

DCS chairs fourth meeting of Task Force on District Governance (with photos)

The Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Cheuk Wing-hing, chaired the fourth meeting of the Task Force on District Governance today (April 29) to follow up on the initiatives endorsed by the Steering Committee on District Governance. The meeting reviewed the preparatory work of various bureaux and departments for the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC), and the implementation progress of seven district issues.

Mr Cheuk said, "This year's October 1 anniversary is of great significance, marking not only the 75th anniversary of the founding of the PRC, but also the first National Day of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region after the reform of District Councils and the completion of the legislation on Article 23 of the Basic Law. I will assist the Chief Secretary for Administration (CS) in leading various bureaux and departments to make good preparations for various celebration activities and publicity programmes."

The Steering Committee chaired by the CS formulated at its first two meetings strategies in relation to seven district issues, covering areas on support for children and the elderly, environmental hygiene, law and order, road safety, pedestrian facilities and estate environment. The Task Force continued to follow up at this meeting the implementation details and the progress of the relevant items is as follows:

(1) Expanding after-school care service and enhancing support for parents

Non-governmental organisations responsible for providing after-school care services have progressively commenced their services since last September. As at the end of this February, 59 primary schools have participated in the School-based After School Care Service Pilot Scheme, providing approximately 2 900 service places in total.

(2) Caring for the elderly and enhancing community support

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) has added elderly-friendly fitness equipment to 18 leisure venues, and will hold around 5 700 recreation and sports activities for the elderly for free this year. The LCSD has also launched the Umbrellas for Loan by Elderly Park Visitors Scheme this February.

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) has launched a pilot scheme this March, with Tsuen Wan and Southern Districts as pilot points, to identify hidden elders, carers of the elderly, and caregivers of persons with

disabilities in need of assistance during home visits by District Services and Community Care Teams for referral to the SWD and social welfare units for follow-up support.

(3) Fostering clean markets and mobilising the community to participate in anti-rodent work

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) is continuing to enhance the cleanliness and hygiene of public markets and cooked food markets, including progressively increasing the frequency of cleansing work in markets, and commencing stall improvements at the Queen Street Cooked Food Market on a trial basis starting this February.

The FEHD is also continuing to strengthen rodent control, including increasing the number of overnight rodent control roving teams, and extending the trial scheme of allowing food premises to place large-size waste containers in rear lanes for temporary storage of waste.

(4) Enhancing public order and combating crimes on all fronts

Police plan to install closed-circuit television in 615 locations with higher crime figures across districts to serve as a deterrent against and an aid in the investigation of street crimes. Fifteen installations have been completed for technical tests in Mong Kok this April.

(5) Improving pedestrian facilities and ensuring road safety

The Highways Department (HyD) is expanding the repaving of footpaths, with works on 18 sections already completed. The Transport Department is installing auxiliary pedestrian crossing devices with red light-beam projections at pedestrian crossing black spots in various districts, with devices at the first 17 locations installed and commissioned.

(6) Enhancing the walking experience for citizens and creating a pedestrian-friendly environment

The HyD has selected 36 footbridges and pedestrian subways in 18 districts, and will design and carry out renovation and beautification works. The HyD has also selected 10 suitable locations and completed preliminary designs for installing bench railings for citizens to sit and rest on a trial basis. The above works are targeted to commence in mid-2024.

(7) Improving the environment of public housing estates and creating comfortable homes

The Housing Department has rolled out estate improvement works for 10 public rental housing estates starting from the first quarter of 2024, and will commence improvement works based on various themes in another five in the second quarter.

Mr Cheuk received reports from the relevant Heads of Departments on

their work. He urged departments and District Councils to make good use of the refined district governance structure and discharge good governance with various district initiatives of community interests to continuously enhance governance efficacy at the district level and duly address the needs of the people.

