

**Progress Report of Pilot Scheme on  
Enhancement of District Administration Through  
District Management Committees in Sham Shui Po and Yuen Long**

**Purpose**

This paper reports the progress of the pilot scheme to enhance the District Administration Scheme through District Management Committees (the pilot scheme) in Sham Shui Po (SSP) and Yuen Long (YL).

**Background**

2. The District Management Committee (DMC) set up in each district provides a regular platform for discussing and resolving district problems, following up on the advice and recommendations of the District Council (DC), and co-ordinating the work of various departments at the district level. The DMC is chaired by the respective District Officer (DO) and comprises the DC Chairman and Vice-Chairman, chairmen of DC committees, and district representatives of the relevant frontline departments<sup>1</sup>. It normally meets once every two months. The terms of reference and the membership of a typical DMC are set out at Annex.

3. Essentially, DMCs play a facilitating role and have no decision-making power. Although DMCs are chaired by the DOs, the latter is not empowered to direct other departments in implementing its recommendations. Organisationally, frontline departmental staff report to their Heads of Departments (HoDs) who in turn report to their respective policy bureaux. In cases where the demands of the districts are not aligned with the objectives and priorities of the departments and bureaux, or when the demands have read-across/territory-wide implications, the departments will not be able to accept the DMC's advice and recommendations.

4. As announced by the Chief Executive in his 2014 Policy Address, the Government introduced a pilot scheme in SSP and YL in April 2014 to provide the relevant DMCs with decision-making power to tackle the management and environmental hygiene problems of some public areas. The DCs concerned have been invited to advise on the work priorities of the respective districts. The pilot scheme, to be completed in August 2015, will provide useful experience for and shed light on practical and effective ways to tackle specific district issues, so as to progressively take forward the concept of "addressing

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<sup>1</sup> Including Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD), Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), Lands Department (LandsD), Transport Department (TD), Hong Kong Police Force (Police), Social Welfare Department (SWD), Housing Department (HD), Education Bureau (EDB), Planning Department (PlanD), Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) and/or Buildings Department (BD).

district issues at the local level and capitalising on local opportunities”.

5. The Government has provided a one-off allocation of \$5 million, including provision for the employment of non-civil service contract (NCSC) staff <sup>2</sup>, to each of the two districts to implement the pilot scheme.

### **Pilot Scheme**

6. We have fully engaged the relevant DCs in the planning and implementation of the pilot scheme. Immediately after the announcement of the Policy Address, the Home Affairs Department (HAD) briefed all DC Chairmen and Vice-chairmen and issued an information note to the 18 DCs to keep members abreast of the pilot scheme.

7. After conducting several rounds of in-depth discussions, the DOs, DMCs and DCs concerned have identified the following issues as requiring attention under the pilot scheme:

- (a) Sham Shui Po Pilot Scheme
  - (i) strengthening support for street sleepers; and
  - (ii) strengthening support for “three nil” buildings<sup>3</sup>.
- (b) Yuen Long Pilot Scheme
  - (i) curbing shop front extensions (SFE) (viz. clearance of unauthorised platforms on pavement and illegal structures);
  - (ii) clearing illegally parked bicycles; and
  - (iii) enhancing anti-mosquito efforts/grass-cutting.

The pilot scheme commenced in April 2014 and will continue until August 2015.

### **Progress of Pilot Scheme**

#### **Sham Shui Po Pilot Scheme**

##### **Strengthening Support for Street Sleepers**

8. SSP is a district with a relatively large number of street sleepers. The latter have caused environmental hygiene problems and complaints from local

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<sup>2</sup> Four dedicated NCSC staff have been employed for the pilot scheme. They include a Project Co-ordinator (subsequently changed to an Executive Assistant having regard to the nature of the duties involved) in SSPDO, an Executive Assistant in YLDO, a Land Executive in LandsD and a Structural Engineer in BD.

<sup>3</sup> "Three-nil" buildings refer to those buildings that (i) do not have an owners' corporation; (ii) do not have any owners/residents organisations; and (iii) have not engaged any property management company.

residents.<sup>4</sup>

9. Under the pilot scheme, District Officer (Sham Shui Po) (DO(SSP)) with the support of Sham Shui Po District Council (SSPDC), DMC and SWD has adopted the following strategies in approaching the problem.

- (a) Assistance: SSPDO engaged an experienced Non-governmental Organization (NGO) namely, the Society for Community Organisation (SoCO), to strengthen support services for street sleepers. Adopting a caring approach, two dedicated social workers are engaged to reach out to the street sleepers to better understand and follow up on their needs and problems. Various programmes (including motivation and ability training, voluntary services etc.) are arranged to help them leave the streets in the long run. Additional support from the community (including a private donation<sup>5</sup>) is also provided to help them bridge over to a normal life. DO(SSP) has also liaised with the NGO and community leaders to explore the feasibility of arranging job referrals for suitable persons.

As at 31 October 2014, the NGO conducted a total of 31 out-reach service sessions and successfully made 1 982 contacts with the street sleepers. It had been following up intensively on 22 more complicated cases by arranging referrals to relevant departments and organisations for assistance as appropriate. 13 street sleepers agreed to leave the streets, with three of them being allocated public housing units, seven renting private places and three being admitted to singleton hostels/elderly homes. Volunteer groups engaging street sleepers were organised to encourage mutual help and support to reduce the chance of relapse of street sleeping.

- (b) Cleansing Exercises: To address the concerns of the SSPDC and local residents about the environmental hygiene conditions of the locations where street sleepers gather<sup>6</sup>, six large-scale cleansing

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<sup>4</sup> More than 130 complaints were received by departments between January and October 2014, most of which related to the environmental hygiene conditions at locations where street sleepers gathered.

<sup>5</sup> It refers to a donation of about \$200,000 from the community to provide both one-off assistance (no more than \$2,000 per person) for procuring necessary household items / basic renovation in their newly rented places / allocated public housing units, as well as a monthly subsidy (of \$500 per person per month) if the street sleepers could stay out of the streets for six months and attend the workshops and meetings organised by the NGO engaged by SSPDO for the aforesaid period. The initial target is to help 40 street sleepers leave the streets under the scheme.

<sup>6</sup> These locations include Cheong San Lane Footbridge, outside of the Tung Chau Street Temporary Market, outside of the Jade Market, area close to 14-18 Nam Cheong Street, Pedestrian Subway near MTR Nam Cheong Station (Exit C & D1) and Kweilin Street Pedestrian Subway.

exercises have been planned under the service contract with the NGO. The first exercise on Cheong San Lane Footbridge was conducted smoothly on 30 September 2014 with participation by seven departments (i.e. SSPDO, FEHD, HyD, LandsD, the Police, SWD and TD). A total of 1.5 tonnes of garbage were cleared. The hygiene conditions were significantly improved. SSPDO will capitalise on the experience gained and carry out the remaining cleansing exercises under the pilot scheme.

- (c) Other Support: FEHD has accepted the suggestion of DC members and street sleepers to extend the opening hours of the toilets at Tung Chau Street Temporary Market round-the-clock.

### Strengthening Support for “Three Nil” Buildings

10. SSP is also a district with many old buildings. Of the 2,400 or so buildings in the district, about 800 are “three nil” buildings. Among them, about 95% are at least 30 years old. These buildings are prone to environmental hygiene problems, unauthorised building structures and fire hazard.

11. More effective management is a key to the proper upkeep of these buildings. While it is the responsibility of owners to maintain private buildings, the DMC and SSPDC accept that in the spirit of promoting environmental hygiene, fire safety and building management, it is worthwhile to provide them with additional assistance under the pilot scheme so as to encourage them to play a more active role in building management by serving as Resident Liaison Ambassadors (RLAs) or forming Owners’ Corporations (OCs).

12. With the support of the DMC and SSPDC, SSPDO has adopted the following strategies in tackling the problem.

- (a) Identification: SSPDC and DMC have helped identify target buildings and rear lanes under the pilot scheme.
- (i) The DMC has shortlisted a total of 81 target buildings according to the following criteria:
- residential or composite buildings of at least 25 years old;
  - with an average rateable value of not more than \$120,000 per residential unit;
  - with multiple ownership; and
  - not being covered in other programmes for “three nil” buildings.
- (ii) SSPDC members have nominated some 40 rear lanes with serious environmental hygiene problems for following up.

(b) Enhancement Measures: As an incentive for the owners of the target buildings to take up their building management responsibilities, DMC has adopted a three-pronged approach to upgrade their building management standards.

(i) Cleansing service: FEHD has engaged a service contractor to provide cleansing services to the common areas of the target buildings and rear lanes.

As at 14 November 2014, the contractor had provided cleansing services to a total of 50 target buildings and 31 rear lanes in the vicinity, and cleared 5 tonnes and 5.5 tonnes of garbage respectively. According to a household survey, the large majority (85%) of the responding residents considered that the environmental hygiene conditions of the common areas of their buildings had been improved.

(ii) Enhanced publicity and promotion of building management: SSPDC and SSPDO have stepped up publicity and public education on the importance of effective building management. So far, five evening receptions/theme-based seminars had been organised for a total of some 270 owners and tenants, and four more events on different topics will be lined up. Appeal letters and souvenirs have been prepared to encourage owners and tenants to enrol as RLAs. These RLAs will help spread the message of effective building management and encourage their neighbours to form OCs. A RLA Newsletter has also been published to disseminate similar messages to the community.

(iii) Formation of OCs: SSPDO has adopted a strategy of “cleansing in the day, household visits in the evening” to encourage the residents of the target buildings to form OCs.

According to the results of the household surveys<sup>7</sup>, a higher percentage of respondents has become more positive about

<sup>7</sup> Comparisons of response from residents before and after the cleansing service as at 14 November 2014

	Pre-cleansing service	Post-cleansing service
Respondents agree to form a OC in their own building	45%	71%
Respondents willing to be an OC member	8%	27%
Respondents registered as RLAs	2%	43%

forming OCs and serving as an OC member after the cleansing services. This shows that the residents feel more encouraged when they see the Government playing an active role in helping them and see the outcome of greater care of the buildings (e.g. cleansing to bring about a better living environment).

Through intensive follow up by SSPDO on those buildings with a relatively good chance of OC formation, six buildings have either formed or are making preparation for the formation of OCs and some 49 owners or residents have registered as RLAs as at 31 October 2014.

### Yuen Long Pilot Scheme

13. On the advice of the Yuen Long District Council (YLDC), the DMC of YL has decided to consider the sustainability, scale, seriousness, and geographical spread in selecting the district issues and prioritising the action locations under the pilot scheme.

### Curbing Shop Front Extensions

14. SFE is prolific in the district, especially in Yuen Long Town where the busy and narrow streets are often crowded. It compromises the safety and access of pedestrians and other road users.

15. Four black spots covering six streets have been proposed by YLDC and endorsed by DMC. District Officer (Yuen Long) (DO(YL)) has adopted the following enhanced approach to tackle shop-front extensions.

- (a) Joint Publicity Campaigns against Black Spots: There has been an on-going inter-departmental public education campaign against shop front extensions in YL. For the first black spot under the pilot scheme, viz. Yu King Square and Hong King Street, public education was conducted in December 2013 (before the start of the pilot scheme). Public education will shift to the remaining black spots during the pilot period.
- (b) Enhanced Enforcement and Cleansing Operations: Joint enforcement action was then launched at the first black spot in April 2014. LandsD and BD posted statutory notices/orders at 71 shops with unauthorised platforms on pavement or unauthorised shopfront signboards or side structures, requiring their voluntary removal. At the expiry of the notice period in early June 2014, 46% of the shops removed the platforms and structures by themselves. For the remaining shops in breach of

the statutory notices/orders, the departments have taken further action, including the issue of warning letters by BD.

If non-compliance persists, provided that sufficient evidence could be collected, LandsD and BD will respectively prosecute the concerned shop occupiers/owners for illegal occupation of Government land and erection of the unauthorised shopfront signboards and side structures. The relevant departments may also carry out removal actions and recover the relevant costs from the shop occupiers/owners.

16. Following the inter-departmental operation and coupled with FEHD's own enforcement actions, the situation at the first black spot, viz. Yu King Square and Hong King Street, has improved. The space for pedestrians to manoeuvre has widened and the street environment got tidier than before, notably with a good portion of the illegal platforms on the sidewalks removed. There is also significant enhancement in the overall efficiency and timeliness of actions under the pilot scheme.

17. Obstruction of pavement and street by placing goods and extension of business area by restaurants fall outside the pilot scheme. This is because restaurants are subject to a separate licensing regime which falls within FEHD's purview (i.e. far less inter-departmental co-ordination is involved). Nevertheless, for holistic tackling of street management issues, FEHD has deployed health inspectors to take action within their ambit, complementing joint operation under the pilot scheme.

18. The public education campaign and inter-departmental enforcement against SFE at each of the remaining black spots (Hung Min Court and Mau Tan Street, Fau Tsoi Street, as well as Sau Fu Street) will take place sequentially during the remainder of the pilot scheme from September 2014 to August 2015. Public education will also be carried out at selected locations, including Hop Choi Street, prevalently with obstruction by goods rather than unauthorised platforms on pavement or illegal structures.

#### Clearing Illegally Parked Bicycles

19. Bicycle is a popular means of transport for the residents of YL district. Illegally parked bicycles are prevalent especially at some locations in Yuen Long Town and Tin Shui Wai.

20. With the support of YLDC and the relevant departments, YLDO has adopted a three-pronged approach in tackling the problem.

- (a) Enhanced Enforcement Actions: YLDO has requested LandsD, FEHD and Police to accord priorities to cases nominated by

YLDC. So far, YLDC members have proposed 40 black spots spanning across Yuen Long Town, Tin Shui Wai and the rural area. Within two months from mid-April 2014, YLDO, together with LandsD and FEHD, have attended to all the black spots. The second cycle of joint operation at the black spots immediately followed, clamping down on the illegal parking of bicycles. By the end of 2014, a total of four cycles of operation will have been repeatedly carried out at all the black spots.

- (b) Supply Management: Apart from stringent enforcement, there are views that additional supply of legal parking space would be conducive to addressing the matter in the long-run. In June 2014, YLDO collected 18 proposals concerning 16 parking locations in Yuen Long Town, Tin Shui Wai, and the rural area from YLDC members. YLDO has referred them to TD for study and follow-up actions. By September 2014, the latter acceded to half of the proposals at nine locations. Upon TD's instruction, HyD will build the new parking spaces.
- (c) Large-scale Joint Publicity Campaign: Tapping the additional resources under the pilot scheme, YLDO conducted a large scale public education campaign on legitimate parking of bicycles in mid-November 2014. Starting from the end of August in Tin Shui Wai, YLDO has displayed banners and maps at the black spots to show the proper parking spaces in the vicinity.

#### Enhancing Anti-mosquito Efforts/Grass-cutting

21. With the support of YLDC and the relevant departments, YLDO has implemented the following measures to help combat transmittable diseases by enhancing environmental hygiene.

- (a) Identification of Black Spots: YLDC members have proposed 42 black spots<sup>8</sup> which are mainly situated in the rural area of YL. YLDO has since visited the black spots scattered around the district with the relevant DC members and village representatives to identify the exact locations for grass-cutting and desilting. Some 15 locations fall within YLDO's routine grass-cutting programme while the remaining spots have been referred to relevant departments for follow-up actions.
- (b) Enhanced Promotion and Publicity Efforts: With the additional resources of the pilot scheme, YLDO has procured and distributed anti-malarial oil and anti-mosquito leaflets to over 150 villages

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<sup>8</sup> Including Government land/private land which are major village access, and unallocated government land which is usually fenced off by LandsD and is not major village access.



through rural committees and DC members by June 2014; and anti-mosquito bracelets, adhesive pads and repellents, as well as publicity leaflets to residents in Yuen Long Town and Tin Shui Wai through DC members. In early July 2014, YLDO, together with YLDC, staged a large scale promotional campaign of anti-mosquito messages with the distribution of anti-mosquito products and handbills at eight locations in Yuen Long Town and Tin Shui Wai.

## **Conclusion**

22. The pilot scheme implemented in SSP and YL has achieved visible and positive outcomes, and is generally welcomed by DC members and district personalities. Progress of the pilot scheme was also well received when a report was made to the Monthly Meeting of the DC Chairmen and Vice-chairmen in November 2014. The DOs concerned will continue to work closely with the respective DCs as well as the relevant departments to ensure the continued and successful implementation of the pilot scheme in the remaining period. We will closely monitor progress and conduct an overall review upon completion of the pilot scheme in August 2015, with a view to ascertaining its cost-effectiveness and making a recommendation on the way forward.

## **Advice Sought**

23. Members are invited to note the progress of the pilot scheme described in paragraphs 6 - 22 above.

Home Affairs Department  
December 2014

## **District Management Committee**

### Terms of Reference (Sample)

The terms of reference of a District Management Committee (DMC) are :-

- (a) to provide a forum for departments to discuss and resolve district problems;
- (b) to respond positively to the advice and requests of the District Council and to assist the Council to perform its role effectively;
- (c) to identify district needs, establish priorities between these needs and ensure that Government programmes are planned and implemented to meet the needs in time;
- (d) to co-ordinate departments' activities and programmes in the management of district affairs, to maximise the utilisation of Government resources and ensure that full account is taken of the community needs;
- (e) to encourage and facilitate the participation of the residents in activities aimed at enhancing the residents' sense of belonging to the community and improving the environment of the district;
- (f) to advise on the temporary use of vacant Government land;
- (g) to consider how best Government policies should be put into effect in the district taking into account its special circumstances; and
- (h) to submit a comprehensive written report to each meeting of the District Council on the work of the DMC, with a detailed account of the progress of follow up actions requested by the District Council.

### List of Government Representatives

- District Officer (Home Affairs Department)
- District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Food and Environmental Hygiene Department)
- District Leisure Manager (Leisure and Cultural Services Department)
- District Lands Officer (Lands Department)
- Chief / Senior Transport Officer (Transport Department)
- District Commander (Hong Kong Police Force)
- District Social Welfare Officer (Social Welfare Department)
- Chief / Senior Housing Manager (Housing Department)
- Chief Schools Development Officer (Education Bureau)
- District Planning Officer (Planning Department)
- Chief Engineer/Senior Engineer (Civil Engineering and Development Department)
- Chief Building Surveyor/Chief Structural Engineer (Buildings Department)