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

**Minutes of the 13th meeting
held in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex
on Wednesday, 26 June 2013, at 8:30 am**

Members present:

Hon CHAN Kam-lam, SBS, JP (Chairman)
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, BBS, MH, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
Hon CHAN Hak-kan, JP
Dr Hon LEUNG Ka-lau
Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP
Hon NG Leung-sing, SBS, JP
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming
Hon WU Chi-wai, MH
Hon Gary FAN Kwok-wai
Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP
Hon Charles Peter MOK
Hon CHAN Han-pan
Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, SBS, JP
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, BBS, MH, JP
Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen, JP

Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Hon SIN Chung-kai, SBS, JP
Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, JP
Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun, BBS, MH, JP
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen

Members attending:

Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP
Hon Ronny TONG Ka-wah, SC
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki

Members absent:

Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, SBS, JP
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH
Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, JP

Public officers attending:

Mr YEUNG Tak-keung	Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) ³
Mr WAI Chi-sing, JP	Permanent Secretary for Development (Works)
Mr Thomas CHOW Tat-ming, JP	Permanent Secretary for Development (Planning and Lands)
Ms Anissa WONG, JP	Permanent Secretary for the Environment
Ms Jasmine CHOI Suet-yung	Principal Assistant Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) (Works) (Acting)
Mr WONG Kam-sing, JP	Secretary for the Environment
Mr Albert LAM Kai-chung, JP	Deputy Director (2) Environmental Protection Department
Dr Ellen CHAN Ying-lung, JP	Assistant Director (Environmental Infrastructure)
Mr Lawrence LAU Ming-ching	Environmental Protection Department Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Waste Facilities) Environmental Protection Department

Clerk in attendance:

Ms Annette LAM

Chief Council Secretary (1)3

Staff in attendance:

Mr Andy LAU

Assistant Secretary General 1

Ms Connie HO

Senior Council Secretary (1)3

Mr Daniel SIN

Senior Council Secretary (1)7

Mr Ken WOO

Council Secretary (1)5

Mr Frankie WOO

Senior Legislative Assistant (1)3

Ms Christy YAU

Legislative Assistant (1)7

Action

The Chairman reported that a total of forty-five capital works projects amounting to \$104,836.1 million had been endorsed by the Public Works Subcommittee (PWSC) in the 2012-2013 session so far. He further advised that three items were on the agenda for the meeting which, if endorsed, would involve a total amount of \$8,948.4 million.

2. The Chairman then reminded members that in accordance with Rule 83A of the Rules of Procedure (RoP) of the Legislative Council (LegCo), they should disclose the nature of any direct or indirect pecuniary interests relating to any items under discussion at the meeting before they spoke on the items. He also drew members' attention to Rule 84 of RoP on not voting or withdrawal in case of direct pecuniary interest.

Head 705 – Civil Engineering

PWSC(2013-14)25	164DR	Southeast New Territories Landfill Extension
PWSC(2013-14)20	163DR	Northeast New Territories Landfill Extension
PWSC(2013-14)21	165DR	West New Territories Landfill Extension

3. The Chairman said that as the proposals in PWSC(2013-14)25, PWSC(2013-14)20 and PWSC(2013-14)21 were all related to landfill extension projects, he proposed that discussion of the three items would be combined but each of the three items would be voted on separately. Members agreed.

4. The Chairman advised that the proposal of PWSC(2013-14)25 was to upgrade 164DR to Category A at an estimated cost of \$1,886.4 million in money-of-the-day (MOD) prices for the proposed Southeast New Territories (SENT) Landfill Extension project. The proposal of PWSC(2013-14)20 was to upgrade 163DR to Category A at an estimated cost of \$7,026.9 million in MOD prices for the proposed Northeast New Territories (NENT) Landfill Extension project. The proposal of PWSC(2013-14)21 was to upgrade part of 165DR to Category A at an estimated cost of \$35.1 million in MOD prices for engaging consultants to commission a study and undertaking tasks to make preparations necessary for the West New Territories (WENT) Landfill Extension project.

5. The Chairman further advised that the Panel on Environmental Affairs (the Panel) had been consulted on the above proposals at its meeting on 27 May 2013. The gist of Panel discussion was tabled at the meeting. Of the two motions moved by the Panel against the three landfill extension projects, the one that objected to the proposed SENT Landfill Extension project (PWSC(2013-14)25) was carried, while the other motion that objected to the proposed NENT and WENT Landfill Extension projects (PWSC(2013-14)20 and PWSC(2013-14)21) was negatived. The Panel further held a special meeting on 1 June 2013 to receive views from deputations on the above projects.

Withdrawal of the proposed Southeast New Territories Landfill Extension project

6. After the Chairman had made the introductory remarks, Secretary for the Environment (SEN) advised the meeting that as the Administration could not secure the majority support of the Subcommittee, it had decided to withdraw the proposed SENT Landfill Extension project under PWSC(2013-14)25.

7. SEN said that landfill extension projects had been discussed for some 10 years and the Administration had all along maintained close communication with the relevant district councils and stakeholders. The Government of the new term had continued to maintain dialogue with LegCo Members on the latest position of landfill extension projects. The Administration had also been adopting a balanced approach to consider various waste management measures, such as waste recovery, recycling and landfill proposals with the community.

8. SEN further advised that the Government had released the "Hong Kong Blueprint for Sustainable Use of Resources 2013-2022" (the Blueprint) on 20 May 2013, which mapped out a comprehensive strategy, targets,

policies and action plans for waste management for the coming 10 years. "Use less, waste less" was the focal point of the Blueprint. In the Blueprint, specific actions to increase waste reduction at source and recycling, including waste charging, had been mapped out and the present situation of Hong Kong's waste infrastructure was also mentioned clearly. With the three existing landfills to be exhausted one by one by 2019, while implementation of incineration facilities was affected by the judicial review in progress, the Government had to extend the landfills in time in the face of the imminent waste challenge. Following the withdrawal of the proposal, SEN said that the Administration would continue to strive for the support of the local community on the proposed SENT Landfill Extension project by addressing their concerns and implementing the proposal to provide funding for retrofitting of refuse collection vehicles (RCVs) to make them fully enclosed to reduce odour.

9. Pointing out that the proposal of PWSC(2013-14)25 on the SENT Landfill Extension project had been withdrawn by the Administration, the Chairman requested members to be concise in expressing views on the proposal so as to allow more time for the deliberation of the remaining two proposals on the NENT and WENT Landfill Extension projects. In view of the Council meeting to be held in the morning and the large number of members who had requested to speak, the Chairman said that each member would be allowed to speak only once for five minutes, after which the Administration would be invited to respond collectively to members' views. Members did not raise any objection.

Landfill Extension Projects

10. Mr Michael TIEN said that landfill disposal was an essential and unavoidable part of the waste management chain. He said that the eastern, the northern and the western regions of Hong Kong should collectively share the burden and he supported the extension of all three landfills together. Pointing out that 64% of municipal solid waste (MSW) was currently received and compacted in refuse transfer stations (RTSs) before delivery to the landfills, he said from his own experience that odour from such wastes was far less than that from wastes delivered directly to landfills by RCVs. He therefore requested the Administration to increase the usage of RTSs for transferring waste with a view to reducing the volume of MSW delivered directly to landfills by RCVs. This would help minimize the associated environmental nuisance. Whilst supporting the Administration's proposal to subsidize retrofitting of RCVs to make them fully enclosed to reduce odour, he pointed out that legislative amendment should also be made in parallel to mandate all RCVs to be fully enclosed in future. Now that the Administration had withdrawn the funding application for the proposed

SENT Landfill Extension project, he said that it would be unfair for the local communities in proximity to the NENT and WENT landfills as these landfills would have to shoulder a higher share of MSW and hence the intensified odour problem. As such, he would object to the proposed NENT and WENT Landfill Extension projects.

11. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok urged the Administration to take measures to promote waste reduction, separation and recovery, and to facilitate the development of the recycling industry. He said that he was involved in the Administration's previous study on incineration technologies but he was disappointed that the issue of building modern incinerators in Hong Kong had been dragged on for over 10 years. He added that during a study tour to Japan many years ago, he observed that the RCVs in Japan were all fully enclosed, and were very clean and odourless. He supported the Administration's proposal to subsidize retrofitting of RCVs to make them fully enclosed to reduce odour but he urged the Administration to speed up the relevant retrofitting work and strengthen the cleaning of the roads leading to landfills. He pointed out that the Business and Professionals Alliance for Hong Kong was concerned about the impacts of landfill extensions on the transport network leading to the landfills. Pointing out that traffic on Lung Kwu Tan Road and Nim Wan Road would increase with Lung Kwu Tan accommodating more public facilities in the future, he called on the Administration to assess the road capacity and the facilities required to cater for the impending increase in traffic volume.

12. Mr LEUNG Che-cheung said that members would have difficulty in supporting the proposals as the transport and environmental concerns, such as those expressed by the Ha Pak Nai Tsuen residents, had not been effectively addressed over the years. He questioned why the Administration did not implement the improvement measures for RCVs earlier. SEN replied that the Administration had been implementing improvement measures for RCVs and most of the RCVs owned by the Government and waste collection contractors of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department had been retrofitted with covers. The retrofitting would now be extended to cover RCVs owned by private companies. In response to Mr LEUNG's concern that the Administration had not consulted the Tuen Mun District Council (TMDC) and Yuen Long District Council prior to taking forward the proposals for consideration by LegCo, Assistant Director (Environmental Infrastructure), Environmental Protection Department (AD(EI), EPD) referred members to the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(1)1079/12-13(01)) and advised that the Administration had in fact conducted a series of public consultation/engagement sessions with TMDC from 2004 to 2012. AD(EI), EPD explained that in view of the short distance between Ha Pak Nai Tsuen and the WENT Landfill, a liaison

committee had also been set up with the Ha Tsuen Rural Committee and Ha Pak Nai Tsuen to address the concerns of the villagers.

13. Dr Fernando CHEUNG commented that the best approach to waste management was to reduce the generation of waste at source, promote waste recovery and recycling, and incineration and landfill disposal should be the last resort. He pointed out that he had recently visited Wo Keng Shan Tsuen near the NENT Landfill where he noted the outflow of odorous water. He was worried that the effluent might be toxic or contained heavy metals. Referring to a press release given by EPD which answered in the negative, saying that its contractor had conducted regular monitoring to the surrounding environment of NENT, Dr Fernando CHEUNG requested the Administration to provide the relevant water quality monitoring records and visit the site with him for a joint inspection.

14. Mr TAM Yiu-chung advised that the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong (DAB) did not support the proposed SENT Landfill Extension project because the odour nuisance and transport issue with the SENT Landfill had remained unresolved. He said that DAB's support for the proposed WENT Landfill Extension project was conditional in that the Administration should strive to minimize environmental nuisance, speed up the legislation requiring RCVs to be retrofitted with covers, increase waste transport by sea, build a new road to avoid RCVs using busy roads such as Lung Mun Road, strengthen odour control measures, enhance consultation with stakeholders, take measures to reduce the generation of waste at source and support the development of the recycling industry, and take forward betterment measures including railway projects and community facilities to enhance the image and living environment of Tuen Mun. In commissioning the relevant study for WENT Landfill Extension, the Administration should also consider whether the scale of the extension site at about 200 hectares was necessary. Efforts should be made to avoid making WENT Landfill an endless waste reception site. SEN replied that the Administration had undertaken to follow up the management and transport arrangements of the landfills and he explained that waste reduction at source and recycling were the focal points of the Blueprint. The Administration would implement the action plans in the Blueprint to achieve the given targets. AD(EI), EPD replied that the Administration would take into account relevant points made by Mr TAM in the coming consultancy study for WENT Landfill Extension. She also replied that the Administration would continue to reach out to the community for the proposed projects and to arrange local residents to visit the landfill.

15. Miss Alice MAK held the view that the Government should seek to reduce the generation of waste at source and make landfill and incineration

the ultimate parts of the waste management chain. She said that the Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions (FTU) had met with the Chief Secretary for Administration and was disappointed that the Administration had not withdrawn both the proposed WENT Landfill Extension project and the proposed SENT Landfill Extension project as requested by FTU. Noting that TMDC members had passed a motion during the TMDC consultation in January and September 2009 objecting to siting more waste facilities in Tuen Mun and requesting the Government to review the overall planning on the long-term development of Tuen Mun, she said that the progress for the relevant betterment measures was slow, and hence TMDC members had no confidence in the Administration's commitment to resolve the problems associated with the proposed WENT Landfill Extension. She added that FTU would object to the proposed WENT Landfill Extension project but would support the NENT Landfill Extension project as the Administration had taken corresponding action to address the needs of the local community. In taking forward policies and measures pertinent to waste management, FTU requested the Administration to consider actively the requests for implementation of local improvement works, and to take forward waste reduction measures in a holistic approach.

16. Ms Cyd HO considered landfill disposal an expensive and unsustainable means of waste treatment due to the huge costs required for construction, maintenance and restoration. Moreover, the restored sites could only be subsequently used for general recreational purpose and building developments was not feasible. Ms HO considered that the Administration's targets on waste recycling and landfill disposal at 55% and 22% respectively by the year 2022 as stated in the Blueprint was far from satisfactory. As 85% of waste (including paper, plastics and food waste) could be recovered and recycled, the Labour Party proposed that the percentage on recycling should be increased from 55% to not less than 72% and landfill disposal be reduced from 22% to 5%. She also urged the Administration to support the development of the local recycling industry by an injection of \$2 billion annually to create 10 000 employment opportunities for the grass-roots and to cater for research and development, product design, marketing of recycled products and exploration of relevant business opportunities.

17. Mr CHAN Hak-kan considered the Administration's proposal to withdraw the proposed SENT Landfill Extension project a pragmatic approach in responding to the concerns of the Tseung Kwan O community. He urged the Administration to keep its promises made to residents of Tseung Kwan O including stepping up odour mitigation measures, retrofitting RCVs with covers, increasing the transport of waste by sea, and restricting RCVs from travelling Wan Po Road during rush hours. SEN responded that the

improvement works on RCVs would be implemented and this would bring about benefits in reducing nuisance arising from RCVs throughout Hong Kong, not just in the district of Tseung Kwan O. With regard to the Administration's proposal to designate the proposed SENT Landfill Extension for reception of only construction waste, Mr CHAN was gravely concerned about the diversion of some 250 vehicular loads to NENT Landfill which would add great pressure to the busy Sha Tau Kok Road. He was also keen to ensure that the Tolo Highway and Sha Tau Kok Road would be free from the hygienic nuisances as presently occurred in Wan Po Road. SEN said that the traffic impact of the proposals would be manageable as traffic impact assessments would have been conducted for all infrastructural projects. AD(EI), EPD advised that around 500 tonnes of MSW generated from the Sai Kung District including Tseung Kwan O would need to be transferred to the other two landfills for disposal if the proposed SENT Landfill Extension project was endorsed. She anticipated that part of the waste could be handled by the Shatin Transfer Station where the waste would be compacted and transported in sealed containers to the NENT Landfill and this would reduce the traffic impact on road network. She added that the Administration would study the utilization of various RTSs to handle the increased quantities of waste to be diverted to other landfills in future.

18. Mr Alan LEONG commented that the Government should seek to reduce waste at source and promote recovery and recycling, and make incineration and landfill disposal the ultimate parts of the waste management chain for disposal of non-recyclables. The Civic Party was of the view that waste cycling targets should be pitched at 60% while incineration and landfill disposal should handle 40% of total waste. Criticizing the Administration for failing to provide a concrete timetable on implementation of various waste treatment proposals, he said that the Civic Party would object to the remaining two proposals on the proposed WENT and NENT Landfill Extension.

19. SEN replied that the Blueprint had mapped out a comprehensive strategy with targets, policies and action plans for waste management for the coming 10 years to tackle the imminent waste challenge. With the impending exhaustion of the existing landfills, the Administration had taken a pragmatic approach to tackling waste issues by proposing to extend the landfills in time. In response to Mr LEONG's view that plasma gasification technology as currently adopted by Japan should be used in taking forward local incineration projects, Deputy Director (2), Environmental Protection Department (DD(2), EPD) advised that in the course of waste management planning, the Administration had made reference to advanced technologies used in other jurisdictions such as Japan and European Union countries which had stringent environmental controls. Having considered important factors

like the treatment capacity of 3 000 tonnes of mixed municipal solid waste per day, the need to meet with the highest standards stipulated by the European Union as well as reliability and track record, the Administration considered the moving grate incineration technology more appropriate to meet the local operational needs.

20. Mr Frankie YICK criticized the Administration's failure to address the various waste management issues which led to the current controversy. He said that the Liberal Party had promised Tseung Kwan O residents that it would not support any Government initiative to extend the SENT Landfill, and the Liberal Party would vote against this proposal. He acknowledged the need for landfills as part of the waste management hierarchy. As the NENT and WENT Landfills were further away from residential areas, and their environmental impact would be less intrusive to nearby residents, Mr YICK said that the Liberal Party would support the other two landfill extension proposals. Noting the Administration's intention to subsidize operators to retrofit RCVs to remove nuisances during operation, he said that the refuse collection trade had reflected to him that the size of the leachate collection tank should also be large enough to prevent overspill of leachate during the transfer of refuse. He requested that the Administration should take this into account in the RCV retrofitting works.

21. Mr Frankie YICK further said that the Liberal Party supported higher utilization of RTSs which would help reduce the nuisance and road traffic volume during transportation of waste to landfills. As the Administration had decided to use the SENT Landfill exclusively for reception of construction waste, all the MSW would have to be disposed of at the WENT and NENT Landfills. He was concerned that RCVs would have to travel longer by road transport to deliver MSW to these two landfills, which would increase the cost of garbage collection. By providing more RTSs in different districts, RCVs would only need to transport the refuse to a nearby RTS, from where compacted wastes could be diverted to the two landfills by sea routes. He also pointed out that RCVs were often forced to park overnight, with their load of refuse, in nearby open areas if they arrive after the operating hours of landfills, thereby causing odour nuisance. He asked the Administration to review the opening hours of landfills. SEN said that the Administration had maintained a close dialogue with the waste collection trade and would continue to work out measures to improve waste transportation.

22. Mr Charles MOK said that there was urgency in extending existing landfills. He criticized the Administration for failing to plan ahead to commission the waste incineration facility. Mr MOK acknowledged the Administration's efforts on waste reduction as the amount of waste disposed

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of at Hong Kong landfills had been reduced by one-third. He did not consider that the amount of MSW that required disposal could be further reduced significantly. He pointed out that, despite the Administration had withdrawn the funding application for the SENT Landfill extension, the Tseung Kwan O residents were still facing the nuisance associated with the operation of the existing SENT Landfill. Therefore, he requested the Administration to take immediate action to address the concerns of the Tseung Kwan O residents, including diverting the government-hired RCVs from the SENT Landfill and designating the SENT Landfill to receive construction waste only. He suggested that Police should be stationed at Wan Po Road to take enforcement action against speeding and fly-tipping activities. He also opined that the Administration should assess the impact of the proposed landfill extension on the residents near to the NENT and WENT landfills and formulate necessary compensation proposals. He expressed that, as a long term solution, the Administration should implement waste charging and the construction of waste incineration facilities as soon as possible. SEN responded that as indicated in the Blueprint, the Administration had demonstrated the determination to adopt a comprehensive approach in dealing with waste problem, and waste charging was one of the measures. SEN said that the public consultation on waste charging would be launched in summer 2013. As for the implementation of waste incineration facilities, SEN said that it would be restarted once the judicial review case had reached a conclusion.

23. Mr WU Chi-wai said that Members of the Democratic Party did not support the proposal to extend existing landfills before effective waste management measures were implemented. Mr WU said that the Administration needed to adopt a multi-pronged approach to MSW management. He questioned whether the Administration had the determination to deliver the objectives of the Blueprint, and urged the Administration to make an undertaking to introduce waste reduction proposals and measures to promote environmental industries. He also said that the Environment Bureau (ENB) should collaborate with other bureaux and departments on the planning and distribution of waste management facilities to avoid repeating previous town-planning blunders such as locating residential areas close to landfills. SEN said that waste reduction was an important aspect of the waste management strategy as stated in the Blueprint. Also, consultation on the implementation of waste charging had commenced and focused group discussions had been conducted. The Administration planned to release a consultation paper in the summer to seek public views on the matter. SEN added that the Administration was also working on details for promoting recycling business in consultation with relevant departments.

24. Ms Emily LAU said that the Administration had mishandled the

current landfill extension funding proposals, which was why even members from the pro-establishment camp were against the proposals. She said that some middle class residents in Tseung Kwan O had made it known that this was the very first time they participated in a public rally, and they did so out of their frustration at the Administration's failure to redress the environmental problems generated by the landfill in their district. She added that Tuen Mun residents, too, felt aggrieved and had complained that the Administration had neither consulted them nor the TMDC on the proposed WENT Landfill extension. Referring to a submission from a group of local academics and professionals who called on LegCo Members to support the landfill extension proposals, Ms LAU said she did not subscribe to the group's submission that LegCo Members should not only focus on local district interest while missing the broader picture of Hong Kong's need for more landfills. Ms LAU stressed that local concerns must be properly addressed.

25. There was an applause in the public gallery. The Chairman reminded members of the public in the gallery to remain silent during the meeting.

26. SEN responded that the Administration accorded high priority on strengthening communication with the local community, District Councils, and the LegCo. The Administration had promulgated the Blueprint and adopted a multi-pronged approach to tackling a long-standing problem that had grown over many years. AD(EI), EPD said that since 2008, the Administration had been reaching out to the local community and organized visit programmes to landfills during which community views and comments were collected.

27. Mr Gary FAN said that the Administration's Blueprint was not much different from an MSW management framework plan presented in 2005. Since then only plastic bag levy was implemented and there was not much progress on waste charging and producer responsibility schemes. Mr FAN was disappointed that so little was achieved on the framework plan and questioned how the Administration would restore public confidence that this Blueprint could make a difference. He further expressed doubts about the ability of the Administration to implement the Blueprint effectively. He noted with concern that commercial and industrial wastes had both increased significantly in recent years and asked the Administration to study whether the increase was due to the Individual Visit Scheme and to implement measures to reduce waste from the commercial and industrial sectors.

28. Referring to a photograph taken on 11 May 2013 that showed the problem of flytipping of waste near Tseung Kwan O Industrial Estate,

Mr Gary FAN pointed out that it was grossly unfair to residents in Tseung Kwan O as 10% of land there had been used for landfills. SEN responded that the case mentioned by Mr FAN was an isolated case and the Administration would step up law enforcement against illegal dumping activities. He said that the objectives set out in the Blueprint were a challenge that required the Administration and the community to work closely hand-in-hand in order to achieve the target.

29. Miss CHAN Yuen-han said that Members belonging to the FTU would vote against the proposal on the extension of WENT Landfill in Tuen Mun. Criticizing the Administration for failing to make concrete achievements on waste reduction and waste management, she remained unconvinced that the Administration could achieve the objectives of the Blueprint. Miss CHAN said that the Administration needed to present clear and solid measures with detailed implementation timetable in order to regain the community's support.

30. Miss CHAN Yuen-han also criticized the Administration for being rigid and unimaginative in formulating waste management measures. She suggested that the Administration should draw references from other countries, such as Japan, in developing waste incineration facilities, and in developing the waste separation, recovery, and recycling industries as a viable economic activity, as was the case in Brazil. She added that supporting waste recovery and recycling industries could create jobs, which was another area of interest to FTU. Miss CHAN said that the community had, in fact, initiated many waste recovery and reuse initiatives. However, many of these endeavours eventually failed and a lot of waste reduction opportunities were lost because they did not receive any support from the Government. She quoted as a case in point the Housing Department's failing to provide enough support for public housing residents to implement food waste reduction programme. In light of all these disappointments, she said that the FTU did not support the extension of SENT Landfill and WENT Landfill.

31. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan noted that the Administration had proposed subsidies for operators to retrofit RCVs to reduce odour and dust nuisance. Noting that environmental nuisance arising from RCVs was not new, she queried why the Administration had not implemented mitigation measures at an earlier stage. Dr CHIANG asked whether the Government, such as the Transport Department, could require RCVs to cover or enclose their skips while travelling on roads. She also asked if the Administration would develop a network of smaller scale waste incineration facilities over the territory to share out waste management responsibilities across districts.

32. SEN replied that a framework of the overall waste management plan

was laid down in the Blueprint and the Administration would update members on the latest developments after the summer recess. Regarding the utilization of landfill gas, SEN said that as detailed in the Blueprint, the Administration would fully utilize the landfill gas. DD(2), EPD said that the Administration had been working closely with the waste collection sector on improving the design and operation of RCVs to address the various environmental nuisances. A pilot test to retrofit different models of RCVs was carried out with the collaboration of the trade. A Code of Practice on RCV operation had been prepared and promulgated. Dr CHIANG requested the Administration to provide a timetable for the implementation of various measures for members' reference.

33. The Chairman said that members could follow up the policy issues with the Administration at the Panel on Environmental Affairs separately.

34. Mr Albert CHAN criticized the Administration for the policy blunders in waste management, saying that Hong Kong had lagged far behind other cities in waste management. He pointed out that Japan switched from landfilling to incineration 20 years ago and in many other countries significant progress had been made in waste incineration technologies which had been widely adopted. But in Hong Kong, the Administration had for many years spent its time flip-flopping between landfilling or incineration as the ultimate waste disposal means.

35. Mr Albert CHAN said that the Administration had failed in waste reduction and recycling efforts, and also failed to implement effective waste separation measures at source. As a result, considerable landfill space was used up unnecessarily, shortening the lifespan of landfills. Mr CHAN urged the Administration to implement mandatory source separation of waste to increase the waste recovery and recycling and prolong the useable lifespan of landfills. He said that until the Administration was able to implement mandatory source separation, he would continue to object any proposals to extend existing landfills. Mr CHAN also asked the Administration to accede to Lung Kwu Tan residents' appeal for relocation if the Administration managed to secure enough support to proceed with the WENT Landfill extension project. Mr CHAN said the local residents had reflected to him that that the environmental nuisance caused by the WENT Landfill would become intolerable should the WENT Landfill be further extended.

36. Mr Ronny TONG commented that the Administration's withdrawal of the item on the SENT Landfill extension came about not because of the outcry from the local community but because of the opposition from the pro-establishment camp. Referring to the Administration's proclaimed policy of sharing out waste management responsibility among districts, he

said that if that was the policy, then Tseung Kwan O residents had for a long time been shouldering more than their fair share on waste management responsibility. He asked whether the Administration would undertake not to proceed with SENT Landfill extension even when the pro-establishment camp members changed their stance.

37. On the compensatory measures proposed by the Administration in exchange for members' support for the landfill extension proposals, Mr TONG said these measures were not new and should have been implemented regardless of whether the proposals would proceed. He also referred to SEN's open statement to the Tseung Kwan O residents regarding enforcement actions against illegal dumping, and said that such law enforcement measures were straight forward and could be implemented immediately without having to wait until the end of the year for implementation.

38. SEN reiterated that the Administration was responding to the community's views in formulating the policy of sharing out waste management responsibilities among districts. The Administration would introduce appropriate measures to mitigate the environmental impacts caused by waste management facilities to the neighbouring areas. SEN added that the Administration had all along been taking enforcement actions against illegal dumping activities, and would step up on-going efforts by installing CCTV devices for more effective monitoring of illegal dumping. As it would take time to identify and consult District Councils on the locations for installing monitoring devices, the Administration anticipated that the enhanced law enforcement measures would be launched towards the end of the year.

39. Mr IP Kwok-him shared Mr Albert CHAN's view about the Administration's unsatisfactory performance on waste reduction efforts. In response to Mr Ronny TONG's earlier remarks on pro-establishment camp's objection, Mr IP said that DAB was concerned about the interest of the local community and the impact of waste management facilities on the health of local residents. There was no question of DAB changing stance. He added that until and unless the Administration had implemented effective measures to mitigate the environmental nuisance to Tseung Kwan O residents, DAB would find it difficult to support the Administration's proposed extension of the SENT Landfill.

40. On management problems at landfills, Mr IP said that some RCVs had been refused admission to the landfills when they were found to be overloaded at the landfill gates. These RCVs would very often dispose of the wastes illegally in remote areas, causing odour and other environmental

nuisances. He said that the Administration should review the management of landfills to tackle this problem. DD(2), EPD said that the Administration had maintained a close dialogue with the sector to combat overloading of RCVs, and had worked with the Police to step up law enforcement against RCV overloading. As overloading of RCVs was illegal, it was necessary to introduce appropriate punitive measures at landfills.

41. The Chairman decided that the meeting be extended for 15 minutes to 10:45 am to allow time for members who were awaiting to speak. The Chairman added that he would also allow some time for the Administration to respond before putting the items to vote.

42. Mr James TO raised a point of order. He queried the Chairman's decision of not allowing members to raise a second round of questions. The Chairman explained that he had announced at the beginning of the meeting that as 18 or so members had already indicated their intention to speak, and taking into account the time scheduled for the meeting, there was time for only one round of questions on the agenda items.

43. Mr James TO commented that it was unreasonable for the Chairman not to allow members to raise a second round of questions. He said that members, regardless of whether they were for or against the Administration's proposed landfill extension, expected the Administration to implement improvement measures to redress the environmental problems. He said that members might have technical questions that needed clarifications from the Administration, and not all of these issues could be raised and resolved within one round of questions.

44. Mr TO also asked whether the Administration had previously considered the option of improving the designs of RCVs and why the Administration had not implemented the measures at an earlier stage. He queried whether the Administration had any other improvement measures up its sleeves which would be used to trade for members' vote for the items.

45. Dr Kenneth CHAN said that Members belonging to the Civic Party would not support the Administration's proposals. He commented that the Administration withdrew the item on SENT Landfill Extension just because it wanted to avoid the embarrassment of being voted down. The Administration had not undertaken to close down the SENT Landfill, and might resubmit the proposal again in future. Dr CHAN opined that the mitigation measures that the Administration had undertaken to implement in exchange for members' support for the proposed items should have been implemented regardless.

46. Citing as an example the "Hong Kong: Our Home" campaign in which many gifts and souvenirs were packed in plastic bags which was environmentally unfriendly, Dr Kenneth CHAN said that he understood that ENB faced difficulties in securing co-operation and support of bureaux and departments in implementing the various environmental policies. He also cautioned the Administration that the proposed reclamation development at Lung Kwu Tan of Tuen Mun could end up similar to what had happened to Tseung Kwan O.

47. Mr Tony TSE said that there was a need for landfills to be used as a means of waste disposal. However, the Administration should also seriously examine other alternatives such as incineration of waste that had less impact on the community. Mr TSE said that many people shared the common disappointment that the Administration had not done enough in waste management and waste reduction. The three districts with landfills were now bearing the full burden of waste disposal for the whole territory, and it was only right that other districts should share the responsibilities. Mr TSE suggested that the Administration should explore providing RTSs in various districts that would receive and compact the wastes before they were transferred to landfills for disposal. As regards the proposed compensatory measures, Mr TSE said that the Administration should implement them regardless of whether the landfills were to be extended. He said that unless the Administration could demonstrate its ability in waste reduction and waste management, it would be difficult for him to support the Administration's proposal.

48. SEN said that the Administration had been making improvements to RCV designs and had been keeping a close dialogue with the sector on what further improvement on vehicle designs should be introduced. He added that the Government had been implementing the re-design of RCV progressively, starting with the Government fleet and then RCVs of government contractors. The Administration had also introduced other measures and committed resources in response to the community's concerns. He reiterated that the Administration would consider other suggestions from the community as appropriate.

49. Mr CHAN Han-pan said that DAB's position on the Administration's proposal was determined after careful consideration. He said that the Administration's compensatory measures should have been implemented earlier and suggested that the Administration should proceed to implement these measures despite the withdrawal of the SENT Landfill extension proposal. Mr CHAN said that if the Administration managed to receive funding for conducting the study on extending the WENT Landfill, the Administration should not be complacent and should listen to the views of

Tuen Mun residents and address their concerns because the Administration would need to apply for funding to implement the WENT Landfill Extension project in two years' time. He added that there was still strong community opposition to the proposed waste incineration facility in Shek Kwu Chau, and cautioned the Administration not to take it for granted that the project would proceed smoothly.

50. SEN responded that the Administration would maintain close communication with the local community and would respond to the community's needs and demand as appropriate. He added that subject to the court's decision on the proposed waste incineration project, and taking into consideration relevant factors, the Administration would examine the way forward in implementing the project.

51. At 10:40 am, the Chairman said that, as he had announced earlier, he would allow time for SEN to make concluding remarks and then he would put the items to vote. Expecting members would claim division on voting, the Chairman said that he would allow for 10 minutes for the voting procedure, and indicated his intention to further extend the meeting to 10:55 am.

52. Mr James TO said that the Chairman had already exercised his power to extend the meeting from 10:30 am to 10:45 am, and said that members' consent was required for the meeting to be further extended.

53. The Chairman asked if members would object to further extending the meeting to 10:55 am. Mr TO said that he objected to it as he was not allowed to raise a second round of questions and also because members should be allowed more time to raise questions on the items.

54. The Chairman asked members who supported extending the meeting to 10:55am to raise their hands. Mr James TO claimed a division. The Chairman ordered that the division bell be rung.

55. Mr Alan LEONG said that paragraph 11A of the Public Works Subcommittee Procedure stipulated that, "The Subcommittee may further extend a meeting for a specified period of time where the same preconditions as set out above are satisfied, and where there is no dissenting voice when deciding such a further extension." Mr LEONG said that his interpretation of the above provision was that the meeting could not be further extended and must be adjourned even if there was only one member objecting to it. The Chairman thanked Mr LEONG and said that the Clerk had also referred him to paragraph 11A of the Public Works Subcommittee Procedure and made the same advice. The Chairman then asked if there was disagreement

from members on his proposal to further extend the meeting to 10:55 am.

56. Mr Albert CHAN dissented.

57. The time being 10:45 am, the Chairman declared that the meeting was adjourned. He said that he would arrange another meeting to deal with the two items on the agenda.

Any other business

58. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:45 am.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
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