

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(4)1172/18-19
*(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)*

Ref : CB4/PL/TP/1

Panel on Transport

**Minutes of meeting held on
Friday, 16 November 2018, at 10:00 am
in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex**

Members present : Hon CHAN Han-pan, BBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon Jeremy TAM Man-ho (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, GBS, JP
Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung, GBS, JP
Hon CHAN Hak-kan, BBS, JP
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP
Hon WONG Kwok-kin, SBS, JP
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yee, GBS, JP
Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun, JP
Hon Claudia MO
Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, SBS, JP
Hon YIU Si-wing, BBS
Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, SBS, MH, JP
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan
Hon POON Siu-ping, BBS, MH
Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, SBS, JP
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, SBS, MH, JP
Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan
Hon Alvin YEUNG
Hon Andrew WAN Siu-kin

Hon CHU Hoi-dick
Dr Hon Junius HO Kwan-yiu, JP
Hon HO Kai-ming
Hon LAM Cheuk-ting
Hon SHIU Ka-fai
Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing, MH
Hon Tanya CHAN
Hon LUK Chung-hung, JP
Hon LAU Kwok-fan, MH
Hon Kenneth LAU Ip-keung, BBS, MH, JP
Dr Hon CHENG Chung-tai
Hon Gary FAN Kwok-wai
Hon AU Nok-hin
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS

Members attending : Hon WU Chi-wai, MH
Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, BBS, JP

Public officers attending : **Agenda item III**

Ms Rebecca PUN Ting-ting, JP
Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing
(Transport)¹

Miss Jessica LEE Wing-tung
Acting Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Transport)⁵

Mr Kelvin LO Kwok-wah, JP
Project Manager/Major Works
Highways Department

Mr Sam LAM Sai-wing
Chief Engineer 1/Major Works
Highways Department

Agenda IV

Mr Frank CHAN Fan, JP
Secretary for Transport and Housing

Ms Mable CHAN, JP
Commissioner for Transport

Ms Ivy LAW Chui-mei, JP
Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing
(Transport)3

Mr Samson LAM Sau-sang
Assistant Commissioner for Transport / Planning

Mr SHEA Tin-cheung
Chief Engineer / Transport Planning
Transport Department

Agenda V

Dr Raymond SO, BBS, JP
Under Secretary for Transport and Housing

Mr Kevin CHOI, JP
Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing
(Transport) 2

Miss Ann CHAN
Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport
and Housing (Transport)(Special Tasks)

Mr Patrick WONG
Assistant Commissioner for Transport/
Bus and Railway
Transport Department

Ms Stella LEE
Assistant Commissioner for Transport/
Management and Paratransit

Clerk in attendance: Ms Sophie LAU
Chief Council Secretary (4)2

Staff in attendance : Ms Angela CHU
Senior Council Secretary (4)2

Miss Mandy LAM
Legislative Assistant (4)2

Action

I. Information paper(s) issued since the last meeting

- LC Paper No. CB(4)87/18-19(01) - Letter dated 16 October 2018 from Hon Charles Peter MOK addressed to Mr Lincoln LEONG, Chief Executive Officer of MTR Corporation Limited and Mr Adi LAU Tin-shing, Operations Director of MTR Corporation Limited
- LC Paper No. CB(4)114/18-19(01) - Administration's response to the joint letter from four members regarding water seepage at the Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link
- LC Paper No. CB(4)125/18-19(01) - Administration's response to the joint letter from four members requesting to hold a special meeting to discuss issues relating to the clearance and operating arrangements of the Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link
- LC Paper No. CB(4)138/18-19(01) - Letter from the Administration regarding the Net Revenue Statements of Western Harbour Tunnel Company Limited

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| LC Paper No. CB(4)138/18-19(02) | - Letter from the Administration regarding Route 3 (Country Park Section) Company Limited |
| LC Paper No. CB(4)146/18-19(01) | - Referral memo regarding issues raised by Tsuen Wan District Council members (Restricted to members only) |
| LC Paper No. CB(4)147/18-19(01) | - Letter from Hon LUK Chung-hung requesting to discuss the utilization of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and related issues after its commissioning |
| LC Paper No. CB(4)148/18-19(01) | - Administration's response to joint letter from Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki, Hon Alvin YEUNG, Hon Tanya CHAN and Hon Jeremy TAM; letter from Hon LUK Chung-hung and letter from Hon Gary FAN Kwok-wai requesting to discuss service disruption of several MTR lines on 16 October 2018 caused by signalling system faults |

Members noted the above papers issued since the last meeting.

2. Ms Tanya CHAN referred to the Administration's response to written requests from members for holding a special meeting to discuss operating arrangements of the Hong Kong Section ("HKS") of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link ("XRL") (LC Paper No. CB(4)125/18-19(01)), and noted that the Mainland had maintained and made public a "List of Dishonest Persons" ("the List") which restricted persons on the List from taking the XRL trains within a certain period of time. Ms CHAN suggested the matter be discussed at the special meeting proposed by members, having regard to the possible implications of the List to Hong Kong passengers of XRL. The Chairman said that he would

discuss with the Administration to decide whether the matter would be followed up by the Panel or the Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways ("the Subcommittee").

(Post-meeting note: the Administration proposed to brief members of the Subcommittee on the agenda item "Operation of HKS of XRL" at its regular meeting scheduled for December 2018)

II. Items for discussion at the next meeting

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| LC Paper No. CB(4)179/18-19(01) | - List of outstanding items for discussion |
| LC Paper No. CB(4)179/18-19(02) | - List of follow-up actions |

3. The Chairman suggested and members agreed to re-schedule the next regular meeting of the Panel originally scheduled for 21 December 2018 to 14 December 2018. Members agreed that the following items be discussed at the meeting:

- (a) 6863TH – Widening of western section of Lin Ma Hang Road between Ping Yuen River and Ping Che Road;
- (b) Review of Assessment Mechanism for Hillside Escalator Links and Elevator Systems Proposals; and
- (c) Implementation of the Public Transport Fare Subsidy Scheme.

III. 6101TX – "Universal Accessibility" Programme

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| LC Paper No. CB(4)179/18-19(03) | - Administration's paper on "Universal Accessibility" Programme |
| LC Paper No. CB(4)179/18-19(04) | - Paper on "Universal Accessibility" Programme prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Updated background brief) |

4. At the invitation of the Chairman, Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Transport)1 ("DSTH(T)1") briefed members on the implementation progress of the "Universal Accessibility" Programme ("the UA Programme") and the funding requirement to take forward the UA Programme in the 2019-2020 financial year. Chief Engineer 1/Major Works of the Highways Department ("HyD") then briefed members on more details with the aid of a powerpoint presentation.

(Post-meeting note: the powerpoint presentation material was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)202/17-18(01) on 19 November 2018)

Implementation progress of the UA Programme

5. Mr Tony TSE expressed concern over the slow implementation progress of the UA Programme in that only 94 out of 202 items had been completed since the launch of the UA Programme in 2012. He proposed that the Administration should consider means to speed up the progress. Sharing similar view, Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok and Dr Elizabeth QUAT asked whether the slow progress was due to the shortage of labour in the market, as the Chief Executive had openly admitted in her Address to the Legislative Council ("LegCo") that shortage of labour had adversely affected construction works progress in Hong Kong. Both members urged the Administration to look into the matter expeditiously.

6. DSTH(T)1 explained that the proposed items under the UA Programme had to go through various procedures before the works could commence. Project Manager/Major Works of Highways Department ("PM/HyD") added that during the implementation of the UA Programme, considerable time had to be spent on administrative and technical aspects of the works, such as conducting investigation and detailed design work, consultation with District Councils ("DCs"), gazetting the retrofitting proposals under the Roads (Works, Use and Compensation) Ordinance (Cap. 370) in case of anticipated objections from stakeholders, inviting tenders, etc., according to the established procedures. As the UA Programme entered its Second and Third Phases, the HyD had consolidated the experience gained, such as streamlining the procedures, so that their programme could be speeded up. As regards the labour shortage problem, PM/HyD replied that HyD had reviewed the manpower requirement and considered that the supply of labour in the market would not be affected by undertaking the UA Programme.

7. In reply to enquiries made by Mr Tony TSE and Dr Elizabeth QUAT on the number of contractors and workers involved in the UA Programme and whether the number was sufficient, PM/HyD replied that more than 10 contractors had been involved in the works contracts under the UA Programme, which were still far below the number of contractors on the List of Approved Contractors for Public Works. There were some 8 000 lift workers in the market. He further added that works contracts would be let out progressively under the Third Phase, i.e. when a batch of items was ready to start construction, a works contract would be tendered out. Therefore, the resources of contractors and lift workers in the market should not be affected by the staged implementation of the Third Phase.

8. Referring to paragraphs 5 and 8 of the Administration's paper, Dr CHENG Chung-tai commented that the Administration had exaggerated the implementation progress of the UA Programme by combining the number of items completed with those under construction and arrived at a ratio of 94% and 96% for the Original and Expanded Programmes. Excluding items under construction, he reckoned that the actual completion rate of about 55% and 25% for the Original and Expanded Programme respectively was far less than satisfactory. Dr CHENG and Mr Gary FAN suggested the Administration to streamline the construction procedures, such as screening out infeasible items during the feasibility study stage, or using default accessories so as to speed up construction. Mr FAN also asked whether such streamlining could help to save construction cost.

9. DSTH(T)1 responded that the Administration had been striving to speed up the implementation of the UA Programme. PM/HyD said that having regard to the experience gained, HyD was carrying out advance site investigation during the design stage for items under the Second Phase, and would adopt the same approach for items under the Third Phase to speed up the progress. Given that the market situation had remained stable, he anticipated that construction cost for the UA Programme would not be much affected.

10. Referring to Annex I of the Administration's paper regarding the nine outstanding items to be settled under the Original Programme, Mr Wilson OR enquired about the status of the items. He also requested the Administration to provide written information on measures to be taken to improve and speed up the implementation progress of the UA Programme.

11. DSTH(T)1 responded that the nine outstanding items encountered difficulties relating to design schemes and diverse local views. HyD was still formulating their design schemes and implementation programmes, but

would endeavour to resolve the matters concerned as soon as practicable. The Admin
She undertook to provide the information requested by Mr OR after the meeting.

(*Post-meeting* note: Chinese and English versions of the Administration's response to the above enquiry were issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)406/18-19(01) on 10 January and 20 June 2019 respectively.)

Review of the UA Programme ambit

12. Noting that each DC was invited to nominate three items for priority implementation among the list of items nominated by the public under the Expanded Programme and Second Phase of the UA Programme in 2013 and 2016 respectively, Mr LUK Chung-hung considered such arrangement inequitable as population size and structure, pedestrian flow as well as geographic location of public walkways differed across districts, and hence the number of nominations made by each DC should be in proportion to the abovementioned factors. He also urged the Administration to allow flexibility for DCs to nominate more than three items to reflect the genuine needs of the community. Concurring with Mr LUK's view, the Chairman recommended the Administration to conduct a comprehensive review of the scope of the UA Programme to include those items not yet covered in the list but was in keen demand for lifts due to their location and users, for instance, steep and long walkways with elderly persons as the major users.

13. DSTH(T)1 responded that items included in the list had been nominated by members of the public where they considered lift retrofitting necessary since August 2012. In the earlier stage of the implementation of the UA Programme, as the response from the public was overwhelming, the Administration invited the 18 DCs to prioritize the items for early implementation in 2013. As announced in the 2018 Policy Address, the Administration would commence a feasibility study in the first half of 2019 on the remaining items under the existing Programme ambit. The Administration would also explore whether there was any scope for further expanding the ambit of the UA Programme.

14. The Chairman, Mr LUK Chung-hung, Mr LAU Kwok-fan, Dr Elizabeth QUAT and Mr Wilson OR called on the Administration to review the UA Programme scope to include estates under Tenants Purchase Scheme ("TPS") and Home Ownership Scheme ("HOS") as many of the occupants were elderly. Mr AU Nok-hin urged the Administration to suitably relax

the four criteria cited in paragraph 3 of the Administration's paper on the eligibility of walkways to be included in the UA Programme, and to consider provoking land resumption for cases where public interests outweighed the private interests. He also enquired whether construction of lifts under the UA Programme at the land under the ambit of the Housing Department/Housing Authority was allowed.

15. DSTH(T)1 explained that the Administration had expanded the ambit of the UA Programme in 2016 and had invited the 18 DCs each to further select not more than three existing walkways proposed by the public for implementation under the Second Phase of the UA Programme. In order to ensure prudent use of public funds, the Administration had to carefully consider members' suggestion of including estates under TPS and HOS as those estates were privately owned with their respective Owners' Corporations vested with the responsibility for the management and maintenance of the facilities within the estates. That said, the Administration would embark on a review in 2019 on the ambit of the UA Programme and would consider members' suggestions in the review.

16. In response to Mr Au's enquiry, PM/HyD affirmed that it was feasible to construct lifts under the UA Programme at the land situated within those public rental housing estates managed by the Housing Department under vesting orders, provided that the Housing Department agreed to modify their vesting orders to allow HyD to carry out the construction works on the land concerned.

17. In reply to Mr LAU Kwok-fan's suggestion regarding the retrofitting of escalator at walkways, DSTH(T)1 responded that the Administration would consider such proposals separately from the UA Programme taking into account the geographic location of the walkways concerned, the accessibility to wheelchair users and pedestrian flow, etc.

Maintenance of lifts

18. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen noted that a number of lifts were out of order after super typhoon Mangkhut hit Hong Kong in September 2018, and some were still pending for repair at the moment. He expressed concern about lift safety, and enquired whether the current design of the lifts could endure extreme weather such as super typhoon and heavy rain.

19. PM/HyD responded that totally 16 lifts were broken down after the passage of super typhoon Mangkhut, and 13 of them were back in service now. The Administration would consider measures to mitigate the damages

during extreme weather in future. At the request of Mr CHAN, PM/HyD undertook to provide the details about the 16 lifts under the UA Programme which were affected by the super typhoon Mangkhut, including the locations of the lifts and the respective period(s) when they were out of service as well as the remedial action(s) taken by the Administration.

(*Post-meeting* note: Chinese and English versions of the Administration's response to the above enquiry were issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)406/18-19(01) on 10 January and 20 June 2019 respectively.)

Financing of the UA Programme

20. Mr LAU Kwok-fan complimented that the UA Programme was widely accepted by local communities and benefited the elderly and people in need, and asked whether the Administration would consider allocating recurrent funding to finance the UA Programme continuously. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok noted that \$650 million was budgeted for the financial year 2019-2020, which was less than the amount of \$730 million budgeted last year and enquired about reasons for the difference.

21. DSTH(T)1 responded that the Administration recognized public aspirations for retrofitting barrier-free access facilities at existing walkways, and would continue to implement the UA Programme subject to the needs of the society as well as comments of DCs and LegCo Members. The Administration would also conduct a review in 2019 to explore whether there was any scope for further expanding the ambit of the UA Programme. As for the difference in the budget for 2018-2019 and 2019-2020, DSTH(T)1 replied that it was due to the difference in the cost of works at different stages of project implementation. The Administration would spend more on investigation and feasibility studies, which were relatively less costly than construction works, in 2019-2020.

Conclusion

22. The Chairman sought members' views on the funding application of the UA Programme. Members indicated support to the application.

Procedural matter

23. At 11:03 am, after the Chairman had concluded the discussion of the item and proceeded to the next agenda item, Mr AU Nok-hin proposed to move a motion under the item. The Chairman said that as the item had already been closed and discussion had run 15 minutes over the original

scheduled time, the motion could not be proceeded with. The Chairman advised that Mr AU 's motion could be circulated to members as a proposal for the consideration by the Administration.

IV. Rationalisation of traffic distribution among three road harbour crossings and three land tunnels between Kowloon and Sha Tin and other tunnel-related proposals

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| LC Paper No. CB(4)17/18-19(01) | - Administration's paper on Rationalisation of Traffic Distribution Among Six Tunnels |
| LC Paper No. CB(4)179/18-19(06) | - Paper on toll rationalisation among three road harbour crossings and three land tunnels between Kowloon and Sha Tin prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Updated background brief) |

24. At the invitation of the Chairman, Secretary for Transport and Housing ("STH") introduced the Administration's toll adjustment proposal for the three road harbour crossings ("RHCs"), viz Cross- Harbour Tunnel ("CHT"), Eastern Harbour Crossing ("EHC") and Western Harbour Crossing ("WHC") and the three land tunnels between Kowloon and Sha Tin ("three land tunnels") ("toll rationalization study"). He said that the proposal was formulated based on that study with sound scientific basis with a large quantity of data analyzed having regard to commuters' travelling behaviour to determine the optimal level of toll adjustment of the three RHCs to achieve the following objectives: (a) the overall tunnel traffic could be more optimally distributed; and (b) the impact of tunnel traffic on non-tunnel traffic could be minimized. The Administration estimated that the proposal would bring about social cost savings of over \$800 million per year.

25. Chief Engineer/Transport Planning of Transport Department ("CE/TP") briefed members on details of the toll rationalization study with the aid of a powerpoint presentation.

(*Post-meeting note*: the powerpoint presentation material was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)202/17-18(02) on 19 November 2018)

Toll adjustment proposal

Members' views

26. Mr LAM Cheuk-ting and Ms Claudia MO expressed concern about the substantial increase in the toll levels of CHT and EHC, and had doubts about the effectiveness of the proposal in re-distributing traffic of the relevant districts. Mr LAM said that the Democratic Party did not support increasing toll levels of CHT and EHC, and opined that raising the toll level for private cars using EHC from \$25 to \$40 was unfair to Kowloon East residents. He also called on the Administration to resolve the congestion problem of Tai Po Road (Sha Tin Section) so that traffic from Sha Tin and North Districts could be diverted to Route 8K and WHC effectively. Ms MO commented that doubling the toll level for private cars using CHT from \$20 to \$40 was unacceptable. In addition, she was sceptical whether Hong Kong Island traffic could possibly be diverted from CHT to WHC because non-tunnel traffic was already very congested near exit of CHT.

27. STH replied that the objective of the toll adjustment proposal was to influence motorists' choice of tunnels such that overall tunnel traffic could be more optimally distributed, thereby tackling the congestion problem at CHT and EHC and their connecting roads. In undertaking the study, the effect of Central-Wan Chai Bypass in alleviating traffic pressure at the connecting roads of WHC had already been taken into account. As regards rationalization of traffic flow from Sha Tin to Kowloon, Assistant Commissioner for Transport / Planning ("AC/P") replied that the widening works of Tai Po Road (Sha Tin Section) was expected to be completed in 2023, after which the bottleneck leading to Route 8K would be removed.

28. Mr Frankie YICK and Mr Tommy CHEUNG said that the Liberal Party supported the toll adjustment proposal in rationalizing traffic of RHCs. Both members opined that narrowing toll difference between CHT and WHC could induce more motorists to switch to WHC, thereby enhancing the utilization of WHC and ease the congestion problem of CHT. Mr YICK added that the taxi trade supported the proposal as more passengers would be willing to use WHC. Unifying toll on taxis without passengers for the three RHCs would also relieve traffic congestion on CHT and provide greater incentive for taxi drivers to engage in cross harbour trips during peak hours.

29. Mr YIU Si-wing supported the toll adjustment proposal, and enquired about the financial implications of toll adjustment and the impact of non-tunnel traffic along the connecting roads of WHC, especially west-bound traffic in anticipation of the increase in tunnel usage.

30. STH replied that if the toll adjustment proposal was implemented, the estimated additional toll revenue from CHT and EHC would be \$546 million, which had already taken into account reduction in traffic volume and proposed exemption of tolls for franchised buses using the two tunnels. The compensation payable under the WHC Toll Compensation Scheme would be subject to an aggregate cap of \$1,800 million and payment of tolls for franchised buses using WHC was estimated at \$956 million. He stressed that the objective of the toll adjustment proposal was to rationalize traffic distribution of the three RHCs, thereby tackling the long-standing problem of traffic congestion at RHCs. Financial gain/loss was not the prime concern of the Administration. In respect of traffic leaving WHC towards the Western District, AC/P replied that the Administration had kept under review traffic conditions of the region and would undertake road improvement works and collect views at district levels on how to enhance traffic flow.

31. Mr Michael TIEN expressed the view that he would support the proposal provided that the toll adjustment would not suppress traffic demand for the tunnels and their connecting roads. Pointing out that total tolls of private cars for using the three RHCs would increase from \$115 at present to \$130 starting from 1 January 2020 if the relevant funding proposal and legislative amendments were supported by LegCo, he enquired whether total tolls would still be kept at \$115 before the prescribed toll level came into effect. He also suggested reviewing the usage of CHT and WHC and the respective non-tunnel traffic given that many motorists might switch from CHT to WHC.

32. STH stressed that the toll adjustment proposal aimed to influence motorists' choice of tunnels to achieve traffic rationalization, rather than to suppress traffic demand. In accordance with the WHC Toll Compensation Scheme agreed in principle with the Western Harbour Tunnel Company Limited ("WHTCL"), toll level for WHC would be frozen for Targeted Vehicles at the prescribed level from 1 January 2020 until the franchise expiry on 1 August 2023. Before 1 January 2020, WHTCL was entitled to increase toll level pursuant to WHC Ordinance (Cap. 436) having regard to business considerations. He added that the Administration would keep the usage of the tolled-tunnels and their connecting roads under review, and adopt the concept of "congestion charging" and principle of "efficiency first"

in the longer term to determine the appropriate toll levels at tunnels to ensure efficient use of road space.

Consultancy study

33. Referring to the Final Report on "Toll Rationalisation Study of Three Road Harbour Crossings and Three Land Tunnels between Kowloon and Sha Tin - Feasibility Study" published by the consultants, the Deputy Chairman sought details regarding the breakdown of taxis with and without passengers using the respective three RHCs. He also queried the reasons why during the technical workshop held on 13 July 2017 to gauge views from academia, advisory bodies and professional committees on tolling strategy, motorcycle was not mentioned at the workshop. He questioned whether the proposed toll levels had been widely consulted and on this basis, he expressed reservation on the toll adjustment proposal put forward by the Administration.

34. Commissioner for Transport ("C for T") explained that in general, taxi with passengers constituted around 85% of tunnel traffic for taxis. As regards breakdown of taxis with and without passengers using the respective three RHCs, C for T agreed to provide the relevant information after the meeting. In respect of the technical workshop held to gauge views on tolling strategy, CE/TP added that the proposed tolling strategy for motorcycles was discussed at the technical workshop, but participants did not have specific comments in this regard.

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Admin

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's response to the above enquiry was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)383/17-18(01) on 3 January 2019)

35. Mr LUK Chung-hung expressed concern about the accuracy of the toll rationalization study in estimating the tunnel traffic of RHCs and enquired about the expected benefit to be brought by the toll adjustment proposal in terms of number of hours saved for motorists using CHT and EHC. Referring to paragraph 14 of the Administration's paper, Mr CHAN Chi-Chuen also enquired on what basis did the Administration come up with the conclusion that merely reducing WHC toll would likely induce more demand for cross-harbour traffic and aggravate the current congestion at RHCs.

36. STH reiterated that the toll adjustment proposal was formulated based on the toll rationalization study with sound scientific basis. It was expected that the average saving in travelling time for public transport and non-public

transport vehicles would be 19 400 hours per day and 17 600 hours per day respectively.

37. Mr Gary FAN sought details regarding the projected change in traffic flow of CHT and WHC after implementing the toll adjustment. AC/P replied that traffic flow of CHT was projected to decrease from 115 000 to 85 000 vehicles on an average weekday while WHC would increase from 76 000 to 110 000 vehicles on an average weekday.

Implementation timetable

38. Mr AU Nok-hin suggested implementing the toll adjustment proposal by phases. Mr LUK Chung-hung also recommended that the proposal be implemented after the Central-Wan Chai Bypass had been commissioned to assess the traffic impact of the Bypass on roads connecting CHT and WHC. Mr AU enquired about the expected traffic volume that could be diverted by the Central-Wan Chai Bypass.

39. STH replied that the effect of the toll adjustment proposal in re-distributing traffic would be undermined if it was to be implemented by phases. AC/P said that the Central-Wan Chai Bypass would provide an alternative fast track route for Hong Kong Island North east-to-west-bound traffic, and could divert around 20% of the existing traffic to use the Central-Wan Chai Bypass.

40. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen noted that the Administration intended to table legislative amendments at LegCo for negative vetting by December 2018 or first quarter of 2019, and enquired about the legislative amendments. Mr AU Nok-hin asked whether the Administration would consider a positive vetting procedure in scrutinizing the legislative amendments.

41. STH explained that as CHT and EHC were government tolled-tunnels, and changes to their toll levels would require legislative amendments by negative vetting. He added that the legislative timetable as mentioned in paragraph 25 of the Administration's paper might be subject to further refinement having regard to the need of gauging views from LegCo Members and the public. That said, the Administration targeted to implement the proposal, if so supported by LegCo, as early as practicable.

Alternative proposals in rationalizing traffic distribution

42. The Chairman was unconvinced that the toll adjustment proposal presently put forward by the Administration was the only option to

rationalize traffic with no other alternatives being proposed for public consideration. Sharing a similar view, Mr LAU Kwok-fan opined that the effect of toll increase in alleviating traffic pressure of CHT and EHC was uncertain and the public was not fully convinced. Both members asked whether there was room for refining the present proposal to better meet public expectation. Mr LAU also requested the Administration to provide statistics and data to justify the feasibility of the proposal vis-à-vis deficiencies of other proposals as shown in slide 17 of the Administration's powerpoint presentation.

43. STH said that the Administration had duly considered other alternative options but they were not feasible because of their limited effectiveness and adverse traffic implications. In addition, the proposed WHC Toll Compensation Scheme was an outcome after lengthy negotiation with WHTCL, and there was little room and time for re-negotiation before the franchise expiry on 1 August 2023. The Administration considered implementing the toll adjustment proposal a pragmatic approach, and would review its effectiveness and consider adjustment after implementation. If the proposal was not supported by the LegCo, the Administration would put in abeyance its implementation until the franchise expiry of WHC in 2023.

44. As regards the information requested by Mr LAU, STH undertook to provide them after the meeting.

The Admin

45. The Chairman and Mr Tommy CHEUNG suggested including Tai Lam Tunnel ("TLT") in the toll adjustment proposal such that motorists from Sha Tin and New Territories would be encouraged to switch to WHC. In reply, STH said that the Administration would review toll level of TLT and other tunnels to ensure the efficient use of road space. In the long run, the concept of "congestion charging" and "efficiency first" would be applied to ensure efficient people carriers and vehicles that support economic activities would enjoy lower tolls.

West Harbour Crossing Toll Compensation Scheme

46. Mr Gary FAN expressed grave concern that under the WHC Toll Compensation Scheme, the Administration had to subsidize WHTCL up to the cap of \$1,800 million for toll reduction, and found it unacceptable that public funds were to be used to compensate revenue forgone of a private company. He commented that the high toll level charged by WHTCL was the undesirable consequence of using a Build-Operate-Transfer form of operating tunnels under which the private company was entitled, at its own discretion, to increase concessionary tolls up to the statutory toll levels any

time having regard to business consideration. He enquired whether the Administration had made a projection on the cost involved in buying back WHC.

47. Mr LUK Chung-hung said that toll level increase of CHT and EHC would induce additional traffic demand for WHC and generate income for WHTCL. He questioned whether it was a prudent use of public funds to subsidize WHTCL for toll reduction. Mr YIU Si-wing also concurred that toll level increase of CHT and EHC had the effect of subsidizing toll reduction of WHC.

48. STH reiterated his stance that WHC Toll Compensation Scheme aimed to subsidize motorists and encourage them to use WHC. The objective was not about compensating WHTCL but to rationalize traffic distribution among the three RHCs. WHTCL had full discretion under the law to increase tolls once the conditions stipulated in the WHC Ordinance were met. Under the Scheme, toll level of WHC would be frozen at the prescribed level until franchise expiry in August 2023, and the Administration would subsidize WHC users on a per vehicle basis.

49. In reply to Ms Claudia MO's enquiry on the estimated amount of subsidy paid to WHTCL per year under the Compensation Scheme, STH replied that compensation payable under the proposed Scheme would be calculated on a per vehicle basis subject to an aggregated cap of \$1,800 million during the compensation period.

Waiving the toll of franchised buses using tunnels

50. Dr CHENG Chung-tai referred to paragraph 20 of the Administration's paper and expressed concern that Government payment for revenue forgone by WHTCL in waiving tolls of franchised buses using WHC would not subject to a cap, and enquired the projected subsidy paid by the Administration in this regard.

51. STH replied that the usage of WHC by franchised buses was not sensitive to toll levels given that the number of franchised bus routes using WHC as well as service frequencies were determined by the Government based on transport needs. It was estimated that the proposed payment over the compensation period from 1 January 2020 to 1 August 2023 upon franchise expiry would be totalled at \$956 million.

52. The Chairman and Mr LAU Kwok-fan supported waiving tolls on franchised buses using all tunnels. Both members urged that the

Administration should also include non-franchised bus and mini-bus in the initiative. Besides, they opined that tunnel toll to be waived for public transport vehicles should be handled separately instead of bundling it together with the toll adjustment proposal and WHC Toll Compensation Scheme for consideration by LegCo.

53. STH responded that the proposed exemption of toll payment by franchised buses aimed to encourage more efficient use of road space by mass people carriers, and in the long term, the Administration would map out the appropriate level of toll for all government tolled-tunnels and the two Control Areas.

(At 12:33 pm, the Chairman proposed and members agreed to extend the meeting by 15 minutes to 1:00 pm)

Motions

54. The Chairman said that there were three motions raised by members in relation to the agenda item under discussion. The Chairman decided that the three motions were directly related to the agenda item, and members agreed to deal with the motions at the meeting.

55. At the request of Mr Gary FAN, the Chairman instructed the Clerk to ring the bell for 5 minutes.

56. The Chairman referred members to the following motion moved by Mr CHAN Chi-chuen -

本委員會要求當局停止就上調紅磡海底隧道及東區海底隧道收費提交相關法例修訂，並就上調東區海底隧道及紅磡海底隧道收費的建議全面及廣泛地諮詢新界東居民意見，在絕大部份新界東區民支持下，方可向立法會提交相關法例修訂。

(Translation)

This Panel requests that the Administration should stop submitting relevant legislative amendments for adjusting upwards the tolls of the Cross Harbour Tunnel ("CHT") and the Eastern Harbour Crossing ("EHC"), comprehensively and extensively consult

residents in New Territories East on the proposals for adjusting upwards the tolls of EHC and CHT, and submit to the Legislative Council relevant legislative amendments only with the support of the vast majority of the residents in New Territories East.

57. The Chairman put the motion to vote. At the request of Mr Gary FAN, the Chairman ordered a division. A total of 11 members voted for and 11 members voted against the motion. The Chairman declared that the motion was negatived.

58. The votes of individual members were as follows:

For

Ms Claudia MO
Mr CHAN Chi-chuen
Dr KWOK Ka-ki
Mr Alvin YEUNG
Mr CHU Hoi-dick
Mr LAM Cheuk-ting
Ms Tanya CHAN
Dr CHENG Chung-tai
Mr Jeremy TAM
Mr Gary FAN
Mr AU Nok-hin
(11 members)

Against

Mr Tommy CHEUNG
Mr Jeffrey LAM
Mr WONG Kwok-kin
Mr Paul TSE
Mr Michael TIEN
Mr Frankie YICK
Mr YIU Si-wing
Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok
Dr Junius HO
Mr SHIU Ka-fai
Mr Kenneth LAU
(11 members)

59. The Chairman referred members to the following motion moved by Dr KWOK Ka-ki -

由於不少居民因居住及工作地點而必須使用紅隧或東隧，大幅增加紅隧東隧收費，將增加市民負擔。本委員會促請政府，收回現時大幅增加紅隧東隧的收費建議，就三隧分流計劃進行公眾諮詢。在取得公眾及立法會的共識後，才重新訂定三隧的收費，以達至三隧分流的效果。

(Translation)

As many residents have to use the Cross Harbour Tunnel ("CHT") or the Eastern Harbour Crossing ("EHC") due to their places of residence and work, substantially increasing the tolls of CHT and EHC will add to the burden of members of the public. This Panel urges the Government to withdraw the present proposal of

substantially increasing the tolls of CHT and EHC, conduct public consultation on the plan to rationalize traffic distribution among the three road harbour crossings ("RHCs"), determine afresh the toll levels of the three RHCs only after reaching a consensus with the public and the Legislative Council, so as to achieve the effect of the rationalization of traffic distribution among the three RHCs.

60. The Chairman put the motion to vote. A total of 11 members voted for the motion, 9 members voted against the motion and a member abstained from voting. The Chairman declared that the motion was carried.

61. The votes of individual members were as follows:

For

Ms Claudia MO
Mr CHAN Chi-chuen
Dr KWOK Ka-ki
Mr Alvin YEUNG
Mr CHU Hoi-dick
Mr LAM Cheuk-ting
Ms Tanya CHAN
Dr CHENG Chung-tai
Mr Jeremy TAM
Mr Gary FAN
Mr AU Nok-hin
(11 members)

Against

Mr Tommy CHEUNG
Mr Jeffrey LAM
Mr WONG Kwok-kin
Mr Michael TIEN
Mr Frankie YICK
Mr YIU Si-wing
Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok
Mr SHIU Ka-fai
Mr Kenneth LAU
(9 members)

Abstained

Mr Paul TSE
(1 member)

62. The Chairman referred members to the following motion moved by Mr AU Nok-hin –

本會認為政府應以漸進方式調整三隧收費，以免令調整計劃停滯不前。

(Translation)

This Panel takes the view that the Government should adopt an incremental approach in adjusting the tolls of the three road harbour crossings so as not to bring the adjustment plan to a standstill.

63. The Chairman put the motion to vote. A total of 10 members voted for the motion, 8 members voted against the motion and a member abstained from voting. The Chairman declared that the motion was carried.

64. The votes of individual members were as follows:

<i>For</i>	<i>Against</i>
Ms Claudia MO	Mr Tommy CHEUNG
Mr CHAN Chi-chuen	Mr Jeffrey LAM
Mr Alvin YEUNG	Mr WONG Kwok-kin
Mr CHU Hoi-dick	Mr Frankie YICK
Mr LAM Cheuk-ting	Mr YIU Si-wing
Ms Tanya CHAN	Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok
Dr CHENG Chung-tai	Mr SHIU Ka-fai
Mr Jeremy TAM	Mr Kenneth LAU
Mr Gary FAN	(8 members)
Mr AU Nok-hin	
(10 members)	<i>Abstained</i>
	Mr Paul TSE
	(1 member)

65. The Chairman requested the Administration to provide a written response to the motions passed by the Panel.

Conclusion

66. The Chairman sought members' views regarding the financial proposal put forward by the Administration on toll adjustment. Members indicated support to the proposal.

67. At 12:37 pm, Mr Gary FAN, Mr CHAN Chi-chuen and Ms Claudia MO said that the Panel had passed the motion moved by Dr KWOK Ka-ki which urged the Administration to withdraw toll increase of CHT and EHC. They opined that the Panel had expressed the view of not supporting the financial proposal through the passage of the motion.

68. The Chairman said that he had sought members' views regarding the financial proposal and members had indicated support to the proposal. As regards the two motions passed by the Panel, they represented views expressed by the Panel on the subject matter discussed under the agenda item which did not have any legislative nor binding effect. The

Administration had been requested to give a written reply on the two motions passed.

V. Enhancing public transport services

LC Paper No. CB(4)179/18-19(07) - Administration's paper on enhancing public transport services

Briefing by the Administration

69. At the invitation of the Chairman, Under Secretary for Transport and Housing ("USTH") briefed members on various new and on-going initiatives proposed by the Administration in the 2018 Policy Address for enhancing public transport services and sought members' views on the proposed creation of a permanent post of an Administrative Officer Staff Grade C ("AOSGC") (D2) to take forward relevant initiatives.

Discussion

Waiving the toll for franchised buses using Government tunnels and Control Areas

70. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen sought clarification on whether the legislative proposal to waive the toll of Government tunnels as well as the Tsing Ma and Tsing Sha Control Areas for franchised buses would be bundled together with the legislative amendment to adjust the toll of CHT and EHC.

71. In response, Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Transport) 2 ("DSTH(T)2") advised that the above mentioned proposal to waive the toll of government tunnels and roads on franchised buses and the toll adjustment proposal for CHT and EHC would be submitted to the LegCo under separate legislative proposals. DSTH(T)2 supplemented that the toll adjustment proposal for CHT and EHC and the proposed WHC Toll Compensation Scheme which aimed to rationalize traffic distribution among the three RHCs would, however, be bundled together. As regards Mr CHAN Chi-chuen's enquiry on the legislative timetable, DSTH(T)2 advised that the Administration's target was to submit the relevant subsidiary legislation amendments to waive the toll of government tunnels and roads on franchised buses to the LegCo by the end of 2018.

72. Mr Frankie YICK opined that the Administration should also include non-franchised buses and green mini-buses ("GMBs") in this toll-waiving initiative because these were also public transport modes. USTH advised that the Administration decided to propose waiving the toll of Government tunnels and Control Areas for franchised buses as the first step since franchised buses, as mass carriers, made more efficient use of road space. USTH supplemented that the Administration would adopt the concept of "congestion charging" and principle of "efficiency first" in the longer term to determine the appropriate level of tolls for different types of vehicles using tolled government tunnels and roads. The suggestion of including other modes of public transport in the toll-waiving initiative would then also be explored.

73. Mr Michael TIEN noted that under the proposal of waiving toll for franchised buses, the toll savings would be set aside in a dedicated fund under each of the bus franchisees. Mr TIEN pointed out that the tunnel toll accounted for about 6% of the operating cost of Kowloon Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited. Instead of setting up the above mentioned dedicated fund, Mr TIEN urged the Administration to consider reducing the fare of the bus routes concerned by around 6% immediately upon the passage of the relevant legislative amendments to benefit commuters.

74. DSTH(T)2 advised that the operating costs including tunnel toll varied among the six franchised bus operators and that on average the fare of the franchised bus routes concerned could be reduced by around 2% to 3% upon the implementation of the toll-waiving initiative on government tunnels and roads. DSTH(T)2 further advised that the franchised bus operators concerned were already facing fare increase pressure and most of them had already submitted fare increase applications. The magnitude of fare increase, if approved, to be shouldered by passengers would be reduced through the application of the above mentioned fund. Mr Michael TIEN remained unconvinced and urged the Administration to consider his proposal with a view to benefitting commuters as soon as possible.

Ferry services

75. Dr Priscilla LEUNG welcomed the Administration's plan of recommissioning the "Central-Hung Hom" ferry route and launching a pilot "water taxi" service. Dr LEUNG then asked whether the service requirements to be set out in the tender exercise which the Administration planned to launch in early 2019 would be formulated based on the two submissions for indication of interests which the Transport Department had received. Dr LEUNG hoped that the above ferry services operating to and

from Central/Hung Hom could address the need of local commuters to travel to work during the peak hours. Whereas during the non-peak hours, the route(s) could run between the Kai Tak, Hung Hom, Tsim Sha Tsui and West Kowloon mainly for the tourists.

76. DSTH(T)2 responded that the Administration would adopt a flexible approach in formulating the service details of the abovementioned ferry route and "water taxi" service. Basically, there would be fixed circular route(s) plying between the locations mentioned by Dr Priscilla LEUNG above and those suggested by the local communities. Subject to the commercial viability of the services, operation of special routes by smaller vessels might also be explored.

77. In response to the enquiry from Dr Priscilla LEUNG, DSTH(T)2 assured that the holder of the proposed AOSGC post, if approved, would deal with cross-bureaux and cross-departmental issues, including the necessary liaison work, in taking forward the relevant new initiatives. Among others, he/she would be responsible to work closely with the Development Bureau and Harbourfront Commission in relation to the preparatory work for the operation of the abovementioned ferry route and "water taxi" services. Dr Priscilla LEUNG indicated support to the proposed creation of a permanent post of an AOSGC to take forward relevant initiatives.

78. Mr Frankie YICK opined that while continuing to provide special helping measures for the six major outlying island ferry routes, the Administration should also consider to provide the same measures to other ferry routes, which included the other franchised/licensed ferry routes and kaitos ferry service routes.

Taxi and hire car service

79. Mr Frankie YICK reaffirmed his objection to the introduction of franchised taxis. Mr YICK said that he had earlier suggested various measures for improving the service quality and operating environment of taxis. However, the Administration had implemented only some of those measures. He then urged the Administration to expedite the work in relation to the implementation of all the suggested measures.

80. The Deputy Chairman urged the Administration to review the policy relating to the regulation of hire car service. The Deputy Chairman then asked whether the proposed AOSGC would be responsible to deal with the issues in this regard. DSTH(T)2 advised that the above mentioned policy

matter was not under the purview of the proposed AOSGC post. USTH undertook to ensure other relevant teams under THB would look into the matter in this regard.

Relaxing the vehicle length restriction of light bus

81. The Deputy Chairman requested the Administration to review the locations within the service area of green minibuses ("GMBs") where vehicles with a length exceeding seven metres were prohibited with a view to exploring whether suitable amendment to the length limit at those locations could be made to facilitate the operation of GMBs. The Deputy Chairman said that this would tie in with the relaxation of statutory vehicle length restriction of light bus to 7.5 metres to facilitate the introduction of light buses with barrier-free facilities and/or other environmental benefits. DSTH(T)2 undertook to follow up on the Deputy Chairman's request.

Other views

82. Mr Frankie YICK urged the Administration to expedite the work in relation to the rationalization of bus routes so as to alleviate traffic congestion on busy trunk roads and to reduce roadside air pollution. He also expressed that the minimum age requirement for obtaining a driving licence for commercial vehicles should be changed from the age of 21 to 19.

The proposed creation of a permanent post of an AOSGC

83. The Deputy Chairman said that he had no objection to the proposed creation of the above post. He then sought clarification on whether the proposed AOSGC would assume the duty of Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport and Housing (Transport) (Special Tasks) ("PASTH(T) (Special Tasks)").

84. DSTH(T)2 advised that PASTH(T) (Special Tasks) was a supernumerary directorate post normally for six months only and that the duties under the proposed AOSGC post would not be exactly the same as those under his/her purview. DSTH(T)2 further advised that the AOSGC post, if approved by the Legislative Council ("LegCo"), would take up the duties as mentioned in the Administration's paper.

85. Noting that the scope of duties under the proposed AOSGC post would mostly be relating to the implementation of time-limited new initiatives, Mr POON Siu-ping asked about the justifications for proposing the creation a permanent post instead of a time-limited one to be subject to

review after a certain period of time. Moreover, Mr POON noted that some of the duties under the proposed AOSGC post overlapped with those under the existing Principal Assistant Secretaries ("PASes"), such as those relating to implementing on-going initiatives of ferry and franchised bus services. Mr POON thus asked whether all the relevant duties of the existing 12 PASes of the THB would be reviewed and redistributed as appropriate.

86. DSTH(T)2 explained that many of the new initiatives for enhancing public transport services would involve on-going monitoring and long-term review. For instance, the operation of the Public Transport Fare Subsidy Scheme would require close monitoring by the Administration and that a review would be conducted around one year after its implementation. As such, the Administration considered that the creation of a permanent post for overseeing and monitoring these initiatives would be more appropriate. DSTH(T)2 further explained that currently all the PASes, including the two PASes (under his team) who were responsible for overseeing and monitoring public transport services, were fully engaged in their respective duties. The existing PASes had no spare capacity to take up the additional duties of the proposed AOSGC post.

87. In summing up, the Chairman sought members' view on the Administration's proposal on creation of a permanent post of an AOSGC (D2) to take forward initiatives for enhancing transport services. Members raised no objection to the Administration's plan to submit the above proposal to the Establishment Subcommittee of the LegCo.

88. At 12:58 pm, the Chairman sought the Panel's agreement on further extending the meeting time to 1:03 pm to allow sufficient time for discussion of this agenda item. Members agreed.

Motion

89. At 1:02 pm, in response to the enquiry of Mr Michael TIEN, the Chairman said that no new motion might be proposed during the period of extension of the meeting.

VI. Any other business

90. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 1:03 pm.

Council Business Division 4
Legislative Council Secretariat
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