

立法會
Legislative Council

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

**Minutes of the 33rd meeting
held in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex
on Wednesday, 27 June 2018, at 8:30 am**

Members present:

Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, SBS, MH, JP (Chairman)
Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, GBS, JP
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, SBS, JP
Hon CHAN Hak-kan, BBS, JP
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, SBS, JP
Hon WU Chi-wai, MH
Hon YIU Si-wing, BBS
Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen
Hon CHAN Han-pan, JP
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, SBS, MH, JP
Hon Christopher CHEUNG Wah-fung, SBS, JP
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Hon Alvin YEUNG
Hon Andrew WAN Siu-kin
Hon CHU Hoi-dick
Dr Hon Junius HO Kwan-yiu, JP
Hon HO Kai-ming

Hon Holden CHOW Ho-ding
Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing, MH
Hon Tanya CHAN
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-kwan, JP
Hon LUK Chung-hung
Dr Hon CHENG Chung-tai
Hon Gary FAN Kwok-wai
Hon Vincent CHENG Wing-shun, MH
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS

Members absent:

Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP
Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun, JP
Hon Claudia MO
Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP
Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen, BBS, JP
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan
Hon LAM Cheuk-ting
Hon HUI Chi-fung
Hon LAU Kwok-fan, MH
Hon KWONG Chun-yu
Hon Jeremy TAM Man-ho
Hon AU Nok-hin

Public officers attending:

Mr Raistlin LAU Chun, JP	Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) ³
Miss Joey LAM Kam-ping, JP	Deputy Secretary for Development (Works) ¹
Ms Doris HO Pui-ling, JP	Deputy Secretary for Development (Planning & Lands) ¹

Mr Donald TONG Chi-keung, JP	Permanent Secretary for the Environment
Ms Margaret HSIA Mai-chi	Principal Assistant Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) (Works)
Dr CHUI Tak-yi, JP	Under Secretary for Food and Health
Miss Grace KWOK Wing-see	Principal Assistant Secretary for Food and Health (Health)1
Mrs Sylvia LAM YU Ka-wai, JP	Director of Architectural Services
Mr Michael LI Kiu-yin	Chief Project Manager 202 Architectural Services Department
Mr KONG Mau-shing	Senior Project Manager 222 Architectural Services Department
Dr Bobby SHUM Shui-fung	Consultant Forensic Pathologist i/c Department of Health
Dr Ronald LAM Man-kin, JP	Assistant Director of Health (Health Administration and Planning)

Clerk in attendance:

Ms Doris LO	Chief Council Secretary (1)2
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Staff in attendance:

Mr. Keith WONG	Council Secretary (1)2
Ms Christina SHIU	Legislative Assistant (1)2
Ms Christy YAU	Legislative Assistant (1)7
Ms Clara LO	Legislative Assistant (1)8

Action

The Chairman advised that there was one funding proposal which was a new submission from the Administration on the agenda for the meeting. He reminded members that in accordance with Rule 83A of the Rules of Procedure ("RoP") of the Legislative Council, they should disclose the nature

of any direct or indirect pecuniary interests relating to the funding proposals under discussion at the meeting before they spoke on the proposals. He also drew members' attention to Rule 84 of RoP on voting in case of direct pecuniary interest.

Head 703 – Buildings**PWSC(2018-19)27 20NB Reprovisioning of Fu Shan Public Mortuary at Sha Tin**

2. The Chairman advised that the proposal, i.e. [PWSC\(2018-19\)27](#), sought to upgrade 20NB to Category A at an estimated cost of \$1,038.0 million in money-of-the-day prices for the reprovisioning of Fu Shan Public Mortuary ("FSPM") at Sha Tin. The Administration consulted the Panel on Health Services on the proposed works on 21 May 2018. Members of the Panel generally supported the submission of the funding proposal for the project to the Subcommittee for consideration. A report on the gist of the Panel's discussion was tabled at the meeting.

Utilization rate and service demand for public mortuaries

3. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen and Mr Gary FAN noted that the utilization rate of FSPM reached 110% in 2017, and the average length of storage of each body in FSPM was as long as 25.5 days. They enquired why the utilization rate of FSPM exceeded 100% in 2017, and why the bodies were stored for a lengthy period.

[At 8:36 am, the Chairman left the conference room and the Deputy Chairman took the chair temporarily. At 9:14 am, the Chairman returned to the conference room and resumed the chair.]

4. Under Secretary for Food and Health ("USFH") said that when the regular body storage capacity of public mortuaries reached their critical storage limits, some bodies had to be stored temporarily on mobile body storage trolleys inside the cold rooms. As a result, the utilization rate would exceed 100%. As for the length of storage of bodies, Consultant Forensic Pathologist i/c Department of Health ("CFP/DH") explained that public mortuaries were mainly used for handling deaths that required medico-legal investigations under the Coroners Ordinance (Cap. 504). It generally took two to four days to conduct such investigations. However, the length of storage of bodies in mortuaries might be longer in some cases as the family members of the deceased might need time to make arrangement for burial services. The Department of Health ("DH") would encourage the family members of the deceased to claim the bodies as soon as possible. If an

unclaimed body had been stored in a public mortuary for more than one month and the Police failed to locate the family members of the deceased, the body would be buried by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department ("FEHD") under the arrangement of DH.

5. Given that the average length of storage of bodies in mortuaries was as long as almost one month, Mr WU Chi-wai queried whether this reflected the insufficient provision of cremation facilities in Hong Kong. He requested the Administration to provide supplementary information to explain in detail the reasons for the long storage period of bodies in mortuaries, and whether this was related to the insufficient provision of cremation facilities in Hong Kong.

(Post-meeting note: The supplementary information provided by the Administration was circulated to members vide [LC Paper No. PWSC286/17-18\(01\)](#) on 9 July 2018.)

6. USFH supplemented that according to the statistics for the past three to four years, the average length of storage of bodies in public mortuaries remained at around 20 days. Some bodies were stored for a longer period mainly because their family members needed time to make burial arrangement. Moreover, FEHD would arrange additional cremation sessions when necessary to meet additional service demand.

7. Mr CHU Hoi-dick noted that according to the Administration's estimate, public mortuaries in Hong Kong should provide a total of 1 300 body storage spaces in order to cope with the projected demand in 2031. He enquired about the basis of the Administration's estimate, including whether the number of deaths requiring medico-legal investigations was expected to increase in future, and whether sufficient spaces had been reserved to meet the need in case of emergencies or disasters.

8. CFP/DH said that based on the projections of population growth and deaths made by the Census and Statistics Department in 2017, and taking into account the need to provide roughly an additional 50% storage spaces during emergencies or times of disaster, DH estimated that public mortuaries should provide a total of 1 300 body storage spaces in 2031. He added that there was no rising trend in the ratio of deaths requiring medico-legal investigations to the total deaths in Hong Kong.

9. Mr Gary FAN asked about the body storage capacity of the reprovisioned FSPM ("the new FSPM"). In addition, he also enquired about the details of the reprovisioning of Victoria Public Mortuary ("VPM"), including the reprovisioning timetable and body storage capacity upon

reprovisioning. Mr Wilson OR requested the Administration to provide supplementary information on the details of the Administration's plan for reprovisioning or expanding Kwai Chung Public Mortuary ("KCPM") and VPM, including the reprovisioning or expansion timetable and local consultation arrangements.

(Post-meeting note: The supplementary information provided by the Administration was circulated to members vide [LC Paper No. PWSC286/17-18\(01\)](#) on 9 July 2018.)

10. USFH replied that the body storage capacity of FSPM was 216 at present, and would increase to 830 upon reprovisioning. The combined storage capacity of FSPM, KCPM and the reprovisioned VPM would be sufficient to cope with the projected storage demand in 2031 mentioned above. Regarding the VPM reprovisioning plan, Principal Assistant Secretary for Food and Health (Health)¹ said that DH was conducting the preliminary planning and expected to launch local consultation as soon as possible. The body storage capacity of VPM was currently 70, and was expected to increase to 250 upon reprovisioning.

11. Mr WU Chi-wai enquired whether the design of the new FSPM had reserved space for future expansion in order to further enhance its body storage capacity, thereby meeting possible new demands in future.

12. USFH said that additional storage space would be provided as appropriate in the cold rooms of the new FSPM for temporary storage of bodies. He supplemented that in case of substantial growth in the demand for storage of bodies in future, the Government would explore ways to expand the public mortuary service in Hong Kong through a holistic planning approach when necessary.

13. Mr Tony TSE expressed support for the public works proposal, and enquired whether the new FSPM was designed to fully utilize the plot ratio for the approved development. Director of Architectural Services ("DArchS") replied that the reference plot ratio of 3.2 recommended by the Planning Department for the site of the new FSPM was fully utilized.

Design of the reprovisioned Fu Shan Public Mortuary

Security measures

14. Taking into account the recent incident of loss of a human organ specimen in North District Hospital, Mr CHAN Chi-chuen urged the Administration to implement stringent security measures in the new FSPM in

order to prevent the loss of bodies or specimens. He requested the Administration to provide supplementary information on the details of the security measures to be implemented in the new FSPM.

(*Post-meeting note:* The supplementary information provided by the Administration was circulated to members vide [LC Paper No. PWSC286/17-18\(01\)](#) on 9 July 2018.)

15. CFP/DH said that the new FSPM would be divided into public areas and staff areas, and closed-circuit television surveillance cameras would be installed at the main entrances/exits separating these areas. The Administration would also review the security needs of the new FSPM upon its commissioning.

Ceremony halls

16. Mr Wilson OR and Dr Fernando CHEUNG were concerned that there would only be three ceremony halls in the new FSPM, which might not be sufficient to meet the demand of bereaved families for memorial services. Dr CHEUNG also enquired whether bereaved families could burn candle sticks and joss paper when conducting memorial ceremonies in the ceremony halls of the new FSPM.

17. CFP/DH said that the outdoor farewell pavilion at the existing FSPM allowed two bereaved families to conduct memorial ceremonies at the same time, and there would be three indoor ceremony halls in the new FSPM. He pointed out that according to statistics, among the bodies stored in FSPM, about one third of their families conducted memorial ceremonies at the farewell pavilion. Taking into account the possible increase in utilization rate, the Administration expected that the three ceremony halls in the new FSPM would be sufficient to meet the demand of bereaved families. Different time slots for use of the ceremony halls in the new FSPM could be allocated to bereaved families as appropriate through administrative means. DArchS added that during the public consultation on the project, members of the public generally supported the provision of indoor ceremony halls in the new FSPM. The ceremony halls would be connected to a designated outdoor area for burning candle sticks or joss paper.

Protective measures

18. Mr MA Fung-kwok expressed support for the public works proposal. He asked how the Administration ensured that the design of the new FSPM would be in compliance with the standards for infection control in modern public mortuaries.

19. CFP/DH said that special protective measures against pathological infection would be implemented in the autopsy suites of the new FSPM. Persons entering the autopsy suites and body storage areas must also wear personal protective equipment. Assistant Director of Health (Health Administration and Planning) ("AD(HA&P)/DH") supplemented that the design of the disinfection and air control systems of the new FSPM met the international standards. As the new FSPM would be more spacious than the existing one, the staff would have more working space, and the occupational health and safety standards could be enhanced.

Autopsy viewing rooms

20. Dr Junius HO expressed support for the proposal. He noted from the floor plan in Enclosure 5 to [PWSC\(2018-19\)27](#) that the autopsy viewing rooms on the third floor of the new FSPM would be located in the public area. He enquired about the uses of these autopsy viewing rooms and whether they would be open to the public. CFP/DH replied that the autopsy viewing rooms would be made available to personnel of government departments who needed to observe autopsies for official purposes, and would also be used for training purposes. These rooms would not be open to the public.

Greening design

21. Mr CHU Hoi-dick noted that vertical greening and planting areas would be provided in the new FSPM. He asked about the details of the greening features, as well as the current policy on the implementation of greening measures in government buildings.

22. DArchS said that vertical greening features would be provided at the public vehicular ingress/egress points at the new FSPM, and planters would be installed in the public waiting halls. Moreover, greening would be provided on the various flat roofs and roof of the new FSPM, which, together with the natural greenery surroundings, would present a pleasant landscape view for residents in the proximity. She supplemented that the Administration aimed to maximize the greenery coverage in new government buildings if circumstances permitted.

Supporting transport arrangements for the reprovisioned Fu Shan Public Mortuary

23. Mr LEUNG Che-cheung expressed support for the proposal. He enquired whether the existing metered parking spaces at Yau On Street would be affected in the course of the FSPM reprovisioning project.

Mr Wilson OR pointed out that members of the Sha Tin District Council and local residents had suggested that the Administration provide more parking spaces at the new FSPM in order to improve the traffic condition in the vicinity. He enquired how the Administration would respond to the request of local residents.

24. USFH said that there would be a car park in the new FSPM providing 50 private car parking spaces for visitors to the mortuary or similar facilities nearby. The existing metered parking spaces at Yau On Street would not be affected when the project was in progress and after the new FSPM was commissioned. Moreover, a number of general lay-bys would be provided beside the new FSPM as temporary parking spaces for up to four large coaches, facilitating group visits to the similar facilities nearby.

25. Mr Gary FAN was worried that in the course of the FSPM reprovisioning project, the traffic in the district would become overloaded as a result of large vehicles entering and leaving the site. He enquired whether the Administration had conducted traffic impact assessment for the project.

26. DArchS replied that in the course of the project, the Architectural Services Department would arrange with the project contractors to set a timetable in the light of the local traffic condition, specifying when works vehicles could enter and leave the site. Works vehicles would also avoid entering and leaving the site during peak grave sweeping periods in order to minimize the impact of the project on the traffic nearby. In the long term, according to the traffic impact assessment for the project, there was reserve capacity at the three major transport interchanges connected to the new FSPM (including the junction of Yau On Street and Lower Shing Mun Road, and the junction of Tai Po Road and Lower Shing Mun Road). It was estimated that the roads in the district could still cope with the additional traffic flow upon the commissioning of the new FSPM.

27. Dr Fernando CHEUNG was concerned that the remote location of the new FSPM would make it difficult for people with limited mobility or wheelchair users to visit. He urged the Administration to provide barrier-free transportation for the new FSPM, including requesting the green minibuses operator running the route between Fu Shan and Tai Wai MTR Station to deploy barrier-free minibuses for the route.

28. DArchS said that a general lay-by outside the new FSPM would be linked with the building by barrier-free access, which would cater for visitors with limited mobility or wheelchair users.

29. The Chairman considered that the Administration should take into account the provision of barrier-free transport facilities when constructing new government buildings. As this was a broader issue pertaining to transport policy, he suggested that members follow up the relevant matters at the Panel on Transport.

Uses of the existing Fu Shan Public Mortuary upon cessation of operation

30. Mr Tony TSE and Mr MA Fung-kwok noted that after the existing FSPM ceased operation, it would be used for administration, disaster drill and training purposes. In their view, given that land was a valuable resource, the Administration should consider demolishing the existing FSPM and redeveloping the area for other purposes.

31. Mr Alvin YEUNG expressed support for the proposal. He enquired whether the Administration would reopen the existing FSPM for storage of bodies if there was a surge in the demand for mortuary service due to unexpected incidents.

32. CFP/DH said that when major disasters occurred, one of the important duties of rescue crew was to handle and identify the bodies. It was necessary for government departments to familiarize with the procedures for handling bodies through drills. Therefore, when the reprovisioning project was completed, DH would need to use the existing FSPM for disaster drill and training purposes. AD(HA&P)/DH added that if there were unexpected incidents leading to a shortage of mortuary service in Hong Kong in future, the Administration would not rule out the possibility of reopening the existing FSPM for temporary storage of bodies when necessary.

33. Dr CHENG Chung-tai noted that the reprovisioned FSPM would serve as a training venue for law enforcement officers, especially the Police, in criminal and crime scene investigations. He asked whether this implied that the existing FSPM would be handed over to the Police for use as a training centre.

34. CFP/DH explained that the existing FSPM would continue to be managed by DH for running major disaster drills. He supplemented that as medico-legal investigations of deaths might involve criminal investigations, the Police needed to understand the work of the Forensic Pathology Service through training and exchanges. In this connection, facilities would be provided in the new FSPM for law enforcement officers to undergo training in criminal and crime scene investigations.

35. There being no further questions on the item from members, the Chairman put the item to vote.

36. The item was voted on and endorsed. The Chairman consulted members on whether the item would require separate voting at the relevant meeting of the Finance Committee. No member made such a request.

37. The meeting ended at 9:42 am

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
18 July 2018