

**立法會**  
***Legislative Council***

LC Paper No. CB(1)1354/20-21  
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by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/DEV

**Panel on Development**

**Minutes of meeting**  
**held on Tuesday, 25 May 2021, at 2:30 pm**  
**in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex**

**Members present** : Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, SBS, MH, JP (Chairman)  
Hon LAU Kwok-fan, MH (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP  
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, SBS, JP  
Hon CHAN Hak-kan, BBS, JP  
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP  
Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun, JP  
Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP  
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, SBS, JP  
Hon MA Fung-kwok, GBS, JP  
Hon CHAN Han-pan, BBS, JP  
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, SBS, MH, JP  
Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen, BBS, JP  
Hon Martin LIAO Cheung-kong, GBS, JP  
Hon Holden CHOW Ho-ding  
Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing, MH  
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-kwan, JP  
Hon Kenneth LAU Ip-keung, BBS, MH, JP  
Dr Hon CHENG Chung-tai  
Hon Vincent CHENG Wing-shun, MH, JP  
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS, JP

**Members absent** : Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP  
Dr Hon Junius HO Kwan-yiu, JP

**Public officers  
attending**

**: Agenda item III**

Ms Angela LEE Chung-yan, JP  
Deputy Secretary (Works)<sup>1</sup>  
Development Bureau

Mr Robin LEE Hong-nin  
Head of Greening, Landscape and Tree Management  
Section  
Development Bureau

Ms Vina WONG  
Head of Greening and Landscape Office  
Development Bureau

Ms Josephine YANG Ka-yee  
Acting Head of Tree Management Office  
Development Bureau

**Agenda item IV**

Mr Vic YAU, JP  
Acting Permanent Secretary for Development (Planning  
& Lands)

Mr Jackie LIU  
Principal Assistant Secretary (Planning & Lands)<sup>7</sup>  
Development Bureau

Ms German CHEUNG  
Assistant Secretary (Planning)<sup>8</sup>  
Development Bureau

Ms Angela CHAN  
Assistant Director (Specialist 2)  
Lands Department

**Agenda item V**

Mr Tony HO Ying-kit  
Principal Assistant Secretary (Works)<sup>4</sup>  
Development Bureau

Mr PANG Yiu-hung, JP  
Director of Electrical & Mechanical Services

Mr Richard CHAN Chi-wai, JP  
Assistant Director/3  
Electrical and Mechanical Services Department

**Clerk in attendance** : Ms Connie HO  
Chief Council Secretary (1)2

**Staff in attendance** : Mr Raymond CHOW  
Senior Council Secretary (1)10

Mr Keith WONG  
Senior Council Secretary (1)2

Ms Christina SHIU  
Legislative Assistant (1)2

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Action

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

Members noted that no information paper had been issued since the last meeting on 10 May 2021.

**II Items for discussion at the next meeting**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)909/20-21(01) — List of outstanding items for discussion

LC Paper No. CB(1)909/20-21(02) — List of follow-up actions)

2. Members agreed that the next regular meeting would be scheduled for Tuesday, 22 June 2021, from 2:30 pm to 4:30 pm to discuss the following items proposed by the Administration:

- (a) Work of the Urban Renewal Authority;
- (b) Progress report on the implementation of the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund; and

- (c) Progress report on the development of the Common Spatial Data Infrastructure.

*(Post-meeting note: The agenda for the meeting on 22 June 2021 was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)949/20-21 on 31 May 2021.)*

Visit to New Territories North

3. The Chairman informed members that a site visit to New Territories North ("NTN") arranged by the Administration would be held on Tuesday, 1 June 2021 for the Panel to enable members to better understand the current situation of NTN. Non-Panel Members had also been invited to join the visit. Participating Members would be informed of the detailed arrangement of the visit upon confirmation by the Administration.

*(Post-meeting note: Having considered the preference of Members on the mode of the above visit, the Administration advised that an aerial inspection of NTN by taking helicopters would be conducted. However, the original visit on 1 June 2021 and the rescheduled visit on 22 June 2021 could not be held as planned due to unstable weather. An on-ground inspection of NTN by coach was subsequently arranged by the Administration on Tuesday, 24 August 2021. The Chairman and the Deputy Chairman of the Panel, 12 Panel members and 2 non-Panel Members participated in the visit.)*

**III Urban forestry management work in Hong Kong**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)909/20-21(03) — Administration's paper on urban forestry management work in Hong Kong

LC Paper No. CB(1)909/20-21(04) — Paper on urban forestry management work in Hong Kong prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Background brief))

4. At the invitation of the Chairman, Deputy Secretary (Works)1, Development Bureau ("DS(W)1/DEVB") gave an introduction on the urban forestry management work in Hong Kong and the proposed regrading of two one-rank grade directorate posts of the Head of Greening, Landscape and Tree Management Section ("H/GLTMS") (D2) and the Head of Tree Management Office ("H/TMO") (D1) in the Greening, Landscape and

Tree Management Section ("GLTMS") under the Works Branch of the Development Bureau ("DEVB") to multi-disciplinary directorate posts. With the aid of a powerpoint presentation, H/GLTMS, DEVB then briefed members on details of the urban forestry management work and the staffing proposal.

*(Post-meeting note: A soft copy of the powerpoint presentation materials was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)947/20-21(01) by email on 25 May 2021.)*

#### Tree management approach and urban forestry initiatives

5. The Deputy Chairman was concerned that under the "integrated approach" for tree management adopted by the Administration, government departments were responsible for managing the trees in the facilities and land within their purview, hence resulting in a lack of coordination and shifting of responsibility among various government departments. He enquired whether the Administration had put in place any mechanism to ensure the compliance of tree management departments with the greening, landscape and tree management guidelines issued by GLTMS.

6. DS(W)1/DEVB advised that the Administration considered the "integrated approach" the most effective and flexible way of tree management. Given the wide distribution of trees in the territory and in order to enhance coordination among various tree management departments, GLTMS was established to coordinate and steer the tree management work, which included the publication of guidelines ranging from landscape planning to tree risk assessment for compliance by tree management departments. A dedicated inspection squad staffed with 12 officers had been set up under GLTMS to randomly check and audit the tree inspection reports completed by tree management departments. The inspection squad would also proactively inspect trees to ensure that the work carried out by tree management departments adhered to the Guidelines for Tree Risk Assessment and Management Arrangement promulgated by GLTMS. New public works projects were required to adopt the greening provision mandated by GLTMS, and the responsible departments had to apply for exemption from GLTMS if the relevant requirement could not be met.

7. Dr Priscilla LEUNG and Mr LEUNG Che-cheung welcomed the applications of various technologies in tree management. Expressing support for promoting proper tree care through public education and promotion campaigns, Mr LEUNG Che-cheung suggested that the Administration should strengthen cooperation with stakeholders in the local communities (e.g. the District Councils and Area Committees) in this regard.

8. DS(W)1/DEVB assured members that the Administration would engage stakeholders in the local communities, such as property management companies and schools, in respect of public education and promotion activities on tree care. The Community Involvement Committee on Greening had been set up to enhance the work of GLTMS on this front and more related activities were expected to be launched this year with the easing of the pandemic.

9. Mr LEUNG Che-cheung relayed the concerns of contractors bidding for the Government's horticulture service contracts that the requirement of having a local nursery of not less than 100 000 square feet for keeping tree stocks in order for a contractor to become eligible for taking up such contracts was too stringent to meet. They suggested that the relevant requirement be relaxed to allow the contractors to keep tree seedlings in the Mainland. DS(W)1/DEVB said that DEVB had been working closely with the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department ("AFCD") to improve the supply of tree seedlings. The Administration undertook to follow up on the above view conveyed by Mr LEUNG.

#### Application of technologies in tree management

10. Expressing welcome for the launch of a three-year study programme in the third quarter of 2021 to collect and analyze tree movement data by installing tilt sensors on trees, the Chairman enquired if the Administration would take immediate action on those tilting trees identified during the study. He also enquired about the functions of the display of Quick Response ("QR")-coded tree labels commenced in March 2021, including whether the public could learn about the species and growing conditions of the trees, or report problematic trees to tree management departments by scanning the QR codes on the tree labels.

11. DS(W)1/DEVB advised that as the research team intended to collect more tree movement data under different wind speeds and typhoon intensity scenarios in different years, the study would take three years to complete. Prior to the completion of the study, the Administration would take prompt action if any irregularities were identified by tilt sensors or during the risk assessment conducted by tree management departments. More QR-coded labels could be put on trees in areas with high pedestrian flows and those in the New Development Areas.

#### Implementation of Greening Master Plans

12. The Chairman welcomed the implementation of the Greening Master Plans ("GMPs") with the planting of theme trees specific to respective districts,

and suggested the Administration implement greening projects featuring Bauhinia, the flower emblem of Hong Kong.

13. DS(W)1/DEVB said that the Bauhinia Garden had been set up at the Kowloon Tsai Park. Given the brittle wood structure of Bauhinia, careful consideration should be given to their planting locations. The Administration would continue to explore suitable locations for thematic planting.

Proposed regrading of two one-rank grade directorate posts to multi-disciplinary directorate posts

14. While indicating support for the staffing proposal, the Chairman expressed disappointment over the inability of the Administration to select suitable candidates for the posts of H/GLTMS and H/TMO over the past 10 years and its impact on the implementation of urban forestry initiatives. The Deputy Chairman raised no objection to the staffing proposal.

15. Dr Priscilla LEUNG enquired about the reasons for the high turnover rate of H/GLTMS and H/TMO, and whether the proposed appointment of civil servants to the posts instead of professionals outside the civil service could solve the problem of high turnover. Expressing concern that the proposed arrangement might give rise to the problem of non-professionals leading professionals, Dr LEUNG enquired whether the posts would be taken up by civil servants with the required expertise and not by generalists.

16. Referring to the creation of a non-civil service post of the Head of Invigorating Island South Office under the "Invigorating Island South" initiative with a view to bringing in new ideas for the project, Ms Alice MAK enquired whether the Administration had relevant policy to determine under what circumstances should certain senior government posts be filled by civil servants or candidates outside the civil service. She was concerned that the implementation of new ideas on tree preservation might be hampered if the posts of H/GLTMS and H/TMO were taken up by civil servants, and enquired whether the proposed arrangement would be instrumental to promoting the professionalization of tree management work within the Government.

17. DS(W)1/DEVB replied that the Administration had limited experience in taking forward the greening, landscape and tree management initiatives when GLTMS was established in 2010. Therefore, open recruitment exercises had been conducted for the posts of H/GLTMS and H/TMO in order to tap talents outside the Government. While both posts were filled by candidates outside the civil service for some time, the high turnover rate of these posts was not desirable to the smooth operation of GLTMS and the Tree Management Office ("TMO").

18. DS(W)1/DEVB further explained that as about 90% of the civil servants responsible for tree management had obtained the relevant professional qualifications over the past 10 years, there was a sufficient pool of experienced civil servants to take up the two posts. Given that the duties of H/GLTMS and H/TMO involved overseeing the work of GLTMS and TMO as well as coordinating with other government departments, these two posts were pitched at the directorate level and post holders concerned should have the capability of driving tree management departments to follow the Government's overall greening policy. There were occasions that the two posts were filled by civil servants on a temporary basis, and experience showed that civil servants had an edge in coordinating the work of and commanding support from government departments. Upon the approval of the staffing proposal by the Legislative Council, the relevant Heads of Grades would be asked to recommend candidates with relevant skill set and work experience for selection by DEVB to fill the posts of H/GLTMS and H/TMO. The post holders would be deployed back to their respective departments following the cessation of their tour, and they could then pass on the knowledge and experience acquired during their service in GLTMS to other departmental staff members to better implement various greening, landscape and tree management initiatives.

19. DS(W)1/DEVB further advised that tree management departments were open minded to new ideas in respect of tree preservation, including the adoption of new technologies. For instance, AFCD had been conducting a pilot scheme on detecting illegal felling of incense trees by infrared sensor camera traps, and was also exploring with relevant organizations the possibility of deploying other new technologies for tree preservation. In respect of promoting the professionalization of tree management work, the Registration Scheme for Tree Management Personnel was launched in December 2020 to uplift the standards of in-service practitioners.

20. Expressing concern over the lack of coordination on tree management among various government departments under the "integrated approach" and that the mere issuance of guidelines was insufficient to ensure the compliance of tree management departments in this regard, Dr CHENG Chung-tai considered that the Administration should formulate comprehensive legislation on tree management to prevent tree falling incidents and illegal felling of incense trees. In this connection, Dr CHENG enquired whether the duties of H/GLTMS and H/TMO would include work relating to the introduction of a tree ordinance.

21. DS(W)1/DEVB indicated that since its establishment, GLTMS had taken a holistic approach in the greening, landscape and tree management initiatives, which included embracing adequate space allocation for new planting, proper



selection of planting species, as well as quality landscape design and planting practices in the upstream, and proper vegetation maintenance in the downstream. Apart from undertaking tasks related to the above initiatives, H/GLTMS and H/TMO would also be responsible for issuing/setting relevant guidelines/standards at the policy level for tree management departments to follow, promoting the development of the arboriculture and horticulture industry, and uplifting the standards of in-service practitioners.

22. Mr Tony TSE said that he was a Member representing the landscape professionals and he had no objection to the staffing proposal in principle. Mr TSE noted that the two multi-disciplinary directorate posts of H/GLTMS and H/TMO were proposed to be filled by officers from any five grades of Engineer, Forestry Officer, Geotechnical Engineer, Landscape Architect ("LA") and Leisure Services Manager, and the post holders concerned should possess relevant recognized professional qualifications and experience. Given that engineering works covered a wide range of works and engineers might not possess relevant qualifications in urban forestry management, Mr TSE enquired about the relevant recognized professional qualifications that H/GLTMS and H/TMO should possess. As Chief LA (D1) was the highest rank in the LA grade and H/GLTMS was a D2 post, Mr TSE also enquired about the promotion ladder for the LA grade officers.

23. DS(W)1/DEVB replied that the Engineer grade officers were civil engineers who were responsible for overseeing the infrastructural development, including tree planting/transplanting works, and implementing GMPs, and the Engineer grade was one of the five grades in the Government involved in greening, landscape and tree management work. Moreover, the regrading proposal would offer the LA grade officers at the rank of Chief LA (D1), among candidates from the said five grades, the opportunity to take up the post of H/GLTMS (D2) in acting capacity.

*[At 2:45 pm, the Chairman said that he would "draw a line" for members' enquiries. He would allow members who had indicated their intention to speak to raise questions.]*

#### Submission of the staffing proposal to the Establishment Subcommittee

24. The Chairman concluded that members in general supported the Administration to submit the staffing proposal as detailed in the paper to the Establishment Subcommittee for its consideration.

**IV Progress report on funding scheme to support the use of vacant government sites by non-government organizations for the financial year 2020-2021**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)762/20-21(01) — Administration's paper on progress report on funding scheme to support the use of vacant government sites by non-government organizations for the financial year 2020-21

LC Paper No. CB(1)909/20-21(05) — Paper on the funding scheme to support the use of vacant government sites by non-government organizations prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Updated background brief))

25. At the invitation of the Chairman, Acting Permanent Secretary (Planning & Lands), Development Bureau ("PS(P&L)/DEVB(Atg)") gave an introduction on the implementation progress of the funding scheme to support the use of vacant government sites by non-government organizations ("NGOs") ("the Funding Scheme") in the financial year 2020-2021. With the aid of a powerpoint presentation, Principal Assistant Secretary (Planning & Lands)7, Development Bureau ("PAS(P&L)7/DEVB") further briefed members on the details of the implementation progress. Members noted that since the launch of the Funding Scheme in February 2019, DEVB had approved a total of 16 applications.

*(Post-meeting note: A soft copy of the powerpoint presentation materials was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)947/20-21(02) by email on 25 May 2021.)*

Implementation of the Funding Scheme and assistance provided to non-government organizations

26. Mr Tony TSE noted with concern that DEVB had only received 11 fresh applications under the Funding Scheme during the 2020-2021 financial year, and considered it a reflection of the slow progress in improving the utilization of vacant government sites. Mr Vincent CHENG suggested that the Administration should enhance the publicity of the Funding Scheme with a view to attracting more NGOs to launch community projects under the Scheme.

27. Assistant Director (Specialist 2), Lands Department responded that the Administration had been proactive in letting vacant government sites for meaningful uses by NGOs. Information about the vacant government sites would be published onto the "GeoInfo Map" website to invite tenancy applications by NGOs for community, institutional, or other non-profit-making uses on a short-term basis. At present, a total of 101 relevant short-term tenancy ("STT") applications were being processed by the Lands Department ("LD"). The 11 fresh applications referred to in the paper only included those applications seeking funding support from the Funding Scheme. PS(P&L)/DEVB(Atg) supplemented that the Administration noted members' views and would consider further stepping up publicity and promotional initiatives to enhance public awareness of the Funding Scheme.

28. Mr Vincent CHENG and Mr Wilson OR pointed out that some NGOs which intended to launch community projects under the Funding Scheme had encountered opposition from the local communities and eventually abandoned their projects. They urged the Administration to provide more assistance to NGOs in conducting local consultations before the launch of the projects and in handling opposition views, if any, from the local communities. Mr CHAN Hak-kan opined that the Administration should avoid creating disharmony in local communities while supporting NGOs in launching community projects under the Funding Scheme.

29. PS(P&L)/DEVB(Atg) agreed that support from the local communities was crucial to the success of launching community projects on vacant government sites. Under the Funding Scheme, the Administration had set up a dedicated team to support NGOs concerned to take forward the community projects, including seeking policy support from the relevant bureaux for the projects, and to assist them in liaising with the local communities to obtain support for their projects. The Administration was aware of the need to strike a balance between the views of the local communities and the project proponents during the consultation process.

30. Mr Wilson OR noted that if the proposed use of a vacant government site was not permitted under the relevant outline zoning plan, the NGO concerned was required to first obtain planning permission from the Town Planning Board ("TPB"). Mr OR enquired whether the subsidy under the Funding Scheme would cover the cost for NGOs to engage consultancy services for seeking planning permission from TPB. He was concerned that the additional costs incurred in the above procedure might discourage NGOs from taking forward the concerned community projects.

31. PAS(P&L)7/DEVB responded that the Funding Scheme was open to NGOs which had obtained in-principle approval of STT under the existing

mechanism for use of vacant government sites for community, institutional or other non-profit making purposes. As securing the planning permission from TPB was a prerequisite for obtaining the approval for STT, the NGOs concerned had to bear the relevant costs, including consultancy fees incurred for the preparation of a planning application.

#### Monitoring of approved projects

32. The Deputy Chairman, Mr Michael TIEN and Mr Tony TSE requested the Administration to explain why the approved amount of financial subsidy for some projects were higher than the initial amount of funding applied for by the NGOs concerned.

33. PAS(P&L)/DEVB explained that NGO-applicants were usually unable to provide an accurate estimate on the project cost when submitting the applications at the initial stage as the design of the temporary structures to be built on the vacant government sites concerned had yet to be finalized. There were also cases where detailed quantity surveying assessments had not yet been conducted for the projects concerned as the NGO-applicants were not well-versed or experienced in project planning and works management. In processing an application, DEVB would discuss and clarify essential details of the proposed works and the cost estimates with NGO-applicants with reference to the information provided in their application forms. Upon verification, availability of the detailed design and quantity surveying assessment, the inter-departmental Assessment Committee chaired by DEVB would consider and decide on the funding ceiling approved for individual projects. As such, the approved funding ceiling could be different from or higher than the funding amount originally applied for by the NGOs concerned.

34. The Deputy Chairman and Mr Wilson OR were concerned whether the Administration had put in place any mechanism to monitor the use of funding by NGOs, and whether NGOs were required to engage contractors through open tender exercises to carry out the relevant construction works.

35. PS(P&L)/DEVB(Atg) responded that under the Funding Scheme, successful applicants were required to engage contractors through open tender exercises to carry out construction works. The Administration would disburse the approved grant to the NGOs concerned by installments, normally on a reimbursement basis, subject to the fulfillment of project milestones in the funding agreement and the verification of certified invoices or bills. The NGOs concerned were required to keep a proper set of books and records for their projects, and to submit regular progress and financial reports against the milestones agreed in the funding agreements before project completion. They were also required to submit audited statements certified by independent

auditors upon project completion. The Administration might suspend disbursement of funding or cease a project in case of unsatisfactory project progress or contravention of the scheme guidelines.

36. Mr Wilson OR was also concerned whether the Administration would monitor the operation of the community projects launched under the Funding Scheme to ensure that the content of the projects would not deviate from the land uses as stated in the applications. PS(P&L)/DEVB(Atg) said that the Administration would maintain communication with NGOs and observe whether the community projects concerned were operated as stated in the applications.

#### Implementation progress of approved projects

37. Mr Kenneth LAU expressed support for the Funding Scheme as it enabled NGOs to launch meaningful projects, such as provision of community and elderly services, on vacant government sites in some rural villages of the New Territories. Pointing out that two projects related to animal adoption services would be set up in Kam Tin under the Funding Scheme, Mr LAU enquired whether the Assessment Committee of the Funding Scheme would, apart from conducting assessments on the technical aspects of the projects, look into the land uses of the proposed projects so as to avoid launching two or more community projects of the same nature in one district.

38. PS(P&L)/DEVB(Atg) responded that when assessing applications, the Assessment Committee would consider the nature of the proposed projects and whether such projects were beneficial to the surrounding community. As regards the two projects related to animal service to be launched in Kam Tin, he explained that both projects had obtained policy support from the relevant bureau, which was a prerequisite for the approval of a STT application. He understood that the operation of the animal centres might generate noise, and advised that the NGOs concerned were required to mitigate the impact of the noise arising from the operation of the centres on their neighbourhood.

39. Mr Vincent CHENG noted that the construction works of the animal adoption service to be provided by the House of Joy and Mercy in Kam Tin had commenced in the third quarter of 2020 and would be completed by second quarter of 2021. However, the term of STT of the site concerned would soon end by 3 August 2021. He enquired whether the term of STT of the site could be extended automatically by the Administration upon its expiry, and whether there was a delay by the Administration in processing the funding application. PS(P&L)/DEVB(Atg) explained that the construction works of the project had taken a longer time due to the disruption caused by COVID-19. Upon expiry of the current STT term, the tenancy could be renewed on a quarterly basis.

40. Mr CHAN Hak-kan noted that the St. James' Settlement had been approved to set up an open lawn space with ancillary facilities at the vacant Quarry Bay harbourfront site. Pointing out that such facilities were essential to the community and should be provided by the Government, Mr CHAN doubted why the provision of the relevant facilities were taken up by an NGO under the Funding Scheme, and whether such an arrangement would be in conflict with the Government's role.

41. PAS(P&L)7/DEVB explained that while the Leisure and Cultural Services Department was responsible for providing and managing leisure facilities in the community, the NGO concerned had a vision to further develop the vacant Quarry Bay harbourfront site area into an open lawn space with a design blending with the harbourfront environment. The Administration did not consider that the proposed project would be inconsistent with the existing policy.

#### Applications in relation to transitional housing

42. The Deputy Chairman noted that the Transport and Housing Bureau ("THB") had set up the "Funding Scheme to Support Transitional Housing Projects by Non-government Organizations" ("the Transitional Housing Scheme"), and funding applications in relation to transitional housing projects thereafter would be processed under the Transitional Housing Scheme. As three projects related to the provision of transitional housing had been approved earlier on under the Funding Scheme, the Deputy Chairman enquired whether the said projects would be financed by the provision of the Transitional Housing Scheme instead.

43. PS(P&L)/DEVB(Atg) responded that the three projects related to the development of transitional housing were approved under the Funding Scheme before the implementation of the Transitional Housing Scheme. Given that the total amount of funding granted to those three projects under the Funding Scheme was limited, there was room for DEVB to continue subsidizing those three projects under the Funding Scheme.

44. Mr Michael TIEN opined that the Funding Scheme should continue subsidizing projects related to provision of transitional housing in order to make good use of vacant government sites and improve the utilization of these sites. He urged DEVB to compile a list of vacant government sites suitable for transitional housing development for THB's consideration. Mr Tony TSE also opined that with over 800 vacant government sites currently available, the Administration should make good use of such precious land resources in providing transitional housing.

45. PS(P&L)/DEVB(Atg) indicated that LD had provided information of relevant vacant government sites which might be considered for the development of transitional housing for THB's initial consideration. He supplemented that in considering whether a site was suitable for such development, THB and relevant NGOs had to assess whether there were sufficient infrastructural facilities (e.g. networks in terms of transportation, water supplies, sewerage) in the vicinity of the sites concerned. As such, the sites that would eventually be taken up by THB for development of transitional housing might be fewer than the number of sites provided by LD.

46. Mr CHAN Hak-kan opined that the Administration should make good use of vacant school premises sites for development of public housing. PS(P&L)/DEVB(Atg) responded that most of the vacant school premises sites suitable for high-density developments had already been so rezoned. He supplemented that vacant government sites open for STT applications were sites pending determination or implementation of long-term uses, and were not taken up by any government bureaux/departments for internal uses.

## **V Development of Government-Wide Internet-of-Things Network (GWIN) to enhance city management**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)909/20-21(06) — Administration's paper on development of Government-Wide Internet-of-Things Network to enhance city management)

47. At the invitation of the Chairman, Director of Electrical & Mechanical Services ("DEMS") gave an introduction on the development of the Government-Wide Internet-of-Things Network ("GWIN") by the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department ("EMSD") to enhance the delivery of public services and support various smart city initiatives. With the aid of a powerpoint presentation, Assistant Director/3, Electrical and Mechanical Services Department then briefed members on details of GWIN.

*(Post-meeting note: A soft copy of the powerpoint presentation materials was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)947/20-21(03) (Chinese version only) by email on 25 May 2021.)*

Extension of the Internet-of-Things network

48. The Chairman commended EMSD for its efforts made on the development of GWIN for exclusive use by government departments. Yet, to support smart city development and facilitate exchange of information between the Government and the public, the Chairman urged the Administration to extend GWIN to a territory-wide Internet-of-Things ("IoT") network.

49. Likewise, the Deputy Chairman welcomed the development of GWIN and called on the Administration to extend the coverage of GWIN and expedite its development. He enquired if the Administration had set a target/roadmap for bureaux/departments to apply GWIN in public services, and whether EMSD would extend the use of IoT technologies from government facilities to private facilities for remote monitoring of the safety of lifts and escalators. Mr CHAN Han-pan also urged the Administration to enable various bureaux/departments to apply GWIN in a coordinated manner. He enquired whether the GWIN system would be open for use by public utilities companies or private sector, such as extending the GWIN system for providing parking vacancy information in government facilities to cover information on vacant private parking spaces as well, or using GWIN for electricity/water supplies meter reading, with a view to boosting the coverage and usage of GWIN.

50. DEMS replied that EMSD acted as a facilitator to encourage other bureaux/departments to actively take forward the smart city initiatives by providing relevant technical support and infrastructure, thereby establishing a role model for private enterprises to follow. An example of these smart city initiatives was the development of the GWIN system which made use of the IoT sensors installed at the electrical and mechanical ("E&M") equipment under monitoring to communicate wirelessly with relevant gateways using the Long Range ("LoRa") technology. These gateways in turn transmit the data to the central server for further processing. At present, over 1 000 IoT sensors of different types had been installed across the territory. Upon successful trial of various GWIN pilot programmes, GWIN would be put into a wider use. Bureaux/departments were positive towards the development of GWIN and its application. For instance, EMSD was working with the Water Supplies Department to explore the feasibility of deploying the LoRa technology for water supplies meter reading in remote areas. EMSD was also collaborating with relevant government departments to conduct trials of installing the LoRa sensing devices in non-metered on-street parking spaces so as to provide real-time information on vacant parking spaces for motorists via the website/mobile application of HKeMobility. Moreover, EMSD would study if GWIN could be open for use by private sector, taking into account factors such as the impact of the applications developed by private sector on the carrying capacity and communication of GWIN.



51. DEMS further advised that EMSD had made use of different methods, including some award-winning ones, to monitor the safety of lifts and escalators in government facilities and encouraged the management companies/contractors in private sector to adopt those successful methods.

#### Use of different Internet-of-Things technologies

52. The Chairman pointed out that 5G-based IoT technology had an edge of high data transmission rate over the LoRa technology. In anticipation that the advantages of the LoRa devices (i.e. longer transmission range and lower cost) over 5G-based devices would fade away upon expansion in the coverage of 5G network and the use of the 5G technology in the future, the Chairman questioned whether 5G technology, instead of the LoRa technology, should be adopted for GWIN to facilitate the development of a territory-wide IoT network.

53. Mr Holden CHOW echoed the Chairman's views. He opined that while the LoRa technology was currently adopted for the GWIN system, the Administration should consider increasing the use of 5G technology in the system, taking into account the wider use of 5G technology and the lower cost of using 5G services in the future. Mr CHAN Han-pan welcomed the use of the LoRa technology in the GWIN system located in countryside or rural areas with weak mobile connection.

54. DEMS explained that EMSD would take into consideration the specific requirements of the concerned application scenarios, latest technological development, cost-effectiveness of various IoT technologies, etc. in selecting the most suitable technologies for use of the GWIN system. For example, 5G technology would be used if high data transmission rate (e.g. monitoring rapidly changing parameters) was required and the LoRa technology would be adopted in remote areas not covered by the mobile network.

55. The Chairman enquired about the arrangement of replacing the batteries of the battery-powered IoT sensors. DEMS said that due to high data transmission rate of 5G-based sensing devices and thus their high power consumption, such devices had to be connected to power supply, thereby requiring more time and incurring a higher cost should they be located in remote areas. In contrast, the low data transmission rate of the LoRa sensing devices enabled such devices to be powered by in-situ battery and the battery life was quite long (from one to five years), rendering the use of the LoRa technology in remote areas an option better than 5G technology.

Cost of the Government-Wide Internet-of-Things Network

56. Mr CHAN Han-pan enquired about the development and maintenance costs of GWIN, including whether the costs were covered by the Government's recurrent expenditure or by a separate funding to be sought from the Legislative Council.

57. DEMS replied that EMSD was tasked to provide quality E&M services to government departments. To further enhance its services, EMSD had made investment in the development of a pilot IoT network, entitled GWIN, by deploying the LoRa technology. GWIN was first built in Shatin in 2019 and extended to Kowloon East in 2020, with a cost of about \$3.5 million.

*[At 4:18 pm, the Chairman proposed to extend the meeting time until the last member who had requested to speak had spoken. Members raised no objection.]*

**VI Any other business**

58. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:39 pm.

Council Business Division 1  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
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