

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(2)635/14-15  
(These minutes have been seen  
by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/PL/HA

**Panel on Home Affairs**

**Minutes of meeting**  
**held on Friday, 12 December 2014, at 8:30 am**  
**in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex**

- Members present** : Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, JP (Chairman)  
Hon YIU Si-wing (Deputy Chairman)  
Dr Hon LAM Tai-fai, SBS, JP  
Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP  
Hon NG Leung-sing, SBS, JP  
Hon Steven HO Chun-yin  
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming  
Hon WU Chi-wai, MH  
Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP  
Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok  
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, BBS, MH, JP  
Hon TANG Ka-piu, JP  
Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, JP  
Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun, BBS, MH, JP  
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS
- Members attending** : Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP  
Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun, JP
- Members absent** : Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan, JP  
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che  
Hon Claudia MO  
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen  
Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan  
Hon IP Kin-yuen

**Public Officers : Item III  
attending**

Mr TSANG Tak-sing, GBS, JP  
Secretary for Home Affairs

Mrs Avia LAI WONG Shuk-han  
Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs (3)

Ms Michelle LI Mei-sheung, JP  
Director of Leisure and Cultural Services

Ms Winsome CHOW  
Assistant Director (Performing Arts)  
Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Mrs Alice YU NG Ka-chun  
Project Director 3  
Architectural Services Department

Mr Chris LIU Chi-ho  
Senior Project Manager 323  
Architectural Services Department

**Item IV**

Mr TSANG Tak-sing, GBS, JP  
Secretary for Home Affairs

Mr Patrick LI Pak-chuen, JP  
Deputy Director of Home Affairs (1)

Mr Benjamin MOK Kwan-yu, JP  
District Officer (Sham Shui Po)  
Home Affairs Department

Mr Jimmy KWOK Chun-wah, BBS, MH, JP  
Chairman of Sham Shui Po District Council

**Item V**

Mr TSANG Tak-sing, GBS, JP  
Secretary for Home Affairs

Mrs Pamela TAN KAM Mi-wah, JP  
Director of Home Affairs

Mr Edward MAK Chun-yu, JP  
District Officer (Yuen Long)  
Home Affairs Department

Mr Benjamin MOK Kwan-yu, JP  
District Officer (Sham Shui Po)  
Home Affairs Department

Mr LEUNG Che-cheung, BBS, MH, JP  
Chairman of Yuen Long District Council

Mr Jimmy KWOK Chun-wah, BBS, MH, JP  
Chairman of Sham Shui Po District Council

**Clerk in attendance** : Ms Alice LEUNG  
Chief Council Secretary (2) 2

**Staff in attendance** : Miss Josephine SO  
Senior Council Secretary (2) 6

Miss Emma CHEUNG  
Legislative Assistant (2) 2

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**I. Information papers issued since the last meeting**  
(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)341/14-15(01) and CB(2)393/14-15(01))

Members noted that the following papers had been issued since the last meeting -

- (a) Referral from the Public Complaints Office of the Legislative Council ("LegCo") Secretariat on policies relating to street sleepers; and
- (b) Administration's information paper on proposed revision of fees and charges for services under the purview of the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department under the Amusement Rides (Safety) (Fees) Regulation (Cap. 449 sub. leg. A).

**II. Date of next meeting and items for discussion**  
(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)407/14-15(01) and (02))

Regular meeting in January 2015

2. Members agreed to discuss the following items at the next regular meeting scheduled for Friday, 9 January 2015, at 8:30 am -

- (a) Development of football in Hong Kong; and
- (b) Outcome of the public consultation on enhanced measures against shop front extensions.

Special meeting in January 2015

3. The Chairman said that pursuant to members' decision at the last meeting on 17 November 2014, a special meeting would be held on Saturday, 24 January 2015, from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm to receive views from deputations on the public consultation document entitled "Review of the Building Management Ordinance" issued by the Home Affairs Department ("HAD") on 11 November 2014. The duration of the special meeting might be adjusted and, if required, extended to the afternoon of that day depending on the number of deputations attending the meeting. A general notice inviting views from the public would be posted on the LegCo website. In line with the usual practice, the 18 District Councils ("DCs") would also be invited to submit views on the subject.

**III. Construction of the East Kowloon Cultural Centre in Ngau Tau Kok**  
(LC Paper No. CB(2)407/14-15(03))

4. At the invitation of the Chairman, Secretary for Home Affairs ("SHA") briefed Members on the proposed construction of the East Kowloon Cultural Centre ("EKCC") to meet the needs of the East Kowloon communities which had demanded for a well-equipped performing arts venue for over 20 years; and to better support the development of local performing arts groups, as detailed in the Administration's paper.

5. As the item involved a funding proposal, the Chairman reminded Members that in accordance with Rule 83A of the Rules of Procedure ("RoP"), they should disclose the nature of any direct or indirect pecuniary interests before they spoke.

Project scope and facilities

6. Mr Christopher CHUNG welcomed the proposed construction of EKCC. According to his understanding, EKCC was one of the priority leisure and cultural services projects of the two ex-Municipal Councils for inclusion into the Government's Public Works Programme. He was concerned whether the proposed EKCC would be equipped with specialist stage facilities and equipment, including stage and lighting system, audio-visual equipment and backstage facilities, to facilitate the efficient mounting and staging of different types of professional stage performances.

7. Director of Leisure and Cultural Services ("DLCS") responded that the EKCC project aimed to provide a cross-district performing arts venue with multi-purpose facilities for performances and rehearsals. The design was practical, having regard to the functional needs and the latest developments in the performing arts sector. The stage equipment, such as flying bars, audio-visual and lighting systems as well as backstage facilities, would be able to support professional performances.

8. Mr Frankie YICK declared that he was a member of the Council of the Hong Kong Repertory Theatre. He and Dr LAM Tai-fai supported the proposed construction of EKCC, as the provision of more cultural facilities could help boost Hong Kong's arts and cultural development. Dr LAM believed that EKCC would also help revitalize the neighbouring old districts, adding vibrancy to the community.

9. In expressing support for the project, Mr MA Fung-kwok and Mr Tony TSE shared similar view that the design of EKCC should be practical and appropriate for its intended functions. Mr TSE enquired how the commissioning of EKCC would help ease the acute shortage of performing arts facilities in Hong Kong.

10. DLCS responded that the Administration had conducted wide consultation with relevant stakeholders before finalizing the project scope of EKCC. It was noteworthy that all of them were strongly supportive of the proposed design and use of the facilities in EKCC, which were considered as practical and flexible. The planned provision of a 1 200-seat auditorium, a 550-seat theatre and three music/dance/drama studios ranging from 120-250 seats could help alleviate the acute shortage of performing arts facilities in the East Kowloon region and Hong Kong at large. She added that the Administration was aware that the demand for venues for staging arts and cultural performances continued to increase and the Administration would lose no time in planning ahead to meet future needs.

Action

11. In response to Mr Paul TSE's enquiry about the design of the public open spaces of the proposed EKCC and its accessibility to members of the public, DLCS advised that EKCC would be a green building with open spaces of about 11 500 square metres which could cater for different types of activities ranging from outdoor performances and community events to leisure activities to make the city life more vibrant and abundant. EKCC would be easily accessible as it was connected to the Kowloon Bay MTR Station. Space was reserved in the current design for possible future footbridge connection from the neighbouring Amoy Gardens should their residents decide to fund and build the connecting footbridge. As in other similar capital projects, such footbridge would be outside the project scope.

Positioning of EKCC and its interface with other arts and cultural venues

12. Expressing support for the proposed construction of EKCC, Mr MA Fung-kwok and Dr CHIANG Lai-wan were concerned about the positioning of EKCC in relation to the Government's overall planning for development of arts and cultural venues in the territory as well as its interface with other performing arts facilities, in particular those being planned in the West Kowloon Cultural District ("WKCD").

13. In response, SHA explained that the positioning of EKCC would complement the new performing arts facilities being planned in WKCD. While WKCD would provide a cluster of world-class arts and cultural facilities and become a hub for overseas visitors commensurate with Hong Kong's status as a metropolis, EKCC was intended to be a cross-district cultural venue to serve local communities and Hong Kong's arts groups. In planning the performing arts facilities of WKCD, the planned development of EKCC had already been taken into account. According to the market analysis commissioned by the WKCD Authority, the demand for performing arts venues could not be fully met by the WKCD project alone. WKCD would be different from EKCC in positioning, objectives, management and operation.

14. On Mr MA Fung-kwok's further question about the hiring policy for the use of the facilities in EKCC, SHA said that EKCC would be managed by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department ("LCSD") which had established venue hiring policy for the performing arts venues under its management and district cultural and arts organizations would be facilitated to use the EKCC's facilities.

Project estimate

15. Noting that the estimated cost of the project was about \$3,998 million

Action

in money-of-the-day prices, Mr TANG Ka-piu and Dr LAM Tai-fai expressed concern as to whether the estimate was sufficient to allow for cost variation due to inflation and the escalating construction cost in recent years.

16. In response, Project Director 3/Architectural Services Department advised that the estimate had already taken into account the funding requirement for providing the various facilities planned for EKCC, as well as adequate provisions for contingencies and price fluctuation due to inflation by drawing reference to the trend in recent tender prices. The provisions for price adjustment for works-related items set for the project was about 25% to 26% of the estimated cost of the project.

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17. Mr Frankie YICK and Mr Tony TSE requested the Administration to provide a breakdown of the EKCC project's cost estimate and the basis for such estimate when the project proposal was submitted to the Public Works Subcommittee ("PWSC") and the Finance Committee ("FC") for consideration and approval.

18. Mr Tony TSE and Dr CHIANG Lai-wan were concerned about the future financing arrangement for the EKCC project and the ultimate fees for using the facilities therein. In Dr CHIANG's view, the venue charges for programmes and events of commercial nature should be pegged to the costs. DLCS advised that EKCC would be put under the management of LCSD and hence, LCSD's prevailing venue hiring and fee charging policies would be applicable to EKCC. To alleviate their financial burden, small and medium-sized arts groups and non-profit making organizations might enjoy concessionary rates. SHA added that in line with its objective of promoting "high culture", the Government provided support to artists/arts groups staging such programmes. The annual expenditure on this aspect was about 1% of the Government's total expenditure.

Planning standards and future provision of performing arts facilities

19. While indicating support for the proposed EKCC, the Chairman, Mr IP Kwok-him and Mr TANG Ka-piu expressed a similar concern about the present acute shortage of performing arts facilities in various districts. Mr IP and Mr TANG enquired whether the Administration would increase the provision of smaller scale civic centres ("CCs") across the territory. In the Chairman's view, the Administration should consolidate existing resources and come up with a refined venue allocation system that district cultural groups and local organizations could have a higher chance of being allocated time slots to use the facilities.

Action

20. Mr LEUNG Che-cheung also supported the proposed construction of EKCC. In his view, in order to ensure that the future provision of performing arts facilities would best meet the needs and aspirations of the public and help promote arts and cultural development at the district level, at least one small to medium-sized cultural facilities should be built in each of the 18 districts for hosting popular arts events with a view to boosting the interest of the public in arts and cultural activities.

21. In response, SHA and DLCS advised that -

- (a) the Administration was aware of the high demand for venues capable of accommodating small to medium-scale performances organized by district cultural groups and local organizations. In the past decade, the number of applications received for using LCSD's major performing arts facilities had increased and presently an average of 70% of the applications for use of LCSD's performance venues were unsuccessful. This showed that there was an increasing but unmet demand for use of performing arts facilities;
- (b) from time to time, local residents/organizations would request for the provision of CCs at the community level. In assessing the need, the Administration would take into account all relevant factors set out in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines including the overall planning at large, the community needs, views of the cultural sector, utilization of existing venues, population trend and relevant art forms. For EKCC, it aimed to serve the communities and arts groups of four districts among the 18 districts in Hong Kong;
- (c) currently, LCSD managed 14 performing arts venues and two indoor stadia which were open for public hiring. LCSD processed applications for uses of venues under its management in a fair and impartial manner. LCSD had also launched the Venue Partnership Scheme at its performance venues and partners were given priority in booking venues. Overall speaking, performance venues were in great demand especially for those in prime locations. To increase the chance of securing a booking slot, arts groups were encouraged to apply for less popular venues; and
- (d) the Administration would keep under review the requirement for district performance venues in the course of planning the overall provision of cultural facilities in future, having regard to the ongoing developments of the 18 districts.



Action

22. In response to the Deputy Chairman's enquiry on whether the Administration had any long-term and comprehensive plan for development of performance venues to meet the diverse needs and aspirations of the general public, SHA assured Members that the Government was determined to promote cultural development in Hong Kong in a holistic, concerted and sustainable way through the provision of different types of venues to meet the needs. The Government would adopt a comprehensive approach and take into consideration different factors including community needs, land use as well as resources in planning the provision of performing arts facilities.

Summing up

23. In concluding the discussion, the Chairman said that many Members had expressed their support for the proposed construction of EKCC and no Members raised objection to the Administration submitting the proposal to PWSC and FC.

**IV. Signature Project of Sham Shui Po District Council**

(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)407/14-15(04) and (05))

24. As the item also involved a funding proposal, the Chairman reminded Members to observe RoP 83A which governed the disclosure of pecuniary interest before they spoke on the matter.

25. At the invitation of the Chairman, SHA, Mr Jimmy KWOK, Chairman of Sham Shui Po District Council ("SSPDC") and District Officer (Sham Shui Po) ("DO/SSP") took turns to brief Members on the proposed construction of the Shek Kip Mei Community Services Centre ("the Centre") which was one of the projects of Sham Shui Po District initiated under the Signature Project Scheme ("SPS"), details of which were set out in the Administration's paper.

Objectives and service scope of the proposed project

26. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan considered the two SPS projects proposed by SSPDC (i.e. the Centre and the Mei Foo Neighbourhood Activity Centre) worthy of support, as they were intended to be operated on a long-term and sustainable basis providing various community services to meet local needs and enhance service coverage in the district. SSPDC's proposed selection of Po Leung Kuk ("PLK") as its partner organization to run the Centre was also a good idea, given the latter's commitment towards this SPS project and substantial experience in providing welfare/community services to the public.

Action

27. In response to Mr Tony TSE's enquiry on whether the two SPS projects proposed by SSPDC could achieve a synergy effect in bringing about benefits to the community, DO/SSP said that recognizing the characteristics of the district, SSPDC proposed to embark on these two projects that would offer community support services to cater for the needs of local residents and to benefit different social groups in the district. The proposed establishment of a community services centre in Shek Kip Mei and a neighbourhood activity centre at Mei Foo could complement each other and achieve synergy in bringing about a visible and lasting impact in the community.

28. Expressing support for the proposed Centre, Mr Frederick FUNG said that he had participated in the consultation and formulation of the two SPS projects proposed by SSPDC. Stressing that the projects had received widespread support at the time of consultation, he appealed to Members to support the present proposal so that it could be implemented as early as possible.

Estimated cost and financial viability of the proposed project

29. Noting that the estimated cost for works and related items under the Centre was \$53.5 million in money-of-the-day prices, Dr LAM Tai-fai expressed concern about the accuracy of the estimate and whether any contingency plan was in place to deal with cost overrun. Since it was the plan of Sham Shui Po District Office ("SSPDO") to sign a service agreement with PLK for an initial period of five years from the commencement of the Centre's operation and the agreement might be renewed every three years thereafter subject to a number of conditions, including the operation of the Centre and delivery of the services to the satisfaction of SSPDC and SSPDO, Dr LAM enquired whether assessment had been made on the viability and sustainability of the Centre. The Chairman and Mr Frederick FUNG also expressed similar concern about the sustainability of the proposed Centre.

30. SHA responded that as the Chairman of PLK's Advisory Board, he was confident that the Centre could be operated in a sustainable manner and its core services be provided on a viable self-financing basis under the control of PLK. Deputy Director of Home Affairs (1) ("DDHA(1)") added that as the selected partner organization, PLK would operate the Centre on a self-financing basis in the long run. SSPDC, SSPDO and PLK would endeavour to enhance the sustainability of the Centre through, for instance, the flexible use of the space of the Centre with a view to generating more revenue to offset the operational cost as far as practicable. All services fees/revenue received would be used for sustaining the operation of the Centre. In the event that the Centre still recorded deficits in its operations, the Board of PLK had agreed to absorb such deficits by either its own financial reserve

Action

or donations received. To support the start-up, a one-off subsidy to PLK of not more than 5% of the estimated cost for works and related items of the project, i.e. \$2.675 million, had also been set aside to subsidize the costs of start-up, operation, management and/or maintenance of the project for up to a maximum of two years after project commissioning.

31. In response to Mr Tony TSE's enquiry, DO/SSP said that a provision of \$2.6 million would be earmarked for hiring non-civil service contract staff, including one Project Manager and one Executive Assistant, who would provide essential support in areas such as coordination with/liaison between relevant Government departments and monitoring of project progress etc.

Implementation progress of SPS projects

32. While indicating support for the proposal, Mr TANG Ka-piu pointed out the prolonged proceedings of PWSC and FC meetings in recent months and expressed worries that the proposed SPS project under discussion might not be timely considered and approved by LegCo even though it had the unanimous support of SSPDC members. As this might impact on the commissioning of signature projects proposed by SSPDC and the other DCs, he enquired whether the Administration had ever considered devolving more power to DCs with a view to enhancing their autonomy in finance and implementation of district projects, including those planned under SPS.

33. In response, SHA advised that all SPS projects would be subject to a lower limit of \$30 million and an upper limit of \$100 million, and DCs were required to follow the established procedures to seek funding approval from LegCo for implementation of individual SPS projects. In reply to a further question from Mr TANG Ka-piu, SHA said that the Administration would seriously consider the suggestion of seeking a "blanket approval" from LegCo for implementing all SPS projects that were proposed and agreed by the 18 DCs without the need of going through PWSC/FC.

34. Regarding the above remarks made by Mr TANG Ka-piu, Mr Frederick FUNG stressed that it was LegCo's duty under the Basic Law ("BL") to, among others, examine and approve budgets introduced by the government and approve public expenditure. It should be noted that DCs were district organizations referred to in BL 97 and they were not organs of political power. As DCs' operation was under the purview of the Home Affairs Bureau ("HAB"), it would require significant institutional changes should DCs be allowed to exercise autonomy in finance-related matters.

35. Dr LAM Tai-fai noted that the 18 DCs had reached consensus on their SPS projects and had submitted a total of 27 proposals. He expressed

Action

concern about the implementation progress of various SPS projects. He and Mr Tony TSE also sought information on when the funding application on the other SPS project of SSP would be submitted to LegCo.

36. DDHA(1) responded that all the 18 DCs had agreed on the preliminary proposals of their SPS projects as set out in Annex 7 to the Administration's paper. Of them, two proposals respectively from Kwai Tsing District and Wong Tai Sin District had obtained the support of the Panel. While it was the plan of the Administration to submit, as soon as possible, in batches the remaining SPS proposals for consideration by the Panel, the funding application on the other SPS project of SSP, namely "Mei Foo Neighbourhood Activity Centre", would be submitted separately to the Panel tentatively in March 2015. Regarding the Centre under discussion, the site selected was currently under development by the Housing Authority ("HA"). To minimize interfacing issues, SSPDC would entrust the design and construction of the Centre to HA, subject to funding approval by FC, so that the Centre would be built as part of the Shek Kip Mei Estate Phase 3 housing development. The housing development was scheduled to commence construction in mid-2015 for completion in 2018.

37. In the light of Members' concerns, the Chairman requested the Administration to update the Panel on the latest progress of implementation of various SPS projects when it consulted the Panel on other project proposals the next time. DDHA(1) said that the Administration would do so.

Motion proposed by members

38. Mr TANG Ka-piu indicated his intention to move the following motion which was seconded by Dr CHIANG Lai-wan -

"本委員會動議促請政府加大決心放權區議會，提昇區議會財政及地區工程的自主性，並爭取立法會授權區議會可自主決定及通過深水埗區議會及其他17個區議會的「社區重點項目」，以提昇為地區市民服務的效率。"

(Translation)

"That, this Panel moves a motion to urge the Government to be more resolved to devolve power to District Councils and enhance their autonomy in finance and implementation of district projects, as well as to seek delegation of power by the Legislative Council to District Councils, so as to allow them to make their own decisions and facilitate the approval of signature projects proposed by the Sham Shui Po District Council and the other 17 District Councils, thereby enhancing the efficiency in the delivery of services to local residents."

Action

Mr TANG and Dr CHIANG held the view that LegCo should respect the decisions of DCs and should not prolong the scrutiny of the funding proposals on SPS projects submitted by DCs. This apart, DCs should be given more autonomy in the implementation of district projects.

39. SHA said that while the Administration appreciated Members' good intention of moving the above motion to expedite the implementation of SPS projects by DCs, he was concerned about the propriety for the Panel to consider the motion proposed by Mr TANG Ka-piu which involved complicated constitutional issues requiring careful study and deliberations.

40. The Chairman said that in accordance with rule 22(p) of the House Rules, a motion might be proposed if it was considered as directly related to the agenda item.

41. Mr Frederick FUNG reiterated his earlier advice that DCs' operation was under the purview of HAB. As the motion, if passed, would give rise to a number of important legal as well as constitutional issues, he would not support the proposed moving of the above motion.

42. Given the possible far-reaching implications of the proposed motion, the Deputy Chairman considered it not desirable for the Panel to pass a motion in haste without detailed deliberations. He therefore suggested to Mr TANG Ka-piu to consider withdrawing the motion.

43. Taking Members' views into consideration, Mr TANG Ka-piu agreed to withdraw his motion.

Summing up

44. In concluding the discussion, the Chairman said that Members supported the proposed construction of the Centre and raised no objection to the Administration submitting the proposal to PWSC and FC.

**V. Progress report of Pilot Scheme on Enhancement of District Administration Through District Management Committees**

(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)407/14-15(06) and (07))

45. At the invitation of the Chairman, SHA briefed Members on the background to launch in SSP and Yuen Long ("YL") Districts the Pilot Scheme on Enhancement of District Administration Through District Management Committees ("the pilot scheme") and reported on the progress of the pilot scheme with the aid of a video presentation.

Design of the pilot scheme

46. Mr Frederick FUNG said that he did not subscribe to the notion of the pilot scheme that the relevant District Management Committees ("DMCs"), chaired by the District Officers, be provided with decision-making power to tackle specific district issues. In his view, instead of empowering the respective District Officers to identify district needs, establish priorities among these needs and co-ordinate departments' programmes and efforts to resolve the problems identified, the decision-making power should rest with the two DCs in order to reflect their enhanced role and functions in district administration.

47. In response, Director of Home Affairs ("DHA") explained that although DMC was chaired by the respective District Officer, it comprised the DC Chairman and Vice-Chairman, chairmen of DC committees, and district representatives of the relevant frontline departments. DMC provided a regular platform to discuss and resolve district problems, follow up on the advice and recommendations of DC and co-ordinate the work of various departments at the district level. It was for this reason that the relevant DMCs were given decision-making power to tackle district issues involving the management and environmental hygiene problems of some public areas.

48. Mr Jimmy KWOK, Chairman of SSPDC and Mr LEUNG Che-cheung, Chairman of YLDC supplemented that it used to be that DMCs in the two districts basically played a facilitating role. Although DMCs were chaired by the District Officers, the latter were not empowered to direct other departments in implementing DMCs' recommendations. Organizationally, frontline departmental staff reported to their Heads of Departments who in turn reported to their respective policy bureaux. In cases where the demands of the districts were not aligned with the objectives and priorities of the departments/bureaux or when the demands had read-across/territory-wide implications, the departments would not be able to accept DMCs' advice and recommendations. The pilot scheme, however, enabled the District Officers to determine, in consultation with DCs, the issues to be addressed, the measures to be taken, the work priorities and the control of the necessary resources to achieve the desired outcomes. Mr LEUNG added that the provision of additional staffing by the Administration to the District Offices and relevant departments would be instrumental to the enhancement of district administration through DMCs.

The pilot scheme in SSP and YL Districts

*Strengthening support for street sleepers in SSP*

49. Mr Frederick FUNG said that the problem of street sleeping was attributed to various reasons and it had long existed in some districts of Hong Kong, including SSP District. In his view, the Administration should tackle the problem of street sleeping from different policy perspectives, such as housing, medical and health services, employment and family support etc., with a view to helping the street sleepers give up street sleeping and become self-reliant. It would be unwise, and irresponsible on the part of the Government, if the problem was overly simplified with DCs left to take up the matter on their own.

50. In response, Mr Jimmy KWOK, Chairman of SSPDC advised that SSP was a district with a relatively large number of street sleepers. The latter had caused environmental hygiene problems and complaints from local residents. As a result, the street sleeper issue had been a matter of serious concern in the district for many years. Under the pilot scheme, DO/SSP, with the support of SSPDC, DMC and the Social Welfare Department had considered the issue thoroughly and, with the additional resources available, adopted the following strategies in approaching the problem -

- (a) SSPDO had commissioned an experienced non-governmental organization ("NGO"), namely, the Society for Community Organisation ("SoCO"), to strengthen the support services for street sleepers. Adopting a caring approach, two dedicated social workers were engaged to reach out to the street sleepers to better understand and follow up on their needs and problems. Various programmes were being arranged to help them leave the streets in the long run. Additional support from the community, including a private donation, was also provided to help them bridge over to a normal life. DO/SSP had also liaised with SoCO and community leaders to explore the feasibility of arranging job referrals for suitable persons; and
- (b) to address the concerns of local residents about the environmental hygiene conditions of the locations where street sleepers gathered, six large-scale cleansing exercises had been planned. The first exercise was conducted smoothly in September 2014, with a total of 1.5 tonnes of garbage cleared. The hygiene conditions of the area concerned had been improved. SSPDO would capitalize on the experience gained and carry out the remaining cleansing exercises under the pilot scheme.

Action

51. DHA emphasized that it was largely due to the concerted efforts of SSPDC, frontline departments, NGOs and community leaders that made the pilot scheme a success.

*Observations and experience gained*

52. In response to the Chairman's enquiry about their observations and experience gained from the implementation of the pilot scheme, DO/SSP and District Officer (Yuen Long) advised that the conducive factors included -

- (a) under the pilot scheme, the two DMCs (comprising the District Officers, DC Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen, Chairmen of committees under DC, and district representatives of relevant departments) were provided with additional manpower and funding as well as decision-making power to tackle long-standing district problems;
- (b) the specific local issues and work priorities mentioned in the Administration's paper were identified after several rounds of in-depth discussions. DMCs had taken into account the views of the respective DCs in the decision-making process;
- (c) in the course of taking forward the initiatives, DMCs were responsible for co-ordinating departments' activities and programmes to maximize the utilization of Government resources and ensure that full account was taken of the community needs; and
- (d) as DC members belonging to different political parties/groupings generally supported the efforts of the two DMCs/ various departments in addressing the district issues identified, the pilot scheme had yielded positive results.

Evaluation of effectiveness of the pilot scheme

53. Noting that the pilot scheme would continue until August 2015, the Deputy Chairman, Mr TANG Ka-piu and Mr WU Chi-wai asked whether and how the Administration would take forward the scheme if it was proven successful and effective in tackling specific district issues. In their views, some initiatives, such as enhanced support for street sleepers, strengthened support for "three nil" buildings and enhanced grass-cutting programme, might justify sustaining the pilot scheme with public resources on a long term basis. Mr WU and Mr Frederick FUNG shared the view that initiatives/ programmes that had been proven as successful under the pilot scheme



Action

should eventually become a policy that would be implemented across the territory.

54. SHA and DHA responded that the pilot scheme implemented in SSP and YL had achieved visible and positive outcomes, and was 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 District Officers concerned would 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. HAD would in parallel closely monitor the 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.

55. In response to Mr MA Fung-kwok's enquiry on whether consideration would be given to expanding the scope of the pilot scheme so that DCs' role in district administration would cover also the management of leisure and sports facilities, DHA advised that in line with the policy direction of "addressing district issues at the district level and capitalizing on local opportunities", the Government planned to gradually encourage members of the community to play a more active role and enhance the efficiency of district administration by leveraging the wisdom and power of local communities. The Administration would not exclude any feasible option, if the situation so warranted in future.

56. Citing football development as an example, Mr MA Fung-kwok opined that the Administration's provision of more resource support and devolvement of powers to DCs in formulating venue hiring policy and management of local recreation and sports facilities would be conducive to the development of local football in Hong Kong. He hoped that proposals under the pilot scheme could be taken forward along these directions, if the scheme was extended to the other 16 districts in future. Echoing his view, Mr Steven HO pointed out that the level of support required by individual districts might vary. The Administration should review and adjust the level of assistance, in the light of the experience gained from the pilot scheme and having regard to the unique situation and characteristics of individual districts. In response, SHA and DHA advised that the Administration would be willing to complement DCs' enhanced role and functions in district administration.

57. Concluding the discussions, the Chairman said that she shared the views of many Members that the Administration should extend the pilot scheme to cover all other districts, given its success in resolving district

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issues identified by SSPDC and YLDC. As it was envisaged that the role of DCs in district administration would become more important in the future, she suggested that consideration be given to conducting a comprehensive review of the pilot scheme, including the level of financial and manpower support as well as the necessary legislation required to facilitate the full implementation of the scheme in all districts of Hong Kong.

**VI. Any other business**

58. The Chairman reminded members that the informal meeting for discussion of the draft research report on "Olympic Committees, sports federations and sports development in selected places" would be held immediately after this meeting in Conference Room 5 of the LegCo Complex.

59. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 11:04 am.

Council Business Division 2  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
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