

## DCS chairs seventh meeting of Task Force on District Governance (with photo)

The Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Cheuk Wing-hing, chaired the seventh meeting of the Task Force on District Governance today (February 17) to follow up on the initiatives endorsed by the Steering Committee on District Governance. The meeting co-ordinated various departments in formulating specific implementation measures on issues of local concern and continuously reviewed the work progress and performance.

Mr Cheuk said, "The Task Force will continue to adhere fully to the overall strategies set by the Steering Committee and actively respond to community concerns about district issues by taking practical actions to improve the living environment, and to enhance people's quality of life through cumulative results achieved, for building a better community together."

The Steering Committee chaired by the Chief Secretary for Administration formulated at its fourth meeting strategies on four more district issues to further enhance the community environment and facilities. The Task Force followed up at this meeting the implementation details and the progress of the relevant items, including:

1. Improving the waiting environment at public transport interchange to enhance travel experience

The Transport Department, in collaboration with the Highways Department (HyD), the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD), and the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department, has selected a covered public transport interchange in each of the 18 districts for enhancement works. These include upgrading the lighting, improving the ventilation system, refurbishing the walls and ceilings to provide a more comfortable waiting environment for passengers. These works have commenced this year with 11 for completion in 2025 and the remaining in 2026.

2. Combating air-conditioner water dripping to improve community environment

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) will strengthen inspections and enforcement actions against about 30 air-conditioner dripping blackspots from May to September this summer. The FEHD will also launch a publicity and public education campaign to appeal to residents to address the issue of air conditioners dripping water, in order to avoid affecting environmental hygiene in public places and causing a nuisance to citizens.

3. Cleaning pedestrian walkways to improve cityscape

Starting in February this year, the FEHD has deployed mini street-washing

vehicles equipped with pressure washer surface cleaners and high-pressure hot water cleaners at about 80 blackspots across the territory on a regular basis to step up street scrubbing and remove stains or moss, with a view to continuously improving the walking environment and enhancing the cityscape.

#### 4. Strengthening thematic plantings

The Development Bureau, along with the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, the HyD, the ArchSD, the Civil Engineering and Development Department and the Housing Department, will enhance thematic planting in selected development projects and venues, such as planting species with conspicuous flowers or thematically planting a single type of tree or shrub across a district to create impact, thereby beautifying the cityscape.

In addition to the four district issues above, the Task Force also followed up on the performance of the 1823 Enhanced Complaint Handling Mechanism and received reports from relevant departments on their work progress regarding the eight key issues identified at the first three meetings of the Steering Committee, including (1) expanding after-school care services 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 combating crimes on all fronts; (5) improving pedestrian facilities and ensuring road safety; (6) enhancing the community environment and strengthening local characteristics; (7) improving the environment of public housing estates and creating comfortable homes; and (8) caring for the elderly and promoting digital inclusion. Mr Cheuk urged all departments to continue advancing these initiatives and enhancing district governance efficacy, so that the Government can deliver district services more effectively, leading to a more comfortable and better life for citizens.

Moreover, Mr Cheuk thanked the departments for their efforts over the past two years in implementing the directives of the Steering Committee and the Task Force, which has brought significant achievements in combating hygiene blackspots for the benefit of the public. He added, "We should not permanently classify places that have seen long-term environmental improvements as blackspots. Relevant departments should critically review the situation of all 738 hygiene blackspots and continue to actively follow up on those requiring improvement while identifying others that are suitable for removal from the blacklist. If the conditions of a blackspot have not recurred after improving for two years, it should be removed from the blackspot list. The hygiene blackspot website will be updated in the first quarter this year to reflect the actual situation."

