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Legislative Council

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

**Minutes of the 2nd meeting
held in the Conference Room A of Legislative Council Building
on Wednesday, 31 October 2007, at 8:30 am**

Members present:

Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, SBS, 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 Bernard CHAN, GBS, JP
Hon CHAN Kam-lam, SBS, JP
Hon SIN Chung-kai, SBS, JP
Hon Jasper TSANG Yok-sing, GBS, JP
Hon Howard YOUNG, SBS, JP
Hon LAU Kong-wah, JP
Hon Miriam LAU Kin-yee, GBS, JP
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon CHOY So-yuk, JP
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon LI Kwok-ying, MH, JP
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, SBS, JP
Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP
Hon TAM Heung-man

Members absent:

Hon CHAN Yuen-han, SBS, JP
Dr Hon Philip WONG Yu-hong, GBS
Hon LAU Wong-fat, GBM, GBS, JP
Hon LEE Wing-tat
Hon Daniel LAM Wai-keung, SBS, JP

Public officers attending:

Mr Joe C C WONG	Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) ³
Mr MAK Chai-kwong, JP	Permanent Secretary for Development (Works)
Mr Raymond YOUNG, JP	Permanent Secretary for Development (Planning and Lands)
Ms Anissa WONG, JP	Permanent Secretary for the Environment
Mr Davey CHUNG	Principal Assistant Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) (Works)
Miss Janet WONG Wing-chen, JP	Deputy Secretary for Development (Works) ¹
Mr Enoch LAM Tin-sing, JP	Deputy Secretary for Development (Works) ²
Ms Esther LEUNG Yuet-yin, JP	Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs (3)
Mr Howard LAM Tak-ming	Chief Treasury Accountant (West Kowloon Cultural District), Home Affairs Bureau
Mr YUE Chi-hang, JP	Director of Architectural Services
Mr John CHAI Sung-veng, JP	Director of Civil Engineering and Development
Mr WONG Chee-keung, JP	Director of Drainage Services
Mr WAI Chi-sing, JP	Director of Highways
Mr CHAN Chi-chiu, JP	Director of Water Supplies
Mr TSANG King-man	Assistant Commissioner (Technical Services), Transport Department
Mr W T CHAN	Chief Technical Advisor (Subvented Projects), Architectural Services Department
Dr M J BROOM	Assistant Director (Water Policy), Environmental Protection Department
Mr CHUI Wing-wah	Chief Engineer (Harbour Area Treatment Scheme), Drainage Services Department
Mr IP Wing-cheung	Chief Engineer (Project Management), Drainage Services Department
Mr CHAN Kin-kwong	Assistant Director (Projects and Development) (Acting), Drainage Services Department
Ms Bernadette LINN Hon-ho, JP	Deputy Secretary for Education (2)
Ms Mable CHAN	Principal Assistant Secretary for Education (Infrastructure and Research Support)

Mr YEUNG Kwok-kuen Deputy Head of Civil Engineering Office
(Port and Land), Civil Engineering and
Development Department

Clerk in attendance:

Ms Rosalind MA Senior Council Secretary (1)8

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

Action

Application for late membership

The Chairman drew members' attention to the letter dated 12 October 2007 from Mr Timothy FOK in relation to his request for late membership on grounds of absence from Hong Kong. Referring to paragraph 4B of the Public Works Subcommittee (PWSC) Procedure which provided that "The Chairman may agree to accept late membership on grounds of indisposition or absence from Hong Kong ...", the Chairman suggested that Mr FOK's request be accepted. There being no dissenting views from members present, the Chairman directed the Clerk to update the membership list of PWSC accordingly for issuance to members after the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The updated membership list was issued to members vide LC Paper No. PWSC12/07-08 on 1 November 2007.)

Overview of potential submissions to Public Works Subcommittee

PWSC1(2007-08)11 Forecast of submissions for the 2007-08 Legislative Council session

2. The Chairman advised members that pursuant to an agreement reached between the Legislative Council (LegCo) and the Administration since the 2001-2002 legislative session, the Administration had been providing forecasts of submissions to PWSC at the beginning of each legislative session. The discussion item was the forecast of the submissions for the 2007-2008 session ("the 2007-2008 forecast") to enable members, including other LegCo Members, to have a preliminary view of the projects and to facilitate the consultation process of capital works projects. The 2007-2008 forecast had been circulated to relevant

Panels for members to indicate whether any projects should require detailed discussions at meetings of the relevant Panels before the Administration submitted the funding applications for the projects to PWSC.

Provision of leisure, cultural and community facilities

3. Mr Albert CHAN opined that given the Government's improved fiscal position, more resources should be available for the provision of leisure, cultural and community facilities (LCC facilities) for the general public. He was however gravely concerned that no projects for the provision of these facilities for the residents of Tin Shui Wai had been included in the 101 projects in the 2007-2008 forecast. In this connection, Mr CHAN urged the Administration to re-examine its plans for providing LCC facilities in Tin Shui Wai with a view to implementing more such projects in the 2007-2008 session. He also called on the Administration to expedite implementation of the outstanding projects of the ex-Municipal Councils.

4. In response, the Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (PS(W), DEVB) assured members that the Administration had been making considerable efforts to implement the outstanding projects of the ex-Municipal Councils. The Deputy Secretary for Development (Works)1 (DS(W)1, DEVB) advised that the Administration had been reporting progress of the outstanding projects of the ex-Municipal Councils to the LegCo Subcommittee to Follow up the Outstanding Leisure and Cultural Services Projects of the Former Municipal Councils. Among these outstanding projects, priority had been given to 25 projects as announced in the Chief Executive's Policy Address in January 2005. The Administration had further undertaken in 2006 to take forward another 21 projects. Construction works for 18 of these 46 projects had commenced or would commence within 2007-2008, and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) would seek the views of the respective District Councils (DCs) on the implementation plan of the remaining 55 projects.

5. As for the provision of LCC facilities in Tin Shui Wai, DS(W)1, DEVB advised members of a number of such projects, including the open space in Areas 15 and 25 completed in 2004 and 2007 respectively, district open space in Areas 33A and 29 under construction, a public library cum indoor recreation centre and a community hall in Area 101 which would commence works in end 2007 and end 2009 respectively. The Director of Architectural Services (D Arch S) added that minor works projects with project cost not exceeding \$15 million which could be implemented under the delegated authority were carried out to provide for the needed facilities in Tin Shui Wai.

6. Mr Albert CHAN did not subscribe to the Administration's explanations. He pointed out that the Administration had obviously accorded priority in resources allocation to large-scale events such as the hosting of the East Asian Games and had deferred LCC facilities needed by the local community as a result. Mr CHAN reiterated his request for speedy delivery of projects for LCC facilities to meet the demand of the local residents. Mr SIN

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Chung-kai also expressed concern about the delivery of LCC projects. At the request of Mr SIN, the Administration undertook to provide, before the relevant meeting of the Finance Committee (FC), supplementary information (such as information on the respective dates for project commencement and completion) on the list of works projects relating to LCC facilities in Tin Shui Wai. The list should cover outstanding projects of which the Administration had undertaken to take forward and other requests for facilities put forward by DC and/or local residents.

West Kowloon Cultural District project

7. Referring to item nos. 57 and 58 of the 2007-2008 forecast, Ms Emily LAU noted that both items were related to the implementation of the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) project, details of which were still being finalized. Ms LAU questioned the propriety of including these two proposals at their preliminary planning stage in the 2007-2008 forecast and enquired about the Administration's timeframe for submitting the two proposals to PWSC.

8. In reply, the Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs (3) (DS(3),HAB) confirmed that the two funding proposals related to the WKCD project were in their planning stage, details of which would be worked out having regard to public views expressed during the on-going three-month public engagement exercise. DS(3), HAB advised that if the WKCD project was met with broad public support, the Administration was determined to take forward the project at full speed and had therefore included the two funding proposals in the 2007-2008 forecast. The Administration intended to introduce the bill for the establishment of the WKCD Authority in early 2008. If the legislative exercise went smoothly, the legislation would be enacted by around mid 2008 and the Administration could submit the funding proposals to PWSC in June 2008. The Administration would also consult the relevant LegCo committee(s) on the detailed proposals as appropriate.

9. Ms Emily LAU commented that to facilitate members' consideration of the proposals, the Administration should have provided, in the project descriptions attached to the 2007-2008 forecast, further information on the various procedures involved in taking forward the WKCD project, such as the public engagement exercise and the legislative exercise, as well as the schedule for completing the various procedures.

10. In response, PS(W), DEVB advised that the forecast of submissions to PWSC aimed to provide an overview of the potential capital works items to be submitted in the current session. He hoped that members could appreciate that information relating to the items had been provided by the proponent departments some time before this meeting and might not capture all latest developments of the projects. Given the large number of items in the list, only brief descriptions on each item were provided in the paper. He assured members that details of the items would be provided to LegCo and consultation would be arranged with the relevant Panels, where appropriate, before the funding proposals were submitted to PWSC. Whilst appreciating that details of the items might not be available at this stage for

inclusion in the forecast, Ms Emily LAU opined that the Administration should provide a gist of the important information, such as the various steps involved in taking forward the items and the preliminary implementation timeframe.

Wan Chai Development Phase II and Central-Wan Chai Bypass

11. Referring to item nos. 66 and 88 of the list of capital works items in the 2007-2008 forecast, Dr KWOK Ka-ki pointed out that these projects were related to the controversies over reclamation of the Victoria Harbour. He recalled that at the meeting of the then Panel on Planning, Lands and Works on 29 May 2007, members had expressed different views on the issue of reclamation and the Administration had not been able to convince members as to why a “zero-reclamation” option could not be pursued for the construction of the Central-Wan Chai Bypass (CWB) and Island Eastern Corridor Link. Moreover, Dr KWOK pointed out that the High Court had granted leave for a judicial review as to the application of the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance (Cap. 531) to the proposed "temporary reclamation" for the construction of CWB, the outcome of which was not yet available. He therefore queried whether it was appropriate for the Administration to include the two capital works items in the 2007-2008 forecast at this premature stage.

12. In reply, PS(W), DEVB appreciated Dr KWOK Ka-ki's concern that the judicial proceedings mentioned above might have impact on the progress of the CWB and Wan Chai Development Phase II projects. He however pointed out that gazettal of the projects had been arranged and objections raised were being handled. The Administration was committed to achieving project delivery expeditiously and therefore had included the two items in the 2007-2008 forecast. The target dates for the projects would nevertheless hinge on the time required for completing the judicial proceedings. Responding to Dr KWOK Ka-ki's concern about the Administration's efforts in consulting and informing the public on the projects, PS(W), DEVB advised that the Administration had carried out in-depth public engagement exercise over a period of more than one year before gazettal, in which the public had ample opportunities to obtain information and express their views on the projects. The Director of Civil Engineering and Development (DCED) added that hearing of the judicial review had been scheduled for February 2008. DCED assured members that the Administration would only take forward the projects after the judicial proceedings had been completed and legal issues resolved.

Delivery of capital works projects

13. Noting that the contracts of only some 20 projects were scheduled to start in each quarter, Mr CHAN Kam-lam expressed concern about speedy delivery of capital works projects (CWPs). Mr CHAN opined that speeding up project delivery, for example projects with readily available sites and those of similar nature, could create employment as well as reduce project costs in the light of the rising material and labour costs in the recent months.

14. In reply, PS(W), DEVB advised that the Administration had reviewed the procedures in the delivery of CWPs and reported to the Development Panel at the meeting on 23 October 2007 the improvement measures to further shorten the planning lead time where appropriate. In this connection, works departments would take measures to compress/streamline the administrative procedures with a view to shortening the planning lead time for medium size civil engineering projects from about 45 month to about 40 months. The Administration had also made arrangements for initiating the tendering process in concurrence with submission of the funding proposals to PWSC with a view to expediting project commencement.

15. Referring to the arrangements for submission of the 99 items endorsed by PWSC in the 2006-2007 session, the Chairman urged the Administration to make improvements so that submissions to PWSC would be evenly distributed throughout the session instead of clustered towards the end of the session.

16. Mrs Selina CHOW noted with concern that the target contract start dates of the 101 projects in the 2007-2008 forecast straddled across a period of about two years, i.e. from the fourth quarter of 2007 to the fourth quarter of 2009. She questioned whether it was the norm to have a time gap of one year or more between the funding approval for CWPs and their contract commencement. In reply, PS(W), DEVB advised that as a matter of fact, the target contract start dates of a number of the projects in the 2007-2008 forecast fell in the first quarter of 2008. Nevertheless, certain projects which were in their planning/consultancy study stage would inevitably have a longer lead time before works commencement. He stressed that the Administration strived to expedite the delivery of CWPs through different measures, for example making arrangements for initiating the tendering process in concurrence with submission of the funding proposals to PWSC with a view to reducing the lead time for contract commencement.

17. Responding to the enquiry of Mr Albert CHAN and Mrs Selina CHOW, the Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury)3 (DS(Tsy)3) advised that the rough cost estimates for the projects in the 2007-2008 forecast amounted to some \$70 billion. He pointed out that the estimate was made on the basis of the preliminary project planning and would be subject to further revision. DS(Tsy)3 said that the cost estimates would be subject to larger variations should there be changes in the target timeframe for implementing some mega infrastructure projects.

18. Responding to the concern shared by Mrs Selina CHOW and Mr Abraham SHEK about the spending for CWPs in 2007-2008, PS(W), DEVB advised that the amount of spending hinged on the funding approved in the last few legislative sessions. As the total amount of expenditure of projects approved by FC in 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 were \$6.0 billion and \$16.4 billion respectively, the spending in 2007-2008 on the approved projects was expected to be about \$20 billion. PS(W), DEVB further explained that the expenditure pattern of CWPs took the form of a “S-curve” with spending picking up gradually from project commencement and would reach the peak a year or so later before it reached the

completion of the project. CWP expenditure would increase substantially in the coming few years if all the funding proposals in the 2007-2008 forecast would be approved. As to Mrs CHOW's further enquiry on the reasons for the limited number of school projects for direct subsidized schools (DSSs) and private independent schools in the 2007-2008 forecast, PS(W), DEVB suggested that policy matters relating to the school building programme could be deliberated at meetings of the Panel on Education if members so wished.

19. Mr Abraham SHEK was of the view that the implementation of CWPs could create employment for the construction industry to alleviate high unemployment rate of the industry. He was therefore concerned about the number of new and on-going CWPs in 2007-2008. Prof Patrick LAU expressed similar concern and sought further information on the estimated expenditure for CWPs in 2007-2008 with breakdown by consultancy fees and construction costs. Prof LAU opined that such information would facilitate the construction and engineering industries in preparing for the necessary manpower and financial resources for bidding the contracts in the coming year.

20. In response, PS(W), DEVB advised that the Administration had tried to boost the expenditure situation of CWPs through implementing as many minor works projects as possible and expediting the progress of on-going projects. In this connection, the Administration had sought the views of the Development Panel on the proposal to increase the financial ceiling for the delegated authority for Category D items from \$15 million to \$21 million. The Administration would seek FC's approval of the proposal at the meeting on 2 November 2007. Whilst the works departments would try to implement as many minor works projects as possible with the increase in the financial ceiling, PS(W), DEVB advised that substantial increase in CWP expenditure could hardly be achieved without the implementation of mega infrastructure projects. PS(W), DEVB advised that the 2007-2008 forecast contained information on the target contract start date, remarks on the part of the project to be upgraded as well as a brief description for each project. In addition to the information set out in PWSCI(2007-2008)11, the Works Branch also prepared Works Digest which had been made available to the public. Members of the construction and engineering industries could make reference to the information on the projects in their resources planning. D Arch S supplemented that the Architectural Services Department (ASD) provided information on the projects under its purview to the relevant professional bodies every January in the past few years.

21. Mrs Selina CHOW sought information on the prevailing policy and practice in outsourcing the design and construction of CWPs to the private sector. She was of the view that outsourcing arrangements could facilitate the utilization of talents and manpower resources of the relevant professions in the private sector to improve the design and delivery of CWPs.

22. In reply, D Arch S advised that outsourcing had been arranged for the majority of ASD's projects (over 85%), in particular projects for the construction of schools. He pointed out that the outsourced school projects had received

favourable comments from the LegCo as well as the school sponsoring bodies (SSBs) in terms of the quality and the uniqueness of the school designs.

23. Mrs Selina CHOW was glad to note that private sector participation in the project designs had brought about diversity and enquired whether similar arrangements had been made for the design of community facilities. Mrs CHOW opined that the Administration should consider giving awards to the consultants concerned as recognition of their professional contributions to the design of CWP. Prof Patrick LAU also suggested that the Administration could express its recognition in giving merits to consultants with good designs in tender assessment.

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24. In reply, D Arch S advised that ASD had an annual award for outstanding designs in which projects designed by both the public sector and the private sector would be considered. D Arch S also advised that apart from school building projects, ASD had outsourced projects of other natures as well including LCC facilities of LCSD. He took note of members' views and said that the Administration would explore measures to show appreciation and recognition of good project designs.

25. Mr Abraham SHEK supported outsourcing arrangements for CWPs and urged the Administration to speed up project implementation through more outsourcing arrangements, which would at the same time help to boost the economic growth of Hong Kong. PS(W), DEVB assured members that the Administration had been working in this direction and the consultancy firms had been able to tap the increased business opportunities in the recent months as a result.

26. Ms Emily LAU expressed grave concern that notwithstanding the clear consensus among Members for expeditious delivery of CWPs and the Administration's undertaking in the same direction, the progress of project delivery was still far from satisfactory. She therefore called on the Administration to devote more efforts in pressing ahead the projects in the pipeline so that funding proposals could be submitted for Members' consideration as soon as possible.

Head 704 – Drainage

PWSC(2007-08)49 230DS Outlying Islands sewerage, stage 1 phase 1 part 2 - Yung Shue Wan sewerage, sewage treatment works and outfall

234DS Outlying Islands sewerage, stage 1 phase 2 - Sok Kwu Wan sewage collection, treatment and disposal facilities

27. The Chairman advised members that the Panel on Environmental Affairs was consulted on this proposal and the next item on the agenda, i.e. **PWSC(2007-08)50** on 25 June 2007. While the Panel welcomed the proposals to

mitigate the nuisances caused by the untreated sewage, some members were concerned about the proximity of the discharge location of the sewage outfall to the fish culture zones, particularly at Sok Kwu Wan (SKW), which might threaten the survival of fishes in the fish culture zones. Members also considered that the Administration should provide members with different parameters, such as chemical oxygen demand, biological oxygen demand and *E. Coli* levels, etc. to facilitate a better understanding on the quality of effluent before and after sewage treatment and the degree of compliance with the standards. The requested information had been incorporated in the Administration's paper to PWSC.

28. Mr Albert CHAN expressed concern about the visual impact of the colossal concrete sewage treatment works (STWs) on the natural rural environment of the Lamma Island, in particular for Yung Shue Wan (YSW). He urged the Administration to pay special attention to the need for the design of sewage facilities to blend well with the environment in the vicinity. Dr KWOK Ka-ki shared Mr CHAN's concern and suggested the Administration to consider measures to improve the design of STWs, such as through open design competitions or engagement of consultants. Prof Patrick LAU suggested that appropriate landscape works could be undertaken to mitigate the adverse visual impact of the STWs. In this connection, Prof LAU opined that the Administration should have provided drawings on the external design for the STWs for members' information.

29. In response, the Director of Drainage Services (DDS) said that the Administration was mindful of the need to mitigate the visual impact of the sewage treatment and collection facilities on the surrounding environment. To this end, height restrictions of not more than 12 and 7 metres (m) would be imposed for the STWs at YSW and SKW respectively. Suitable colour tones would be adopted for the exterior of the STWs (in dark green and brown respectively to match with the surrounding greenery at YSW and the adjacent slope at SKW). In light of members' concern about the visual impact of the sewage facilities, DDS advised that the Drainage Services Department (DSD) would further examine measures to enhance the appearance of the facilities in collaboration with ASD and the consultant. PS(W), DEVB advised that open competitions for project design would inevitably lengthen the period for project planning and therefore not conducive to the expeditious delivery of CWPs. As such, open design competition would only be held for selected projects.

30. As to Dr KWOK Ka-ki's idea about the possibility of shared-use of the project site with LCSD facilities, DDS undertook to liaise with LCSD in this regard. PS(W), DEVB added that the Administration attached great importance to maximizing the use of project site through co-use with compatible facilities to meet public demand. He nevertheless pointed out that for the sewerage facilities in the current proposal, technical issues including sewage treatment functions and safety had to be taken into account in examining the feasibility of co-use with community facilities. In order to address members' concerns on the harmony between the design of the STWs and the rural environment of the Lamma Island, PS(W), DEVB proposed that a site visit be arranged to facilitate members'

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understanding of the STWs design, including the constraints involved in the design. Members agreed to the proposal and the Chairman directed the Clerk to liaise with the Administration for the visit arrangement accordingly.

31. Noting that Lamma Island was presently unsewered, Ms Emily LAU expressed concern about the impact of sewage discharged on the water quality in the fish culture zones in SKW. Pointing out that the estimated population at YSW was much larger than that at SKW, Ms LAU questioned why a shorter submarine outfall of length 500 m would be provided at YSW. Dr KWOK Ka-ki asked the Administration to consider extending the outfall at SKW further away from the fish culture zones to minimize the impact of the discharged effluent on the water quality.

32. DDS advised that given the strong water current at YSW, a submarine outfall of length 500 m would be sufficient to bring the discharged effluent away from the bay. A longer outfall of 750 m in length was required at SKW for conveyance of the treated effluent away from the sac-shaped bay where water current was weaker and away from the fish culture zones. The Assistant Director (Water Policy), Environmental Protection Department (AD(WP), EPD) supplemented that as Lamma Island was unsewered at present, sewage from village houses was discharged into nearby water bodies after treatment by private treatment facilities such as septic tanks and soakaway systems. The sewage discharge was currently a source of pollution to nearby water courses and receiving waters, especially near the shore line. Such sources of pollution, while not having significant impact on water quality of the two beaches on Lamma Island, had caused a lower level of dissolved oxygen in the fish culture zones at SKW compared with other fish culture zones. The provision of STWs on Lamma Island under the current proposal would improve the water quality of the nearby water courses and receiving waters of Lamma Island. In response to Ms Emily LAU's further enquiry about whether fish from fish culture zones at SKW were safe for consumption, AD(WP), EPD said that consumption of the fish should not give rise to any health concern provided that they were properly cooked. Ms LAU remarked that the Administration should inform restaurant operators on the Lamma Island as well as the public about the water quality of the fish culture zones. The Administration took note of Ms LAU's view.

33. Dr KWOK Ka-ki called on the Administration to expedite the sewerage projects to address public concern about improvements in water quality. In response to Dr KWOK's enquiry about the timeframe for implementing the remaining works under the outlying islands sewerage projects, DDS advised that the remaining works were planned to commence in 2009 for completion in 2013.

34. Ms Emily LAU expressed concern about the costs incurred for land acquisition and clearance for **230DS** and **234DS**. She enquired how the costs were computed and how such expenditure would be charged. In response, the Chief Engineer (Harbour Area Treatment Scheme), Drainage Services Department (CE(HATS), DSD) said that 79.4 square metres (m²) and 460.3m² of private agricultural land had to be resumed for **230DS** and **234DS** respectively. Given the

larger area of land resumption for **234DS**, a higher cost of \$1.4 million would be incurred compared with \$0.2 million for **230DS**. DDS and PS(W), DEVB advised that in accordance with the normal practice, the cost of land acquisition and clearance would be charged to **Head 701 – Land Acquisition** and would not be counted towards the estimated capital cost of the project. In response to Ms Emily LAU's further enquiry, PS(W), DEVB advised that the cost for disposal of construction waste at public fill reception facilities and landfills was set out under "Environmental mitigation measures" of the project's estimated capital costs. Ms Emily LAU remarked that to facilitate members' understanding of the overall financial implications of CWPs, all costs incurred for project implementation, including the cost for land acquisition and clearance, should be listed clearly under the section on financial implications of the projects.

35. The item was voted on and endorsed.

PWSC(2007-08)50 346DS Upgrading of Tuen Mun sewerage, phase 1

36. Dr KWOK Ka-ki supported the proposal and enquired about the timeframe for the completion of the remainder of **346DS**, in particular the sewerage works for the 27 unsewered villages/areas in Tuen Mun. In reply, DDS said that the present proposal comprised sewerage works for one of the unsewered villages under **346DS**, i.e. Tseng Tau Chung Tsuen, where hygiene problem was compounded by the fact that the domestic sewage was mostly discharged directly into open drainage channels without any treatment, or treated by private treatment facilities which were often ineffective. The sewerage works for the remaining 27 unsewered villages/areas in Tuen Mun would be carried out under the subsequent phases of **346DS** with works commencing in 2009 for completion in 2013.

37. Dr KWOK Ka-ki urged the Administration to expedite implementation of the remainder of **346DS** for early improvement of water quality in the surrounding water in Tuen Mun. In reply, DDS advised that sewerage works for some of the 27 villages in Tuen Mun might require land resumption and would take more time for implementation. PS(W), DEVB added that in taking forward sewerage works, efforts had to be made by the Administration from time to time in persuading reluctant villagers to connect their houses to the branch sewers at their own cost.

38. Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming stated support for the project and called on the Administration to put in place necessary measures to minimize impact on road traffic during the construction works. Referring to the large number of unsewered villages in the New Territories, Mr CHEUNG urged the Administration to expedite sewerage works in rural areas for the construction of trunk and branch sewers for connection to the village houses. He opined that assistance of the rural committees could be sought to liaise with villagers for connection of their houses to the branch sewers.

39. Ms Emily LAU also expressed support for the proposed project and its expeditious delivery to alleviate the hygiene and the pollution problems in the

areas concerned. She enquired about the outcome of the Administration's past efforts in persuading villagers to connect their village houses to the branch sewer and measures to facilitate a higher connection rate.

40. DDS said that sewerage works had been completed for 98 villages under the village sewerage programme and a high connection rate of over 80% had been achieved for projects in Sha Tin, Tai Po, Sai Kung and Mui Wo. DDS advised that staff of DSD and the Environmental Protection Department would provide assistance, where possible, to villagers who encountered technical difficulties in the connection works. Moreover, eligible village house owners might also apply for assistance under the Hong Kong Housing Society's Home Renovation Loan Scheme to finance the relevant works. He nevertheless pointed out that for certain village houses where the technical difficulties in connection could not be overcome, private treatment facilities such as septic tanks or soakaway systems would continue to be used for sewage treatment and discharge.

41. In response to Ms Emily LAU's enquiry about the difficulties anticipated by the Administration in land resumption for implementation of the sewerage works in the remainder of **346DS**, DDS said that the Administration would strive to liaise with the affected land owners and/or households for resumption of land required for the sewerage works. He also confirmed that the project had the support of the Tuen Mun DC, from which assistance in liaison with local villages might be sought where necessary. In reply to Ms Emily LAU's further enquiry on the estimated costs incurred for land resumption and clearance for the remainder of **346DS**, DDS said that the required information was not available at this early stage.

42. Mr Albert CHAN opined that it would be ridiculous if, upon completion of the sewerage works, some village houses would continue to use the ineffective private treatment facilities for their sewage discharge due to owners' reluctance to bear the cost for connecting their houses to the branch sewers. To ensure improvement in water quality after completion of the sewerage works, Mr CHAN suggested that the Administration should formulate its clear policy on achieving full connection of village houses for consultation with the relevant Panel. Where voluntary connection by village house owners could not be achieved, Mr CHAN was of the view that mandatory requirement might have to be imposed.

43. The item was voted on and endorsed.

PWSC(2007-08)51 119CD Drainage improvement in Northern New Territories - package C

44. The Chairman advised members that an information paper provided by the Administration on the project had been circulated to the then Panel on Planning, Lands and Works on 18 July 2007.

45. Mr Abraham SHEK supported the proposal and commended DSD for its expeditious arrangements in submitting CWPs to PWSC. He called on other departments to compress/streamline the planning lead time for submission of CWPs under their purviews.

46. Noting that the estimated costs for land resumption and clearance amounted to \$109.37 million, Ms Emily LAU was concerned that the costs were not commensurate with the estimated cost for the proposed works, which was only \$161.8 million. She therefore enquired about details of the calculation of the land acquisition cost. Dr KWOK Ka-ki expressed similar concern, in particular the compensation payment to affected land owners/households.

47. DDS advised that higher land acquisition cost was incurred for resumption of a large area of land required for the river improvement works. The Assistant Director (Projects and Development) (Acting), Drainage Services Department supplemented that the proposed works involved clearance of about 53 900 m² of government land and resumption of about 48 533 m² of private agricultural land. Compensation payment to owners of the private land was calculated in accordance with the standard rates adopted by the Lands Department.

Admin 48. At the request of Ms Emily LAU and Dr KWOK Ka-ki, the Administration undertook to provide further details on the cost of land resumption and clearance for the current proposal (**119CD**) as well as for **230DS** and **234DS**, including the following –

- (a) breakdown of the total cost of resumption and clearance by items such as compensation payment, cost of clearance etc.; and
- (b) standard rates adopted by the Administration in calculating the land acquisition cost payable to owners of the private land to be resumed.

49. The Chairman opined that the Administration should set out in its funding proposal necessary information, such as the special circumstances of the proposed works, to facilitate members' consideration.

50. Referring to Enclosure 1 of the Administration's paper which provided the typical cross-sections of drainage channels, Ms Emily LAU sought the Administration's explanation on circumstances under which the three different types of channels would be used. Ms LAU called on the Administration to enhance the greening works on both sides of the drainage channels.

51. In reply, DDS said that the Administration had adopted an environmental friendly concept in the design of drainage channels by using gabion, rock and gravel bedding instead of concrete for the river channel. Type 1 would be used for relatively narrow drainage channels while type 2 (box culvert) would be used in Ping Che and Man Uk Pin under roads. The design of type 3 would preserve the natural river bed and bank while widening the drainage channel to give enough capacity for Man Uk Pin. This type of design could also enable maintenance vehicles to use the river bed for maintenance purpose. In response to Ms Emily

LAU, DDS advised that type 3 design had previously been adopted for the drainage works in Tai Po.

52. The item was voted on and endorsed.

Head 703 – Buildings

PWSC(2007-08)46 340EP A 24-classroom primary school at Inverness Road, Kowloon City

53. The Chairman advised members that an information paper provided by the Administration on the project had been circulated to the Panel on Education on 4 October 2007.

54. Noting the variations among the project estimates for different school projects, Dr KWOK Ka-ki enquired whether there was a standard provision for school facilities. In response, the Deputy Secretary for Education (2) (DS(2), EDB) said that the standard school facilities were provided according to a standard schedule of accommodations on the basis of number of classrooms in the school concerned. The costs for additional non-standard facilities required would have to be borne by the SSBs. Notwithstanding the standard provision of facilities, estimated costs for different school projects might vary due to specific physical conditions of the school sites. D Arch S added that project estimates would also be subject to variations such as the geotechnical and topographical conditions of the sites.

55. Dr KWOK Ka-ki stressed that variations in the project estimates for school projects should be fully accounted for in the funding submissions. He then enquired whether it was common for schools to put up requests for non-standard facilities. DS(2), EDB replied that given the cost implication for the provision of non-standard facilities, public sector schools would generally accept the standard provision while DSSs and private independent schools would more often pay top-up costs for additional non-standard facilities.

56. Prof Patrick LAU noted with concern the small site area of the school project and sought information on the size of the site. In response, D Arch S advised that the project site area was approximately 3 983m², which fell below the standard provision of 4 700m² for a 24-classroom primary school. Responding to Prof LAU's further enquiry about the costs for site formation and construction of the retaining wall behind the proposed school, D Arch S said that the works in question were carried out under a separate project, which had been undertaken before the current school building project was finalized. D Arch S further advised that the Administration was keenly aware of members' concerns raised at previous PWSC meetings on the compatibility of the designs of retaining walls/boundary walls and the adjacent schools. Nevertheless, the above concerns might not be fully addressed in the designs of the retaining wall and the proposed school given the time gap between the two separate projects.

Admin

57. Prof Patrick LAU maintained his view that the Administration should have included information on the costs for site formation and construction of the retaining wall in the current proposal to provide members with a comprehensive view on the cost implications of the proposal. Mr Abraham SHEK shared Prof LAU's view. Pointing out that the question had in fact fallen outside the scope of the current proposal, the Chairman appreciated Prof LAU's concern and urged the Administration to include costs information relevant to the proposed works in its future submissions. Pursuant to the request of Prof LAU, the Administration agreed to provide the project cost for site formation, including the cost for construction of the retaining wall before the relevant FC meeting.

58. Ms Emily LAU noted that the current proposal would provide facilities for an existing bi-sessional primary school to switch to whole-day operation (without affecting the overall supply of primary school places) under the Government's policy to implement whole-day primary schooling. In this connection, Ms LAU referred to the new policy initiative announced by the Chief Executive in his 2007-2008 Policy Address on implementing small-class teaching by phases from the 2009-2010 school year and expressed concern about the implication of this new initiative on the number of classrooms required in different school nets.

59. In reply, DS(2), EDB said that it was the Government's policy to implement whole-day primary schooling for all primary schools students by the 2007-2008 school year and currently only 30 primary schools had yet to be converted to whole-day schooling mode (26 of which had plans for conversion within the next two years). The Administration would make continuous efforts to implement the policy for the remaining four primary schools of which difficulties had to be resolved (such as identification of suitable sites for the provision of school facilities required). As for the new initiative on small-class teaching, DS(2), EDB advised that before the Administration started to consult stakeholders on the implementation details towards the end of this year, and before schools indicated their options having regard to these details, the Administration would not be able to arrive at a realistic assessment of the supply and demand for classrooms in each school net. When opting for small class, a school would be admitting fewer number of students per class under the same approved class structure. Hence, the need for additional classrooms would not arise until and unless the school net in which the school was located would require an addition of classes to meet any overall shortfall arising from increased demand after implementation of small class teaching. She advised that at this point in time, the Administration did not know if additional classrooms would be required in the school nets in which the primary school to be built under the current proposal and under the other school building projects (including those under **339EP** and **341EP**) were located, and if yes, the extent of that demand.

60. Ms Emily LAU opined that the Administration should provide flexibility for modifying the school designs under the current proposal as well as the other school building projects (including those under **339EP** and **341EP**), where

necessary, to cater for the possible increase in the requirements for classrooms under the new policy initiative of small-class teaching. Given that shortfalls of classrooms were anticipated in some school nets upon the implementation of small-class teaching, Ms LAU enquired whether the design of the new school projects would be modified to cope with the expected shortfalls. In this connection, Ms LAU also asked the Administration to consult the SSB of the current proposal on their views on the implementation of small-class teaching and take these into account for provision of additional classrooms or school facilities required.

61. DS(2), EDB said that shortfalls of classrooms in certain school nets might be met through providing additional classrooms in existing school premises or building new schools. If new schools had to be built, suitable SSBs would have to be identified for the operation of schools concerned. She pointed out that the Administration could not ascertain at the present stage whether additional schools would be required in individual school nets for the implementation of small-class teaching pending the outcome of the consultation with SSBs. She further pointed out that even if there was a shortfall in classrooms in the school net within the Kowloon City District in which the school under the current proposal was located, the number of classrooms that could feasibly be added, if any, was likely to be small for this school project given the constraint of the site area. Moreover, modifications of the project design at this late stage would inevitably delay the implementation schedule of the project, which would not be in the interest of the school concerned, given the wish of the SSB concerned for a speedy project delivery. D Arch S added that the height of the school building was limited by fire safety requirements and therefore the provision of a large number of additional classrooms for this school project would not be technically feasible.

62. At the request of Ms Emily LAU, the Administration agreed to consider whether it should take the opportunity of the new primary school projects (including the current proposal and the proposals under **339EP** and **341EP**) to provide additional classrooms required for small-class teaching and consult the relevant SSBs, notwithstanding possible delays in the implementation schedules of the projects. The Administration undertook to report to PWSC new developments, if any, arising from the above consultations.

Admin

63. In response to Ms Emily LAU's enquiry on the name of the school under the current proposal, the Chairman highlighted that some members had expressed views against disclosure of the name of the school to ensure consideration of school projects in an objective manner. Upon Ms LAU's further enquiry on the school sponsor involved, DS(2), EDB said that it belonged to the Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong.

64. Noting that the proposed school would be provided with only one vehicular ingress/egress, Miss CHOY So-yuk was concerned whether the vehicular access and/or lay-bys provided for the school could adequately cope with the increase in traffic and loading/unloading of passengers during school peak hours. In this connection, Miss CHOY urged the Administration to consider enhancing the project design to provide for sufficient facilities for the school

traffic, including roundabouts and lay-bys.

65. DS(2), EDB said that in accordance with the standard in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines, four parking spaces for private cars (including one for the disabled) would be provided under the current project. In addition, eight lay-bys would be provided for taxis and private cars and three lay-bys for coaches. DS(2), EDB nevertheless pointed out that as the school project sought to provide facilities for an existing bi-sessional school in the same district to switch to whole-day operation, significant increase in traffic volume was not expected upon the operation of the new school. D Arch S added that separate vehicular ingress and egress would be provided for school projects where technically feasible. However, only one vehicular access could be provided under the current project due to site constraints

66. The item was voted on and endorsed.

PWSC(2007-08)47 339EP A 30-classroom primary school at Fuk Wing Street, Sham Shui Po

341EP An 18-classroom primary school at Fuk Wing Street, Sham Shui Po

67. The Chairman advised members that an information paper provided by the Administration on the project had been circulated to the Panel on Education on 4 October 2007.

68. Referring to the possible increase in demand for classrooms upon the implementation of small-class teaching, Ms Emily LAU was concerned whether opportunity would be taken to modify the designs of the two school projects under this proposal, which had bigger project sites, to cater for the increase. In response, DS(2), EDB said that the current proposal comprised the construction of two school premises in Sham Shui Po, one for an existing bi-sessional primary school to switch to whole-day operation and the other for the reprovisioning of a school presently accommodated in substandard premises. The site areas of both school projects could barely meet the standard requirements for schools with 30 and 18 classrooms respectively. DS(2), EDB reiterated that the Administration could not ascertain at the present stage the additional demand for classrooms for implementation of small-class teaching; but modification of school designs at this stage would inevitably cause delay in project delivery. Nevertheless, she undertook to take follow-up action for the two school projects as suggested in paragraph 62 above.

Admin

69. Ms Emily LAU said that the Administration should be forward-looking and allow flexibility in the design of school projects to cater for the demand under the new policy of small-class teaching. Mrs Selina CHOW agreed that the Administration should consult the relevant SSBs on the possible need or otherwise for providing additional classrooms in their new school premises for the

impending implementation of small-class teaching. Mrs CHOW nevertheless stressed that school building projects should not be put on hold awaiting implementation details of the new policy initiative.

70. The item was voted on and endorsed.

PWSC(2007-08)48 261ES Secondary school at Aberdeen Reservoir Road, Aberdeen

71. The Chairman advised members that an information paper provided by the Administration on the project had been circulated to the Panel on Education on 4 October 2007.

72. Dr KWOK Ka-ki noted with concern the higher provision of \$6 million for furniture and equipment for this proposal as compared with provisions for the other three school projects considered at the meeting, which all amounted to about \$3 million. DS(2), EDB explained that higher cost would be incurred for furniture and equipment for the current proposal as the school involved was a secondary school, whilst the three school projects considered earlier at the meeting were for the construction of primary schools. The provision for furniture and equipment was calculated on the basis of standard provisions for secondary schools of the same number of classrooms.

73. Miss CHOY So-yuk called on the Administration to provide for adequate vehicular access and/or lay-bys in the project design having regard to the increase in traffic caused by the school operations.

74. The item was voted on and endorsed.

75. The meeting ended at 10:45 am.