

# 立法會

## *Legislative Council*

LC Paper No. CB(4)620/20-21

(These minutes have been seen  
by the Administration)

Ref : CB4/PL/TP/1

### **Panel on Transport**

#### **Minutes of meeting**

**held on Friday, 20 November 2020, at 10:00 am  
in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex**

**Members present** : Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, SBS, JP (Chairman)  
Hon CHAN Han-pan, BBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP  
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 Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP  
Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS  
Hon YIU Si-wing, BBS  
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, SBS, MH, JP  
Hon POON Siu-ping, BBS, MH  
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, SBS, MH, JP  
Dr Hon Junius HO Kwan-yiu, JP  
Hon Holden CHOW Ho-ding  
Hon SHIU Ka-fai, JP  
Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing, MH  
Hon CHAN Chun-ying, JP  
Hon LUK Chung-hung, JP  
Hon LAU Kwok-fan, MH  
Hon Kenneth LAU Ip-keung, BBS, MH, JP  
Dr Hon CHENG Chung-tai  
Hon Vincent CHENG Wing-shun, MH, JP

**Members absent** : Hon Jimmy NG Wing-ka, BBS, JP  
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS, JP

**Public officers attending** : **Agenda item VI**

Mrs Sharon YIP LEE Hang-ye, JP  
Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing  
(Transport)1  
Transport and Housing Bureau

Miss Gillian LAM Yuk-ting  
Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport and  
Housing (Transport)5  
Transport and Housing Bureau

Mr LUK Wai-hung, JP  
Project Manager/Major Works  
Highways Department

Mr Anthony TSANG Kwok-leung  
Principal Project Coordinator/Universal Accessibility  
Highways Department

**Agenda item VII**

Mrs Sharon YIP LEE Hang-ye, JP  
Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing  
(Transport)1  
Transport and Housing Bureau

Miss Gillian LAM Yuk-ting  
Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport and  
Housing (Transport)5  
Transport and Housing Bureau

Mr Jimmy CHAN Pai-ming, JP  
Director of Highways  
Highways Department

Mr Chris WONG Kin-por  
Project Manager/Major Works (Special Duties)  
Highways Department

Mr Frankie CHOU Wing-ping  
Regional Highway Engineer/New Territories  
Highways Department

Mrs Joanna KWOK TAM Yuk-ying  
Principal Project Coordinator 1/Special Duties  
Highways Department

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

**Staff in attendance** : Mr Matthew LOO  
Assistant Secretary General 4

Miss Katherine CHAN  
Senior Council Secretary (4)3

Ms Jacqueline LAW  
Council Secretary (4)2

Miss Winnie CHENG  
Senior Legislative Assistant (4)1

Miss Emma CHEUNG  
Senior Legislative Assistant (4)3

Mr Griffin FUNG  
Legislative Assistant (4)7

Miss Mandy LAM  
Legislative Assistant (4)2

Mr Chris CHAN  
Clerical Assistant (4)2

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## **I. Election of the Deputy Chairman**

The Chairman presided over the election and called for nominations for the deputy chairmanship of the Panel on Transport ("the Panel"). Mr LAU Kwok-fan nominated Mr CHAN Han-pan and Mr SHIU Ka-fai seconded the nomination. Mr CHAN accepted the nomination. As there was no other nomination, the Chairman declared Mr CHAN elected as Deputy Chairman of the Panel for the 2020-2021 session.

## **II. Information paper(s) issued since the meeting on 19 June 2020**

- LC Paper No. CB(4)799/19-20(01) - Submission from Hong Kong Franchised Bus Employees General Union on the relaxation of eligibility requirements for commercial vehicle driving licences and extension of pre-service course to public bus drivers
- LC Paper No. CB(4)829/19-20(01) - Letter from the Administration providing financial information in regard to the Western Harbour Crossing
- LC Paper No. CB(4)7/20-21(01) - Letter from Hon CHAN Han-pan proposing the appointment of a subcommittee under the Panel on Transport to study matters relating to parking spaces and Park-and-Ride Scheme in Hong Kong
- LC Paper No. CB(4)47/20-21(01) - Information paper on the progress update of the construction of the Shatin to Central Link (as at 30 June 2020)
- LC Paper Nos. CB(4)50/19-20(01) and (02) - Letter from Hon HUI Chi-fung on his three Bills relating to bicycle-friendly policy and the Clerk's reply on behalf of the

Action

Panel Chairman

- LC Paper No. CB(4)53/20-21(01) - Letter from Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, the Panel Chairman, proposing the appointment of a subcommittee under the Panel on Transport to study and follow up on the difficulties encountered by the transport sector in procuring insurance and related issues
- LC Paper Nos. CB(4)70/20-21(01) and (02) - Letters from the Administration regarding the Net Revenue Statements of the Western Harbour Tunnel Company Limited and the Route 3 (Country Park Section) Company Limited
- LC Paper No. CB(4)96/20-21(01) - Referral from the Public Complaints Office of the Legislative Council Secretariat on issues relating to the use of electric mobility devices in Hong Kong
- LC Paper No. CB(4)127/20-21(01) - Joint letter from Dr KWOK Ka-ki, Mr Dennis KWOK Wing-hang, Mr Alvin YEUNG and Hon Jeremy TAM Man-ho requesting to hold a special meeting on matters relating to the issue of the Certificate of Particulars of Motor Vehicles

2. Members noted the above papers issued since the meeting held on 19 June 2020.

### **III. Items for discussion at the next meeting**

LC Paper No. CB(4)139/20-21(01) - List of outstanding items for discussion

LC Paper No. CB(4)139/20-21(02) - List of follow-up actions

3. Members noted that the following items would be discussed at the next regular meeting to be held on 18 December 2020:

- (a) Briefing by the Secretary for Transport and Housing on the Chief Executive's 2020 Policy Address;
- (b) 3023TP — Public vehicle park at Areas 4 and 30 (Site 2), Sheung Shui, 3024TP — Public vehicle park at Area 99, Tung Chung and B085TI — Public Transport Interchange at Tung Chung Area 99; and
- (c) Free-Flow Tolling System for government tolled tunnels and Tsing Sha Control Area.

4. To allow sufficient time for discussion, the Chairman proposed and members agreed that the meeting would be advanced to start at 10:00 am.

*(Post-meeting note: As the COVID-19 outbreak in Hong Kong had been getting more severe, the Chairman had directed that an informal meeting be conducted by videoconferencing on 18 December 2020 for the Panel to receive the "Briefing by the Secretary for Transport and Housing on the Chief Executive's 2020 Policy Address". The regular meeting originally scheduled for 18 December 2020 had been rescheduled to be held on 5 January 2021. Members were informed of the above meeting arrangements vide LC Paper Nos. CB(4)287/20-21 and CB(4)297/20-21 on 12 and 16 December 2020 respectively.)*

5. The Chairman supplemented that in line with past practice, he and the Deputy Chairman would meet with the Secretary for Transport and Housing to discuss the work plan of the Panel for the 2020-2021 session.

*(Post-meeting note: The work plan meeting was held on 3 December 2020.)*

**IV. Report on the circulation of the paper "Setting up of the Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways"**

LC Paper No. CB(4)16/20-21 - Paper on setting up of the Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat

6. The Chairman said that during the last meeting on 15 October 2020, no members signified disagreement to the proposal of the setting up of the Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways ("the Railways Subcommittee") under the Panel in the current legislative session. Subsequently, the paper setting out the proposed terms of reference and work plan of the Railways Subcommittee was circulated to members on 16 October 2020 vide LC Paper No. CB(4)16/20-21 for consideration and endorsement.

7. The Chairman reported that among the 31 members who responded to the circular, 30 members had indicated agreement to endorse the paper and one member had indicated objection. The Chairman explained that as a member had signified disapproval, the matter should be discussed at this meeting.

8. The Chairman invited members to express their views on the setting up of the Railways Subcommittee. Mr LAU Kwok-fan considered it appropriate to set up the Railways Subcommittee in view of the importance of railway matters which would affect the livelihood of people. Mr Paul TSE pointed out that the Railways Subcommittee had been set up under the Panel in every term since the Second Legislative Council to monitor issues relating to the planning and implementation of new railway projects as well as existing railway operation. Mr TSE proposed to set up a separate Panel to follow up on matters relating to railways in the future without having to go through the procedures to set up the Railways Subcommittee.

9. Mr Holden CHOW considered it necessary for the Railways Subcommittee to continue to monitor the implementation of Tung Chung Line Extension and Tuen Mun South Extension, as well as to monitor the planning progress of the remaining five railway projects as recommended in the Railway Development Strategy 2014 ("RDS-2014"). Sharing similar views, Mr Wilson OR and Mr LAU Kwok-fan reckoned that setting up of the Railways Subcommittee would facilitate members to follow up on the planning and implementation of new railway projects, in particular East Kowloon Line and Northern Link, under RDS-2014. Mr LUK Chung-hung was of the view that given the slow implementation progress of the new railway projects, setting up

Action

of the Railways Subcommittee was crucial to monitor the overall planning and financing of those projects.

10. Dr Priscilla LEUNG and Mr Wilson OR considered it important for the Railways Subcommittee to continue to follow up with the Administration and the MTR Corporation Limited ("MTRCL") on various matters relating to the service performance and maintenance works of existing railway lines, in particular the Kwun Tong Line.

Terms of reference of the Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways

11. The Deputy Chairman proposed that after the commissioning of certain new railway lines in recent years, the terms of reference of the Railways Subcommittee should be extended to cover matters relating to MTR fares, including fare adjustment, which had been a major public concern. Mr Wilson OR concurred. The Chairman considered it more appropriate for the Panel to follow up on matters relating to MTR fares from a more macro perspective. Members agreed.

12. Furthermore, the Deputy Chairman also suggested revising the terms of reference of the Railways Subcommittee by including coordination of other public transport services consequent to the commissioning of new railway lines and related matters. Members raised no objection.

Conclusion

13. The Chairman concluded that members endorsed the appointment of the Railways Subcommittee. He instructed the Clerk to fine-tune the terms of reference of the Railways Subcommittee as appropriate to reflect members' views as mentioned in the above paragraphs, and circulate the fine-tuned terms of reference, work plan and time frame of the Railways Subcommittee for members' information.

*(Post-meeting note: The fine-tuned terms of reference, work plan and time frame of the Railways Subcommittee were issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)225/20-21(01) on 25 November 2020.)*



## **V. Proposals on the appointment of subcommittees under the Panel on Transport**

LC Paper No. CB(4)139/20-21(03) - Paper on the proposals on the appointment of subcommittees under the Panel on Transport prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat

14. The Chairman said that at the last meeting on 15 October 2020, he had received two proposals on the appointment of subcommittees by the Panel to study parking spaces and insurance coverage for the transport sector. However, due to insufficient time, the proposals had not been discussed. To facilitate members' discussion, a paper setting out the terms of reference, time frame and work plan of the two proposed subcommittees was circulated to members on 13 November 2020.

### Proposals for the appointment of subcommittees

15. On invitation of the Chairman, the Deputy Chairman briefed members on his proposal to set up a subcommittee to study the issues relating to parking spaces and Park-and-Ride Scheme ("the Subcommittee on Parking"). After discussion, members were in support of the Deputy Chairman's proposal, and endorsed the terms of reference, time frame and work plan of the Subcommittee on Parking.

16. The Chairman then briefed members on his proposal to set up a subcommittee to study and follow up on the difficulties encountered by the transport sector in procuring insurance and related issues ("the Vehicle Insurance Subcommittee"). After discussion, members raised no objection to the Chairman's proposal, and endorsed the terms of reference, time frame and work plan of the Vehicle Insurance Subcommittee.

### Order of activation of the subcommittees

17. On invitation of the Chairman, the Clerk explained that according to the broad principles for the activation, operation and extension of period of work of policy subcommittees, the number of subcommittees under each Panel operating at the same time should not exceed two. In view of this, the Chairman invited members to determine the order of activation of the Railways Subcommittee, and the two newly appointed subcommittees, i.e. the Subcommittee on Parking and the Vehicle Insurance Subcommittee.

Action

18. After deliberation, the Chairman put the order of activation of the subcommittees to vote. A total of 10 members voted for the prioritized activation of the Railways Subcommittee, one member voted for the Parking Subcommittee and five members voted for the Vehicle Insurance Subcommittee. The Chairman concluded that the first, second and third priorities would be accorded to the Railways Subcommittee, the Vehicle Insurance Subcommittee and the Subcommittee on Parking respectively. The House Committee would be informed of the above decision by the Panel.

**VI. 6101TX — Universal Accessibility Programme**

LC Paper No. CB(4)139/20-21(04) - Administration's paper on the "Universal Accessibility" Programme

LC Paper No. CB(4)139/20-21(05) - Paper on the "Universal Accessibility" Programme prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Updated background brief)

Briefing by the Administration

19. At the invitation of the Chairman, Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Transport)1 ("DSTH(T)1") briefed members on the latest progress of the "Universal Accessibility" Programme ("the UA Programme") and the funding requirement to take forward the UA Programme in the 2021-2022 financial year. Project Manager/Major Works of the Highways Department ("HyD") ("PM/MW") then briefed members on the 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)219/20-21(01) on 20 November 2020.)*

Discussion

20. The Chairman reminded members that, in accordance with Rule 83A of the Rules of Procedure of the Legislative Council, they should disclose the nature of any direct or indirect pecuniary interests relating to the subject under discussion at the meeting before they spoke on the subject.

*General views on the "Universal Accessibility" Programme*

21. Noting that the Administration had been installing barrier-free access facilities at public walkways and launched the UA Programme in August 2012, members in general considered it a good policy to provide more barrier-free access facilities, namely lifts and ramps, to enhance the convenience of the public in using public walkways.

22. Mrs Regina IP noted that HyD proposed to create six permanent directorate posts, inter alia, for leading the Universal Accessibility Works Division to be established and for the planning, implementation, design and construction of the lift retrofitting projects under the UA Programme. She had reservations about this staffing proposal, which was to be discussed under another agenda item of this meeting. Mrs IP considered that the UA Programme should be implemented within the existing resources of HyD.

*Special Scheme under the "Universal Accessibility" Programme*

23. Dr CHENG Chung-tai noted that the Administration had consulted the District Councils on the lift retrofitting items under the Special Scheme, and enquired about how the Administration would address the possible problems if the relevant owner(s) or parties, such as the Link Real Estate Investment Trust ("Link REIT") and the Hong Kong Housing Authority ("HKHA"), who were responsible for the management of the land/walkways concerned, did not agree to those lift retrofitting proposals. Also, he asked what measures would be taken by the Administration if they were unwilling to cooperate with the Administration in subsequent management and maintenance of the lifts. Dr CHENG further enquired if there was any lift retrofitting item under the Special Scheme that could not be taken forward owing to the disagreement from the relevant owner(s) or parties.

24. In response, PM/MW explained that THB and HyD had conducted meetings with Link REIT and HKHA, and they indicated in-principle support for the Special Scheme. HyD would continue to communicate with them, as well as other relevant owner(s), regarding the lift location, detailed arrangements for granting right of access to HyD for implementing the lift retrofitting works within the housing estates concerned and for carrying out subsequent maintenance works.

25. Noting that HyD would continue to discuss the details of lift retrofitting works with the relevant Manager(s) of Deed of Mutual Covenant of the housing estates concerned, Dr Junius HO enquired whether the Administration would

Action

insert a provision into the Deed of Mutual Covenant or amend relevant legislation with a view to stipulating that relevant owner(s) or parties responsible for the management of the land/walkways concerned should give the right of access to the Administration to implement the lift retrofitting works within the housing estates concerned and to carry out subsequent maintenance works.

26. In reply, PM/MW advised that the Administration had to tackle some technical and legal problems during the implementation of the Special Scheme. The Administration planned that the items to be implemented under the Special Scheme should meet the criteria, among other things, that Manager of Deed of Mutual Covenant (with the approval of the Owners' Committee) agreed to the arrangements as included in the Deed of Grant of Easement in the following three aspects: (a) providing land for construction of lift facilities within the housing estate area; (b) giving access right for the Administration to carry out construction and future maintenance for the such lift facilities within the housing estate area; and (c) taking up daily management responsibilities of the completed lift facilities within the housing estate area. DSTH(T)1 supplemented that the Administration had consulted legal advisers in handling the above issues. After settling the legal issues in relation to the Special Scheme, the Administration would standardize the relevant procedures for all items under the Special Scheme to help expedite the implementation.

*Implementation progress of individual lift retrofitting items*

27. Mr Michael TIEN expressed appreciation of the efforts made by the Administration in implementing the UA Programme, especially for the completion of item 42 (structure number: NF186) located across Tai Chung Road near Heung Che Street; item 44 (structure number: NF288) located at Sai Lau Kok Road near Exit A of Tsuen Wan MTR Station in Tsuen Wan and item 51 (structure number: NF376) located across Ping Ha Road near Exit B of Tin Shui Wai MTR Station under the Expanded Programme of the UA Programme as listed in Annex II to the Administration's paper.

28. Regarding item 14 (structure number: ID01) located across Ying Hei Road near the Visionary and Caribbean Coast on Islands, as listed in Annex III to the Administration's paper, Mr Michael TIEN asked whether this item would be completed according to the planned schedule, i.e. the second quarter of 2022. Principal Project Coordinator/Universal Accessibility of HyD ("PPC/UA") replied that the Administration had commenced the lift-retrofitting works in mid-2020 for completion by June 2022. Despite the tight schedule, the Administration would try to complete this item as planned.

Action

29. Mr Michael TIEN also expressed concern about the implementation progress of item 29 (structure number: TW03) located across Mei Wan Street connecting Tsuen King Circuit Sports Centre and Discovery Park in Tsuen Wan as listed in Annex III to the Administration's paper. He enquired if it was possible to expedite the implementation progress of this item to bring benefits to the residents as soon as practicable. In reply, PPC/UA explained that the construction works of this item had commenced in mid-2020 for completion in mid-2023. The Administration would endeavour to make an effort to advance its completion to March 2023.

30. As regards item 86 (structure number: NF437) ("NF437") located across Castle Peak Road — Tsing Lung Tau near Hong Kong Garden in Tsuen Wan, under the Third Phase of the UA Programme as listed in Annex IV to the Administration's paper, Mr Michael TIEN enquired if it was possible for the Administration to commence the lift-retrofitting works of NF437 in 2021 for completion by late 2024. He pointed out that as there was a lack of pedestrian crossing in the vicinity of NF437, some jaywalkers crossed the road just for the sake of convenience, thereby posing risks to road users. In response, PPC/UA said that the Administration planned to commence the construction works in the third quarter of 2021 and the anticipated completion date would be in the first quarter of 2025.

31. The Deputy Chairman also enquired about the detailed design of NF437, and that upon the completion of NF437, whether the residents could enter the shopping arcade direct via the walkway concerned. He considered that when conducting the detailed design, the Administration should take heed of the public opinions with a view to bringing greater benefits to the nearby residents. In reply, PPC/UA advised that the Tsuen Wan District Council in principle supported the proposed lift-retrofitting works at NF437. As such, the Administration would carry out detailed design, and communicate with the relevant stakeholders. PPC/UA undertook to follow up on the Deputy Chairman's concern as appropriate.

32. Mr Michael TIEN enquired about the implementation schedule of item 91 (structure number: TW01) located across Castle Peak Road — Tsuen Wan near Discovery Park in Tsuen Wan, under the Third Phase of the UA Programme as listed in Annex IV to the Administration's paper. In response, PPC/UA explained that as the walkway of this item was not currently maintained by HyD, the Administration had communicated with relevant parties, including the management parties of this walkway and the Buildings Department, for necessary connection arrangements. It was estimated that the works contract would be awarded in the first quarter of 2022, and the lift-retrofitting works

Action

would commence in the third quarter of 2022 for completion in the first quarter of 2026.

33. Mrs Regina IP expressed concern about the slow implementation progress of item 111 (structure number: NF232) ("NF232") located across Hoi Wing Road near Sam Shing Light Rail Station in Tuen Mun, as listed in Annex IV to the Administration's paper. She enquired whether the implementation progress of NF232 had been adversely affected by the project of widening of the section of Castle Peak Road — Castle Peak Bay between Hoi Wing Road and Hong Kong Gold Coast Phase I, Tuen Mun ("the Castle Peak Road Project").

34. In response to Mrs Regina IP's enquiry, PM/MW said that the Administration would provide information on whether item 111 ("NF232") fell under the scope of the Castle Peak Road Project in due course.

*(Post-meeting note: the Administration's supplementary information was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)530/20-21(01) on 17 February 2021.)*

35. Mrs Regina IP also enquired about the implementation progress of the proposed lift and pedestrian walkway system between Saddle Ridge Garden and Sai Sha Road, which was supported by the Sha Tin District Council. PM/MW replied that the aforesaid system was a hillside escalator links and elevator systems proposal, and the Administration would take forward its implementation according to the public works procedures.

36. Dr Priscilla LEUNG considered that the lift retrofitting items under the UA Programme benefitted many residents, and proposed to extend the UA Programme to cover more areas in Kowloon West, such as Chak On Estate. She pointed out that Chak On Estate was built on uphill areas and residents had to walk up and down the slope for commuting. Therefore, she urged the Administration to enhance the accessibility of Chak On Estate and facilitate the residents, in particular the elderly. To better understand the actual problems faced by the residents living in Chak On Estate, Dr LEUNG invited the Administration to join her for a site visit.

37. In response, DSTH(T)1 explained that the proposed provision of lifts at Chak On Estate was not covered by the UA Programme at present. That said, the Administration would liaise with Dr Priscilla LEUNG after the meeting to better understand Dr LEUNG's lift retrofitting proposal, and take follow-up actions as appropriate.

Action

38. Furthermore, Dr Priscilla LEUNG also pointed out that there were still some older public rental housing estates without lift service and opined that the Administration should add new lifts to these older blocks to allow barrier-free access for the elderly and disabled. She suggested the provision of a lift tower built adjacent to the block, if conditions allowed. The Administration noted Dr LEUNG's view.

*Public consultation*

39. Mr LEUNG Che-cheung noted that in the past years, the District Councils had been invited to each select three public walkways among those proposed by the public for priority implementation under the UA Programme. He enquired if the decisions made by previous terms of the District Councils could be overridden by the current term of the District Councils. DSTH(T)1 replied in the negative. The Administration would keep liaising with the District Councils, such as consulting them on the lift retrofitting items under the newly launched Special Scheme, and inviting them to select not more than three items to be included in the Special Scheme.

40. Dr CHENG Chung-tai relayed some District Council members' concern that the Administration had not given comprehensive consideration of all relevant factors, in particular the needs of the residents and the estimated pedestrian flow upon completion of the lift retrofitting works, when conducting the preliminary study of the lift retrofitting items under the Special Scheme. He considered that the Administration should pay due regard to the views of the District Council members.

41. In reply, PM/MW said that HyD had consulted the District Councils on the lift retrofitting items under the Special Scheme between May and October 2020 (Stage 1 District Council consultation), and invited the District Councils' suggestions on the items to be included in the preliminary study. Consultants had been engaged to carry out the preliminary study. Since November 2020, the findings of the preliminary study had been reported to the District Councils (Stage 2 District Council consultation), which were invited to each select not more than three existing walkways as priority items for implementation under the Special Scheme. PM/MW reiterated that the role of HyD was to provide the necessary information, such as pedestrian flow, to the District Councils for consideration in selection of walkways to be implemented under Special Scheme, while the priority items for implementation were decided by the District Councils.

42. Mr Holden CHOW enquired, apart from consulting the District Councils, whether the Administration would gauge views of the local

community, such as Area Committees of individual district, on the implementation of the UA Programme. Sharing similar views, Dr Priscilla LEUNG considered that the Administration should consult different groups of people in the society, say professional bodies. Furthermore, Mr Holden CHOW reckoned that when conducting the preliminary study for the lift retrofitting items, the Administration should not only take into account the pedestrian flow. As the demand for barrier-free access facilities was greater in some districts with relatively more elderly residents, the Administration should also take the population profile into consideration for the preliminary study.

43. In reply, PM/MW said that seeking the views of the District Councils was not the only means of consultation. Indeed, in the course of implementation of the UA Programme, the Administration would also gauge the views of the local community, including residents and shops. Upon receiving the public views, the Administration would decide the way forward.

44. PM/MW further explained that the scope of the preliminary study for the lift retrofitting items included assessing the pedestrian flow at present, factors affecting the pedestrian flow in the future, whether there were any facilities nearby for the elderly or disabled, preliminary technical feasibility and preliminary construction costs estimate, etc. PM/MW supplemented that subject to the availability of resources, the Administration would take heed of the public views to provide the required barrier-free access facilities.

#### *Construction time and costs*

45. Mr Paul TSE enquired about the major difficulties and challenges that the Administration had been facing in the course of implementation, and the actions that the Administration would take to address them, given that each item would take as long as three to four years to complete.

46. In reply, PM/MW explained that the Administration had to spend considerable time on administrative and technical aspects of the works, in particular the diversion of congested underground utilities affected by the proposed retrofitting of lifts in urban areas while maintaining the operation of public facilities. Moreover, other factors like traffic conditions and environmental control also had impact on the costs and time required for lift-retrofitting proposals under the UA Programme. Nonetheless, HyD was exploring different ways, such as adoption of the Modular Integrated Construction ("MiC") method in urban areas, to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation of the UA Programme.



Action

47. Mr LUK Chung-hung noted that the works to be implemented under the UA Programme would require a budget of \$565 million in the 2021-2022 financial year. In view of budgetary constraints faced by the Administration, he enquired whether it was possible to reduce the construction costs for retrofitting lifts by, for example, standardizing the design of lift towers and lifts.

48. In response, PM/MW advised that with a view to minimizing the time needed and construction costs incurred in the UA Programme, the Administration planned to award the works contracts with Early Contractor Involvement ("ECI") so that contractors would be engaged in the design work and liaise with underground utility undertakers at an earlier stage of the project. Hence, the actual position and condition of underground utilities could be ascertained as early as possible, so that the projects could be taken forward more smoothly during construction. In addition, having consulted the trade, HyD had considered standardizing the design of the lift towers and constructing lifts by adopting MiC method so as to reduce the time for construction.

49. Upon Mr LUK Chung-hung's request, PM/MW undertook to provide the estimation of the construction time and costs expected to be saved by the adoption of measures including the use of MiC method by HyD.

*(Post-meeting note: the Administration's supplementary information was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)530/20-21(01) on 17 February 2021.)*

*Manpower supply and lift maintenance*

50. Mr LEUNG Che-cheung pointed out that the time required for maintenance and repair of those lifts under the UA Programme was too long. He recalled that the Administration had spent about one week's time to repair a lift situated at Tiu Yiu Estate in Tin Shui Wai, causing much inconvenience to the residents, in particular the elderly. He suggested improving the efficiency of repairing the lifts by, for example, outsourcing the maintenance and repair works.

51. In response, PM/MW said that the HyD had engaged the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department ("EMSD") to carry out the lift maintenance works and EMSD had outsourced the contracts for the maintenance and repair works of the lifts retrofitted under the UA Programme. That said, PM/MW admitted that there was room for improvement in enhancing the lift maintenance works. PM/MW reiterated that the retrofitted lifts under the Special Scheme, despite being situated within the estate area, would also be maintained by the Government.

52. In view of the growing numbers of lifts to be retrofitted under the UA Programme, Mr LEUNG Che-cheung also expressed concern if there would be sufficient manpower to carry out the maintenance and repair works. If not, the lift maintenance and repair period would be prolonged.

53. In reply, PM/MW advised that when awarding the contracts for the maintenance and repair works of the lifts retrofitted under the UA Programme to lift contractors, EMSD would stipulate a performance pledge in the contracts. Hence, the lift contractors should complete the maintenance and repair works within the timeframe as specified in the aforesaid performance pledge.

54. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok suggested that if practicable, the Administration should consider provision of two lifts for public walkways at the same location (e.g. two smaller-sized lifts) to provide better facilities to the public. In case the operation of one of the two lifts had to be suspended for regular maintenance or repair, the other one could still provide service to the public. The Chairman shared Ir Dr LO's view.

55. In response, PM/MW advised that the number of lifts to be retrofitted at each walkway would be subject to a number of factors, such as geographical constraint and residents' need. However, the Administration would take Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok's suggestion into account and follow it up as appropriate. PM/MW supplemented that, to minimize the inconvenience brought to the public, the Administration would make an effort to enhance the efficiency in the maintenance and repair service of the lifts under the UA Programme.

56. Mr LUK Chung-hung enquired whether the slow implementation progress of the UA Programme was caused by shortage of manpower to implement the proposals or not. Mr Paul TSE also expressed concern about the succession problems of construction and lifts workers, resulting in inadequate manpower to implement the proposals under the UA Programme and to carry out the maintenance works in the future.

57. In reply, PM/MW said that HyD had been closely communicating with EMSD and lift contractors. According to their understanding, there were adequate lift contractors and workers in the market to carry out the UA Programme and relevant maintenance works.

58. The Deputy Chairman noted that contractors in the List of Approved Contractors for Public Works ("the List") might tender for public works contracts only in the works categories and groups for which they were approved. Groups A, B and C might tender for public works contracts of

Action

values up to \$100 million, \$300 million and of any values exceeding \$300 million respectively. The Deputy Chairman was worried that under the existing mechanism, only contractors in Groups B or C might be able to bid for larger scale works, while those in Group A might only become subcontractors in those public works.

59. In response, PM/MW explained that Groups A, B and C on the List were given opportunity to tender for the public works contracts according to their estimated costs. Indeed, for certain public works contracts, contractors in Groups A and B, or joint ventures with contractors in Groups A and C, had participated in the public works contracts. Upon the Deputy Chairman's request, PM/MW undertook to provide the number of works contracts under the UA Programme that had been awarded to different groups of contractors as specified in the List in the past three years.

*(Post-meeting note: the Administration's supplementary information was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)530/20-21(01) on 17 February 2021.)*

60. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok considered that as a result of social events and the lingering epidemic, the construction industry faced unprecedented challenges, including high unemployment rate and economic hardship. In view of this, he suggested that the Administration should review and expand the List in order to allow more contractors, in particular the small- and medium-sized contractors, to be eligible for tendering for the public works contracts. In response, PM/MW said that the Administration would consider Ir Dr LO's views when inviting the contractors to bid for the public works.

**VII. Proposed creation of six permanent posts in the Highways Department, viz one Principal Government Engineer (D3) and three Chief Engineer (D1) posts to strengthen management and support in taking forward projects under the policy initiative of "Walk in Hong Kong" so as to enhance pedestrian networks and environment; and two Chief Engineer (D1) posts to strengthen road maintenance and district administration work in urban and New Territories regions**

LC Paper No. CB(4)139/20-21(06) - Administration's paper on the staffing proposal for the Walkability Project Management Office and the Regional Offices of the Highways Department

### Briefing by the Administration

61. At the invitation of the Chairman, DSTH(T)1 briefed members on the Administration's proposal to create six permanent directorate posts in HyD, namely:

- (a) one permanent Principal Government Engineer ("PGE") (D3) post and three permanent Chief Engineer ("CE") (D1) posts in the Walkability Project Management Office ("WPMO") to be established to take forward relevant projects under the "Walk in Hong Kong" policy; and
- (b) one permanent CE (D1) post each in the New Territories Regional Office and Urban Regional Office to strengthen road maintenance and district administration work, and to provide professional advice on and support to the development and improvement of roads related to the land supply and land use strategic planning.

62. Project Manager/ Major Works (Special Duties) supplemented the justifications of the staffing proposal with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation.

*(Post-meeting note: the PowerPoint presentation material was issued vide LC Paper No. CB(4)219/20-21(02) on 20 November 2020.)*

### Discussion

#### *Staffing proposal for the Walkability Project Management Office*

63. Mr LUK Chung-hung said that while he supported the Administration's initiative to develop Hong Kong into a "Walkable City", he expressed doubt on how the proposed creation of six permanent directorate posts in HyD could speed up the implementation of the related projects and lower the project costs concerned. The Deputy Chairman expressed a similar view. Noting that a number of large-scale transport infrastructure projects had been completed in recent years and the Tuen Mun – Chek Lap Kok Link ("TM–CLKL") project would be completed soon, the Deputy Chairman enquired if the Administration had considered meeting the manpower requirement through internal redeployment. Mr LUK opined that more resources should be devoted to strengthening the manpower of frontline and mid-level staff to facilitate the

implementation of different projects.

64. In response, Director of Highways ("DHy") clarified that among the proposed six permanent directorate posts, four of them would be created for the WPMO to be established, while the other two were to be created in the Regional Offices of HyD. As to the manpower of frontline and mid-level staff, DHy advised that in addition to internal redeployment, 12 non-directorate posts would also be created under WPMO with a view to ensuring sufficient support to take forward the "Walk in Hong Kong" policy. Besides, the directorate post responsible for managing the TM-CLKL project was a supernumerary post and would lapse soon, hence it was not feasible for the directorate post concerned to take on additional work.

65. DHy further advised that projects under the "Walk in Hong Kong" policy were currently supervised by the existing directorates in different offices/divisions of HyD on top of their existing workload. For instance, projects under the UA Programme were managed by the Major Works Project Management Office ("MWPMO"), but MWPMO was also responsible for managing various large-scale and urgent projects, including the Central Kowloon Route ("CKR") and Route 11, among which the construction of CKR was currently at its critical construction stage. Also, as the lift retrofitting works under the Special Scheme of the UA Programme had to be carried out within housing estates, more complicated land ownership and legal issues would be involved in the planning work for the Special Scheme. Thus, it was necessary to create directorate posts to be dedicatedly responsible for the UA Programme to liaise with relevant stakeholders including Link REIT and HKHA. As regards the implementation of Hillside Escalator Links and Elevator Systems ("HEL") projects, the affected members of the public might hold diverging views towards the alignment of the project. The creation of directorate posts was therefore necessary to dedicatedly lead and provide steer in liaising with and building consensus among relevant stakeholders, thereby expediting the overall progress of HEL works.

66. DHy noted that the current implementation progress of UA Programme and HEL projects might not have fulfilled the community's expectation. He remarked that it would be difficult to meet the growing public demand for various pedestrian-friendly facilities if the Administration continued with the existing resources and approach to implement relevant projects. As such, the Administration proposed to create the proposed directorate posts to widely

Action

promote innovative techniques, such as the adoption of MiC and ECI, with a view to expediting the works progress. The Administration considered that there was an urgent need to create these posts to meet the public demand and to address the views of the trade to kick start more works projects.

67. Mr LEUNG Che-cheung requested the Administration to provide a table setting out the annual expenditure of "walkable-city" projects expected to be managed by the proposed WPMO in the coming five years, so as to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of creating the proposed posts. DHy undertook to provide the supplementary information.

Admin

68. The Deputy Chairman expressed that he had reservation about the staffing proposal having regard to the present Government's fiscal position. Mrs Regina IP echoed a similar view. The Deputy Chairman commented that HyD could consider out-sourcing part of the works to contractors. Mr LEUNG Che-cheung similarly queried the need for creating three CE posts in the proposed WPMO. Mr POON Siu-ping asked about the follow-up actions to be taken by the Administration in case the staffing proposal was not supported by the Panel. Mr POON and the Deputy Chairman enquired about the feasibility of creating the proposed directorate posts on a supernumerary basis.

69. DHy responded that in the light of the past experience in taking forward the relevant projects under the "Walk in Hong Kong" policy, it was foreseeable that there would be increasing and continual public demand for these projects to improve the walking environment and facilitating people to commute. For example, the scope of the UA Programme has expanded over the years and there was an increasing number of HEL and covered walkway proposals. DHy therefore considered that the proposed posts under WPMO should be permanent.

*(At 12:36 pm, the Chairman extended the meeting for 15 minutes to allow more time for discussion.)*

70. Mr YIU Si-wing found it unreasonable creating new posts to share the workload of the incumbent directorate officers. Given that the Administration had already been taking forward the "walkable-city" projects even without these posts, Mr YIU opined that the Administration should provide further justifications on the cost-effectiveness of the posts. He suggested that the

Action

proposed posts should be created on a supernumerary basis to increase the manpower support for implementing the planning work of the projects, while the associated follow-up work including budgeting and project supervision should be handled by existing staff resources.

71. Mrs Regina IP considered that the justifications provided by the Administration could not adequately convince her to support the creation of directorate posts in HyD. She expressed that the capabilities of the existing officers should be enhanced so that they could be able to cope with the relevant high-level liaison work. She queried how the proposed creation of six permanent directorate posts could expedite the works progress, and requested the Administration to explain the benefits to be brought about by the proposed creation of posts in quantified terms in respect of project delivery.

72. DHy responded that in view of the substantial number of "walkable-city" projects involved and the new challenges arising therefrom, the Administration considered it necessary to create these directorate posts, with a view to commencing more works projects and expediting the overall progress.

73. Sharing Mrs Regina IP's views, Mr Vincent CHENG said that he had reservation about the staffing proposal as well. He further said that the Administration had failed to address the problems and propose effective measures for improving walking environment in Sham Shui Po district, which was indeed one of the pilot areas to try out the measures for enhancing walkability under the "Walk in Hong Kong" policy.

74. Taking note of Mr CHENG's views, DHy advised that the proposed WPMO would not only be responsible for carrying out local walking environment improvement works such as widening footpaths, but would also be responsible for implementation of the UA Programme and HEL proposals for the benefits of the public.

75. Referring to paragraphs 28 and 41 of the Administration's paper, Mrs Regina IP noted with concern that a large number of non-directorate posts would be internally redeployed to support the proposed directorate posts. In response, DHy advised that the impact on other offices/divisions would be minimal since the officers concerned had already been performing the relevant duties even without the proposed directorate posts.

76. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok and Mr SHIU Ka-fai indicated support for the implementation of projects related to the concept of "Walkable City", including the UA Programme and HEL proposals. Both members urged the Administration to continue to press ahead with the implementation of these projects. Citing the Braemar Hill Pedestrian Link project as an example, Mr SHIU called on the Administration to build early consensus among various stakeholders so as to ensure smooth implementation of the projects concerned. Ir Dr LO opined that it might be worthwhile to consider the proposed creation of directorate posts, given that the scope and number of "walkable-city" projects would be further expanded/increased, the overall work progress would be expedited and more job opportunities would be provided for the construction industry.

*Staffing proposal for the Regional Offices of the Highways Department*

77. Mr YIU Si-wing queried the justifications for the proposed creation of CE post in the Urban Regional Office. DHy explained that the existing public highway structures in Hong Kong had been ageing gradually. In particular, some of the public highway structures located in Kowloon and Hong Kong Island were constructed more than 30 years ago, such as the Island Eastern Corridor, Gascoigne Road Flyover and Canal Road Flyover. There was thus a pressing need to create a dedicated post in the Urban Regional Office to study and formulate strategically long-term maintenance schemes with a view to ensuring structural safety and enhancing the durability of these aged public highway structures.

78. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok noted with concern that only one additional CE post had been created in the Regional Office of HyD over the years, albeit the rapidly expanding road networks in Hong Kong. In view of the successive completion and commissioning of a number of large-scale local and cross-boundary transport infrastructure projects such as the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Hong Kong Section and the Central – Wanchai Bypass, and the resultant increase in the workload of relevant highway maintenance works, Ir Dr LO questioned why the Administration had not reviewed the directorate establishment of HyD in a timely manner.

79. DHy responded that HyD had been utilizing the existing manpower across different offices/divisions to handle the additional workload brought about by the expansion in road networks in the past years. Coupled with the



Action

maintenance works of the ageing public highway structures and lift facilities retrofitted under the UA Programme, there was a genuine need for the creation of directorate posts in the two Regional Offices to formulate long-term inspection and maintenance strategies and conduct timely review on the adoption of new maintenance technologies and equipment.

80. Mr Michael TIEN enquired about the details of technical standards for road maintenance and re-surfacing. He said that he would support the proposed creation of two CE posts relating to highway maintenance if the Administration would consider his suggestion of setting up a reporting mechanism in respect of wear and tear of highway facilities, whereby staff would be deployed to conduct inspections within three days upon receiving a complaint concerning damaged road surfaces, and the complainant would be informed of within a week the timetable of the maintenance works of the concerned road section if so required.

81. DHy advised that there were regular inspections and maintenance of existing roads undertaken by HyD. Site inspection of the road section concerned would be arranged in case a complaint about poor condition of road surfaces was received.

82. Mr SHIU Ka-fai opined that the routine inspections of public roads should be enhanced so that prompt actions could be taken by the department concerned once complaints relating to poor road surfaces were received.

Conclusion

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83. The Chairman advised the Administration to take note of members' views on the staffing proposal. The Administration was requested to provide more information on (a) the benefits to be brought about by the proposed creation of six permanent directorate posts in HyD in quantified terms in respect of cost-effectiveness and project delivery; and (b) the feasibility of creating the proposed six directorate posts on a supernumerary basis when submitting the staffing proposal to the Establishment Subcommittee for deliberation.

**VIII. Any other business**

Action

84. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:59 pm.

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