

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. PWSC135/07-08
(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/F/2/2

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

**Minutes of the 15th meeting
held in Conference Room A of Legislative Council Building
on Friday, 13 June 2008, at 8:30 am**

Members present:

Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, SBS, S.B.St.J., JP (Chairman)
Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, JP
Hon Mrs Selina CHOW LIANG Shuk-yee, GBS, JP
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, SBS, JP
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 Miriam LAU Kin-yee, GBS, JP
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon CHOY So-yuk, JP
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, GBS, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon LI Kwok-ying, MH, JP
Hon Daniel LAM Wai-keung, SBS, JP
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, SBS, JP
Hon TAM Heung-man

Members absent:

Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC (Deputy Chairman)
Hon James TO Kun-sun

Dr Hon Philip WONG Yu-hong, GBS
Hon LAU Kong-wah, JP
Hon LAU Wong-fat, GBM, GBS, JP
Hon LEE Wing-tat
Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP

Member attending:

Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung

Public officers attending:

Mr Joe C C WONG, JP	Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) ³
Mr MAK Chai-kwong, JP	Permanent Secretary for Development (Works)
Ms Anissa WONG, JP	Permanent Secretary for the Environment
Mrs Susan MAK, JP	Deputy Secretary for Development (Planning and Lands) ¹
Miss Sandra LAM	Principal Assistant Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) (Works)
Ms Bernadette LINN Hon-ho, JP	Deputy Secretary for Education (2)
Ms Mable CHAN	Principal Assistant Secretary (Infrastructure and Research Support), Education Bureau
Mr YUE Chi-hang, JP	Director of Architectural Services
Mr Albert WONG Kam-wing	Principal Inspector (Special Education Support 1), Education Bureau
Mrs Ingrid YEUNG HO Poi-yan	Deputy Secretary for Food and Health (Health) ²
Mr Bruno LUK Kar-kin	Principal Assistant Secretary (Health) ³ , Food and Health Bureau
Mr Stephen SUI Wai-keung	Commissioner for Rehabilitation, Labour and Welfare Bureau
Mrs Cecilia YUEN	Assistant Director (Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services), Social Welfare Department
Dr Raymond CHEN	Chief Manager (Strategy and Service Planning), Hospital Authority
Dr AU Si-yan	Service Director (Community Care), Hospital Authority
Ms Sharon HO Ho-shuen	Principal Assistant Secretary (Transport) ⁵ , Transport and Housing Bureau
Mr John CHAI Sung-veng, JP	Director of Civil Engineering and Development
Mr Duncan SIU Sau-ching	Chief Engineer (New Territories West), Civil Engineering and Development Department
Mr LEE Yan-ming	Chief Traffic Engineer (New Territories

Mr Francis HO Siu-hong	West), Transport Department Principal Assistant Secretary (Food)2, Food and Health Bureau
Ms CHU Lan-ying	Assistant Director (Operations)3, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Miss Amy YUEN Wai-yin	Principal Assistant Secretary (Planning and Lands)2, Development Bureau
Mrs Christina KWONG	Chief Engineer (Tin Shui Wai and Yuen Long), Civil Engineering and Development Department
Mr LAU Ka-keung, JP	Director of Drainage Services
Mr Chris CHAN Yu-yuen	Chief Engineer (Drainage Projects) (Acting), Drainage Services Department
Mr MA Lee-tak, JP	Director of Water Supplies
Mr KONG Kwok-ching	Chief Engineer (Consultants Management), Water Supplies Department

Clerk in attendance:

Ms Rosalind MA	Senior Council Secretary (1)8
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Staff in attendance:

Mrs Constance LI	Assistant Secretary General 1
Ms Annette LAM	Senior Council Secretary (1)3
Ms Angel SHEK	Council Secretary (1)2
Ms Alice CHEUNG	Senior Legislative Assistant (1)1
Mr Frankie WOO	Legislative Assistant (1)2

Action

Head 703 – Buildings

**PWSC(2008-09)16 262ES A secondary school at development near
Choi Wan Road and Jordan Valley, Kwun
Tong**

Ms Emily LAU expressed support for the proposal. Noting from paragraph 4 of the Administration's paper that the facilities of the existing school premises were substandard and dilapidated and that site constraints had posed difficulties for in-situ redevelopment, Ms LAU enquired whether the Administration had plans to use the vacant school premises for other purpose. The Deputy Secretary for Education (2) (DS(2), EDB) responded that to cope with the demand for decanting premises during the in-situ redevelopment of schools, the vacant school premises would be utilized as decanting premises as far as practicable.

2. In view of the poor conditions of the existing school premises, Dr KWOK Ka-ki expressed concern about student safety if the premises would be used as decanting premises for another school, and the duration for such usage. He stressed that the Administration should ensure a safe and suitable learning environment for students. He enquired whether safety assessments would be conducted for the vacant premises.

3. DS(2), EDB responded that the Administration would conduct safety assessments of vacant school premises, and carry out minor renovation works where necessary to make the premises suitable for temporary use. Depending on the physical conditions of the premises, the period of temporary use would range from one to three years. DS(2), EDB advised that as the new school premises under the proposal was expected to complete in 2010, safety assessment for the existing premises would be conducted around 2009. The Director of Architectural Services (D Arch S) added that the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) would, base on the duration for temporary use of vacant school premises, carry out necessary maintenance and repairs to make the premises suitable for the temporary use.

4. Dr KWOK Ka-ki enquired whether the existing school premises could be used as decanting premises for another school. DS(2), EDB advised that the Administration's target was to take forward in-situ redevelopment for four to five schools a year subject to availability of sites, in view of the considerable number of under-provided school premises. To cope with the demand for decanting premises, the existing premises of the school under the current project would likely be used by at least one school undergoing in-situ redevelopment, subject to the findings of the safety assessment to be conducted in due course. At the request of Dr KWOK, the Administration agreed to provide, before the relevant meeting of the Finance Committee (FC), information on the list of vacant school premises being used as decanting premises for schools undergoing in-situ redevelopment in the past five years and safety assessments conducted on these premises prior to their being used as decanting premises, and the risks identified in these assessments, if any.

Admin

5. Ms Emily LAU referred to paragraph 3(p) of the Administration's paper and expressed concern about the facilities to provide barrier-free access under the proposed project. She asked whether the design of these facilities would comply with the latest requirements to be introduced under the Building (Planning) (Amendment) Regulation 2008 which was being examined by the Legislative Council (LegCo). Ms LAU was concerned about compliance with statutory requirements on barrier-free access in government building projects as the Government was not bound by the relevant legislation. She asked the Administration to provide information on facilities to ensure barrier-free access for building projects, in its future submissions to the Public Works Subcommittee (PWSC), as in the case of energy conservation measures and environmental implications.

Admin

6. The Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (PS(W), DEVB) added that, as he had explained previously at a PWSC meeting, the Administration would ensure the provision of barrier-free access in government facilities and community venues. Given that the measures to provide barrier-free access were quite standardized and the design manual governing the provision of such measures was voluminous, PS(W), DEVB advised that it was not desirable for the Administration to set out all the details in the paper for every project proposal. D Arch S advised that ArchSD had undertaken two research studies and developed internal guidelines for the provision of barrier-free access which would apply to the designs of government facilities. He pointed out that the accessibility provisions would align with, and in some cases well exceed, the standards of the statutory requirements applicable across the board. To address Ms Emily LAU's concern, D Arch S suggested that the Administration would provide a paper summarizing the provisions for barrier-free access applicable to government building projects for members' reference.

7. While supporting the installation of insulated windows and air-conditioning for rooms exposed to traffic noise exceeding the limits recommended in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines, Ms Emily LAU queried why the Administration had not provided the same noise mitigation measures for private dwellings exposed to excessive traffic noise.

8. The Permanent Secretary for the Environment (PS(ENV)) responded that the issue of traffic noise abatement measures raised by Ms Emily LAU had been discussed in great details at meetings of the Panel on Environmental Affairs (EA Panel). She advised that pursuant to the prevailing policy, insulated windows and air-conditioning would be installed for rooms of public or subsidized schools which were exposed to excessive traffic noise, so as to provide a quiet and suitable learning school environment for students. It was not the Administration's policy to provide similar noise abatement facilities for private dwellings taking into account factors such as cost implications and diverse views from owners of the dwellings. Under the prevailing policy, consideration would be given to minimizing the traffic noise impact on neighbouring dwellings in the design of new roads. For existing roads, traffic noise impact on neighbouring dwellings would be reduced through retrofitting of barriers and enclosures where technically feasible and resurfacing with low noise material. Ms Emily LAU remained unconvinced of the Administration's explanation. The Chairman suggested that the policy issues could be further deliberated at meetings of the EA Panel if members so wished.

9. The item was voted on and endorsed.

**PWSC(2008-09)15 104ET A direct subsidy scheme school
(secondary-cum-primary) in Area 13, Yuen
Long**

10. Mrs Selina CHOW expressed support for the proposal, which would provide parents with the choice of a through-train school with a strong emphasis

on language training. Given the remote location of the school in Yuen Long (YL), Mrs CHOW enquired whether the Administration would consider the provision of boarding facilities for the school to cater for the needs of students residing in different areas of the territory.

11. DS(2), EDB responded that given the limited land resources and the need to meet policy objectives such as implementation of small-class teaching and reprovisioning, priority would be given to school building projects, rather than the provision of boarding facilities in schools. Nevertheless, the school sponsoring body (SSB) might reserve space in the school design to cater for short-term exchange programmes. DS(2), EDB pointed out that as announced in the Chief Executive's Policy Address in October 2007, the Administration would study the feasibility of allowing the international school sector to develop hostel facilities on a trial basis, with a view to attracting students from different parts of the world.

12. Noting that the proposed school would be taking in students from all over the territory, Mrs Selina CHOW enquired whether consideration could be given to limiting the intake to students residing within the school net, in order to address the concern about the lack of direct subsidy scheme (DSS) schools and international schools in the New Territories West. DS(2), EDB responded that the Administration was exploring the provision of another DSS secondary school in YL in consultation with the YL District Council (YLDC). Consideration had been given to using vacant school premises but the premises had subsequently been allocated for use as a youth training centre to cater for the needs of residents of Tin Shui Wai. The Administration would continue discussion with YLDC and local residents on the provision of another DSS school in YL, and a reserved school site had been considered for the purpose. DS(2), EDB also took note of Mrs CHOW's request for expeditious implementation of the DSS secondary school project at the reserved site in YL.

13. Ms Emily LAU supported the project. However, she was concerned that when the proposed school commenced operation, the student intake of other schools in YL would be adversely affected. She asked whether the operation of the proposed school would have impact on the supply and demand of public sector school places in the district. DS(2), EDB said that while the supply of public primary school places could generally meet the demand, there was a slight shortage in the supply of secondary school places in YL, which was currently met by the provision of cross-district places in secondary schools in Tuen Mun. The Administration considered that the operation of the proposed school would only have a marginal impact on the supply and demand of public sector school places in YL.

14. Referring to paragraph 5 of the Administration's paper, Ms Emily LAU noted that students of the proposed school could take a third language and that the school would put great efforts in the area of performing arts to blend the learning of language with critical thinking and creativity. Ms LAU considered that such innovation should also be extended to local schools in the public sector, which in her view, was too traditional and not conducive to inspiring creativity and

enhancing communication skills of students. She asked the Administration to provide resources for other public sector schools to offer comparable courses and training to their students.

15. DS(2), EDB responded that the information in paragraph 5 of the Administration's paper mainly served to highlight characteristics in the curriculum and approach of the proposed school. In fact, schools in the public sector were also putting increasing emphasis on the diversity of activities and cultivating students' creativity through innovative approach in the area of performing arts. Regarding Ms Emily LAU's concern about the policy on the medium of instruction in government and subsidized schools, DS(2), EDB advised that the Administration would consult the Panel on Education later on the proposal to allow greater flexibility for schools in the choice of the medium of instruction.

16. Mrs Selina CHOW noted from paragraph 9 of the Administration's paper that the contracts of the proposed works would not provide for price adjustment because the contract period would not exceed 21 months. She was concerned whether the estimated cost of the proposal was adequate and realistic given the recent trend of escalating tender prices.

17. D Arch S said that in the light of the recent price escalations, the Administration was examining the current practice of providing for price adjustment only for contracts exceeding 21 months in duration. He pointed out that the estimated costs for capital works projects were worked out taking into account changes in the prices of tender returns in the previous quarters. In line with the existing practice, a 4% increase per quarter had been adopted in working out the estimates for the current project, which was considered reasonable and adequate to cope with the price escalations. D Arch S advised that as the facilities and requirements for school projects were rather standardized, the cost estimates for these projects were generally of greater precision and would turn out to be rather close to the actual tender price.

18. Mrs Selina CHOW reminded the Administration of the importance of ensuring the quality and standard of school facilities and not to compromise the standard of provision in order to limit the expenditure within the estimated cost.

19. The item was voted upon and endorsed.

PWSC(2008-09)18	299EP	A 24-classroom primary school in Area 55, Tuen Mun
	300EP	A 30-classroom primary school in Area 55, Tuen Mun

20. Ms Emily LAU expressed support for the proposal. As the two proposed school premises were to house the PM sessions of four existing bi-sessional primary schools in Tuen Mun for conversion to whole-day operation, she enquired whether the existing premises were sufficient and safe for use by the

AM sessions of these four schools. Ms LAU was of the view that necessary improvement works should be carried out for the existing school premises to ensure that facilities provided for the AM sessions were not substandard.

21. DS(2), EDB responded that the existing premises of the AM sessions of the primary schools concerned had a history of around 20 years, and the buildings and facilities were still in good condition and suitable for continued use. She pointed out that upon removal of the PM sessions to the new school premises, more space would be available in the existing premises for the AM sessions remaining.

22. Ms Emily LAU noted from paragraph 25 of the Administration's paper that the project would affect one of the sites of archaeological interest identified by the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO), and that AMO would conduct a rescue excavation prior to the construction of the two proposed schools. She was concerned whether the findings of the excavation would have any implications on the school project, for example, whether the construction works would be delayed.

23. D Arch S advised that some items of archaeological interest had been found during the construction of the electricity station adjacent to the project site, therefore AMO proposed to conduct a rescue excavation prior to the construction of the proposed schools to confirm the archaeological value of the site. According to the preliminary study by AMO, there should not be a large number of items with heritage value in the project site. The current proposals had already incorporated the time and cost required for the rescue excavation. To ensure a smooth delivery of the project according to the scheduled timeframe, the Administration would take forward preparatory works, such as demolition of existing structures, concurrently with the excavation work. At the request of Ms Emily LAU, the Administration undertook to provide information on the implications if the site was subsequently confirmed to be of unique heritage value, and also the contingency arrangements.

Admin

24. Ms Emily LAU referred to the school design at Enclosure 2A to the Administration's paper and called on the Administration to improve the design to provide for a more appealing and colourful school building for the primary school students. D Arch S took note of Ms LAU's view for consideration in the detailed design stage of the project.

25. Ms Emily LAU noted that there would be a total of three basketball courts in the two school premises. Ms LAU was of the view that shared use of school facilities should be considered for these two neighbouring schools to make the best utilization of the facilities.

26. D Arch S advised that the number of basketball courts provided for the two schools was worked out according to their respective number of classrooms. As the two schools were physically separated by a pedestrian walkway, shared use of facilities might not be convenient to the students and the SSBs concerned

had not made such a request. DS(2), EDB added that it would be easier to have shared use of facilities by schools with the same SSB. For schools of different SSBs, issues such as division of responsibilities and management of the shared facilities would have to be resolved by the SSBs concerned. To promote the best utilization of school facilities, the Administration would encourage temporary use of school premises and facilities between schools on a rental or rent-free basis, where practicable.

27. The item was voted on and endorsed.

PWSC(2008-09)20 105ET Extension to Jockey Club Elaine Field School, the Spastics Association of Hong Kong in Area 9, Tai Po

28. The Chairman advised members that the Panel on Education was consulted in July 2006 on the development of the New Senior Secondary (NSS) academic structure for special schools. Members of the Panel had called for the provision of more classrooms, facilities, and increased boarding places for the implementation of the NSS academic structure. The Subcommittee to Study Issues Relating to the Provision of Boarding Places, Special Education and Employment Opportunities for Children with Special Education Needs was updated in November 2006 on the progress of the implementation of the NSS academic structure for special schools.

29. Dr Fernando CHEUNG welcomed the proposal to provide additional classrooms and related facilities for students with physical disability. He noted that the vehicular ingress/egress of the proposed new extension block for Jockey Club Elaine Field School (the School) was located at the end of the access road leading to the School. As the narrow road did not have enough turn-around space for big vehicles, lorries and vans parked at the cul-de-sac near the vehicular ingress/egress could easily block the passage way for school buses. The School had previously called in the Police to direct traffic on many occasions. Mr CHEUNG was concerned that with the completion of the extension block, the increase in pedestrian and vehicular flow would further worsen the situation. He enquired about the possibility of widening and improving the design of the road and stepping up enforcement to ensure smooth traffic flow for school buses.

30. D Arch S explained that the road in question was of standard design but its width was restricted by the location of another school (the China Holiness Church Living Spirit College) adjacent to the school under discussion. Given the physical constraints, not much improvement could possibly be made to the road. Nevertheless, D Arch S undertook to liaise with the Transport Department to explore measures to address the vehicular access problem.

31. Dr Fernando CHEUNG noted that Chi Yun school with boarding places for students with severe intellectual disability was accommodated in a 40-year old building in Sham Sui Po without barrier-free access, posing great risks for students

and boarders in case of fire hazards. He expressed concern that a number of special schools were accommodated in very old buildings with significantly substandard facilities, and enquired whether the Administration had any plan for improving the access and facilities of these special schools.

32. DS(2),EDB advised that in connection with the implementation of the NSS academic structure, there were plans to provide additional classrooms and related facilities through conversion works. EDB would also examine the need for re-provisioning and redeveloping old school buildings with substandard facilities.

33. Ms Emily LAU expressed concern about the visual aesthetics of the school design and the apparent lack of windows in the school building. D Arch S explained that sufficient windows would be provided for ventilation and bringing in natural light. Referring to the picture on the Central Court of the extension building, he highlighted that the building with corridors and sloping passage ways for wheelchairs was airy and bright. He added that the consultant architect responsible for the project had won the Hong Kong Institute of Architects' awards for school designs for two consecutive years.

34. Ms Emily LAU asked about the current supply and demand for school places and boarding facilities for students with special education needs. DS(2),EDB advised that while the current supply of special school places was just enough to meet the demand, a shortage of about 30 places was anticipated in the coming two to three years. The completion of the proposed extension block in July 2010 was estimated to bring about a surplus of some 30 places. Should there be a supply shortage pending project completion, arrangements would be made for the existing special schools to take in more students as an interim measure. As regards boarding facilities, DS(2),EDB said that in the 2007/08 school year, all the existing 170 boarding places provided in two special schools were filled, and there were six children with physical disabilities on the waiting list. Of these 170 boarding places, 80 were on Hong Kong Island, 90 in Kowloon, and there was no boarding places in the New Territories. The demand for boarding was anticipated to increase to 220 places by the year 2011/12. It was the Administration's plan to expand and re-distribute boarding services to schools in the New Territories in order to cater for the demands in the New Territories. In this connection, two boarding sections, one in New Territories East (which was covered in the proposed project) and the other in New Territories West (NTW) were proposed to be set up. The completion of the extension block under the proposed project which included a 60-place boarding section in 2010 would bring about a surplus of about 20 boarding places.

35. Ms Emily LAU and Dr Fernando CHEUNG expressed doubts that the supply of boarding facilities could adequately meet the demand. Dr Fernando CHEUNG urged the Administration to expedite the project delivery and suggested that for future projects on special schools, consideration should be given to initiating the tendering process concurrently with submission of funding proposals to PWSC, so as to reduce the lead time for project commencement.

36. D Arch S advised that tendering process for the proposed extension would commence as soon as the proposal was endorsed by PWSC and approved by the Finance Committee. DS(2),EDB said that there were precedents of commencing the tendering process ahead of funding approval to enable the opening of the school to tie in with the start of a new school year. She assured members that every effort was being made in collaboration with ArchSD to press ahead with the NTW project for submission of funding proposal to PWSC for consideration in the 2009-10 legislative session. The Administration would also endeavour to facilitate early completion of the project before commencement of a new school year.

37. The item was voted on and endorsed.

Head 708 - Capital Subventions and Major Systems and Equipment

PWSC(2008-09)24 66MM Provision of a general out-patient clinic, an integrated community mental health support services centre and a long stay care home in Tin Shui Wai Area 109

38. The Chairman advised members that the Panel on Health Services and Panel on Welfare Services had been consulted on the proposed project on 14 April 2008. Mr LI Kwok-ying, Chairman of the Panel on Health Services, apprised the meeting that Panel members supported the proposed provision of a general-out-patient clinic (GOPC) in Tin Shui Wai (TSW) North Area 109, and urged the Administration to expedite the construction work. Dr KWOK Ka-ki had expressed concern about the short medical consultation time spent on each patient in GOPC, and urged the Administration to actively explore measures to address the problem. The Chairman added that members of the Panel on Welfare Services generally supported the proposal for setting up an integrated community mental health support services centre (ICMHSSC) and a long stay care home (LSCH) for discharged chronic mental patients in TSW. The Panel had urged the Administration to advance the commencement of services where feasible. The Panel was concerned that as the proposed LSCH would be located in a joint-user complex which also provided general out-patient (GOP) services, there should be adequate infection control measures to protect the health of LSCH residents. A suggestion was also made that when designing the proposed complex, more recreational area should be provided to LSCH residents.

Provision of GOP services

39. Mr Albert CHAN expressed regret that the construction of the building complex to accommodate the much needed GOPC, ICMHSSC and LSCH was delayed by five to six years. He sought details on the specialist and allied health professional services to be provided in the complex and enquired whether 24-hour GOP services would be provided.

40. Deputy Secretary for Food and Health (Health)2 (DS(H)2,FHB) advised that the GOPC included a general clinic with six consultation rooms, a community multi-specialty clinic with six consultation rooms, and an integrated clinic with two consultation rooms. The proposed community multi-specialty clinic was expected to provide physiotherapy, occupational therapy, prosthetic and dietetic services while the proposed integrated clinic would provide family medicine, gynaecology, paediatric, community health services, and psychiatric treatment. DS(H)2,FHB said that the proposed GOPC in TSW North, same as all other existing GOPCs, would not provide 24-hour GOP services. For emergencies, residents of TSW could use the accident and emergency (A&E) services provided in Tuen Mun Hospital and Pok Oi Hospital.

41. While appreciating the difficulty in providing round the clock emergency services which required a wide range of support facilities, Mr Albert CHAN was of the view that the 300 000 residents of TSW should be provided with 24-hour GOP services as there was no 24-hour A&E services in the district. He considered it unfair and unacceptable that TSW residents had to seek treatment at the A&E departments in Tuen Mun Hospital and Pok Oi Hospital for sicknesses during night time. He recalled that before the transfer of responsibility over public hospitals and GOPCs from the Department of Health (DH) to the Hospital Authority (HA) in 2003, some GOPCs in districts with no public hospital, for example Lady Trench GOPC in Tsuen Wan, did provide 24-hour GOP services. He criticized the Administration for inflexibility in policy implementation and failure to take account of the unique situation of TSW and the needs of the residents in the area. Sharing a similar view, Ms Emily LAU expressed disappointment at the project slippage and the delay in providing health and welfare services for the low income families and vulnerable groups in TSW. She urged for the provision of 24-hour public GOP services in TSW.

42. In response, DS(H)2,FHB clarified that even before 2003, GOPCs managed by DH did not provide 24-hour services. DS(H)2,FHB and the Chief Manager (Strategy & Strategy Planning) of HA (CM(S&SP),HA) explained that GOP services and emergency services provided different services. In general, GOP services catered for the needs of chronic patients who required regular follow-ups as well as episodic illnesses of a relatively less serious nature. GOPCs were not equipped with the requisite support facilities to handle medical emergencies. For emergency cases requiring emergency care, they should more appropriately be handled by emergency services at hospitals for timely treatment. In fact, none of the GOPCs in the 18 districts operated 24-hour public GOP service, and emergency cases occurring at night were dealt with by emergency services at hospitals. CM(S&SP),HA supplemented that according to the Fire Services Department, it took about 12 to 18 minutes to travel from TSW to Tuen Mun Hospital and Pok Oi Hospital, the A&E departments of which could adequately meet the service demand of TSW residents.

43. Mr Albert CHAN did not subscribe to the Administration's explanation. He maintained that it was natural for people with a stomach-ache to seek treatment at a GOPC. He said that the Administration should not ask these patients to abuse

the A&E services in public hospitals. Dr Fernando CHEUNG agreed with Mr CHAN that TSW residents should be provided with 24-hour public GOP services instead of relying on emergency services of Tuen Mun Hospital and Pok Oi Hospital for sicknesses at night. He pointed out that there was extended GOP service at Tung Chung GOPC.

44. DS(H)2,FHB explained that the extended GOP service in Tung Chung was a pilot scheme which was once suspended due to low usage and was subsequently resumed in response to residents' request. A review would be conducted to assess the scheme's effectiveness. She further advised that TSW Health Centre in TSW South currently operated an evening clinic from 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm. A review would be conducted to assess the overall demand for GOP services in TSW before considering an extended service for the proposed GOPC in TSW North.

45. Mr CHAN Kam-lam stated his support for the project and called on the Administration to expedite the project delivery. He urged Members to focus discussion on the project and suggested members to follow up any related policy matters at the relevant Panel.

Admin

46. At the request of Mr Albert CHAN, Ms Emily LAU and Dr Fernando CHEUNG, the Administration agreed to provide written response on whether the provision of 24-hour or extended GOP services would be considered under the proposed project.

47. Ms Emily LAU noted that currently the TSW Health Centre located in TSW South and the rented consultation room in Pok Oi Hospital Chinese Medicine Clinic located in Tin Wah Estate in TSW North provided about 163 000 attendances of GOP consultation services a year, and that the proposed GOPC under the project was expected to provide about 55 000 GOP consultations a year. Ms LAU enquired whether the public GOP service could adequately meet the needs of TSW residents at the present stage and in future. DS(H)2,FHB replied that the planning of the proposed GOPC had already taken into account the anticipated population growth in TSW up to year 2016. The residents' needs for public GOP service could be adequately met upon the launch of the proposed GOPC by the end of 2011 when the six consultation rooms became fully operational, with capacity for about 55 000 attendances each year. During the interim period, a pilot project would be implemented to purchase primary care services from the private sector in TSW for specified patient groups to complement the existing GOP services.

48. In response to Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming's enquiry about details of the pilot subsidy scheme, DS(H)2,FHB and Service Director (Community Care), HA (SD(CC),HA) advised that the scheme was expected to benefit some 1 000 patients residing in TSW North who were suffering from specific chronic diseases and were in need of long-term follow-up treatment. Under the scheme, each participating patient could receive a maximum of ten consultations per year at the same fee as charged by GOPCs (i.e. \$45 inclusive of drugs) for each consultation.

Patients who were recipients of Comprehensive Social Security Allowance or had been given a waiver of the GOPC fee could enjoy full or partial fee exemption in accordance with their exemption status. HA would arrange for the drugs to be delivered to clinics of participating private doctors in advance for doctors' direct prescription. DS(H)2,FHB highlighted that the scheme would bring immediate improvement to the existing GOP service in TSW and benefit residents of TSW North as they could seek treatment in clinics nearby their residence. The scheme had progressed smoothly and, as at the deadline for enrolment on 12 June 2008, five private doctors had signed up for the scheme. Subject to finalization of contractual details with the participating practitioners, the scheme would be implemented shortly after mid-2008.

General out-patient services in Tin Wah Estate

49. Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming expressed support for the proposed GOPC and the related health and welfare facilities, and urged for the expeditious construction of the building complex. He asked whether the GOP service provided through the rented GOPC under the consultation room of the Pok Oi Hospital Chinese Medicine Clinic in Tin Wah Estate since 2006 would continue after the opening of this project.

50. DS(H)2,FHB responded that upon the commissioning of the proposed GOP clinic in TSW Area 109, a review would be conducted on the demand for GOP service and the need for retaining the service in Tin Wah Estate. She pointed out that the operation of the GOPC in Tin Wah Estate was not ideal as it was not supported by a pharmacy and necessary clinic administration structure due to physical constraint, and the number of attendances was lower than what was projected. Moreover, the pilot scheme on purchasing primary care services from the private sector targeted to be implemented in phases around mid-2008 would help enhance the existing GOP services in TSW and bring convenience to residents of TSW North.

51. Miss CHAN Yuen-han and Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming said that during consultation with the YLDC, the Administration had undertaken that the GOP service in Tin Wah Estate would continue after the opening of the proposed GOPC in TSW. Ms CHAN considered that the Administration should honour its undertaking to YLDC. Sharing a similar view, Ms Emily LAU requested the Administration to clarify its undertaking made to YLDC. The Administration agreed to provide, before the relevant FC meeting, information on whether the GOP services at the rented consultation room of Pok Oi Hospital Chinese Medical Clinic in Tin Wah Estate would continue after the launch of the GOPC under the project.

Admin

Provision of mental health services

52. Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming said that while the Culture, Recreation, Community Service and Housing Committee (CRCSHC) of the YLDC had been consulted and given its support for the proposed GOPC and the related medical

facilities, the residents and community organizations in the district had not been fully consulted. He considered it necessary for the Administration to continue to engage the local community on the setting up of LSCH for discharged chronic mental patients and the proposed provision of welfare services for mental patients, in order to enhance residents' understanding of the nature of services, and allay their concerns or objections to the proposal. Ms Emily LAU shared a similar view and urged the Administration to fully consult the affected residents in the vicinity.

53. Assistant Director (Rehabilitation and Medical and Social Services) of Social Welfare Department (AD(R&MSS),SWD) advised that besides consulting the CRCSHC of YLDC in March 2008, the Owners Corporation of a nearby private residential development had been consulted in April 2008. There were concerns about possible adverse impact on property prices and the safety of students in the area. AD(R&MSS),SWD said that District Social Welfare Officer would continue to explain to the local residents the welfare facilities of the ICMHSSC and the LSCH to relieve their concern and anxiety. She added that there were currently five LSCHs in Hong Kong and there was no indication that such facilities had caused any inconvenience or nuisance to school students or residents in the districts.

54. Referring to the new service mode in which the proposed welfare and health care facilities would be located in the same joint-user complex, Dr Fernando CHEUNG relayed the concern of the Panel on Welfare Services about the adequacy of the infection control measures to protect the health of LSCH residents. He also called on the Administration to take into account the needs of LSCH residents when designing the complex. He noted that the site adjacent to the proposed complex was reserved for telephone exchange purpose and asked whether such facility would pose any health risks to LSCH residents.

55. DS(H)2,FHB assured members that their concern and the needs or service users would be taken into account when designing the complex and formulating service components for the proposed LSCH. Separate entrances would be provided for users of health care and welfare services located on different floors to minimize the chance of LSCH residents being infected by patients of GOPC on the lower floor. SD(CC),HA supplemented that the two consultation rooms at the integrated clinic for mental patients were designed to provide a quiet environment and there would be waiting area suitable for patients and their visitors.

56. Dr Fernando CHEUNG supported the proposal and urged for early delivery of the long-awaited building complex so that TSW residents could use the new facilities as soon as possible. Noting that the proposed integrated clinic would provide family medicine, gynecology, paediatric and community health services, as well as psychiatric treatment, Dr CHEUNG was concerned whether the two consultation rooms would be adequate for providing the wide range of services planned. He also enquired whether mental health out-patient clinic services would be provided.

57. DS(H)2,FHB responded that the two consultation rooms of the integrated clinic would be used by different disciplines/specialties for less complicated cases on sessional basis. More complex cases would be referred to specialist out-patient clinics of hospitals for follow-up. As regards community health and psychiatric services, SD(CC),HA supplemented that the services would be provided on sessional basis for making preliminary assessments and facilitating patients' adjustment and rehabilitation. Cases of a more serious nature would be followed up at the psychiatric out-patient department of the Castle Peak Hospital.

58. Dr Fernando CHEUNG urged the Administration to actively consider providing mental health/psychiatric out-patient clinic services under the proposed project, so that TSW patients would not need to travel to Castle Peak Hospital for follow-up. Dr CHEUNG also opined that basic dental services such as extraction and pain relief should be provided.

Project design

59. In response to Ms Emily LAU's enquiry, D Arch S advised that to expedite project delivery, the project would be pursued through a design-and-build contract. Detailed design would be drawn up after the contract was awarded through open tender which was tentatively scheduled for May 2009. D Arch S undertook to provide information on the project design as soon as available.

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60. The item was voted on and endorsed. Mr Albert CHAN and Ms Emily LAU requested that this item be voted on separately at the relevant FC meeting.

Head 707 – New Towns and Urban Area Development

PWSC(2008-09)25 324TH Widening of Yeung Uk Road between Tai Ho Road and Ma Tau Pa Road, Tsuen Wan

61. The Chairman advised that an information paper on the project was circulated to the Panel on Transport in May 2008.

62. Miss CHAN Yuen-han enquired about the four objections to the proposed road scheme, Chief Engineer (New Territories West) Civil Engineering and Development Department (CE(NTW),CEDD) advised that three objections were lodged by the owners of two shops and a new development along the road who were concerned about the impact on their business, and the other objection came from a resident who was concerned about possible noise pollution. Following explanation on the mitigation measures to address their concerns, the objectors were generally satisfied and subsequently withdrew their objections. Miss CHAN considered that the Administration should put in place all necessary measures to minimize any adverse impact on the affected residents and closely monitor the progress to ensure timely project delivery. The Director of Civil Engineering and Development (DCED) responded that suitable mitigation measures would be implemented to reduce environmental impact to the minimum.

63. Ms Emily LAU sought details of the \$17.3 million budgeted for noise mitigation measures. DCED replied that \$2 million and \$15.3 million were reserved respectively for low-noise road surfacing and for installing noise barriers. Ms LAU suggested that the Administration should set out separately the environmental impact of the proposed project during and after the construction stage, and itemize the costing for future proposals. DCED took note of Ms LAU's suggestion.

64. Ms Emily LAU referred to the \$1.1 million provision for removal of existing abandoned structures and enquired whether the owners could be identified and held responsible for the cost. CE(NTW),CEDD advised that the abandoned structures to be removed included an electricity transformer room, lighting tower, and entrance kiosk which were structures at the ex-Tsuen Wan Sports Ground in Yeung Uk Road.

65. The item was voted on and endorsed.

Head 703 – Buildings

PWSC(2008-09)26 11NT Conversion of aqua privies into flushing toilets – phase 5

66. The Chairman advised members that an information paper on the project was circulated to the Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene on 8 May 2008.

67. Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming expressed concern about the interface between the proposed project with other public sewerage projects in the New Territories (NT) under planning or in progress.

68. The Principal Assistant Secretary (Food)2, Food and Health Bureau (PAS(F)2, FHB) advised that the conversion works for the 80 aqua privies under the project could be classified into three types, i.e. general refurbishment works (Type 1); installation of bio-treatment system (Type 2); and connection with public sewerage (Type 3). There were six aqua privies under the current proposal which would be connected to public sewers available in the vicinity. The conversion method recommended for each aqua privy would be reviewed and, if required, adjusted in the light of the situation on the ground. Hence, the availability of newly completed public sewerage facilities in the vicinity would be taken into account in reviewing the conversion method.

69. Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming noted that under the proposed project, refurbishment works would be carried out for existing aqua privies. As a large number of such facilities were built years ago, Mr CHEUNG doubted whether it would be more cost effective to rebuild the aqua privies instead. Noting the proposed conversion of existing aqua privies into toilets with flushing system,

Mr CHEUNG also expressed concern whether the existing underground septic tanks would have adequate capacity to cope with the increase in volume of sewage.

70. D Arch S referred to Enclosure 5 to the Administration's paper on the exterior and interior views of the toilet after completion of the proposed conversion works. He advised that the proposed conversion works had been worked out after examining the structures of the existing facilities as a whole to achieve an overall improvement to the toilets. For structures with inadequate ceiling height, structural alterations would be carried out for improvements. PAS(F)2, FHB said that for Type 1 aqua privies, general refurbishment works would include conversion of the existing septic tanks into underground holding tanks. The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department would arrange for more frequent clearing of the underground tanks to cope with the increase in volume of sewage from flushing.

71. Mr Daniel LAM supported the project. He was concerned that as the toilets would be connected to public sewers only if these were available in the vicinity, the environmental nuisance caused by the existing aqua privies could not be fully alleviated. Mr LAM pointed out that many scenic and tourists spots in NT were provided with aqua privies. He called on the Administration to expedite the conversion works of these aqua privies.

72. Miss CHAN Yuen-han, Ms Emily LAU and Mrs Selina CHOW expressed support for the project. Miss CHAN was concerned about the provision of public toilets in NT and outlying islands to meet the demand and expectation of the public and tourists. Miss CHAN said that the absence of public toilet facilities in Shum Wat on the Lantau Island had caused much inconvenience to picnickers. She was dissatisfied that this popular scenic spot was not included in the proposed project. Miss CHAN opined that more resources should be allocated to provide more public toilets and improve their standard taking into account the views of DCs and local residents. Miss CHAN said that the standard of public toilet facilities should be commensurate with the image of Hong Kong as an international city of Asia. The Administration could make reference to the public toilet facilities in Singapore and Japan.

73. Ms Emily LAU and Mrs Selina CHOW expressed concern that completion of the conversion programme for all aqua privies in the territory would take a long time as the target completion was 2012-2013. Ms LAU noted that a Reserve List had been drawn up for the project and enquired about the purpose of the list.

74. PAS(F)2, FHB advised that the Administration had endeavoured to speed up the conversion of aqua privies by conducting the works in phases so that funding approval could be sought once the details for the proposed works in each phase were ready. In some cases, it was necessary to resolve issues of land ownership and address the concerns of land owners, hence more time was required for taking forward the conversion works. To expedite project delivery, a Reserve List had

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been drawn up so that replacements would be identified if certain works could not proceed as planned due to land or other technical reasons. He took note of Miss CHAN's suggestion of provision of public toilet facilities at Shum Wat and members' other views on the provision of public toilet facilities in the territory.

75. Regarding Mrs Selina CHOW's concern about the flushing facilities in the proposed toilets, the Assistant Director (Operations)³, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department advised that the proposed toilets would be provided with manual flushing facilities. PAS(F)2, FHB took note of Mrs CHOW's view on the merits of installing motor sensor-controlled flushing facilities in public toilets.

76. Ms Emily LAU called on the Administration to allow room for creativity in the design of public toilets, with reference to previous successful designs such as those at Pak Shek Kok promenade. Ms LAU also reminded the Administration of the need to provide barrier-free access for people with disabilities (PwDs).

77. D Arch S advised that unlike the design of new public toilet facilities, there was limited scope for creativity in the design of the conversion works for existing aqua privies due to site and technical constraints. As to the needs of PwDs, D Arch S advised that toilets for the disabled would be provided subject to availability of space at the existing sites of the aqua privies. The provision of barrier-free access would also be taken into consideration in the project design. Regarding Ms Emily LAU's concern about provision of adequate cubicles for the female toilets, PAS(F)2, FHB said that the Administration was aware of the demand in this regard and had proposed provision of additional cubicles in the female toilets by swapping the location of male and female toilets in the existing layout.

78. The item was voted on and endorsed.

Head 707 – New Towns and Urban Area Development

**PWSC(2008-09)29 721CL Kau Hui development - engineering works
in Area 16, Yuen Long, phase 2 - extension
of Road L3**

79. The Chairman advised members that an information paper on the project had been circulated to the Panel on Development on 19 May 2008.

80. Ms Emily LAU noted that the area in which the proposed Road L3 extension was situated was a low-lying flood plain susceptible to flooding during severe rainstorms. She asked about the capacity of the drainage works associated with the proposed road project in withstanding future rainstorms upon completion of the project. DCED advised that the proposed drainage facilities could withstand rainstorms with a return period of one in 50 years.

81. The item was voted on and endorsed.

Head 704 – Drainage

PWSC(2008-09)27 144CD Drainage improvement in Southern Hong Kong Island

82. The Chairman advised members that an information paper on the project had been circulated to the Panel on Development on 20 May 2008.

83. The item was voted on and endorsed.

Head 709 – Waterworks

PWSC(2008-09)28 13WS Salt water supply system for Pok Fu Lam area

84. The Chairman advised members that an information paper on the project had been circulated to the Panel on Development on 21 May 2008.

85. The item was voted on and endorsed.

86. The meeting ended at 10:43 am.