

For discussion

**Legislative Council Subcommittee on Issues Relating to Bazaars
Tung Wah Group of Hospitals Tin Sau Bazaar in Tin Shui Wai**

Purpose

This paper provides information on the situation of the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals Tin Sau Bazaar (Tin Sau Bazaar).

Objective and Operational Arrangement of Tin Sau Bazaar

2. Tin Sau Bazaar is operated by the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals (TWGHs) as a social enterprise with non-profit-making objectives, with the aims to provide more shopping choices and affordable goods for local residents, develop the local economy, and create local employment.

3. Being one of the longest standing and largest charitable organisations in Hong Kong, TWGHs has considerable experience in running social enterprises. In response to the needs of the residents in Tin Shui Wai, TWGHs submitted the Tin Sau Bazaar proposal to the Government, indicating its interest in operating and managing Tin Sau Bazaar. Upon the Government's acceptance of the proposal, the Government leased the site by short-term tenancy to TWGHs at a nominal rate on 25 January 2013.

4. TWGHs has operated the Tin Sau Bazaar since early 2013 when there were 182 stalls for Yuen Long residents aged 18 or above who are interested to join the Tin Sau Bazaar to apply for. TWGHs allocated part of the stalls to applicants on Comprehensive Social Security Assistance or with children receiving full textbook assistance. Starting from early 2014, TWGHs has designated a small proportion of the stalls for open bidding by operators who have more experience in commercial operation with a view to diversifying the goods and services at Tin Sau Bazaar and making them more competitive. Since the commencement of operation, TWGHs has since consolidated some of the stalls for optimising Tin Sau Bazaar. Currently, the number of stalls for leasing is 177, including 19 rented out by open bidding. Tin Sau Bazaar has been leasing stalls to operators at rental levels which are far below the market rate. The monthly rent for most of the stall operators is set at \$1,000 while that for adjoining stalls with a larger area is at \$2,000. The rent has already covered the charge for the first 100 units of electricity, rates and management fees. In fact,

no adjustment had been made to the rent since Tin Sau Bazaar commenced operation in 2013.

5. According to TWGHs, for the convenience of visitors and in response to the requests of stall operators, the operating hours of Tin Sau Bazaar have been extended to 10 pm (the original operating hours being 8 am to 8 pm) since July 2017, with flexibility during festive seasons. For instance, to facilitate the “Tin Sau Mid-Autumn Fair” held this month, the operating hours were extended to 12 midnight, which was well-received by the stall operators and visitors. TWGHs will continue to strive for a balance between the daily life of nearby residents and the development needs of Tin Sau Bazaar by adjusting the operating hours flexibly as required.

Continuous Enhancement and Evaluation of Effectiveness of Tin Sau Bazaar

6. TWGHs has been collecting the views of stall operators, the members of the Yuen Long District Council (YLDC) and other stakeholders through various channels, for instance, meetings with stall operators and the TWGHs’ staff stationed at Tin Sau Bazaar. “The Advisory Committee on the Management of Tin Sau Bazaar” (the Advisory Committee), which was set up in late 2013, also serves as a platform for thorough discussions among the elected representatives of stall operators and other stakeholders, including the representatives of TWGHs, relevant government departments and YLDC, as well as academics and members of the community.

7. TWGHs has been enhancing the Tin Sau Bazaar with the support of government departments. Taking the ancillary facilities as an example, more directional signs for Tin Sau Bazaar have been installed at various locations in Tin Shui Wai while the drainage and power supply at Tin Sau Bazaar have been improved. Shading facilities and outdoor fans have also been installed for improving the comfort of shoppers. An additional entrance adjacent to Tin Yat Estate and Tin Sau Road Park has been built.

8. TWGHs has also enhanced the publicity for Tin Sau Bazaar. Promotional leaflets are distributed at locations nearby with high pedestrian flow, such as shopping arcades, West Rail and Light Rail stations and bus stops. It also puts up publicity street banners in Tin Shui Wai and advertises Tin Sau Bazaar on buses.

9. According to TWGHs, it commissioned an independent academic institution in 2016 to conduct an evaluation of the effectiveness of Tin Sau Bazaar, during which 1 155 local residents, 79 stall operators, as well as six focus groups comprising a total of 47 stall operators, stall operators’ representatives and members of the Advisory Committee, were interviewed. The views collected have been

reflected in the evaluation report, and in turn formed the basis of the recommendations of the report, which mainly include further establishing Tin Sau Bazaar's unique characters, introducing more featured snacks, improving facilities and adopting flexible management. TWGHs is progressively taking forward the recommendations in the evaluation report. On publicity, in light of the proposals in the report for Tin Sau Bazaar to consider arranging weekend performances to attract patronage, TWGHs now arranges the weekly "Tin Sau Weekend Market" featuring arts performance and street stalls. TWGHs staged in May this year the "Music Viva Day" when performances by the Hong Kong Community Philharmonic Orchestra were presented in Tin Sau Bazaar. In addition, TWGHs organises pre/post-festival fairs and carnivals of different themes at Tin Sau Bazaar, and makes available spaces there for district organisations to stage their events. Since April 2016, for example, other large-scale events held at Tin Sau Bazaar include the "South Asian Culture Experience Day", "Tin Sau Hui Mother's Day Fair", "Tin Sau Farmers' Market", "Tin Sau Retro Flea Market", "Tin Sau Magic Experience Day", "Tin Sau Mid-Autumn Fair", etc. The Working Group on Building a Safe Community in Yuen Long of YLDC plans to organise the "Yuen Long Safety and Health Carnival" at Tin Sau Bazaar in January 2018.

10. The Advisory Committee discussed and approved the introduction of stalls of featured snacks at Tin Sau Bazaar by the TWGHs in 2014. The report of the above-mentioned evaluation agrees to the provision of more snacks stalls so as to attract and keep visitors. Thus far, a total of six such stalls have been set up at Tin Sau Bazaar.

11. According to the information provided by TWGHs, the cumulative patronage of Tin Sau Bazaar totalled 3 million as at September 2017. The number of visitors to Tin Sau Bazaar has been on the rise since 2013. Comparing to the average daily numbers of visitors on weekdays and holidays in July 2013, the corresponding numbers in the same period in 2015 have increased by about 200% (to 1 500) and 76% (to 2 200) respectively. The average daily number of visitor on weekdays in July 2017 has further increased to 1 750.

12. The total numbers of applications for leasing the vacant stalls (i.e. not including renewal applications) received by Tin Sau Bazaar in 2014, 2015 and 2016 were 100, 185 and 224 respectively; while the number of applications received in 2017 up to September was 158. Upon the tenancy expiry at the start of year in 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017, the rates of successful renewal reached 93%, 90%, 92% and 100% respectively. As regards the stall vacancy rates, they were at 7%, 14% and 4.5% respectively taking July in 2013, 2015 and 2017 as example.