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Legislative Council

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

**Minutes of the 13th meeting
held in the Conference Room A of Legislative Council Building
on Monday, 25 May 2009, 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 CHAN Kam-lam, SBS, JP
Hon LAU Wong-fat, GBM, GBS, JP
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, GBS, JP
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, SBS, JP
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH
Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, SBS, JP
Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP
Hon KAM Nai-wai, MH
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king
Hon CHAN Hak-kan
Hon Paul CHAN Mo-po, MH, JP
Hon Tanya CHAN
Hon WONG Kwok-kin, BBS
Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP
Dr Hon Samson TAM Wai-ho, JP

Members absent:

Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC (Deputy Chairman)

Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon Miriam LAU Kin-ye, GBS, JP
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon LEE Wing-tat
Dr Hon LEUNG Ka-lau
Hon WONG Yuk-man

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)
Mr Enoch LAM Tin-sing, JP	Deputy Secretary for Development (Works) ²
Mr Raymond YOUNG, JP	Permanent Secretary for Development (Planning and Lands)
Mr Benny WONG Yiu-kam, JP	Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (1)
Miss Sandra LAM	Principal Assistant Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) (Works)
Mr Edward YAU Tang-wah, JP	Secretary for the Environment
Mr Albert LAM Kai-chung, JP	Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (2)
Dr Ellen CHAN Ying-lung	Assistant Director (Environmental Infrastructure), Environmental Protection Department
Mr Alex NG Yau-wing	Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Special Waste and Landfill Restoration), Environmental Protection Department
Ms Sharon HO Ho-shuen	Principal Assistant Secretary (Transport) ⁵ , Transport and Housing Bureau
Mr WAI Chi-sing, JP	Director of Highways

Clerk in attendance:

Ms Debbie YAU	Chief Council Secretary (1) ⁶
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Staff in attendance:

Ms Angel SHEK	Senior Council Secretary (1) ¹
Ms Alice CHEUNG	Senior Legislative Assistant (1) ¹
Mr Frankie WOO	Legislative Assistant (1) ²

The Chairman reported that a total of 102 capital works projects of an amount of \$53.565 billion had been endorsed by the Public Works Subcommittee (PWSC) in the 2008-2009 session so far.

Head 705 – Civil Engineering

PWSC(2009-10)16 233DS Sludge treatment facilities

2. The Chairman advised that due to time constraint, the Subcommittee had not been able to finish discussion on the proposal at the last meeting on 20 May 2009. The item was carried forward to this meeting.

Technology of the proposed sludge treatment facilities and alternative proposals

3. Prof Patrick LAU noted that the Green Island Cement (Holdings) Limited (GIC(H)Ltd.) had proposed to the Administration to use their novel technology (i.e. Eco-co-combustion) at their existing cement plant site for the treatment of sludge and recycle the ash so generated into cement manufacture. As the GIC(H)Ltd.'s proposal appeared to be less costly and more environmental-friendly, Prof LAU doubted whether the sludge treatment facilities (STF) proposed by the Administration was the best option for the treatment of sludge. He also enquired if the Administration would explore ways to make better use of the sludge, such as transporting them to the Mainland for recycled use in the construction industry.

4. The Assistant Director (Environmental Infrastructure), Environmental Protection Department (AD(EI), EPD) advised that the Administration had explored various alternatives (e.g. biological treatment of sludge and drying of sludge) for the treatment of sludge before carrying out the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the proposed STF. As these options had their limitations in terms of the size of area required for treatment and storage, energy consumption, emission performance or impact on the environment, they were considered less sustainable and effective as a long-term solution to manage and treat sludge. She said that overseas experience had shown that incineration technology used by the proposed STF was the most reliable and energy efficient process for treating sludge. The method also had the advantage of generating energy to produce electricity.

5. In reply to Prof Patrick LAU, AD(EI), EPD explained that the proposed treatment using incineration method would adopt the most stringent target emission standards (i.e. equivalent to the European Union Standards (EUS)). It would perform better in terms of carbon emission when compared to other methods such as biological treatment.

6. Mr Paul CHAN noted that GIC(H)Ltd. had not made pre-qualification submission by the deadline (i.e. 21 January 2009) but issued a letter to EPD two days after closing of invitation, briefly outlining their proposal for adopting their previously proposed system for municipal solid waste (MSW) treatment to treat sludge in their Tap Shek Kok facility, and expressing their wish to be considered for handling sludge treatment. He enquired whether procedural consideration

(i.e. delay in prequalification submission) was an overriding factor in not allowing GIC(H)Ltd. to participate in the tender exercise. As GIC(H)Ltd.'s proposal appeared to be a less costly and more environmental-friendly solution for Hong Kong's waste management problems, he questioned whether GIC(H)Ltd.'s proposal would be an alternative proposal to be considered for sludge treatment. Mr CHAN said that GIC(H)Ltd. had provided in its letter to Subcommittee members detailed explanation in response to the Administration's views about the company's proposal.

(Post-meeting note: The letters from GIC(H)Ltd. to the Chairman and Mr CHAN Mo-po tabled at the meeting were subsequently circulated to members after the meeting vide LC Paper No. PWSC103/08-09 issued on 27 May 2009.)

7. The Secretary for the Environment (SEN) stressed that the Administration was open to different alternatives for sludge treatment, and welcomed suggestions from private enterprises. To enable proper consideration of different proposals and ensure fair competition, it was essential that the proponents should follow the prescribed procedures for prequalification submission. In addition, to prove the proposed alternative technology and associated environmental impacts would satisfy the relevant technical and environmental protection requirements, the proponents needed to carry out an EIA to demonstrate the feasibility of their proposals as well as compliance with the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance. While GIC(H)Ltd. had approached the Administration time and again in the previous years about the proposal for the treatment of MSW at its existing cement plant site, it was not until 23 January 2009 that the company had formally proposed to the Administration to use the same Eco-co-combustion system for treating sludge on the cement plant site. As the submission was made after the prequalification submission deadline, the company's proposal could not be pursued further. SEN pointed out that GIC(H)Ltd. had not carried out an EIA for its proposed sludge treatment facility at the site. The proposal also did not conform to the location requirement as its facility was confined to their existing cement plant in Tap Shek Kok (instead of the designated STF site at Tsang Tsui, Tuen Mun) which was closer to residential areas. It was doubtful that the local community would accept the proposed facility at the present site. It was also uncertain whether GIC(H)Ltd.'s proposal would be compatible with the current "Other Specific Uses/Cement Plant" land use status of the site. Given these uncertainties, together with a lack of information about the project estimates and fee schedule, the Administration was not able to further assess GIC(H)Ltd.'s proposal. The Deputy Director of Environmental Protection(2) (DDEP2, EPD) added that the company had not provided any breakdown or basis on how the project estimate of \$950 million was arrived at. The estimate was considered unreliable as the company had provided varied cost estimates at different times presumably under different assumptions.

8. AD(EI), EPD advised that as for the STF currently proposed, the project estimates was arrived at in a systematic manner, taking into account the prices of individual components of the incineration system as quoted recently by different

suppliers. She pointed out that the project estimates of the STF proposal could not be compared on equal basis with GIC(H) Ltd.'s proposal, as the latter was made on the assumption of making use of existing and site-specific facilities.

9. Prof Patrick LAU expressed concern that members were not able to assess the proposal in an objective manner without the knowledge and expertise in STF and the relevant technologies. While TMDC had expressed no objection to the submission of the STF project to PWSC for consideration, it was incumbent upon members to study the proposal thoroughly and make appropriate recommendations for consideration of the Finance Committee (FC). He opined that although GIC(H)Ltd. was not able to meet the deadline for prequalification submission, it would be in the interest of the public for the Administration to look further into the proposal.

10. The Chairman advised that the funding proposal under discussion had been scrutinized by the relevant panel before being considered by PWSC and FC. Nevertheless, he agreed that it was difficult for members to consider the proposal if there was inadequate information for comparing the options. He was of the view that it might not be appropriate to discard GIC(H) Ltd.'s proposal on grounds of its delay in making the prequalification submission. He considered that the prequalification submission was similar to an expression of interest, and the Administration could exercise flexibility for accepting late submissions. If GIC(H)Ltd.'s bid did not conform to the requirements, the Administration could then disregard the proposal. He suggested that an independent expert could be appointed to further assess GIC(H)Ltd.'s proposal, and GIC(H)Ltd. should be given the chance to present their proposal to the Administration for consideration.

11. Mr Abraham SHEK said that as members did not have the expertise to assess the technical aspect of the proposals of the Administration and the GIC(H)Ltd., members could only assess on the basis of the financial implications. He considered it necessary for members to have more information before taking a decision in order to ensure proper spending of public monies. As the proposed STF was far more expensive than GIC(H)Ltd.'s proposal, the Administration should provide strong justifications to convince members of the merits of the Administration's proposal. Mr SHEK requested the Administration to further discuss with GIC(H) Ltd., and review the tender specifications as necessary. He emphasized that he did not mean to upset the established tendering system but only to ensure prudent use of public resources.

12. Mr IP Kwok-him concurred with the view that members should exercise due diligence in playing a gate-keeping role when vetting funding proposals. However, he opined that GIC(H)Ltd. should comply with the established procedures and requirements and send in their prequalification submission on time, since the company was fully aware of the prequalification requirements and timetable. If the company's proposal could not conform to the requirement of operating the STF at Tsang Tsui, the local community would find it difficult to accept such proposal.

13. Ms Cyd HO said that, in view of the monopolistic nature of the proposed STF services, she considered it more appropriate and reliable for the Administration rather than private enterprises to undertake the project. Nevertheless, she considered that GIC(H)Ltd. should provide more information on the financial analysis of its proposal for members to consider. It would not be adequate for GIC(H)Ltd. to state just the amount of possible savings that might be achieved.

14. Mr TAM Yiu-chung said that the facility proposed by GIC(H)Ltd. was in close proximity to residential areas and would not be welcomed by the local residents. Mr LAU Wong-fat added that it was after lengthy discussion that TMDC had decided to express no objection to the proposed STF at Tsang Tsui. If the Administration switched to another proposal at this stage, it would need to consult TMDC all over again.

15. SEN advised that the Administration welcomed proposals that could integrate sludge treatment with other features for environmental protection. While GIC(H)Ltd's proposal appeared attractive, the company should still follow the established procedures for prequalification submission and tendering. SEN clarified that prequalification exercise was different from an expression of interest exercise. For prequalification, open invitation would be adopted to identify technically and financially capable contractors who possessed the necessary expertise and experience in design, construction and operation of sludge incineration facilities, and they would be encouraged to submit proposals for the STF project. He said that a notice was published in the Government gazette on 5 December 2008 to invite interested companies and joint-ventures who wished to be included in the list of pre-qualified tenderers to make submissions. He reiterated that GIC(H)Ltd. had not submitted its prequalification submission on or before the deadline, and the letter from the company to EPD on 23 January 2009 was just a document indicating its intent and could not be regarded as the required prequalification submission. As GIC(H)Ltd.'s letter was not in compliance with the established procedure, and did not meet the facility location and EIA requirement, the Administration did not consider it justified and fair to re-open the prequalification exercise only for GIC(H) Ltd. He also cautioned that there were no details on the project estimates proposed by GIC(H)Ltd. and the bases of its calculation were not known. He stressed that it would be necessary to conduct public consultation all over again if GIC(H)Ltd.'s proposal was to be further considered. He was aware that some members of the community including TMDC had indicated strong objection to developing MSW treatment facilities at the cement plant site.

16. SEN further advised that in the past discussions with GIC(H)Ltd., the Administration had advised the company to conduct EIA to confirm the technology and emission performance of its proposed facility. However, the company had not positively responded to this request. The Administration had serious reservation about taking forward GIC(H)Ltd.'s proposal in the absence of a proper EIA study. The Chairman remarked that it would be financially difficult for GIC(H)Ltd. to carry out an EIA without the Administration's assurance that the

company would be allowed to compete when tenders were called.

Consultation with Tuen Mun District Council

17. Mr LAU Wong-fat expressed support for the proposal. He said that in response to TMDC's grave concern about the possible adverse impact of the proposed STF, the Environment Bureau (ENB) had taken the lead to set up the Tuen Mun Development Liaison Working Group to discuss proposals for improving Tuen Mun's overall image and development. Having regard to the progress of discussion of the Working Group, and in view of the stringent emission standards to be adopted for the proposed STF, TMDC had expressed no objection, at its meeting on 5 May 2009, to the submission of the STF project to PWSC. He said that TMDC members generally shared an understanding of the need for the provision of STF and its benefits to the community at large.

18. Mr WONG Kwok-hing said that although Mr LAU Wong-fat, Chairman of TMDC, had expressed his support for the proposal, TMDC had only expressed "no objection" to but not support for the submission of the project to PWSC. He further said that he would only give support to the proposal if TMDC confirmed its support in writing. Without such confirmation, he would vote against the proposal. He strongly requested the Administration to defer the project and conduct further consultation with TMDC.

19. SEN said that he hoped members would understand there had been a positive change in the stance of TMDC following consultation from April to May 2009, and TMDC had expressed no further objection to the proposal at the meeting on 5 May 2009. In view of the urgency for the provision of STF for the treatment of sludge, he considered it inappropriate to withdraw the proposal at this stage. He assured members that the Working Group would maintain dialogue with TMDC with regard to the proposals presented by TMDC and other projects impacting on the development of Tuen Mun.

20. Mr KAM Nai-wai enquired about the Administration's commitment towards the ten proposals put forward by TMDC for the development of Tuen Mun. DDEP2, EPD advised that the Working Group was still in the process of discussing the proposals and the Administration had provided preliminary responses to TMDC. While some proposals could be implemented within a relatively short period, other proposals required longer-term planning and consideration (e.g. extension of the mass transit railway system to Tuen Mun). He highlighted that, as an example, a timetable had been set for taking forward greening and beautification of Tuen Mun in response to TMDC's proposal. SEN assured members that the Administration would follow up closely the proposals raised by TMDC, irrespective of whether the proposed STF would be built in Tuen Mun or not.

21. Mr WONG Kwok-hing pointed out that according to the Administration's written responses to the Working Group and TMDC, the Administration had made specific commitment to only two of the ten proposals. Apart from implementation

of greening plans for Tuen Mun by 2011, the provision of crematorium would be removed from the planning of Tuen Mun Area 46. However, the Administration had not provided definite responses to the other proposals. Mr KAM Nai-wai expressed dissatisfaction that the Administration had not presented in its paper the full picture of its responses to the proposals, such as the Administration's agreement to abandon the proposal of constructing a crematorium in Tuen Mun. He said that Members belonging to the Democratic Party would abstain from voting for the proposed project.

Admin

22. SEN stressed that the Administration endeavoured to present all relevant information on the consultation with TMDC and the Administration's responses to the TMDC's proposals. The Administration was well aware of the concerns of TMDC and members in considering the proposed STF, and a balance had to be struck between the interests of local residents and the larger community. He explained that the ten proposals raised by TMDC were meant for the betterment of Tuen Mun. As some of the proposals warranted more time for discussion, the Working Group would continue to follow up the matter and maintain an active dialogue with TMDC. At the request of Mr KAM Nai-wai, the Administration agreed to provide information on the Administration's latest responses to the ten proposals put forward by TMDC representatives to the Working Group.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's latest responses to the ten proposals put forward by TMDC tabled at the meeting was subsequently circulated to members after the meeting vide LC Paper No. PWSC103/08-09 issued on 27 May 2009.)

23. Mr TAM Yiu-chung said that it would be difficult for TMDC to give support for the proposed STF, as there were already many obnoxious facilities placed in Tuen Mun. However, TMDC also saw the need for the provision of a dedicated and appropriate means to handle the large amount of sludge generated by Harbour Area Treatment Scheme (HATS). He considered it necessary for the Working Group to continue with its work with regard to projects impacting on the development of Tuen Mun after the proposed project was approved. Mr IP Kwok-him and Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming shared similar concerns. Mr CHEUNG requested ENB to continue to lead the Working Group. SEN agreed.

Environmental concerns

24. Ms Cyd HO enquired about the emergency plan in case of system failure, given that the proposed STF were the only facilities for incineration of the large quantity of sludge in the territory. AD(EI), EPD explained that, similar to the existing Chemical Waste Treatment Centre in Tsing Yi, contingency plans would be in place in the event of system shut-down, including quenching device, extended storage of sludge in the sludge receiving facilities, as well as landfill disposal during system failure of the proposed STF.

25. Ms Cyd HO reminded the Administration of the need to ensure safe delivery of sludge by land transport to STF. Mr KAM Nai-wai requested the Administration to ensure that malodour would not be emitted during delivery. He also enquired about the mitigation measures recommended by the EIA report.

26. AD(EI), EPD advised that the sludge would be transported in sealed containers to mitigate problem of spillage and malodour. It was envisaged that containers with improved design would be commissioned in future adapting to the specific needs of transporting sludge. She highlighted the measures that would be taken to avoid odour emission during the unloading of sludge from the sealed containers in the trucks/vessels to the sludge receiving facilities at the STF and in the treatment process. These included the use of ventilation system to generate negative pressure to control odour emission, activated carbon filtration and regular site inspection. For example, independent experts would also be appointed to inspect the site three times per week to monitor odour emission performance, on top of other environmental monitoring measures. She assured members that the most stringent target emission standards equivalent to EUS would be adopted. The EIA findings had revealed that the emission level of the proposed STF would not pose adverse impacts on air quality and human health.

27. Mr KAM Nai-wai was worried that the actual number of trucks carrying sludge to STF would be higher than the estimated number under the proposal.

28. AD(EI), EPD said that around 70% to 75% of sludge would be delivered by sea to the proposed STF. It was estimated that, upon full commissioning of the STF, there would only be about two vessels delivering sludge (i.e. about 1 400 tonnes per day) produced by HATS to the STF everyday. As for the remaining 25% to 30% of sludge generated from other sewage treatment works, they could only be transported to the STF by land transport, at around 50 truck-count per day. This estimation had taken into account population growth, planned expansion and upgrading of existing regional sewage treatment works up to 2015 and the consequent increase in the amount of sludge requiring disposal. The Administration would watch closely the latest development and monitor the delivery process accordingly. SEN added that the assumed 50 truck-count per day was based on the estimation of further increase in the amount of sludge from the current quantity of about 800 tonnes per day to some 1 500 tonnes per day by 2014 and subsequently over 2 000 tonnes per day by 2020.

29. Ms Cyd HO suggested that, as a compensatory measure, electricity generated by the incineration of sludge should be made available for use by the Tuen Mun residents. AD(EI), EPD said that based on a quantity of 2 000 tonnes of sludge per day, it was estimated that the treatment of sludge could generate around 7.5 megawatts (MW) of electricity per day. After deducting the daily electricity demand for operating the STF (i.e. around 6 MW), the remaining amount of electricity would be sufficient for use by around 3 000 households per day. The Administration was in the process of discussion with the power company about the opening of electricity grid for transmitting electricity to be generated at the proposed STF.

30. In response to Ms Cyd HO's further enquiry about the use of carbon capture technology to collect and store carbon discharged by the proposed STF, SEN stated that the amount of carbon emission from the proposed STF was limited and the development of commercial scale of carbon capture technology was still at a preliminary stage. He added that green house gas generated from disposal of sludge at landfills was more than that by incineration.

31. Ms Cyd HO suggested the Administration to make reference to GIC(H)Ltd.'s proposal and consider recycling the treated sludge for cement manufacture or other uses. AD(EI), EPD said that the Administration was open to further discussion with GIC(H)Ltd. in this regard.

Source of sludge and treatment of municipal solid waste

32. Mr TAM Yiu-chung enquired whether the proposed STF would be deployed to treat mud arisen from the upcoming public works, such as the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link. AD(EI), EPD advised that the proposed STF would only handle sludge produced by HATS and from the existing regional sewage treatment works. Mud arisen from seabed dredging associated with marine works would be separately dealt with by other means of treatment and disposal, depending on their level of contaminants.

33. Addressing the concern of Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming about future expansion of the proposed facilities to include the treatment of MSW, SEN said that the location for incineration of MSW was still under study by the Administration.

34. As members raised no further question, the Chairman put the item to vote. Eight members voted for the proposal, four members voted against and two members abstained. The individual results were as follows:

For :

Mr CHAN Kam-lam
Mr TAM Yiu-chung
Ms Cyd HO Sau-lan
Miss Tanya CHAN
(8 members)

Mr LAU Wong-fat
Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming
Mr CHAN Hak-kan
Mr IP Kwok-him

Against :

Mr Abraham SHEK Lai-him
Prof Patrick LAU Sau-shing
(4 members)

Mr WONG Kwok-hing
Mr Paul CHAN Mo-po

Abstain:

Mr Fred LI Wah-ming
(2 members)

Mr KAM Nai-wai

35. The item was endorsed. Prof Patrick LAU and Mr Abraham SHEK requested that this item be voted on separately at the relevant FC meeting.

Head 706 – Highways

**PWSC(2009-10)29 819TH Traffic improvements to Tuen Mun Road
Town Centre Section**

36. The Chairman advised that the proposal was to upgrade 819TH to Category A at an estimated cost of \$1,814.4 million in money-of-the-day (MOD) prices for traffic improvements to the Tuen Mun Road Town Centre Section (TMRTCS). The Panel on Transport was consulted on the proposal at the meeting on 24 April 2009. In response to members' request, the Administration had provided in the PWSC paper information on the measures to improve the environmental conditions of the covered section of the TMRTCS at Tuen Mun Town Plaza.

37. The item was voted on and endorsed.

PWSC(2009-10)30 157TB Centre Street escalator link (stage 1)

38. The Chairman advised that the proposal was to upgrade 157TB to Category A at an estimated cost of \$60.7 million in MOD prices for construction of an escalator link in Centre Street. An information paper on the proposal was circulated to the Panel on Transport on 20 April 2009.

39. Mr KAM Nai-wai said that while residents of the Central and Western Districts looked forward to early implementation of the project, they had raised a number of concerns. As the proposed works comprised three sections of one-way escalators between Third Street and Ying Wa Terrace and one section of two-way escalator between Ying Wa Terrace and Bonham Road, he enquired about the reasons for not providing all sections of the escalator link with two-way escalators.

40. The Director of Highways (DHy) explained that as the section between Ying Wa Terrace and Bonham Road had a steep gradient, there was a need to provide two-way escalator thereat to facilitate pedestrians commuting along the street. As for the other sections (i.e. between Third Street and Ying Wa Terrace), there was inadequate space to accommodate two-way escalators due to widening of the existing footway on the eastern and western sides under the project scope and the provision of emergency exit.

41. Mr KAM Nai-wai further enquired whether construction of an escalator link for the section between Queen's Road West and Third Street would be taken forward as stage 2 of the proposed project, and the timeframe for implementation. He also requested the Administration to consider connecting the escalator link with the Sai Ying Pun Station of the West Island Line (WIL).

42. DHy said that after implementation of WIL, pedestrians could access the escalator link and commute between Third Street and Bonham Road via the underground access of WIL and its exit/entrance at Second Street. Noting the explanation, Mr KAM Nai-wai suggested that the Administration should provide escalator link between Second Street and Third Street for pedestrians to reach the areas under the escalator link. DHy responded that pedestrians could commute conveniently between the WIL exit/entrance at Second Street and the escalator link exit at Third Street via the existing footbridge leading to Sai Ying Pun Market Complex (SYPMC) and the existing escalator system at SYPMC.

43. Mr KAM Nai-wai expressed concern that as the escalator system at SYPMC would close outside the market's opening hours (i.e. after 10:00pm), this would create inconvenience to users. In view of the steepness of the section between Second Street and Third Street, he requested the Administration to consider providing escalator link also for the section between Second Street and Third Street. DHy said that the Administration would review the operation hours of the escalator system at SYPMC upon opening of the escalator link.

44. Mr IP Kwok-him was pleased that the Administration had taken on board the request of the Central and Western District Council to build the proposed escalator link. He requested the Administration to expedite the project and consider the feasibility of stage 2 development of the escalator link.

45. In reply to Mr KAM Nai-wai, DHy said that the Fire Services Department had confirmed that the proposed works would not pose an adverse impact on the fire exit/entrance at Ying Wa Terrace or obstruct the access of fire engines to it.

46. Mr KAM Nai-wai noted that some owners of shops near the proposed escalator link were concerned about the potential reduction in pedestrian flow of the footway fronting their properties resulting from the construction of the proposed escalator link. DHy said that to address these concerns, the project would incorporate widening and improvement works to existing footway on Centre Street between Third Street and Bonham Road.

47. Mr KAM Nai-wai expressed concern about the long duration to be taken to complete the proposed project, i.e. by April 2012. DHy explained that there were a lot of existing underground facilities obstructing the construction of the escalator.

48. Miss Tanya CHAN supported early implementation of the proposal. She requested the Administration to also review the existing escalator link between Mid-Level and Central, in view of its increasing pedestrian flow. DHy took note of the member's concern and informed members that the Administration was conducting a study on the establishment of an assessment system for provision of hillside escalator links in the territory.

49. The item was voted on and endorsed.

50. The meeting ended at 10:45 am.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
4 June 2009