

立法會
Legislative Council

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

**Minutes of the 6th meeting
held in the Chamber of Legislative Council Building
on Wednesday, 18 February 2004, at 10:45 am**

Members present:

Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, JP (Chairman)
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Kenneth TING Woo-shou, JP
Dr Hon David CHU Yu-lin, JP
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, JP
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, JP
Hon SIN Chung-kai
Hon LAU Kong-wah, JP
Hon Miriam LAU Kin-yee, JP
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Hon Henry WU King-cheong, BBS, JP
Hon IP Kwok-him, JP

Members absent:

Dr Hon Eric LI Ka-cheung, GBS, JP
Hon CHAN Kam-lam, JP
Hon Andrew WONG Wang-fat, JP
Hon WONG Yung-kan
Hon YEUNG Yiu-chung, BBS

Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon CHOY So-yuk
Dr Hon LAW Chi-kwong, JP
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Dr Hon TANG Siu-tong, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP
Hon WONG Sing-chi
Hon LAU Ping-cheung

Public officers attending:

Mr W S CHAN	Acting Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works)
Mrs Carrie LAM, JP	Permanent Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands (Planning and Lands) 1
Mr Rob LAW, JP	Director of Environmental Protection
Miss Janice TSE	Principal Assistant Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) (Works)
Ms Joyce HO	Principal Assistant Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Environment and Transport) E2 (Acting)
Dr Ellen CHAN	Assistant Director (Waste Facilities), Environmental Protection Department
Mr Alex NG	Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Facilities Development), Environmental Protection Department
Ms Christine CHOW	Principal Assistant Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands (Planning and Lands)2
Mr Raymond HO	Principal Assistant Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Transport) 7
Mr John CHAI, JP	Director of Territory Development
Mr Talis WONG	Chief Engineer (Kowloon 2) Territory Development Department
Mr Raistlin LAU	Principal Assistant Secretary (Environment and Transport) E1, Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
Mr Raymond CHEUNG, JP	Director of Drainage Services
Mr C K HON	Chief Engineer/Project Management Drainage Services Department
Mr C H YUE, JP	Director of Architectural Services
Mrs Cherry TSE, JP	Deputy Secretary for Education and Manpower (2)
Mr David WONG	Principal Assistant Secretary for Education and Manpower (Infrastructure & Research Support)

Clerk in attendance:

Ms Anita SIT

Chief Council Secretary (1)6

Staff in attendance:

Ms Pauline NG

Assistant Secretary General 1

Mr Matthew LOO

Senior Council Secretary (1)3

Ms Caris CHAN

Senior Legislative Assistant 1

Mr Frankie WOO

Legislative Assistant 2

HEAD 705 - CIVIL ENGINEERING**PWSC(2003-04)65****162DR****Restoration of five urban landfills –
post-completion environmental
monitoring work**

Members noted that the Panel on Environmental Affairs (EA Panel) had been consulted on the proposal at the meeting held on 19 January 2004. On behalf of the Chairman of EA Panel, the Chairman reported that the Panel supported the proposal in principle. Noting that the amount of landfill gas and pollution level of leachate generated in the five landfills had considerably reduced, some members queried that there might be room for reduction in the cost of the continued environmental monitoring work. Members had raised concern about the usage of restored landfills, and considered that restored landfill sites should be put to beneficial uses. Noting that the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) was reviewing the planned usage of Ma Yau Tong West Landfill, Ma Yau Tong Central Landfill and Jordan Valley Landfill, members had requested the Administration to include the outcome of the review in the Administration's submission to the Public Works Subcommittee (PWSC).

2. Mr Fred LI recalled that, following the discussion with the former Municipal Councils, the Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC) had agreed to donate towards the provision of recreational facilities on closed landfill sites. He enquired about the present status of this agreed arrangement. In response, the Principal Assistant Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Environment and Transport)E2 (PAS(E)2) confirmed that, among the five urban landfills, HKJC had agreed to contribute 80% of the capital costs for the proposed recreational developments at the landfill sites at Sai Tso Wan and Jordan Valley. She noted Mr LI's comment that special funding arrangements for public works projects should be clearly set out in future submissions to PWSC, so that members were provided with accurate information on the amount of public funds involved.

3. Mr Fred LI was also concerned about the progress of the planned developments at other restored landfill sites. PAS(E)2 said that the Administration had submitted a supplementary information paper (PWSCI(2003-04)35) to PWSC in January 2004 showing the current and planned usage of 12 restored landfills in Hong Kong. LCSD is reviewing the priority of the proposed developments in the context of an overall review of the planning of recreational facilities in the territory. She also informed members that the Administration was exploring the possibility of involving the private sector in developing and managing facilities at the restored landfill sites. As a first step, the Administration had invited the private sector to participate in the construction of certain recreational facilities at Tseung Kwan O and Kwun Tong.

4. In this connection, Mr Albert CHAN considered that the Administration should encourage the private sector to come up with proposals for economical use of restored landfills. He was concerned that the existing administrative arrangements were too rigid to provide incentives for private sector participation in public works projects. The Permanent Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands (Planning and Lands) said that the Administration welcomed new initiatives from the private sector and in fact, the policy direction was to harness the resources and expertise of the private sector for the delivery of public works projects. However, many problems such as the existence of sufficient economic incentives in the projects concerned had to be considered in deciding whether the private sector involvement mode of delivery should be adopted. The Administration had already invited the private sector to participate in two recreational facilities projects, and would prudently explore the feasibility to extend this arrangement to other projects. The Director of Environmental Protection added that there were various constraints on the use of restored landfills. For example, they were not suitable for the construction of permanent building structures and hence restored landfills were mainly used for provision of passive recreational facilities.

5. Noting that the methane content of landfill gas generated from the five restored urban landfills was between 16% - 44% which was much higher than the safety standard of 1%, Mr Fred LI expressed grave concern as to whether the restored landfill sites such as the Sai Tso Wan Landfill to be used for the provision of public recreational facilities would be absolutely safe for the users. The Assistant Director (Waste Facilities) of Environmental Protection Department (AD(WF)) appreciated Mr LI's concern and explained that the methane content of landfill gas mentioned in the Administration's paper was measured from landfill gas collected from boreholes and extraction wells, while landfill gas would be dispersed when it was emitted to open air. In any event, the methane content of the surface landfill gas emission at the restored landfills with recreational facilities thereon would be closely monitored to ensure that the sites were safe for users. In response to the Chairman's concern that landfill gas might be accumulated in manholes outside landfill sites, AD(WF) advised members that environmental monitoring work at landfills included detection of landfill gas, particularly in confined spaces on site and off site. Immediate remedial actions would be taken if accumulation of landfill gas was detected. Some

precautionary measures such as making trenches to prevent the migration of landfill gas to areas with developments would be taken to ensure safety.

6. Miss Cyd HO commented that landfills were not an effective means for waste disposal in view of their high restoration costs and adverse environmental impacts thereby requiring decades of environmental monitoring work. Hence this waste disposal method should be avoided in future. She was also concerned about the management of leachate at these landfills. In response, AD(WF) said that the five landfills covered in the proposal commenced operation in the 1960s and at that time, no capping layers had been provided to reduce infiltration of rain water into the waste mass when the landfills were completed. The completed restoration facilities for the five landfills included the provision of engineered capping layers with low permeability and surface water drainage systems at landfills thereby reducing the amount of leachate discharged from the landfills. A leachate management system was in operation at the Jordan Valley Landfill to extract, collect, treat and dispose of the leachate. The leachate discharged from the other four landfills was collected and transferred to the Jordan Valley Landfill for treatment before being discharged to the foul sewers.

7. The item was voted on and endorsed.

HEAD 707 - NEW TOWNS AND URBAN AREA DEVELOPMENT

**PWSC(2003-04)66 469CL South East Kowloon development –
infrastructure at north apron area at Kai
Tak Airport**

8. Members noted that the Administration had briefed the LegCo Panel on Planning, Lands and Works (PLW Panel) on the proposed project on 27 January 2004. On behalf of the Chairman of PLW Panel, the Chairman briefed members that the Administration had confirmed at the meeting that the proposed works under this item would not be affected by the result of the current review of the South East Kowloon Development and the possible changes in the design and alignment of the Shatin-to-Central Link. The proposed works should commence in April 2004 so that the relevant site could be handed over to the Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation (KCRC) in mid 2006. On a Panel member's enquiry about the alternative of entrusting the works to KCRC, the Administration had, after the Panel meeting, requested KCRC to review the situation. KCRC subsequently replied that after reconsidering the case, they were unable to undertake the proposed entrustment works due to resources reason.

9. The item was voted on and endorsed.

HEAD 704 - DRAINAGE

**PWSC(2003-04)64 143DS Central, Western and Wan Chai West
sewerage, stage 2 phase 2B works**

10. Members noted that the Administration had briefed EA Panel at the meeting held on 22 December 2003. On behalf of the Chairman of EA Panel, the Chairman reported that members supported the project in principle to upgrade the sewers serving Central, Western and Wan Chai West. Members were however concerned about disruption to traffic caused by the proposed works and requested the Administration to include in its submission to PWSC the planned traffic management measures to be taken during the works period. Members also considered that care should be taken to choose locations which were the least obstructive to business as road openings for construction using the trenchless method.

11. Miss Cyd HO said that the Central and Western District Council (C&WDC) supported the proposal but expressed concern that the impact of the works on road traffic should be closely monitored. In response, the Director of Drainage Services (DDS) confirmed that the Administration would set up a Traffic Management Liaison Group (TMLG) comprising C&WDC members to monitor the road traffic during construction. The Administration would also report the progress of the sewerage works to C&WDC regularly.

12. Miss Cyd HO pointed out that under normal circumstances, underground utility facilities should be laid at least 1 metre beneath the road surface, but some utility facilities such as sewers and fresh water pipes in the Central and Western District were laid only 1 feet below the ground. These pipes were susceptible to damages when road excavation works were undertaken, causing disruption to the relevant services and the road excavation works. Many excavation works were also delayed due to inaccurate information on underground utility facilities. Miss HO therefore considered that exploratory works on the underground utilities should be performed before proceeding with excavation works. Efforts should also be made to compile accurate plans for underground utility facilities. Mr Kenneth TING echoed Miss HO's views. In response, DDS shared members' concern about inaccurate information on underground utility facilities, especially in old districts such as Western District where the majority of the sewers were built several decades ago. He advised that contractors were required to perform exploratory works before proceeding with road excavation works, and that some allowance would be given for unforeseen delay due to inaccurate underground plans. Advanced technology such as radar would also be used in exploratory works. The Acting Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works) (PSW, ETWB) added that the Land (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Amendment) Ordinance 2003, which would commence operation in April 2004, stipulated a new regime on road excavation works to ensure strict compliance with the road excavation permit conditions. The Administration would closely monitor relevant works departments and their contractors to ensure

their compliance with the statutory requirements.

13. On Mr Kenneth TING's concern about the monitoring of road excavation works, PSW, ETWB said that any road excavations must be approved by the Administration, and all excavation application records were kept in a computer system for central monitoring with a view to reducing unnecessary repetition in road excavations. The Administration would review the monitoring mechanism regularly and improve the system where appropriate.

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14. On Miss Cyd HO's concern about assistance rendered to shops affected by public works projects, the Administration agreed to explore her suggestion that the Rates for the shops affected by this project and other similar projects be suitably adjusted by the Rating and Valuation Department to provide relief for the impact of road works on their business.

15. Mr Albert CHAN considered that the Administration should improve the coordination of excavation works to minimize the disruption to residents and traffic arising from different works projects. He also enquired whether the works under this project would overlap with those under the Shatin-to-Central Link (SCL) and Central-Wanchai Bypass (CWCB), especially for those works near Queen's Road Central. In response, DDS said that the works under this project were to upgrade and improve sewers in Central, Western and Wan Chai West Districts, and these works would not overlap with those under SCL and CWCB. DDS also pointed out that the Administration accorded high priority to good coordination among works projects involving road excavation works. For example, some sewerage works had been included in the beautification project of the Western Market to minimize excavation works. The Drainage Services Department (DSD) and Water Supplies Department had been working closely to minimize excavation works in projects under their purviews. PSW, ETWB also said that it was a standing arrangement for all relevant departments to be consulted in planning and design stages with a view to avoiding overlap of works and achieving the best co-ordination and utilization of resources.

16. Mr IP Kowk-him expressed concern about the long time required (around 12 years) for the entire project and urged the Administration to expedite the sewage works. He also enquired why four years were required for rectification of expedient connections in old sewers under the stage 2 works of the project. In response, DDS advised that the scope of the stage 2 works comprised the upgrading and rehabilitating about 9.5km of sewers along the large coastal areas in the lower catchment at Central and Western District. A longer construction period was required as the contractor was allowed to complete one 50-metre road section at a time to avoid causing inconvenience to the public. DDS also advised that notice boards would be erected at each site to specify the scheduled commencement and completion dates of the works so that the public would know whether the works had progressed on schedule. Where the works schedule had been revised, the original completion date would be maintained on the notice boards. The Administration would also keep District Councils informed of the work progress. On Mr IP's concern about the

progress of the works at Belcher Road, DDS said that the excavation works were part of an earlier phase of the sewerage project. The works were delayed due to the presence of many rocks beneath Belcher Road.

17. Mr Henry WU expressed grave concern about the temporary traffic management measures to be taken during the project to cope with the heavy traffic at some major roads such as Queen's Road West and Wing Lok Street. He also pointed out that night-works might not be feasible in some areas such as Connaught Road Central as the works would disrupt cultural activities held inside the nearby City Hall. He requested the Administration to provide the schedule of works for each area and conduct traffic impact assessment for the project to estimate the additional traffic time required arising from works in each area. DDS appreciated Mr WU's concern but said that no detailed works schedule for each area was available at this stage and it was impracticable to specify the schedules in the works contract. Instead, the Administration would look into the situation of each area and specify the works schedule in the works orders issued to the contractor for each section of works. As regards the temporary traffic measures, the Chief Engineer/Project Management of DSD said that the Administration would use the trenchless method to construct sewers at critical locations to minimize traffic disruption. Any temporary traffic arrangement must be approved by the Transport Department before the commencement of works.

18. Miss Cyd HO enquired whether excavations were required for repair and maintenance of the underground sewers after the improvement works. DDS advised that under normal circumstances, sewers blockage could be cleared by high pressure water jetting and cracks in sewers could be repaired by lining with the assistance of advanced technology such as CCTV, and hence no excavation would be required for normal maintenance and repair.

19. The item was voted on and endorsed.

HEAD 703 - BUILDINGS

**PWSC(2003-04)67 311EP A 36-classroom primary school in Area
12, Yuen Long**

20. Members noted that the Administration had consulted the LegCo Panel on Education (Education Panel) on the planning and provision of public sector school places at the meeting held on 30 January 2004. On behalf of the Chairman of Education Panel, the Chairman reported that the Administration had invited the Panel to comment on the suggestion to proceed with seeking funding approval for three categories of school projects, namely, projects aimed to implement whole-day primary schooling (WDPS), reprovisioning and redevelopment projects, and schools which had already been allocated to school sponsoring bodies (SSBs). Members basically supported the construction of new schools for the implementation of WDPS

and reprovisioning and redevelopment of existing sub-standard schools. Some members considered that other proposed school projects should be considered on a case-by-case basis. Furthermore, members also stressed that to facilitate members' deliberation at PWSC meetings, the Administration should submit their proposals for construction of new schools with detailed background information including the supply and demand situation and the views of the school heads in the districts concerned, etc.

21. Mr James TO referred members to the tabled letter issued by Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong and stated that the Democratic Party (DP) supported the construction of new schools for the implementation of WDPS and for reprovisioning and redevelopment of existing sub-standard schools. Apart from these two categories, DP would only support the construction of new schools to cope with the increase in student population in a district, or to provide special education programmes which were not provided in the mainstream schools. DP would like to stress that the Administration should not seek funding approval for the construction of new schools merely for the reason that such schools had been allocated to SSB. The Deputy Secretary for Education and Manpower(2) (DS(2), EMB) noted Mr TO's view and pointed out that the school allocation mechanism had been discussed by the Legislative Council in the 1999/2000 legislative session. The allocation of schools several year in advance of the target operation date of the new schools was to enable the selected SSBs to get involved in the design of the school building so that schools' hardware could suit their school plans. The arrangement would not pre-empt the funding approval by LegCo, and the SSBs concerned were clearly informed that whether and when the schools allocated would be built was subject to, inter alia, the funding approval of the Finance Committee.

22. In response to Mr James TO's enquiry, the Principal Assistant Secretary for Education and Manpower (Infrastructure & Research Support) confirmed that to enable whole day primary schooling by 2007/08, the construction of the proposed primary school would be adequate for Area 12 in Yuen Long District.

23. Mr Albert CHAN pointed out that many parents and students in Yuen Long District had asked for the construction of a new school for a long time and he would support the project.

24. Noting that three basketball courts would be provided in the school, Miss Cyd HO suggested that one basketball court with facilities suitable for primary one to three students might be provided so as to encourage them to play basketballs. Mr Henry WU and Mr IP Kowk-him expressed reservation on the suggestion and considered that the matter should be left to school sports experts in the Education and Manpower Bureau and the school management to decide. DS(2), EMB undertook to convey members' views to the relevant experts for consideration.

25. The item was voted on and endorsed.
26. The meeting ended at 12:15 pm.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
26 February 2004