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

**Minutes of the 5th meeting
held in Room A of Legislative Council Building
on Wednesday, 16 December 2009 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, SBS, JP
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon CHAN Kam-lam, SBS, JP
Hon Miriam LAU Kin-yee, GBS, JP
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH
Hon LEE Wing-tat
Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP
Hon KAM Nai-wai, MH
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king
Hon CHAN Hak-kan
Hon Tanya CHAN
Hon WONG Kwok-kin, BBS
Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP

Member attending:

Hon IP Wai-ming, MH

Members absent:

Hon LAU Wong-fat, GBM, GBS, JP
Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, GBS, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, SBS, JP
Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, GBS, JP
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
Dr Hon LEUNG Ka-lau
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP

Public officers attending:

Ms Doris HO Pui-ling	Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) ³
Mr MAK Chai-kwong, JP	Permanent Secretary for Development (Works)
Mr Thomas CHOW Tat-ming, JP	Permanent Secretary for Development (Planning and Lands)
Ms Anissa WONG, JP	Permanent Secretary for the Environment
Miss Sandra LAM Ching-nga	Principal Assistant Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Works)
Mr Peter TSANG Wai-mau	Chief Estate Surveyor (Acquisition) Lands Department
Mrs Marigold LAU LAI Siu-wan, JP	Director of Architectural Services
Mr FONG Siu-wai	Assistant Director (Property Services) (Acting) Architectural Services Department
Mr LAU Ka-keung, JP	Director of Drainage Services
Mr John CHAI Sung-veng, JP	Director of Civil Engineering and Development
Dr Ellen CHAN Ying-lung, JP	Assistant Director (Environmental Infrastructure) Environmental Protection Department
Mr WONG Hang-chi	Deputy Director of Highways
Mr Andrew TSANG Yue-tung, JP	Assistant Director (2) Home Affairs Department
Mrs Dorothy MA CHOW Pui-fun	Deputy Secretary-General (1) University Grants Committee
Miss Gloria LO Kit-wai	Principal Assistant Secretary (Health) ² Food and Health Bureau
Mr Donald LI	Chief Manager (Capital Planning) Hospital Authority
Mr Raymond SY Kim-cheung	Principal Assistant Secretary (Infrastructure and Research Support) Education Bureau

Mr Benjamin YUNG Po-shu	Principal Education Officer (Curriculum Development) ² Education Bureau
Mr SHE Mang	Chief Curriculum Development Officer (Information Technology Education) Education Bureau
Dr LEE Kin-wang	Head (Estates, Health and Safety Division) Vocational Training Council
Miss Ann HON	Assistant Director (Subventions) Social Welfare Department
Mr MA Lee-tak, JP	Director of Water Supplies
Mr Victor LAM Wai-kiu	Assistant Government Chief Information Officer (Business Transformation) Office of the Government Chief Information Officer
Mr Kenneth WONG Hung-keung	Chief Civil Engineer Transport and Housing Bureau
Professor Gabriel M LEUNG, JP	Under Secretary for Food and Health
Mrs Angelina CHEUNG FUNG Wing-ping	Principal Assistant Secretary (Food) ¹ Food and Health Bureau
Dr Constance CHAN Hon-ye, JP	Controller, Centre for Food Safety Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Mr Wilson LEE Hung-wai	Project Director (3) Architectural Services Department
Dr LEE Siu-yuen	Assistant Director (Food Surveillance and Control) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Mrs Apollonia LIU LEE Ho-kei	Principal Assistant Secretary (Transport) ⁵ Transport and Housing Bureau
Mr CHOW Ying-shun, JP	Project Manager (Major Works) Highways Department
Mr Sam WONG Chung-kwong	Chief Engineer (Major Works) 2-2 Highways Department
Mr LEE Yan-ming	Chief Traffic Engineer (New Territories West) Transport Department

Clerk in attendance:

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

Mrs Constance LI	Assistant Secretary General 1
Ms Angel SHEK	Senior Council Secretary (1)1
Mr Frankie WOO	Senior Legislative Assistant (1)3
Ms Christy YAU	Legislative Assistant (1)1

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The Chairman reported that a total of 11 capital works projects of an amount of \$73,132.6 million had been endorsed by the Public Works Subcommittee (PWSC) in the 2009-2010 session so far.

Capital Works Reserve Fund Block Allocations

PWSC(2009-10)78 — Block allocations for Heads 701 to 711 under the Capital Works Reserve Fund

2. The Chairman advised that the proposal was to seek approval of a total allocation of \$11,824.3 million for the block allocations under the Capital Works Reserve Fund for 2010-2011. The funding proposals in PWSC(2009-10)78 had been circulated to the Panel on Development on 17 November 2009. Panel members had not raised any comments on the proposals. The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) had also consulted the Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting (ITB Panel) on the proposed allocation for the block vote under "Head 710- Computerization" on 9 November 2009. As requested by the ITB Panel, OGCIO would provide supplementary information on contracting out information technology projects, and publish tender-related information on its website.

3. The Chairman advised that each member speaking at the meeting would be allowed a speaking time limit of up to five minutes.

Compensation for loss of redevelopment potential

4. Mr IP Kwok-him noted that the compensation estimate in relation to the loss of redevelopment potential arising from underground strata resumption required for the West Island Line (WIL) project (Annex 1A to PWSC(2009-10)78) under Head 701 was \$378.9 million, of which \$70 million was earmarked for 2010-2011. He enquired about the coverage and calculation of the compensation. Mr KAM Nai-wai said that as property owners could make claims under the Railways Ordinance (Cap. 519), the Government should inform the owners affected by the WIL project of the compensation arrangements such as calculations to facilitate them, especially those elderly owners, to make claims. He asked whether the Government would take the initiative to arrange for compensation to be made to the eligible owners. Mr IP Kwok-him considered that the Government should also take the initiative to make compensation to the property owners

affected by the resumption of underground strata for the construction of the Hong Kong section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link.

5. The Chief Estate Surveyor (Acquisition), Lands Department (CES(Acq), LandsD) explained that the compensation estimate of \$378.9 million would cover the compensation for around 0.8 hectares of underground stratum underneath 48 private developments and 109 lots affected by the resumption for the WIL project referred to in Annex 1A to the paper. The project did not involve resumption of the buildings above the underground strata concerned. The strata resumption would be undertaken in eight phases from January to August 2010. The provision of \$70 million for 2010-2011 was an estimate of compensation likely to be sought by property owners of two over 40-year old private buildings that would likely be redeveloped. The calculation was based mainly on the current market value of the properties vis-à-vis their estimated value after redevelopment. As for other affected buildings with multi-ownership, it was envisaged that their re-development potential was rather distant, but the estimated provision for their potential compensation claims had already been included in the overall project estimate of \$378.9 million.

6. CES(Acq), LandsD further said that in accordance with the mechanism for determination of claims under the Railways Ordinance (Cap. 519), the Government would invite the affected property owners to make claims and propose the amount of compensation for the Government's consideration. The claimants would be entitled to the costs for appointing professionals to seek compensation on their behalf. While it was not the existing practice to provide information to claimants on the estimated amount of compensation, the relevant departments would explain the compensation arrangements to the affected owners.

7. Mr KAM Nai-wai expressed disappointment that the Administration would not consider his suggestion of providing information on the calculation of compensation to the affected property owners. At the request of Mr KAM and Mr IP Kwok-him, the Administration agreed to provide, before the relevant meeting of the Finance Committee (FC), information on the number of private flats/buildings/lots affected by the underground strata resumption required for the WIL project; and details on the calculation of the related compensation, including the breakdown for individual flats/buildings/lots where available, and whether the calculation of compensation would be provided to the property owners concerned.

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8. Mr Albert CHAN expressed grave concern that the prevailing policy and legislation regarding land resumption and determination of claims were outdated and inclined towards protecting public interests at the expense of individual property owners. Referring to the resumption of the Wah Kai Industrial Centre (WKIC) a decade ago, he said that more than 100 factory operators had still not received reasonable compensation, as the amount assessed by government-appointed consultants were substantially less than that estimated by the experts engaged by the factory operators. While numerous assessment reports had been submitted by the claimants' surveying consultants, none of them were accepted by the Government. He opined that the Government should consider

using arbitration, rather than Lands Tribunal proceedings, to resolve disputes on compensation in an expeditious manner. He also requested the Panel on Development to review the related policies with the Administration as soon as possible. Prof Patrick LAU also expressed concern that the assessment reports submitted by surveying consultants were not accepted by the Government, and asked whether the Lands Tribunal had the necessary expertise for settling the disputes fairly.

9. CES(Acq), LandsD said that in most cases, the Government could reach a consensus with the claimants on the compensation for properties affected by land resumption. For those cases in which the ex-owners and occupants of WKIC had not yet received final payments or wished to pursue additional claims, the Lands Department had continued the dialogue with them. As for those unresolved differences in the assessments between the Government and the surveying consultants, the claimants who declined to accept the Government's compensation offer were advised to pursue their claims at the Lands Tribunal.

10. The Chairman advised that as policies of land resumption and compensation were outside the scope of the funding proposal, they could be discussed by the Panel on Development. He advised members to focus discussion on the proposed projects and not on details of the related policies. Mr Albert CHAN remarked that he was consulting the Chairman of the Panel on Development for discussion of the land resumption and compensation issues at the Panel meetings. As the funding proposals were based on the existing policies, it was necessary for him to highlight the shortcomings of such policies while considering the funding proposals.

Refurbishment and modification of refuse transfer station

11. Mr KAM Nai-wai expressed concern about the feasibility studies to be undertaken for the refurbishment and modification of Island West and West Kowloon transfer stations. The Assistant Director (Environmental Infrastructure), Environmental Protection Department (AD(EI), EPD) said that the facility operators were granted a 15-year contract to operate the two transfer stations which were now near completion. The Administration would normally review the facilities and operation of the refuse transfer stations several years before the end of the service contracts, having regard to the latest requirements and technology in waste management. For better planning of the upgrading works and related expenditure, feasibility studies would be undertaken to identify suitable upgrading works for the refuse transfer stations.

12. Mr KAM Nai-wai requested the Administration to engage the local community in the feasibility study. He noted that the Island West transfer station was close to residential areas and the traffic had caused noise nuisance to the local community. As there would be more residential developments in the vicinity of the future WIL, he considered there was an urgent need to enhance the design and capacity of the Island West transfer station. In this connection, he urged the

Administration to complete the studies as soon as practicable. AD(EI), EPD advised that the feasibility study would take into account traffic impact assessment and infrastructural developments in the vicinity. The study would normally take 18 months to complete, and the Administration would see if the timeframe could be shortened for this project. As in past practice, the Administration would consult the relevant district councils and the affected residents on the proposed refurbishment and modification works.

Employment opportunities and outsourcing of public works

13. Prof Patrick LAU enquired whether the works contracts would be out-sourced through open tenders and whether the tender information would be published on the websites of the relevant works departments so that the construction industry could make necessary preparation for bidding the projects. Mr WONG Kwok-hing requested the Administration to undertake that priority would be given to employing local workers and professionals in the capital works projects under the proposed block allocations for 2010-2011. He also urged the Government to avoid multi-level subcontracting to prevent exploitation of the workers and to save public monies.

14. The Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (PS(W), DEVB) responded that these block allocations were to enable works departments to carry out standalone minor improvement items of a smaller scale or at district level in a more efficient manner, subject to a financial ceiling of \$21 million in spending on each item. While some of the works and repairs would be carried out by the maintenance contractors through works order, works of larger scale might be contracted out by open tender. Forecasts on consultancies and tenders were released in the quarterly works digests published by the Works Branch of the Development Bureau. PS(W), DEVB further advised that the Development Bureau was committed to creating jobs in the construction industry through public works projects. Contractors should give priority to employing local workers as far as practicable, while imported workers would be allowed only under very exceptional circumstances, such as when there was a lack of the technical personnel in the local market. There were also requirements in the contracts to restrict multi-level subcontracting in public works projects.

Environmental protection

15. Mr WONG Kwok-hing urged the Administration to take forward more greening and energy conservation measures in the proposed works under the block allocations. PS(W), DEVB said that there were guidelines and codes of practices on the requirements of greening and environmental protection in public works projects.

16. Prof Patrick LAU enquired about the amount of construction waste which would be generated by the proposed minor works projects, and the measures to reduce such construction waste. PS(W), DEVB said that as the block allocations covered mainly small-scale projects, the amount of construction waste generated

would not be substantial. The Administration would endeavour to reduce the generation of construction waste, and where possible, reuse the inert construction waste on site or in other suitable sites, while non-inert construction waste would be disposed at public fill reception facilities. The adoption of environmental-friendly building materials, such as reusable bricks and tiles, had also helped reduce the amount of construction waste significantly. There was also an ongoing trial scheme to deliver inert construction waste and demolition materials to Taishan for reclamation purposes. Prof LAU said that fly-tipped construction waste was usually in small quantities and thus they could be conveniently dumped at any place. He hoped that the Administration would closely monitor the disposal process to minimize illegal dumping arising from the minor works.

17. The item was voted on and endorsed.

Head 703 - Buildings

PWSC(2009-10)79 49FS Extension of Man Kam To food inspection facilities

18. The Chairman advised that the proposal was to upgrade 49FS to Category A at an estimated cost of \$176.1 million in money-of-the-day (MOD) prices for the extension of Man Kam To (MKT) food inspection facilities. The Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene (FSEH Panel) had been consulted on the proposal on 10 November 2009.

Food inspection facilities and services

19. Ms Miriam LAU supported in principle the enhancement of facilities at boundary control points. While appreciating that the MKT food inspection facilities would be strengthened to include more inspection parking spaces and ancillary facilities, she suggested that the operation hours of the MKT Food Control Office (MKTFCO) should be extended to cater for late arrivals of cross-boundary vehicles carrying food from the Mainland and shorten the queuing time during peak hours from 7 pm to 10 pm. Since all vehicles carrying fresh food from the Mainland had to enter Hong Kong through the MKT Boundary Control Point, she enquired whether the Administration would consider providing round-the-clock services, so that vehicles carrying fresh food such as raw meat and poultry could be inspected within the same day even if they arrived in late hours. Referring to the boundary control arrangements for the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Corridor, Ms LAU stressed that there should be adequate facilities on the Mainland side of the MKT Boundary Control Point to match the handling capacity at the Hong Kong side in order to realize the benefits of having an extended MKTFCO.

20. Mr IP Kwok-him expressed support for the proposal. He shared Ms Miriam LAU's view that there should be parallel and coordinated efforts from the Mainland and Hong Kong authorities in enhancing the facilities of boundary control points.

21. The Under Secretary for Food and Health (USFH, FHB) said that the Administration had to take into account the facilities and manpower deployment at the Mainland's checkpoint when considering the operation of food inspection services at MKTFCO. The existing arrangements at the MKT Boundary Control Point was made upon agreement between the Governments of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and Shenzhen in 1998. It should be noted that most of the food imported from the Mainland were vegetables (around 260 to 280 food vehicles a day) which would arrive during the peak hours from 7 pm to 10 pm. As the importers had to distribute the vegetables to wholesale markets at around midnight so that the items could reach the retailers early next morning, there was no practical need to extend the opening hours of the inspection facilities beyond 10 pm. As for fresh or chilled meat and poultry, they accounted for only some 40 vehicles per day, with the peak arrivals from 11 am to 1 pm and 3 pm to 8 pm respectively. As such, the existing operation hours up to 10 pm at night was deemed appropriate and adequate. He assured members that vehicles arriving MKTFCO before 10 pm would be inspected on the same day.

22. Mr WONG Kwok-hing said he supported the proposal given the insufficient food inspection facilities at the MKTFCO. However, he was disappointed that the Administration did not accept his suggestion of providing an additional X-ray scanner at the MKT Boundary Control Point to enhance detection of food smuggling and better safeguard food safety. He said that if the Administration refused his suggestion, he would not vote in favour of the extension project.

23. USFH, FHB said that food safety and prevention of smuggling, though related, were separate issues. There were various measures to combat smuggling activities, such as intelligence collection for proactive investigations, joint targeting operations conducted by FEHD and the Customs and Excise Department (C&ED), periodic surprise inspections, and routine surveillance by detector dogs. He explained that while X-ray scanner could be used to produce radiographic images of vehicles to facilitate identification of unusual structures which might carry smuggled goods, it might not detect irregularity if the variation in spatial resolution was not significant enough to produce perceptible different images. He advised that food vehicles from the Mainland would be first examined by C&ED officers. They would then arrive at the extended MKTFCO for random inspection, verification of certification documents and collection of food samples for testing. This multi-pronged approach should be effective in deterring smuggling. In view of the Administration's response, Mr WONG Kwok-hing stated that he would vote against the proposal.

24. Noting that the project would take around two years to complete, Mr IP Kwok-him asked whether the new facilities could be constructed and put into service in phases so that the inspection work of non-staple food would not be affected. USFH, FHB said that the Administration would strive to complete the proposed works as soon as possible. Currently, FEHD would from time to time conduct joint inspection with C&ED at the latter's inspection bays. He advised that as the extension works would take place at the neighbouring sites of the

existing MKTFCO, the operation at the existing premises would not be affected when the extension works were in progress. The MKTFCO would be relocated to the extended areas upon completion of the proposed works.

Other issues

25. Mr TAM Yiu-chung expressed support for the proposal as the extension of the food inspection facilities would enhance the handling capacity of MKTFCO. He enquired about the manpower requirement for the anticipated increase in workload at MKTFCO, and whether the additional annual recurrent expenditure of \$23.6 million for MKTFCO had included provisions for additional staff.

26. USFH, FHB advised that with the steady increase in volume of food supplied from the Mainland to Hong Kong and the increased number of vehicles carrying imported food requiring inspection, the existing facilities had become inadequate to meet the operational requirements of MKTFCO. Additional manpower would be deployed to ensure that the daily random inspections could be conducted effectively. The Controller, Centre for Food Safety, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department added that after completion of the proposed works, the annual handling capacity of the MKTFCO would be increased from 50 000 food vehicles to 100 000 food vehicles. To meet the increase in workload, 23 additional health inspectors would be provided.

27. In response to Prof Patrick LAU, the Director of Architectural Services (D Arch S) said that the project estimate had included a photovoltaic system to be installed at the rooftops of the new buildings.

28. While expressing support for the proposal, Mr IP Wai-ming said he was concerned whether the increased traffic at MKTFCO would result in adverse traffic and noise impact during and after construction of the new facilities. USFH, FHB said that the Administration had engaged consultants to carry out a Preliminary Environmental Review (PER) and Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) after the project was upgraded to Category B. He also advised that as the project site was away from the local road network, the extension works would not cause traffic obstruction to MKT Road. D Arch S supplemented that the TIA consultant concluded that with the recommended junction improvement and widening of site entrance, the local road network should be able to cope with the traffic generated by the proposed project. During construction, the contractor was required to implement mitigation measures to control noise, dust and site runoff nuisances to within established standards and guidelines.

29. The item was voted on and endorsed.

Head 706 - Highways

PWSC(2009-10)80

76TI

Bus-bus interchanges on Tuen Mun Road

30. The Chairman advised that the proposal was to upgrade 76TI to Category A at an estimated cost of \$162.3 million in MOD prices for the construction of the bus-bus interchanges (BBIs) on Tuen Mun Road (TMR). An information paper had been circulated to the Panel on Transport on 24 November 2009.

Bus-bus-interchange scheme

31. Mr TAM Yiu-Chung noted that there were difficulties in identifying suitable locations for setting up BBIs in the territory. While he did not object to the current proposal, he stressed the importance to engage the Tuen Mun District Council (TMDC) and local residents in rationalizing the bus routes after the establishment of the proposed BBIs. He observed that most people would prefer point-to-point bus services, and some TMDC members had raised concern about a longer travelling time with the BBI arrangements. As such, he cautioned that the Administration should carefully consider the routes and fares under the proposed BBI scheme.

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32. Mr WONG Kwok-hing said that as a Member returned from the New Territories West constituency, he would support the proposal. He urged the Government to discuss with the bus companies and TMDC to provide concessionary fares to encourage passengers to interchange buses at BBIs, and inform members of the outcome of consultation with TMDC and bus companies when concluded. Mr IP Kwok-him considered that there should be more incentives to attract passengers to use the BBI services, and the provision of concessionary bus fares to compensate for the longer travel time was pivotal to the success of the scheme.

33. Ms Miriam LAU noted that 57 bus routes were running along Castle Peak Road (CPR) or TMR at present, and Tuen Mun residents had been looking forward to a wider coverage of bus services to different parts of the territory. Since one key objective for implementing BBI schemes was to reduce point-to-point bus routes to alleviate traffic congestion and improve the environment, she asked what targets were to be achieved under this proposal. She was concerned that the Government would encounter grave difficulty in bringing down the number of bus routes under the BBI scheme, given that the public in general favoured point-to-point bus services.

34. Mr Albert CHAN suggested the Administration make reference to the development of BBIs at the Shing Mun Tunnel when planning the reduction of bus routes in Tuen Mun. He added that the progress of introducing new BBI schemes had been very slow. Mr IP Kwok-him said that while he supported the proposal on environmental grounds, it might not be appropriate to set a target on the number of bus routes to be reduced at this stage as this might be resented by TMDC and the

local public. He stressed that the Administration should thoroughly consult TMDC before taking a decision. Mr WONG Kwok-hing shared the view that it would be too hasty and not practicable to decide on the reduction of bus routes in Tuen Mun at the present stage, in view of the time required to consult TMDC and bus companies thoroughly.

35. The Chief Traffic Engineer (New Territories West), Transport Department (CTE(NTW), TD) advised that apart from environmental concerns, the BBIs also served other purposes such as providing a wider coverage of bus services. The Administration would work with TMDC and bus companies on the routes and fares of the interchange bus services. The Principal Assistant Secretary (Transport), Transport and Housing Bureau (PAS(T)5, THB) pointed out that while the existing bus routes running along TMR or CPR had been providing point-to-point services to a number of estates in Tuen Mun, the new BBIs would provide passengers with a wider choice of routes.

36. Noting that the Administration had not laid down specific targets of reducing the existing bus routes in planning the proposed BBIs, Ms Miriam LAU said that the Administration should not claim bus route rationalization as one of the control measures to reduce emissions in the future reports on Review of Air Quality Objectives and Development of a Long Term Air Quality Strategy for Hong Kong. She commented that it had been confusing and unclear to her whether and how the environmental targets were set and achieved, although she supported the introduction of BBIs for their environmental benefits in past years.

37. The Permanent Secretary for the Environment said that from the environmental considerations, rationalizing bus routes by reducing the number of buses travelling on roads, particularly at pollution hot spots of busy districts, was one of the strategies to improve roadside air quality. On the other hand, the Administration was mindful of the community demand for bus services. As part of an annual Bus Route Development Programme, the Transport Department would review the needs of the travelling public taking into account factors such as reduction in traffic congestion and roadside emission, and availability of alternative services, and consulted the relevant district councils on major proposals on rationalization of bus routes at the district concerned. However, experience so far indicated that the district councils placed higher priority in maintaining or even enhancing bus services over other considerations. As regards the proposal on rationalization of bus routes as a measure recommended under the Air Quality Objective Review to improve air quality, the Administration would submit a paper for discussion at a joint meeting of the Panel on Environmental Affairs and Panel on Transport.

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Design and facilities

38. Referring to the artist's impression of the proposed BBIs in Enclosure 3 to PWSC(2009-10)80, Mr WONG Kwok-hing suggested that facilities such as benches, fixed-line telephones and public toilets should be provided at the BBIs to cater for the needs of the waiting passengers. More trees should also be planted

and the cover of the passenger holding areas should be designed in such a way that it could adequately shelter the passengers from inclement weather. The Project Manager (Major Works), Highways Department (PM(MW), HyD) advised that under the design for the proposed project, benches would be provided at the proposed BBIs, and the cover of the passenger holding areas would be extended to provide adequate shelter for waiting passengers. The Administration would also incorporate planting proposals, including planting about 3 630 trees, as part of the project. PM(MW), HyD further said that arrangements would be made for the provision of fixed-line telephone services at the proposed BBIs, while the Administration would actively consider the suggestion of providing public toilets.

39. Mr WONG Kwok-hing also urged for providing digital display panels to provide information on bus routes and the bus arrival time. The Chairman commented that despite his repeated requests in previous years, the Administration had not agreed to installing touch-screen terminals at bus stops to provide public transport information to passengers. CTE(NTW), TD said that the Transport Department would discuss the suggestions with the bus companies. PM(MW), HyD supplemented that installation of digital display panels showing information on the road and traffic conditions could be included in the road widening works for TMR.

40. Mr Albert CHAN suggested that the proposed BBIs should provide for passenger pick-up/drop-off area for taxis and private vehicles to facilitate the public in using the interchange facility. He said that it would be a waste of resources if passengers using other mode of transportation could not change for buses at the BBIs. He would support the proposal if such facilities would be included in the BBI design. CTE(NTW), TD noted the request for interchange facilities for non-bus passengers to change for bus at the BBIs and advised that there was a car park next to the Tuen Mun bound BBI which could be used for the purpose. As the bus routes of the proposed BBI scheme would be determined after consultation with TMDC and the bus companies, the Administration would actively explore the feasibility of providing passenger pick-up/drop-off areas after the details of the BBI scheme were confirmed. Referring to the BBIs of the Cross Harbour Tunnel which provided passenger pick-up/drop off points for taxis/public light buses/private vehicles, Ms Miriam LAU also expressed support for the suggestion of providing passenger pick-up/drop-off areas at the proposed BBIs. She said such facilities were necessary to enhance the attractiveness and usage of the BBIs, and the approach was different from the park-and-ride facilities which were less popular in Hong Kong.

41. Ms Miriam LAU noted that there was one objection following the gazettal of the proposed works under the Roads (Works, Use and Compensation) Ordinance (Cap. 370), which raised concerns about, inter alia, the possible risk impact of a dangerous goods warehouse on the proposed BBI on TMR Kowloon bound. Although the Administration had explained to the objector that the concerned warehouse was fenced off by cladding wall so that it would not create additional risk to the BBI, Ms LAU opined that the Administration should consider more mitigation measures to alleviate the worry of the objector and the local public. At

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Admin her request, the Administration agreed to provide, before the relevant FC meeting, information on the measures to address the possible safety concerns.

42. Mr CHAN Kam-lam said that he supported the BBI scheme which was the outcome of prolonged discussion and consultation. However, he considered that the proposed design for the BBI under examination was far from adequate in meeting the needs of the passengers and bus companies. He urged the Administration to adopt a more user-friendly design which could accommodate the needs of the bus companies and their staff, and also the travelling public. He criticized that the two sheltered passenger holding areas at the BBI on TMR Tuen Mun bound were not on the same level but connected by a link bridge with two lifts, which would be very inconvenient to passengers for bus interchange, especially when there was a long waiting queue or during bad weather. He considered that the Administration should find another suitable location for this BBI so that the passenger holding areas could be built on the same level, or escalators could be used for commuting between the two levels. He cautioned that the design should be more forward-looking, as the BBI would serve a large area of Tuen Mun, and its success or otherwise would impact on the development of other BBI schemes in future.

43. PAS(T)5, THB advised that the current design was worked out in consultation with TMDC, and the current location for the BBIs was the best option the Administration could identify. Similar to other BBIs, the Administration would liaise with bus companies on their need for office facilities and their staff deployment at the BBIs.

Admin 44. Ms Miriam LAU said that as the Administration had not fully addressed members' concerns at this meeting, she had reservation about supporting the proposal. Highlighting that the objectives of BBI schemes were to achieve transport and environmental benefits, she requested the Administration to provide a written response to address members' concerns before the relevant FC meeting.

45. Mr WONG Kwok-hing said that TMDC and local residents were generally supportive of the proposed BBI scheme and they hoped that the project would be taken forward as soon as possible. While the design could be further refined, this should not delay implementation of the scheme.

46. In concluding, the Chairman said that he had repeatedly given suggestions to the Administration about the design of BBIs in the past, in particular the provision of touch-screen terminals. It appeared to him that while BBI schemes had operated successfully overseas, this was not the case in Hong Kong. He considered the current design primitive and could not address the concerns on some fundamental issues raised by members. He urged the Administration to take heed of members' suggestions to enhance the design of the BBIs and provide more incentives to enhance the usage of BBIs.

47. The Chairman put the item to vote. Of the members present, one member voted for the item, one member voted against and two members abstained. As the votes of members were equally divided, the Chairman exercised the casting vote in accordance with Rule 39 of the PWSC Procedure against the item.

48. The item was negatived by the Subcommittee.

The way forward

49. Mr WONG Kwok-hing expressed disappointment about the voting result as only a few members were present at the voting of the project which was of vital significance to the local residents in Tuen Mun. He opined that members should have raised their concerns and suggestions earlier when the proposal was considered by the Panel on Transport.

50. Miss Tanya CHAN said that PWSC members who were not members of the Transport Panel might not have the chance to study the design of the BBIs or raise their concerns when the funding proposal was circulated to the Panel. It was the duty of PWSC members to exercise due diligence in vetting funding proposals and give their comments where necessary. She believed that members' input was useful for enhancing the project design, which would ensure smooth implementation of the proposed BBIs and similar projects in future.

51. Mr CHAN Kam-lam said that he found it difficult to accept the current design of the proposed BBI. He cautioned that as bus interchange would lengthen the travelling time, it was important to ensure that the project design would not cause further inconvenience to the travelling public. He hoped that the Administration would revert to PWSC with a better design that was more user-oriented.

52. Ms Miriam LAU said that she was disappointed that the Administration did not agree to consider the suggestion of providing a touch-screen terminal at the proposed BBIs. Given the advancement in transport technology such as the global positioning system, she hoped that the Administration would seriously consider providing transport information at the BBI using modern technology.

53. Mr WONG Kwok-hing asked whether the proposal would be re-submitted to PWSC or the Panel on Transport. He urged that arrangements should be made for discussing the improved proposal again at the earliest time possible. The Chairman advised that it would be for the Administration to consider when the revised proposal and/or supplementary information would be ready for re-consideration by PWSC which would hold its next regular meeting on 20 January 2010. It was also up to the Administration to decide whether it would consult the Panel on Transport again. He assured members that PWSC would discuss the proposal once the Administration's paper(s) was ready. PAS(T)5, THB said that the Administration would provide a further information paper to the Panel on Transport before reverting to PWSC. She assured members that the

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Administration would enhance the project design in the light of members' suggestions as far as practicable.

54. The meeting ended at 10:43 am.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
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