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Public Works Subcommittee of the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council

Minutes of the 3rd meeting held in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex on Wednesday, 6 November 2019, at 8:30 am

Members present:

Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, SBS, MH, JP (Chairman)
Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, GBS, JP
Hon CHAN Hak-kan, BBS, JP
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP
Hon Claudia MO
Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP
Hon WU Chi-wai, MH
Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen
Hon CHAN Han-pan, BBS, JP
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, SBS, MH, JP
Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen, BBS, JP
Hon Christopher CHEUNG Wah-fung, SBS, JP
Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan
Hon Alvin YEUNG
Hon CHU Hoi-dick
Hon HO Kai-ming

Hon Holden CHOW Ho-ding
Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing, MH
Hon Tanya CHAN
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-kwan, JP
Hon LUK Chung-hung, JP
Hon LAU Kwok-fan, MH
Dr Hon CHENG Chung-tai
Hon Jeremy TAM Man-ho
Hon Gary FAN Kwok-wai
Hon AU Nok-hin
Hon Vincent CHENG Wing-shun, MH, JP
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS
Hon CHAN Hoi-yan

Member attending:

Hon KWOK Wai-keung, JP

Members absent:

Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, SBS, JP
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Hon Junius HO Kwan-yiu, JP
Hon HUI Chi-fung
Hon KWONG Chun-yu

Public officers attending:

Mr Howard LEE Man-sing	Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury)3
Mr LAM Sai-hung, JP	Permanent Secretary for Development (Works)
Ms Bernadette LINN, JP	Permanent Secretary for Development (Planning and Lands)

Mr Elvis AU Wai-kwong, JP	Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (1)
Ms Margaret HSIA Mai-chi	Principal Assistant Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) (Works)
Ms Brenda AU Kit-ying, JP	Head of Energizing Kowloon East Office Development Bureau
Mr Edwin WONG Kuo-yang	Deputy Head of Energizing Kowloon East Office Development Bureau
Mr Kelvin LO Kwok-wah, JP	Director of Drainage Services
Mr Thomas WONG Hip-lik	Chief Engineer (Drainage Projects) Drainage Services Department
Mr Edward TSE Cheong-wo, JP	Project Director (3) Architectural Services Department
Ms Wendy KWOK Wing-yin	Senior Project Manager 328 Architectural Services Department
Mrs Doris FOK LEE Sheung-ling	Assistant Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Leisure Services)1
Mr CHEN Che-kong	Assistant Director of Environmental Protection (Water Policy)
Mr Anthony FOK Wai-kai	Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Sewerage Infrastructure) Environmental Protection Department
Mr Jacky WU Kwok-yuen	Principal Assistant Secretary for Development (Works)5
Mr Jimmy POON Sui-shun	Chief Engineer (Project Management) Drainage Services Department
Mr David LEUNG Hon-wan	Chief Engineer (Consultants Management) Drainage Services Department

Dr CHUI Tak-yi, JP	Under Secretary for Food and Health
Mr Gilford LAW Sun-on	Principal Assistant Secretary for Food and Health (Food)2
Mrs Sylvia LAM YU Ka-wai, JP	Director of Architectural Services
Mr Alex TSE Lok-man	Senior Project Manager 335 Architectural Services Department
Mr Ryan LIN Wai-tung	Senior Project Manager 321 Architectural Services Department
Mr Ricky WONG Chi-pan, JP	Deputy Head of Civil Engineering Office (Port and Land) Civil Engineering and Development Department
Mr CHOI Wing-hing	Chief Engineer (Land Works) Civil Engineering and Development Department
Miss Diane WONG Shuk-han	Deputy Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Environmental Hygiene)
Mr Eric TSAI Yu-sing	Assistant Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Grade Management and Development)

Clerk in attendance:

Ms Doris LO	Chief Council Secretary (1)2

Staff in attendance:

Mr Raymond CHOW	Senior Council Secretary (1)10
Mr Keith WONG	Council Secretary (1)2
Ms Christina SHIU	Legislative Assistant (1)2
Ms Christy YAU	Legislative Assistant (1)8
Ms Clara LO	Legislative Assistant (1)9

The Chairman advised that there were eight funding proposals on the agenda for the meeting, all of which were funding proposals carried over from the meetings on 19 June 2019 and 30 October 2019. The eight funding proposals involved a total funding allocation of $19,612.2 million. He 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 the funding proposals under discussion at the meeting before they spoke on the proposals. He also drew members' attention to Rule 84 of RoP on voting in case of direct pecuniary interest.

Head 704 — Drainage
PWSC(2019-20)9 171CD Revitalization of Tsui Ping River
Head 703 — Buildings
468RO Improvement of Lam Wah Street Playground and adjacent area

2. The Chairman advised that the proposal, i.e. PWSC(2019-20)9, sought to upgrade 171CD and 468RO to Category A at the respective estimated costs of $1,762.7 million and $145.5 million in money-of-the-day ("MOD") prices, in order to revitalize the King Yip Street Nullah into Tsui Ping River as a green river corridor that would enhance connectivity as well as flood conveyance capability; and to improve Lam Wah Street Playground and its adjacent area to enhance the provision of recreational facilities and the streetscape in the area respectively. The Subcommittee commenced deliberation on the proposal at the meeting on 30 October 2019 and would continue with the deliberation at this meeting.

3. The Chairman said that before the end of the meeting on 30 October 2019, he had declared that he would allow members who were waiting for their turns to speak to raise one question each. After that, the "question and answer session" would end. Ms Tanya CHAN indicated her wish to raise the last round of questions. The Chairman approved her request.

171CD — Revitalization of Tsui Ping River

4. Noting from the supplementary information paper provided by the Administration (i.e. LC Paper No. PWSC18/19-20(01)) that the smart water gate involved a construction cost of about $58 million, Mr Gary FAN enquired whether a higher estimated cost was a result of the procurement of

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some special components for use. He also enquired about the main purpose for constructing the smart water gate. In addition, he requested the Administration to provide the cross-sectional plan for Tsui Ping River showing the current depth of the nullah and the depth after completion of the project works, as well as the maximum and minimum water levels after installing the smart water gate.

5. Director of Drainage Services ("DDS") advised that due to the effects of tidal movements, the water level of Tsui Ping River varied between 2.5 metres above Principal Datum ("mPD") the maximum and 0.2 mPD the minimum. The upstream section of Tsui Ping River would be relatively dry when the water level was low during low tide. During low tide, the smart water gate could be adjusted upwards to regulate the water level so as to allow sustainable growth of aquatic plants in the river. In addition, the stormwater storage tank at On Sau Road could serve as a water source for the river channel when the water level was too low. The proposed works also included dredging of the river channel by 200 to 700 millimetres ("mm") to enhance its flood conveyance capability.

6. Ms Tanya CHAN noted from the supplementary information paper provided by the Administration (i.e. LC Paper No. PWSC18/19-20(01)) that the floating pontoon proposed to be built on Tsui Ping River had an area of about 120 square metres and was designed for a maximum loading for five to six persons per square metre. As such, hundreds of people could be accommodated on the floating pontoon at the same time. In this connection, she enquired about the Administration's pedestrian control measures to prevent accidents that might occur due to over-crowdedness on the floating pontoon. Moreover, she enquired about the area of the engineered wetland proposed to be provided at the upstream section of Tsui Ping River.

7. DDS said that the designed maximum loading of the floating pontoon was its ultimate maximum capacity. For the sake of safety and comfort, the maximum number of visitors would be kept below the safe loading. The Administration would not allow too many people to access the floating pontoon at the same time. After the floating pontoon was opened for public use, the Drainage Services Department ("DSD") would properly control the pedestrian flow onto the floating pontoon depending on the number of visitors and utilization rate. He pointed out that the engineered wetland would have an area of about 250 square metres.

468RO — Improvement of Lam Wah Street Playground and adjacent area

8. Mr Jeremy TAM suggested that the Administration should eschew building unduly high walls as far as possible when designing the 5-a-side

soccer pitch at Lam Wah Street Playground, so that members of the public could watch the soccer matches by standing outside the soccer pitch.

9. Project Director (3), Architectural Services Department said that the Administration would take into account members' views. In designing the 5-a-side soccer pitch, it would ensure that the lower part of the surrounding walls would allow a certain degree of visual permeability so that the public could watch the soccer matches from outside.

Voting on PWSC(2019-20)9

10. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen requested that the two projects under PWSC(2019-20)9 be voted on separately. The Administration raised no objection to the arrangement. The Chairman said that the two projects under PWSC(2019-20)9 would be voted on separately.

171CD — Revitalization of Tsui Ping River

11. The Chairman first put 171CD to vote. At the request of members, the Chairman ordered a division. Fourteen members voted for the project, and no member voted against it. Two members abstained from voting. The votes of individual members were as follows:

For:

Mr Tommy CHEUNG	Dr Priscilla LEUNG
Mr MA Fung-kwok	Ms Alice MAK
Mr Christopher CHEUNG	Mr HO Kai-ming
Mr Holden CHOW	Mr Wilson OR
Ms Tanya CHAN	Mr Jeremy TAM
Mr Gary FAN	Mr Vincent CHENG
Mr Tony TSE	Ms CHAN Hoi-yan
(14 members)	

Against:
(0 member)

Abstained:

Mr CHAN Chi-chuen	Dr CHENG Chung-tai
(2 members)	

12. The Chairman declared that the project was endorsed by the Subcommittee.

468RO — Improvement of Lam Wah Street Playground and adjacent area

13. The Chairman then put 468RO to vote. The project was voted on and endorsed.

14. The Chairman consulted members about whether PWSC(2019-20)9 would require separate voting at the relevant meeting of the Finance Committee ("FC"). Mr CHAN Chi-chuen requested that 171CD — Revitalization of Tsui Ping River be taken out for separate voting at the relevant FC meeting.

Head 704 — Drainage

PWSC(2019-20)11	**354DS**	**Outlying Islands sewerage, stage 2 — upgrading of Cheung Chau and Tai O sewage collection, treatment and disposal facilities**
	389DS	**Upgrading of West Kowloon and Tsuen Wan sewerage — phase 2**
	391DS	**West Kowloon and Tsuen Wan village sewerage**
	214DS	**Tseung Kwan O sewerage for villages**
	414DS	**Rehabilitation of underground sewers**
	172CD	**Rehabilitation of underground stormwater drains**

15. The Chairman advised that the proposal, i.e. PWSC(2019-20)11, sought to upgrade part of 354DS, 389DS, part of 391DS, 214DS, part of 414DS and part of 172CD to Category A at the respective estimated costs of $2,606.9 million, $2,285.5 million, $104.1 million, $289.5 million, $306.1 million and $515.1 million in MOD prices for carrying out sewerage projects on Cheung Chau, in West Kowloon, Tsuen Wan and Tseung Kwan O, and rehabilitating the ageing underground sewers and stormwater drains in the districts of Tsuen Wan, Kwai Tsing, Sham Shui Po, Yau Tsim Mong, Kowloon City and Wong Tai Sin. The Government had consulted the Panel on Environmental Affairs regarding 354DS, 389DS, 391DS and 214DS on 25 March 2019, and regarding 414DS on 29 April 2019. It had also consulted the Panel on Development regarding 172CD on 30 April 2019. Panel members had no objection to the submission of the six funding proposals to the Subcommittee for consideration. A gist of the two Panels' discussion was tabled at the meeting.

354DS — Outlying Islands sewerage, stage 2 — upgrading of Cheung Chau and Tai O sewage collection, treatment and disposal facilities

16. Dr CHENG Chung-tai noted that under the current funding proposal, the treatment capacity of Cheung Chau Sewage Treatment Works ("STW") would be increased to a level capable of serving a projected population of 38 200. In this connection, Dr CHENG enquired whether the upgrading proposal was drawn up based on the Administration's projection of Cheung Chau's future population growth. Moreover, Dr CHENG enquired whether the proposed project included expanding the coverage of the public sewerage system on Cheung Chau to the unsewered areas. As the insufficient capacity of the existing sewage treatment facilities on Cheung Chau had caused environmental hygiene problems which aroused concerns among residents, Dr CHENG urged the Administration to step up communication with members of the District Council concerned and commence the upgrading works as soon as possible.

17. Mr AU Nok-hin enquired how the Administration came up with the projection that Cheung Chau's population would increase to about 38 200, and whether it was an accurate projection. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen enquired by what time the population on Cheung Chau would reach the projected level of 38 200. As the Administration had indicated that the Cheung Chau STW was currently capable of serving 65% of Cheung Chau's existing population of 22 000 with access to public sewerage network, Mr CHAN sought explanation as to whether the insufficient capacity of the existing sewage treatment facilities on Cheung Chau was a result of insufficient treatment capacity of the Cheung Chau STW or limited coverage of the public sewerage system.

18. DDS replied that the proposed project was aimed at coping with population growth and the gradual expansion of village sewerage network to other unsewered areas of Cheung Chau in future by first increasing the treatment capacity of the Cheung Chau STW from the present level of 4 000 cubic metres ("m^3") per day to 9 800 m^3 per day in order to serve Cheung Chau's projected population of about 38 200 the maximum by 2041. The population projection was made according to the Territorial Population and Employment Data Matrix compiled by the Planning Department, and had taken into account the population growth and number of visitors on the island. Furthermore, regarding the gradual expansion of village sewerage network to other unsewered areas of Cheung Chau, which included the provision of sewerage system for 10 areas (involving a population of about 7 000) without coverage of sewerage network, funding would be sought for works implementation of the remainder of 354DS after completion of the design and preparatory work.

19. Mr Holden CHOW urged the Administration to expeditiously commence the expansion works of the public sewerage system on Cheung Chau. He enquired about the estimated timeframe for implementation of the project concerned, and whether the Administration had conducted technical assessment to ensure that the expanded public sewerage system could be connected to the upgraded Cheung Chau STW in future.

20. DDS responded that the existing public sewerage system of Cheung Chau had already been connected to the Cheung Chau STW and Pak She Sewage Pumping Station ("SPS"). Future connection with the upgraded STW and SPS could be made by simply constructing sewers in the currently unsewered areas to allow access to the public sewerage network. The implementation schedule of the expansion works of the public sewerage system would depend on the progress of the design and preparation work (e.g. land acquisition) and a specific timetable could not be provided at this stage.

21. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen was dissatisfied that the Administration did not concurrently implement works to upgrade the treatment capacity of the Cheung Chau STW and expand the public sewerage system concerned. He sought explanation for the reasons behind.

22. DDS explained that for the sake of implementing the expansion works of Cheung Chau's public sewerage system, the Administration would discuss with local residents the design of the sewerage system as soon as possible. However, as such project might involve construction of sewers on private land, it took time for the Administration to draw up an alignment proposal which was acceptable to all parties and resolve the objections received in respect of the project after gazettal.

23. Given that the facilities of the Sai Kung STW were damaged during the passage of super typhoon Mangkhut in 2018, Dr CHENG Chung-tai enquired whether the proposed project included works to enhance the resilience of the Cheung Chau STW against strong wind.

24. DDS replied that the Cheung Chau STW was located on the western side of Cheung Chau. When typhoons approached from the southeast, the hills on the island would serve as a natural barrier reducing damages to the facilities of the Cheung Chau STW. As a result, the Cheung Chau STW sustained no damage during the passage of super typhoon Mangkhut.

25. Mr CHU Hoi-dick was concerned that it often involved a long process before the projects for construction of public sewerage system could be

implemented in various rural areas (such as Kam Tin and Pat Heung) in Hong Kong. In this connection, Mr CHU enquired about the time required for the Government to carry out internal discussion about the proposed project and the difficulties encountered in preparing for the project. Dr CHENG Chung-tai was also concerned that it took more than 10 years for the Administration to put forward this proposal to upgrade the proposed expansion works of the Cheung Chau STW to Category A. Mr LEUNG Che-cheung suggested that the Administration should consider simplifying the land resumption procedures in order to expedite the progress of providing public sewerage system in rural areas.

26. DDS pointed out that the existing treatment capacity of the Cheung Chau STW was sufficient to satisfy the present demand, and the proposed project was aimed at coping with the projected increase in sewage flow on Cheung Chau in future. In addition, the public sewerage system of Hong Kong had reached over 93% of the population at present. The Administration aimed to further expand the coverage of the system. However, the Administration had to take into account, at the same time, factors such as the cost effectiveness of providing sewers in remote rural areas, project feasibility, demand of the affected residents and the time required for completing the statutory procedures (such as resolving the objections received in respect of the projects after gazettal). A case in point was that among the six construction projects of public sewerage system in rural areas to be taken forward according to DSD's plan, four had their works implementation postponed as objections were received after gazettal. DDS also said that he would relay members' suggestion about simplifying the land resumption procedures to the Lands Department.

389DS — Upgrading of West Kowloon and Tsuen Wan sewerage — phase 2 and 391DS — West Kowloon and Tsuen Wan village sewerage

27. Dr Priscilla LEUNG expressed support for the proposed projects. She was concerned that foul odours were still emitted from sewers and stormwater drains in West Kowloon as well as the area near the ferry pier on the Tsuen Wan waterfront from time to time. Dr LEUNG enquired how the proposed projects would improve the odour problem in the two areas, and whether the Administration would further implement other projects to get rid of the problem.

28. DDS said that the Administration had been implementing sewerage works in phases. FC's approval was obtained earlier for upgrading part of 389DS to Category A as 418DS for the construction of eight dry weather flow interceptors ("DWFIs") in West Kowloon and Tsuen Wan and modification of 43 DWFIs in West Kowloon. The current funding proposal sought to

upgrade the related parts of 389DS and 391DS to Category A for the respective purposes of (a) upgrading the existing sewerage system in West Kowloon and Tsuen Wan to accommodate the projected increase in sewage flow and (b) constructing eight DWFIs in Tsuen Wan and Kwai Chung to handle sewage discharged from the unsewered villages in the districts.

29. Mr Jeremy TAM enquired how the construction of eight DWFIs in Tsuen Wan and Kwai Chung could reduce pollution at the coastal area of Tsuen Wan Bay and Rambler Channel; how the Administration monitored the water quality of the aforesaid areas and ensure that sewage would not flow into those waters via other channels; and whether the Administration had plans to provide additional DWFIs at other locations in the territory. He also enquired whether DSD would consider adopting smart technologies in the operation of DWFIs for adjustment of flow interception according to the volume of polluted flow in the stormwater drains.

30. DDS explained that most buildings in the eight villages and areas in Tsuen Wan and Kwai Chung had no access to public sewerage network at the moment. Sewage discharged from these areas would flow into the sea at the end via stormwater drains or natural rivers and cause pollution. However, it was not cost effective to provide public sewerage system at these widely scattered villages. The Administration therefore proposed construction of eight DWFIs at the downstream of these villages. DWFIs intercepted and diverted polluted dry weather flow from a stormwater drain/channel into the sewerage system during non-rainy days for transmission to STWs for treatment. Upon completion and commissioning, these DWFIs were expected to bring improvement to the water quality of Tsuen Wan Bay and Rambler Channel.

31. DDS further said that there were currently a total of 187 DWFIs in various districts across the territory. The Administration would consider constructing additional DWFIs at other suitable locations depending on sewage flow. In view of members' suggestions, DSD would consider exploring the feasibility of retrofitting DWFIs with smart features.

32. Mr CHAN Han-pan was concerned that the proposed projects could not commence in the fourth quarter of 2019 as scheduled and be completed in the fourth quarter of 2023 if FC had failed to approve the funding proposals in a timely manner. Mr CHAN enquired about the Administration's measures to expedite the project progress, and the rural areas in Tsuen Wan where DWFIs were not provided or access to public sewerage network was unavailable.

33. DDS replied that the timing for commencement of the proposed projects would hinge on when the funding proposals were approved by FC, but the Administration would explore ways to expedite the project progress.

214DS — Tseung Kwan O sewerage for villages

34. Mr Gary FAN enquired about the locations of the private agricultural land to be resumed under 214DS, and the types of the four structures that were affected by site clearance at Sun Tei Village and Au Tau. Mr FAN also sought details of the Administration's effort to resolve the objections received after gazettal of the proposed project under the Water Pollution Control (Sewerage) Regulation (Cap. 358AL), including whether the objections were received from the holders of the four structures mentioned above.

35. Mr CHU Hoi-dick pointed out that while the Administration would spend a long period of time resolving, one by one, the objections received after gazettal of sewerage works, it insisted on expediting the implementation of certain projects in the past, such as the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link and the Kwu Tung North and Fanling North New Development Areas ("NDAs"), despite a large number of objections received. He questioned why the Administration adopted different approaches in dealing with the objections received after gazettal of different types of projects.

36. DDS said that since the expansion works of public sewerage system in rural areas might involve acquisition of private land, it took time for the Administration to resolve the objections received and draw up an alignment proposal that was acceptable to all parties. He explained that if objections were received after gazettal of a sewerage project under the Water Pollution Control (Sewerage) Regulation (Cap. 358AL), the Administration would take into account the views of the objectors and consider the feasibility of revising the project design. In the event that the objectors agreed with the proposed revisions put forward by the Administration, they should withdraw their objections. However, if they still objected to the proposed revisions and their objections remained unresolved, the Administration would submit the cases to the Chief Executive in Council for decision. Regarding 214DS, the sites affected by land resumption and site clearance were mainly located at Sun Tei Village, Tseung Kwan O Village, Wo Tong Kong, Boon Kin Village, Mau Wu Tsai Village as well as Ming Oi New Village, and the four affected structures were temporary ones erected for storage purpose. The objections received by the Administration were unrelated to those four structures.

414DS — Rehabilitation of underground sewers and 172CD — Rehabilitation of underground stormwater drains

37. Mr AU Nok-hin was concerned whether the Administration would take more effective measures to resolve the nuisance to local community caused by the rehabilitation works of underground sewers and stormwater drains carried out in urban areas. Mr WU Chi-wai raised a similar concern. As the Administration had proposed implementing trial common utility enclosures ("CUEs") (i.e. ways of housing various underground utility services within single structures) in some NDAs, Mr WU urged the Administration to consider constructing CUEs in other places across the territory by implementing the proposed projects or other works, and coordinate the road excavation works carried out by various utility undertakings for installation and maintenance of their own utility services, so as to optimize the use of underground space and reduce the impact on road traffic.

38. DDS responded that in order to reduce the impact of the rehabilitation works of underground sewers and stormwater drains on road traffic and nearby residents, DSD would carry out prior investigation of the roads at the planning and design stages to ascertain the positions of the underground utility services concerned. During project implementation, DSD would employ a trenchless pipe rehabilitation method and open up an excavation pit at a particular place through which new pipe materials (e.g. glass fibre, polyester) were inserted into the existing pipeline to form a liner in the pipeline. The liner was then cured by such ways as ultraviolet light or steam until it hardened and rehabilitated the pipe concerned. In addition, road excavation promoters were required to obtain excavation permits from the Highways Department and coordinate with other promoters regarding their road excavation works prior to commencement.

39. DDS further said that if the proposed projects covered additional works concerning the construction of CUEs across the territory, the Administration would have to take forward various tasks, including a completely new design of the project, cost estimation, construction time projection and a study of whether Hong Kong had sufficient underground space to accommodate CUEs. These tasks involved a much wider scope than the original ones of the proposed projects. Nonetheless, the Administration would consider constructing additional underground drainage pipes for certain roads with heavy traffic when implementing other new projects to facilitate the installation or maintenance of the facilities in question under those busy roads in future.

40. Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) supplemented that the Administration was actively considering the construction of common utility trenches in NDAs in order to alleviate the problem of occupying road space when implementing excavation works. However, it would be difficult to realize the idea of common utility trenches in urban areas since there was already a crisscross of underground utility facilities.

Illegal discharge of pollutants and expedient connections

41. Mr CHU Hoi-dick was concerned about the serious problem of illegal discharge of livestock waste into nearby rivers by livestock farms in Yuen Long, which had polluted the environment and caused nuisances to nearby residents. However, he opined that the current measures taken by the Environmental Protection Department ("EPD") (including the provision of financial assistance for farms to set up livestock waste treatment facilities and law enforcement actions against illegal discharge) did not help resolve the problem. Mr CHU enquired whether farms could use the public sewerage system to discharge livestock waste in future when the system was expanded to cover the rural areas in which these farms were situated, and whether EPD would introduce new measures to address the problem of illegal discharge by livestock farms.

42. Assistant Director of Environmental Protection (Water Policy) replied that EPD was working with the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department to encourage the industry to exercise self-discipline and promote their awareness of environmental protection through education and publicity efforts. Operators of livestock farms were also encouraged to improve the hygiene conditions of their farms and minimize the nuisances they caused to the environment. On the premise of not affecting the village sewerage programme, the Administration would also consider Mr CHU's suggestions with a view to minimizing the pollution caused by discharge from the farms in particular areas.

43. Mr WU Chi-wai was dissatisfied with the extended time required by the Administration to handle complaints relating to expedient connections ("ECs") of sewers to stormwater drains. He enquired about the methods currently employed by DSD to check for ECs; whether DSD had considered adopting alternative new technologies (e.g. provision of optical fibres or installation of sensors at the outlets of pipelines for monitoring of polluted flow) to expedite the progress of checking; and whether a performance pledge had been drawn up for addressing the problem of ECs. The Chairman suggested that DSD should strengthen inspections at black spots of ECs.

44. DDS replied that apart from routine checks and strengthened inspections carried out at least once every six months at the relevant black spots subject to complaints, DSD would also make investigation upon receipt of complaints relating to ECs of sewers to stormwater drains. Meanwhile, DSD would carry out close-circuit television surveys of all underground pipelines in Hong Kong once every five years in order to inspect the internal structural conditions of the pipelines. DSD would take this opportunity to identify ECs by checking if polluted flow was found at the outlets of drains and whether the relevant pipelines were shown in the drainage plans.

45. DDS also pointed out that visual inspection for polluted flow from the outlets of drains was the most straightforward method currently employed to check for ECs. Regarding the adoption of new technologies, given that the underground sewerage and drainage pipes had a total length of about 4 000 kilometres, provision of optical fibres to cover the whole network would be very expensive. As for the installation of sensors at the outlets of drains for checking polluted flow, it involved highly complicated operations since different parameters would have to be set in respect of water quality standards. That said, DSD would consider exploring the possibility of introducing suitable new technologies for pipeline inspection.

Voting on PWSC(2019-20)11

46. There being no further questions on this item from members, the Chairman put PWSC(2019-20)11 to vote.

47. The item was voted on and endorsed. The Chairman consulted members on whether the item would require separate voting at the relevant FC meeting. Ms Tanya CHAN requested that the item (i.e. PWSC(2019-20)11) be voted on separately at the relevant FC meeting.

Head 703 – Building		
PWSC(2019-20)14	**24NB**	**Provision of columbarium, Garden of Remembrance and related works at On Hing Lane, Shek Mun, Sha Tin**
	28NB	**Provision of columbarium and Garden of Remembrance at Sandy Ridge Cemetery (Phase 1 development)**
Head 705 – Civil		
	193TB	**Construction of subway in support of the provision of columbarium at On Hing Lane, Shek Mun, Sha Tin**

48. The Chairman advised that the proposal, i.e. PWSC(2019-20)14, sought to upgrade 24NB, 28NB and 193TB to Category A at estimated costs of $859.5 million, $1,240.5 million and $227.4 million in MOD prices respectively to provide columbaria in Shek Mun, Sha Tin and Sandy Ridge Cemetery, and construct a pedestrian subway underneath and across Tate's Cairn Highway to support the provision of the columbarium in Shek Mun. The Government had consulted the Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene on the proposed projects on 16 April 2019. Members of the Panel generally supported the submission of the funding proposal to the Subcommittee for consideration. A gist of the Panel's discussion was tabled at the meeting.

24NB — Provision of columbarium, Garden of Remembrance and related works at On Hing Lane, Shek Mun, Sha Tin

49. Mr CHU Hoi-dick commended the high quality design of the proposed columbaria in Shek Mun and Sandy Ridge Cemetery. He pointed out that the Shek Mun columbarium would be conveniently located near the MTR Shek Mun Station, but the Administration only proposed to construct a three-storey columbarium block (plus a rooftop) and provide about 40 000 niches. Mr CHU enquired whether the Administration had reserved space on the proposed site for future expansion of the columbarium or it would identify other places in Sha Tin for constructing new columbaria to address the public's demand for niches.

50. Deputy Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Environmental Hygiene) ("DD(EH)/FEHD") advised that the Administration formulated the present Shek Mun columbarium project plan after discussing with the Sha Tin District Council ("STDC"). The relevant traffic impact assessment ("TIA") and local consultation with residents were also conducted on the premise that about 40 000 niches would be provided in the columbarium. Nevertheless, the Administration would keep an open mind and maintain liaison with STDC on whether to expand the Shek Mun columbarium in-situ or on a nearby site, or identify other places in Sha Tin for constructing new columbaria in future. The Administration would consult STDC on any proposal to provide additional niches in the district in future.

28NB — Provision of columbarium and Garden of Remembrance at Sandy Ridge Cemetery (Phase 1 development)

51. Mr CHU Hoi-dick pointed out that the Sandy Ridge Cemetery columbarium project would eventually provide about 200 000 niches, which was far more than the number of niches to be provided under the Shek Mun

columbarium project, and would probably have significant impact on the local traffic. He enquired why the North District Council agreed to the development project.

52. DD(EH)/FEHD responded that the Administration had conducted TIAs and consulted the local district councils in respect of the columbarium projects in Shek Mun and Sandy Ridge Cemetery. Given the different background and situation of each columbarium project, it was not desirable to simply compare the numbers of niches of different columbarium projects.

53. Mr AU Nok-hin enquired whether members of the public going to the Sandy Ridge Cemetery columbarium would travel via Man Kam To Road and Sha Ling Road in future; if so, what were the transport arrangements for travelling to and from the columbarium during the Ching Ming and Chung Yeung festive periods; and whether it would be possible for members of the public to walk from the MTR Lo Wu Station to the columbarium; if so, how long it would take. Mr AU also enquired about the projected traffic flow of private cars accessing the columbarium.

54. DD(EH)/FEHD responded that, in drawing up the project details of the Sandy Ridge Cemetery columbarium, it was the Administration's plan to provide shuttle bus services during the two grave sweeping seasons, including special bus services running from the MTR Fanling Station to the columbarium via Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point Connecting Road and Lin Ma Hang Road. The journey time concerned would be around 20 minutes. The Administration would also arrange shuttle bus services for the columbarium concerned at the MTR Kwu Tung Station and other transport facilities in future upon completion of these facilities. Besides, even though it would be possible for members of the public to walk from the MTR Lo Wu Station to the abovementioned columbarium, given the required walking time of at least 50 minutes and the level difference of 40 metres between the two places, this would not be a main route for accessing the columbarium by members of the public.

55. DD(EH)/FEHD further advised that, as in the case of other columbaria, access of private cars and taxis to the Sandy Ridge Cemetery columbarium would be restricted as appropriate during the Ching Ming and Chung Yeung festive periods. Passengers of private cars and taxis might have to alight at Man Kam To Road and walk to the columbarium.

193TB — Construction of subway in support of the provision of columbarium at On Hing Lane, Shek Mun, Sha Tin

56. Given the large number of vehicles, including heavy duty vehicles, using Tate's Cairn Highway, Mr Alvin YEUNG was concerned whether the Administration had assessed the impact on Tate's Cairn Highway brought about by the construction of a pedestrian subway underneath and across Tate's Cairn Highway, and what measures the engineering team would adopt to support the proposed pedestrian subway in the course of the works.

57. Deputy Head of Civil Engineering Office (Port and Land), Civil Engineering and Development Department ("DHCEO(P&L)/CEDD") advised that the construction of the proposed pedestrian subway would not affect the road traffic on Tate's Cairn Highway. In the course of the works, the engineering team would only carry out noise barrier modification works in certain areas on the hard shoulder of Tate's Cairn Highway without closing any traffic lane. The team would adopt trenchless construction method and erect shorings within the works areas for temporary support. The Administration would also closely monitor whether unusual settlement was found on Tate's Cairn Highway in the course of the works and carry out grouting works, if necessary, to strengthen the road surface.

58. Mr Alvin YEUNG enquired about the existing settlement limits set by the Administration for project works, whether the project works concerned would be subject to suspension if the settlement readings exceeded the pre-set limits, and whether the limits would be relaxed under certain special circumstances. DHCEO(P&L)/CEDD replied that there were three triggering levels for monitoring settlement, namely the alert, alarm and action levels (the respective limits of the three levels were 13 mm, 20 mm and 25 mm). These settlement limits generally served as the basis for monitoring the construction of pedestrian subways. For the time being, there was no reason for relaxing the settlement limits, which would depend on the actual settlement causes, the relevant construction and strengthening methods.

59. The Chairman advised that the Subcommittee would continue to discuss this item at the next meeting. The meeting ended at 10:28 am.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
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