the economy continued to grow, the labour market was expected to remain tight in the near term;

Employment Overview and Employment Services

Number of private sector vacancies posted at LD

- (ii) LD generally received over one million private sector vacancies every year. During the pandemic in 2020, the number of vacancies received once dropped to around 700 000, but the number had since rebounded to over one million. Also, from 2021 to 2023, LD had helped over 150 000 job seekers secure employment every year;
- (iii) LD would continue to pay close attention to Hong Kong's economic and labour market conditions, and would strive to help job seekers find suitable jobs;

Various employment services provided by LD

- (iv) LD currently operated 11 Job Centres in the territory to provide comprehensive and free employment services and facilities to the public. Residents of Wong Tai Sin District could visit the Kowloon East Job Centre in Kai Tak or the Kwun Tong Job Centre to use these services;

- (v) LD had also set up Industry-based Recruitment Centres for the catering industry, retail industry and construction industry respectively to provide free one-stop on-the-spot recruitment and employment services to employers and job seekers in these industries;
- (vi) Members of the public could use LD's telephone employment service, the "Interactive Employment Service" webpage and the iES mobile application to look for suitable vacancies. They could also participate in large-scale job fairs, district-based job fairs and thematic job fairs held by LD;
- (vii) LD had established two youth employment resource centres named "Youth Employment Start", which provided one-stop integrated employment and self-employment support services for young persons aged between 15 and 29;

LD's various employment services for different groups

- (viii) LD had in place multiple employment programmes for job seekers of different ages and backgrounds, including the "Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged" ("EPEM"), the "Youth Employment and Training Programme" and the "Work Orientation and Placement Scheme" etc., to provide on-the-job training allowance to employers to encourage them to employ middle-aged and elderly people, young people and the disabled;
- (ix) Since November 2023, LD had regularised the "Racial Diversity Employment Programme", which commissioned non-governmental organisations to provide one-stop employment services to ethnic minority job seekers through a case management approach. Also, LD had employed more persons from ethnic minorities as employment assistants and general assistants. To date, LD had a total of 23 ethnic minority employees to help promote the

employment services of LD to ethnic minority communities;

“Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme” (“REA Scheme”)

- (x) LD would launch the three-year REA Scheme on 15 July 2024. REA Scheme aimed at encouraging persons aged 40 or above who had not been in paid employment for three consecutive months or more to re-enter the employment market. Participants who had worked full-time continuously for six months would receive a re-employment allowance of \$10,000, and those who had worked full-time continuously for 12 months would receive an additional allowance of \$10,000. Each eligible participant could receive up to \$20,000 in the form of re-employment allowance during the implementation period of the Scheme. LD had commissioned the Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions and the Federation of Hong Kong and Kowloon Labour Unions as the service organisations to assist in implementing the Scheme and provide employment support and follow-up services to participants;
- (xi) LD encouraged employers who had hired REA Scheme participants to also join EPEM at the same time, and eligible employers could apply for an on-the-job training allowance. The two schemes complemented each other and could achieve synergy to help elderly and middle-aged people secure employment;

“Greater Bay Area (“GBA”) Youth Employment Scheme”

- (xii) Since March 2023, LD had implemented the regularised GBA Youth Employment Scheme to encourage enterprises with businesses in both Hong Kong and GBA to employ Hong Kong youth to work in Mainland cities in GBA, so as to foster their career development and the exchange of talent in GBA. For each participating young person, the Government would provide a monthly allowance of HK\$10,000 for up to 18 months to the enterprises;

- (xiii) LD introduced various enhancement measures in 2024, including accepting applications all year round, allowing enterprises to employ trainees who had worked for them in the previous 12 months, and allowing enterprises to, based on their business needs, send young participants to work in Hong Kong or other non-GBA provinces / cities in the Mainland for up to nine months;

“Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme” (“ESLS”)

- (xiv) To cope with the challenges brought by manpower shortage, the Government had, on the premise of safeguarding the employment priority for local workers, enhanced the mechanism for importation of workers. Apart from launching labour importation schemes for the construction sector, the transport sector, and residential care homes respectively, LD had also launched ESLS in September 2023 to enhance the coverage and operation of the previous Supplementary Labour Scheme (“SLS”). A measure under was ESLS suspending the general exclusion of the 26 job categories and unskilled or low-skilled posts from labour importation. LD would conduct reviews by the end of the two-year implementation period of the enhancement measures;
- (xv) In order to uphold the principle of employment priority for local workers, ESLS had followed SLS in requiring applicant employers to conduct a four-week local recruitment exercise and prioritise suitable local workers when filling the vacancies. LD would analyse each application to assess whether the employer had sincerely attempted to employ local workers with sincerity;

Labour Relations

Labour disputes and claims handled by LD

- (xvi) LD closely monitored the labour relations in different industries and would intervene in a timely manner to assist employers and employees in resolving their differences. The Labour Relations

Division of LD operated from ten branch offices to provide free consultation and voluntary conciliation services to employers and employees. In 2023, LD had handled around 12 000 labour disputes and claims, and more than 70% of the cases involving LD's conciliation service were settled;

The “continuous contract” requirement under the Employment Ordinance

- (xvii) Currently the “continuous contract” requirement (i.e. employees employed continuously by the same employer for four weeks or more and having worked for 18 hours or more per week, commonly referred to as the “4-18” requirement) under the Employment Ordinance established that employers had the legal obligation to offer employment benefits to employees who provided a stable and considerable level of service;
- (xviii) The Labour Advisory Board had reached a consensus regarding the review of such requirement in February 2024. The requirement would be relaxed by using the aggregate working hours of four weeks as a counting unit and setting the four-week working hour threshold at 68 hours (i.e. “4-68”). The Government was actively working on the relevant legislative amendment, and the relevant bill was expected to be submitted to the Legislative Council for scrutiny in the first half of 2025;

Increase of statutory holidays

- (xix) The number of statutory holidays would be gradually increased from the current 14 days per year to 17 days per year in 2030. The additional statutory holidays to be added in the future would be Easter Monday (starting from 2026), Good Friday (starting from 2028), and the day following Good Friday (starting from 2030);

Abolition of Mandatory Provident Fund (“MPF”) “offsetting” arrangement

- (xx) The Government would abolish the use of the accrued benefits of

employers' mandatory contributions under the MPF System to offset the severance payment / long service payment on 1 May 2025;

- (xxi) LD would continue to extensively publicise the imminent abolition of MPF “offsetting” arrangement. Employers and employees could use the online calculating tool provided by the Government to calculate severance payment / long service payment, government subsidy for employers and total benefits for employees after the abolition. LD would help employers and employees understand the abolition of MPF “offsetting” arrangement by providing simple and comprehensible information;

- (xxii) The Government would share part of the expenses on severance payment / long service payment after the transition by offering subsidies to employers. The 25-year subsidy scheme would involve over \$33 billion. LD was pressing ahead with the preparatory work, including developing an information technology system for the “Government Subsidy Scheme” and formulating its operational details, to ensure that the abolition of MPF “offsetting” arrangement and the “Government Subsidy Scheme” could be implemented smoothly;

Employees' Rights and Benefits

Statutory Minimum Wage (“SMW”) and its review mechanism

- (xxiii) The Chief Executive in Council had accepted the recommendations of the Minimum Wage Commission on enhancing the SMW review mechanism on 30 April 2024. The recommendations included reviewing the SMW rate once a year instead of once every two years (“Annual Review”), adopting a formula for implementing the Annual Review, and reviewing the aforesaid new review mechanism five to ten years after its implementation. The design of the formula would ensure that the SMW adjustment rate would not fall below the headline Consumer Price Index (A) inflation, and that when the Hong Kong economy performed well, the SMW increase

rate would be suitably higher than inflation to benefit employees. The Government was formulating the relevant implementation arrangements;

Foreign domestic helpers

- (xxiv) Currently there were more than 360 000 foreign domestic helpers (“FDHs”) working in Hong Kong. Philippine FDHs took up the largest proportion, followed by Indonesian ones. LD actively rendered support to both employers and foreign domestic helpers by, for example, holding a series of education and promotion campaigns and setting up a FDH portal in 12 languages in order to help FDHs and employers better understand their obligations and rights;
- (xxv) Employment agencies (“EAs”) in Hong Kong were regulated by the Employment Ordinance and the Employment Agency Regulations. Currently there were around 3 700 licensed employment agencies, and about half of them provided placement services for FDHs;
- (xxvi) LD processed and approved applications for employment agency licence issuance and renewal in accordance with the requirements of the Employment Ordinance, the Employment Agency Regulations and the Code of Practice for Employment Agencies (“the Code of Practice”). LD would also conduct regular and surprise inspections of employment agencies to combat irregular operations; and
- (xxvii) LD had promulgated the revised the Code of Practice in order to further enhance the professionalism and service quality of employment agencies, and better protect the rights and interests of job seekers and employers. If employment agencies failed to comply with the Code of Practice, LD might consider revoking their licenses, refusing to issue/renew their licenses, or issuing warnings to demand rectifications;

Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund

- (xxviii) Earlier on, LD had reviewed the application and vetting procedures in relation to the Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund. It was hoped that the new measures could shorten the time required for making *ex gratia* payments. The Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund Board had agreed that the fund would provide legal services to assist applicants in filing bankruptcy or winding-up petitions against their employers, thereby saving applicants the time needed for making legal aid application and undergoing means test with the Legal Aid Department. It was estimated that the time required for the application and vetting procedures could be shortened by up to 12 weeks;

Occupational safety and health

The yearly number of fatal industrial accidents had been steady at around 20 in recent years. In 2023, there were 24 fatal industrial accidents, and 20 of them involved the construction industry. The number of fatal industrial accidents in the construction industry had always been way higher than other industries.

- (xxix) In this connection, LD had taken a series of targeted measures to urge various industries, especially the construction industry, to pay attention to occupational safety and health. Such measures included raising the penalty prescribed in occupational safety and health legislation, enhancing the safety of works that involved truss-out bamboo scaffolds, implementing the remaining four elements of the safety management system, continuing the implementation of the Pilot Rehabilitation Programme for Employees Injured at Work, optimising the Guidance Notes on Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work and revising the Code of Practice for Safety and Health at Work in Confined Spaces; and
- (xxx) LD would also continue to participate actively in site safety management committee meetings of public works projects, carry out more in-depth surprise inspections and special enforcement

operations, promote the concept of Construction Design and Management, and launch the “Promoting the Use of Light-duty Working Platforms Scheme”.

5. The Chairman thanked Ms. CHAN for her detailed introduction of LD’s work, and invited Members to raise suggestions or questions on labour issues.

6. Mr. YAU Yiu-shing said that the recent changes in the employment environment had led to the emergence of many gig workers who were employed on a temporary and part-time basis. These workers were usually classified as self-employed and were therefore ineligible for basic employee protections stipulated in the Employment Ordinance such as minimum wage, severance payment, long service payment, paid leave and work injury compensation. Moreover, these workers usually lacked bargaining power and were unable to recover the salary and benefits they were entitled to from platform companies. He asked whether LD would, in light of the increasing number of gig workers in Hong Kong, review the existing labour legislation to provide better protection for gig workers, and set up a tripartite cooperation platform for effective resolution of disputes between employees and employers. He also enquired about the latest progress and preparations surrounding the Government’s plan to abolish the MPF “offsetting” arrangement on 1 May 2025.

7. Ms. LAU Yuen-ye, Janus suggested that LD should reach out to enterprises to encourage them to provide part-time roles that suited women who needed to take care of children, in the hope that by offering flexible working hours, mothers would be induced to return to work. This measure could allow more people to benefit from EPEM, increasing the effectiveness of the programme and filling the gap in Hong Kong’s labour market. She also pointed out that recently there had been media reports about some mainland cleaning companies advertising their services on online social media platforms and claiming that they could provide home cleaning services in Hong Kong at low prices. Such services would not only breach the Immigration Ordinance provisions on hiring overseas workers, but also take jobs away from local workers. In this connection, she enquired whether LD had taken the initiative to crack down on illegal labour syndicates with other government departments through decoy operations. Furthermore, LD had revised the Guidance Notes on Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work

and optimised the issuance, renewal and cancellation mechanisms of Heat Stress at Work Warnings in May 2024. She enquired whether LD had established a notification mechanism to ensure that workers could be notified about Heat Stress at Work Warnings when working at works sites.

8. Mr. YUET Ngai-keung suggested on behalf of the Wong Tai Sin Branch of the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong that the Government should step up inspections regarding the revised Code of Practice for Safety and Health at Work in Confined Spaces and consider employing advanced technologies to improve the working environment in confined spaces and prevent accidents, for example using drones to monitor the working conditions in confined spaces and using the Smart Site Safety System to monitor the location and real-time vital signs of workers. He also suggested LD consider holding more recruitment events in Wong Tai Sin District in order to help local residents with their job search and match them with suitable jobs, so as to boost the employment rate in Wong Tai Sin District and encourage residents to enter the labour market.

9. Mr. YUET Ngai-keung and Mr. LAI Wing-ho, Joe also suggested that, in order to effectively protect workers' rights, LD should consider making laws regarding the Guidance Notes on Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work to make it mandatory for employers to follow the guidance notes and at the same time clarify employers' responsibilities and prevent disputes between employers and employees. Moreover, they also welcomed LD's efforts in inviting the construction industry and the property management industry etc. to come up with their own practice guides about heat stroke prevention. They hoped that these practice guides on heat stroke prevention could lay down simple and easily practicable regulations to prevent heat strokes and protect the occupational safety of workers.

10. Ms. CHAN gave a consolidated reply as follows:

Platform Workers

- (i) The Government was very concerned about the labour rights of platform workers. Platform work was a new mode of work, and LD had already asked the Census and Statistics Department to carry

out a thematic household survey on the platform workers in the territory in order to gather information about the working conditions of platform workers through a scientific survey. LD would also actively draw reference from the experience of other regions with a view to formulating measures suitable for Hong Kong's situation;

- (ii) Furthermore, LD had set up a liaison group to explore with major platform operators and the relevant stakeholders feasible ways to better protect platform workers. In order to strengthen the functions of the liaison group, LD would timely invite representatives of labour organisations to join the liaison group in order to foster tripartite dialogue and collaboration;
- (iii) LD would keep communicating with stakeholders and Members in the hope that the parties involved could exchange views from different perspectives and work together to explore the way forward regarding the protection for platform workers.

Abolition of MPF “offsetting” arrangement

- (iv) The Government was taking forward at full steam the preparatory work for the abolition of MPF offsetting arrangement, such as developing the information technology system for the “Government Subsidy Scheme” and working out the details of the Scheme;
- (v) The Government would continue to carry out extensive publicity to help employers and employees understand the abolition of the “offsetting” arrangement, including conducting briefings for employers’ associations, labour unions and human resources practitioners to explain the abolition of the offsetting arrangement; publishing posts on social media; placing advertorials in major local newspapers and on news applications; producing video clips and promoting the “Government Subsidy Scheme” in a timely manner etc.;

Guidance Notes on Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work

- (vi) The purpose of the Guidance Notes on Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work was to encourage employees to take effective heat stroke prevention measures to avoid industrial accidents caused by heat stroke;
- (vii) Codes of practice and industry-specific guidelines allowed employers and employees to flexibly adjust the work arrangements and take appropriate measures against heat stress based on the working environment at the moment and the common practices in the industries. Meanwhile, making new laws would involve complicated and lengthy discussions and consideration process. Codes of practice and industry-specific guidelines could let industries gain experience in a progressive manner and allow employers and employees to build awareness about prevention of heat stroke at work. If necessary, LD might consider further regulating the relevant practices through introducing new laws in the future; and
- (viii) According to the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance, every employer must, so far as reasonably practicable, ensure the safety and health at work of all the employer's employees. Therefore, the employer might be held legally accountable if an employee suffered from heat stroke at work and caused an industrial accident;

Encouraging enterprises to provide suitable jobs for mothers

- (ix) LD would continue to actively promote the idea to the relevant employers' associations and hold thematic job fairs to help enterprises and mothers in job matching. For example, hotels required a lot of manpower for cleaning rooms during the check-out period, which fitted the schedule of mothers very well. Therefore, LD would encourage employers in the hotel industry to hire women who needed to take care of children;

Boosting the employment rate in Wong Tai Sin District

- (x) LD would continue to actively hold district-based job fairs to provide job-matching services and employment opportunities for residents of Wong Tai Sin District. As far as resources permitted, the department would also be glad to hold job fairs with Members to help residents of Wong Tai Sin District secure employment;

Safety and health at work in confined spaces

- (xi) LD would continue to actively carry out inspections and enforcement, while also allocating resources for targeted publicity and education to help employers, employees and other stakeholders understand the potential safety risks;
- (xii) LD would continue to work closely with the Development Bureau to promote the use of smart technologies for reducing the safety risks of working in confined spaces; and

Crackdown on hiring illegal workers

- (xiii) LD had always worked closely with the Immigration Department (“ImmD”) and the Hong Kong Police Force (“HKPF”) to combat illegal employment, with a view to protecting the local workforce’s job opportunities. Members and the public were encouraged to report any suspected illegal employment to ImmD or LD, and the Government would handle such cases in a serious manner.

11. The Chairman invited other Members to express their views or raise enquiries.

12. Mr. YEUNG Nok-hin said that the vacancies posted on the REA Scheme website were mainly for cleaning workers, telemarketers and delivery persons and so on, with fewer clerical job vacancies. He suggested that the Scheme could cover more kinds of jobs such as clerical jobs for middle-aged and elderly job seekers. Also, he suggested that the department could consider providing training courses for REA

Scheme participants, so that they could grasp the latest innovations and trends in the society through the training courses. These courses could introduce new technologies such as artificial intelligence technology and new automated cleaning equipment, so that the participants could keep up with the pace of the society, regain working skills, and thereby re-enter the workforce.

13. Mr. LEE Tung-kong suggested that LD could consider progressively expanding the Pilot Rehabilitation Programme for Employees Injured at Work to cover more industries, so that more employees injured at work those industries could benefit. He also suggested that the department could consider making the REA Scheme cover more part-time employees and look into developing a more diversified formula for calculating the allowance. This measure could not only encourage more middle-aged and elderly people to re-enter the workforce, but also cater to the needs employees under different modes of employment. In addition, he enquired whether LD expected mass dismissal or employees being forced to re-sign employment contracts by their employers after the abolition of MPF “offsetting” arrangement took effect on 1 May 2025.

14. Mr. MOK Kin-wing said that as online recruitment platforms or recruitment applications became ubiquitous, labour dispute cases involving online recruitment were also on the rise, which raised concerns about whether the rights and benefits of the employees involved were protected by law. He asked whether LD would devise regulatory measures to strengthen the regulation of online recruitment platforms and protect the rights of job seekers. He also asked whether LD would step up their publicity, so as to prevent job seekers, especially younger ones, from falling into employment traps.

15. Ms. CHAN gave a consolidated reply as follows:

REA Scheme

- (i) LD noted Members’ suggestion on providing retraining courses for participants of REA Scheme and would relay it to the Employees Retraining Board in the hope that the training courses could enhance employees’ work efficiency and occupational safety and health;

- (ii) REA Scheme currently covered part-time jobs, and eligible part-time participants could also receive re-employment allowance. Currently a simple calculation method was adopted for the Scheme. LD would accumulate more practical experience before further considering adjusting the content of the Scheme, so that the Scheme could be more robust and comprehensive;

“Pilot Rehabilitation Programme for Employees Injured at Work”

- (iii) The Pilot Scheme currently covered the construction industry, catering and hotel industry, and transportation and logistics industry. The department would discuss and study whether the Scheme could be expanded to cover other suitable industries in future reviews;

Regulation of online recruitment platforms and applications

- (iv) According to the Employment Ordinance, all employment agencies operating in Hong Kong, regardless of their mode of operation or the types of job openings offered, must obtain a licence issued by LD and be subject to regulation. Therefore, online recruitment platforms should be regulated by LD;
- (v) In addition to complying with the legislative provisions, employment agencies must also operate in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Practice. Employment agencies should not assist or abet employers to breach the requirement of on-time wage payment to employees under the Employment Ordinance, and must act honestly and exercise due diligence in checking the information provided by both job seekers and employers, including job details, duty descriptions, employers’ information, and the remuneration and welfare of employees;
- (vi) If members of the public suspected that an online recruitment platform had breached the law or the Code of Practice, they could file a complaint or a report to LD. LD would investigate every complaint. If a complaint was substantiated, LD would urge the

relevant platform to rectify, or even revoke or refuse to issue/renew its licence. If there were sufficient evidence to prove that such platform had breached labour legislation, LD would also institute prosecution;

Supplementary information on the abolition of MPF “offsetting” arrangement

- (vii) The abolition of the “offsetting” arrangement had no retrospective effect. After the abolition took effect, employers could still use the accrued benefits derived from MPF contributions before the effective date to offset the pre-transition portion of severance payment / long service payment. As employers would not save severance payment / long service payment expenses by dismissing employees before the abolition took effect, there would be no incentive for employers to dismiss employees en masse before the change.

16. The Chairman continued to invite other Members to express their views or raise enquiries.

17. Ms. TAM Mei-po said that the Government had launched a series of family-friendly employment measures to encourage childbearing, including amending the Employment Ordinance on 18 January 2019 to increase the statutory paternity leave from three days to five days. She enquired whether LD would consider further increasing the number of days of paternity leave in order to provide more support to dual-income parents and create a favourable childbearing environment.

18. Mr. LEUNG Tang-fung said that currently labour was in short supply for some industries, and the Government had implemented a number of labour importation policies such as ESLS in recent years to cope with the challenges brought by manpower shortage. He enquired whether the Government would consider further developing the existing labour importation channels, such as increasing the number of enterprises operating business on labour service co-operation with Hong Kong (“labour service enterprises”), setting up training mechanisms for imported workers (including setting up training bases in the Mainland), promoting mutual recognition of occupational skills, optimising the imported labour supervision system and encouraging corporate

academies to set up branch campuses in the Mainland, so as to supplement the local workforce. Also, in light of the frequent industrial accidents lately, he enquired whether LD would consider introducing a demerit point system for contractors, where demerit points would be given for non-compliance with occupational safety and health requirements identified during safety inspections, so as to improve works site safety.

19. Ms. CHAN gave a consolidated reply as follows:

Paternity leave

- (i) The Government had always encouraged employers to, having regard to affordability concerns and the employees' needs, provide their employees with employment benefits more favourable than the statutory requirements. In fact, some organisations had voluntarily provided longer paternity leave to attract and retain their employees. When considering whether statutory paternity leave days should be further increased, the Government must carefully evaluate all relevant factors, including Hong Kong's labour market conditions, interest of employees, and the employers' ability to afford etc., and strike an appropriate balance between these factors. Currently the Government had no plans to increase the number of paternity leave days;

ESLS

- (ii) ESLS required that employers who intended to hire Mainland residents as imported workers must recruit them through labour service enterprises approved by the relevant competent authority in commerce of the Mainland. LD would pay close attention to the relevant arrangements for Mainland residents to work in Hong Kong;
- (iii) Currently most applicant employers recruiting workers in the Mainland would generally choose workers with relevant skills and experience, and some employers would also provide work-related training to their imported workers. As the labour importation

scheme involved various industries and there were many applicant employers and imported workers, the relevant training was mainly arranged by individual employers; and

Suggestion on introducing a demerit point system for contractors

- (iv) Under the prevailing tender evaluation mechanism, contractors' previous performance in "site safety", accident rate and record of serious incidents in public works projects would all be assessed during tender evaluation. Therefore, the performance evaluation of contractors for their public works contracts would directly affect their chances of being awarded future public works contracts. The works department would conduct a comprehensive review of the contractor's performance after the completion of a contract, and would take appropriate regulating actions against the contractor, including downgrading to probatory status, demotion to a lower group, or even removal from the approved lists, as necessary.

20. The Chairman continued to invite other Members to express their views or raise enquiries.

21. Mr. CHAN Ying, Leonard said that there was a shortage of manpower in the security services industry and the cleaning industry and enquired how LD would help these industries increase manpower supply.

22. Ms. TANG Man-wai suggested that the Government should consider providing the "GBA Youth Employment Scheme" allowance directly to the youth participants instead of the enterprises. She also suggested providing GBA employment information to this year's Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education graduates, organising briefing sessions on the "GBA Youth Employment Scheme", as well as providing career matching opportunities. She hoped these briefing sessions and direct allowances could attract young people to develop their careers in GBA. She also proposed that the list of employment agencies that frequently breached the Employment Ordinance, the Employment Agency Regulations and the Code of Practice should be regularly disclosed, so as to remind employers to choose employment agencies prudently.

23. Mr. NGAI Shi-shing, Godfrey said that currently labour service enterprises would charge different service fees as agencies. He suggested building a standardised imported labour application system and formulating clear agency service fee standards to make such services more transparent and fair. Also, he pointed out that some housewives waiting for public rental housing (“PRH”) might voluntarily give up their job opportunities so that their family income would not the PRH income limit. Therefore, in order to alleviate the local labour shortage, he suggested that the Government should consider formulating policies and measures that could encourage and help people to re-enter the workforce by protecting their eligibility for PRH.

24. Ms. CHAN gave a consolidated reply as follows:

“GBA Youth Employment Scheme”

- (i) Enterprises participating in the “GBA Youth Employment Scheme” must employ eligible young people at a monthly salary of not less than HK\$18,000, and LD would provide the enterprises with a monthly allowance of HK\$10,000 for each young person. In other words, enterprises would have to pay each participant at least HK\$8,000 as salary each month. LD would continue to actively promote the Scheme to young people and enterprises, in the hope of giving young people more diversified job opportunities, and at the same time broadening their horizons and expanding their interpersonal networks in the Mainland;

Regulatory matters of the Employment Agency Regulations involving FDHs

- (ii) LD would release the latest information on employment agencies, such as the list of employment agencies that had been refused licence renewal, through the Employment Agencies Portal to make the relevant information more transparent;
- (iii) The Government had been closely monitoring the frequent job-hopping of FDHs. If FDHs were found to have frequently changed

their employers in a suspiciously short period of time, ImmD might refuse to grant employment visas to them. This measure would pose a deterrent effect to FDHs. The newly revised Code of Practice required that employment agencies must clearly explain to newly recruited FDHs the immigration requirements that concerned them, including the general application procedures and arrangements for changing employers, and the consequences of suspected abuse of the arrangements for premature termination of employment contract to change employers. LD would continue to strengthen the publicity on this issue; and

Further information on ESLS

- (iv) On the premise of safeguarding the employment priority of local workers, if employers of the security service industry and cleaning industry were truly unable to recruit suitable employees in Hong Kong, they could apply for hiring imported workers under ESLS. Currently, some employers had already applied for imported workers to take up positions such as security guards and cleaning workers to alleviate the industries' manpower shortage.

25. Members had no further enquiries, and the Chairman thanked Ms. CHAN and Miss FUNG for attending this meeting.

(The Chairman announced that the meeting would be adjourned for ten minutes)

II. Confirmation of the Minutes of the 3rd Meeting of Wong Tai Sin District Council held on 7 May 2024

26. Members noted that the Secretariat had not received any amendment suggestions on the minutes of the last meeting prior to the meeting, and thus confirmed the minutes of the last meeting.

III. Progress Report of the 3rd Meeting of Wong Tai Sin District Council held on 7 May 2024

(WTSDC Paper No. 32/2024)

27. Members noted the Paper.

IV. Social Welfare Department Wong Tai Sin and Sai Kung District Social Welfare Office 2024-2026 Business Plan

(WTSDC Paper No.33/2024)

28. Ms. CHING Oi-ho, Sandy of the Social Welfare Department (“SWD”) presented the Paper with the aid of PowerPoint (Annex I).

29. Mr. FUNG Kin-lok expressed his concerns about mental health issues among the elderly, especially as the elderly suicide cases in the district had presented a worrying picture. He hoped that SWD could work more closely with Care Teams to jointly improve the mental health of elderly people in the district. For example, SWD might identify cases that required help, and Care Teams could visit and show care for people in need. At the same time, Care Teams could also refer any cases in need to SWD, so that the department could provide professional support services.

30. Mr. HUNG Chor-ying, Edmond was concerned about the mental health of teenagers. He said that although schools could identify students in mental distress, teachers might not be in a position to provide suitable support because they could not know what was happening outside school and the problems faced by these students. Given that neither schools nor Care Teams had the professional capability to handle emergencies involving mentally ill persons, he was of the view that these cases would require SWD’s intervention and professional support. He suggested that SWD could introduce 24-hour emergency support or social work services in order to provide help in emergency situations. Moreover, he said that in addition to the old and the young, there were also caregivers in the community who had to work and take care of their elderly or young children at the same time. These caregivers were often under great stress and he opined that SWD should show more care to them.

31. Ms. LAU Yuen-ye, Janus hoped that SWD could build a cross-sectoral

cooperation platform comprising of non-governmental organisations, WTSDC Members and Care Teams for each sub-district. Members of the platform could meet regularly to foster communication, and WTSDC Members or Care Teams could also learn about the service organisations in the sub-district through the platform, so that needy cases identified in the district could be referred to suitable organisations in the sub-district such as elderly centres, rehabilitation centres and integrated family service centres for follow-up.

32. Ms. LAU Yuen-yee, Janus and Ms. LUI Kai-lin, Wendy hoped that SWD could provide more training for Care Teams, especially training courses for identifying hidden elderly persons, elderly singletons and former mental patients. Ms. LUI was of the view that inexperienced volunteers might not be able to identify hidden elderly persons, so she hoped that SWD could provide Care Teams and DC Members with more information and support to equip them with skills for identifying and interacting with hidden elderly.

33. Ms. CHING Oi-ho, Sandy of SWD gave a consolidated reply as follows:

- (i) SWD had always been concerned about elderly mental health issues and suicide cases in the district. The department had already allocated extra resources to various welfare service units in the district such as district elderly community centres and neighbourhood elderly centres in order to provide elderly people in the district and their carers with a series of support services including social and recreational activities, emotional support, carer support counselling services, etc. at the neighbourhood level. These centres also had designated outreach service teams, who would set up street booths to look for and reach the hidden elderly in the community and provide referrals and support services to elderly persons with mental health needs;
- (ii) SWD would strengthen its cooperation and communication with Care Teams. If Care Teams identified cases in need, they could refer such cases to SWD for follow-up with the consent of the individuals concerned. SWD held a briefing session in early 2024

to introduce Care Teams and Members to the referral mechanism and the department's main partnering welfare service units in the district, whose contact details could be found on the referral service application form. Upon receiving new cases, social workers of these service units would communicate with the individuals concerned as soon as possible or refer the cases to suitable service units. SWD's integrated family service centres, district elderly community centres, neighbourhood elderly centres, district support centres for persons with disabilities and parents/relatives resource centres would provide various support services to people in need. SWD would be glad to provide the referral form to Members and Care Teams again for their reference after the meeting;

- (iii) SWD's 24-hour enquiry and support hotline (tel: 2343 2255), which had been in operation for years, provided emergency support and social worker outreach services, for example immediate professional support for suspected child abuse cases, during non-office hours. Moreover, SWD launched a 24-hour designated hotline for care support (tel: 182 183) last year to provide carers in need with information, referrals and service matching to relieve their stress. As for mental health services, the Hospital Authority ("HA") also provided a 24-hour mental health hotline answered by psychiatric nurses to provide professional advice. Furthermore, the Government was dedicated to improving mental health awareness among the public. The Mental Health Support Hotline (tel: 18111) was launched in late 2023 to offer one-stop round-the-clock support in order to help members of the public identify early signs of mental illness and provide mental help support and referral services for people in need;
- (iv) As for cooperation and training in relation to Care Teams, SWD kicked start the "District Services and Community Care Teams - Pilot Scheme" ("Pilot Scheme") in early 2024. Taking Tsuen Wan and Southern District as pilot points, Care Teams were engaged to help identify households of singleton / doubleton elderly and carers of elderly persons / persons with disabilities in need through home

visits or routine services and provide follow-up support by, for example, encouraging them to install the emergency alarm system and referring these cases to SWD or relevant social welfare service units for follow-up. SWD would consolidate the experience gained from the two pilot districts in order to review and enhance the Pilot Scheme based on the actual operation, and consider expanding the Pilot Scheme to all districts in Hong Kong. Before commencing the Scheme, District Social Welfare Offices would provide Care Teams with training such as communication technique training for volunteers who needed to visit service recipients; and

- (v) SWD looked forward to working more closely with Care Teams, WTSDC and WTSDO. The Director of Social Welfare would soon visit WTSDC to exchange views with Members and introduce the social welfare services and facilities in the district.

34. Mr. LEE Tung-kong noticed that currently Care Teams played a very important role in the community. For instance, Wong Tai Sin District Care Teams had recently assisted in handling emergencies in the district. Expecting an increase in the demand for Care Teams' services in the society in the future, he suggested that more in-depth training should be provided to Care Teams to equip team members with skills for providing better services. He also said that Care Teams and WTSDC Members could strengthen their communication and cooperation with government departments.

35. Mr. MOK Kin-wing pointed out that Wong Tai Sin District had always been a district with a higher proportion of elderly persons and more public housing estates. Therefore, he suggested that SWD could consider setting up a community canteen in the redeveloped Choi Hung Estate to provide meals to the elderly. He opined that community canteens could not only satisfy the dietary needs of the elderly, but also allow them to obtain community information and socialise. On top of the above suggestion, Ms. LUI Kai-lin, Wendy also noticed that community living rooms could be found in some areas with more subdivided units. She opined that SWD could consider setting up community living rooms for the elderly and their carers so as to provide them with socialising opportunities and breathing space.

36. Mr. LI Dennis said that he had recently received some help requests from

elderly singletons with dementia. Pointing out that these elderly persons had limited self-care abilities, he hoped that SWD could provide Care Teams and DC Members with practical information on the department's assistance for people with dementia, so that they could refer needy cases received or identified to the appropriate service units for follow-up. Also, he hoped that SWD could consider building an information sharing platform that included SWD, Care Teams and WTSDC Members, so as to provide appropriate assistance to members of public in need.

37. Ms. LUI Kai-lin, Wendy expressed her concern about the social welfare needs of ethnic minorities in Wong Tai Sin District. She opined that although the population of ethnic minorities in the district was small, they were still one of the major groups in need of assistance in the district. She said that due to cultural and language differences, Care Teams would encounter difficulties when assisting ethnic minority groups. Therefore, she hoped that SWD could provide more support to help Care Teams provide comprehensive services to ethnic minority groups.

38. Ms. CHING Oi-ho, Sandy of SWD gave a consolidated reply as follows:

- (i) SWD noted Members' suggestions on strengthening the collaboration between SWD, social welfare service units of the district and Care Teams and providing training to Care Teams. The department would further study the relevant suggestions;
- (ii) Regarding the concerns about the impact of the redevelopment of Choi Hung Estate on social welfare units or services, SWD said that the current Community Centre for Senior Citizens ("the Centre") in Choi Hung Estate, a subvented centre operated by the Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service, would be accorded local rehousing. During the redevelopment, SWD would strive to ensure a seamless transition of service facilities to avoid service disruption. Currently, the Centre already provided canteen services for the elderly, and SWD noted Members' suggestions on community canteens. Regarding the suggestions on adding various community service facilities in the redevelopment plan, SWD would coordinate with the relevant departments and consider

the feasibility of incorporating such suggestions in the redevelopment plan;

- (iii) SWD was very concerned about the needs of elderly singletons, especially those suffering from dementia. In 2018, SWD launched a territory-wide public education campaign called “Dementia Friendly Community Campaign” to enhance public awareness of dementia and motivate all sectors, especially property management staff and security guards, to register as “Dementia Friends”. With a view to building an elderly-friendly and caring community for the elderly, SWD had also launched a training project called “Support for Carers Project”, which provided training for property management staff and security guards so that they could identify and care for elderly persons with suspected dementia in the district and assist them in seeking help from nearby district elderly community centres or neighbourhood elderly centres when necessary;
- (iv) The Health Bureau launched with HA and SWD a pilot scheme called “Dementia Community Support Scheme” in 2017. Using a medical-social collaboration model through the participation of district elderly community centres and HA Clusters, the Scheme provided support services to elderly persons with mild or moderate dementia and their carers, and was currently being implemented in various districts. Once Care Teams or WTSDC Members identified elders with dementia, they could refer such elders to the district elderly community centres in the district for follow-up. The centres were staffed with dedicated teams of nurses, social workers, occupational therapists, etc. to assess relevant cases, and would refer cases to specialist clinics under HA for follow-up when necessary. District elderly community centres would also provide group counselling and support services to the elderly and carers, teach carers to take care of elderly persons with dementia, and at the same time relieve the stress of carers;
- (v) SWD had commissioned non-governmental organisations to set up outreaching teams for ethnic minorities throughout the territory to

proactively help ethnic minorities in need to access core welfare services. These outreaching teams would provide referral services, invite ethnic minorities to serve as care ambassadors to connect ethnic minority groups in the district, introduce ethnic minorities in need to various welfare services, and refer cases to professional social workers for follow-up when necessary; and

- (vi) SWD agreed that in addition to residents of subdivided unit, the elderly could also benefit from community living rooms. The department was preliminarily exploring the feasibility of setting up a community living room in Wong Tai Sin District. The implementation of the Community Living Room Project required coordination of community resources. For the successful implementation of the Community Living Room Projects in districts such as Sham Shui Po, Kowloon City and Yuen Long, the support and venues provided by the locals or district organisations were indispensable. Therefore, SWD welcomed persons or groups who intended to provide venues to contact the department for coordination. Currently, the district elderly community centres, neighbourhood elderly centres and integrated family service centres subvented by SWD all provided drop-in services that gave the elderly socialising opportunities. The centres also played a role in providing social welfare resources and delivering community information.

39. The Chairman said in summary that as the Chairman of WTSDC and the commander of Care Teams, he fully agreed that WTSDC and Care Teams could work closely with SWD. He thanked SWD's representative for providing important information such as the referral forms and various telephone hotlines at the meeting. He also hoped that SWD could distribute the relevant information to the Secretariat, so that the Secretariat could forward it to Care Teams and WTSDC Members. Regarding training for Care Teams, he said that Care Teams had already co-organised large-scale training and briefing sessions with SWD when they were first established, and organisations in the district were also invited to these sessions to introduce their services. He pointed out that Care Team members were all enthusiastic volunteers in the district, and enhanced training would help them better understand the needs of local residents.

As for cases that required professional judgement, they should be referred to SWD or local social welfare organisations for further follow-up. In light of the recent emergency incidents in the district, the Chairman also hoped that SWD could provide more information on its support services as reference for handling emergencies in the future. The Chairman hoped that WTSDC could work closely with SWD and various local organisations to jointly provide adequate support to those in need in the district.

(Post-meeting note: After the meeting, SWD provided Members and Care Teams with service referral forms through the Secretariat. An information note containing details of the core social welfare services units in Wong Tai Sin District, sorted by the corresponding Care Team, was also provided along with the referral forms.)

V. Power Failure and Voltage Dip Incidents in Wong Tai Sin District

(WTSDC Paper No.34/2024)

(WTSDC Paper No.35/2024)

40. The Chairman said that stakeholders in the district were highly concerned about the successive power failure and voltage dip incidents in the district in the past few months. Among these incidents, the power failure on 12 June mainly hit Lower Wong Tai Sin Estate, Lions Rise and Mei Tung Estate, with about 2 300 households affected. The voltage dip on 21 June affected Che Cheung Building in Tsz Wan Shan, while the voltage dip on 23 June also affected Fung Chuen Court and its surrounding areas in addition to Che Cheung Building in Tsz Wan Shan. The Chairman said that after the incidents, the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (“EMSD”) had demanded CLP Power Hong Kong Limited (“CLP”) to submit a report before 10 July regarding the above incidents. The department would also engage a consultant company for a 12-month follow-up study. Meanwhile, WTSDC also had a thorough discussion with CLP’s representatives on 26 June regarding the follow-up measures for the power supply incidents in Wong Tai Sin District in order to explore ways to prevent similar incidents.

41. The Chairman welcomed Mr. Lo Kwok-yau, Director – Corporate Affairs (External Relations), Mr. Chu Chi-wah, Principal Operation Manager (East and West District) and Mr. LI Louis, Principal Corporate Affairs Manager of CLP, as well as

Mr. HO Kin-yip, Acting Senior Electrical and Mechanical Engineer/Nuclear and Utility Safety and Mr. LAM Tin-sheung, Timmy, Electrical & Mechanical Engineer /Nuclear & Utility Safety/3 of EMSD, who had attended the meeting for this discussion item. The Chairman then invited Mr. POON Cheuk-bun, Ms. LUI Kai-lin, Wendy and Mr. MOK Kin-wing to present the Papers and the submission.

42. Mr. POON Cheuk-bun presented Paper No.34/2024.

43. Ms. LUI Kai-lin, Wendy presented Paper No.35/2024.

44. Mr. MOK Kin-wing presented the submission titled “CLP’s follow-up on the incidents in Wong Tai Sin District” (Annex II).

45. Mr. Lo Kwok-yau of CLP thanked the affected residents of Wong Tai Sin District for their understanding and then gave a consolidated reply as follows:

- (i) The power supply incident on 12 June 2024 affected Mei Tak House of Mei Tung Estate, Lung Kwong House of Lower Wong Tai Sin Estate and Lions Rise, involving a total of four buildings. CLP had submitted an investigation report to EMSD on 9 July 2024. According to the report, two 11kV ring circuit underground cables in Wong Tai Sin District each had one cable joint showing gradual deterioration of insulation property under third party interference, resulting in successive faults in the two cables on that day;
- (ii) Understanding that residents of Wong Tai Sin District were concerned about the power supply incidents, CLP had immediately taken measures in response, including stepping up inspection of the electric cables and substation facilities in Wong Tai Sin District. CLP would also step up inspection of third-party works sites and remind frontline workers to avoid interfering with and damaging underground cables when carrying out construction works;
- (iii) CLP would continue to utilise innovative technologies to inspect the conditions of key underground cables in Wong Tai Sin District. The company would also expedite the updating of key power supply

facilities in Wong Tai Sin District;

- (iv) As for customer support, CLP had enhanced its communication with property management offices to improve the coordination during incidents. CLP had arranged for professional teams to provide power quality consultation services for affected buildings such as Lions Rise, Che Cheung Building, Fung Chuen Court, Lung Kwong House of Lower Wong Tai Sin Estate and Mei Tak House of Mei Tung Estate. The company would also continue to maintain close communication with district leaders and disseminate information to customers in a timely manner; and
- (v) CLP once again sincerely apologised to the affected residents. The company thanked customers for their understanding and the relevant government departments and different sectors of the community, including WTSDO, WTSDC Members, Care Teams, EMSD, the Housing Department (“HD”), the Police and property management companies, for their assistance.

46. Ms. YEW Yat-wa, Deannie noted that CLP had provided elderly persons with sensor lights and Care Teams with mobile chargers and lamps so that residents could use them during power supply incidents. Pointing out that these devices were quite large, she enquired about their functions and the quantity provided by CLP. She continued that being older estates in the district with more elderly occupants, Chuk Yuen South Estate and Chuk Yuen North Estate had a small stock of temporary lighting equipment such as torches and lamps for emergencies. Ms. YEW Yat-wa, Deannie and Mr. YEUNG Nok-hin both hoped that CLP could provide mobile chargers and lamps for buildings in older sub-districts in Wong Tai Sin, Care Teams and WTSDC Members so that residents could use them for emergency lighting during power outages.

47. Ms. YEW Yat-wa, Deannie said that when the power supply incidents broke out, Care Teams had immediately rendered assistance to affected households by, for example, visiting their homes to check on them and remind them not to open their doors for strangers. Ms. YEW then went on to enquire whether CLP would send large mobile generator vehicles during power outages. She also enquired about the details of HKPF’s planning for large scale power supply incidents in the district, for example

whether extra manpower would be deployed for traffic control. She hoped that the Police could work with Care Teams during power supply incidents to provide help to local residents.

48. Mr. YEUNG Nok-hin pointed out that there was an emergency lighting system in Mei Tung Estate that could provide lighting in rear staircases. However, some housing estates in the district were not equipped with emergency lighting systems that could be used during power supply incidents. He enquired about the backup power supply of public housing estates in the district during power supply incidents and whether these estates were equipped with emergency lighting systems to provide lighting for residents when necessary. Mr. YEUNG also suggested that CLP should work with EMSD to improve the power cables of buildings, so as to prevent voltage dips caused by tripping when many households in individual buildings switched on their electrical appliances at the same time.

49. Mr. YUET Ngai-keung said that the frequent voltage dips and power failures this year had hurt people's confidence in CLP. He asked how CLP would regain public confidence and whether it would provide compensation to residents of Wong Tai Sin District for the power supply incidents in the district.

50. Mr. YUET Ngai-keung and Mr. YUEN Kwok-keung enquired, as extreme weather was becoming commonplace, what measures CLP would take to cope with the impact of extreme weather on the operation of power supply equipment and hence enhance the stability and reliability of power supply and lower the risk of power supply incidents.

51. Mr. YUET Ngai-keung and Mr. LAI Wing-ho, Joe wished to know more about CLP's support services for local residents, Care Teams, WTSDC Members and other government departments apart from assisting in urgent repair works during power supply incidents. They also asked how power supply problems could be detected earlier in order to prevent power supply incidents.

52. Mr. Lo Kwok-yau and Mr. Chu Chi-wah gave a consolidated reply as follows:

- (i) CLP had been working with Care Teams to hold community education events on improving electricity safety and provide mobile chargers and lamps in emergency situations. CLP would continue to communicate and work closely with Care Teams to further explore how such equipment could be utilised effectively to provide instant help for the public during power supply incidents;
- (ii) Regarding Members' suggestions, CLP would explore feasible proposals such as providing practical and suitable equipment for Members so that the public could use it when necessary;
- (iii) As for short-term measures to enhance the power supply stability in Wong Tai Sin District, CLP expected to finish inspecting all substations in the district by mid-July. The company had also deployed extra manpower for daily inspections of third party works sites and reminding workers to avoid interfering with and damaging CLP's cables during construction works;
- (iv) In the medium term, CLP would continue to utilise innovative technologies to inspect the conditions of key underground cables in Wong Tai Sin District. The company would also expedite the updating of key power supply facilities in Wong Tai Sin District; and
- (v) For long-term measures, CLP would tie in with the Government's management of the power system, including the full review on asset management and maintenance matters.

53. Mrs. LAI CHAN Wai-fan, Clara of HD said that there was a backup generator in Mei Tung Estate but not in Lower Wong Tai Sin Estate. HD would review the situation and report to WTSDC or the Members concerned afterwards.

54. Mr. YEUNG Chun-po, Carmelo of HKPF said that the power failure on 12 June had affected quite a large area, which covered buildings such as Lower Wong Tai Sin Estate, Lions Rise, Kai Chuen Court, Temple Mall, Lung Kwong House and Mei Tung Estate. Upon receiving reports about power supply incidents, the Police

would first confirm the location of the incident and the area affected and assess whether there would be immediate or potential danger. After that, the Police would take corresponding actions such as assisting firemen in saving people trapped in lifts and sending police officers to direct traffic in light of the failure of traffic lights. Having always maintained close contact with the Chairman of WTSDC and the staff of WTSDO, the Police also deployed uniformed officers to work with Care Teams and WTSDO's staff in providing support to the public, such as helping residents return to their homes after the power failure. If Members noted any emergencies in the district, they could inform the Police and the Police would be ready to provide any assistance needed.

55. Mr. HO Kin-yip of EMSD said that after the incident, EMSD had sent its staff to the affected buildings to inspect the situation and provide technical support. The department would urge CLP to come up with a plan to minimise the impact of similar incidents on buildings.

56. The Chairman invited other Members to express their views or raise enquiries.

57. Mr. LAI Wing-ho, Joe wished to learn about the causes of the recent power failures and voltage dips in Wong Tai Sin District. He also asked how CLP would better monitor the system's operation and conduct timely repairs.

58. Mr. LEE Tung-kong thanked HD and its management companies, WTSDC Members and Care Teams for quickly arriving at the scene to provide assistance to residents in need. However, he noticed that CLP did not carry out its regular inspection until mobile generators had arrived at the scene. He opined that CLP was too slow to react to the situation and enquired whether CLP would step up its response measures to cope with future power supply incidents. Mr. LEE Tung-kong and Mr. YUEN Kwok-keung both hoped that CLP would improve its response measures for power supply incidents in the district in order to minimise the inconvenience caused to residents.

59. Regarding the power restoration arrangements, Mr. CHAN Ying, Leonard and Mr. YUEN Kwok-keung both pointed out that during the power failure on 21 June, CLP said that the power supply at Che Cheung Building had resumed in two hours.

However, since the power supply facilities were owned and managed by the building, it would take a qualified registered electrical worker to reactivate the air circuit-breaker (“ACB”) in the building’s machinery room after the power failure in order to restore power for the building. Members hoped that CLP could reactivate ACBs for residents during emergencies so that power could be restored sooner.

60. Mr. Lo Kwok-yau of CLP responded that since electrical installations varied from building to building, CLP was exploring whether there were suitable registered electrical workers on the market that could provide support. CLP was in the process of gathering contact and service details (including the availability of 24-hour or overnight service) of registered electrical workers in order to compile a list, which would be provided to owners’ corporations of buildings, WTSDC Members, WTSDO and Care Teams so that buildings could quickly contact registered electrical workers in the event of an incident and promptly resume power supply. CLP’s engineers were also ready to offer technical advice when necessary.

61. The Chairman invited other Members to express their views or raise enquiries.

62. Mr. LI Dennis enquired whether CLP would install smart electricity monitoring devices in Wong Tai Sin District to promptly notify affected residents in case a power supply incident broke out. He suggested that CLP should consider notifying affected residents using instant messaging software such as SMS and WhatsApp so that they could obtain the latest news about power supply incidents.

63. Mr. LEUNG Tang-fung suggested that CLP could sign an agreement with owners’ corporations in advance to allow CLP’s electrical workers to reactivate ACBs under emergency situations in order to restore power as soon as possible.

64. Mr. FUNG Kin-lok suggested that CLP should distribute gift coupons to residents and shops in Wong Tai Sin District as compensation. He also proposed that CLP could subsidise buildings to hire registered electrical workers to reactivate ACBs.

65. Ms. TANG Man-wai enquired about the details of the third-party object that had interfered with the ring circuit cables and how the risk of third-party interference

with power supply facilities could be lowered.

66. The Chairman summarised the above discussion as follows:

- (i) WTSDC Members had already discussed with CLP the follow-up measures in relation to the power supply incident on 26 June in detail, and CLP had promised to complete the inspection of power supply facilities in Wong Tai Sin District in July;
- (ii) CLP would provide power quality consultation services for affected buildings including Lower Wong Tai Sin Estate, Lions Rise, Che Cheung Building, Mei Tung Estate, etc.;
- (iii) CLP would also continue to utilise innovative technologies to inspect its key power supply facilities and expeditiously update the power supply facilities in Wong Tai Sin District; and
- (iv) It was hoped that CLP would follow up on whether it could provide equipment such as chargers and lamps to WTSDC Members and Care Teams for distribution to residents during power supply incidents.

67. Mr. Lo Kwok-yau and Mr. Chu Chi-wah added the following:

- (i) CLP submitted an investigation report to EMSD on 9 July 2024. The company also issued a press release on the same day to explain the cause of the incidents and the improvement measures it would take;
- (ii) CLP had arranged for professional teams to provide power quality consultation services for affected buildings such as Lions Rise, Che Cheung Building, Fung Chuen Court, Lung Kwong House of Lower Wong Tai Sin Estate and Mei Tak House of Mei Tung Estate;
- (iii) CLP was very concerned about the power supply incident on 12 June. After the incident broke out, CLP had immediately sent its staff to the locations concerned to assist in power restoration. The company also immediately provided mobile generators, laid

temporary cables to nearby substations to draw power, and, in order to expeditiously restore power, made all-out efforts to repair faulty cables. Since mobile generators required a lot of installation, connection and testing works as well as properly performed safety procedures, CLP needed some time to restore power for the buildings; and

- (iv) CLP noted the suggestion about distributing gift coupons to affected customers and would explore appropriate arrangements.

68. The Chairman added the following:

- (i) It was hoped that HD could continue to improve the power supply in public housing estates and follow up on the issue of backup power supply facilities; and
- (ii) The District Works and Facilities Committee (“DWFC”) under WTSDC would follow up on the issue and continue to discuss with CLP ways to improve the reliability of the power supply facilities in Wong Tai Sin District. DWFC would also follow up on the other suggestions put forward by Members such as gift coupons and the power restoration arrangements for private housing estates.

(Post-meeting note: (i) HD said that some older public housing buildings were not equipped with generators. Installation of such facilities might be hindered by physical constraints. For example, the chimneys of generators must be installed on rooftops in general out of environmental concerns, yet some rooftops might not have enough space and the building structure might not be able to handle the extra load brought by generators; (ii) CLP had compiled a list of registered electrical contractors in Wong Tai Sin District. The list was sent to WTSDO, property management personnel in the district, owners’ corporations, Care Teams, liaison ambassadors of three-nil buildings and WTSDC Members on 29 July, so that they could engage registered electrical contractors for repair works during emergencies and expeditiously restore power for the buildings.)

VI. Progress Reports

69. Members noted the following Papers:

- (i) Progress Report of the 3rd Meeting of the Housing Committee held on 21 May 2024
(WTSDC Paper No. 36/2024)
- (ii) Progress Report of the 3rd Meeting of the District Facilities and Works Committee held on 28 May 2024
(WTSDC Paper No. 37/2024)
- (iii) Progress Report of the 3rd Meeting of the Food, Environment and Hygiene Committee held on 4 June 2024
(WTSDC Paper No. 38/2024)
- (iv) Progress Report of the 3rd Meeting of the Traffic and Transport Committee held on 18 June 2024
(WTSDC Paper No. 39/2024)
- (v) Progress Report of the 3rd Meeting of the Community Involvement, Culture and Recreation Committee held on 25 June 2024
(WTSDC Paper No. 40/2024)

VII. Date of the Next Meeting

70. The 5th Meeting of the 7th Term of WTSDC would be held at 2:30 p.m. on 3 September 2024 (Tuesday).

71. The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Wong Tai Sin District Council Secretariat
September 2024

Chinese Version Only

(Please refer to:

[https://www.districtcouncils.gov.hk/wts/doc/2024_2027/tc/
dc_meetings_minutes/DC_M4_M.pdf](https://www.districtcouncils.gov.hk/wts/doc/2024_2027/tc/dc_meetings_minutes/DC_M4_M.pdf))