

**Minutes of the Special Meeting of
Yuen Long District Council on 3 February 2020**

Date : 3 February 2020 (Monday)

Time : 10:00 a.m. – 1:50 p.m.

Venue : Conference Room, Yuen Long District Council, 13/F., Yuen Long Government Offices,
2 Kiu Lok Square, Yuen Long

<u>Present</u>	<u>Time of Arrival</u>	<u>Time of Withdrawal</u>
Vice-chairman: Mr MAK Ip-sing	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Members: Ms CHAN Mei-lin	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Ms CHAN Sze-nga	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr CHEUNG Chi-yeung, Felix	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr CHEUNG Sau-yin	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr FONG Ho-hin	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr HAU Man-kin	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr HO Wai-pan	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr HONG Chin-wah	(Beginning of the meeting)	(12:05 p.m.)
Mr KWAN Chun-sang	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr KWOK Man-ho	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Hon KWONG Chun-yu	(11:05 a.m.)	(01:10 p.m.)
Mr LAI Kwok-wing, Samuel	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Ms LAI Po-wa	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr LAI Wing-tim	(Beginning of the meeting)	(12:30 p.m.)
Mr LAM Chun	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr LAM Ting-wai	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr LEE Chun-wai	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr LEE Wai-fung, Deco	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr LI Chung-chi	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr MO Kai-hong	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr NG Hin-wang	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr NG Kin-wai	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Ms NG Yuk-ying	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr SHEK King-ching	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr SZETO Pok-man	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr TO Ka-lun	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr WONG Pak-yu	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Ms WONG Wing-sze	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Secretary: Ms PANG Ka-fong, Cindy	Senior Executive Officer (District Council), Yuen Long District Office	
Assistant Secretary: Ms WONG Man-ting, Mandy	Executive Officer I (District Council), Yuen Long District Office	

In Attendance

Mr YUEN Ka-lok, Enoch, JP	District Officer (Yuen Long)
Mr NG Lak-sun, Nixon	Assistant District Officer (Yuen Long) 1
Ms POON Wai-yi, Joanna	Assistant District Officer (Yuen Long) 2
Ms NG Yin-bing, Tracy	Senior Liaison Officer (1) (Acting), Yuen Long District Office
Mr HUI Wai-ming, Kenneth	Senior Liaison Officer (2) (Acting), Yuen Long District Office
Ms OR Lai-kum, Christina	Senior Liaison Officer (3), Yuen Long District Office
Mr TSOI Ka-wai	District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Yuen Long), Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Ms TONG Shuk Ting	Chief Health Inspector (Yuen Long)3, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Ms CHU Wing-yin, Diana	District Social Welfare Officer (Yuen Long), Social Welfare Department
Ms YUEN Miu-chun, Christine	Chief Transport Officer/ New Territories North West, Transport Department
Mr WONG Pui-chun	Chief Manager/Management (Tuen Mun and Yuen Long), Housing Department
Ms LAM Yat-kiu	Senior Housing Manager/Yuen Long, Housing Department
Ms KEE Wing-yin, Fionn	Chief School Development Officer (Yuen Long), Education Bureau

Absence

Mr AU Kwok-kuen	(Absent with apologies)
Mr CHAN King-lun, Kisslan	(Absent with apologies)
Mr CHAN Shu-fai	
Mr CHING Chan-ming	(Absent with apologies)
Mr LEUNG Tak-ming	(Absent with apologies)
Mr MAN Fu-wan, BBS	
Mr MAN Mei-kwai, Jimmy	
Mr SHUM Ho-kit, JP	(Absent with apologies)
Mr TANG Che-keung	
Mr TANG Ho-nin	
Mr TANG Ka-leung	
Mr TANG Lai-tung	(Absent with apologies)
Mr TANG Sui-man	(Absent with apologies)
Mr TANG Yung-yiu, Ronnie	
Mr YOUNG Ka-on	(Absent with apologies)
Mr WONG Wai-yin, Zachary	(Absent with apologies)

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Opening Remarks

The Vice Chairman welcomed Members and departmental representatives to the second special meeting of the Yuen Long District Council (“YLDC”). Since the Chairman, Mr Zachary

WONG, was unable to attend this meeting, the Vice Chairman said he would preside over the meeting pursuant to Yuen Long District Council Standing Order 6(2).

2. Mr AU Kwok-kuen, Mr TANG Sui-man, Mr Kisslan CHAN, Mr LEUNG Tak-ming, Mr CHING Chan-ming, Mr SHUM Ho-kit, JP, Mr YOUNG Ka-on and Mr TANG Lai-tung were absent with apologies.

3. The Vice Chairman said if he had to leave the chair during the meeting, Mr WONG Pak-yu would preside over the meeting temporarily.

Item I: Confirmation of the Agenda

4. Regarding the agenda, the Secretariat received three questions and two motions which were set out as follows:

Question 1: “Request all the SAR government departments to provide an update on the disease prevention status in the district and adopt this Council’s suggestions”;

Question 2: “Request all government departments to report the quantities of protective masks domestically produced and in stock”;

Question 3: “Request the Education Bureau to explain its disease prevention arrangements and adopt this Council’s suggestions”;

Motion 1: “This Council requests that the Government promptly allocate funding to purchase disease prevention supplies for free distribution to members of the public in response to the outbreak of COVID-19”; and

Motion 2: “Request the Hong Kong Police Force to increase manpower at high-risk areas such as hospitals, border control points and quarantine camps to tackle non-compliant COVID-19 patients and gate-crashers”.

5. Since the above questions and motions were relevant to epidemic prevention work in the community under Item II, the Vice Chairman advised that they be discussed together.

6. The agenda was confirmed with no objection from Members.

Discussion Items

Item II: Efforts to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the community (YLDC Paper Nos. 22 to 26/2020)

7. The Vice Chairman referred Members to Paper Nos. 22 to 26, and asked departmental representatives to respond to Members’ questions.

8. Mr Enoch YUEN, JP, District Councillor (Yuen Long), said the District Office had been in contact with Members to update them of the latest epidemic situation. To deal with the urgent work arising from the epidemic, some government departments were unable to attend the meeting,

but they had provided Members with written replies. Owing to time constraint and the time required to consolidate data from different departments, some of them could not give a prompt reply to Members. That said, he would endeavour to respond to Members' questions with reference to the latest information on the epidemic released by the Government.

9. Some Members suggested that the representatives from government departments brief Members on the epidemic prevention measures and respond to written questions raised by Members first. Afterwards, Members could put forward their views and questions. The Vice Chairman adopted the suggestion.

10. Mr Enoch YUEN, JP said that in response to the latest development of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) infection, the Chief Executive announced on 25 January that the response level under the "Preparedness and Response Plan for Novel Infectious Disease of Public Health Significance" would be raised to Emergency Response Level with immediate effect. To tackle the disease, a package of measures were rolled out and government departments concerned were working closely with one another. Currently, Yuen Long District Office ("YLDO") provided basic and limited service such as oath-taking. The Home Affairs Enquiry Centre which was open provided public members or users in need with face masks. To reduce the risk of the spread of COVID-19 in the community, community halls had suspended service. Flexible working schedules were implemented to reduce contact and consumption of face masks, the provision of which would be catered by the Government Logistics Department ("GLD") based on the needs of the departments.

11. Mr TSOI Ka-wai of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department ("FEHD") said a range of anti-epidemic measures had been implemented at public places, as well as its facilities such as markets and public toilets, since the onset of the outbreak. Service contractors had been urged to step up cleaning and disinfection of public markets in Yuen Long District. At present, public facilities under the FEHD were still open to public. Apart from putting up posters and banners reminding the public of observing personal hygiene in the district at the early stage of the outbreak, the department had strengthened a series of enforcement actions.

12. Mr WONG Pui-chun of the Housing Department ("HD") said the Housing Authority had announced a number of arrangements including estate management service on a limited scale in response to the Government's special work arrangement to reduce the risk of the spread of COVID-19 in the community. Besides, with a raise of the cleaning and disinfection measures of its housing estates to the highest level, the daily cleaning and disinfection in public places of all Housing Authority's housing estates was stepped up.

13. Ms Christine YUEN of the Transport Department ("TD") said the department had, in tandem with the epidemic prevention work in response to COVID-19, disseminated to the transport industry the message of preventing the spread of infectious disease through public transport carriers. Public transport operators, such as cross-border bus companies, were requested to adopt appropriate measures to intensify cleansing of station facilities. Apart from providing employees with face masks and delivering health guidelines, public transport operators had put up notices on buses or minibuses to draw passengers' attention to observance of hygiene. The department would continue to communicate with the transport industry to follow up on the epidemic prevention work.

14. Ms Diana CHU of the Social Welfare Department (“SWD”) said since the early stage of the epidemic, the SWD had, with reference to the information and instructions released by the Department of Health (“DH”), issued guidelines to social welfare service units, reminding them of stepping up cleaning and disease prevention work. On 28 January, the department issued guidelines to these service units. All aided child care centres, day care centres for the elderly and sheltered workshops would suspend their delivery of service. These centres, however, would remain open to serve users in need. Members of the public who had the need for these services could contact the centres or service units concerned in advance. While all residential care services would continue to operate, integrated family service centres would only provide casework service, and integrated home care services would only provide meal, escort, nursing and administration of medicine services. Under such arrangement, urgent and essential services would be provided as normal, and other services would be provided on a limited scale. In light of the special work arrangement announced by the Government, integrated family service centres and social security field units would maintain limited service. Service users would be contacted by phone instead of via face-to-face visits, so that the department could pool resources to handle urgent cases. Medical social services in Tin Shui Wai would remain normal to support in-patients.

15. Ms Fionn KEE of the Education Bureau (“EDB”) said after considering the latest development of the epidemic, medical advice, readiness of schools and supply of anti-epidemic materials, the EDB had decided that schools would resume classes on 2 March the earliest. With the development of the outbreak, the class resumption date was subject to further assessment. The EDB would continue to assess the situation and decide whether conditions allow for class resumption based on medical advice, schools’ readiness and the supply of protective equipment in the community. When conditions were ready, the EDB would decide on and inform schools of the exact date of class resumption as soon as possible so that they could make arrangements in advance. Schools were urged to contact the students to see whether they had returned to Hong Kong before 3 February for making corresponding arrangement where necessary. Besides, the EDB disseminated letters of the Centre for Health Protection (“CHP”) to schools, urging them to heighten vigilance and strengthen precautionary measures, as well as disseminate the information to parents. In addition, for more effective prevention against the spread of communicable diseases in the campus, schools should assign designated staff or a crisis management team to coordinate and oversee matters relating to the hygienic conditions of the school environment and to brief students, staff and parents on the relevant precautionary measures. The EDB would continue to keep in close contact with government departments including the CHP to disseminate the latest information on the disease and related precautionary measures to schools, and maintain communication with the education sector to learn about their concerns.

16. Some Members said that government department representatives attending the meeting had not replied Members’ written questions, and suggested that they give a supplementary response first.

17. The Vice Chairman invited government department representatives to reply to Members’ written questions first.

18. Mr WONG Pui-chun said the department’s staff stationing at housing estates would

monitor the cleansing and security work there. The special task force would conduct inspections and issue summons to people for littering offence. Managers would take enforcement actions against breaches of the law if found, and the special task force would be deployed to conduct more frequent inspections in different areas, especially those with poor environmental hygiene conditions. Besides, between July and December 2019, the department issued a total of 79 summons for offences including spitting and littering. Lastly, he said he would relay the concern on the use of vacant public rental housing units for quarantine purpose to the department.

19. Mr TSOI Ka-wai said the department had deployed three special task force teams to take enforcement actions against public cleansing offences and conduct raids in Yuen Long District. The number of prosecutions in Yuen Long District from August 2019 to January 2020 amounted to 2 280. Separately, the department had instructed staff in Yuen Long District to strengthen enforcement actions against spitting since the outbreak of the epidemic was noted in December last year. Up till now, 36 offenders were issued fixed penalty summons. Moreover, all refuse collection vehicles used for collecting domestic waste in Yuen Long District were of an enclosed design. Lastly, with sufficient reserve of disinfection materials in Yuen Long District, staff members could clean and disinfect public places effectively.

20. Mr Enoch YUEN, JP said he had responded to Members' suggestions of providing more face masks and alcohol-based hand sanitisers for use by people in need in community facilities. Members of the public were advised to wear their own masks, but face masks would still be provided to people in need. At the moment, basic services on a limited scale such as oath-taking were offered. The Home Affairs Enquiry Centre was open to public, but community halls and community centres were temporarily closed. Besides, the District Office was not using lidless rubbish bins, but Members' suggestion of replacing them with pedal bins would be conveyed to the Headquarters. Secondly, part of the written question to the Home Affairs Department ("HAD") fell out of the purview of the District Office, but he had requested from other government departments information including occupancy of hotels and licensed guesthouses in Yuen Long District. He said the HAD was responsible for the administration of the Hotel and Guesthouse Accommodation Ordinance (Cap 349), primarily to ensure that premises intended to be used as hotels/guesthouses complied with the statutory standards in respect of building and fire safety. However, the HAD was not vested with the power to trace the whereabouts of the tourists and their accommodation at guesthouses. Nevertheless, to trace tourists from Hebei who were still in Hong Kong, the Immigration Department ("ImmD") had intensified measures including inspections to hotels and guesthouse accommodations in the territory. In addition, the Chief Executive was leading all government departments to counter the epidemic, and the departments were working with the CHP in fighting the disease. The District Office would disseminate the most up-to-date anti-epidemic information to the public through the community network such as hotels, guesthouses, property management companies, owners' corporations and mutual aid committees in a timely manner. Assistance would also be rendered to government departments concerned promptly in carrying out the quarantine work and relief measures. Members were invited to refer to the written reply by the Food and Health Bureau ("FHB").

21. Mr TSOI Ka-wai responded to a number of written proposals put forward by Members to the FEHD. Firstly, regarding the provision of covered rubbish bins at the streets, he said that the orange standing rubbish bins in use now were covered with two inserts on both sides. Some of the rubbish bins used in major refuse collection points were with pedals, but they might require extra force to open, and were therefore not recommended for general use. Secondly, on the suggestion

of monitoring the distribution of sufficient personal protective equipment to frontline cleansing workers by contractors, he said the department had written to contractors at the onset of the virus outbreak, requesting them to ensure that frontline cleansing workers were given sufficient protective equipment. It was also learnt that contractors undertaking cleansing work in Yuen Long District had adequate protective supplies, and inventory of masks would be replenished. Under the signed contract, contractors should ensure occupational safety and health of the employees, and the department would continue to monitor the situation. Thirdly, on the suggestion of increasing the frequency of cleaning and disinfection of streets and rear lanes in Yuen Long, he thanked the District Office for allocating \$600,000 to the FEHD through the District-led Action Scheme. In the coming two months, four cleansing teams would be deployed to step up cleansing work at the black spots Yuen Long District. Fourthly, regarding the suggestion of stepping up prosecution against people in contravention of public health laws, the department would step up prosecution against spitting in public places to prevent the spread of the epidemic.

22. Ms Christine YUEN said public transport operators had enhanced cleaning and disinfection measures in response to the epidemic. It was noted that the MTRCL had fully stepped up the virus prevention and disinfection work in the train network. Station facilities with high public accessibility were cleaned and disinfected regularly with 1:99 bleach water solution every four hours. For stations connecting the Mainland boundary control points, disinfection would increase depending on the situation. The department would convey Members' suggestion of increasing the frequency of cleansing to once every hour to MTRCL. Besides, on the suggestion to the bus companies of increasing the frequency of disinfecting bus compartments to once per bus trip, the department had requested the bus companies to clean bus compartments with 1:99 diluted bleach once daily. Compartments of buses on higher-risk routes such as cross-border routes would be cleaned more regularly. Bus companies were requested to remind the bus captains of attending to the cleanliness in the bus compartments. If there was any area that was apparently dirty cleansing workers should be assigned to perform cleaning. The department would reflect Members' views to the bus companies, which would be requested to step up cleaning and disinfection work as appropriate and as far as practicable.

23. Ms Fionn KEE supplemented that, on the suggestion of following up on the health status of cross-border students, strengthened health check measures including identifying persons with fever were implemented by the DH at border control points. Cross-border students were also required to pass the checks. In addition, with reference to the DH's precautionary measures, schools should adopt appropriate initiatives to safeguard the health of students. Students should not attend schools if they felt unwell or had any symptoms. The EDB would maintain close liaison with the CHP and consider measures that had to be taken when schools resumed, including declaration of students' health status. Besides, on Members' concern over public examination arrangement, the EDB would closely monitor and assess the situation, and discuss with the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority ("HKEAA") on the support offered to takers of this year's HKDSE and schools. The EDB would also continue to communicate with the education sector. The HKEAA would examine necessary contingency plans (including precautionary measures) and make announcements should there be any change in the examination arrangements.

24. Mr Enoch YUEN, JP said that regarding the reserve quantity of masks, storage locations, distribution measures, logistics procedures and quantity of masks produced locally, he would respond to questions that fell within the purview of the District Office. At present, the District Office had reserved a stock of not more than 400 face masks mainly for use by staff on duty, as well

as for visitors or service users in need. It was expected that the masks would be sufficient for one week's consumption. The District Office had sent a request to the GLD for additional supply of masks. Besides, on mask supply, he cited the remarks of the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development at a media session on 30 January this year, saying that because a majority of masks were produced in the mainland, retailers in Hong Kong faced genuine difficulty in purchasing masks. For example, retailers were unable to ensure that the masks could be delivered on time after they had placed an order. The Government would collaborate with the Mainland authorities to facilitate customs clearance to accelerate the supply of masks on the market. Since mid-January, the SAR government had, through the collaboration of the customs authorities in the two places, facilitated a supply of nearly eight million face masks, which had arrived or would soon arrive in Hong Kong for retail. The Government would continue to liaise with the relevant Mainland authorities, especially when Hong Kong retailers encountered difficulty in clearance and delivery in the Mainland. The SAR Government would arrange with the Mainland authorities to ensure an increased supply of masks, and its work would carry on. On the procurement of masks, the GLD was sourcing globally and had contacted more than 220 suppliers from over 10 countries. It strove to remove all the unnecessary procedures provided that the quality of masks would not be compromised. The economic and trade offices outside Hong Kong were in parallel identifying suppliers of face masks in their respective regions. On the increase in local production, the Correctional Services Department ("CSD") strove to extend production to 24 hours, increasing the production from 1.1 million to 1.8 million per month. The Government had also contacted the only local producer of face masks, which had already enhanced the overall outputs from 800 000 to 1.6 million a month.

25. The Vice Chairman invited Members to raise questions to government department representatives in attendance of the meeting.

26. Mr WONG Pak-yu reflected that while housing estates had stepped up cleaning and disinfection work, there were complaints that the HD had not ensured proper monitoring, such as inadequate cleaning and disinfection in Tin Heng Estate. He hoped that the HD would give an explanation.

27. Mr WONG Pui-chun said the department had enhanced its monitoring on cleaning and disinfection work in the housing estates. Estate managers would conduct regular inspections to ensure that frontline cleansing workers would observe the guidelines when conducting cleaning and disinfection work. The cleaning work in Tin Heng Estate was satisfactory on the whole. Members of the public were welcomed to report any irregularities found to the estate offices.

28. Ms CHAN Mei-lin said a vast number of smokers huddled at Tin Yuet Amphitheatre, particularly during morning peak hours. Apart from countless cigarette buds on the ground and overthrowing rubbish bins, the area was filled with droppings left by large flocks of pigeons gathering there. These frequently overlooked problems had caused poor hygienic conditions there.

29. Mr WONG Pui-chun said Members' complaints would be followed up by HD's officers. The department had observed the hygienic black spots, and would deal with them. He said while these problems had not been found in the housing estate during the inspection last week, the department would instruct the staff to be mindful of the situation.

30. Mr Felix CHEUNG expressed regret that the Police representative was absent from today's meeting, saying that the Police should respond to Members' questions at the meeting. Besides, Mr WONG Pak-yu and he believed that the MTRCL should inform the TD of fainting cases and make such information available to the public to alleviate their concerns.

31. Ms Christine YUEN said in situations where passengers reported sick at the stations, the MTRCL would cope with them by itself and assign its staff to give assistance. A mechanism was set up by the department and MTRCL to cope with service delay. Whenever there was a train service delay, the MTRCL was required to notify the department within a specified timeframe.

32. Mr CHEUNG Sau-yin enquired the Education Bureau ("EDB") on whether Secondary School Places Allocation ("SSPA") would be postponed due to school suspension that had affected the SSPA internal assessments for Primary 5 and Primary 6 students. He also enquired whether the EDB had communicated with schools on the SSPA arrangement, saying that school parents had expressed serious concern that school banding and secondary one place allocation would be affected in case the last SSPA internal assessment ("IA") had to be cancelled. Lastly, he suggested the EDB to support the schools in digital and online learning during school suspension.

33. Ms Fionn KEE said that under the present SSPA system, students' IA results at the end of Primary 5, and both in mid-year and at the end of Primary 6, should be submitted to the EDB for allocation of school places. According to schedule, the third internal assessment results should be submitted by end of April. In light of the development of the epidemic, the EDB would discuss with schools suitable arrangements, including postponing the submission deadline of IA results. Separately, the EDB would remind schools to make good use of different learning modes (including digital learning) and arrange appropriate learning activities for students. Schools should also provide students with learning materials, supplementary exercises and extra-curricular readings so that they could continue to learn at home at their own time.

34. Mr FONG Ho-hin requested the FEHD to draw attention to the shortage of protective equipment for frontline cleansing workers, adding that some workers were provided with only one face mask per day. He suggested that the workers should be given anti-epidemic items such as hand sanitisers, and mature-age workers should be educated on the proper use of face masks. He also called on the FEHD to follow up on the problem of feral pigeons along Yuen Long Nullah which was a matter of concern.

35. Mr TSOI Ka-wai said while cleansing service contractors had sufficient protective equipment in stock, the department would look into each case. Cleansing service contractors were requested to provide workers with adequate protective equipment and additional masks in case they needed to replace them. Members were welcomed to inform him of any irregularities, which would be followed up. Besides, on the problem of feral pigeons along Yuen Long Nullah, the department, being aware that a significant number of pigeons had gathered at the area, would step up actions against feeding of feral pigeons. Where necessary, such cases would be referred to the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department ("AFCD") for assistance and follow-up.

36. Mr HO Wai-pan enquired the HD on whether covered rubbish bins would be placed on the ground floor of each public housing estate building for disposal of face masks; whether anti-epidemic items were purchased by the outsourced management companies and cleansing service contractors at their own cost or provided by the department; the actual timeslots of cleaning and disinfection that was performed at an eight-hour interval each day; whether the special task force would carry out an inspection upon receipt of a complaint or conduct spot checks proactively, and the relevant figures; and whether maintenance service in public housing estates could remain available during virus outbreak. He also enquired the SWD on whether face masks were purchased by subsidised social welfare service units on their own or provided by the department.

37. Mr WONG Pui-chun said as a general practice, rubbish bins would be placed outdoor instead of on the ground floor of each public housing estate building. Workers were requested to use 1:99 diluted household bleach to clean areas that were frequently touched by the public at least eight times a day, i.e. at an interval of around two hours. During the epidemic, urgent maintenance works in public housing estates would be conducted, while repair works involving contact with the residents would be reduced.

38. Ms Diana CHU said subsidised service units would normally purchase face masks with the funding allocated by the department. In response to the epidemic, the department had offered additionally an allowance of \$3,000 or \$5,000 to care service units to acquire protective equipment including face masks and cleansing items.

39. Mr HONG Chin-wah considered that the guidelines of government departments were clear but appeared to be a mere formality, so he suggested that monitoring should be stepped up when implementing the guidelines. He said frontline cleansing workers of FEHD, who were mostly older-aged, would be more susceptible to virus infection. However, in face of insufficient protective equipment, FEHD staff boasted online about the face masks they had stocked up. He requested the FEHD to properly address the situation. He added that when workers performed cleaning tasks in the morning and evening duty shifts, passers-by would spit or throw rubbish at the large refuse collection bins that were not covered in the public places. Secondly, he intended to discuss with the HD the distribution of more than a thousand face masks donated by non-profit organisations to residents, but he did not get any reply. In addition, he suggested that the Government support working mothers who had to pay more for child care service due to the epidemic. Lastly, he enquired whether anti-epidemic items were purchased by the outsourced management companies and cleansing service contractors at their own cost or provided by the FEHD and HD.

40. Mr WONG Pui-chun said, concerning refuse collection bins not covered with lids during cleaning tasks, the department would follow up on the problem and step up inspections. The department was aware of the distribution of face masks. In this regard, it would make necessary arrangement to ensure that the masks would be given to people in need by reducing gathering of crowds. Secondly, outsourced management companies and cleansing service contractors would be reminded to provide adequate protective equipment. These companies and contractors would also purchase anti-epidemic items such as face masks at their own cost. The department would take heed of the situation.

41. Ms Diana CHU said child care centres which had suspended service would still be open to users. Members of the public could contact the centres when necessary.

42. Mr KWAN Chun-sang said there were a lot of hygienic black spots in Tin Shui Wai. For example, rodent infestation was rampant in the area outside T Town facing Tin Yan Estate. In view of the highly severe epidemic situation, he suggested that the FEHD step up inspections and cleaning, while safeguarding the health of frontline cleansing workers. He also suggested that the SWD subsidise low-income families to buy anti-epidemic items such as face masks, because the market price of these items had skyrocketed.

43. Ms Diana CHU said it was noted that face masks were in tight supply. As allocation of extra subsidy had to do with policy, Members' views would be reflected to the policy bureaus concerned. In case help-seeking families encountered difficulty in purchasing face masks, the department would consider giving them assistance in the form of special funds. Members were welcomed to refer these cases to the SWD for follow-up.

44. Mr TSOI Ka-wai said the department, which was heedful of rodent infestation in Tin Yan Estate, had arranged inspections with DC Members on the problem in Tin Shui Wai. In order to control rodent infestation, there would be an increase of pest control teams from 23 to 26 in the future. Separately, frontline cleansing workers would be provided with adequate and standard epidemic-prevention equipment.

45. Mr KWOK Man-ho said he had not received the guidelines on enhanced cleaning and disinfection work from the HD. He also enquired the HD on whether the Total Maintenance Scheme in Tin Ching Estate would continue during the epidemic, and whether a clear and standard set of guidelines would be issued to the HD's housing estates. Moreover, he reflected that the poor hygiene of the area of Tin Ching Estate outside One Sky Mall was caused by the accumulation of litter in the absence of rubbish bins. Therefore, he requested the FEHD to step up cleaning in the community. He also suggested the FEHD to enhance the monitoring of provision of protective equipment to frontline cleansing workers by outsourced service providers, adding that the present situation should be explained to alleviate public concern. Lastly, he called on the SWD for addressing the need of people with chronic illness, elderly living alone and ethnic minority groups. Resources should be allocated to district bodies or organisations to provide assistance and disseminate anti-epidemic messages to these people.

46. Mr WONG Pui-chun said only urgent maintenance service would remain available during the epidemic. In addition, the department had already issued its housing estates with the guidelines on stepping up cleaning and disinfection work, and monitoring would be strengthened.

47. The Vice Chairman requested the HD to provide the guidelines on stepping up cleaning and disinfection work in housing estates in writing after the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The Secretariat forwarded the HD's "Guidelines on Stepping up Cleaning and Disinfection Work in Public Housing Estates (Serious Response Level)" to Members on

11 February 2020.)

48. Ms Diana CHU said relevant guidelines had been issued to district elderly centres at the onset of the epidemic. When visiting the elderly, volunteers would remind them to take heed of the latest epidemic situation and follow precautionary measures. Since face-to-face contact was not encouraged at this critical stage, volunteers of district elderly centres would mostly contact elder people in need by phone. Subject to the epidemic development, the department would adjust its policy on funding allocation. Activities of each district funded by respective programme allocation were designed to meet the need of individual district. In Yuen Long at present, there was at least one centre providing support to ethnic minorities, and ethnic minority volunteer groups in youth centres would develop support networks.

49. Mr TSOI Ka-wai said the department had pledged to place rubbish bins outside Sky Mall, albeit a reduction of rubbish bins in the district with the introduction of the waste charging scheme. The department would monitor the provision of face masks to frontline cleansing workers by cleansing service contractors by means of inspections. There were around 600 outsourced cleansing workers in Yuen Long. Members were encouraged to reflect any unreasonable situation to the department.

50. Hon KWONG Chun-yu reprimanded the FHB for not sending any representative to the DC meeting for the second time. He said there were a lot of healthcare professionals who urged the Government to close the border in the hope of stopping the virus at source by launching a strike. The FHB could not decline to attend the meeting and answer Members' questions, including the quantity in stock and utilisation of face masks, with the excuse of having other commitments. He supported the medical staff to go for a strike and hoped that other Members would also voice their support, saying that regardless of what decision they had made, the Hong Kong people would back them up.

51. Mr Samuel LAI proposed that Estate Management Advisory Committees purchase epidemic-prevention items and equipment for use in the estates with the unused allocation from cancelled activities, and provide support to cleansing service contractors in short of manpower so as to comply with the guidelines on stepping up cleaning and disinfection work issued by the HD. He also suggested the Leisure and Cultural Services Department ("LCSD") and FEHD to arrange for more protective equipment such as gloves for frontline cleansing workers. He enquired the FEHD on the ways to monitor the proper distribution of epidemic-prevention items to frontline cleansing workers.

52. The Vice Chairman said as the LCSD had not sent any representative to the meeting, Members' views would be conveyed to the department in writing after the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The Secretariat conveyed Members' views to the LCSD in writing on 6 February 2020. The LCSD's reply was relayed to Members on 11 February 2020.)

53. Mr TSOI Ka-wai said cleansing services in Yuen Long District were mainly outsourced to contractors. In monitoring the treatment to cleansing workers, the department would check the

stock of epidemic-prevention items kept by service contractors, inspect the work situation and meet with workers, and follow up on any irregularities. The department had also purchased goggles and garbage grabbers to cleansing workers of the Government. Protective equipment would be upgraded taking into account the epidemic situation.

54. Mr WONG Pui-chun said views on how to make good use of the allocation for stepping up the cleaning work in housing estates and raising the awareness of personal hygiene would be relayed to the Estate Management Advisory Committees by estate managers, who would also encourage Advisory Committee members to adopt the suggestions.

55. Ms LAI Po-wa said although the HD had confirmed that alcohol-based hand sanitisers were provided for residents' use at every management counter of the building in Tin Shui Estate, some residents complained that the hand sanitisers were of small volume and not placed at visible locations. She was also concerned that estate security officers had not been offered face masks, and suggested that the HD provided support.

56. Mr WONG Pui-chun said measures should be taken by service contractors to take measures to safeguard the occupational safety of staff members under the signed contracts, including the provision of anti-epidemic items such as face masks. The department would continue to monitor the situation and was seeking information on the stock of epidemic-prevention equipment such as face masks from the contractors so that timely assistance could be offered.

57. Ms LAM Yat-kiu of the HD said hand sanitisers were provided at the management counter of each Tin Shui Estate building. Members' views and observations were noted and would be conveyed to Estate Managers for follow-up.

58. Mr LAI Wing-tim said in rural areas, rubbish was found everywhere. Even if grab-mounted lorries were used, some waste would remain there and the FEHD was unable to clear the area right away. The problem was particularly serious in Kam Shueng Road where waste would be discarded on roadside, causing not only bad odour but also potential health hazards to members of the public.

59. Mr TSOI Ka-wai said albeit the setting up of refuse collection points and bin sites to allow villagers to dispose of household waste in rural areas, waste dumping was still observed. The department would deploy refuse collection vehicles to clear the area and strengthen cleaning of refuse collection points. It was hoped that Members could help calling on residents in rural areas to dispose of the waste properly in the rubbish bins.

60. In view of the obstruction faced by members of the public in the purchase of face masks from overseas sources, Mr LAM Chun enquired whether the Customs and Excise Department ("C&ED") had implemented import control of face masks under the Prohibition on Face Covering Regulation. Besides, he enquired the FEHD and HD on whether the frequency of inspections in recent days was comparable to that during the SARS outbreak. He also suggested the FEHD and HD to step up inspections in hygiene black spots in housing estates, especially spitting and littering

arising from the gathering of the elderly.

61. Mr Enoch YUEN, JP said the C&ED had clarified that face masks were not included in the lists of prohibited and controlled items, adding that it would not hinder importation of such products into Hong Kong legally. Details would be given by the C&ED in its reply.

62. The Vice Chairman requested the Secretariat to write to the C&ED concerning Members' question, and hoped that import restriction on face masks would be relaxed.

(Post-meeting note: The Secretariat referred Member's question to the C&ED on 6 February 2020 and relayed the C&ED's reply to Members on 11 February 2020.)

63. Mr TSOI Ka-wai said Members could inform the department of any hygienic black spot discovered. Surprise checks and prosecutions against offenders would be taken. It was hoped that members of the public would abide by the law. He said government departments would stay vigilant against COVID-19 and continue to increase the frequency of inspections.

64. Mr WONG Pui-chun said the department would arrange for inspections utilising current resources to ensure that frontline workers would observe the established operation guidelines.

65. The Vice Chairman suggested staff of the FEHD and HD to inspect hygienic black spots with DC Members.

66. Mr LAM Ting-wai supported the HD for the temporary closure of children's play area. He then enquired whether the FEHD would step up cleaning in areas with high people flow such as exits and accesses to pedestrian walkways at West Rail Long Ping and Yuen Long Stations. An enquiry was also made on detailed figures of the increase in delivering cleaning work since the outbreak of COVID-19.

67. Mr WONG Pui-chun said with the closure of the play areas in housing estates, the department could pool the resources to cope with other more important work to fight the epidemic.

68. Mr TSOI Ka-wai said cleaning at public places and public transport stations with high people flow had been enhanced. Between February and March, an additional four cleansing teams were deployed. Detailed figures on the increase in the cleaning frequency would be clearly reported in due course.

69. The Vice Chairman said in the absence of MTRCL representative, the TD was advised to convey Members' suggestion of stepping up cleaning of public transport stations.

70. Ms Christine YUEN said the views would be relayed to MTRCL.

71. Mr Deco LEE said the HKDSE was expected to take place in March. Last year, there were about 400 non-local candidates including those from the Mainland. He enquired whether non-locals would take the exam together with local candidates in the same venue. A special room was suggested to safeguard the health of both parties.

72. Ms Fionn KEE said the EDB would keep contact with the HKEAA to discuss the appropriate examination arrangement.

73. Mr LI Chung-chi enquired the FEHD about the frequency of cleaning at busy streets in Yuen Long Town, and whether cleaning was delivered at the standard during the outbreak of SARS. Besides, as waste accumulation had been prevalent in rural areas, he suggested the FEHD to increase cleaning frequency. The District Office was also advised to enhance the dissemination of messages on epidemic prevention. For example, information could be put up on notice boards at the village entrances to raise the villagers' awareness of proper ways to guard against the disease.

74. Ms TONG Shuk-ting of the FEHD said cleansing service contractors were required to conduct cleaning and refuse collection at heavily-visited areas in Yuen Long three times a day under the contract. With funding allocation from the District Office, an additional four cleansing teams were deployed to step up cleaning operation. There would be an increase in the frequency of cleaning, taking into account the situation of garbage accumulation in rural areas.

75. Mr Enoch YUEN, JP said the District Office had maintained contact with the rural communities. With the Government's raise in the response level to the epidemic, the District Office had advised the Rural Committees to cancel large-scale activities attended by a vast number of people. The District Office would timely post the DH's latest anti-epidemic information in rural areas or disseminate such information to villagers through DC Members and Rural Committees.

76. Mr MO Kai-hong said school children had been forced to stay at home due to school suspension. He suggested that after school care service at schools and community centres be strengthened. He enquired the HD about the measures taken when confirmed cases were identified in its housing estates. He also enquired the FEHD on whether cleaning at public markets would be stepped up, and proposed that banners showing the proper way of wearing face masks be hanged in the district.

77. Ms Fionn KEE said while school suspension announcement had been made, the EDB requested that schools remain open and arrange suitable manpower on duty to take care of students in need.

78. Mr WONG Pui-chun said with reference to the previous experiences in disease outbreaks, the department would arrange cleansing workers to clean public facilities in housing estates where confirmed cases were recorded, with the use of 1:49 diluted household bleach. These workers would be provided with protective equipment such as protective clothing prepared in advance.

79. Mr TSOI Ka-wai said the department had stepped up cleaning at markets. Public facilities were cleaned four times a day, with the use of 1:99 diluted household bleach. Higher-risk places such as toilets were disinfected once every two hours, and lift buttons were disinfected every hour. Hanging banners showing the proper way of wearing masks was not a key initiative in the department's work plan.

80. Mr NG Hin-wang suggested the Government to distribute face masks produced by the CSD to the public free of charge to alleviate panic shopping for face masks on the market. He enquired what measures the Government would take in case of an outbreak in the community, and whether the Government would close the border in response to the strike staged by medical workers. Separately, he suggested the HD to increase the frequency of cleaning of public facilities to once every hour, and enquired the HD whether reserve funds of the estates had been utilised for epidemic prevention.

81. Mr Enoch YUEN, JP thanked Members for being understanding to the arrangement of this meeting to prevent the spread of virus and safeguard the health of the meeting participants. At present, with the flexible work arrangement in the District Office, some staff members would be working from home to reduce the use of face masks. That said, face masks would be provided to staff in need to protect their health.

82. Mr WONG Pui-chun said the department would relay the suggestion of increasing the cleaning frequency of public facilities to the headquarters and contractors.

83. The Vice Chairman said that, because the CSD had not sent any representative to this meeting, Members' views would be conveyed to the department in writing after the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The Secretariat conveyed Members' views to the CSD in writing on 6 February 2020, and the CSD's reply was relayed to Members on 11 February 2020.)

84. Mr NG Kin-wai said many Mainland tourists frequently visited Yuen Long and Tin Shui Wai and stayed at the hotels there. He enquired whether the Government would maintain close liaison with hotels to assess the information of tourists and ensure they would be effectively kept track of. He expressed concern that the epidemic-prevention measures in private housing estates were inconsistent, and suggested that the Government issue written guidelines to property management companies. He also enquired whether there was a mechanism to ensure the consistency of precautionary measures taken by property management companies of private housing estates and those of the Government. He enquired whether the District Office was aware of the online rumours regarding the distribution of CSI masks by district organisations, and if they were true, he suggested that DC Members have the priority in distributing masks to the public.

85. Mr Enoch YUEN, JP reiterated that the HAD was responsible for administering the Hotel and Guesthouse Accommodation Ordinance (Cap 349), with an aim to ensure that the premises intended to be used as a guesthouse complied with the statutory standards of structural and fire

safety. The HAD was not empowered to keep track of the visitors and their stay at hotels and guesthouses. Nevertheless, the Immigration Department (“ImmD”) had started tracking Hubei visitors staying in Hong Kong and contacted hotels and guesthouses for visitors’ information for follow-up. He clarified that the District Office had not provided any masks to District Councillors or other individuals. They were for internal use only. The District Office had approached property management companies of private housing estates and conveyed to them updates on disease prevention from the DH.

86. Ms NG Yuk-ying made an enquiry on the cleaning arrangement of parks and outdoor facilities of the LCSD. She suggested the Government to issue epidemic prevention guidelines to property management companies of private housing estates, as well as enhance communication and support. Secondly, in response to media reports that CSI masks were available on the market, the Government said masks had been distributed to some NGOs by the CSD before the outbreak of COVID-19. She enquired about the details of the masks, including the reasons for provision of masks and the list of the NGOs concerned.

87. Mr Enoch YUEN, JP said the District Office would contact the private housing estates to follow up on the discrepancies between their anti-epidemic guidelines and the Government. He believed that property management companies would draw up their own disease prevention guidelines for observance by their staff. Again, he clarified that the District Office had not provided any masks to District Councillors or any other individuals, and considered that it was more appropriate for government departments supplying masks to NGOs to answer Members’ questions.

88. The Vice Chairman said a written enquiry would be sent to the LCSD about the cleaning arrangement of its parks and outdoor facilities. He also suggested that the Government should promptly put up anti-epidemic posters in lobbies of housing estates.

(Post-meeting note: The Secretariat referred Member’s question to the LCSD on 6 February 2020 and relayed the LCSD’s reply to Members on 11 February 2020.)

89. Mr SHEK King-ching enquired how the District Office provide anti-epidemic support to residents in single-block or old tenement buildings without property management companies or owners’ corporations. He said public markets were sources of potential virus outbreaks. Even all necessary cleaning and disinfection measures were taken, if stall owners had not exercised self-discipline to wear masks properly, the spread of virus could not be controlled effectively. Next, on the Government’s proposal of a 14-day quarantine for persons entering Hong Kong from the Mainland, he enquired the EDB what arrangements would be made for cross-border students after school resumption. Lastly, he believed that the outbreak would become serious shortly after the Chinese New Year holiday.

90. On the Government’s announcement that the outbreak had reached a serious level, Mr Enoch YUEN, JP clarified that this referred to a raise of the response level under the “Preparedness and Response Plan for Novel Infectious Disease of Public Health Significance” to Emergency. He said building management was the owners’ responsibility. Under the Resident Liaison Ambassador Scheme, the District Office would keep contact with and disseminate epidemic prevention messages to owners of buildings without management organisations. Buildings

without owners' corporations would also be encouraged to participate in the scheme.

91. Mr TSOI Ka-wai said the FEHD wrote to market stall owners on 9 January, requesting them to observe personal, stall and food hygiene in response to the virus outbreak. The CHP's guidelines on the prevention of COVID-19 was also attached. The department would call on the stall owners for wearing masks when they were sick.

92. Ms Fionn KEE said school suspension would reduce the risk of students contracting COVID-19. In view of the development of the virus outbreak, the exact date of class resumption was subject to further assessment. In deciding whether the schools were ready for class resumption, the EDB would continue to assess the situation, act on medical advice and take into account schools' preparation work and the supply of protective equipment in the community. With close communication with the CHP, the EDB would issue guidelines to schools on class resumption.

93. The Vice Chairman proposed that the District Office or FEHD render assistance such as cleansing service to three-nil buildings without owners' corporations, residents' organisations and management companies.

94. Mr Enoch YUEN, JP noted the above views.

95. Mr SZETO Pok-man felt helpless to the Government's refusal to close the border. He suggested the TD to urge and monitor green minibuses in stepping up cleaning of minibus compartments. He enquired the FEHD on the frequency of inspections in the town and rural areas of Yuen Long by health inspectors or officers concerned. A request was also made on the respective figures on prosecutions against littering in Yuen Long, Tin Shui Wai and rural areas. Lastly, he enquired the EDB on how cases of cross-border students would be handled when it had decided on the date of school resumption.

96. Ms Fionn KEE clarified that the EDB had announced schools would resume classes on 2 March the earliest, subject to further assessment. The EDB would decide on the date of school resumption and relevant arrangements with due regard to the development of the epidemic. If the schools' conditions were ready for resumption, the EDB would request schools to implement epidemic-prevention measures such as declaring the health conditions of students. The CHP would also be consulted on the resumption arrangements for cross-border students.

97. Mr TSOI Ka-wai said prosecution figures and detailed inspection arrangements would be provided to Members in due course.

98. Ms Christine YUEN said letters had been issued to public transport operators including green minibus companies in early January, requesting them to take anti-epidemic measures such as cleaning the minibus compartments with 1:99 diluted bleach at least once daily. The department would remind public transport operators to step up cleaning, follow up on relevant complaints and

conduct inspections.

99. Mr SZETO Pok-man enquired the TD about the frequency of regular inspections and whether cleaning the compartments once daily was already adequate.

100. Ms Christine YUEN said the measure of cleaning the compartments with 1:99 diluted bleach at least once daily had been drawn up with reference to the DH's recommendation. Bus captains were requested to take note of the cleanliness of the compartments. Where visible dirt was found, bus captains should arrange for designated workers to clean the place.

101. Mr TO Ka-lun hoped that the Government would attach significance to cleaning work and protect frontline cleansing workers. Given no students would return to schools after the EDB's announcement of school suspension, he opined that the schools should be temporarily closed. He also suggested that parents contact teachers by phone, instead of requiring teachers to return to schools. Lastly, he enquired the EDB on whether adequate epidemic-prevention supplies would be provided to teachers on duty at schools.

102. Ms Fionn KEE said after evaluation, the EDB considered it necessary for schools to remain open during suspension to take care of students in need, respond to parents' enquiries and handle school affairs. Individual teachers might need to handle and arrange learning activities for students at school during the suspension period. The EDB had reminded schools to prepare sufficient epidemic-prevention items to cater for the needs of teachers and students.

103. Ms WONG Wing-sze said while the Government had systemically coordinated the supply of masks, it was reported that masks had been acquired underhandedly from civil servants when desperate people were trying to get hold of masks. The Government was taking a perfunctory role and being negligent of public safety. She also made an enquiry on the quantity and specifications of face masks the Hong Kong Council of Social Service ("HKCSS") had procured for profit-making organisations. She said that someone attempted to snatch the masks at an integrated home care service centre in Yuen Long last week, and enquired how the SWD would handle similar cases. Lastly, she enquired how the SWD or non-profit making organisations would respond if there was an outbreak in the community.

104. Ms Diana CHU said regarding a person was suspected of taking away a box of masks at an integrated home care service centre in Yuen Long last week, the staff had requested that person to put the box back in place. The department had provided masks to staff on duty in its service centres. Notices were put up to request visitors to wear face masks. According to the department's estimation, the current stock of masks would be sufficient for a month's consumption by the department which was operating on a limited scale. The masks which met the standard were arranged and provided by the GLD. The department would closely monitor the procurement of masks by non-profit making organisations, and advised them of seeking assistance from the HKCSS if any difficulty was encountered. When there was an outbreak in the community, service units under the SWD would take precautionary measures as instructed by the CHP. If an outbreak occurred in an institution, the CHP should be notified immediately, and the institution would take precautionary measures according to the guidelines.

105. The Vice Chairman suggested that four motions moved by Members be handled first, after which Members could raise follow-up questions. The first motion was moved by Ms CHAN Mei-lin, and seconded by the Vice Chairman Mr MAK Ip-sing, Mr AU Kwok-kuen, Mr Kisslan CHAN, Mr CHAN Shu-fai, Mr CHEUNG Sau-yin, Mr HO Wai-pan, Mr KWOK Man-ho, Mr Samuel LAI, Mr LEE Chun-wai, Mr LEUNG Tak-ming, Mr LI Chung-chi, Mr MO Kai-hong, Mr NG Hin-wang, Ms NG Yuk-ying, Mr TO Ka-lun and Mr WONG Pak-yu:

“This Council requests that the Government promptly allocate funding to purchase disease prevention supplies for free distribution to members of the public in response to the outbreak of COVID-19.”

106. The Vice Chairman invited Members to vote on the motion by a show of hands with Members’ names recorded. The Vice Chairman Mr MAK Ip-sing, Ms CHAN Mei-lin, Ms CHAN Sze-nga, Mr Felix CHEUNG, Mr CHEUNG Sau-yin, Mr FONG Ho-hin, Mr HAU Man-kin, Mr HO Wai-pan, Mr KWAN Chun-sang, Mr KWOK Man-ho, Hon KWONG Chun-yu, Mr Samuel LAI, Ms LAI Po-wa, Mr LAM Chun, Mr LAM Ting-wai, Mr LEE Chun-wai, Mr Deco LEE, Mr LI Chung-chi, Mr MO Kai-hong, Mr NG Hin-wang, Mr NG Kin-wai, Ms NG Yuk-ying, Mr SHEK King-ching, Mr SZETO Pok-man, Mr TO Ka-lun, Mr WONG Pak-yu and Ms WONG Wing-sze voted in favour of the motion.

107. The Vice Chairman announced that the motion had been passed by an absolute majority of votes, with 27 votes in favour, zero against and zero abstaining.

(Post-meeting note: The Secretariat sent the motion passed by Members in writing to the FHB, Commerce and Economic Development Bureau and GLD on 25 February 2020.)

108. The second motion was moved by Mr LEE Chun-wai and seconded by Ms CHAN Mei-lin, Ms CHAN Sze-nga, Mr Felix CHEUNG, Mr CHEUNG Sau-yin, Mr FONG Ho-hin, Mr HAU Man-kin, Mr HO Wai-pan, Mr HONG Chin-wah, Mr KWAN Chun-sang, Mr KWOK Man-ho, Mr Samuel LAI, Ms LAI Po-wa, Mr LAM Chun, Mr LAM Ting-wai, Mr, Deco LEE, Mr LI Chung-chi, Mr MO Kai-hong, Mr NG Hin-wang, Mr NG Kin-wai, Mr SHEK King-ching, Mr SZETO Pok-man, Mr TO Ka-lun and Mr WONG Pak-yu. The motion read as follows:

“Request the Hong Kong Police Force to increase manpower at high-risk areas such as hospitals, control points and quarantine camps to tackle non-compliant COVID-19 patients and gate-crashers

COVID-19 has continued to be rampant and the situation has been worsening since the first suspected case was reported in Hong Kong on 2 February. A high number of suspected cases entered Hong Kong through the borders, causing chaos from the top to the bottom of the society. Non Hong Kong residents were reported to have disrupted the order in different places from time to time.

Therefore, this Council requests the Police to take immediate actions as follows:

1. enhance manpower in hospitals and quarantine camps throughout Hong Kong to assist

- frontline medical staff to tackle the infected patients who had breached the rules and intended to escape, in order to prevent outbreak in the community;
2. share the workload of frontline medical staff by performing duty at the hospital isolation ward to ensure order and safety of all patients;
 3. enhance manpower to handle tourists from the Mainland and passengers on flights and trains from Wuhan and Hong Kong, and deploy anti-riot squads to station at the boundary control points to assist in handling suspected patients and intercept them from crossing the border.”

109. The Vice Chairman invited Members to vote on the motion by a show of hands with Members’ names recorded. The Vice Chairman Mr MAK Ip-sing, Ms CHAN Mei-lin, Ms CHAN Sze-nga, Mr Felix CHEUNG, Mr CHEUNG Sau-yin, Mr FONG Ho-hin, Mr HAU Man-kin, Mr HO Wai-pan, Mr KWAN Chun-sang, Mr KWOK Man-ho, Hon KWONG Chun-yu, Mr Samuel LAI, Ms LAI Po-wa, Mr LAM Chun, Mr LAM Ting-wai, Mr LEE Chun-wai, Mr Deco LEE, Mr LI Chung-chi, Mr MO Kai-hong, Mr NG Hin-wang, Mr NG Kin-wai, Ms NG Yuk-ying, Mr SHEK King-ching, Mr SZETO Pok-man, Mr TO Ka-lun, Mr WONG Pak-yu and Ms WONG Wing-sze voted in favour of the motion.

110. The Vice Chairman announced that the motion had been passed by an absolute majority of votes, with 27 votes in favour, zero against and zero abstaining.

(Post-meeting note: The Secretariat sent the motion passed by Members in writing to the Security Bureau (“SB”) and the Police on 25 February 2020. The Police’s reply was passed to Members on 16 March 2020.)

111. The third motion was moved by Hon KWONG Chun-yu and seconded by Ms CHAN Mei-lin, Ms CHAN Sze-nga, Mr Felix CHEUNG, Mr FONG Ho-hin, Mr HAU Man-kin, Mr HO Wai-pan, Mr HONG Chin-wah, Mr KWAN Chun-sang, Mr KWOK Man-ho, Mr Samuel LAI, Ms LAI Po-wa, Mr LAM Chun, Mr LAM Ting-wai, Mr LEE Chun-wai, Mr Deco LEE, Mr LI Chung-chi, Mr MAK Ip-sing, Mr MO Kai-hong, Mr NG Hin-wang, Mr NG Kin-wai, Ms NG Yuk-ying, Mr SHEK King-ching, Mr SZETO Pok-man, Mr TO Ka-lun and Ms WONG Wing-sze. The motion read as follows:

“This Council supports healthcare workers to take strike and all other forms of action to press the Government for complete border closure, which aims at shutting out the virus source, protecting Hong Kong people’s safety and health, as well as ensuring a comprehensive approach to disease prevention.”

112. The Vice Chairman invited Members to vote on the motion with Members’ names recorded. The Vice Chairman Mr MAK Ip-sing, Ms CHAN Mei-lin, Ms CHAN Sze-nga, Mr Felix CHEUNG, Mr CHEUNG Sau-yin, Mr FONG Ho-hin, Mr HAU Man-kin, Mr HO Wai-pan, Mr KWAN Chun-sang, Mr KWOK Man-ho, Hon KWONG Chun-yu, Mr Samuel LAI, Ms LAI Po-wa, Mr LAM Chun, Mr LAM Ting-wai, Mr LEE Chun-wai, Mr Deco LEE, Mr LI Chung-chi, Mr MO Kai-hong, Mr NG Hin-wang, Mr NG Kin-wai, Ms NG Yuk-ying, Mr SHEK King-ching, Mr SZETO Pok-man, Mr TO Ka-lun, Mr WONG Pak-yu and Ms WONG Wing-sze voted in favour of the motion.

113. The Vice Chairman announced that the motion had been passed by an absolute majority of votes, with 27 votes in favour, zero against and zero abstaining.

(Post-meeting note: The Secretariat sent the motion passed by Members in writing to the SB, FHB, DH and Hospital Authority on 25 February 2020. Their replies were passed to Members on 3 March 2020.)

114. The fourth motion was moved by Mr FONG Ho-hin, Mr HAU Man-kin, Mr HO Wai-pan, Ms LAI Po-wa, Mr LAM Ting-wai, Mr LEE Chun-wai, Mr Deco LEE, Mr LI Chung-chi, Mr MO Kai-hong, Mr NG Hin-wang, Mr NG Kin-wai, Ms NG Yuk-ying, Mr SHEK King-ching, Mr TO Ka-lun and Mr WONG Pak-yu, and seconded by the Vice Chairman Mr MAK Ip-sing, Ms CHAN Mei-lin, Ms CHAN Sze-nga, Mr Felix CHEUNG, Mr CHEUNG Sau-yin, Mr HONG Chin-wah, Mr KWAN Chun-sang, Mr KWOK Man-ho, Hon KWONG Chun-yu, Mr Samuel LAI, Mr LAM Chun and Mr SZETO Pok-man. The motion was as follows:

“This Council urges the Hong Kong Police Force to send a volunteer delegation to fight the disease in Wuhan

Recently, some police officers have posted videos under the theme ‘Hang in there, Wuhan’ on social media platforms such as WeChat to show their support to the Wuhan Government and the citizens in fighting the disease. In this connection, this Council highly commends the police officers for their nobility, and considers that the Police Force has the capacity and resources to contribute more to the people in Wuhan.

Therefore, this Council urges the Commissioner of Police of Hong Kong Mr TANG Ping-keung to head 3 000 frontline police officers to Wuhan to assist the local people and the government in the fight against the disease by taking concrete, resolute and professional action in the spirit of Honour, Duty and Loyalty.”

115. Mr Enoch YUEN, JP asked Members to note that one of the DC’s functions was to advise on the matters in the district. The District Office had noted the motions, which would be relayed to the Police.

116. The Vice Chairman invited Members to vote on the motion with Members’ names recorded. The Vice Chairman Mr MAK Ip-sing, Ms CHAN Mei-lin, Ms CHAN Sze-nga, Mr Felix CHEUNG, Mr CHEUNG Sau-yin, Mr FONG Ho-hin, Mr HAU Man-kin, Mr HO Wai-pan, Mr KWAN Chun-sang, Mr KWOK Man-ho, Hon KWONG Chun-yu, Mr Samuel LAI, Ms LAI Po-wa, Mr LAM Chun, Mr LAM Ting-wai, Mr LEE Chun-wai, Mr Deco LEE, Mr LI Chung-chi, Mr MO Kai-hong, Mr NG Hin-wang, Mr NG Kin-wai, Ms NG Yuk-ying, Mr SHEK King-ching, Mr SZETO Pok-man, Mr TO Ka-lun and Mr WONG Pak-yu voted in favour of the motion.

117. The Vice Chairman announced that the motion had been passed by an absolute majority of votes, with 26 votes in favour, zero against and zero abstaining.

(Post-meeting note: The Secretariat sent the motion passed by Members in writing to the SB and the Police on 25 February 2020. The Police’s reply was passed to Members on 16 March 2020.)

118. The Vice Chairman asked if Members had any questions.

119. Mr SZETO Pok-man enquired the TD on the frequency of regular inspections of cleanliness of public minibuses. He suggested the TD to step up inspections of cleanliness of public minibuses.

120. Ms Christine YUEN said inspections on the cleanliness of minibuses would be taken by the department on a non-regular basis. Complaints would also be followed up.

121. Mr LI Chung-chi said wild animals in rural areas were potential disease transmitters. In particular, bats homing in the vicinity of the residential neighbourhood posed risk to the residents. An enquiry was made with the AFCD on the strategies to combat the disease. He also noted that frontline cleansing workers were given a limited quantity of face masks, so the FEHD was requested to explain and follow up on the situation by submitting a written reply.

122. The Vice Chairman said as the AFCD had not sent any representative to the meeting, Member's enquiry would be relayed to the department in writing after the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The Secretariat relayed Member's view to the AFCD in writing on 6 February 2020.)

123. Mr TSOI Ka-wai said the department and service contractors in the district had already reached a consensus. Since the date of this meeting, every cleansing worker would be given 15 face masks. The department would continue to monitor the situation.

124. Mr HO Wai-pan enquired the government department representatives in attendance whether CSI masks had been distributed to NGOs, political parties or councillors. He also enquired outsourced property management companies and cleansing service contractors on whether anti-epidemic items were purchased at their own cost or provided by the HD. He then sought clarification from the HD on the message that applications for display of publicity items and use of venues in housing estates would be suspended. Lastly, he enquired the SWD on the support to social welfare service units such as institutions and day care centres which fell short of masks.

125. Ms Diana CHU said the SWD had not distributed any CSI masks to NGOs, political parties or councillors. Besides, it was noted that the supply of masks in institutions and day care centres were tight. The department would provide support to institutions which were unable to source masks through the HKCSS.

126. Mr TSOI Ka-wai said the FEHD (Yuen Long) had not distributed any CSI masks to NGOs, political parties or councillors.

127. Mr WONG Pui-chun said outsourced property management companies and cleansing service contractors had to purchase anti-epidemic items at their own cost. He believed that the HD had not distributed any CSI masks to NGOs, political parties or councillors. As the department provided service on a limited scale responding to the Government's appeal, applications for display of publicity items in the housing estates had been suspended.

128. Ms Christine YUEN said public transport operators were obliged to provide adequate epidemic-prevention items such as face masks for their staff. The TD had been communicating with these operators so that assistance could be offered if needed. Assistance was sought from public transport operators due to shortage of masks. While it had no reserve of masks, the department had approached the CSD to arrange for a loan of face masks to the operators in need.

129. Ms Fionn KEE said the Education Office of Yuen Long had not distributed any CSI masks to NGOs, political parties or councillors.

130. Mr HAU Man-kin enquired the EDB about whether it had obtained information on the quantity of anti-epidemic items the schools in Yuen Long kept. Besides, he said simply requesting cross-border students to check the temperature when entering Hong Kong and boarding nanny buses was not enough. He suggested that quarantine measures be taken or cross-border students be prohibited from attending schools in Hong Kong until the epidemic was over.

131. Ms Fionn KEE said the EDB had kept contact with secondary schools, primary schools and kindergartens on whether epidemic-prevention items were sufficient. If needed, schools would be provided with assistance. The EDB would take into account the situation after school resumption and the CHP's recommendations when drawing up resumption arrangements so that the risk of community outbreak could be minimised.

132. Mr CHEUNG Sau-yin said the epidemic had hindered foreign domestic helpers from coming to work in Hong Kong. To take care of the kids, working parents were forced to stay at home. It was suggested that the SWD provide support such as child care service. He also reflected that extremely low quality masks were available in the market for unlawful sale, and enquired the FEHD how the situation would be handled. Lastly, he enquired the District Office about the progress of procurement of masks.

133. Mr Enoch YUEN, JP said the problem of sale of counterfeit masks should be handled by law-enforcing departments. Having reached a consensus with District Councillors, the District Office was inviting tenders for the provision of masks. However, due to the tight supply of masks, there might not be any offer from tenderers. The District Office would closely monitor the situation and endeavour to assist in the procurement. For masks procured by DC funding, the allocation should be fair, integral and transparent. The allocation mechanism would be discussed by the District Council.

134. Ms Diana CHU said while in child and youth service centres had suspended child care or

after school care services, they were still open for users in need. Members of the public could contact the centres in advance. Besides, the department had launched the Neighbourhood Support Child Care Project which provided child carers in the community to help families in need.

135. Mr TSOI Ka-wai said combatting illegal hawkers was one of the duties of the FEHD. To control mask hawking through different channels that were recently found, the department would instantly follow up on any case reported and seize the masks on spot.

136. Mr LAM Chun reflected that second-hand face masks were sold in the market. He enquired the FEHD about whether a report hotline could be provided to Members so that the department could arrest the persons concerned promptly.

137. Mr TSOI Ka-wai said Members could contact the duty Senior Health Inspectors or he himself. Staff members would be deployed to handle the reported cases.

138. Mr Enoch YUEN, JP said to ensure the face masks products sold in the market complied with the Trade Descriptions Ordinance and the Consumer Goods Safety Ordinance, the C&ED had stepped up enforcement action. Members of the public could contact the C&ED through the 24-hour hotline at 2545 6182 or report activities that were suspected to have violated the two above-mentioned ordinances through the email set up for reporting crime at crimereport@customs.gov.hk.

139. Mr WONG Pak-yu suggested the HD to expedite the handling and assessment of Members' applications for the display of publicity items, and that the HD should have special arrangement under special circumstances to allow Members to put up publicity items such as posters with information on epidemic prevention before the applications were processed.

140. Mr WONG Pui-chun said in face of the epidemic, the department could only provide service on a limited scale, and so applications for the display of publicity items in housing estates had been suspended. As to whether service could resume next week, the department would take into consideration and remain open to Members' views.

141. The Vice Chairman hoped that the HD could help Members put up publicity items such as posters on anti-epidemic information in housing estates. He also hoped that the FEHD would strengthen its action against illegal hawking of counterfeit masks.

142. Mr TO Ka-lun said the Government, without a detailed reply on the questions regarding the quantity of masks in stock in Hong Kong, their storage locations, distribution measures, logistics procedures and quantity of masks locally produced, had triggered people's panic over the shortage of mask supply and prompted them to scramble for masks. He was discontented that the office and residence of Chief Secretary Mr Matthew CHEUNG had stocked up masks enough for six month's use, ignoring the fact that people shared the same need.

143. A Member enquired the District Office on the progress of tender invitation for the provision of masks, expressing concern over how the case would be handled if no tender was submitted. Mr KWAN Chun-sang suggested the District Office to procure some child masks.

144. Mr Enoch YUEN, JP said suppliers invited to tender were those who could produce and provide face masks meeting the standard. Comparatively, the first round of tender invitation was shorter. He said the second round of tender invitation had commenced, adding that the tender closing date and delivery date had been duly adjusted so as to identify suitable mask supply in every way. The District Office had already set out in the tender that face masks of two sizes would be procured.

145. The Vice Chairman hoped the District Office would notify the District Council the tendering results. In view of the special circumstances, he suggested that the District Office exercise discretion if the tenders received were fewer than required.

Item III: Additional funding for purchasing face masks and alcohol-based hand sanitisers for distribution in the community

146. The Vice Chairman said that the YLDC had endorsed an allocation of \$500,000 for purchasing face masks and alcohol-based hand sanitisers for distribution in the community. Considering the present situation, it was suggested that more funding be allocated to purchase these items. According to the information provided by the Secretariat, due to the cancellation of DC-funded activities, the funding that was left unused increased by \$200,000. He believed that other organisations would cancel the activities, and the unused funds would be dealt with in due course.

147. Mr NG Hin-wang enquired about the funding allocation for organising DC-funded community involvement (“CI”) projects between April and June 2020, and the amount of funding that went unused after the cancellation of DC-funded activities. He suggested that the funding allocation for procuring anti-epidemic items could be dealt with by circulation of paper.

148. The Vice Chairman said funding applications for YLDC-funded CI projects between April and June 2020 had not closed. As to whether part of the funding should be reserved for procurement of anti-epidemic items, the matter would be dealt with by the Finance and Administration Committee.

149. Mr CHEUNG Sau-yin suggested the Secretariat to provide details on the DC’s financial situation and allocation of funding, including the allocation in the following year, for Members’ reference.

150. The Secretary Ms Cindy PANG said the funding allocation that went unused due to cancellation of DC-funding activities amounted to \$700,000. Subject to HAD’s notification, the Secretariat did not have detailed information on the DC funds next year. The total amount of DC funds last year was \$34 million.

151. Mr Enoch YUEN, JP shared Member's view that the funding allocation for purchasing anti-epidemic items could be handled by circulation of paper, saying that it would be more effective and reduce the risk of virus transmission from person to person. The District Office would purchase disease prevention items through established procurement procedures.

152. Hon KWONG Chun-yu said the District Council should discuss and decide on issues at meetings. Only urgent matters would be suggested to be dealt with by circulation of paper.

153. The Vice Chairman invited Members to vote on the endorsement of an allocation of \$200,000 for procuring masks. Members unanimously approved the allocation.

(Post-meeting note: The Secretariat sought Members' views on the proposal of purchasing alcohol-based hand sanitisers with the allocation of \$200,000 earmarked for purchasing masks by circulation of paper on 2 March 2020. The proposal was subsequently endorsed by Members.)

Item IV: Any other business

154. The Vice Chairman said an item on "Request the Police to follow up on the issue of public security in the villages in the district". Members proposing the item were invited to speak.

155. Mr CHEUNG Sau-yin said an attack on members of the public on the ground floor of West Rail Yuen Long Station on the evening of 30 January 2020 left six people hospitalised. Besides, there were a large number of reports of illegal discharge of firecrackers and fireworks in the New Territories during the Chinese New Year, but the problem had never been addressed over the years. He believed that public security in the villages should be a matter of concern, and hoped that the District Council would hold a discussion on this item.

156. The Vice Chairman said the item which had been referred to the Police would be discussed at the next meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The item was discussed at the third meeting of the YLDC on 25 February 2020.)

157. The Vice Chairman declared that the meeting was adjourned. He thanked Members for attending the meeting.

Yuen Long District Council Secretariat
June 2020