

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. PWSC 93/05-06

(These minutes have been
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**Public Works Subcommittee of the Finance Committee
of the Legislative Council**

**Minutes of the 12th meeting
held in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building
on Wednesday, 21 June 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 CHOY So-yuk

Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo

Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP

Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP

Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip

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

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)
Mr Robin IP, JP	Permanent Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands (Planning and Lands) (Acting)
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 (Works)
Mr C K WONG, JP	Director of Drainage Services
Mr W C IP	Chief Engineer (Project Management) Drainage Services Department
Mr K K CHAN	Chief Engineer (Drainage Projects) Drainage Services Department
Mr John S V CHAI, JP	Director of Civil Engineering and Development
Mr Raymond W M FAN	Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (2) Environmental Protection Department
Mr K F TANG	Assistant Director (Waste Management Policy) Environmental Protection Department
Mr K H IP	Chief Engineer (Fill Management) Civil Engineering and Development Department
Mr C W KWAN	Chief Traffic Engineer (Hong Kong Island) Transport Department
Mr C K HON	Deputy Head (Project and Environmental Management) Civil Engineering and Development Department
Mr CHAN Chi-chiu, JP	Director of Water Supplies
Mr LEUNG Mang-chiu, JP	Assistant Director (New Works) Water Supplies Department
Miss CHENG Wai-fung	Chief Manager (Tourism) SD Tourism Commission
Miss Janet WONG Chin-kiu	Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs (Recreation and Sport)
Mr C H YUE, JP	Director of Architectural Services
Mr Eddy YAU, JP	Assistant Director (Leisure Services) ³ Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Mr Vincent LIU	Principal Assistant Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene) ²
Mr Donald TONG, JP	Deputy Director (Administration and Development) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Ms Rhonda LO, JP	Assistant Director (Operations) ³ Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Miss CHEUNG Siu-hing	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 Xavier TANG Kam-moon	Assistant Commissioner (Personnel) Hong Kong Police Force
Ms Barbara R WILLISON	Chief Superintendent (Planning and Development Branch) Hong Kong Police Force
Miss Susie HO, JP	Deputy Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Health) ¹
Ms Ernestina WONG	Principal Assistant Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Health) ²
Dr FUNG Hong, JP	Hospital Chief Executive of Prince of Wales Hospital

Clerk in attendance:

Mr Paul WOO	Chief Council Secretary (1) ⁷
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Staff in attendance:

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

Action

HEAD 704 – DRAINAGE

PWSC(2006-07)26 104CD Drainage improvement in Northern Hong Kong Island – lower catchment improvement

The Chairman advised members that an information paper on the project had been circulated to the Panel on Planning, Lands and Works (PLW Panel) on 15 May 2006.

2. The item was voted on and endorsed.

PWSC(2006-07)27 118CD Drainage improvement in Northern New Territories – package B

3. The Chairman advised members that an information paper on the project had been circulated to the PLW Panel on 20 March 2006.
4. The item was voted on and endorsed.

HEAD 705 – CIVIL ENGINEERING

PWSC(2006-07)28 93DR Chai Wan Public Fill Barging Point

5. The Chairman advised members that the Panel on Environmental Affairs (EA Panel) was consulted on the proposed project at its meetings on 22 May and 13 June 2006. The Panel raised no objection in principle to the project but expressed concern about the requirement to cover the public fill materials on dump trucks and the enforcement actions taken against non-compliance. The Panel had urged the Administration to liaise with the trades to work out the most appropriate method to cover the dump trucks to prevent adverse air impacts and road safety problems caused by leakage of public fill materials, and to tighten enforcement and prosecution measures against uncovered dump trucks.

6. Mr Albert CHAN pointed out that there were strong views expressed by Panel members during the discussion at the EA Panel urging that all dump trucks entering the proposed public fill barging point must be equipped with power-operated mechanical covers to prevent leakage of dusty materials which might cause harm to the environment and road safety problems. In his view, the requirement to install mechanical cover on dump trucks for delivery of construction and demolition materials should be made a necessary condition for all public works projects.

7. The Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works) (PS(W)) and the Director of Civil Engineering and Development (DCED) responded that the Administration was conscious of members' concern and accepted that dump trucks should be equipped with cover in order to mitigate air impacts and ensure road safety. As explained in the Administration's paper, to address the issue, the Administration had promulgated a Technical Circular requiring that dump trucks engaged in public works contracts with contract sum of \$20 million or more should be equipped with mechanical covers. The Administration would also step up inspections, and where necessary, prosecution actions to ensure compliance with the requirement. Moreover, contractors failing to comply with the requirement would receive an adverse assessment report on their performance. In serious cases, they might be disqualified from submitting tenders for future public works projects. It was expected that by 2008, about 80% of dump trucks engaged in public works projects would be equipped with mechanical covers, while the rest would also be covered, albeit the cover might not necessarily have to be a mechanical one. The Administration would continue to

keep in close contact with the trades and operators on the matter, and a meeting with them had been scheduled for August to discuss further details.

8. Mr Albert CHAN said that the demand of Panel members was that the requirement to use dump trucks with mechanical covers should apply to all Government works projects. In response, the Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (2) advised that the issue was raised and discussed again at the EA Panel on June 13, and Panel members accepted that all dump trucks engaged in public works projects should be installed with covers, though a small percentage of the trucks might not need a mechanical cover, depending on the nature and scale of the works projects concerned. Some Panel members had also expressed concern that imposition of an across-the-board requirement for mechanical covers to be installed on all dump trucks could have an impact on the livelihood of small operators who could not afford the cost of mechanical covers. He said that the most important issue was to ensure that the dump trucks had installed and made use of proper cover, mechanical or otherwise, to prevent leakage of dusty material. The Administration would further consult the trades on the matter with a view to working out practical and effective measures for safe transportation of public fill materials by dump trucks.

9. Mr Patrick LAU enquired about the method of unloading public fill materials and the payment system. In reply, DCED advised that the design of the project included an enclosed tipping hall for unloading of public fill into barges, an elevated platform linking the road bridge to the tipping hall and ramps to and from the tipping hall. A buffer zone would be provided for the dump trucks to queue up without causing disruption to traffic. The dump trucks would pass through the weightbridge at Kai Yip Street and then unload the public fill at two tipping points at the enclosed tipping hall, and the trucks could exit at the run-out at Sun Yip Street. Payments would not be made at the barging point but through an account registered with the Administration.

10. Referring to paragraph 21 of the paper, Mr Albert CHAN suggested that more trees than shrubs should be planted at the site for cost-effective reasons. The Administration took note of Mr CHAN's views.

11. The item was voted on and endorsed.

PWSC(2006-07)29 44WS Salt water supply system for Penny's Bay

12. The Chairman advised members that the Panel on Economic Services was consulted on the proposed project at its meeting on 22 May 2006.

13. Noting that the project involved the construction of a salt water supply system for Hong Kong Disneyland (HKD) and other facilities in Penny's Bay, Mr Albert CHAN queried why the salt water system, including the salt water pumping station and the long salt water mains, could not be located nearer to HKD and Penny's Bay. He pointed out that the sites for the salt water service reservoir

near Yan O Tuk and the salt water pumping station at Ta Pang Po were far away from Penny's Bay.

14. The Director of Water Supplies (DWS) explained that the salt water service reservoir had to be located at a hill top. The proposed site adjacent to the existing Sunny Bay fresh water service reservoir near Yan O Tuk was considered an ideal location for the proposed salt water service reservoir. In fact, the site had been reserved for the construction of the salt water service reservoir at the time when the Sunny Bay fresh water service reservoir was constructed. With regard to the salt water pumping station, it was preferable to have it located at Ta Pang Po, near to the salt water service reservoir.

15. Referring to Enclosure 1 to the paper, Mr Patrick LAU commented that the plan was rather difficult to comprehend. In particular, it failed to show the fresh water and salt water mains clearly. In response, DWS said that the 600 mm water mains shown on Enclosure 1 were existing salt water mains. The 450 mm salt water mains to be constructed under the proposed project were indicated in red on the plan. At Mr LAU's request, the Administration undertook to provide, before the relevant Finance Committee (FC) meeting, a detailed plan to identify clearly the salt water mains (existing and proposed) from the fresh water mains.

(Post-meeting note: The plan provided by the Administration was circulated to Members vide LC paper No. PWSC 89/05-06 on 3 July 2006.)

16. In response to Mr Albert CHAN's enquiry on the provision of an outlet main for the proposed salt water service reservoir, DWS explained that the 600 mm salt water mains had already been laid along the North Lantau Highway next to the fresh water mains. These salt water mains would convey salt water from the salt water pumping station to the salt water service reservoir through the inlet main. The outlet main would be used for supplying salt water from the salt water service reservoir to the service areas in Penny's Bay via the existing salt water mains network along the North Lantau Highway.

17. The item was voted on and endorsed.

HEAD 703 – BUILDINGS

PWSC(2006-07)30 405RO District open space in Area 107, Tin Shui Wai

18. The Chairman advised members that the Panel on Home Affairs (HA Panel) was consulted on the proposed project at its meeting on 12 May 2006. Panel members supported the project and requested the Administration to expedite its implementation to address the community concerns about shortage of open space in the area. Some members considered that additional facilities for holding active outdoor activities, such as football pitches, should be provided urgently.

19. Mrs Selina CHOW noted that this project was one of the leisure and recreational projects of the former Municipal Councils and had been delayed for a long time. She urged the Administration to expedite the project. She also queried the proposed schedule to start the construction works for this relatively simple project in March 2007 for completion in December 2008. The Director of Architectural Services (D Arch S) replied that the Administration fully acknowledged the strong demand of local residents for the project. He pointed out that soon after the user's requirements were finalized in end 2005/early 2006, the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) had deployed in-house resources to prepare the detailed design of the project. The Administration would proceed to invite tenders after funding was approved by FC. He added that the commencement date of the project might be advanced.

Admin 20. Mrs Selina CHOW was not convinced by the explanation and expressed dissatisfaction at the late commencement of the project and the long period for completion. She pointed out that the general public already had the impression that Government works projects always took much longer time than private projects for completion. The Administration should take the matter seriously. Mrs CHOW requested the Administration to try its best to expedite the project and to provide, after the completion of the tender exercise, an update on whether the project could be completed ahead of the original schedule.

21. D Arch S informed members that the Administration was still working on the detailed design. It would, however, strive to advance the commencement date to January/February 2007. He added that in comparison with other recent open space projects, such as those in Sham Shui Po and Tseung Kwan O which took about 19 months to 23 months for completion, the scheduled time for completion of this project was reasonable. He further explained that open space projects were often prone to delays caused by inclement weather and this had been factored in when the Administration did the estimation of the completion period of the project.

22. Mr TAM Yiu-chung stated support for the project. He enquired whether the Administration had considered, in relation to the design of the project and the proposed facilities, the possibility that some people or groups might use the open space as a venue for conducting activities such as music playing and singing, which might cause nuisance to residents in the neighbourhood. He remarked that the Administration should strike a right balance between the interest of people who wished to engage in such activities for enjoyment and those who might feel disturbed. Mr TAM called upon the Administration to plan ahead and take appropriate measures to minimize nuisances and guard against conflicts which might arise.

23. The Assistant Director (Leisure Services)³, Leisure and Cultural Services Department (AD(LS)³, LCSD) explained that the design of the project had not included areas for the specific purpose of holding large-scale public performances. In practice, conducting light leisure and recreational activities at the open space without using instruments such as loud speakers might be allowed and the activities would be carefully monitored. He further advised that the

Administration was considering providing additional open spaces and facilities in the next phase of the development, to be carried out in the north of the present site.

24. Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming pointed out that many trees and plants in Tin Shui Wai (TSW) were found to have withered due to the high proportion of sand in the soil. Noting that \$3.2 million had been earmarked for the soft landscaping works for the project, including planting of 350 trees and 100 000 shrubs, Mr CHEUNG urged for efforts to keep the plants in good shape. In response, AD(LS)3, LCSD said that \$3.2 million was considered adequate for the greening and landscaping works, calculated on the basis that the average cost for one tree was \$200 to \$300. He added that before planting was done, the soil would first be prepared and tested, with the top layer removed and replaced by nutrient topsoil.

25. In response to Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming's further enquiry on the planned development of the remaining portion of Area 107, AD(LS)3, LCSD said that the Administration would consult the Yuen Long District Council (YLDC) on the scope of development in July 2006. Funding would be sought in the next round of Resource Allocation Exercise. Subject to approval, the works were expected to commence in two years' time.

26. Mr Patrick LAU queried why the Administration had not included the area currently occupied by the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) site office and the beautification of Government vacant land near to the proposed open space in the same project. He opined that a piecemeal project would be less cost effective than a coordinated and integrated development, and would fall short of the demands of local residents. AD(LS)3, LCSD explained that the CEDD site office was not available for immediate development as it was only due for release to the LCSD in early 2008. To wait for the site to be released would delay the entire project. As regards the vacant land in the north, beautification works had already been carried out. PS(W) further advised that there would be problems in relocating the CEDD site office away from the existing site as the current use of the site was still contract bound. There were also difficulties in finding an immediate alternate site for the CEDD site office.

27. Mr Albert CHAN said that the Administration should be deplored for the poor planning of TSW and the extreme shortage of recreational facilities in the district. Pointing out that at present there was only one football pitch in Area 107, Mr CHAN criticized the LCSD for ignoring the needs and welfare of local residents. He further stated that the entire open space development in Area 107 was originally planned to be delivered as a single project but was now decided to be carried out in four different phases, hence seriously delaying the completion of the whole development. The residents, who had been urging for the commencement of the project since 2000, were the ultimate losers. Mr Albert CHAN asked that his reprimand against the Administration be put on record.

28. AD(LS)3, LCSD informed members that the Administration had consulted the Culture, Recreation and Sports Committee of the YLDC (CRSC) on the proposed facilities to be provided under the project and the CRSC supported

the project. He also drew members' attention to a letter dated 20 June 2006 from the CRSC to members of the Public Works Subcommittee (PWSC) stating that the CRSC was consulted on the project at its meetings held on 6 July 2004, 9 November 2004 and 7 March 2006. He further said that the LCS D had put great emphasis on sports events, as evidenced by its involvement in organizing the East Asia Games and staging the 2008 Olympic Equestrian Events. Regarding the HA Panel's suggestion that football pitches should be provided in the remaining parts of Area 107 in TSW, the Administration had undertaken to draw up a proposal and further consult the CRSC of YLDC. After all, the Administration had to consider the overall demand of the residents in planning new facilities. The Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs (Recreation and Sport) supplemented that the Home Affairs Bureau was always mindful of the need to provide more active recreational facilities in TSW but the actual planning, design and implementation would take time. She said that the Administration would strengthen consultation on its proposals at the district level as necessary.

29. Mr Albert CHAN said that during its consultation with the YLDC on the project, the Administration had told District Council members that should they not support the project as proposed, they would risk delaying the project. He criticized the Administration for silencing views and forcing District Council members to accept the proposed project. Mr CHAN suggested and the Chairman agreed that the Secretariat should write to YLDC to request it to provide the consultation papers on the project and the relevant notes of meetings for members' reference.

(Post meeting Note: The papers provided by YLDC were circulated to Members vide LC paper No. PWSC87/05-06 on 29 June 2006.)

30. The item was voted on and endorsed.

PWSC(2006-07)31 33NM General improvement to five markets

31. The Chairman advised members that the Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene (FSEH Panel) was consulted on the proposed project at its meeting on 9 May 2006. Mr Fred LI, Chairman of the FSEH Panel, said that the Panel had urged the Administration to carefully assess the cost-effectiveness of the proposed market improvement works. The Administration should also fully consult the stall lessees on the impact of the project on their operation, and to carry the improvement works during non-business hours to minimize such impact. Mr LI added that the Panel supported the submission of the proposal to PWSC for its consideration.

32. Members noted a written submission on the proposed project from Mr Cosmas K C KWONG, a member of the Tsuen Wan District Council. The submission was tabled at the meeting and subsequently circulated to members vide LC Paper No. PWSC84/05-06.

33. Referring to the market improvement works carried out at the Ngau Chi Wan Market, Mr Fred LI commented that there had been complaints from stall operators that fire services installations such as smoke doors had obstructed customers' access and therefore affected their business. The location and size of the signage at the Tai Kok Tsui Market also needed improvement. He asked the Administration to learn from the experiences and conduct thorough consultation with the stallholders before commencing the market improvement works at the five markets.

34. The Deputy Director (Administration and Development), Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (DD(A&D), FEHD) assured members that the Administration would further consult the stall lessees, the various Market Management Consultation Committee (MMCC) and the District Councils on the proposed works. The Administration would undertake the improvement works after reviewing the feedback received. In relation to the concern about smoke doors, he advised that they were only used in some markets. In many cases, fire roller shutters had been installed instead if appropriate.

35. Mr TAM Yiu-chung stated support for the project. He considered that as some stallholders might suffer loss of business as a result of the undertaking of the improvement works in the markets, the Administration should grant rental waiver/reduction to them during the period. He further opined that air-conditioning had become a necessity for most people in Hong Kong and hence an air-conditioned market could help raise customer patronage, particularly during the summer and when ventilation in the markets was poor. In his view, despite that some stall lessees were unwilling to bear the electricity cost, the Administration should strike a balance and review the policy on the retrofitting of air-conditioning to the markets.

36. The Principal Assistant Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)² explained that the FSEH Panel had discussed the issue of retrofitting air-conditioning to the markets before and agreed that the Government would provide air-conditioning if a support rate of 85% or more was obtained from the stall lessees concerned. As the support rate from the stall lessees in the five markets was as low as around 20%, the Administration would upgrade the existing ventilation system instead of providing air-conditioning in the market.

37. Miss TAM Heung-man expressed support for the project as the five markets had been in operation for many years. On the scope of the improvement works, she enquired whether anti-slippery flooring and maintenance of the external facade would be included. Noting that the Government would arrange temporary closure of the markets by zones if necessary during the construction period to minimize disruption to the normal operation of the markets, Miss TAM enquired about the arrangements to relocate the affected stall lessees to temporary stalls. She also sought clarification on the criteria for granting rental waiver/reduction for the affected stall lessees.

38. D Arch S responded that the scope of the proposed improvement works was explained in paragraph 3 of the paper. In the main, the scope covered the essential works to meet the prevailing building/fire safety requirements such as barrier-free access provision and upgrading of fire services installations and existing ventilation system. General improvement works for individual markets such as external wall finishes, ceiling and internal wall finishes at common area and waterproofing layer at the rooftop would also be included. If necessary, anti-slippery flooring would be provided or improved.

39. DD(A&D), FEHD advised that the markets would remain open throughout the construction period, although some affected stallholders might be relocated to temporary stalls to continue business and some might choose to suspend their business temporarily, depending on the scope and progress of works in individual markets. It was hoped that the temporary suspension could be limited to one or two weeks. To assist the affected stallholders, rental waiver/reduction would be granted in accordance with Government's established procedures. Generally speaking, for rental reduction, about 30% to 50% reduction might be offered depending on the particular location and period of the works. The policy had been explained to the stall lessees and the MMCCs.

40. Mr Patrick LAU considered that the Administration should conduct fire engineering studies together with the Fire Services Department (FSD) on the cost-effectiveness of alternative measures to improve fire services installations and ventilation in the markets. He suggested that the option of removing part of the outer walls to enhance air circulation and ventilation might be considered. He also opined that fire roller shutters were not necessary for the markets and they might also block ventilation. Compartmentalization of the markets was also unnecessary. The Chairman supported the suggestion of a review as the fire safety regulations were first enacted in the 1980s and many safety standards had been in place for a long time.

41. D Arch S said that members' views would be carefully considered. He advised that Government buildings were exempt from the provisions of the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123). However, the statutory safety standards and requirements were closely observed and upgrading works to Government buildings had been undertaken on an on-going basis. He further informed members that the five markets in question were built in the 1980s and the 1990s and the Government had undertaken upgrading works whenever necessary. On improving ventilation and comfort in the markets, he accepted that the use of fans was ineffective and retrofitting of air-conditioning was a good option. Suitable alteration of the walls to improve air circulation as suggested by Mr Patrick LAU could also be considered. Regarding fire services installations in the markets, ArchSD would engage in close discussions with FEHD and FSD on practical and effective ways to upgrade the facilities. Mr Patrick LAU suggested that the Administration should also consult fire engineering professionals on how to improve fire prevention and air ventilation.

42. Miss CHAN Yuen-han commented that the design of existing markets was unsatisfactory, resulting in poor ventilation and high temperature in most of the markets. In some markets, the temperature could reach as high as 40 degree Celsius which caused extreme discomfort to the patrons. She urged that the Administration should take urgent actions to address the problems.

43. The item was voted on and endorsed. Miss CHAN Yuen-han said that she might request that this item be voted on separately at the relevant FC meeting.

PWSC(2006-07)32 45JA Junior police officers' married quarters in Area 44, Tuen Mun

44. The Chairman advised members that the Panel on Security had been consulted on the proposed project at its meeting on 6 June 2006. Panel members in general supported the proposal.

45. Miss TAM Heung-man noted that even with the provision of 336 new quarters upon the completion of the construction of the proposed quarter blocks, there would still be a shortfall of about 700 quarters for married junior police officers (JPOs). She asked when the Administration would construct new quarters to meet the shortfall. The Deputy Secretary for Security (1) (DS(1), SB) replied that where resources permitted, the Administration would try its best to meet the shortfall. In view of the current shortfall situation, the Administration proposed to build two quarter blocks providing in total 336 quarters in order to reduce the waiting time for married JPOs to be allocated a unit. She said that the provision of additional quarters would be reviewed as and when necessary.

46. Mr Albert CHAN pointed out that the Administration had purchased some surplus Home Ownership Scheme (HOS) flats to re-provision certain old or substandard Government departmental quarters. As there was still an abundant amount of HOS units, he asked whether the Administration would consider purchasing some of the units as quarters for married JPOs. In his view, this could optimize the use of the surplus HOS units. Moreover, to his understanding, many officers preferred living in HOS units to purpose-built Government departmental quarters. In response, DS(1), SB advised that the purchase of HOS units was done in 2004 and by now the re-provisioning exercise had already been completed. At present, the Administration had no plans to purchase additional HOS units for re-provisioning purposes. She added that from the Government's point of view, the disposal of surplus HOS units had to be considered from a macro perspective, including the overall market situation and the housing needs of the general public.

47. The item was voted on and endorsed.

HEAD 708 – CAPITAL SUBVENTIONS AND MAJOR SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT

PWSC(2006-07)33 51MM Prince of Wales Hospital – extension block

48. The Chairman advised members that the Panel on Health Services (HS Panel) was consulted on the proposed project at its meetings on 8 May and 12 June 2006. Panel members in general had no objection to the Administration's proposal to construct an extension block at the Prince of Wales Hospital (PWH) but considered that the Administration should also undertake improvement and refurbishing works for the existing blocks in order to make full use of the resources.

49. Mrs Selina CHOW said that the proposed project had been discussed by the HS Panel at length and the Liberal Party supported the project.

50. Mr Andrew CHENG said that the Democratic Party (DP) acknowledged that there was a serious shortage of space in PWH and the facilities had become outdated. Given that PWH was a major tertiary acute hospital, the problems had to be addressed, and the DP would support the project. However, noting that PWH had only been in use for 22 years, Mr CHENG expressed dissatisfaction at the substandard design of the hospital and the rapid deterioration of building services and facilities. He cautioned that the Administration should ensure that the same situation would not occur to the new extension block. Mr CHENG also expressed concern that as the present project involved a substantial cost of \$1,882 million, the burden of the cost might be shifted to the public in the form of increased medical fees. He considered that the Administration should refrain from pursuing such course, particularly when the financing options for provision of public health care services had yet to be decided.

51. While stating support for the proposed project, Miss TAM Heung-man enquired whether the existing Main Block of PWH would be refurbished or redeveloped after the proposed extension block was completed. She cautioned that duplication of resources and facilities should be avoided. Mr Andrew CHENG also enquired whether the existing Main Block would be demolished for redevelopment in the long term.

52. The Deputy Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Health)1 (DS(H)1, HWFB) explained that the present project was a stand-alone project for the construction of a new building block to meet existing service needs but it could serve to provide capacity for decanting of existing services in the future if the need arose. Upon completion of the proposed new extension block, some of the facilities and services in the existing blocks would be rationalized. She drew members' attention to the conceptual plan for rationalizing some of the existing facilities highlighted in paragraph 12 of the paper. She added that while future changes to the existing blocks to meet future functional needs might be required, how the changes should be carried out would need to be assessed and accounted for separately. The Administration would conduct a detailed study in the light of

the long-term functional needs of PWH. She further assured members that the Administration would consult the HS Panel and the public before deciding on the future development programme for PWH.

53. The Hospital Chief Executive of Prince of Wales Hospital (HCE(PWH), HA) said that in observing the principle of sustainable development, HA would upgrade or refurbish the existing blocks as far as practicable. The blocks would not be pulled down unless there were full justifications to do so. He further said that as explained in paragraph 12 of the paper, the Main Block (Blocks A, B, C and D) was planned to be changed into an ambulatory care as well as diagnostic and treatment block, taking into consideration the physical constraints in converting the blocks into in-patient wards. However, due to the space constraints in the existing Main Block, a comprehensive assessment on the condition of the buildings could not be immediately carried out.

54. Mr Andrew CHENG asked whether the Administration could provide a timetable for completing the rationalization programme outlined in paragraph 12 of the paper and the estimated cost involved to enable members to have an understanding of the possible financial commitment to meet the long-term functional needs of PWH.

55. DS(H)1, HWFB reiterated that the Administration and the Hospital Authority (HA) would need to conduct thorough assessment and planning on how the facilities of the existing blocks in PWH could be rationalized and redeveloped to suit long-term needs. Pending completion of the study and finalization of the scope of the future redevelopment works, the Administration could not provide at this stage any reliable estimates of the cost that would be incurred. Nevertheless, in response to Mr Andrew CHENG's request, DS(H)1, HWFB agreed to provide, before the relevant FC meeting, an anticipated timeframe for implementing the rationalization programmes highlighted in paragraph 12 of the paper. The Chairman said that the issue of long-term development of PWH should be followed up by the HS Panel.

56. Mr Albert CHAN said that the present proposal of construction of an extension block for PWH involved a substantial estimated cost of \$1,882 million. He stressed that in meeting the long-term development needs of hospitals, the Administration should ensure that there would be fair and equitable allocation of resources amongst individual hospitals in different clusters. He pointed out that the Tuen Mun Hospital in the New Territories West, for example, was also in need of upgrading of facilities but had not been provided with sufficient funding to carry out the improvement works.

57. HCE(PWH), HA responded that PWH was planned as a regional hospital, providing medical services for the population in the New Territories East (NTE). It was also a teaching hospital and a major tertiary acute general hospital. Having been in operation for 22 years, its facilities needed to be modernized. There was also inadequate space provision in the hospital to cope with increasing service demand. Hence, there was a genuine need for the construction of the extension

block to be taken forward. He said that HA would constantly look at the demand for services of hospitals in different clusters and regularly review the capacity of the hospitals in providing services to ensure that the demand could be adequately met. Moreover, different teaching hospitals had their own specialties providing highly specialized services. In the interest of the community, it was necessary to provide sufficient resources and up to standard facilities to the hospitals to satisfy their functional needs. He further pointed out that the Tuen Mun Hospital would soon have a new rehabilitation block to add to its facilities. As regards the NTE cluster, there was clear division of work and service provision among the seven hospitals. The hospitals took on a complementary, rather than duplicative, role between each other.

58. Mr LAU Kong-wah supported the proposed project to modernize the facilities of PWH. He noted that part of the existing staff quarters of PWH was leased to outsiders for private use, and this practice had been examined by the Director of Audit in one of his previous reports. In Mr LAU's opinion, the practice of leasing staff quarters units of PWH appeared to contradict with the HA's claim that PWH was suffering from shortage of space provision to meet service demand. In response, HCE(PWH), HA advised that Staff Quarters Block E of PWH was at present rented out with one of the tenants running a private elderly home. HA had written to the Government Property Agency to seek repossession of the block when the existing tenancy agreement expired. The other staff quarters blocks were being used by hospital staff and the occupancy rate was high. DS(H)1, HWFB added that there was no plan to convert Staff Quarters Block E into an in-patient block.

59. Mr LAU Kong-wah considered that it might not be appropriate, from the point of view of optimal use of hospital resources, to rent out staff quarters units to non-medical staff. His view was shared by Miss CHAN Yuen-han. The Administration was requested to provide, before the relevant FC meeting, information on the rationale for not using the existing Staff Quarters Block of PWH which was currently used for non-hospital related purposes for the extension works.

60. Mr LAU Kong-wah enquired about the number of storeys planned for the proposed extension block as well as the possible impact of the project on the environment. HCE(PWH), HA said that this project would be tendered as a Design and Build (D&B) contract. The user requirements set by the HA had been forwarded to ArchSD. As the design would be done by the successful contractor and would be finalized at the tender stage, the number of storeys of the extension block had yet to be decided. Regarding measures to minimize the impact of the proposed works on the surrounding environment, HCE(PWH), HA advised that the local residents would be fully consulted, and the Shatin District Council had set up a working group to deal with the issue. HA would try to address the residents' concerns through discussion with the working group. D Arch S added that ArchSD had ample experience in undertaking similar hospital projects. An example was the construction of a new infectious disease centre at the Princess Margaret Hospital. He further advised that in the D&B contract, the contractor

would be required to undertake necessary mitigating measures, such as to control emission of dust and minimize noise nuisance, erection of barriers and hoardings etc.

61. On the “Green Zone” concept mentioned in paragraph 12(c) of the paper, Mr LAU Kong-wah said the Administration should ensure that any greening works associated with the proposed project should blend in with the surrounding environment, such as the areas near Ngan Shing Street, and hence there should be good coordination between HA and the departments in undertaking integrated design of the greening works. The Administration was requested to provide information on greening works to be carried out before the relevant FC meeting for members’ reference.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration’s paper in response to the issues raised in paragraphs 55, 59 and 61 above was circulated to Members vide LC paper No. PWSC 91/05-06 on 4 July 2006.)

62. The item was voted on and endorsed.

63. The meeting ended at 10:40 am.