立法會 Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)495/15-16 (These minutes have been seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/EA

Panel on Environmental Affairs

Minutes of meeting held on Friday, 27 November 2015, at 8:30 am in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex

Members present	:	Hon CHAN Hak-kan, JP (Chairman) Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok (Deputy Chairman) Hon James TO Kun-sun Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP Hon Vincent FANG Kang, SBS, JP Hon WONG Ting-kwong, SBS, JP Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS Hon WU Chi-wai, MH Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP Hon Kenneth LEUNG Hon Kenneth LEUNG Hon KWOK Wai-keung Hon Dennis KWOK Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun, BBS, MH, JP Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS
Members absent	:	Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan, JP Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, JP Hon CHAN Han-pan, JP Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, JP Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, SBS, MH, JP Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan

Public Officers : attending	For item IV
	Ms Christine LOH, JP Under Secretary for the Environment
	Mr MOK Wai-chuen, JP Assistant Director (Air Policy) Environmental Protection Department
	Dr MAK Shing-tat Acting Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Mobile Source) Environmental Protection Department
	For item V
	Ms Christine LOH, JP Under Secretary for the Environment
	Mr TANG Kin-fai, JP Assistant Director (Environmental Assessment) Environmental Protection Department
	Mr Maurice YEUNG Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Assessment and Noise) Environmental Protection Department
Clerk in attendance :	Ms Angel SHEK Chief Council Secretary (1)1
Staff in attendance	Ms Doris LO Senior Council Secretary (1)1
	Ms Mandy LI Council Secretary (1)1
	Miss Mandy POON Legislative Assistant (1)1

I. Confirmation of minutes

(LC Paper No. CB(1)81/15-16 —Minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2015)

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2015 were confirmed.

II. Information papers issued since last meeting

2. <u>Members</u> noted that the following papers had been issued since the last meeting -

(LC Paper Nos. CB(1)69/15-16(01) – and (02)	-Letter dated 30 September 2015 from the Chairman of the Tsuen Wan District Council (Chinese version only) together with the Administration's written response regarding the indiscriminate placement of cargo compartments on roadsides
LC Paper No. CB(1)119/15-16(01) –	-Referral memorandum from the Public Complaints Office of the Legislative Council Secretariat regarding the eligibility criteria and funding under the "Restored Landfill Revitalization Funding Scheme" (Chinese version only) (Restricted to Members)
LC Paper No. CB(1)143/15-16(01) –	-Submission from Business Environment Council Limited regarding its views on environmental and sustainability related policies in the 2016 Policy Address (English version only)

LC Paper No. CB(1)202/15-16(01) —Letter dated 24 November 2015 from Hon Kenneth LEUNG on the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (Cap. 499) (Chinese version only))

III. Items for discussion at the next meeting

(LC Paper No. CB(1)180/15-16(01) —List of follow-up actions

LC Paper No. CB(1)180/15-16(02) —List of outstanding items for discussion)

3. The <u>Chairman</u> informed members that he and the Deputy Chairman met with the Secretary for the Environment on 2 November 2015 to discuss the work plan of the Panel in the 2015-2016 session. The work plan was reflected in the Panel's list of outstanding items for discussion (LC Paper No. CB(1)180/15-16(02)) ("the List"). The <u>Chairman</u> drew members' attention that pursuant to the discussion, four items (i.e. items 16 to 19) were proposed to be deleted from the List. <u>Members</u> raised no objection to the deletion.

4. <u>Members</u> agreed to discuss the following items at the next regular meeting scheduled for Monday, 21 December 2015, at 8:30 am -

- (a) Provision of sewerage in Lantau; and
- (b) Reduction of construction waste.

5. The <u>Chairman</u> sought members' views in respect of Mr Kenneth LEUNG's letter dated 24 November 2015 (LC Paper No. CB(1)202/ 15-16(01)) requesting the Panel to discuss issues in relation to the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (Cap. 499). <u>Members</u> agreed and the <u>Chairman</u> directed that a relevant item be included in the List. <u>Members</u> also noted that the Administration had been requested to provide a written response to the issues raised in the letter.

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IV. Proposals to tighten emission standards of newly registered motor vehicles to Euro VI level and motor cycles and tricycles to Euro IV level

- (LC Paper No. CB(1)180/15-16(03) —Administration's paper on "Proposals to Tighten Emission Standards of Newly Registered Vehicles"
- LC Paper No. CB(1)180/15-16(04) —Background brief on "Tightening of emission standards of newly registered motor vehicles" prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat
- LC Paper No. CB(1)198/15-16(01) —Joint submission from associations of non-franchised bus operators (Chinese version only))

Briefing by the Administration

6. The <u>Under Secretary for the Environment</u> ("USEN") briefed members on the proposal to tighten the statutory emission standards of newly registered motor vehicles (excluding motor cycles and tricycles) to Euro VI in phases starting from 1 September 2016 ("the proposal"). Separately, the Administration would consult motor cycle and tricycle suppliers for working out a proposal to tighten the emission standards of newly registered motor cycles and tricycles to Euro IV.

Discussion

Implementation schedule

7. <u>Mr Tony TSE</u> expressed support for the proposal. <u>Mr TSE</u> observed that the dates for implementation of Euro VI emission standards in respect of newly registered motor vehicles (excluding motor cycles and tricycles) (i.e. 1 September 2016 for newly registered private cars and taxis, and 1 January 2018 for newly registered double-decked buses) lagged behind the European Union ("EU")'s corresponding schedules. Given the large number of commercial vehicles like buses, light buses, goods vans in Hong Kong, <u>Mr TSE</u> asked whether it was feasible to advance the implementation schedule for such vehicles, with a view to expediting improvements in roadside air quality, particularly along busy corridors.

8. The Assistant Director (Air Policy) ("AD(AP)") advised that apart from making reference to the implementation schedule of EU, the Administration had to ensure that there would be a reasonable supply of compliant vehicle models on the local market by the respective implementation dates in Hong Kong. In this regard, the Administration had consulted the vehicle suppliers regarding the local supply situation of the relevant classes of Euro VI vehicles in the coming years when drawing up the implementation schedule. Drawing experience from the previous stages of tightening emission standards for newly registered vehicles to Euro IV/V, the Chairman agreed that implementation of the Euro VI emission standards should be premised on an adequate supply of compliant vehicles on the local market to meet the demand of vehicle owners, and in particular commercial vehicle owners who depended on the vehicles to make a living. He considered that it was incumbent upon the Administration to closely monitor the supply situation of the relevant classes of Euro VI vehicles on the local market.

Impact on vehicle maintenance trade

9. Mr Kenneth LEUNG said that following the progressive tightening of emission standards in the previous years, the vehicle maintenance trade had been striving hard to catch up with the latest vehicle technology. He reflected the views of some members of the trade that it might be too rush for them to get prepared for the Euro VI emission standards by the proposed implementation dates. He enquired whether the Administration would provide training courses for vehicle mechanics and ensure that there would be a sufficient supply of vehicle mechanics who were equipped with the necessary vehicle maintenance techniques. Mr KWOK Wai-keung shared the same concern over the impact on the vehicle maintenance trade, and enquired whether the Administration had liaised with the trade regarding relevant support measures. Mr Tony TSE considered that the Administration should ensure that the proposal would not adversely impact on the availability of vehicle maintenance services and choices of vehicle repair workshops to consumers.

10. <u>AD(AP)</u> said that the Administration was aware of the vehicle maintenance trade's concern about the lack of skills to maintain commercial vehicles equipped with advanced emission control systems. He pointed out that the emission control equipment and technologies adopted for Euro VI vehicles were basically similar to that for Euro V vehicles, except that the application of such technologies in Euro VI vehicles were more comprehensive and effective. As such, they should not be new to the vehicle

maintenance trade. That said, to provide better support to the trade, the Environmental Protection Department ("EPD") had collaborated with the Vocational Training Council, vehicle manufacturers and relevant vehicle maintenance trade organizations, such as the Hong Kong Commercial Vehicle Maintenance Association, in organizing seminars on vehicle maintenance techniques for vehicle mechanics. Such seminars had received very positive responses from the trade. EPD would continue liaising with the trade and the co-organizers to organize similar events to help vehicle mechanics upgrade their maintenance skills.

11. The <u>Chairman</u> opined that apart from organizing seminars for vehicle mechanics, the Administration should step up its support to the vehicle maintenance trade on various fronts. He stressed the need to open up vehicle maintenance information so that vehicle maintenance would not be monopolized by major vehicle manufacturers/agents. He also urged the Administration to ensure sufficient supply of spare parts for different models of Euro VI vehicles available in the market. The <u>Administration</u> took note of the Chairman's views and suggestions.

Admin 12. On the Deputy Chairman's request, the <u>Administration</u> agreed to provide supplementary information, apart from those given in paragraphs 16 to 19 of the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(1)180/15-16(03)), on the maintenance of Euro VI vehicles, including the training for the local vehicle maintenance trade, availability of the vehicle maintenance services to the public, and the maintenance cost.

Testing of vehicle emission performance

13. The <u>Deputy Chairman</u> said that Members belonging to the Civic Party supported the proposal. Referring to the recent incident involving diesel vehicles of a German vehicle manufacturer group being found to have fitted with defeat devices to cheat on emission tests ("the incident"), he queried whether the Administration was acting in hindsight to state at first that there had not been any registration of vehicles of the affected models in Hong Kong, but later on announced that over 200 vehicles belonging to the affected models had already been imported into Hong Kong and the exhaust emission type-approval of which had to be withdrawn. To allay public concern, the <u>Deputy Chairman</u> urged the Administration to draw experience from the incident and review and enhance the existing mechanism of processing the registration of imported vehicles. He stressed the need for putting in place effective measures for ensuring compliance of newly registered vehicles with the statutory emission standards.

14. AD(AP) explained that when the incident was first revealed by the relevant regulatory authority in the United States around September 2015, EPD had taken immediate action to assess the impact of the incident in Hong Kong, and based on the information back then, the affected models involved diesel private cars that had not been registered for use in Hong Kong. Around mid-October 2015, it was reported that some diesel commercial vehicles ("DCVs") by the same vehicle manufacturer group also had defeat devices. Upon checking with the local representative of the vehicle manufacturer concerned, it was confirmed that 269 light duty diesel goods vans belonged to one of the affected models. Therefore, EPD had immediately withdrawn the exhaust emission type-approval for first registration of the affected vehicle model and the Transport Department stopped processing the registration applications for such vehicles.

15. <u>AD(AP)</u> supplemented that the defeat devices involved in the incident enabled the vehicles to comply with the specified emission standards while undergoing tests in the laboratory but their on-road emissions exceeded the emission standards. To address this problem, the European Commission ("EC") had decided to introduce Real Driving Emission ("RDE") test procedures upon implementation of Euro VI emission standards. It had started implementing on-road emission tests for heavy duty vehicles and would announce the relevant requirements for light duty vehicles at the later stage. <u>AD(AP)</u> advised that EPD would introduce the RDE requirements when introducing Euro VI emission standards for newly registered vehicles.

Admin 16. In the light of EC's plan to introduce RDE test procedures for assessing the emission performance of Euro VI vehicles on road, the <u>Deputy</u> <u>Chairman</u> requested and the <u>Administration</u> agreed to provide information on the corresponding implementation plan in Hong Kong.

Related measures for controlling vehicular emissions

17. <u>Mr Tony TSE</u> asked about the measures for regulating emissions from existing vehicles that were registered for use before the respective implementation dates to tighten vehicle emission standards for newly registered vehicles to Euro VI. <u>AD(AP)</u> replied that DCVs accounted for over 90% of respirable suspended particulates ("RSP") and nitrogen oxides ("NOx") emissions from vehicles and were one of the major sources of roadside pollution. To improve roadside air quality, the Administration launched a \$11.4 billion incentive-cum-regulatory scheme in March 2014 with an aim to phasing out some 82 000 pre-Euro IV DCVs by the end of 2019 ("the scheme"). For petrol and liquefied petroleum gas vehicles, the use of remote sensing equipment and an advanced emission test had been effective in detecting and combating their excessive emission problem, which

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was usually caused by poor maintenance.

Mr KWOK Wai-keung enquired about why the Administration had 18. not required the replacement vehicles under the scheme to be Euro VI vehicles, given that EU had already started tightening in phases its vehicle emission standards for newly registered vehicles to Euro VI from December 2013. He was worried that the implementation of Euro VI emission standards for newly registered vehicles would have negative impact on the responses towards the scheme. In reply, AD(AP) said that the supply of Euro VI DCVs was limited on the local market when the scheme was rolled out and might not meet the demand for replacement vehicles arising from the On Mr KWOK's further enquiry, AD(AP) affirmed that the scheme. proposed tightening of emission standards to Euro VI would not affect second-hand vehicles or vehicles already imported into Hong Kong before the respective implementation dates.

19. Owing to the much lower diesel prices comparing to petrol prices, <u>Mr WU Chi-wai</u> was worried that more private car owners would turn to diesel private cars which, however, generally emitted more air pollutants than their petrol counterparts. He asked whether the Administration would take measures to control the number of diesel private cars by legislative means such as ceasing new registrations for such cars.

20. <u>AD(AP)</u> shared the view that the lower diesel price might drive some private car owners to turn to diesel private cars. That said, since 1998, EPD had only allowed diesel private cars meeting the emission standards of petrol private cars to register in Hong Kong. However, as diesel private cars could emit much more NOx than their petrol counterparts while on road when compared with the laboratory tests, the Administration would embark on a review on whether more stringent control was necessary and appropriate on new registrations of diesel private cars. <u>USEN</u> added that the Administration would keep an open mind on controlling the number of diesel private cars by all means including legislative measures if practicable with a view to improving roadside air quality.

21. Noting that petrol vehicles equipped with direct injection engines (which in Hong Kong all belonged to light duty petrol vehicles) would emit a substantive amount of fine particles (i.e. PM2.5) as diesel engines, even if the vehicles were compliant with Euro VI emission standards, the <u>Chairman</u> expressed grave concern about the associated impact on public health as PM2.5 could lodge deeply into the lungs and blood because of their very small particle size and were believed to pose the greatest health risks compared with other roadside air pollutants. He asked whether there was a reliable and practicable way to measure roadside emission of PM2.5 for

regulatory purposes.

22. <u>AD(AP)</u> responded that in view of the substantive amount of PM2.5 emitted from petrol vehicles equipped with direct injection engines, EU had introduced in Euro VI standard a Particle Number limit for this type of petrol vehicles. Unlike the lack of a reliable method for measuring PM2.5 emission from power plants due to the operation of a wet-type flue-gas desulphurization systems, the tailpipe emission of PM2.5 from vehicles could be effectively measured in terms of both the particle weight and number with existing devices.

Admin 23. At the request of the Chairman and Mr Albert CHAN, the <u>Administration</u> agreed to supplement statistics on the emission of PM2.5 from Euro VI light duty petrol vehicles that were equipped with direct injection engines, and an impact analysis (with "best case" and "worst case" scenarios and different assumptions of weather conditions) of the envisaged increase in the number of such vehicles in Hong Kong on local air quality (e.g. concentrations of PM2.5 in the air) by district including Tung Chung.

24. Regarding the development of low carbon public transport as an integral part of the strategy for improving air quality, <u>Mr WU Chi-wai</u> considered that the Environment Bureau should assume a leading role and coordinate with other relevant bureaux/departments to take forward relevant initiatives. He enquired about the specific targets and measures in this regard. The <u>Deputy Chairman</u> and <u>Mr Kenneth LEUNG</u> sought details on the progress of introducing electric buses. <u>Mr LEUNG</u> opined that the trial of electric buses should cover different models and technologies.

USEN stated that it was the ultimate policy objective of the 25. Administration to have zero emission buses running across the territory. Along this line, the Administration had sought funding from the Legislative Council ("LegCo") for fully subsidizing the franchised bus companies to procure six double-deck hybrid buses and 36 single-deck electric buses for trial runs in different bus routes, with a view to comprehensively assessing their operational efficiency, performance under local conditions and economic feasibility taking into account the operations, capacities and financial abilities of the bus companies, etc. The specific schedule of replacing existing buses with zero emission buses such as electric buses would be subject to in-depth review of the trial outcomes. AD(AP) supplemented that the single-deck electric buses on trial included two main types of electric buses, i.e. battery-electric buses which were purely operated by batteries, and supercapacitor buses which used supercapacitors that could be charged up more quickly though the electricity storage was less. Members noted that EPD would report the trial outcomes to the Panel in due course.

Monitoring of auto-fuel quality

26. Referring to media reports and feedbacks of some professional drivers regarding the poor auto-fuel quality of certain local oil companies, <u>Mr Albert CHAN</u> expressed concern about the effectiveness of the related monitoring mechanism. <u>AD(AP)</u> replied that EPD would conduct sample checks on the quality of auto-fuels (including both diesel and petrol) supplied by local oil companies and no abnormalities had been detected so far. The <u>Acting Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Mobile Source)</u> elaborated that EPD would conduct surprise checks by collecting auto-fuel samples from three randomly selected filling stations in every two months for checking at the Government Laboratory.

27. <u>Mr Albert CHAN</u> criticized that the sample checks were too inadequate considering the number of oil companies and filling stations in Hong Kong. He expressed great disappointment about the perfunctory manner of EPD in conducting the sample checks. He urged EPD to step up efforts in monitoring the quality of auto-fuels supplied by local oil companies, for example, by checking at least two filling stations of each oil company each time at more frequent intervals.

Concluding remarks

28. The <u>Chairman</u> concluded that members were supportive of the Administration's proposal to tighten emission standards of newly registered vehicles to Euro VI, and urged the Administration to take heed of the views and concerns of members, the transport trade and the vehicle maintenance industry when drafting the relevant legislative proposal.

(*Post-meeting notes*:

- A submission from Professional Crane Lorry Association Limited (LC Paper No. CB(1)205/15-16(01)), which was tabled at the meeting, was issued to members on 27 November 2015; and
- the Administration's written response to various issues raised at the meeting was issued vide LC Paper No. CB(1)389/15-16(02) on 5 January 2016.)

V. Revision of fees relating to the Noise Control Ordinance (Cap. 400)

(LC Paper No. CB(1)180/15-16(05) — Administration's paper on "Noise Control Ordinance (Cap. 400) — Revision of Fees")

Briefing by the Administration

29. The <u>Assistant Director (Environmental Assessment)</u> ("AD(EA)") briefed members on the proposal to increase the fees charged under the Noise Control Ordinance (Cap. 400) for the following applications –

- (a) applications for a Construction Noise Permit ("CNP") for
 - (i) construction works other than percussive piling; and
 - (ii) percussive piling; and
- (b) applications for a Noise Emission Label ("NEL") for
 - (i) air compressor; and
 - (ii) hand held percussive breaker.

30. <u>AD(EA)</u> advised that, having regard to the ultimate goal of achieving full cost recovery, the fees for the above applications were last adjusted upward in 2008, and since then, the Administration had taken measures to reduce the relevant costs of processing and vetting the applications by implementing various efficiency initiatives. Nevertheless, the relevant costs had been on the rise due to various factors including inflation, thus driving down the related cost recovery rates. In this regard, the Administration proposed to increase the CNP fees (i.e. for items (a)(i) and (ii) above) by 50% and NEL fees (i.e. for items (b)(i) and (ii) above) by about 9% to improve the respective cost recovery rates. Upon implementation of the fee increase proposal, it was expected that the cost recovery rates for items (a)(i) and (ii) would be increased to 56% and 68% respectively, and that for (b)(i) and (ii) would reach 100%.

31. <u>AD(EA)</u> further said that the Administration had consulted relevant stakeholders on the fee increase proposal. Subject to any views from members, the Administration would consult the Advisory Council on the Environment on the proposal at the next stage, and then submit the relevant legislative amendments for negative vetting by LegCo. It was the Administration's intention to implement the proposed revision of fees by the

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end of the 2015-2016 legislative session.

Discussion

Achieving full cost recovery for CNP applications

32. In reply to Mr KWOK Wai-keung and Mr Kenneth LEUNG, <u>AD(EA)</u> explained that most of the construction works under items (a)(i) and (ii) involved public works (e.g. road works and works relating to underground utilities) and works for the construction/renovation of private buildings, which required application for CNPs on operation of powered mechanical equipment (e.g. electricity generators and hand held percussive breakers) during restricted hours. A flat rate of fees was charged for CNPs that could be valid for one day up to as long as six months to be specified in the permits depending on the nature of the construction works, works stage and progress, as well as the potential noise impact arising from the works on the surrounding areas. Generally, renovation/repair works inside domestic flats would not be granted CNPs.

(*Post-meeting note*: The Administration clarified after the meeting that renovation/repair works inside domestic flats would also involve application for CNPs.)

33. Noting that the cost recovery rates of CNP fees were still far below 100% (56% for item (a)(i) and 68% for item (a)(ii)) despite the proposed fee increase, <u>Mr KWOK Wai-keung</u> requested the Administration to draw up a plan for achieving full cost recovery of such fees. As item (a)(i) involved over 5 000 CNP applications each year from 2012 to 2014 taking up the largest share of the overall applications, <u>Mr KWOK</u> opined that more considerations and greater priority should be given to achieving full cost recovery of this item. Otherwise, the low cost recovery rate would amount to a considerable sum of public money being used to subsidize construction companies in respect of their applications for CNP.

34. <u>AD(EA)</u> emphasized that the Administration had targeted at achieving full cost recovery of CNP fees for items (a)(i) and (ii) as early as possible. Taking into account the potential financial burden caused to the construction sector by any drastic fee increase, it was considered appropriate to increase the CNP fees by 50% at this stage under the current proposal. The Administration would continue to communicate with the sector on the need for further fee increases to achieve full cost recovery in the end. In parallel, the Administration would continue to take measures to reduce the costs of processing/vetting the applications for CNPs, including providing detailed information for applicants with a view to illustrating and

encouraging applications made in a compliant and proper manner.

35. <u>Mr KWOK Wai-keung</u> and <u>Mr Kenneth LEUNG</u> took the view that the impact on the construction sector arising from a higher fee increase to achieve full cost recovery of CNP fees for items (a)(i) and (ii) should be minimal in terms of the overall cost of the construction works concerned. They urged the Administration to revise its current proposal such that the CNP fees would be increased to achieve full cost recovery in one go, thereby obviating the need for further or frequent fee revisions in the near future. <u>Mr LEUNG</u> also suggested the Administration consider reviewing its existing approach of calculating the full cost of processing CNP/NEL applications and explore the feasibility of taking out the fixed overhead costs in the calculation. <u>The Administration</u> took note of the members' suggestions.

Promotion of electronization in respect of CNP/NEL applications

36. <u>Mr Albert CHAN</u> asked about the Administration's initiatives, if any, to promote electronization in respect of CNP/NEL applications by encouraging submission of applications through electronic means or introducing electronic applications ("e-applications") with a view to streamlining the workflow of processing the applications and reducing administrative costs.

37. <u>AD(EA)</u> responded that submission of CNP/NEL applications and their supporting documents by electronic means was currently available but most applicants preferred to submit their applications in paper form and pay the application fees by cheque, for their own convenience. As CNP/NEL applications were processed by electronic means, the Administration would computerize the relevant data submitted in the paper application forms to facilitate further electronic processing and vetting.

38. <u>Mr Albert CHAN</u> expressed great disappointment that the Administration had not been proactive in promoting electronization in respect of CNP/NEL applications, and the progress of electronization was far lagging behind many overseas jurisdictions where e-applications were commonplace and considered to be very user-friendly. <u>Mr CHAN</u> indicated that he would object to the proposal of increasing CNP/NEL fees if the Administration would not take initiatives in encouraging submission of applications for CNPs/NELs by electronic means (such as setting a relatively lower level of application fees for such submissions) or promoting e-applications. <u>Mr Kenneth LEUNG</u> supported the suggestion of promoting electronization to enhance the cost efficiency of processing/vetting CNP/NEL applications. In response, AD(EA) emphasized that CNP/NEL application procedures and work flows were already processed by electronic means and e-applications

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were already available, though applicants had the choice of submitting their applications in electronic form or paper form.

39. <u>USEN</u> undertook to review the processing/vetting of CNP/NEL applications as well as all other applications under the purview of EPD with a view to promoting electronization as far as practicable, and would report the review results to the Panel in due course.

Admin 40. At the request of Mr Albert CHAN, the <u>Administration</u> agreed to provide information setting out the workflows and costs of processing an application submitted by electronic means vis-a-vis paper form for different types of CNPs/NELs.

Conclusion

41. The <u>Chairman</u> concluded that members in general did not object to the current proposal of increasing the application fees for CNPs and NELs but considered that the level of the revised CNP fees might be raised further with a view to achieving full cost recovery in one step. <u>Mr Albert CHAN</u> reiterated that he would object to the current proposal for reasons he stated earlier at the meeting. <u>Mr CHAN</u> also indicated that he would follow up related issues at the subcommittee, if any, to be formed to study the relevant legislative amendments. The <u>Chairman</u> urged the Administration to take heed of members' views and concerns when drafting the relevant legislative proposal.

VI. Any other business

42. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 9:54 am.

Council Business Division 1 Legislative Council Secretariat 26 January 2016