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

**Minutes of the 17th meeting
held in Conference Room A of Legislative Council Building
on Friday, 20 June 2008, 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, JP
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, SBS, JP
Hon Bernard CHAN, GBS, JP
Hon SIN Chung-kai, SBS, JP
Dr Hon Philip WONG Yu-hong, GBS
Hon Howard YOUNG, SBS, JP
Hon LAU Kong-wah, JP
Hon LAU Wong-fat, GBM, GBS, JP
Hon Miriam LAU Kin-ye, GBS, JP
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon CHOY So-yuk, JP
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, GBS, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon LI Kwok-ying, MH, JP
Hon Daniel LAM Wai-keung, SBS, JP
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, SBS, JP
Hon TAM Heung-man

Members absent:

Hon Mrs Selina CHOW LIANG Shuk-yee, GBS, JP
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon CHAN Kam-lam, SBS, JP
Hon Jasper TSANG Yok-sing, GBS, JP
Hon LEE Wing-tat
Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP

Public officers attending:

Mr Joe C C WONG, JP	Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) ³
Mr MAK Chai-kwong, JP	Permanent Secretary for Development (Works)
Ms Anissa WONG, JP	Permanent Secretary for the Environment
Mr Raymond YOUNG, JP	Permanent Secretary for Development (Planning and Lands)
Miss Sandra LAM	Principal Assistant Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) (Works)
Mr Damian LEE Kwok-hung	Assistant Secretary (Recreation and Sports) ¹ , Home Affairs Bureau
Mr YUE Chi-hang, JP	Director of Architectural Services
Miss Olivia CHAN Yeuk-oi	Assistant Director (Leisure Services) ² , Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Mr Victor YIU Man-wai	Chief Executive Officer (Planning) ¹ , Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Ms Bernadette LINN Hon-ho, JP	Deputy Secretary for Education (2)
Ms Mable CHAN	Principal Assistant Secretary (Infrastructure and Research Support), Education Bureau
Miss Amy YUEN Wai-yin	Principal Assistant Secretary (Planning and Lands) ² , Development Bureau
Mr TAM Po-yiu	Assistant Director (Technical Services), Planning Department
Mr MA Lee-tak, JP	Director of Water Supplies
Mr CHIU Wai-ka	Assistant Director (New Works) (Acting), Water Supplies Department
Mr KONG Kwok-ching	Chief Engineer (Consultants Management), Water Supplies Department

Clerk in attendance:

Ms Rosalind MA	Senior Council Secretary (1) ⁸
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Staff in attendance:

Mrs Constance LI	Assistant Secretary General 1
Mr Noel SUNG	Senior Council Secretary (1)4
Ms Angel SHEK	Council Secretary (1)2
Ms Alice CHEUNG	Senior Legislative Assistant (1)1
Mr Frankie WOO	Legislative Assistant (1)2

Action

Head 703 – Buildings

PWSC(2008-09)36 419RO Aldrich Bay Park

The Chairman advised that the item had been discussed at the Subcommittee meeting on 2 June 2008, and having listened to members' concerns, the Administration withdrew the paper so that the operator of the existing driving range could discuss his co-location proposal with the relevant District Council (DC) and local organizations concerned. The Eastern DC had subsequently heard the views of the operator and local residents at its meeting on 10 June 2008, and concluded that the Aldrich Bay Park project should proceed as planned.

2. Mr Howard YOUNG remarked that while he supported the proposed Park project, he noted that the Eastern DC also requested that an alternative site should be identified for use as a driving range. Mr YOUNG asked, in view of the popularity of the sport and the lack of driving ranges in the urban area, whether the Government would attempt to identify a site(s) in the urban area, preferably on Hong Kong Island, for use as a driving range, and the timetable for development of such a facility. Mr YOUNG further enquired whether the existing site could be recovered by stages so that the driving range could continue to operate for some time. Mr YOUNG and Mr SIN Chung-kai were of the view that the Government should draw up the planning standard, like those for football pitches and indoor games halls, for provision of driving ranges on a territory-wide basis in order to meet the demand of the public.

3. The Assistant Director (Leisure Services)2 (AD(LS)2), Leisure & Cultural Services Department (LCSD) responded that both the Government and private organizations, e.g. the South China Athletic Association, provided golf driving facilities and such facilities had yet to be fully utilized. The Government considered that the current provision of golf driving facilities in the market was sufficient to meet the public demand. However, the Government would keep the situation under review in examining the need for long-term provision of golf facilities in Hong Kong.

4. Ms Emily LAU asked whether the Government had examined the proposal of the existing operator to relocate the driving range to a site in Sheung On Street of Chai Wan. Ms Miriam LAU, Miss CHAN Yuen-han, Mr Alan LEONG and Mr Andrew CHENG shared Ms LAU's concern. Ms Miriam LAU was of the view that the Government should actively pursue the provision of an alternative open-air site in the urban area for use as a driving range in order to meet the demand of the

public. Mr Andrew CHENG opined that driving ranges should not be located near residential buildings in the urban area as they would cause nuisance and danger to the residents in the vicinity. Miss CHAN Yuen-han stressed that the residents in the vicinity should be consulted if a site was identified for use as a driving range.

5. The Permanent Secretary for Development (Planning and Lands) (PS(PL)), Development Bureau (DEVB) responded that the relevant Government departments were considering whether the proposed site in Chai Wan was suitable for use as a temporary driving range although the site was quite near to residential buildings. The Government noted the views of Members of the Legislative Council (LegCo) and the Eastern DC and would consider identifying sites in the urban area for development as driving ranges, both on short-term and long-term basis. AD(LS)2 supplemented that if the site in Chai Wan was found to be suitable for use as a driving range, open tender would be called to select an operator for the driving range.

Admin

6. Ms Emily LAU expressed concern about the attractiveness and safety of the design of the water feature. Ms Miriam LAU requested that the design of the Park should be enhanced to incorporate more attractive features and facilities in demand by the local residents.

7. The Director of Architectural Services (D Arch S) responded that the design of the Park was based on the theme set by the relevant DC to depict Aldrich Bay's past as a fishing village, and for public safety, a wide platform and ground lighting would be built along the edge of the water feature. A water feature of similar design in a park in Sai Kung which had won a design award was well received by the local community.

8. Dr KWOK Ka-ki opined that, given the shallow water depth of just about 200mm, the water feature should be open to children for their enjoyment, and administrative arrangements, e.g. children below a certain age should be accompanied by their parents, could be made to protect the safety of children.

9. Ms Miriam LAU expressed reservation about Dr KWOK's proposal regarding the opening of the water feature to children. Ms LAU opined that public safety should be of paramount importance, and many tragic incidents occurred in the past when children were allowed to enter such water areas in parks.

10. AD(LS)2 responded that for safety and hygiene reasons, the water feature was not intended for people to get into .

11. Mr Andrew CHENG expressed concern that the wide platform along the edge of the water feature would become wet and slippery causing injuries to the park users. He opined that a stone or sand path should be built along the edge of the water feature instead of a platform. Mr CHENG requested that consideration should be given to preventing injuries of park users due to wet and slippery ground surface near the water feature. D Arch S undertook to consider Mr CHENG's proposal and give a written response before the relevant Finance Committee (FC) meeting.

Admin

Admin

12. Dr KWOK Ka-ki said that the Council had passed a motion urging for the provision of more lawns for the public. He opined that more lawn areas should be provided in the proposed Park for the enjoyment of the users. He also asked whether areas would be provided in the Park for pets.

13. D Arch S responded that the lawn area to be provided for public enjoyment in the proposed Park would be about 900 square metres (m²), i.e. about 4% of the overall area of the Park, and it was located inside the open plaza. Consideration would be given to providing additional lawn area of about 200m² in the Park. AD(LS)2 supplemented that since a separate entrance and a designated area would be required for a dog garden in the Park, the relevant DC, after thorough discussion, did not support the inclusion of a dog garden in the proposed Park.

Admin

14. Miss CHAN Yuen-han commented that management consideration should not be the overriding factor in the design of public parks. Miss CHAN requested that sufficient park entrances/exits at convenient locations should be provided to facilitate access of park users, and the design of the Park should also harmonize with the neighbouring facilities such as the schools. She also requested for planting of different species of plants in the scented garden for enjoyment by the users during different seasons. D Arch S responded that his Department would take into consideration members' views in the detailed design.

15. Mr Daniel LAM said that he supported the proposed Park project for the following reasons:

- (a) the relevant DC supported the project;
- (b) the local community had demanded for provision of a park at the site;
- (c) the site was leased to the operator of the driving range on a short-term tenancy basis and the site had been designated for development of a park; and
- (d) an alternative site could be identified for development of a driving range.

Admin

16. Mr Daniel LAM and Miss CHOY So-yuk added that the Government should take into account the local community's views and ideas when finalizing the design of the proposed Park. Mr Howard YOUNG opined that the Government should be allowed time to consult the local community and draw up an improved design for the proposed Park taking into consideration the views expressed by LegCo Members. Ms Emily LAU said that LegCo Members should be provided with the finalized design of the Park when it was available. The Administration agreed to the request.

17. The item was voted on and endorsed.

PWSC(2008-09)35 267ES Conversion of a primary school premises in Area 104, Tin Shui Wai to support reprovisioning of a secondary school

18. Mr Albert CHAN noted that the basketball court to be provided in the proposed new extension block of the school was very close to a public housing estate (PHE) under construction. He was concerned that the school activities would cause noise nuisances to residents of the PHE, in particular the ringing of bells between lessons and the broadcasting during school assembly. Mr CHAN referred to the complaints of residents of Tin Shui Wai to noise nuisances caused by a cluster of schools in the middle of residential developments, and called on the Administration to work out suitable measures to mitigate the noise impact of schools on neighbouring residents.

Admin

19. The Deputy Secretary for Education (2) (DS(2), EDB) responded that the basketball court in the proposed school project would be provided on the roof-top of the new extension block and would unlikely be used for school assembly. She agreed to follow up with the school sponsoring body on measures to reduce noise impact generated from school activities on neighbouring residents.

20. Ms Emily LAU noted that the secondary school in question had been reprovisioned to the existing school building (formerly built for use as a primary school) since December 2006. As the school was already operating at the premises, Ms LAU was concerned about the disruptions caused to teaching and other school activities during the works period. Noting that the existing school building was built in accordance with the standards of a millennium school, Ms LAU enquired about the need for the proposed additional facilities such as a library for the school.

21. DS(2), EDB advised that while the existing school building was built and provided with facilities according to the standards of a millennium primary school, the facilities had to be upgraded to meet the requirements of a standard secondary school. The school concerned had moved into the existing premises pending full-scale conversion works, with only minor improvement works carried out initially, on the understanding that upgrading works would be carried out after obtaining funding approval for the reprovisioning project. She said that a larger library to meet the requirement of secondary school students would be provided in the new extension block, while the small library in the existing school building would be converted for other purposes. D Arch S supplemented that arrangements would be made during the works period to minimize disruptions to school operation. To this end, the conversion works for the existing school building would commence after completion of the new extension block so that school activities could continue at the new premises.

22. Mr Albert CHAN expressed grave concern about the high capital cost for the proposed reprovisioning project, which was estimated at \$92.6 million. He doubted whether the estimated cost was proportional to the scope of works for reprovisioning a school. DS(2), EDB advised that the proposed scope of works under the current proposal included the construction of a new extension block and conversion works in the existing school building. The estimated construction unit cost was comparable to

similar conversion projects undertaken by the Government. D Arch S added that compared with the unit construction cost for previous school improvement projects of around \$9,700/m² of construction floor area (CFA), the estimated construction unit cost for the extension block was higher, due to the need to allow a 12% provision to cater for tender price escalation, higher cost for provision of special rooms in the extension block, and complexity in work arrangements to minimize disruptions to school operation.

23. Responding to Mr Albert CHAN's further enquiry, D Arch S advised that CFAs of the new extension block and for conversion works in the existing school building were 3 630m² and 470m² respectively. Mr CHAN questioned that the construction unit cost for the school premises would be much higher than that for previous projects, considering the small CFA of the new extension building. D Arch S responded that the construction unit cost of building projects only included the costs for building and building services. The estimated project cost for piling, drainage and external works were project specific items which should not be taken for calculation of the construction unit cost.

Admin

24. Mr Albert CHAN said that he could not support the current proposal without information on the construction cost for the new extension block. At the request of Mr CHAN, D Arch S agreed to provide, before the relevant FC meeting, supplementary information on the cost items for the project, including information on the construction cost for the new extension block.

25. The item was voted on and endorsed. Ms Emily LAU requested that this item be voted on separately at the relevant FC meeting.

PWSC(2008-09)30 55RE A permanent planning and infrastructure exhibition gallery at City Hall Annex

26. Mr LAU Wong-fat, Chairman of the Panel on Development, apprised the meeting that the Panel on Development had deliberated on the current proposal at its meeting on 31 May 2008. While supporting the proposal, members were of the view that the exhibition gallery should be of international standard, including the provision of a three-dimensional model of Hong Kong, and more exhibition area. Members also requested for more detailed plans and drawings regarding the external and internal design of the exhibition gallery vis-a-vis the City Hall buildings.

27. Miss CHAN Yuen-han enquired about the additional areas to be provided at the exhibition gallery and the estimated patronage for the permanent exhibition gallery. Miss CHAN also asked whether the design of the exhibition gallery would be compatible with the other landmarks in the Central waterfront, including the reassembled Queen's Pier, City Hall and the Edinburgh Place as a group.

28. The Assistant Director (Technical Services) (AD(TS)), Planning Department (PlanD) responded that the total area of the exhibition gallery after completion of the renovation work would be about 3 980m². At present, about 6 700 persons visited the

exhibition gallery each month, and the new permanent exhibition gallery was envisaged to attract about 15 000 visitors a month. Since the project would only involve refurbishment of the existing City Hall Annex, it would not affect the future development of the Central waterfront.

29. Mr Alan LEONG pointed out that members of the Panel on Development had expressed concern about the impact of the permanent exhibition gallery on the neighbouring heritage structures, including the City Hall, the Edinburgh Place and the reassembled Queen's Pier. Mr LEONG requested that, for future similar proposals to PWSC, the Administration should provide more detailed information to facilitate Members to assess and consider the proposals. PS(PL) noted Mr LEONG's request.

30. Miss CHOY So-yuk asked about the exhibition areas in the permanent exhibition gallery, and the floor areas of other facilities which would be open to the public, such as the multi-purpose hall, meeting rooms and resource centre, etc. AD(TS) undertook to provide details of the exhibition and public areas after the meeting. In response to Miss CHOY's further enquiry, AD(TS) said that admission to the permanent exhibition gallery would be free of charge.

Admin

31. While supporting the establishment of a permanent planning and infrastructure exhibition gallery, Mr Albert CHAN opined that the permanent exhibition gallery should not be located at the City Hall Annex as it was incompatible with the heritage structures in the vicinity, e.g. the City Hall which provided cultural and municipal services. Therefore he would vote against the proposal. Mr CHAN was also concerned about the high estimated construction unit cost which amounted to \$24,579/m².

32. D Arch S responded that the estimated construction unit cost was worked out based on the recent trend of tender prices for building projects.

33. Ms Emily LAU was concerned whether the design of the exhibition gallery could be further improved. Miss CHAN Yuen-han shared Ms LAU's concern and opined that convenient entrances/exits should be provided at the permanent exhibition gallery the design of which should be compatible with the Central waterfront area, e.g. the reassembled Queen's Pier. Mr Alan LEONG shared similar concerns and remarked that the exhibition gallery should include facilities to demonstrate the impact of individual infrastructure projects on the surrounding environment. D Arch S responded that the design of the exhibition gallery emphasized on the transparency of the building. AD(TS) added that other than the existing entrance, an additional entrance would be provided on the second floor of the permanent exhibition gallery which would be connected to Admiralty and the Central waterfront area with a pedestrian footbridge system. Consideration would be given to providing three-dimensional models in the exhibition gallery. Drawings showing the conceptual floor plans of the permanent exhibition gallery could be provided to members for information.

34. Ms Emily LAU enquired about the size and the tenure of the temporary exhibition gallery at Murray Road Car-park Building. AD(TS) replied that the

temporary exhibition gallery had an area of about 460m², which was similar to the size of the existing gallery at the ground floor of the City Hall Annex, and the site would be used for three years.

35. The item was voted on and endorsed. Mr Albert CHAN voted against the proposal.

Head 709 – Waterworks

PWSC(2008-09)33 186WC Replacement and rehabilitation of water mains, stage 3

PWSC(2008-09)34 189WC Replacement and rehabilitation of water mains, stage 4

36. The Chairman suggested that the two funding proposals under **PWSC(2008-09)33** and **PWSC(2008-09)34** be discussed together as they were part of the proposed works under the territory wide water mains replacement and rehabilitation programme (R&R programme). The two items would be voted on separately after discussion. Members agreed.

37. The Chairman advised members that the Panel on Development was consulted on both proposals on 27 May 2008. Hon LAU Wong-fat, Chairman of the Panel, reported that Panel members generally supported the proposed works. Some members expressed concern about the leakage rate of aged water mains and the resultant wastage in fresh water resources. Some other members were concerned whether the water supply from Dongjiang would be adequate to cope with future demand.

38. Ms Emily LAU expressed support for the proposals and urged the Administration to expedite the implementation of the R&R programme. Noting from the Administration's paper on **186WC** that the proposed works would not give rise to additional recurrent expenditure, she enquired whether there would be savings in costs taking into account the water resources saved because of reduced leakage and resultant savings in maintenance.

39. The Director of Water Supplies (DWS) responded that upon completion of the R&R programme, the leakage rate of the water mains network in the territory as a whole would be reduced from 25% to 15%, hence reducing loss of precious water resources. However, the actual amount of savings to be achieved would depend on the costs for water production. At the request of Ms Emily LAU, DWS agreed to provide information on possible cost saving before the relevant FC meeting.

Admin

40. Ms Emily LAU expressed doubt about the estimation that there would still be a 15% leakage rate after completion of all the four stages of the R&R programme. DWS responded that as the R&R programme involved the replacement and rehabilitation of some 3 000 kilometers (km) of aged water mains among a total of about 7 700 km of mains in the water supply network of the territory, the reduction of

leakage rate from 25% to 15% after completion of the programme was considered reasonable. The leakage rate of 15% would be comparable to that in other areas of the world. Given the water pressure in the mains for supplying water to individual households, the mains would be subject to higher risk of wear and tear and a certain extent of leakage was inevitable.

41. Miss CHOY So-yuk expressed concern about the high unit cost for the proposed works under stage 3 of the R&R programme (i.e. **186WC**) and sought information on a breakdown of material cost and labour cost. DWS explained that the cost for **186WC** was estimated with reference to recent tender prices of similar projects, providing for capital costs for the materials, consultants' fees, labour costs for the construction works and costs for implementing environmental mitigation measures. He advised that about 40% of the estimated cost would be material costs, while about 60% would be for other, including labour-related, expenses. In response to Miss CHAN Yuen-han, DWS advised that the total cost for implementation of all four stages of the R&R programme was estimated at around \$19 billion in money-of-the-day prices.

42. Ms Emily LAU asked the Administration to closely monitor the implementation of the traffic and environmental mitigation measures and the interfacing of the proposed works, so as to minimize disturbance and inconvenience to the public caused by the road opening works. DWS advised that to minimize impact on traffic, temporary traffic arrangements would be implemented during the construction period, and road opening works would be undertaken in short sections, some of which of 50 metres or below based on traffic considerations. The Administration would closely monitor the impact of the road opening works on the vehicular and pedestrian traffic at the work sites.

43. Miss CHOY So-yuk enquired whether the Water Supplies Department (WSD) would take forward the proposed works in conjunction with drainage works at the same sites, especially those at the black spots of flooding. DWS responded that the Administration would take forward the proposed works under the R&R programme in collaboration with other works departments for the best interface of different projects at the same sites to minimize the need for road openings. He added that WSD had all along been working closely with the Drainage Services Department (DSD) with a view to implementing concurrently works projects which required opening of roads. The two departments would adopt entrustment arrangements to facilitate interfacing of their projects. Under stage 3 of the R&R programme, the proposed works for about three km of mains would be entrusted to DSD, whilst works for about one km of drainage pipes would be entrusted to WSD.

44. Ms Emily LAU supported the application of the trenchless method for the works under **186WC**. She considered that the trenchless method should be adopted where practicable even at a higher cost, to minimize disturbance of the construction works to the public. She opined that the Administration should not limit the application of such method to busy road sections along Nathan Road and Queensway only. Miss CHAN Yuen-han expressed support for the two proposals. She enquired whether the application of the trenchless method to busy commercial

areas in the Yau Tsim Mong district and the Central and Western district were based on cost consideration.

45. DWS advised that the trenchless method would be adopted, where feasible and practicable, for the proposed works to minimize the need for road openings. He said that technical and site conditions of the section of the water main concerned, rather than the cost, would be the major considerations for applying the trenchless method at a road section. For water mains running along road sections servicing a large number of users with a large number of service pipes and connections, it would not be effective to use the trenchless method as the connection works would still require road openings. Responding to Ms Emily LAU's further enquiry, DWS advised that the estimated cost of using the trenchless method would be about ten times that of the conventional method.

46. Noting from Enclosure 3 to the Administration's paper on **186WC** that all the relevant District Councils (DCs) had given support to the proposed works, Miss CHAN Yuen-han sought information on the views and concerns of DCs on the implementation of the proposed works. DWS responded that the relevant DCs unanimously supported the implementation of the R&R programme for improvement of the water supply network and reduction of frequency of bursts and leaks. Some DC members had expressed concern about the impact of the proposed works on traffic and environment and welcome the application of the trenchless method to minimize such impact. The Central and Western (C&W) DC had requested the Administration to provide detailed plans for implementation of the proposed works in due course.

47. Responding to Miss CHAN Yuen-han's concern about the importance of minimizing the impact of the works on the households and shops in the affected areas, DWS stressed that the trenchless method would be used where practicable in different districts, having regard to the technical and site constraints of the road sections concerned. Moreover, the Administration would liaise with the affected residents and shop operators on the period for temporary suspension of water supply for the proposed works. He advised that to minimize disturbance to the community, the Administration would limit the duration of water suspension to a few hours, up to around eight hours.

48. As the majority of the water mains in the territory was ageing, Ms Emily LAU questioned why the Administration had not proposed to replace all the aged mains. She also enquired whether there were any differences in performance and service lives of replaced and rehabilitated water mains.

49. DWS explained that the rehabilitated mains would be comparable to new one in terms of service life and performance. For rehabilitation of mains, the trenchless method could be employed to launch a new pipe from a launching pit along the existing pipe route to a receiving pit, and the road surface for the whole length of the pipe would not need to be opened up under such a method. An alternative trenchless technique for rehabilitation was to force a hydraulic bursting tool through the existing water main causing it to burst, and a new pipe would be

installed in the vacated space. Rehabilitation of aged mains could minimize the need for road opening and the impact on traffic and the environment. Responding to Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming's enquiry, DWS said that after implementation of the replacement or rehabilitation works, the water mains would have a longer service life span of about 50 years, as compared with the 30 to 40 years life span of the existing mains.

50. DWS noted Ms Emily LAU's concern about the unsatisfactory finishing of some water mains within the country park areas. He said that WSD would take necessary actions in collaboration with relevant departments to ensure the standard of water mains works.

51. Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming enquired how the proposed works under the R&R programme would be prioritized for implementation in the coming years up to 2015, for example, whether priority would be given to the condition of the mains or simply according to their geographical locations. He pointed out that some water mains in the rural areas were in critical condition and urged the Administration to accord priority to replacing or rehabilitating these mains.

52. Miss CHOY So-yuk noted that works would be undertaken in a number of districts over the territory both under stage 3 and stage 4 of the R&R programme. She enquired whether works could be undertaken on a district basis, i.e. completing all the works in one district after moving on to another district.

53. DWS said that the Administration would take forward necessary works to improve the condition of aged mains in different areas of the territory, where practicable. In deciding the order for implementation of the improvement works, consideration would also be given to the condition of existing mains and priority would be given to mains which were more dilapidated or worn-out. To minimize inconvenience caused to residents of different districts, it was considered desirable to implement works concurrently in various districts under each stage of the R&R programme instead of on a district basis. Information on locations for works under the R&R programme was available for public inspection on WSD's website.

54. Mr Albert CHAN supported the proposal but expressed concern about the long timeframe for completion of the R&R programme in 2015. He recalled that the Administration had undertaken to shorten the project timeframe in response to Members' earlier request. He questioned whether the works under the programme had been advanced.

55. DWS explained that while the Administration appreciated Members' wish to accelerate the delivery of the programme, it was necessary to allow time for preparatory work of such a large-scale programme and coordination of interfacing of works. According to the initial plan in 2000, the R&R programme would be implemented in four stages over a period of 20 years between 2000 and 2020. In 2005, the Administration revised the project delivery timeframe and advanced the target completion date from 2020 to 2015. Responding to Mr Albert CHAN's request for further advancing the delivery of the programme, DWS advised that

2015 was a reasonable target. The Administration would endeavour to implement all the R&R works in an expeditious manner.

56. Item PWSC(2008-09)33 was voted on and endorsed.

57. Item PWSC(2008-09)34 was voted on and endorsed.

PWSC(2008-09)32 327WF Laying of western cross harbour main and associated land mains from West Kowloon to Sai Ying Pun

58. The Chairman advised members that the Panel on Development was consulted on this proposal on 27 May 2008.

59. Mr LAU Wong-fat, Chairman of the Panel on Development, reported that members of the Panel generally supported the proposal. They noted the need to lay a new cross harbour main to ensure security of water supply before the aged water mains were taken out of service for examination. Some Members opined that the Administration should take forward the proposed works expeditiously.

60. Miss CHAN Yuen-han appreciated the need for laying a new cross harbour main. She was concerned whether the associated dredging and backfilling works would have any adverse impact on the marine environment, in particular on the marine ecology and water quality of the Victoria Harbour. Ms Emily LAU expressed similar concern.

61. DWS responded that an environmental impact assessment (EIA) study in accordance with the statutory requirement had been conducted for the laying of the proposed submarine pipeline. The EIA report had been approved by the Director of Environmental Protection. Recommendations of the EIA study covered detailed measures in the construction and operation stages of the project to mitigate and control the environmental impact of the proposed works so as to comply with the requirements of the EIA Ordinance (Cap. 499). In brief, dredging would be carried out in the Victoria Harbour by stages for the laying of the submarine pipeline under the seabed, and the pulling of the pipeline across the harbour from West Kowloon to Sai Ying Pun would take only a couple of weeks. The proposed works would not have any unacceptable impact on the fishing community as the alignment of the pipeline was quite a distance from the nearest fish culture zone in Ma Wan.

62. Miss CHAN Yuen-han noted that the C&WDC had requested the Government to carefully handle any possible adverse traffic and environmental impact arising from the proposed works. She enquired about measures to be implemented to address the concern of C&WDC. DWS advised that to address the concern of C&WDC about the impact of road opening works along busy road sections in Sai Ying Pun, the contractor would be required to submit temporary traffic management schemes to the Administration before work commencement. The Administration would consult C&WDC on the proposed arrangements nearer

the time.

63. Noting that the design life of the existing cross harbour mains was 50 years, Ms Emily LAU enquired about the design life of the new cross harbour main under the proposed works. She was concerned whether the problem of leakage had been detected for the four groups of cross harbour mains now in service.

64. DWS responded that the proposed main would have the same design life of 50 years as both the existing mains and the new main were made of steel, which were more durable and resistant to wear and tear. Notwithstanding that the four groups of existing cross harbour mains were now in good condition without any leakage, two of them had been in use for over 40 years. Shutting down of these aged mains to conduct a detailed survey of their conditions was necessary to ensure security of water supply to Hong Kong Island. Responding to Ms Emily LAU's further enquiry, DWS explained that one of the reasons for the durability of cross harbour mains as compared with other underground mains was that the former mains were less prone to damage by other construction works. Moreover, the chance of leakage for cross harbour mains, without valves, was lower than other mains. Responding to Miss CHAN Yuen-han's concern about the use of the existing cross harbour mains after completion of the new main, DWS advised that the four groups of existing mains would continue their service. The Administration had no plan at the present stage to shut down these mains, except for examination of the water mains.

65. The item was voted on and endorsed.

66. The meeting ended at 10:49 am.