

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. PWSC 77/01-02
(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

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**Public Works Subcommittee of the Finance Committee
of the Legislative Council**

**Minutes of the 10th meeting
held in the Chamber of Legislative Council Building
on Wednesday, 30 January 2002, at 10:45 am**

Members present :

Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, JP (Chairman)

Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip (Deputy Chairman)

Hon Kenneth TING Woo-shou, JP

Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan

Hon Eric LI Ka-cheung, JP

Hon James TO Kun-sun

Hon CHAN Yuen-han, JP

Hon CHAN Kam-lam

Hon SIN Chung-kai

Hon Andrew WONG Wang-fat, JP

Hon WONG Yung-kan

Hon LAU Kong-wah

Hon Miriam LAU Kin-yeet, JP

Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP

Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo

Hon LAW Chi-kwong, JP

Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP

Dr Hon TANG Siu-tong, JP

Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP

Hon Henry WU King-cheong, BBS

Hon IP Kwok-him, JP

Hon LAU Ping-cheung

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Ms Pauline NG
Ms Bonnie KAN

Assistant Secretary General 1
Senior Assistant Secretary (1)9

HEAD 707 – NEW TOWNS AND URBAN AREA DEVELOPMENT

PWSC(2001-02)93 743TH Tsuen Wan Road upgrading

Members noted that a paper on the present proposal had been circulated to the Transport Panel for information on 11 December 2001.

2. Miss Emily LAU expressed concern about the noise impact of Tsuen Wan Road (TWR) on the nearby residential developments including Clague Garden Estate and Riviera Garden upon completion of the proposed road widening. In response, the Director of Territory Development (DTD) advised that similar concern about the noise impact of the widened TWR had been expressed by Tsuen Wan District Council. Subject to the approval for the present proposal, an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) study for the project would be conducted in May 2002. The Administration would incorporate all the measures recommended in the EIA study report into the detailed design and the relevant works contract. He envisaged that noise barriers would need to be installed under this project to mitigate the traffic noise impact on Clague Garden Estate and Riviera Garden.

3. In reply to Miss Emily LAU's enquiry about the planning time frame for provision of noise mitigation measures, DTD advised that generally if the traffic noise impact of a new road would exceed the prescribed limit of 70dB(A) any time within 15 years from the completion of the project, provision of noise mitigation measures would be required.

4. Mr Albert CHAN said that the upgrading of TWR had long been called for by local community to meet the increasing traffic demand. He anticipated that the completion of West Rail scheduled for end 2003 would generate more traffic on TWR and thus urged the Administration to expedite this road upgrading project as far as possible. Mr CHAN also reminded the Administration to take into account possible future changes in land uses along TWR in planning for the provision of noise barriers/enclosures to ensure that any future residential developments along this road would not be subject to excessive traffic noise impact.

5. The item was voted on and endorsed.

PWSC(2001-02)94 754TH Widening of Tung Chung Road between Pa Mei and Lung Tseng Tau

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6. Members noted that the proposed widening of the entire Tung Chung Road (TCR) had been discussed at the Transport Panel on 25 January 2002.

7. Ms Miriam LAU, Chairman of the Transport Panel, said that members of the Transport Panel supported the widening of TCR in principle. Noting that the widening of the entire TCR would not be completed until December 2006, Ms LAU enquired about the feasibility to advance the completion of the widening works to meet the pressing traffic demand. The Chairman recalled that members of the Transport Panel had requested the Administration to expedite the entire TCR widening project by six to 12 months. Mr IP Kwok-him conveyed the strong request of Island District Council to speed up the widening of the entire TCR. Mr TAM Yiu-chung and Mr MA Fung-kwok echoed the concern about the need to speed up the entire TCR widening project.

8. In response, the Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport (5) and DTD advised that the Administration was fully aware of the urgency of the TCR improvement project and would take all possible steps to expedite the project. Widening of the northern section of TCR between Pa Mei and Lung Tseng Tau, with which the present proposal was concerned, was less complicated and would be completed in November 2003. It would bring early benefits to residents of six villages and would improve road safety. It might be possible to shorten the construction works for this section from 18 months to 16 months. However, widening of the southern section would involve more complicated works and it would be necessary to maintain through traffic on TCR during the construction period. Thus, it would be difficult to achieve substantial advancement in the entire project. DTD also confirmed that the section of TCR under consideration would be the same as the remaining TCR, i.e. widening to a 7.3-metre wide single two-lane carriageway. The Administration did not envisage that the widening of TCR by sections would give rise to any interface problem.

9. In reply to Mr SHEK Lai-him's enquiry about the feasibility of carrying out the construction works around the clock to expedite the project, DTD and the Deputy Director of Environmental Protection advised that in view of the possible noise impact on the villages along the northern section of Tung Chung Road and Yat Tung Estate, the Environmental Protection Department would unlikely agree to issue a permit for carrying out the proposed road works during night time, particularly if those works involved the use of heavy equipment.

10. Mr Albert CHAN questioned whether the delay in the implementation of the TCR widening project was attributed to any communication problem between the Territory Development Department (TDD) and the Transport Department, resulting in the TCR widening works not having been included in the Tung Chung New Town Development Plan. In response, DTD explained that the initial plan was to construct

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a Lantau north-south road link between Tai Ho Wan and Mui Wo to cope with the increased north-south traffic in Lantau Island. Owing to environmental reasons, the idea of constructing the north-south road link was subsequently dropped in late 2000 and thereafter, the widening of TCR was pursued.

11. Mr Albert CHAN expressed concern that the traffic congestion situation on TCR would be exacerbated when the improvement works were in progress. He suggested that a temporary link road from TCR via the District Open Space to Yu Tung Road be provided to divert traffic from the northern section of TCR during construction. DTD confirmed that proper traffic diversion arrangements, including the arrangement suggested by Mr CHAN, would be made during construction.

12. In reply to the Chairman's enquiry, DTD confirmed that the future cycle track in the Tung Chung area would be a continuous track without interruption.

13. The item was voted on and endorsed.

HEAD 706 – HIGHWAYS

PWSC(2001-02)96	759TH	Shenzhen Western Corridor
	736TH	Deep Bay Link

14. Members noted that the proposed projects had been discussed at a number of meetings of the Transport Panel since 26 October 2001. An item PWSC(2001-02)92 on the same projects had been discussed at the PWSC meeting on 9 January 2002 and had been withdrawn by the Administration.

15. Ms Miriam LAU said that Members of the Liberal Party supported the projects of Shenzhen Western Corridor (SWC) and Deep Bay Link (DBL) and welcomed the Administration's inclusion of an easterly link road from DBL to Yuen Long Highway in response to some Members' request. Ms LAU sought clarification on the planned function(s) of this link road and the type of road it would be.

16. The Deputy Secretary for Transport (1) (DS(T)1) confirmed that the main planned function of the link road was to facilitate eastbound traffic from SWC to gain access to Route 3 or Tolo Highway via Yuen Long Highway. The exact alignment would be confirmed at the detailed design stage. The Director of Highways (DH_y) advised that the easterly link road would be of a standard between a trunk road (幹線) and a slip road (連接路). Consultation with local organizations on the alignment would be made to ensure minimum impact on residents.

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17. Miss Miriam LAU sought confirmation on whether the easterly link road would be at least a dual two-lane carriageway to ensure that it could effectively perform the traffic diversion function. DS(T)1 confirmed that the Administration was planning the easterly link road on this basis.

18. Mr Andrew WONG opined that the easterly link road would be a very important link road and therefore the link road should be of dual two-lane standard, if dual three-lane standard was not feasible, to effectively serve the traffic diversion function. Mr Abraham SHEK shared Mr WONG's view and sought assurance from the Administration in this regard. In response, DHy and DS(T)1 advised that at this stage when site investigation works for the easterly link road were yet to be carried out, the Administration could at best assure members that the dual two-lane standard would be the basis for planning the easterly link road. If feasible and subject to environmental and cost considerations, a higher standard for the link road would be pursued.

19. In reply to Mr Henry WU's enquiry about the connection point between the DBL and the easterly link road, DHy advised that the Administration hoped to seek the shortest, most cost-effective and feasible alignment acceptable by local residents for the easterly link road. One possible alignment was from San Sang San Tsuen via Hung Shui Kiu and Hung Tin Road to Yuen Long Highway.

20. In reply to Dr TANG Siu-tong's enquiry, DS(T)1 confirmed that the alignment suggested by Yuen Long District Council (YLDC), i.e. the "Tin Shui Wai North" alignment option, was one of the three alignment options which the Administration had identified and would further examine. Dr TANG then conveyed the support of YLDC for the present proposal and the provision of an easterly link road from DBL to Route 3.

21. Mr LAU Ping-cheung pointed out that the connection of DBL and Route 10 at Lam Tei would still be controversial. He recalled an earlier remark made by the Secretary for Transport that the Administration would not rule out the possibility of inviting private investment and use a "Build-Operate-Transfer" (BOT) franchise arrangement for Route 10. Mr LAU was concerned that some design and construction cost for DBL would be wasted if the BOT approach was subsequently adopted.

22. DS(T)1 advised that the Crosslinks Further Study completed in March 2001 confirmed the need for constructing the fourth land boundary crossing of SWC together with the connecting road, DBL, to satisfy future demand. Route 10 would represent the fourth north-south link in addition to Route 3 (Country Park Section), Tuen Mun Road and Tolo Highway. Route 10 would be connected to DBL to cope with the increasing cross-boundary traffic and hence the interface in the design of

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DBL and Route 10 would be important. The Administration did not have any plan to adopt the BOT approach for the delivery of Route 10 at this stage.

23. Miss Emily LAU sought elaboration on the exceptionally fast-track programme for SWC and DBL mentioned in the proposal. She was particularly concerned whether this approach would give rise to additional cost and risks. In response, DHy said that the main feature of the exceptionally fast-track programme was to commence the detailed design of SWC and DBL in early 2002 pending completion of the EIA studies. While the Administration adopted this programme mainly on account of the extremely tight schedule for the projects, there were favourable factors that enabled the adoption of this programme. Basically, SWC would be a bridge structure spanning across Deep Bay. No land resumption would be required for the project. With extensive feasibility study works carried out under the Cross Links Further Study completed by Planning Department in March 2001, the preliminary design stage for SWC could be dropped. These factors attributed to the possible completion of SWC and DBL in late 2005. DHy added that flexibility in works planning and implementation needed to be exercised in case of urgent projects like SWC and DBL.

24. Mr Albert CHAN pointed out that while the Administration sought additional funds of \$26.9 million for the design and site investigations for an easterly link road from DBL, it had not provided any substantive information on this road link including its feasibility, alignment and standard (whether it would be a dual two-lane carriageway or otherwise). He considered that the present funding request had departed from the standing practice of seeking funding approval for the detailed design of a road project after its feasibility and preliminary alignment had been established. Mr Albert CHAN also referred to a letter jointly submitted by two YLDC members and five local organizations of Yuen Long and Tin Shui Wai expressing objection to the funding proposal for the easterly link road. They highlighted that the residents of Tin Shui Wai had not been consulted on the matter. (The letter was tabled at the meeting and issued to members after the meeting vide LC Paper No. PWSC 70/01-02 on 31 January 2002.) Mr Albert CHAN suggested that the easterly link road should be taken out from the present proposal and should then be dealt with according to the established funding procedures.

25. DS(T)1 explained that the provision of an easterly link road from DBL to Yuen Long Highway was made in response to the request of some Members and that of YLDC. The Administration considered that the easterly link road was an important component of the DBL project, and for time and interface considerations, it was desirable to incorporate this link road into the DBL project. DHy supplemented that the Administration was working under a very tight schedule for the SWC and DBL projects, as well as the easterly link road. The Administration planned to appoint a single consultant for the detailed design of DBL and for the

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investigation and planning of the easterly link road to ensure that the works for these link roads would progress in tandem with each other. DHy also advised that the estimated cost for the investigation and planning for the easterly link road was \$5 million and that for the detailed design was \$21.9 million.

26. Mr Albert CHAN questioned whether there had been any precedent of a funding request in the order of \$26.9 million for a road project without any prior consultation with the local community nor information on the project feasibility and preliminary design provided to Members. Mr CHAN cautioned that if the present funding request for the easterly road link was approved, Members would be liable to the possible consequences of improper control of public expenditure.

27. In response, DS/Tsy3 said that generally speaking, any capital works item with an estimated cost of \$15 million or above would be submitted to PWSC and FC for consideration. As the cost for the site investigation and design works for the easterly link road would be about \$26.9 million, the proposed funding for these works would have to be submitted to PWSC and FC for consideration irrespective of whether the easterly link road was to be treated as a separate project.

28. As regards public consultation, DS(T)1 said that it was unfair to say that the Administration had not undertaken consultation on the easterly link road. He stressed that some members of YLDC had requested the provision of a branch road off DBL to Route 3 via Tin Shui Wai to divert additional traffic arising from the SWC and DBL projects. Indeed, the preferred alignment of YLDC was one of the three alignment options to be examined under the proposed consultancy. He said that the Administration would further consult YLDC and other local organizations in the course of drawing up the design of the easterly link road. Moreover, there was also a statutory requirement to gazette the proposed road scheme for public consultation. DHy supplemented that the Administration would consult relevant local organisations on the alignment options for the easterly link road before proceeding with the detailed design. He envisaged that there would be several rounds of consultation with the local organizations as the works for the easterly link road progressed.

29. In reply to the Chairman's enquiry about the normal public consultation process for public engineering projects, the Secretary for Works (S for W) advised that for a typical public engineering project, the Administration would first conduct a technical feasibility appraisal and a preliminary design. At the preliminary design stage, a preliminary alignment of a proposed new road would be drawn up. Public consultation might then be undertaken on the proposed project. Where necessary, further consultation might be conducted as a project progressed. In this case, preliminary design for SWC and DBL had been made and the local organizations

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had been consulted. The need for the easterly link road was raised during the consultation process.

30. Mr LAU Kong-wah expressed support for the SWC and DBL projects and the provision of an easterly link road. He recalled that at the last meeting of PWSC on 9 January 2002, some members had requested the Administration to provide an easterly link road from DBL to Route 3. The Transport Panel held three meetings in January 2002. In response to the request of Panel members for information on the easterly link road at the Panel meeting on 11 January 2002, the Administration presented a paper with three alignment options for the easterly link road at the Panel meeting on 17 January 2002 (vide LC Paper No. CB(1)821/01-02(06)). The Secretary for Transport advised at the Panel meeting on 23 January 2002 that the estimated cost of the detailed design for the easterly link road would be about \$20 million. Mr LAU then asked if the three roads would be completed at the same time and whether the completion of SWC (Hong Kong section) would be synchronized with the SWC (Mainland section). DS(T)1 advised that the Administration's plan was to construct the SWC, DBL and the easterly link road concurrently to achieve a common completion time. The target was to complete the SWC (Hong Kong section) at the same time as the SWC (Mainland section), which was scheduled for 2005.

31. Mr Abraham SHEK expressed support for providing funding to kick off the site investigation and design work for the easterly link road. He considered that if the link road was to be carried out as a separate project from DBL project, it might give rise to additional cost and time. He urged the Administration to consult green groups on the alignment options for the link road at an early stage to avoid frustration at the subsequent stages due to environmental concerns.

32. Mr WONG Yung-kan said that he gathered from his recent meeting with some YLDC members that YLDC members at large strongly supported the provision of an easterly link road from DBL to Yuen Long Highway.

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33. Mr Henry WU and Mr WONG Yung-kan expressed concern that the resources spent on the site investigation and design works for the easterly link road would be wasted if it subsequently turned out that provision of the link road was not feasible due to objections from affected residents or environmental reasons. DS(T)1 assured members that the Administration would consult local residents in the course of drawing up the design for the easterly link road.

34. Mr TAM Yiu-chung and Mr IP Kwok-him expressed support for the provision of an easterly link road on account of the need to allieviate the heavy traffic demand on Tuen Mun Road upon completion of SWC and DBL. Mr IP stated that if an easterly link road from DBL to Yuen Long Highway was not to be provided, it would be difficult for the Democratic Alliance for Betterment of Hong Kong to support the funding proposal for SWC and DBL. Nevertheless, Mr IP considered it necessary for the Administration to revert to Members when details of the preliminary design on the alignment and other aspects of the easterly link road were available.

35. Miss Emily LAU shared the concern of Mr Albert CHAN that it would not be prudent for members to approve a substantial sum of \$26.9 million without being provided any substantive information about the easterly link road. She considered that the present proposal was a departure from the normal funding procedure. The Administration had yet to establish the feasibility of the link road and conduct consultation with local organizations but members were requested to approve funding to complete the detailed design for the link road. She was also not convinced that such departure was warranted on this occasion. Miss LAU then expressed support for Mr Albert CHAN's earlier suggestion that the funding request for the easterly link road should be separately considered and should follow the normal funding procedure.

36. In response, S for W said that the Administration fully understood members' concern about the need for effective monitoring of public spending. He however requested members' appreciation that for exceptionally pressing projects as in this case, an extent of flexibility needed to be exercised. He stressed the need to synchronize the easterly link road with DBL and remarked that putting the easterly link road under separate funding arrangements would inevitably delay the progress of the link road and might give rise to interface problems with the DBL.

37. DS(Tsy)3 advised that if the funding for the preliminary design and the detailed design for the easterly link road were to be considered separately, the Administration would need to submit a separate funding proposal for the detailed design, as the estimated cost of the detailed design exceeded \$15 million. This

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arrangement would have time implications while the time factor was critical to the SWC and DBL projects.

38. Mr Abraham SHEK considered that the present proposal with the inclusion of the easterly link road warranted special consideration, as the inclusion was made in response to some Members' request and funding was indeed necessary for the Administration to proceed with the design work for the link road. To ensure prudent disposal of funds, Mr SHEK suggested that the works for the easterly link road should be scheduled into stages and separate provisions be included in the consultancy agreements to stipulate that detailed design works would be subject to the outcome of the preliminary design and relevant impact assessments. No payment for the detailed design would be incurred if the easterly link road was not to be pursued.

39. Mr Eric LI said that while the present funding arrangement for the easterly link road was not perfect and did entail certain risks, he appreciated the urgency of the SWC and DBL projects and the importance of the diversion function of the easterly link road. Having weighed the pros and cons and the potential enormous economic loss to Hong Kong if the SWC, DBL and its easterly link road could not be proceeded with shortly, he would support the present funding proposal. Mr LI supported Mr SHEK's suggestion of phasing the design works and the corresponding payments for the easterly link road in the relevant contracts, and urged the Administration to monitor the projects with great care. He also requested the Administration to revert to LegCo upon completion the preliminary design of the easterly link road and before proceeding with the detailed design.

40. DS(T)1 and DHy confirmed that the Administration could specify in the relevant consultancy agreement that commencement of the detailed design for the easterly link road would be subject to satisfactory completion of the preliminary design and the outcome of relevant impact assessment studies.

41. At Mr Albert CHAN's request, the Administration then provided a plan (i.e. Annex D of the LC Paper No. CB(1)821/01-02(06) issued to Transport Panel members as well as other LegCo Members on 16 January 2002) showing the three alignment options for the easterly link road for members' reference at the meeting.

42. Upon the request of DS(Tsy)3, the meeting was adjourned at 12:33pm.

43. The meeting was resumed at 12:40pm.

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- Admin. 44. DS(T)1 stated that after thorough re-consideration, the Administration decided that it would report to the Transport Panel and the Public Works Subcommittee on the alignment option of the easterly link road before the detailed design commenced. He also affirmed the earlier undertaking made by DHy that the Administration would use the dual two-lane standard as the basis for the capacity design of the easterly link road.
45. Miss Emily LAU said that while some members had urged the Administration to target at building a dual three-lane easterly link road, she considered that due considerations should be given to environmental factors. In this regard, she urged the Administration to adopt a sustainable development perspective in planning the easterly link road and other transport facilities.
46. Mr Andrew WONG considered that the easterly link road was even more important than DBL, which would be a dual three-lane carriageway. He said that unless the Administration provided an undertaking that the dual three-lane standard would be pursued if this was found feasible, he could not support the DBL project, i.e. project 736TH. In response, DS(T)1 and DHy advised that it was necessary to balance economic, environmental and planning considerations. In view of the anticipated environmental and planning constraints, the Administration could not make an undertaking as requested by Mr WONG, but was more confident about the feasibility of providing a dual two-lane easterly link road.
47. Miss Emily LAU reiterated her concern about the unusual course taken by the Administration to including the easterly link road in the proposal. She considered that the easterly link should be removed from the present funding proposal and should be separately dealt with by PWSC upon provision of relevant substantive information by the Administration. DS(T)1 re-iterated that the Administration planned to commission the same consultant for the design of the DBL and the planning of the easterly link road to ensure that works for the two link roads would be properly synchronized.
48. Mr LAU Kong-wah objected to separately consider the funding provision for the design of the easterly link road on account of the urgency of the projects and the need to ensure smooth interface among SWC, DBL and the easterly link road. Mr Abraham SHEK also expressed preference to consider the funding provisions for the SWC, DBL and the easterly link road under a single package.
49. Dr TANG Siu-tong reaffirmed that YLDC supported the SWC, DBL and Route 10 projects. As YLDC had requested provision of an easterly link road from DBL to Yuen Long Highway via Tin Shui Wai North, and the Administration had

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confirmed that the "Tin Shui Wai North" alignment would be examined under the proposed design study, YLDC supported the present proposal.

50. Referring to the plan provided by the Administration, Mr Albert CHAN pointed out that the "Tin Shui Wai North" alignment route was apparently much longer than DBL. Given that the estimated cost for the site investigation and detailed design works for DBL was \$60.8 million, it was unlikely that the Administration's provision of \$21.9 million for the detailed design of the easterly link road would be adequate if the "Tin Shui Wai North" alignment route was adopted. He therefore questioned that the Administration might already have an inclination to adopt one of the other two alternative alignments, i.e. the "Tin Shui Wai West" or "Hung Shui Kiu" alignments shown on the plan. Mr CHAN expressed his dissatisfaction with the funding arrangements for the easterly link road.

51. Mr Andrew WONG suggested that the SWC and the DBL projects be voted on separately. DS(Tsy)3 advised that as it was necessary to ensure smooth interface between the two projects and to synchronize their completion time, the Administration considered it more appropriate to put the two projects under a single proposal.

52. The Chairman put the item to vote. The item was voted on. 14 members voted for the proposal, eight voted against and none abstained-

For:

Mr Kenneth TING	Mr TAM Yiu-chung
Mr Eric LI	Dr TANG Siu-tong
Miss CHAN Yuen-han	Mr Abraham SHEK
Mr CHAN Kam-lam	Mr Henry WU
Mr WONG Yung-kan	Mr IP Kwok-him
Mr LAU Kong-wah	Mr LAU Ping-cheung
Miss Miriam LAU	Mr MA Fung-kwok
(14 members)	

Against:

Miss Cyd HO	Miss Emily LAU
Mr James TO	Mr Andrew CHENG
Mr SIN Chung-kai	Mr LAW Chi-kwong
Mr Andrew WONG	Mr Albert CHAN
(8 members)	

53. The item was endorsed.

54. Mr Albert CHAN requested the Administration to provide further details on

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Admin. the three alternative alignments for the easterly link road before the relevant Finance Committee meeting.

Clerk,
FC 55. Mr Andrew WONG requested that this item be voted on separately from other PWSC items at the relevant Finance Committee meeting.

56. As there was insufficient time, the Chairman suggested and members agreed that consideration of the remaining five items, i.e. PWSC(2001-02)97, PWSC(2001-02)95, PWSC(2001-02)98, PWSC(2001-02)99 and PWSC(2001-02)100, would be deferred to an additional meeting to be held before the Lunar New Year.

57. The meeting ended at 12:55pm.

Legislative Council Secretariat
5 March 2002