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

**Minutes of the 10th meeting
held in Conference Room A of Legislative Council Building
on Monday, 29 May 2006, at 8:30 am**

Members present:

Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, S.B.St.J., JP (Chairman)
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, JP
Hon Mrs Selina CHOW LIANG Shuk-yee, GBS, JP
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, JP
Hon CHAN Kam-lam, SBS, JP
Hon Jasper TSANG Yok-sing, GBS, JP
Hon LAU Kong-wah, JP
Hon Miriam LAU Kin-yee, GBS, JP
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP
Hon LEE Wing-tat
Hon LI Kwok-ying, MH
Hon Daniel LAM Wai-keung, BBS, JP
Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, SBS, JP
Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP
Hon TAM Heung-man

Members attending:

Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Hon WONG Kwok-hing

Members absent:

Hon CHOY So-yuk
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip

Public officers attending:

Mr Joe C C WONG	Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) ³
Mr Y C LO, JP	Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works)
Mrs Rita LAU, JP	Permanent Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands (Planning and Lands)
Dr Mike CHIU, JP	Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Environment) (Acting)
Mr Davey CHUNG	Principal Assistant Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) (Works)
Miss Elizabeth TSE, JP	Director of Administration
Mrs MAK Lok Suet-ling, JP	Deputy Director of Administration
Mr Sidney CHAN	Assistant Director of Administration
Mr C H YUE, JP	Director of Architectural Services
Mr Peter K T YUEN	Project Director (1) Architectural Services Department
Mr TANG Ping-kwong	Deputy Government Property Administrator Government Property Agency
Mr CHEUNG Kin-wah	Chief Property Manager (Management Services) Government Property Agency
Mr Elvis AU	Assistant Director (Environment Assessment) Environmental Protection Department
Mr Lawrence KWAN	Chief Engineer/Traffic Engineering (Hong Kong) Transport Department
Ms Phyllis LI	Chief Town Planner (Special Duties) Planning Department
Ms Bernadette LINN	Deputy Secretary for Education and Manpower (2)
Ms Mable CHAN	Principal Assistant Secretary for Education and Manpower (Infrastructure and Research Support)

Mr Peter KWOK	Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs (Culture) 2
Mr LEE Yuk-man	Assistant Director (Libraries and Development)
Ms Carol YUEN	Deputy Secretary for Security (2)
Mr Charles WONG	Principal Assistant Secretary for Security (B)
Mr Aaron CHEUNG Yin-chiu	Chief Fire Officer (Headquarters) Fire Services Department
Miss CHEUNG Siu-hing, JP	Deputy Secretary for Security (1)
Miss Rosalind CHEUNG	Assistant Secretary for Security (E)1
Mr Arthur NG Sek-hon, JP	Director of Finance, Administration and Planning Hong Kong Police Force
Mr Paul HUNG Hak-wai	Regional Commander (Hong Kong Island) Hong Kong Police Force
Ms Barbara R WILLISON	Chief Superintendent (Planning and Development Branch) Hong Kong Police Force
Mr John S V CHAI, JP	Director of Civil Engineering and Development
Mr K K YEUNG	Deputy Head (Port and Land) Civil Engineering and Development Department
Mr Martin K K CHEUNG	Chief Civil Engineer Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau (Housing)
Ms Polly C P YOUNG	Chief Architect (Procurement) (Acting) Housing Department

Clerk in attendance:

Mr Paul WOO	Senior Council Secretary (1)3
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Staff in attendance:

Ms Pauline NG	Assistant Secretary General 1
Mr Anthony CHU	Council Secretary (1)2
Ms Alice CHEUNG	Senior Legislative Assistant (1)1
Mr Frankie WOO	Legislative Assistant (1)2

HEAD 703 – BUILDINGS**PWSC(2006-07)15 63KA Tamar development project**

The Chairman declared an interest as he was an independent non-executive director of a firm which took part in the prequalification/ tender exercise of the Tamar development project (TDP). With no objection from members, the Chairman continued to chair the meeting. Mr Patrick LAU also declared that he was engaged in consultancy services in relation to the tender exercise for the project.

2. Mr Patrick LAU, Deputy Chairman of the Panel on Planning, Lands and Works (PLW Panel), informed members that the Administration had briefed the PLW Panel on the relaunch of the TDP in November 2005. In view of the wide public concern on the project, the Panel and the Subcommittee formed under it, namely the Subcommittee to Review the Planning for the Central Waterfront (including the Tamar Site), had held a number of meetings with the Administration and interested parties to discuss matters relating to the project. On behalf of the PLW Panel and the Subcommittee, Mr LAU reported that the PLW Panel had not taken a stance on whether the TDP should be supported, but it had completed discussion on the project.

3. The Chairman drew members' attention to a submission from the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong (DAB) which raised questions on the TDP (issued vide LC Paper No. PWSC68/05-06) and the written response from the Administration (tabled at the meeting and subsequently issued vide LC Paper No. PWSC70/05-06).

4. At the invitation of the Chairman, the Director of Administration (D of Adm) briefly explained the Administration's response to the DAB. D of Adm reiterated that the TDP funding proposal concerned the design and construction of the Central Government Complex (CGC), Legislative Council Complex (LCC), open space and associated facilities at Tamar. Some issues raised in the DAB's submission, such as the construction of the Road P2, measures to increase the vibrancy of the Central waterfront area and the development of Wan Chai North, etc, were not within the scope of the present funding proposal, but the Administration had provided as much information as possible in view of DAB's concerns.

5. Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming said that the DAB was seriously concerned about how the TDP, being a project of an enormous scale, would contribute to the overall benefits of the community. During the extensive discussions on the project in the past, the DAB had stated its reservations about choosing Tamar as the site for reprovisioning the Government headquarters and the Legislative Council (LegCo). In DAB's view, Southeast Kowloon might be a better alternative than Tamar for the development of the CGC and LCC to bring about more sustainable developments, such as rejuvenation of some of the nearby old districts like San Po Kong, Kwun Tong and Kowloon City. In this regard, upon conducting some

detailed studies, the DAB had submitted its views and proposals for the consideration of the Administration. Mr CHEUNG further said that while the Administration still maintained its position that Tamar was the most suitable site for the project, it was encouraging to note that the Administration had responded positively to the DAB's views and taken constructive steps to revise the design and the scale of the development. These included tightening up the height restriction of the Tamar development to ensure protection of the ridgeline, reduction of the site density and the development plot ratio of the CGC and LCC, provision of a large "Open Space" for public enjoyment as well as other environmental protection initiatives. The Administration had also pledged to take forward the project with measures which would create more employment opportunities, especially for the construction industry. Mr CHEUNG said that in view of the Administration's efforts to improve the planning and design of the project in response to public demand, the DAB was inclined to support the TDP.

6. Referring to paragraph 18(b) of the paper provided by the Administration, which stated that the CGC would be able to accommodate future alteration and expansion, Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming enquired about the measures which would be taken. Mr Abraham SHEK considered that the design of the CGC should cater for the possibility of future expansion, such as constructing additional floors within permissible limits, provided that the ridgeline and the environment could be protected.

7. D of Adm said that sustainable development was an important factor for the design of the TDP. As such, the Administration would require the tenderers to build in flexibility in the building design to facilitate future expansion to meet the needs of the Government Secretariat and LegCo. For the project as a whole, in order to develop Tamar as the prime civic core of Hong Kong, the Administration would require the design of the new development to project Hong Kong's position as a cosmopolitan city and Asia's world city. The Administration would ensure that the TDP would integrate well with the development of the Central waterfront. The design scheme for the TDP would be responsive to the urban fabric of the Central District as well as the natural context of the waterfront setting and the backdrop of Victoria Peak. Referring to paragraph 63 of the paper, D of Adm further said that the Administration estimated that the proposed works under the TDP would create about 2 700 jobs (2 420 for labourers and another 280 for professional/technical staff) providing a total employment of 73 000 man-months.

8. Mr WONG Kwok-hing welcomed the Government's decision to impose a mandatory requirement specifying that concrete structural units and concrete external walls of the CGC and LCC could not be pre-fabricated. He pointed out that this measure would result in creation of more job opportunities for local construction workers.

9. Mr WONG Kwok-hing further asked whether, and how, the Government would implement measures to protect the rights of workers engaged in the project, including measures to guard against contractors failing to pay wages. In his view, suitable protective requirements should be prescribed in the tender document. In

response, Director of Architectural Services (D Arch S) advised that the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau had promulgated, since 1 May 2006, measures to strengthen protection of workers engaged in public works projects, including ensuring due payment of wages. The relevant guidelines and requirements would be set out in the tender documents for the TDP.

10. Mrs Selina CHOW said that Liberal Party (LP) considered that the Administration's current proposal on the TDP had addressed most of the issues raised by it, and therefore supported the project. Both the Government and LegCo had genuine needs for new accommodations which would enhance their operational efficiency. In addition, the project would create much-needed job opportunities for the construction sector. She urged the Administration to expedite the project.

11. Mr LEE Wing-tat said that the Democratic Party (DP) had close discussions with the Administration on the development of the Tamar site and the future use of the existing Central Government Offices and Murray Building. The DP considered that the Administration had reacted positively to its views and made commitments to improve the TDP proposals, such as reducing the size of the CGC and increasing the open space and introducing environmental protection and heritage preservation measures. The DP's stance was that although the TDP as presently proposed did not satisfy all the requests and demands, the Government's efforts to try to address the issues raised were welcomed. DP was therefore prepared to support the project. Mr LEE however urged the Administration to maintain a high degree of openness and transparency and involve extensive public participation in the development process. In this connection, he suggested that the Administration should make available the design models for the project for public viewing and comment at an early stage.

Project cost

12. Dr KWOK Ka-ki remarked that as the public still held qualms about the Administration's proposals on the TDP, the project should not be rushed. He said that main issues including the high construction costs of the TDP, alternative sites for the development, development intensity of the project, future use of the Central Government Offices and the Murray Building, etc. were yet to be addressed. Dr KWOK considered that given the significant capital cost of \$5.2 billion involved, the TDP ought to be planned cautiously and approval to the funding application should only be given if fully justified. Referring to paragraph 41 of the paper on the capital cost estimates of the project, Dr KWOK said that after deducting the cost for external works, landscaping works and the pedestrian footbridges, which totalled \$330 million, the actual construction costs for the building structures had come up to more than \$4 billion. He questioned the Administration's earlier explanation that the construction cost of TDP was lower than that of Grade A commercial premises in the private sector. He also queried the justification of accommodating some 3 270 staff members of the Administration in the CGC.

13. Noting that the total construction floor area (CFA) of TDP was 201 910 square metres, Miss TAM Heung-man asked how the estimated unit construction cost of \$11,600 per square metre was arrived at. Dr KWOK Ka-ki also enquired about the justifications for providing \$413.4 million for contingencies.

14. D of Adm and the D Arch S responded to the queries raised by Dr KWOK Ka-ki and Miss TAM Heung-man as follows –

- (a) In comparing the unit construction cost of the CGC and LCC with projects in the private sector, the cost for “Building” and “Building services” (set out under items (d) and (e) in paragraph 41 of the paper), which totalled \$2.95 billion, should be used as the parameters for comparison, as the other cost items were project/site-specific which might vary substantially with the particular features of the project/site concerned. The amount of \$2.95 billion included fitting-out cost.
- (b) On the basis of the total construction cost of \$2.95 billion for the total CFA of 201 910 square metres, the unit construction cost should be around \$14,500 per square metre. However, in calculating unit construction cost, it was common practice for the private sector to exclude the fitting-out cost. Hence, to facilitate a like-with-like comparison, the Administration had deducted the fitting-out cost (amounting to some \$2,900 per square metre) from the \$14,500, thus arriving at \$11,600 per square metre. The unit construction cost was considered reasonable, as compared with the unit cost level of \$13,000 per square metre in the private sector, according to the data published by private surveying consultants based on a number of representative Grade A commercial office buildings in the private sector.
- (c) In line with normal practice for funding applications for government projects, the provision for contingencies was calculated at 10% of the sum of the cost components (a) to (n) in paragraph 41 of the paper, excluding the item on furniture and equipment.
- (d) To reduce development intensity, the Administration had reduced the space requirement for the CGC by 10% in terms of net operating floor area, or 8.5% in terms of CFA. The height restriction of the TDP would be tightened up, reducing from the maximum building height of 180 mPD to 130 mPD – 160 mPD. The plot ratio of the CGC and LCC (i.e. not including the exhibition gallery originally proposed) had also dropped from about 6.2 to 5.7. The Administration would ensure that the new CGC would meet the operational needs of the Government Secretariat.

- (e) The staff members of the Government to be accommodated in the new CGC would be confined to those working in units with core policy formulation functions. In comparison with the original proposal, the space requirements (measured by net operating floor area) for the staff members had been reduced by 10%.

15. In response to the enquiries from Dr KWOK Ka-ki and Mrs Selina CHOW, D of Admin further explained that it was normal practice to make provisions for price adjustment for works projects which spanned over a number of years to cater for fluctuations in prices of, for example, building materials. The money-of-the-day (MOD) estimates of this project were derived on the basis of the Government's latest forecast of trend rate of change in the prices of public sector building and construction output for the period 2006 to 2014. The cost estimates of the project were derived using the September 2005 price. To convert the cost estimates to MOD prices, a price adjustment factor was used.

16. Noting that the TDP was planned for completion by 2010, Mrs Selina CHOW asked why the Administration had derived the estimated cost in MOD prices based on forecast of price variations for the period 2006 to 2014. In reply, D of Adm explained that the estimated adjustment was to prepare for settlement of some accounts on expenditure items which might be finalized after 2010, such as payment for furniture and equipment and information and technology infrastructure etc.

17. The Chairman advised members that the adjustment mechanism was explained in a paper provided by the Administration which had been issued vide PWSCI(2005-06)30 in March 2006.

18. Dr KWOK Ka-ki said that according to the information set out in paragraph 41 of the paper, the cost for furniture and equipment, external works, landscaping works and pedestrian footbridges totalled at about \$620 million. After deducting this amount, the construction cost for the project still amounted to some \$4.5 billion. Dr KWOK considered the cost unreasonably high.

19. Mr Alan LEONG said that with a view to drawing a comparison between the estimated construction cost of the TDP with the cost of comparable Grade A office buildings in the private sector, the Civic Party (CP) had sought the assistance from Professor WONG Kwok-chun of the University of Hong Kong to look into the construction cost of International Finance Centre Two (IFC II). The findings showed that the estimated cost of the TDP was substantially higher. The Administration had dismissed the result of Professor WONG's study on the ground that the data used in relation to the TDP and IFC II were not comparable. Mr LEONG said that in making the comparison, Professor WONG had already discounted the fitting-out cost from the estimates for TDP. Moreover, there were common cost items for the two projects, including, among others, pedestrian footbridges and contingencies. On contingencies, the data obtained by Professor WONG in respect of IFC II was \$23 million, as compared to \$413.4 million for the

TDP as provided by the Administration. Mr LEONG pointed out that the findings of Professor WONG indicated that the cost of TDP was 100% higher than that of IFC II. Even excluding the costs for external works and landscaping works and contingencies, the cost of the TDP was 60% higher. Mr LEONG further commented that the public had no idea of the cost for the open space of the TDP as there was no such breakdown in the estimates provided by the Administration.

20. D of Adm reiterated that the method used in calculating the capital cost of TDP was in line with common practice adopted by the trade. She said that the Administration could not comment on the findings of Professor WONG as the Administration could not verify the data used by Professor WONG in relation to IFC II. D Arch S supplemented that the Administration had consulted its consultants, who also expressed doubt on the data used by Professor WONG to illustrate the construction cost of IFC II.

21. Mr Abraham SHEK agreed that it was difficult to draw a comparison of the cost of the TDP with IFC II on the basis of the data provided by Professor WONG. In his view, the estimates of building and building services costs of the TDP worked out by the Administration were reasonable. He further pointed out that experience had shown that the actual tender prices of government works projects might turn out to be less than the approved project estimates. Mr Abraham SHEK said that The Alliance supported the project as proposed by the Administration.

22. D Arch S said that the Administration always exercised stringent control and monitored the costs of public works projects vigilantly. In most cases, the actual project costs did not exceed the approved project estimates, with a positive balance in the amount reserved for contingencies.

23. With regard to Mr Alan LEONG's enquiry about the cost of the open space, D Arch S explained that it was included in the estimated capital cost and mainly represented by the cost of drainage, external works and landscaping works, totaling about \$230 million. Part of the cost for site works (\$33.6 million) would also be used for the open space. The Project Director (1), Architectural Services Department (PD, Arch SD) supplemented that the unit cost of landscaping works for TPD was \$3,300 per square metre. This was 10% higher than the normal cost of landscaping works in open space projects in order to provide more greenery in the open space at the Tamar site.

24. In response to Mr Abraham SHEK's enquiry on the cost of external works, PD, Arch SD explained that the location for developing the open space in the Tamar site was slanting towards the harbour and lower than the future waterfront promenade. Therefore, external works would have to be undertaken to raise it to the same level to facilitate accessibility of pedestrians between the Tamar open space and the waterfront promenade without having to engage a level change. External works also included lighting and signage and a variety of other facilities.

25. Mr Alan LEONG asked whether the Administration would give an assurance that it would not revert to LegCo for additional funding if the present funding application for \$5.2 billion was approved. D Arch S responded that the Administration was well aware of the need to work out realistic estimates in computing the overall capital cost of the project. The Administration would also closely monitor the cost in delivering the project. He explained that as the TDP would be delivered by the Design-and-Build approach, the Administration would likely impose a cap on the cost of the project and specifying all the user requirements that had to be satisfied. All the requirements would be clearly stated in the tender document for the project, and the Special Selection Board (SSB) would take into account whether they had met the requirements and conditions when assessing the tenders. D of Adm said that while the Administration would ensure that the project cost estimates were reasonably set, it could not give any assurance that future additional funding would not be sought as exigencies might arise.

The TDP and Central waterfront development

26. Dr KWOK Ka-ki noted that on 28 May 2006, the Administration held a press conference, with exhibition of a model, on the land-use planning under the approved Central District Outline Zoning Plan relating to the planning for Central Reclamation Phase III (CRIII). Dr KWOK commended that this was a right move for the Administration to seek the public's views on CRIII at an early stage. However, he questioned why the Administration had not at the same time made public the design of the TDP. In his view, TDP and CRIII were inter-related projects and there should be integrated design for the two. Hence, the Administration should also release information on the design of the TDP to enable the public to consider it in tandem with the planning of CRIII.

27. Miss TAM Heung-man asked whether the Administration would set out conditions in the tender document requiring that the design of TDP should integrate with the Central waterfront development. D of Adm responded that the development under CRIII was separate from the TDP. Nevertheless, the Administration was aware of the importance to develop the TDP using a holistic approach. She reiterated that as explained in paragraph 12 of the paper, the Tamar site would be developed as the prime civic core of Hong Kong and responsive to the overall setting of the surrounding environment. Detailed requirements of the project would be specified in the tender document, and the tenderers would be asked to fully explain how their proposed design scheme could satisfy all the requirements. The tenderers would also be requested to take into consideration the need for integration with the design concept of the waterfront development in preparing the design of the TDP. Vice versa, the development under CRIII would also take into account the design of the TDP.

28. Mr Alan LEONG said that as many issues relating to the project still remained unresolved, including its integration with the Central waterfront development, and given the importance of prudent use of public money, the CP did

not favour approving the funding application without full knowledge of the outcome of the development. The CP did not support a piece-meal approach in implementing the TDP. In its view, the Administration should temporarily withhold the funding application and produce a detailed design model of the TDP for a three-month public consultation, and re-submit the funding application to LegCo after completing the consultation. Noting that the Chief Executive had recently stated that 70% of the members of the public were in favour of the TDP, Mr LEONG said that if a formal public consultation exercise showed that the TDP had the majority support of the respondents, the CP would support the project.

29. Dr KWOK Ka-ki asked whether the Administration would reject a design proposed for the TDP if it was not accepted by the public. In response, D of Adm said that when compared with the Central waterfront development, the TDP had reached a mature stage and it should not be further delayed. The Administration had given careful consideration to the views expressed in the community, and undertaken to make the best efforts to accommodate the demands, including the various measures to reduce the scale of the project and protect the environment. Taken as a whole, the project would be undertaken in compliance with the relevant requirements promulgated by the Town Planning Board, the Urban Design Guidelines under the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines, and the Harbour Planning Principles formulated by the Harbour-front Enhancement Committee. The Administration would require the tenderers to observe all these requirements. D of Adm further advised that the proposed designs submitted by the prequalified applicants in the prequalification exercise could not be displayed to the public. There was a risk of property right infringement. Moreover, the designs submitted at the prequalification stage might be very different from the designs submitted by the prequalified tenderers at the tender stage. However, the SSB had agreed that the designs provided at the tender stage might be displayed to the public for viewing, and it would take into account the public views in assessing the tenders.

30. Noting that the open space in the Tamar site (which would be developed into a civic place) and the adjoining waterfront promenade would together provide about 10.8 hectares of public open space, Mrs Selina CHOW called on the Administration to take measures to increase the vibrancy of the area to attract visitors. In her view, the large open space at the waterfront should be well planned with provision of adequate facilities to enable wide varieties of crowd-drawing activities to be organized for public participation and enjoyment. Citing the example of the Avenue of Stars, Mrs CHOW commented that it usually took quite a long time for applications to hold public activities to be approved.

31. The Chief Town Planner (Special Duties), Planning Department explained that the planned open space along the Central waterfront amounted to about 11 hectares and the planned waterfront promenade of CR III would be 1.4-kilometre in length. The Tamar open space and waterfront promenade would be developed to create vibrancy and diversity. There would be different facilities, including a waterfront park, lawns, sitting-out areas, and waterfront-related leisure and recreation uses to enable diversified events and activities to be held to attract

local visitors and tourists. The area would be enjoyed and easily accessible by the public. She further advised that the Administration would undertake an urban design study on the Central waterfront in due course and the public would be fully engaged in the process.

32. In response to the enquiries made by Miss CHAN Yuen-han and Ms Miriam LAU on pedestrian access facilities, D of Adm said that the Tamar site would be well connected to the waterfront promenade mainly through an open at-grade pedestrian deck of a width of 50 to 60 metres above the sunken portion of Road P2. The open deck linkage would provide direct and smooth pedestrian access to the waterfront. Road P2 was not an expressway. Apart from the sunken section of Road P2, above which the at-grade pedestrian deck would be built, there would be at least three at-grade pedestrian crossings at other points on Road P2 equipped with traffic signals to facilitate pedestrian access to the Tamar site and the waterfront. Moreover, as explained in the paper, the proposed pedestrian footbridges, one connecting Admiralty to Tamar and the other connecting to the existing footbridge system linking the CITIC Tower, would provide convenient and safe pedestrian access to the CGC, LCC, the open space and the waterfront promenade.

33. Ms Miriam LAU enquired whether the underpass section of Road P2 could be modified to at-grade level. The Chief Engineer/Traffic Engineering (Hong Kong), Transport Department replied that the purpose of building a sunken part of Road P2 outside the Tamar site was to enable a wide at-grade open deck to be constructed above it to facilitate unobstructed pedestrian flows to and from the waterfront. If that part of Road P2 was to be changed to at-grade level with signal-controlled crossings, it would make it less convenient for pedestrians to reach the waterfront through the Tamar site.

34. Mr WONG Kwok-hing enquired whether the two footbridges linking Admiralty and the CITIC Tower to the Tamar site would be sufficient to cater for the anticipated pedestrian flow. He also asked what measures would be available to facilitate access of people with disabilities (PwDs) to the Tamar site and the waterfront. In response, D Arch S said that a consultant engaged by the Administration had commissioned a study in 2003 and had concluded that the proposed pedestrian footbridges would be sufficient to handle the pedestrian flow. The Transport Department accepted the findings. Regarding access of PwDs, he advised that at present, there were prescribed requirements on provision of barrier-free access for PwDs. The requirements would be strictly followed.

35. Noting that the construction of the footbridge linking to Admiralty might affect a small number of shops and require resumption and clearance, Mr WONG Kwok-hing enquired about the number of shops affected and measures to address the demand of the affected shops. PD, Arch SD said that when the accurate alignment of the footbridges had been determined, the Administration would seek the necessary authorization under the Roads (Works, Use and Compensation) Ordinance (Cap. 370). The proposed alignment of the footbridges would be gazetted and the relevant District Council would be consulted.

Admin

36. Mr LEE Wing-tat pointed out that at a recent media interview, the Chief Executive had spoken of the TDP as a “people’s project”. He considered that, to live up to such description, the CGC should be given a unique role to play in helping to bring the public and the Government closer to each other. He suggested that the Government headquarters to be housed in the CGC, including the Chief Executive’s Office, could by appointment be made open for visit by the public. Moreover, as a unique feature of the CGC, part of the top floor of the CGC facing the Victoria Harbour could be turned into a public viewing gallery to enable visitors to take a close look of the magnificent harbour view of Hong Kong. Echoing Mr LEE’s views, Mr Abraham SHEK said that a gallery on the top floor could also be used for exhibition purposes, as the original proposal to provide for an exhibition gallery had been excised from the TDP. Mr LEE Wing-tat and Mr Abraham SHEK requested the Administration to seriously consider the proposals.

37. While acknowledging that it was technically feasible to include a public gallery in the design of the CGC, D of Adm said that the implications of the proposal would have to be carefully considered in the context of, for example, the need to ensure security, effective crowd control and optimal use of space and resources.

38. Mrs Selina CHOW said that the LP supported the option of building some facilities such as car parking spaces underground as mentioned in paragraph 28 of the paper. However, she disagreed with the statement in paragraph 29 of the paper that underground accommodation was generally considered a less cost-effective option, which seemed to run contrary to the proposed arrangement. Mrs CHOW said that while underground construction would inevitably be more costly than above ground construction, the issue of underground development for TDP should be considered more as a matter of need rather than cost, in view of the strong public sentiment of keeping the building heights to the minimum necessary.

39. D Arch S responded that as explained in the paper, the indicative CFA of the facilities, if provided underground, amounted to about 20% of the CFA of the CGC. The Administration would require the tenderers to seriously consider the option. The SSB would consider the pros and cons of underground development in detail in assessing the proposals and it would strike a right balance in making a decision.

40. The Chairman put the item to vote. Mr Alan LEONG requested a division. Of the members present, 16 members voted for the item and two members voted against.

(Members voted for the item)

Mr Fred LI, Mrs Selina CHOW, Mr James TO, Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong, Miss CHAN Yuen-han, Mr CHAN Kam-lam, Mr Jasper TSANG, Mr LAU Kong-wah, Ms Miriam LAU, Mr TAM Yiu-chung, Mr Abraham SHEK, Mr LEE Wing-tat, Mr LI Kwok-ying, Mr Daniel LAM,

Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming, Mr Patrick LAU

(Members voted against the item)

Mr Alan LEONG, Miss TAM Heung-man

**PWSC(2006-07)19 325EP First primary school in Area 13, Yuen Long
& and Second primary school in Area 13, Yuen
326EP Long**

41. The Chairman advised members that an information paper provided by the Administration on the project had been circulated to the Panel on Education on 17 May 2006.

42. Mrs Selina CHOW expressed support for the project and relayed the requests of the principals of the two existing bi-sessional schools to expedite the projects. She also informed members that the school principals had expressed concern about the adoption for the proposed projects the “Year 2000 Design” with curtain walls which required the use of gondolas for cleaning the windows, resulting in high recurrent costs of some \$10,000 for each cleaning. She requested the Administration to give due consideration to the concern expressed.

43. D Arch S responded that the Administration had noted the view. The Administration would consider making appropriate changes to the design in consultation with the schools and the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB), taking into account also the cost considerations.

44. Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming stated support for the project. He noted that a 100-metre running track would be provided and asked if it would be shared by the schools and, if yes, the intended arrangement.

45. D Arch S replied that due to site constraints, a 100-metre running track could not be provided for each of the schools. After consulting both school sponsors, it was agreed that a 100-metre running track could be constructed as a shared facility. The track would be designed in such a way that it could be separated into two tracks, each of 50-metre length, for individual use by the schools, and re-connected into a 100-metre track for shared use.

46. In response to Mr TAM Yiu-chung’s enquiry about conversion of the existing schools to whole-day operation, the Deputy Secretary for Education and Manpower (2) (DS(EM)) explained that as the two existing bi-sessional schools would be converted to whole-day operation, each of them would split into two whole-day schools, with students in one of the existing sessions staying in the existing school premises and those of the other session moving to the new school premises. Therefore, upon completion of the proposed projects, there would be four primary schools operating in the whole-day mode.

47. Mr TAM Yiu-chung asked that apart from the Yuen Long District Council, whether the Administration had consulted other school principals on the proposed projects. DS(EM) replied that under existing practice, where a project involved conversion of an existing bi-sessional school into whole-day operation, the Administration would only consult the relevant District Council acting as the channel for communication with the local communities. Where a project involved the construction of premises for a new school, apart from consulting the relevant District Council, the EMB, through its local office, would also seek the views of the relevant association of school principals.

48. The item was voted on and endorsed.

PWSC(2006-07)18 49RE Renovation of libraries – phase 2 works

49. The Chairman advised members that the Panel on Home Affairs was consulted on the proposed project at its meeting on 12 May 2006. Members of the Panel in general supported the proposed project but requested the Administration to provide supplementary information on the proposed renovation works and the related public consultation. Some members of the Panel had also expressed concern that the renovation works for Yau Ma Tei Public Library had been taken out from the proposed project.

50. Mr LEE Wing-tat noted from Enclosures 2 and 3 to the paper that the renovation works for Kowloon Public Library, Tuen Mun Public Library and Sha Tin Public Library would take 18, 15 and 15 months respectively. He queried whether the long duration of the works would cause inconvenience to users of the libraries.

51. The Assistant Director (Libraries and Development), Leisure and Cultural Services Department said that the above-mentioned libraries were the major libraries in the districts. The renovation works would be carried out in phases and the libraries would remain open during the renovation period. The arrangement would, however, entail a longer time for the renovation works to be completed.

52. The item was voted on and endorsed.

PWSC(2006-07)16 127BF Fire Services Department diving training centre in the Government Dockyard at Stonecutters Island

53. The Chairman advised members that the Panel on Security (SE Panel) was consulted on the proposed project at its meeting on 2 May 2006. To address the issues raised by the Panel members, the Administration had provided a written response to the SE Panel after the meeting.

54. Mr Abraham SHEK enquired about the justifications for the scale and the cost of the proposed project. In response, D Arch S explained that the scope of the proposed project included the construction of a diving training centre (DTC) for the Fire Services Department (FSD), with provision of a wide range of facilities for conducting training courses on special diving rescue skills, as well as berthing facilities including jetty and pontoon. Excluding the specialized training facilities and installations required for the DTC, the cost of the proposed project was comparable with that of the New Marine Police Headquarters at Ma Liu Shui.

55. The Deputy Secretary for Security (2) (DS(S)) said that at present, Hong Kong did not have facilities for conducting training on special deep sea diving rescue skills, such as decompression, underwater thermal cutting, light salvage and application of underwater rescue tools necessary for becoming a professional diver. With the training facilities of the proposed DTC, all FSD divers could readily acquire such skills in Hong Kong. This would not only enhance the overall capacity of divers in performing rescue operations, but also provide flexibility in the deployment of divers for responding to such operations. She added that the DTC, in addition to providing diving training for marine search and rescue diving, would also serve as a base for marine rescue operations. Statistics of the past four years indicated that about 50% of the marine incidents in local waters occurred in the Victoria Harbour. By consolidating rescue resources at the proposed marine rescue operational base, divers could respond more speedily to marine incidents occurring at the heart of the harbour.

56. In response to Mr Patrick LAU's enquiry about the use of the huge overhead structure shown in Enclosure 2 to the paper and the rapid pool, DS(S) and the Chief Fire Officer (Headquarters), FSD explained that the overhead structure was for constructing and protecting the overhead rail and helicopter winch simulator with electric fans, which was used for simulating helicopter winching operation under imitating downwash from a helicopter. The rapid pool was used for simulating conditions of whirling and rapid currents for swift water rescue training.

57. Mr Patrick LAU requested the Administration to provide two-dimensional or cross-sectional plans on the proposed facilities of the DTC for members' reference before the relevant Finance Committee meeting.

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58. The item was voted on and endorsed.

PWSC(2006-07)17 243LP Reprovisioning of Central District Headquarters and Central Divisional Station of the Police

59. The Chairman informed members that the SE Panel was consulted on the proposed project at its meeting on 2 May 2006. In response to the Panel's request, the Administration had provided a comparison between the previous facilities at the Central Police Station Compound and the proposed facilities at the Chung

Kong Road and explained the after-use of the Gloucester Road site of Wan Chai Police Station. The SE Panel raised no objection to the proposal.

60. The item was voted on and endorsed.

HEAD 711 – HOUSING

PWSC(2006-07)20 407RO District open spaces adjoining Kwai Chung Estate, Sau Mau Ping and Choi Wan Road public housing development

61. The Chairman advised members that the Panel on Housing was consulted on the proposed project at its meeting on 3 April 2006. Members of the Panel supported the construction of the district open spaces (DOS) and requested the Administration to expedite the project to meet the needs of the local residents. They had also expressed views on the provision and management of the facilities to be provided under the project.

62. Mrs Selina CHOW informed members that the LegCo had held a case conference with the Administration in October 2005. The Administration had been urged to expedite the proposed works. Noting that the proposed project was planned to commence in August 2006 for completion by December 2007, she queried that the period was too long for a relatively simple project.

63. The Chief Civil Engineer, Housing Planning and Lands Bureau (Housing) (CCE(H), HPLB) said that the Administration had noted residents' wish to speed up the project. He advised that the tender for the proposed works had been issued in the previous week. In comparison with other similar projects, the time for completion of this project was shorter. He added that if the works were not affected by inclement weather, the project could be completed by October 2007.

64. Ms CHAN Yuen-han enquired about the timeframe for completion of the remainder of **407RO**, i.e. the DOS adjoining Sau Mau Ping Estate Phase 12 and the DOS/local open space (LOS) adjoining Choi Wan Road public housing development. CCE(H), HPLB replied that the Administration would speed up the consultation process for the projects. It planned to submit the funding applications for Sau Mau Ping Estate DOS and Choi Wan Road DOS/LOS to the Public Works Subcommittee in year 2006/2007 and 2007/2008 respectively.

65. The item was voted on and endorsed.

66. The meeting ended at 10:50 am.