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**Paper for the House Committee meeting
on 23 June 2000**

**Report of the
Subcommittee to follow up on the outstanding capital works projects
of the two Provisional Municipal Councils
for inclusion into the Government's Public Works Programme**

Purpose

This paper reports on the work of the Subcommittee to follow up on the outstanding capital works projects of the two Provisional Municipal Councils (PMCs) for inclusion into the Government's Public Works Programme (PWP).

The Subcommittee

2. At the House Committee meeting on 17 December 1999, Members agreed that a subcommittee should be formed under the House Committee to follow up the outstanding capital works projects of the two PMCs.
3. Chaired by Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, the Subcommittee had held five meetings to discuss with the Administration the progress of these projects. Discussion was also held between the Subcommittee and representatives of the Eastern District Council (DC), Central and Western DC and Sham Shui Po DC on those projects in their districts.
4. The membership of the Subcommittee is in **Appendix I**.

Committed projects of the two Provisional Municipal Councils

5. Upon dissolution of the two PMCs on 1 January 2000, Government took over the responsibility for the provision of municipal services including the projects committed by the PMCs. On 17 December 1999, the Legislative Council (LegCo) Finance Committee (FC) approved Government's funding request to meet the outstanding commitments of 149 capital works projects and some 3 000 minor works projects already contracted out by the PMCs, at a

total cost of \$5.4 billion in money-of-the-day-prices. Members also noted that funding had also been set aside funding for 12 projects which were to be reviewed by Government before they were recommended for upgrading to Category A of PWP.

6. Members had expressed much concern about Government's arrangement for the remaining 169 projects which had been approved by the former PMCs but not included in the funding proposal to FC in December 1999. Members were worried that these remaining projects might eventually be shelved by Government.

The 12 projects which had received funding approval of the PMCs

7. The Subcommittee noted that Government had set aside funding for 12 projects (of a total value of \$2.36 billion) which had received funding approval of the former PMCs but the contracts had not yet been awarded. Government considered that these projects should be reviewed before they were submitted to the Public Works Subcommittee (PWSC) for upgrading to Category A of the PWP.

8. To enable the Subcommittee to have a better understanding of the position of the 12 projects, Government was invited to brief members on the scope of the review of these projects. Members noted that eight out of the 12 projects were ready for upgrading to Category A of PWP, and were approved by PWSC and FC in May 2000 after discussion by the Subcommittee -

- (a) Conversion of Centre Street Market, Phase II;
- (b) Redevelopment of Victoria Park - Improvement to Park Proper;
- (c) Water Sports Centre at Stanley Main Beach;
- (d) Jordon Valley Playground, Phase II, Stage 2;
- (e) Indoor Recreation Centre cum Library in Area 100, Ma On Shan;
- (f) Renovation of the External Wall of Shatin Town Hall Complex and Tuen Mun Town Hall Complex;
- (g) Local Open Space in Area 44, Tuen Mun; and
- (h) Improvement works to Lady MacLehose Holiday Village and Sai Kung Outdoor Recreation Centre.

9. As regards the remaining four projects, the Subcommittee urged Government to expedite action to upgrade these projects to Category A of PWP. Members emphasized that, except with very strong justifications, Government should not attempt to modify the scope or vary the nature of these projects as

these were the outcome of extensive consultation and detailed consideration of the former PMCs.

10. Government had assured members that it would not renege on its promise. The review was only to ensure that the projects would be cost-effective, user-friendly and viable, with regard to the need of the community and current utilization of similar facilities in the districts. It was also necessary to ensure prudent use of public resources, particularly in view of the Director of Audit's previous criticisms about the viability of new public markets.

11. The discussion of the Subcommittee in respect of the four projects was summarized in paragraphs 12-23.

Stanley Complex

12. The Subcommittee had expressed reservations about Government's arguments that the provision of wet goods and dry goods stalls in the proposed Stanley Complex might not be viable given the opening of a new superstore in Ma Hang. Some members also disagreed with Government that the planned provision of indoor games hall and library were not necessary because similar facilities in nearby districts were not yet fully utilized. Since the project had already received funding approval of the Provisional Urban Council (PUC), the Subcommittee considered that Government should proceed with the project as planned.

13. Government had explained that a review of the project was necessary to ensure that the project was compatible with the overall development of Stanley as a tourist spot, taking into account considerations such as the viability and cost-effectiveness of the proposed facilities. In particular, Government would like to assess the impact of the opening of a new superstore in the nearby Ma Hang Estate, and the need for providing an indoor games hall, refuse collection facilities and public toilets in the proposed building.

14. Members pointed out that the new superstore in Ma Hang was inconvenient to residents living in Stanley. As the market stalls planned for the Complex were meant to re-provision the existing temporary wet market in the seafront promenade and the street-side dry goods bazaar, it did not involve justifying new or additional facilities for the district. Some members also stressed that usage rate should not be the only consideration for planning leisure and cultural facilities in districts. A member commented that it would be difficult for leisure or cultural facilities to achieve 100% utilization though many of them were heavily booked after office hours and during holidays.

15. In view of members' concerns, Government conducted a survey in March 2000 to gauge the views of Stanley residents and tourists on the viability

of the wet goods and dry goods market in the Stanley Complex. As the survey findings cast doubts on the viability of relocating the existing licensed hawkers under one roof in the proposed Complex, Government proposed to conduct a further assessment in July/August 2000, after the new superstore had commenced operation. As regards the leisure and cultural facilities, the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) and Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) were examining the possibility of including a community hall in the Complex, and the compatibility of providing such facilities with market facilities. Government undertook to provide more concrete proposals on the project in October 2000.

Kowloon Bay Recreation Ground

16. Members noted that the project was to provide a recreation ground with two natural grass soccer pitches, two tennis courts, a cycling area, a tai-chi area and a children's play area. As the proposed development would involve permanent closure of a section of Kai Lai Road, the proposal had been discussed at a meeting of the Traffic and Transport Committee of Kwun Tong DC on 16 March 2000. With the support of the DC, the project was ready for upgrading to Category A of PWP.

Hammer Hill District Park

17. The Subcommittee had detailed discussion with Government on the design and facilities proposed for the Hammer Hill District Park project. The majority of members strongly supported developing the Park as a landmark for tourism in Hong Kong and that the design should be in harmony with the Tang Dynasty style architecture of the Chi Lin Monastery next to the site. A member strongly felt that the exhibition hall planned for the District Park should be retained because the existing exhibition venue in Chi Nin Monastery was more for religious purpose and would not be available during certain periods in a year.

18. Members noted that the Chi Lin management was very concerned about the compatibility of the design of the District Park with the architecture of Chi Lin which had been awarded the Ten Best Architecture in Hong Kong. The need for more greenery and less concrete buildings, special landscaping to shield off traffic noises and adequate parking space for coaches had been discussed. Members considered that these issues could be resolved through detailed discussion and close partnership between Government departments and Chi Lin management.

19. In view of the concerns expressed by members and Chi Lin management, Government finally proposed to entrust the project to Chi Lin which had demonstrated the ability to construct Tang style buildings and landscaped gardens of a very high standard. Members noted that Government intended to

cap the project estimate at \$177 million as originally approved by the former PUC. Government would discuss the entrustment arrangement with Chi Lin and would consider the management responsibility for the Park. Members welcomed Government's approach and hoped that the project could commence as soon as possible.

Tai Kok Tsui Complex

20. The Subcommittee noted Government's reservations about the provision of a swimming pool on the high floor of the proposed Complex. Government had explained that the provision of swimming pools together with market facilities in a municipal services building was a new concept not tried out before. With the anticipated increase in the number of pool users following the introduction of sessions for public swimming pools, Government was concerned about the lift capacity and crowd control management of the Complex which would also accommodate a library and a multi-purpose arena for ball games and leisure activities.

21. Members shared the strong feeling of the Yau Tsim Mong DC that Government should not scrap the swimming pool from the project as the district had been deprived of a public swimming pool for a long time. To address the needs of the district, Government had proposed for the Subcommittee's consideration the option of constructing the swimming pool in a nearby site. However, members were of the view that the option would unduly delay the provision of the swimming pool in the district, and that it might not make the best use of the proposed alternative site.

22. At the suggestion of the Subcommittee, Government further consulted Yau Tsim Mong DC on the proposal. In view of the wish of the DC to retain the swimming pool in the Complex, Government finally agreed to proceed with the project as originally planned. To tackle the management problem, Government would put in place administrative measures such as designating queuing areas and lifts for pool users during peak hours.

23. The project was subsequently upgraded to Category A of PWP and construction works would start in December 2000.

The remaining 169 projects

24. The Subcommittee noted that there were still 169 projects which had received approval of the former PMCs and were at various stages of planning. Of the 169 projects, 22 were purely environmental hygiene facilities which were now dealt with by the Environment and Food Bureau (EFB). HAB and LCSD were responsible for 147 leisure and cultural projects including eight projects which involved both environmental hygiene and leisure and cultural facilities.

25. As the two policy bureaux, HAB and EFB, had conducted an initial review of these projects in consultation with LCS D and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD), the Subcommittee requested the two bureaux to report the progress of the review. HAB and EFB informed members that many of these projects were not yet ready for upgrading either because the sites had yet to be formed or the project details or scope would require further deliberations. In the review, HAB and EFB had taken into account the need of the proposed facilities and whether the old facilities would have to be brought up to present day standards.

26. In April 2000, HAB and EFB reported that two environmental hygiene and 16 leisure and cultural projects were accorded priority and recommended for inclusion in Category C of PWP, while one project would proceed as a minor works item. HAB and EFB further advised in May 2000 that one more project was recommended for inclusion into Category C of PWP, and there was no real need for some projects. In addition, the scope of some other projects would need to be reviewed. The lists of projects recommended for inclusion into Category C and PWP and those considered unnecessary are in **Appendices II and III**.

27. As regards the other projects which were in the less advanced stage of planning, Government had assured members that it would continue to assess their suitability for inclusion into PWP. In this connection, members urged Government to take an active approach to consult all DCs on the needs of the districts. Some DC members also requested the presence of sufficiently senior officers at DC meetings to facilitate deliberations of these projects. Members noted that both FEHD and LCS D would launch a programme to discuss with all DCs.

28. Members had questioned the basis of according priority to the outstanding projects. They noted that some Category II items of the Provisional Regional Council (ProRC) had not been recommended for inclusion in Category C of the PWP. In response, HAB had explained that there were only nine Category II projects of ProRC and four of them had already been recommended for inclusion as Category C items. The other five projects were considered not ready for inclusion due to various reasons, for instance, the project design and scope would need further review or the site was not yet available.

29. Three DCs had forwarded submissions to the Subcommittee expressing concern that certain projects in their districts were not recommended for inclusion in Category C of PWP. The discussion between the Subcommittee and the DCs was summarized below.

Eastern District Council

30. The Eastern DC considered it necessary to provide the Aldrich Bay Complex and Siu Sai Wan Complex to cater for the needs of the residents in the new reclamation area and old developments in the vicinity. EFB had responded that there had been changes in the development of the areas concerned. EFB considered it necessary to review the need for new markets in the areas since Housing Authority would also provide their own market facilities in new public housing estates. However, HAB had accepted the need for providing a library for Aldrich Bay and would examine how to address the need.

31. As regards the retro-fitting of air-conditioning in Yu Wan Market, EFB would review the project together with other markets with similar requirements (see paragraph 37). The main considerations were the technical feasibility of the project, acceptance by stall holders of the likely requirements for closure of stalls when the works were in progress and the impact of recurrent electricity costs on stall rental.

Central and Western District Council

32. On the proposed Sun Yat Sen Memorial Park, members noted that the major obstacle was the access problem as the site was separated from residential and commercial developments by highways and flyovers. The DC therefore suggested building a pedestrian walkway to connect the Park with the commercial area and providing additional bus stop to solve the problem. A member considered that the Park should also serve the educational purpose of familiarizing visitors with the history of Sun Yat Sen and the 1911 Revolution.

33. In response to these concerns, HAB and LCSD had agreed to actively pursue the above suggestions.

Sham Shui Po District Council

34. Sham Shui Po DC had requested Government to accord priority to the Tung Chau Street Complex, Lai Wan Market extension and other projects planned for the District. However, EFB had expressed reservation about the need for new markets in the District in view of the high vacancy rate of some 240 market stalls in Tung Chau Street and the existence of 20 stalls in Mei Foo. Furthermore, Government had planned to review the cooked food stalls policy and the merits/demerits of providing markets together with leisure/cultural facilities under one roof.

35. On the provision of indoor games hall in the Complexes, LCSD was of the view that this would need further review as the existing leisure and cultural

facilities in the District were not yet fully utilized. The Subcommittee advised HAB and LCSD to consult the DC before taking a decision.

Other issues discussed

36. On the provision of leisure and cultural facilities in Tai Po, LCSD considered that the shortage of leisure space in Tai Po was relatively less serious than the other districts and that the indoor games halls in Tai Po were currently under-utilized. However, LCSD agreed to give consideration to providing a larger library for Tai Po in view of its increased population.

37. Some members expressed concern that there had been slow progress in the retro-fitting of air-conditioning to existing markets and cooked food stalls. Government had responded that the cost-effectiveness of retro-fitting air-conditioning to public markets and cooked food stalls would have to be reviewed on completion of the current projects. Among the 81 public markets and 60 cooked food stalls in Hong Kong, six markets and six cooked food stalls were purpose-built with air-conditioning. Five cooked food stalls had been retrofitted with air-conditioning while retrofitting works were being carried out in three markets.

Planning standards for new projects

38. The Subcommittee was very concerned that Government appeared to justify non-construction of some planned facilities on the basis of the current utilization rate of existing facilities. Members also questioned the existence of three different planning standards for the provision of leisure and cultural facilities, that is, the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines and the planning standards of the two former PMCs.

39. Members noted that these standards were largely based on the size of population in the district and that different standards were adopted by the two PMCs. Government had stressed that these planning standards were only used for reference, while actual provision would depend on the availability of suitable sites, and existence of similar facilities provided by Housing Department, private developments, and non-government organizations. In view of the socio-economic and demographic changes over the years, Government would review the current planning standards and guidelines to align the different standards and policies on a territory-wide basis.

40. Members were disappointed that Government did not provide information of the leisure and cultural facilities in individual districts and whether there was under-provision or over-provision of facilities in each district based on the current planning standards. Government had agreed to provide the information for follow up in the next LegCo term.

Way forward

41. The Subcommittee considered it necessary to maintain the momentum in monitoring the progress of the outstanding projects approved by the former PMCs. As many of these projects were still under review by Government, the Subcommittee had requested Government to provide a progress report in October 2000 to LegCo for consideration on how to follow up these projects.

Advice sought

42. Members are invited to note the report and recommendation of the Subcommittee.

Legislative Council Secretariat

22 June 2000

**Subcommittee to follow up on the outstanding capital works projects
of the two Provisional Municipal Councils
for inclusion into the Government's Public Works Programme**

Membership List

Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, JP (Chairman)

Hon HO Sai-chu, SBS, JP

Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan

Hon Edward HO Sing-tin, SBS, JP

Hon LEE Wing-tat

Hon James TO Kun-sun

Hon CHAN Yuen-han

Hon WONG Yung-kan

Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, SBS, JP

Dr Hon TANG Siu-tong, JP

Total : 10 Members

Date : 14 January 2000

**Subcommittee to follow up on the outstanding capital works projects
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**Projects which have been accorded priority for inclusion into
Category C of Public Works Programme**

Leisure and Cultural facilities

1. Improvement works to Lei Yue Mun Park
2. Improvement to the Jockey Club Wong Shek Water Sports Centre
3. Indoor Recreation Centre in Area 17, Tin Shui Wai
4. District Open Space in Area 7, Tung Chung, Lantau
5. Indoor Recreation Centre (Type C) cum Library in Area 17, Tung Chung, Lantau
6. Temporary Recreational Development at Sai Tso Wan Landfill
7. Landfill Site in Tseung Kwan O
8. Temporary Recreational Development at Jordan Valley Landfill
9. Golf Course in Shuen Wan Landfill, Tai Po
10. Improvement to Victoria Park - Swimming Pool Complex
11. Improvement Works to Lok Wah Playground
12. Ma On Shan Sportsground (Phase II)
13. Additional Open Space to Tsuen Wan Town Hall
14. District Open Space in Areas 3 and 8, Tsing Yi
15. New Tennis Centre cum Car Park at Moreton Terrace
16. Kwai Chung Park - Further Development

Food and Environmental Hygiene facilities

1. Redevelopment of existing public toilet at Ngong Ping, Lantau
2. Aldrich Bay Complex (with a revised scope)
3. Kwai Chung ambulance depot with Fire Services Department Offices and Refuse Collection Point at Hing Shing Road in Area 10B, Kwai Chung

Note : The temporary off-street refuse collection point cum public toilet at Ma Tau Kok Road (with a revised scope) will proceed as a minor works item.

**Subcommittee to follow up on the outstanding capital works projects
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**Projects which Government considered to be unnecessary after review
in April and May 2000**

1. Redevelopment of Cheung Sha Wan Temporary Cooked Food Market
2. Food and Environmental Hygiene facilities in the Tseung Kwan O Complex
3. Fuk Wing Street Complex
4. Lai Wan Market Extension
5. Cooked Food Centre, Refuse Collection Point and Public Toilet in Area 10G, Kwai Chung
6. Reprovisioning of Kam Tin Market
7. Lau Fau Shan Market
8. Multi-purpose Building at Wing Hong Street
9. Food and Environmental Hygiene facilities of Redevelopment of Fo Tan Cooked Food Market