

Steering Committee on District Governance convenes first meeting (with photos)

The Steering Committee on District Governance chaired by the Chief Secretary for Administration (CS), Mr Chan Kwok-ki, convened the first meeting today (July 12).

Mr Chan said, "With Hong Kong embarking on a new journey to advance from stability to prosperity, the Government's district governance must keep pace with the times. The Steering Committee chaired by me will holistically strengthen high-level leadership and co-ordination, enhance the capacity and effectiveness of district governance, and respond to the needs of the community at large."

The Steering Committee focused the discussion of the meeting on five areas of community interests, namely (1) expanding after-school care service and enhancing support for parents; (2) caring for the elderly and enhancing community support; (3) fostering clean markets and mobilising the community to participate in anti-rodent work; (4) enhancing public order and combatting crimes on all fronts; and (5) improving pedestrian facilities and ensuring road safety. The meeting formulated strategies in relation to the above five areas, which will be followed up by the Task Force on District Governance chaired by the Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration (DCS) to finalise relevant measures for implementation by relevant bureaux and departments.

Items identified by the Steering Committee in the five areas for implementation include:

(1) To launch at full steam the School-based After School Care Service Pilot Scheme in the new school year to allow primary students in need to stay after school to receive care and learning support, while enabling parents who are bound by after-school child care duties to work and improve their livelihood;

(2) To improve and set up more fitness equipment for the elderly; to provide umbrellas and hiking poles for borrowing in large parks to provide the elderly in need with the ease of visiting parks or taking a walk; and to step up efforts in identifying and caring for the elderly and carers in need for referral to social welfare units for support;

(3) To improve the environmental hygiene of public markets and cooked food markets, including improving the hardware and management of toilets, strengthening inspection and enforcement, and expediting overhaul of stalls; and to enhance anti-rodent work, including exploring the adoption of new rodent detection and control technologies, strengthening nighttime rodent prevention and control work, etc;

(4) To strengthen the patrol coverage, as well as the work and visibility of

enforcement, of law enforcement agencies such as the Police; and

(5) To expand the repaving of footpaths for a more comfortable walking environment, and install new auxiliary devices with red light beam projection at pedestrian crossings for improving road safety.

The Steering Committee also reviewed at the meeting the arrangements for displaying publicity materials to celebrate the 26th anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and examined the report on the work of the District Services and Community Care Teams.

"The Steering Committee's discussion today covered a wide range of policy areas including support for children and the elderly, environmental hygiene, law and order, and road safety. The various items identified by the Steering Committee will not only provide better support for specific groups such as children and the elderly, but also benefit all members of the public at the district level. They will respond to people's needs in various aspects from both the micro and macro perspectives. I will lead all bureaux and departments to work together and improve district governance, so that we can respond proactively to the aspirations of the people and enhance their sense of achievement, satisfaction and security," Mr Chan added.

The Government announced on May 2 the proposals on improving district governance, which cover reforming the District Councils and strengthening the district governance structure. The Steering Committee chaired by the CS will take a leading role in the overall strategies, policies and measures, work priorities and resource allocation of district governance, whereas the Task Force on District Governance chaired by the DCS will steer and co-ordinate the district work of various bureaux and departments and, as necessary, co-ordinate inter-departmental and/or cross-district issues.

The terms of reference and membership of the Steering Committee are in Annex I and Annex II respectively.



