

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)1363/11-12
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/TP/1

Panel on Transport

**Minutes of meeting held on
Monday, 7 November 2011, at 4:30 pm
in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex**

- Members present** : Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo (Chairman)
Hon LAU Kong-wah, JP
Hon Miriam LAU Kin-ye, GBS, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, SBS, JP
Hon LI Fung-ying, SBS, JP
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, SBS, JP
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH
Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung, GBS, JP
Hon Ronny TONG Ka-wah, SC
Hon KAM Nai-wai, MH
Hon CHAN Hak-kan
Hon WONG Sing-chi
Hon IP Wai-ming, MH
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
Hon Tanya CHAN
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
- Members absent** : Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, GBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, SBS, S.B.St.J., JP
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP

**Public Officers
attending** : **Agenda item IV**

Mr YAU Shing-mu, JP
Under Secretary for Transport and Housing

Ms Rebecca PUN, JP
Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing

Ms Carolina YIP, JP
Deputy Commissioner/Transport Services &
Management
Transport Department

Ms Macella LEE
Principal Transport Officer/Bus and Railway 3
Transport Department

Agenda item V

Mr YAU Shing-mu, JP
Under Secretary for Transport and Housing

Mr Patrick CHAN, JP
Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing
(Transport)3

Miss Erica NG
Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport and
Housing (Transport) 2

Mr CHING Kam-cheong, JP
Deputy Commissioner/Planning & Technical
Services
Transport Department

Mr LEUNG Tak-fai
Assistant Commissioner/Technical Service
Transport Department

Attendance by invitation : Agenda item IV

Public Transport Think Tank of Hong Kong

Mr CHAN Tik-yiu
Chairman

中西區長者友善工作小組

Ms TAI Shui-ching
Representative

Individual

Mr Nigel LAM

Bike Racks on Buses@hk

Mr CHAN Ka-leung
Convenor

Hong Kong Cycling Alliance

Mr LEUNG Wang-hei
Transport Officer

Individual

Mr CHAI Man-hon
Southern District Council Member

The Staffs & Workers Union of Hong Kong
Civil Airlines

Mr CHEUNG Shu-wang
Chairman

民航 (HAECO) 分會

Mr TING Sung-ki
Chairman

Hong Kong Airport Ramp Services Employees
Union

Mr LI Wing-foo
Chairman

殘疾人士爭取交通半費優惠聯席

Mr Allen CHAN
Convenor

Individual

Mr Martin OEI
Political Commentator

Neighborhood and Worker's Service Centre

Miss Vincci WONG
Labour Organizer

Rehabilitation Alliance Hong Kong

Mr LAU Kwok-lam
Project Officer

Leslie Chan Community Services Office

Mr Leslie CHAN

Individual

Mr HO Man-kit
Sai Kung District Council Member

Individual

Mr Patrick LAI

Dynamic Islands

Mr Michael MO Kwan-tai
Committee Member

天水圍北交通關注組

Mr KONG Kin-shing
Representative

Community Development Alliance

Mr CHAN Yu-cheung
Project Worker

North District Employment Concern Group

Ms Venny KWOK
Convenor

Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong Diocesan
Pastoral Centre for Workers (New Territories)

Mr Augustine YU Siu-po
Program Officer

Hong Kong Blind Union

Mr Billy WONG
Vice-president

Individual

Ms LI Shee-lin

Public Transport Research Team

Mr Leo KUNG
Committee Member

Hong Kong Federation of the Blind

Ms CHEUNG Siu-mei
Member

Mr SHING Li-lim
Executive director

Same Rate Different Fare Victims Union

Mr Michael TSUI
Convenor

Clerk in attendance : Ms Joanne MAK
Chief Council Secretary (1)2

Staff in attendance : Ms Macy NG
Senior Council Secretary (1)2

Ms Emily LIU
Legislative Assistant (1)2

Action

I Confirmation of minutes of meeting

(LC Paper No. CB(1)210/11-12 - Minutes of meeting on
13 October 2011)

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2011 were confirmed.

**II Information papers issued since the last regular meeting on
11 July 2011**

(LC Paper CB(1)2854/10-11(01)	No. -	Administration's response to the submission from a member of the public on improvements that should be introduced to the public transport arrangements at Central Piers
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LC Paper CB(1)2854/10-11(02)	No. -	Correspondence between a member of the public and the
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- LC Paper
CB(1)2854/10-11(03) No. - Administration regarding a complaint about the driving attitude of a driver of green minibus route no. 56
No. - Submission from a member of the public complaining about a station supervisor of The Kowloon Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited
- LC Paper
CB(1)2919/10-11(01) No. - Submission on provision of cycle tracks and cycle parking facilities in the vicinity of the new Legislative Council Complex
- LC Paper
CB(1)2977/10-11(01) No. - Correspondence between a member of the public and the Administration regarding new bus stops for the new Legislative Council/ Government Complex
- LC Paper
CB(1)3006/10-11(01) No. - Submission from a member of the public on tram waiting kiosk at Queensway
- LC Paper
CB(1)3006/10-11(02) No. - Submission from a member of the public on air conditioning in buses
- LC Paper
CB(1)158/11-12(01) No. - E-mail from a member of the public complaining about the queue jumping problem at Tung Chung Bus Terminus (Bus route no. S1)
- LC Paper
CB(1)159/11-12(01) No. - Net Revenue Statement for 2010-2011 submitted by Western Harbour Tunnel Company Limited
- LC Paper
CB(1)159/11-12(02) No. - Net Revenue Statement for 2010-2011 submitted by Route 3 (Country Park Section) Company Limited
- LC Paper
CB(1)170/11-12(01) No. - Memorandum referring to the Panel the views and concerns raised by Sha Tin District Council members on

- provision of bus route between Ma On Shan and Western/Sheung Wan via Route 8
- LC Paper No. -
CB(1)170/11-12(02) Memorandum referring to the Panel the views and concerns raised by Kwai Tsing District Council members on provision of a lift for the footbridge near On Pok House on Tsing King Road
- LC Paper No. -
CB(1)170/11-12(03) Memorandum referring to the Panel the views and concerns raised by Kwai Tsing District Council members on installation of a lift outside Ching Mui House, Cheung Ching Estate
- LC Paper No. -
CB(1)209/11-12(01) Submission from a member of the public on the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge related infrastructure projects in Hong Kong
- LC Paper No. -
CB(1)238/11-12(01) Information paper provided by the Administration on replacement of the Tunnel Lighting System in the Aberdeen Tunnel
- LC Paper No. -
CB(1)238/11-12(02) Information paper provided by the Administration on replacement of four specialised vehicles providing towing services for the Tsing Ma Control Area, North Lantau Highway and Penny's Bay
- LC Paper No. CB(1)254/11-12 - Letter from Hong Kong Construction Association (HKCA) (request for presenting to Panel members the findings of the Visionary Transport Infrastructure Study 2030 commissioned by

LC CB(1)249/11-12(01)	Paper	No. -	HKCA) Supplementary information provided by the Administration on latest progress of Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge infrastructure projects in Hong Kong)
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2. Members noted the above papers issued since the last meeting.

III Items for discussion at the next meeting scheduled for 5 December 2011

(LC CB(1)227/11-12(01)	Paper	No. -	List of outstanding items for discussion
LC CB(1)227/11-12(02)	Paper	No. -	List of follow-up actions)

3. Members agreed to discuss the following items at the next regular meeting on 5 December 2011 –

- (a) Elderly-friendly bus design; and
- (b) Application of latest surveying technologies in major highway projects.

(Post-meeting note: At the request of the Administration and with the concurrence of the Chairman, the item on "Application of latest surveying technologies in major highway projects" was subsequently replaced by an urgent item on "Star Ferry fare increase application".)

IV Franchises of New World First Bus Services Limited (NWFB), Long Win Bus Company Limited (LW) and Citybus Limited (Citybus) (Franchise for Airport and North Lantau Bus Network) (Franchise 2)

(LC CB(1)227/11-12(03)	Paper	No. -	Administration's paper on franchises of NWFB, LW and Citybus (Franchise 2)
LC CB(1)2647/10-11(04)	Paper	No. -	Administration's paper on franchises of NWFB, LW and Citybus (Franchise 2)

LC Paper No. CB(1)193/11-12 - Paper on franchises of NWFB, LW and Citybus (Franchise 2) prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Background brief))

Meeting with deputations/the Administration

*Public Transport Think Tank of Hong Kong
(LC Paper No. CB(1)232/11-12(01))*

4. Mr CHAN Tik-yiu presented the views of Public Transport Think Tank of Hong Kong as detailed in its submission, including -

- (a) the three franchised bus companies (NWFB, LW and Citybus) should provide more route information at bus termini and stops so that passengers waiting for buses would be aware of the road traffic situation, particularly when the bus arrival time was affected by traffic congestion or other reasons;
- (b) the Kowloon Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited (KMB) and LW should introduce inter-company bus-bus interchange (BBI) schemes as they were subsidiaries of the same parent company;
- (c) bus stop announcement system should be installed for the bus fleet of NWFB; and
- (d) better quality buses should be deployed for airport routes.

中西區長者友善工作小組

(LC Paper No. CB(1)232/11-12(10))

5. Ms TAI Shui-ching briefed members on the Group's submission. She pointed out that the three franchised bus companies should be required to provide barrier-free facilities for the elderly, such as facilities to ensure safe boarding and alighting, priority seats with different colours to make them more eye-catching and visible, widened gangway and improved provision of passenger information for the elderly. Ms TAI suggested that elderly-friendly bus guidelines should be provided for by legislation and franchised bus companies should be required to comply with the guidelines on a mandatory basis. She added that a forum should be put in place for the elderly to give views on the improvements required for franchised bus

services, and the franchisees concerned should be required to take into account such views.

Mr Nigel LAM

6. Pointing out that the Government was committed to adhering to the climate change strategy and implementing environmental protection measures, Mr Nigel LAM opined that the Government should consider –

- (a) including terms and conditions in the new bus franchises to stipulate the greenhouse gas emission reduction measures;
- (b) setting a maximum level of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emission for each bus route and award the bus franchises to the bus companies with the lowest CO₂ emission generated by buses of their routes;
- (c) establishing a low-emission zone (LEZ) on Lantau Island, restricting the use of fossil fuel vehicles and encouraging the use of electric or other zero emission vehicles within the zone; and
- (d) promoting use of electric vehicles.

Bike Racks on Buses@hk

(LC Paper No. CB(1)232/11-12(02))

7. Mr CHAN Ka-leung briefed members on the salient points of his submission. He pointed out that some cycle tracks were located far away from residential areas. However, the bus companies had not provided necessary facilities to enable carriage of bicycles on buses. He suggested that the relevant bus companies should be required to provide facilities such as cycle racks, and to allow carriage of folding bicycles on buses. He also suggested installation of facilitates for hanging bicycles outside the bus.

Hong Kong Cycling Alliance

(LC Paper No. CB(1)232/11-12(03))

8. Mr LEUNG Wang-hei echoed Mr CHAN Ka-leung's views above. He also considered that the Government should require the bus companies to review their policies on carriage of bicycles on buses every three years and involve public participation in the review.

The Staffs & Workers Union of Hong Kong Civil Airlines

9. Mr CHEUNG Shu-wang stated that the Union had conducted a survey in October 2011 to study the views of airport staff on transportation for work. The survey had shown that the majority of the respondents travelled on buses and many of them considered that the bus fares were too high. They hoped that the transport network and frequency of bus services on the airport island could be improved. In addition, BBI schemes and fare discounts/monthly tickets should be introduced for airport staff.

民航 (HAECO) 分會

10. Mr TING Sung-ki echoed Mr CHEUNG Shu-wang's views above. He pointed out that the introduction of minimum wage policy had reduced the wage differences between airport staff and staff who worked in urban areas, and hence discouraged people working in the airport owing to the high transport expenses and long travelling time to work. To attract more people working in the airport, he suggested that the relevant bus companies should –

- (a) offer fare discount/monthly tickets to airport staff;
- (b) review the airport routes, in particular their bus frequency and bus stop locations. In this connection, emphasis should be put on facilitating travelling of those staff working on night shifts and those who lived in remote areas; and
- (c) introduce interchange schemes with other public transport, such as the Mass Transit Railway (MTR). An example would be MTR's Airport Express and airbus "A" routes, which were expensive with low patronage.

Hong Kong Airport Ramp Services Employees Union

11. Mr LI Wing-foo considered that many airport routes were too long and, due to inadequate seats, passengers (including airport staff travelling to work) often had to stand for a long time to arrive at the airport. Mr LI hoped that more direct routing could be arranged within the airport island and the operating hours of the airport external bus routes could be extended. In addition, BBI schemes should be introduced to reduce the transport expenses of airport staff.

*殘疾人士爭取交通半費優惠聯席
(LC Paper No. CB(1)232/11-12(04))*

12. Mr Allen CHAN briefed members on the Alliance's submission. He pointed out that as proposed in the Chief Executive's 2011-2012 Policy Address, public resources would be used to facilitate the provision of fare concessions to eligible people with disabilities (PwDs) to travel on the franchised buses anytime at a concessionary fare of \$2 a trip. The Alliance was disappointed that such fare concessions were not provided by the franchised bus companies. The Alliance considered that the Government should specify, in the new franchises, the requirement that the relevant bus companies should provide fare concessions to PwDs, and consider awarding the franchises to those companies which were willing to employ PwDs.

*Mr Martin OEI, Political Commentator
(LC Paper No. CB(1)284/11-12(04))*

13. Mr Martin OEI presented his views as detailed in his submission, which included the following points –

- (a) in view of the hilly terrains and low patronage of some bus routes in Hong Kong Mid Level, part of the double-deck NWFB buses servicing this area should be replaced by a new kind of public transport, namely maxicab, which should be allowed to provide 20 or 24 seats; and
- (b) all or part of the bus routes operated by LW in the New Territories should be opened for tendering in view of their unsatisfactory performance.

Neighborhood and Worker's Service Centre

14. Miss Vincci WONG made the following points:

- (a) the franchised bus companies should fulfil their social responsibility and provide fare concessions for the elderly and PwD passengers and more BBI schemes;
- (b) to cope with the transport demands of Kwai Chung Estate residents, a bus stop at Kwai Chung Estate should be set up for route numbers A31 and E32. In addition, the destination of route no. 930 operated by Citybus from Kwai Chung Estate

should be extended from the existing Admiralty to Causeway Bay; and

- (c) in consideration of the increasing transport fares in recent years, a work incentive transport subsidy scheme on individual and household bases should be implemented. In the long run, the fare adjustment mechanism should be reviewed and there should be reduction of bus fares.

Rehabilitation Alliance Hong Kong
(LC Paper No. CB(1)232/11-12(11))

15. Mr LAU Kwok-lam briefed members on the Alliance's submission which included the following points:

- (a) the relevant bus companies should be required in the new franchises to offer half-fare concessions to PwD passengers; and
- (b) conditions and terms on provision of barrier-free facilities for PwD passengers should be included in the new franchises.

Leslie Chan Community Services Office
(LC Paper No. CB(1)232/11-12(05))

16. Mr Leslie CHAN highlighted the following views of the Services Office –

- (a) folding bicycles should be allowed to be carried on buses on North Lantau routes. In the long run, larger size of franchised buses (13.7 to 15 metres in length) should be used to accommodate bicycles on board;
- (b) WiFi services should be provided on North Lantau routes to facilitate internet surfing by tourists; and
- (c) more BBI schemes should be introduced for passengers who needed to interchange between different bus routes operated by LW and KMB during their journeys.

Mr Patrick LAI

17. Mr Patrick LAI welcomed the Administration's initiatives to provide fare concessions for PwDs. He, however, shared other deputations' views that the relevant bus companies should meet the relevant cost by their own profits instead of resorting to public resources to fund the relevant initiatives.

Dynamic Islands

18. Mr Michael MO pointed out that the number of lost trips for bus routes operated by Citybus and LW remained high particularly during peak hours, and the bus frequency should be enhanced to meet the needs of airport staff. He suggested that the relevant bus companies should provide bus arrival information at bus stops, improve the cleanliness of buses, and introduce more BBI schemes particularly during night time. To increase the competitiveness of bus services, Mr MO also suggested that the bus franchises for bus routes in North Lantau should be opened to more bus operators.

天水圍北交通關注組

19. Mr KONG Kin-shing considered the transport expenses for work for Tin Shui Wai residents very high. Sharing other deputations' views, he considered that bus companies should provide concessionary fares to the elderly and PwD passengers. In addition, he suggested that the bus companies should allocate a portion of their profits made for setting up a fund to stabilize bus fares.

Community Development Alliance

20. Mr CHAN Yu-cheung considered the transport fares in Hong Kong high particularly for those who lived in remote areas. He requested the Administration to review the current fare adjustment arrangement for franchised buses. He also pointed out that the relevant bus franchises should specify the adoption of elderly-friendly design for buses and introduction of monthly tickets.

North District Employment Concern Group

21. Ms Venny KWOK appreciated the point-to-point bus services provided by the relevant bus companies. She, however, echoed other deputations' views that the franchised bus companies should use their own

resources to provide fare concessions and introduce monthly tickets to alleviate the burden of travelling expenses on the public, especially the grassroots.

Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong Diocesan Pastoral Centre for Workers (New Territories)

22. Mr Augustine YU questioned whether the Administration had made sufficient efforts in the past decade in monitoring bus services and ensuring that they met the needs of the public. He also expressed dissatisfaction with the Administration's new initiative of using public resources in the provision of bus fare concessions for the elderly and PwD passengers. He considered that the relevant bus companies should provide such fare concessions and meet the relevant costs by their profits.

Hong Kong Blind Union

23. Mr Billy WONG also considered that the relevant bus companies had the social responsibility to provide fare concessions for PwDs and the Administration should take into account the companies' performance in their employment of PwDs when considering franchise renewal with them. He added that although some barrier-free facilities were currently provided on buses, such facilities were not adequate. He suggested that voice announcement should also be made available outside the bus to facilitate blind persons identifying the buses they were waiting for. He hoped that relevant terms on the requirement to provide barrier-free facilities could be incorporated into the new franchises.

Ms LI Shee-lin

24. Ms LI Shee-lin made the following points –

- (a) the current situation of different bus companies charging different fares of similar/same routes should be improved;
- (b) to address the problem of lost trips during peak hours in Hong Kong South, bus frequency should be enhanced. In addition, more bus captains should be deployed at busy bus stops to facilitate better arrangement of bus services;
- (c) provision of bus service information display panel at bus stops and on-board bus stop announcement display panels should be enhanced;

- (d) BBI schemes and sectional fares should be introduced for all bus routes; and
- (e) bus services between Southern District and Eastern District should be improved.

Public Transport Research Team
(LC Paper No. CB(1)232/11-12(07))

25. Mr Leo KUNG highlighted the following views of the Research Team –

- (a) the franchise for NWFB should be opened for tendering in order to bring about improvements to bus services and fare concessions. Alternatively, the Administration could renew the franchise for NWFB for a duration ending on the same expiry dates of other bus service franchises, so as to facilitate the Administration to review all bus franchises and bus routes in one go;
- (b) more direct routings to the airport should be provided under the franchises for LW and Citybus (Franchise 2);
- (c) inter-company BBI schemes should be introduced at the Lantau Link Toll Plaza bus stop; and
- (d) the relevant bus companies should consult the District Councils concerned and passenger liaison groups in their planning and development of their services.

Hong Kong Federation of The Blind
(LC Paper No. CB(1)232/11-12(08))

26. Mr SHING Li-lim briefed members on the silent points of the Federation's submission. He called on the Administration to specify in the new franchises the requirement to provide adequate barrier-free facilities for PwDs, as follows –

- (a) voice announcement (on bus arrival and bus route number) should be made available to facilitate the blind to get on the correct bus; and

- (b) two wheelchair zones (one fixed and one flexible) should be set up on each bus to facilitate disabled couples getting on the same bus.

27. Mr SHING added that the bus companies should be required to submit a concrete plan and timetable for providing the above facilities for consideration by the Administration. He also opined that the Administration should invite PwDs to participate in the process of tender assessment, if any.

*Same Rate Different Fare Victims Union
(LC Paper No. CB(1)232/11-12(09))*

28. Mr Michael TSUI briefed members on the Union's submission. In gist, the Union disagreed to the proposal to renew the franchises for all bus companies as the current approach of providing bus services by means of franchise was not satisfactory. He considered that the existing bus fare adjustment arrangement had led to the problem of similar bus routes charging different bus fares. He suggested that the Administration should look into the problem and take remedial actions.

*Mr CHAI Man-hon, Southern District Council Member
(LC Paper No. CB(1)284/11-12(03))*

29. Mr CHAI Man-hon briefed members on his submission. He opined that the Administration should adopt the suggestions of various bus service improvements as put forward by deputations. He also opined that the Administration should review its long-term policy on public transport, such as the operational mode of buses and public light buses. He also hoped that the Legislative Council should make sustained efforts in ensuring the provision of quality public bus services.

*Mr HO Man-kit, Sai Kung District Council Member
(LC Paper No. CB(1)232/11-12(06))*

30. Mr HO Man-kit opined that franchise of NWFB in Tseung Kwan O (TKO) South should not be renewed in view of its provision of poor bus services. He said that the population of TKO South had been increasing rapidly in the past decade but NWFB had neither increased the bus frequency nor bus routes. Worse still, it had scaled down its bus services. He also pointed out that because the franchise in respect of bus services for TKO South was granted to NWFB, route number 296D, which was currently operated by KMB, was not allowed to extend its services to Tiu

Keng Leng to meet the service demands of TKO South residents. He opined that the current bus franchise of TKO South should be opened for retendering.

31. Members noted that the following organizations which did not attend the meeting had also provided submissions for members' reference –

- (a) Hong Kong Federation of Handicapped Youth (LC Paper No. CB(1)233/11-12(01));
- (b) "反九聯盟" (LC Paper No. CB(1)233/11-12(02));
- (c) Clear The Air (LC Papers Nos. CB(1)233/11-12(03) and (04));
- (d) The Civic Party (LC Paper No. CB(1)233/11-12(05)); and
- (e) Clean Air Network (LC Paper No. CB(1)233/11-12(06)).

Discussion

Provision of environment-friendly buses

32. Pointing out that the Administration had initiated to fund the cost of procuring hybrid buses and electric buses for use by franchised bus companies respectively in the 2010-2011 Policy Address and 2011-2012 Policy Address to improve roadside air quality, Mr CHAN Hak-kan said that franchised bus companies had a corporate responsibility to protect the environment by using more environment-friendly buses. He also considered that the Administration should specify in the new franchises the types of environment-friendly bus which the bus companies should switch to when replacing their existing buses, and the proportion of those environment-friendly buses to be used by the bus companies.

33. The Under Secretary for Transport and Housing (USTH) responded that the ultimate policy objective of the Government was to have zero emission buses running throughout the territory. When the current bus franchises expired in the coming few years, the Government would impose additional requirements in the franchises for the bus companies to switch to zero emission buses or the most environment-friendly buses when replacing existing ones, taking into account the feasibility and affordability for bus operators and passengers. He added that since the technology of developing zero emission buses such as hybrid buses or electric buses was

not yet mature, testing of their performance in different road conditions had yet to be carried out, particularly on climbing lanes.

Bus services for airport staff

34. Mr WONG Kwok-hing enquired about the Administration's follow up actions in response to the views put forward by 民航(HAECO)分會 on the insufficient bus services provided during mid-night for airport staff. He added that as a result of that, airport staff needed to travel across districts at night and had to bear expensive transport costs.

35. Sharing similar views of Mr WONG, Mr IP Wai-ming hoped that the Administration could require the relevant bus companies to offer fare concessions/monthly tickets for airport staff and enhance the current BBI schemes. He cited an example of a bus route no. A43, which provided services between Fanling and the airport. Although BBI scheme had been implemented, passengers still had to bear the full fare of certain part of the relevant bus route.

36. USTH responded that some bus companies were offering fare concessions for airport staff for some airport routes. He said that the Administration would continue to encourage and negotiate with the franchised bus companies for the offer of additional fare discounts including enhanced BBI schemes. He added that any concrete proposals on enhancing bus service standards for the consideration by Transport Department (TD) were welcome.

Facilities for needy persons

37. Mr WONG Kwok-hing questioned whether the Administration would follow up the requests made by deputations for the installation of voice announcement system to facilitate blind persons getting on the buses they wanted; and for mandatory implementation of the elderly-friendly bus design guidelines by bus companies. USTH undertook that TD would discuss the requests with the bus operators.

Way forward

38. Ms LI Fung-ying pointed out that the requests for provision of concessionary fares and barrier-free facilities for the elderly and PwD passengers were not new and had long been called for. However, the Administration had only responded that it would encourage or liaise with the bus companies on these requests. She enquired about the

Administration's concrete actions to take forward the proposals, such as whether the Administration would introduce new terms and conditions into the new franchises to stipulate that the franchised bus companies would have to provide low-floor buses, enhance the working hours and rest time for bus captains, and adopt guidelines (such as the elderly-friendly bus design guidelines) in the provision of bus services. She further asked which suggestions of service improvements that the deputations had made would be included for negotiation with the relevant bus companies for adoption.

39. USTH reiterated that the Administration would take the opportunity of renewing bus franchises to negotiate with the relevant bus companies for provision of better bus services and fare concessions. He undertook that the views of the public would be fully reflected in the course of negotiating with relevant bus companies. He further said that some improvements had been implemented without waiting for the franchise renewal. He pointed out that, e.g. TD had already requested the franchised bus companies in 2010 to implement measures to improve the working hours and rest time for bus captains and it was noted that improvements in this regard had been made.

Admin

40. Sharing Ms LI Fung-ying's views, the Chairman requested the Administration to provide a paper on the specific requirements that the Administration was going to liaise with the bus companies for inclusion in the new franchises to enhance services and fare concessions for further discussion by the Panel. He added that in considering about the specific requirements to be imposed on the bus companies, the Administration should take into account the various suggestions, such as provision of facilities for the elderly and PwD passengers, use of low-floor buses, enhancing rest time for bus captains, provision of sectional fare and monthly-ticket scheme, etc, that had been made by the Panel in the past. The Chairman directed that this item should be further discussed at the next meeting on 5 December 2011.

V **Cycling safety**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)227/11-12(04) - Administration's paper on cycling safety
LC Paper No. CB(1)194/11-12 - Paper on promotion of cycling safety prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Updated background brief))

41. USTH briefed members on the Administration's paper on measures to promote cycling safety. Members noted the powerpoint slides tabled at the meeting on measures to promote cycling safety (LC Paper No. CB(1)284/11-12(07)).

Cycle tracks and ancillary facilities

42. Mr CHAN Hak-kan pointed out that some residents living in the New Territories regarded cycling as a supplementary transport mode to provide short-distance travel for interchange to other suitable transport modes to save costs. However, the Administration had not made sufficient efforts in improving the design of cycle tracks and providing adequate cycling ancillary facilities such as cycle parking spaces. Mr CHAN enquired about the Administration's measures to provide safer and better cycling facilities. Pointing out that the conditions of cycle parking area outside some railway stations were poor, Mr CHAN also asked whether the Administration had considered contracting out the management of such area to non-governmental organizations.

43. The Deputy Commissioner/Planning & Technical Services of Transport Department (DC/P&TS) responded that TD had planned to increase cycle parking facilities at major public transport hubs (such as railway stations), and to provide 1 000 additional bicycle parking spaces by 2013 through retrofitting and replacing existing cycle parking spaces at major transport hubs. TD was also planning to conduct trials at the Fanling and Sheung Shui MTR stations on new "double-deck" parking systems which would further increase cycle parking provision. Interdepartmental clearance operations were also undertaken to remove illegally parked bicycles.

44. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung expressed concern about the adequacy of bicycle parking spaces to meet demands and asked about the total number of bicycle parking spaces in Hong Kong. DC/P&TS responded that there were at present 41 440 bicycle parking spaces throughout the territory and an average of 62 000 cycling trips on Sunday. He added that while the Administration did not have information on the total number of bicycles throughout the territory, TD was conducting a Travel Characteristics Study (TCS), which would obtain information about the ownership of bicycles by Hong Kong people.

Admin

45. In response to Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung's further enquiry on the total number of motorcycles and the number of motorcycle parking spaces, USTH undertook to ascertain whether such information was available and if

so, to provide it after the meeting.

46. The Chairman considered that the Administration should give thought to installation of wide-angle fish-eye type projection lens at turning junctions to enhance cycling safety on cycle tracks. He considered that the facility would be effective in reducing bicycle accidents and cyclist casualties.

Cycling on public roads

47. Miss Tanya CHAN expressed concern that some cyclists were cycling dangerously on public roads, which not only created pressure on other road users but would also increase the risk of traffic accidents. She enquired what actions the Administration had taken to tackle the problem.

48. USTH said that the Administration did not encourage the use of bicycle as a transport mode in urban areas, as the road traffic in urban areas was heavy. He advised that mountain bike trails and well-designed cycle tracks were available in the New Territories for cycling by members of the public. He added that the Administration was taking steps to promote public awareness of the importance of cycling safety.

49. USTH supplemented that cyclists riding on public roads had to observe the relevant traffic law and regulations to ensure road safety. In fact, the Road Safety Council had included promotion of cycling safety as one of the priority issues for its 2011-2012 work plan, which would include publicity campaigns by means of television announcements in the public interest, leaflets, posters and roadside banners, etc, to remind cyclists not to ride within the blind spots of motor vehicles and to remind motorists to respect cyclists' right for the shared use of roads. TD was also developing a "Cycling Information Centre" website to disseminate information on cycling safety.

Concerns about the need to mandate wearing of cycle helmets

50. Pointing out that there had been a rising trend in both the numbers of bicycle accidents and cyclist casualties and a quite number of fatal accidents involved head injuries, Mr CHAN Hak-kan queried why the Administration did not require cyclists to wear cycle helmets on a mandatory basis.

51. USTH responded that TD had examined overseas practices on the use of safety equipment for cyclists. The study revealed that the majority of the overseas jurisdictions including the United States and many European

countries such as the United Kingdom (UK) and Denmark did not require the mandatory wearing of cycle helmets. Their approach was to encourage cyclists to wear helmets voluntarily through education and publicity campaigns. He also pointed out that for the few jurisdictions that had helmet laws, relevant studies revealed that the laws had discouraged cycling activities and resulted in no obvious reduction in the number of head injuries in cycling. He pointed out that the impact of legislative control on the public and public acceptance, in particular regarding enforcement and prosecution, were important factors for consideration. He added that the Administration would keep in view the situation and review the matter as appropriate. DC/P&TS supplemented that the TCS conducted by TD would also obtain public views on mandatory wearing helmets on cycle tracks and public roads.

52. In response to Mr CHAN Hak-kan's suggestion of requiring at least young cyclists to wear helmets on a mandatory basis, USTH said that such an approach should take into consideration public acceptance, in particular regarding enforcement and prosecution. He pointed out that the public's views towards young children's legal responsibility in case of non-compliance would need to be considered.

53. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung said that although the Administration regarded cycling as a recreational and leisure activity, many people in fact used bicycles as a means for commuting. Mr LEUNG enquired whether the Administration would consider requiring cyclists who used bicycles for commuting to wear helmets on a mandatory basis.

54. USTH responded that there might be enforcement problems as it would be difficult to differentiate persons cycling for recreational purposes from those cycling for commuting and also because some people cycled for both purposes. He pointed out that statistics had revealed that the majority of bicycle accidents were caused by poor technical skills of cyclists. As such, the Administration considered that public education and publicity should be the most effective means to promote cycling safety.

55. The Chairman echoed Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung's views. Expressing concern that simply encouraging cyclists to wear helmets voluntarily through education and publicity campaigns might not be effective, the Chairman called for the early enactment of legislation to require the mandatory use of helmets by cyclists riding on public roads.

56. USTH reiterated that the impact of legislative control on the public and public acceptance were important in considering whether to enact legislation on wearing helmets by cyclists. He pointed out that the statistics on fatal bicycle accidents in the past two years did not show that the increase in the number of cyclists wearing helmets had led to a reduction of casualty rate. He further said that there were many causes of fatal bicycle accidents, which included failures to comply with traffic regulations.

57. The Chairman, however, said that although there had been cases of serious accidents in which cyclists wearing helmets had died, he believed that wearing helmets provided a certain degree of protection to cyclists from head injuries. In view of the importance of the matter, the Chairman directed that the subject should be included on the list of outstanding items for discussion and revisited at a Panel meeting before the end of the current session.

VI Any other business

58. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 7:00 pm.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
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