

**Minutes of the First and Second Meeting of the Traffic and Transport Committee
under the Yuen Long District Council in 2021**

Date: 11 March 2021 (Thursday)

Time: 10:00 a.m. to 6:35 p.m.

Venue: Conference Room, Yuen Long District Council, 13/F., Yuen Long Government Offices,
2 Kiu Lok Square, Yuen Long

<u>Present</u>	<u>Time of Arrival</u>	<u>Time of Withdrawal</u>
Chairman : Mr CHEUNG Sau-yin	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Vice Chairman : Mr CHAN Shu-fai	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Members : Mr AU Kwok-kuen	10:10 a.m.	End of the meeting
Mr CHAN King-lun, Kisslan	Beginning of the meeting	5:50 p.m.
Ms CHAN Mei-lin	Beginning of the meeting	6:20 p.m.
Ms CHAN Sze-nga	10:20 a.m.	End of the meeting
Mr CHEUNG Chi-yeung, Felix	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr FONG Ho-hin	2:15 p.m.	End of the meeting
Mr HO Wai-pan	Beginning of the meeting	12:35 p.m.
Mr HONG Chin-wah	Beginning of the meeting	1:20 p.m.
Mr KWOK Man-ho	12:20 p.m.	End of the meeting
Hon KWONG Chun-yu	4:50 p.m.	End of the meeting
Mr LAI Kwok-wing, Samuel	Beginning of the meeting	6:05 p.m.
Ms LAI Po-wa	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr LAI Wing-tim	Beginning of the meeting	1:00 p.m.
Mr LAM Ting-wai	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr LEE Chun-wai	10:20 a.m.	4:10 p.m.
Mr LEE Wai-fung, Deco	2:10 p.m.	End of the meeting
Mr LEUNG Tak-ming	10:15 a.m.	2:55 p.m.
Mr LI Chung-chi	Beginning of the meeting	5:50 p.m.
Mr MAK Ip-sing	10:15 a.m.	End of the meeting
Mr MO Kai-hong	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr NG Hin-wang	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Ms NG Yuk-ying	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr SHEK King-ching	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr SZETO Pok-man	10:10 a.m.	End of the meeting

Mr TO Ka-lun	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr WONG Wai-yin, Zachary	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Ms WONG Wing-sze	10:40 a.m.	4:10 p.m.
Mr YOUNG Ka-on	Beginning of the meeting	12:00 p.m.

Secretary : Miss TANG Hei-lam, Sophia Executive Officer (District Council)2,
Yuen Long District Office

In Attendance

Mr HUEN Yeuk-hon, John (a.m.)	Senior Liaison Officer (1), Yuen Long District Office
Ms OR Lai-kum, Christina (p.m.)	Senior Liaison Officer (3), Yuen Long District Office
Mr TSANG Kwong-wing, Kelvin	Senior Transport Officer/Yuen Long 1, Transport Department
Ms CHUNG Man, Emily	Senior Transport Officer/Yuen Long 2, Transport Department
Miss FOK Sze-man, Grace	Engineer/Yuen Long South, Transport Department
Mr LEE Kar-chun, Wilson	Engineer/Yuen Long East, Transport Department
Mr MAN Ka-ho, Wilson	Engineer/Yuen Long West and Yuen Long Central, Transport Department
Mr TSE Ho-hang	Engineer/Boundary, Transport Department
Miss CHAN Sin-hang, Michelle	Engineer/Special Duties 1, Transport Department
Ms CHEUNG Pui-yan	District Engineer/Yuen Long (East), Highways Department
Mr SHIH Yung-chi	District Engineer/Yuen Long (West), Highways Department
Mr TO Kai-cho	Engineer/16 (West), Civil Engineering and Development Department
Mr LEUNG Kei-ching	Officer-in-charge, District Traffic Team (Yuen Long), Hong Kong Police Force
Mr LIN Kin-tak	District Operations Officer (Yuen Long), Hong Kong Police Force
Mr LUI Kai-ming	Assistant Housing Manager/Tenancy (Yuen Long 5), Housing Department

Mr SHIU Wai-ming	Administrative Assistant/Lands, Yuen Long Lands Office
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Item II(1), III(1), III(2) and III(3)

Miss YU Wing-sze, Natalie	Senior Transport Officer/bus (Lantau), Transport Department
Mr CHOW Yu-chung, James	Transport Officer/Bus (Lantau), Transport Department
Mr LEUNG Ling-yin, Gary	Head of Operational Planning Department, Long Win Bus Company Limited
Mr LAW Yiu-wah, Rayson	Senior Officer (Planning and Development), Long Win Bus Company Limited
Mr YEUNG Chun-wai, Kelvin	Division Manager, Operations (New Territories West), Long Win Bus Company Limited
Mr WAN Wai-yim, Stephen	Manager (Operations), Long Win Bus Company Limited
Ms LEUNG Ka-yan, Betsy	Manager (Public Affairs), Long Win Bus Company Limited

Item IV and III(4)

Mr YEUNG Hon-fai, Humphrey	Chief Engineer/Railway Development Highways Department
Mr HUI Ka-kit, Desmond	Senior Engineer/Railway Development
Mr LU Wan-him	Highways Department Engineer/ Railway Development Highways Department
Mr FUNG Wai-chung	Senior Liaison Engineer, MTR Corporation Limited
Mr MAN Ka-yue, Henry	Projects Communications Manager MTR Corporation Limited

Item III(5)

Mr HO Hei, Jazz	Public Relations Executive – External Affairs, MTR Corporation Limited
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Item III(5), II(2) and III(7)

Ms LAM Yuen, Annie	Public Relations Manager - External Affairs, MTR Corporation Limited
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Item III(6)

Mr TANG Ching-kit, Desmond	Assistant Manager (Planning & Development), Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited
Ms WONG Yee-ling, Debby	Manager (Operations), Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited
Ms LEUNG Ka-yan, Betsy	Manager (Public Affairs), Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited

Item V

Mr. HUI Ka-chun, Billy	Senior Engineer Strategic Studies 1, Transport Department
Ms. CHIU Chi-heng, Sharon	Engineer/Strategic Studies 6, Transport Department
Mr CHING Kam-shing, Gary	Associate Director, MVA Hong Kong Limited
Mr YUEN Ka-lok, Eric	Assistant Engineer, MVA Hong Kong Limited

Item VI(1) and VI(3)

Mr. CHAN Chi-kwong	Assistant District Engineer/Works (North West) Highways Department
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Item VI(3)

Mr. LAI Chun-fung	Engineer/New Territories West (Distribution 3) Water Supplies Department
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Item VII, III(13), III(14), III(15), III(16) and III(17)

Mr. LIU Kin-wai, Rick	Senior Transport Officer/Bus/New Territories North West, Transport Department
Miss SIU Ka-yan, Catherine	Transport Officer/Bus/ New Territories North West, Transport Department
Mr TANG Ching-kit, Desmond	Assistant Manager (Planning & Development) Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited
Ms WONG Yee-ling, Debby	Manager (Operations), Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited

Ms LEUNG Ka-yan, Betsy	Manager (Public Affairs) Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited
Mr KUNG Syu-yan, Louis	Operations Manager, Citybus Limited
Mr CHAN Man-wai, Simon	Assistant Planning and Scheduling Manager Citybus Limited and New World First Bus Services Limited
Mr WONG Leung-ting, Billy	Assistant Manager – Operation Support New Lantau Bus Company (1973) Limited

Absent

Mr HAU Man-kin	(Absent with apologies)
Mr KWAN Chun-sang	(Absent with apologies)
Mr LAM Chun	(Absent with apologies)
Mr NG Kin-wai	(Absent with apologies)
Mr WONG Pak-yu	(Absent with apologies)

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Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed Members and government department representatives to the first and second meeting of the Traffic and Transport Committee (“T&TC”) under the Yuen Long District Council (“YLDC”) in 2021

Item I. Confirmation of the minutes of the fifth meeting in 2020

2. Members confirmed the above minutes unanimously.

Item II: Matter arising

- (1) **Adjustment arrangements for franchised bus routes to facilitate the commissioning of the Northern Connection of Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Link (T&TC Paper No. 45/2020)**

Item III: Questions raised by Members

- (1) (1) Mr MO Kai-hong proposed to discuss the further comments on the adjustment arrangements for the franchised bus routes of the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Link (T&TC Paper No. 26/2021)
 - (2) (2) Mr MO Kai-hong and Mr WONG Pak-yu proposed to discuss the request for lower fares of airport bus “E” routes in Yuen Long and Tin Shui Wai (T&TC Paper No. 10/2021)
 - (3) Mr MO Kai-hong and Mr WONG Pak-yu proposed to discuss the request that Yuen Long and Tin Shui Wai airport buses should not stop at Tuen Mun San Hui Market and Tuen Mun Town Centre (T&TC Paper No. 11/2021)
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3. As the above four items were interrelated, the Chairman suggested discussing them altogether.

4. The Chairman welcomed the following persons to the meeting:

Transport Department

Senior Transport Officer/bus (Lantau)

Miss YU Wing-sze, Natalie

Transport Officer/Bus (Lantau)

Mr CHOW Yu-chung, James

Long Win Bus Company Limited

Head of Operational Planning Department

Mr LEUNG Ling-yin, Gary

Senior Officer (Planning and Development)

Mr LAW Yiu-wah

Division Manager, Operations (New Territories West)

Mr YEUNG Chun-wai

Manager (Operations)

Mr WAN Wai-yim

Manager (Public Affairs)

Ms LEUNG Ka-yan

5. Members' views on the issue were summarised as follows: :

- (1) considered that part of the airport bus routes should be kept using Tai Lam Tunnel. Although the Government considered that the estimated travelling time of using Tai Lam Tunnel and Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel (TM-CLKT) was similar, as TM-CLKT was free of charge, the congestion of Tai Lam Tunnel should be alleviated which shortened the travelling time of using Tai Lam Tunnel. It was

suggested putting both routes on a trial run first;

- (2) said that despite the fact that bus routes A36 and E36 started at Kam Tin and Pak Heung, they failed to cater to the needs of residents there due to the small number of bus stops. The Government was asked whether there would be any plans on improvement or new discounts;
- (3) asked for the reason why "E" routes in Yuen Long adopted buses of 12.8 metres in length while other airport bus used ones of 12 metres in length. It was asked whether this represented that patronage of "E" routes was higher;
- (4) pointed out that as the road widening works of junction of Kam Sheung Road had been completed, the road should be able to allow buses to go to Yuen Long via Kam Tin Road. Therefore, they did not support the plan of re-routing via Ying Ho Road;
- (5) opined that those going to work needed to have route E34. It only took 35 minutes to arrive North Lantau by taking 251A or 251B and interchanging for E34 at Tai Lam Interchange while the new route took more than one hour. Considering deployment of resources and reduction of vacant buses on road, they hoped that 2 to 3 special buses which drove to Kam Tin and Pak Heung could be arranged to shorten the travelling time while other buses did not need to drive passed those road sections;
- (6) pointed out that airport bus services were available in Tuen Mun and "E" routes running in Tin Shui Wai and Yuen Long were overloaded in Yuen Long during peak hours. It was suggested not repeating the route in Tuen Mun after re-routing via TM-CLKT. Moreover, additional bus stops of "E" routes in Tuen Mun San Hui and Town Centre would further lengthen commuting time of those living in Tin Shui Wai. Tuen Mun District Council also reflected that patronage at Tuen Mun San Hui was too high. As "A" routes were express lines, buses starting from Tin Shui Wai and Yuen Long should not stop in Tuen Mun;
- (7) pointed out that bus companies were positive towards two-way section fare while the Transport Department (TD) said that bus companies could launch section fare on their own will. They asked why two-way section fare was still not yet confirmed. They also hoped that TD and bus companies could provide information on the travelling time and distances regarding two-way section fare;

- (8) pointed out that most of the passengers of Airport buses travelled for work and did not agree that TD opposed to section fare using the excuse that some passengers carried large luggage. In view of the huge impact of the epidemic on patronage of "A" routes, they considered that the number of passengers carrying large luggage would be lower before recovery of aviation sector. The Government also needed to subsidise bus companies to continue operations. They suggested that TD could approve a one-year trial on two-way section fare and allow "E" routes to implement two-way section fare during non-peak hours. TD could review the trial results after patronage resumed normal;
- (9) pointed out that the fare of the West Rail Line from Yuen Long to Tuen Mun was \$10.8 while that from Tin Shui Wai to Tuen Mun was \$8.8. It was hard to attract passengers of Yuen Long to take a bus to Tuen Mun without two-way section fare;
- (10) requested that TD should promptly observe the operational mode and report to Members the operational situation, patronage, etc. with Long Win Bus (LWB) after three months. TD and LWB were also requested to report whether to implement two-way section fare;
- (11) said that the bus stop at YOHO MALL was an outdoor stop and suggested confirming promptly the plan of a covered bus stop;
- (12) pointed out that route A37 did not travel via Hong Kong – Zhuhai – Macao Bridge (HZMB) and hoped that there was a direct bus travelling from Tin Shui Wai to HZMB; and
- (13) asked when the adjustment arrangements for the bus routes of the Tuen Mun - Chek Lap Kok Link would be put into practice upon endorsement.

6. The responses of Miss Natalie YU, TD were summarised below:

- (1) said that when planning to adjust routes to Northwest New Territories and North Lantau via the Tuen Mun - Chek Lap Kok Link, TD had considered the decrease in travelling time, impact on bus fares and interchange arrangements at TM-CLKT Interchange and Lantau Link Interchange. Moreover, it was hoped that the decrease in travelling time could widen the bus services network between Northwest New Territories and North Lantau;

- (2) pointed out that residents of Kam Tin and Pak Heung currently needed to take a bus of "A" route or "E" route at Tai Lam Tunnel Bus Interchange to go to Lantau. After route adjustments of re-routing via TM-CLKT, the bus terminuses of A36 and E36 were extended to Kam Sheung Road Station and Pak Heung Road respectively as substitute stations for those currently using Tai Lam Tunnel Bus Interchange. The bus terminal of A36 would be set up in the centre of Kam Tin so that passengers could interchange for other public transport there and the impact on residents of Kam Tin could be reduced;
- (3) said that TD had been collecting travelling data from the bus companies after opening of TM-CLKT and the overall travelling time of routes was similar to the estimation of TD. However, the Department noted that those currently using Tai Lam Tunnel Bus Interchange had reservation on "E" routes in Yuen Long re-routing via TM-CLKT. TD had also considered suspending the arrangement of E36 to TM-CLKT and maintaining the current route and services arrangements of E34B. TD also noted that bus companies would provide an alternative plan for consideration in response to the public views;
- (4) said that they had discussed with DC Members extending bus routes to Kam Tin but such arrangement would further increase the travelling time. Under the current available resources, the number of trips would decrease and the service standards of related routes in Yuen Long would be affected. The Department hoped that under the adjustment arrangements of routes, the service standards of routes travelling between Yuen Long and North Lantau could be maintained. However, the Department would pay close attention to the development of Kam Tin and look into the feasibility of services improvement when necessary;
- (5) said that two "A" routes, E36 and E37 would be re-routed to go to TM-CLKT via Tuen Mun Road after adjustments. Routes travelling via Tuen Mun Road would be a more direct route to TM-CLKT, compared with other routes in Tuen Mun. She also said that TD and LWB had preliminarily planned to set up stops near Hung Kiu and Waldorf Garden. After confirming the bus routes, they would review the arrangement of the bus stops and look into different suggestions on bus stops proposed by Members;
- (6) noted Members' suggestion on two-way section fare. The Government had been encouraging franchised bus companies to offer concessionary fares if financial and operational circumstances so allowed, to reduce public expenditure on transport.

However, as most of the LWB routes were airport buses which served more passengers with luggage, two-way section fare for those routes needed to be considered carefully to avoid affecting existing passengers (especially those commuting to and from the airport). Currently, apart from the West Rail Line, Light Rail and MTRC buses, passengers could also choose Kowloon Motor Bus (KMB) and Citybus routes to Tuen Mun, Yuen Long and Tin Shui Wail;

- (7) said that E36A which travelled to Tung Chung is a new route. TD would look into the feasibility of two-way section fare only after reviewing the travelling mode and demand of passengers at a later stage;
- (8) said that the Department reviewed the bus fares proposed by bus companies based on the Scale of Fares formulated by the Chief Executive and the Executive Council. Currently, "E" routes were under the category of "North Lantau External Routes". The maximum fare of bus routes travelling between 40 km or above to below 60 km was \$14.3 while the proposed fare of LWB was \$13.9, which was in line with the regulation of the Scale of Fares;
- (9) noted Members' view that they would like to have a report within 3 months. TD would provide a consolidated report if LWB could timely provide the relevant operational data;
- (10) said that TD did not receive any new application from bus companies on bus stop. They would process the applications according to existing procedures after receiving them;
- (11) said that when Hong Kong Port of HZMB opened, 9 "A" routes would extend to Hong Kong Port of HZMB. The Department had been paying attention to the operation of Hong Kong Port Public Transport Interchange, the service standards of the routes and the passengers' needs. In order to better cope with the travelling mode of passengers and provide more direct routes travelling between different districts and Hong Kong Port, TD had arranged two new routes to travel via Hong Kong Port. Due to the epidemic, the Department needed more time to review the operation and passengers' needs of the new bus routes before further looking into the feasibility of new bus routes; and
- (12) said that the adjustment arrangements for bus routes of TM-CLKT were originally scheduled to be implemented in March but as LWB submitted new proposals and

TD received Members' views today, TD needed time to further prepare and confirm the adjustment arrangements. After confirmation of the route details, TD also needed time to inform the public of the updated information of the routes. It was estimated that 4 to 6 weeks were required to implement the arrangements.

7. The responses of Mr LEUNG Ling-yin, LWB were summarised below:

- (1) was disappointed that TD considered suspending the arrangement of E34B interchanging for E36 buses;
- (2) said that the company had a trial run with government department and DC Members and it was estimated that after opening of E36, the travelling time of most passengers from Castle Peak Road - Yuen Long to Tung Chung and the airport would be shortened. Direct bus services from Au Tau and Ko Po to North Lantau, as well as direct "E" routes between Tuen Mun and Yuen Long would be available. Most of the passengers could enjoy a shorter journey after routes adjustments and it was also more convenient to go to Tuen Mun;
- (3) understood the needs of residents of Kam Tin and Pak Heung to have bus interchange at Tai Lam Tunnel. Although E34B would not go to Tai Lam Tunnel after being replaced by E36, residents could still choose an "A" route bus to Tai Lam Tunnel. There were a total of 37 buses for E34A and E34B routes. After adjustment, E37 and E36 would replace E34A and E34B respectively. There would be an additional route of E36A. The company could only deploy a certain number of buses to provide the services. If new bus services were provided while keeping E34B, 5 more buses would be required which would be different with the limited resources;
- (4) in view of the lengthened travelling time of residents of Pak Heung and Kam Tin, the company wanted to provide an alternative plan to provide special buses and concessionary fares for residents there. First, LWB proposed providing two special buses during peak hours in the morning and at night, which were similar to the existing route of E34B, i.e. from Yuen Long to Tung Chung and airport terminal via Tai Lam Tunnel. Moreover, the company wanted to encourage residents of Kam Tin and Pak Heung to use the interchange service after opening of E36 by providing joint interchange concessionary fare with KMB. Interchanging for E36 after taking KMB 54 and 64K buses could exempt the KMB fares. The total fare would decrease from \$19.7 to \$13.9;

- (5) understood the needs of residents of Kam Tin and Pak Heung to commute from and to North Lantau. Data showed that travelling time of E36 from Pak Heung would increase 10 to 15 minutes, compared to the original route of interchanging for E34B at Tai Lam Tunnel. Data showed that working hours of residents were very concentrated. The company promised to provide special buses accordingly. Detailed schedule would be discussed with TD;
- (6) said that A36 currently adopted buses of 12.8 metres in length to increase patronage and provide more space. The company would try to adopt buses of 12.8 metres in length if traffic allowed. Due to the epidemic, A36 could not travel via Kam Tin and Pak Heung at first. When the number of passengers to the airport increased, the company would consider providing special buses of "A" routes and "E" routes to Kam Tin and Pak Heung. Buses of 12.8 metres in length could not access Kam Tin and Pak Heung, and so special buses of 12 metres in length might be used to serve the residents there;
- (7) operational figures reflected that stopping by Tuen Mun San Hui and Town Centre did not affect travelling time much but the company held an open attitude towards Members' suggestion on not stopping at Tuen Mun. The company would further discuss with TD;
- (8) said that section fare would be available for buses from Tuen Mun to Yuen Long and Tin Shui Wai. The company held an open attitude towards two-way section fare which included travelling from Yuen Long and Tin Shui Wai to Tuen Mun. KMB routes serving Tuen Mun, Yuen Long and Tin Shui Wai gradually provided two-way section fare and passengers showed positive response. Bus operation was not affected also. Although TD worried that two-way section fare would be affected by passengers of "A" routes and "E" routes carrying luggage, passengers would also alight at intermittent stops even without section fare. Other operators of "A" routes also provided two-way section fare, so the company hoped that TD could further consider it;
- (9) noted Members' request for operation data, such as patronage, waiting time at bus stops, etc. to help review the feasibility of two-way section fare and understand the impact of stopping at Hung Kiu and Tuen Mun Town Centre on travelling time. The company wanted to provide figures on the impact on passengers as soon as possible and would further discuss the details with TD after the meeting;

(10) said that in view of limited buses, the company had not tried to arrange buses to simultaneously travel via Tai Lam Tunnel and the TM-CLKT. The company could further discuss with TD the point of departure of the special buses; and

(11) said that the bus company had submitted an application for building a covered stop outside YOHO MALL I to TD.

8. The Chairman concluded that Members proposed to TD and LWB to provide figures on patronage and relevant information after three months. TD and LWB were requested to consider two-way section fare and skipping of Tuen Mun bus stops. Members hoped that TD could promptly look into the suggestion on skipping Tuen Mun San Hui and Town Centre and implement the arrangement of skipping Tuen Mun San Hui and Town Centre by E" routes during peak hours and "A" routes for the whole day. Members hoped that special E34B buses and route adjustments related to TM-CLKT could be implemented simultaneously. Members suggested that the special buses should start from Long Ping Station to compensate some of the passengers affected by route adjustments. In view of operation of bus companies, passengers' needs and extension of bus network, upon satisfying the above requirements by TD and under reservation of some Members, Members endorsed the adjustment arrangements of bus routes at TM-CLKT.

9. (Post-meeting note: TD provided supplementary information on adjustment arrangements of franchised buses to the Secretariat on 7 May 2021. The Secretariat had relayed the information for Members' reference.)

Item IV: Profile of the Northern Link project (T&TC Paper No. 3/2021)

Item III: Questions raised by Members (Cont-d):

(4) **Mr WONG Wai-yin, Zachary proposed to discuss the latest development of the MTR Northern Link project
(T&TC Paper No. 12/2021)**

10. As the above two items were interrelated, the Chairman suggested discussing them altogether.

11. The Chairman welcomed the following persons to the meeting:

Highways Department

Chief Engineer/Railway Development	Mr. YEUNG Hon-fai, Humphrey
Senior Engineer/Railway Development	Mr. HUI Ka-kit, Desmond
Engineer/ Railway Development	Mr. LU Wan-him

MTR Corporation Limited

Senior Liaison Engineer	Mr FUNG Wai-chung
Projects Communications Manager	Mr MAN Ka-yue

12. Mr Humphrey YEUNG, Highways Department (HyD) and Mr MAN Ka-yue, MTR Corporation Limited (MTRC) briefed the above Paper.

13. Members' views on the issue were summarised as follows: :

- (1) currently residents of Yuen Long and Long Ping were difficult to board a train while there would be further development in Kam Tin South. The MTRC Paper failed to explain the pressure exerted on Kam Sheung Road Station by two major areas of San Tin and Kwu Tung after opening of the Northern Link. Waiting time might also increase. Members asked how much commuting time could be saved by the Northern Link, the assumptions and calculation methods;
- (2) suggested increasing the number of doors and allowing empty trains to start in Kam Sheung Road Station to speed up the flow of interchanging passengers. Only one more car as proposed by MTRC was hard to carry the new passengers. It was also suggested increasing the frequency of West Rail Line from 4 minutes to 2 minutes and asked whether MTRC planned to increase train frequency;
- (3) pointed out that as completion of various developments would bring about a population increase of 500,000 in Yuen Long, which would be a double of the current population, even updating signalling system by MTRC would not suffice. It was also suggested that MTRC could consider opening new bus routes to Tsuen Wan West and the urban area, so that they did not need to rely solely on the West Rail Line;
- (4) pointed out that under the two proposed interchange stations of the Northern Link, a passenger from Yuen Long needed to interchange twice at Kam Sheung Road and

Kwu Tung to get to Sheung Shui. It was asked whether the Kwu Tung Interchange could be changed to Sheung Shui by lengthening the railway through platform sharing. MTRC was asked to explain why the above arrangement could not be adopted, whether it was a technical or service reason. Trains from Sheung Shui to Lok Ma Chau were not frequent. Considering the waiting time of interchanging passengers to board the above train, the travelling time from Kam Sheung Road to Kwu Tung might reach half an hour, instead of 12 minutes as shown in the Paper. Members requested to provide a more efficient interchange plan;

- (5) MTRC said to TTC before that as trains started from Pak Heung Depot, they could not arrange for more trains at Kam Sheung Road Station due to the traffic direction. However, MTRC said in this meeting that special trains or even additional trains could be arranged at Kam Sheung Road Station. MTRC were asked to explain the reason for the difference. Members were of the view that special trains could have been arranged if this was feasible;
- (6) wanted a clarification on whether the position of the Northern Link was a short-or long-distance line. In case of the latter, Kwu Tung Station should directly connect the East Rail Line and Kam Sheung Road should directly connect to a station in Kowloon. It was considered that the Northern Link under the current proposal was a short-distance line as it ran on a different trail from the East Rail Line. Such design was not in line with the original idea of the Northern Link;
- (7) the costs of the first and second phase were 3.5 billion and 58.5 billion respectively, which were based on the price level of 2015. Inflation was not considered. Moreover, as there would be a number of developments in Yuen Long, it was foreseen that labour shortage would further increase the costs. HyD and MTRC were asked to provide the cost estimation based on price level of 2021. Making reference to recent projects of MTRC, the estimated costs of the Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail (XRL) were more than 60 billion with rail length of 26 km. As the Northern Link was only 10 km long, the costs nearly doubled to projects in similar year. The reason for such high costs was asked;
- (8) the Government once said that the works of Hung Shui Kiu Station would commence in 2024 but the site was still untouched. It was doubted whether the works of the Northern Link could commence in 2025 and end in 2034 as scheduled;

- (9) said that the Paper of the Department did not tell whether the Northern Link would be connected to Shenzhen railway in the future. The Government should promptly announce such plan if any;
- (10) said that construction of the Hong Kong Section of the XRL affected underground water and local agriculture of Ngau Tam Mei and Mai Po. The Paper of the Department showed the preliminary alignment and the Government contacted the village head, rural villagers and individual groups of San Tin in the past two years. This proved that the Government knew the approximate alignment of the project and estimated that the project would disturb local ecology and agriculture. The Department was asked to announce the ecological and environmental impacts as soon as possible;
- (11) said that although the Government would conduct an environmental impact assessment (EIA), the EIA of the Hong Kong Section of the XRL did not fully assess the environmental destruction, such as the underground water problem. Members did not agree to look at the negative ecological impacts merely through an EIA;
- (12) said that the professionals commissioned by the Government for the Hong Kong Section of the XRL said that the lost underground water would be recovered but upon its completion, the underground water level did not return to the previous level. Residents also did not receive compensation for cracks in their houses. Those engaged in fisheries needed to find another job. MTRC pumped out water from the ventilation well every day and allowed underground water to flow away without storing it for local use. MTRC had found a loss adjuster but they always supported MTRC and failed to safeguard rights of the villagers. HyD was more intended to accept the report of MTRC. Members wanted the government departments to enhance supervision on works implementation of MTRC and solve the problems of Ngau Tam Mei before introducing a new project. Conservation work might start only after completion of a project, but ecology had already been destroyed by then;
- (13) wanted MTRC to make more compensation for villagers affected by the Northern Link than the ones affected by the Hong Kong Section of the XRL. At that time, only 0.02 cent per feet was paid for resuming villagers' land under the Railways Ordinance;
- (14) asked about the number of squatters to be removed and affected villagers under the

proposed development and worried that villagers lost their homes;

- (15) asked whether topside properties would be developed at new railway stations of the Northern Link; if yes, the Department and MTRC should consider whether the topside properties could cover construction expenditure; if not, they could consider setting up a green station like Hin Keng Station. Members also asked about the exact considerations of setting up railway stations;
- (16) asked whether MTRC had ruled out the option of adopting the financing arrangement of direct government funds, how to avoid over-expenditure and whether passengers needed to pay for the excess construction costs if any;
- (17) asked whether the project would adopt an overhead railway as there were a large number of artefacts in Kam Tin and whether the design would cater to the possibly affected artefacts;
- (18) asked about the respective patronage of local and cross-border passengers of the Northern Link estimated by MTRC and HyD;
- (19) said that the Paper of the Department only showed figures on domestic flats without estimation on employment along the railway and estimated number of users of San Tin and Kwu Tung. The project might only benefit residents and those going to hike. Members worried that the economic benefits of the Northern Link were not as great as expected;
- (20) opined that the proposed employment exhibition of MTRC only provided job opportunities during the works while residents was hard to go to the urban area because of overloading of Kam Sheung Road Interchange. Members wanted that sufficient job opportunities could be provided along the Northern Link;
- (21) according to the current schedule of works completion in 2034, considering also the possible delay, it might take 13 years from 2021 to complete the works. Members did not understand why the works took so long with the use of current technology;
- (22) asked about the pros and cons of adopting overhead and underground railways;
- (23) railway accidents became more serious recently and shuttle buses could not speed up passenger flow. Members suggested that the Northern Link and the connecting

East Rail and West Rail Lines shared their tracks. When an accident occurred on one side, trains could adopt the track on another side, so that the whole track could run on a loop;

- (24) asked how to help residents of Yuen Long to take the West Rail Line to urban area if one line, such as East Rail to Hung Hom, was out of order during peak hours and many passengers went to the urban area via the Northern Link and Kam Sheung Road Station;
- (25) asked about the detailed plan and schedule and when the alignment would be confirmed. Looking back to previous MTRC projects, if a project was scheduled to commence in 2023, MTRC should submit its funding application to the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council by end-2021 but no preparation of MTRC was seen;
- (26) said that HyD and MTRC did not give a clear response on the load factor of Kam Sheung Road Station and considered that the Government's estimation did not include Tuen Ma Line, Tuen Mun South Extension, Hung Shui Kiu Station and increase in population. Members considered that the Northern Link might intensify the loading problem; and
- (27) asked whether updates of the Northern Link would be submitted for DC discussion, whether the Government had solicited views of the villagers and about the progress of consultation work.

14. The responses of Mr Humphrey YEUNG were summarised below:

- (1) preliminary assessment of MTRC showed that congestion of the West Rail Line in the morning would intensify upon completion of the Northern Link. The Department had asked MTRC to further review the impact of the project on West Rail Line at the stage of detailed planning and study and provide mitigation plan on possible congestion;
- (2) HyD and TD had commenced the "Strategic Studies on Railways and Major Roads beyond 2030" to review transportation needs after 2031 and look into strategic development of transportation infrastructure network based on latest planning figures;

- (3) HyD would commission an independent consultancy to help review the project design and cost effectiveness of the Northern Link. They would also try to reduce unnecessary design;
- (4) said that the schedule and cost in the Paper were the preliminary information contained in the MTRC project proposal. The schedule and cost would be further reviewed at the detailed design stage. The Department would request MTRC to try to speed up project implementation;
- (5) said that the Department mainly intended to introduce the Northern Link project in the meeting. MTRC had entered the stage of detailed planning and design of the Northern Link. Alignment, stations and other details would be confirmed at this stage. DC and the public would be consulted according to existing procedures when appropriate;
- (6) said that currently there was no schedule of launching an extension of the Northern Link. The Government would make further consideration in view of the increase in demand for cross-border transportation;
- (7) said that an EIA would be conducted when launching the Northern Link and expected that the Northern Link would run via rural area and affected the ecology there. The Department would also consider valuable structures and other ground facilities. In principle, the impact of the works on nearby ecology and local life would be minimised and appropriate mitigation measures would be proposed. Public consultation on the assessment results would be carried out according to existing procedures. The Department would also actively follow up on the impact on land and environment;
- (8) said that MTRC would review the exact alignment and locations of stations based on cost, time, risks and other factors at the detailed design stage. MTRC was still reviewing whether to adopt overhead or underground alignment and railways. The railways and the alignment would run through rural area no matter they were overhead or underground. The actual transport and environmental impacts would be further assessed;
- (9) said that the Northern Link project adopted the ownership approach. Under this approach, MTRC was responsible for finance, design, construction, operation, repairs and maintenance of the project, and owned the railway, while the

Government would subsidise the projects which were financially infeasible. MTRC needed to undertake commercial risks arisen from railway design, construction, operation, repairs and maintenance, etc. The Government would discuss with MTRC the financing arrangements and negotiate the subsidy mode at the stage of detailed planning and design;

- (10) said that the Government would prudently consider land development and disposal along the railway based on prevailing land policy;
- (11) said that the Northern Link was a connection between Kam Sheung Road and Kwu Tung. A passenger of the West Rail Line needed to interchange for the Northern Link at Kam Sheung Road Station. In principle, interchange arrangement needed to be convenient and minimised interchange time. Interchange time at railway stations was normally a few minutes. The Department would request MTRC to improve interchange arrangement and minimised interchange time at the detailed design stage;
- (12) said that the estimated travelling time of the Northern Link from Kam Sheung Road to Kwu Tung was 12 minutes. The estimated travelling time from Kam Sheung Road to Au Tau, Ngau Tam Mei and San Tin was 2, 5 and 7 minutes respectively which was much shorter than road traffic. The Northern Link formed a loop with the East Rail and West Rail Lines to improve connection between New Territories East and West. If railway services were suspended, the Northern Link could be an alternative for passengers to choose another railway line to the urban area;
- (13) said that space had been reserved for Kwu Tung Station of the Northern Link when constructing the Lok Ma Chau Spur Line and so Kwu Tung was the interchange station under the current design;
- (14) pointed out that the Northern Link served five main functions: (1) to improve connection between New Territories East and West; (2) to serve as an alternative line to enhance stability of the railway network; (3) to enable those living in New Territories North to reach the urban area more quickly; (4) to enable those living along the West Rail Line to reach control points of Lok Ma Chau and Lo Wu more quickly; and (5) to unleash the development potential of areas along the railway line. MTRC would assess patronage of the Northern Link in view of the latest planning information at the stage of detailed planning and design. It was expected currently that the Northern Link mainly served those living in New Territories West and North.

Cross-border passengers were expected to be some of those who currently used the East Rail Line to go to Lo Wu and Lok Ma Chau. Relevant departments had been announcing regularly the information on the number of users at control points;

- (15) said that the cost figures in the current MTRC project proposal were preliminary estimates. HyD would commission an individual consultancy to review the costs;
- (16) said that as the backbone of public transport system, railway was an environmentally friendly and efficient means of mass transport. It was expected that reliance of those living in New Territories West on road traffic would be significantly reduced upon completion of the Northern Link. Road congestion and pollution would also be mitigated;
- (17) said that land along the Northern Link would be developed in phases. Kwu Tung Station of the first phase of the Northern Link mainly served the New Development of Kwu Tung North. The second phase of the Northern Link included three intermittent stations of San Tin, Ngau Tam Mei and Au Tau. Land development along the railway line was at preliminary stage. The planning of San Tin/Lok Ma Chau Development Node (STLMC DN) was in progress at the same time. Relevant departments including the Planning Department (PD) and the Civil Engineering Development Department (CEDD) would introduce the planning of STLMC DN to DC. The land use study on brownfield and housing developments in Ngau Tam Mei and Au Tau would commence soon. Housing development along the second phase of the Northern Link was subject to the progress of the above study and the works. The Department would urge MTRC to closely follow the implementation schedule and other relevant departments would coordinate to ensure sufficient transportation services for local residents;
- (18) said that the works of Kwu Tung Station under the first phase of the Northern Link was within the land area of the Lok Ma Chau Spur Line. It was expected that existing public utilities would not be affected and there would be no need for resumption of private land. It was expected that the main line of the second phase of the Northern Link, i.e. the section between Kwu Tun and Kam Sheung Road would inevitably affect the land along the line. MTRC would assess the required amount of land at the stage of detailed planning and design. They would follow the main principle of occupying the least area of land when considering different plans of land resumption;

- (19) noted Members' view on dealing with rural issue related to the Hong Kong Section of the XRL. After reviewing previous management experience of railway projects and making reference to supervision mechanisms of overseas large-scale railway projects, the Government would implement specific measures to enhance control on safety, quality, schedule and cost of the railway project, with a view to strengthening public trust on quality of railway works;
- (20) said that the current implementation schedule was a preliminary estimation. Detailed planning and design involved various items, such as EIA, geological inspection, related legal procedures, etc. As the alignment of the Northern Link would run through area with ecological value, MTRC needed to implement mitigation measures and so certain time was required for implementation of works.

15. The responses of Mr MAN Ka-yue were summarised below:

- (1) said that MTRC had considered factors of incoming population and increase in passengers of the West Rail Line. As the Tuen Ma Line fully opened, the number of cars of the West Rail Line would increase from 7 to 8. The maximum patronage increased by 14%, from 49 200 to 56 200. MTRC would make reference to the patronage and travelling mode after opening of the Tuen Ma Line in designing the Northern Link. In order to speed up passenger flow of the West Rail Line during peak hours, MTRC would also carry out other service arrangements, such as increasing service assistants in platforms and arranging special trains from Tin Shui Wai to Hung Hom during peak hours. MTRC would continue to review the operation of the West Rail Line and include corresponding service arrangements in the design of the Northern Link project;
- (2) said that Hung Shui Kiu Station was one of the projects under the Railway Development Strategy 2014. The company had submitted the proposal to the Government earlier and was providing supplementary information. The Government needed to have a comprehensive review on the project from various aspects, such as law, land, alignment, community impact, etc. DC Members would be timely informed of latest updates;
- (3) said that MTRC complied with the statutory environmental requirements in terms of project design, construction and operation of the Northern Link. MTRC would commission an environmental consultant later to assess the potential environmental

impact of the works and operations. Mitigation measures would be proposed to reduce impact on the public and the environment;

- (4) said that the impact of incoming population of the new development area of Kam Tim South on loading capacity of the West Rail Line to Tsuen Wan during morning peak would be considered when planning the Northern Link in detail. MTRC might also deploy empty cars for busy stations, similar to other lines;
- (5) noted Members' view on design of the interchange station. The current MTRC railway system included a number of interchange stations. The most important concern of the design and operation was convenience for passengers. MTRC would try their best to adjust walking distance, interchange arrangements and signs. Interchange arrangements at Kam Sheung Road and Kwu Tung Stations would be planned in detail during the stage of detailed planning and design. They would relay Members' suggestions on interchange design to the design team;
- (6) opined that the Northern Link provided a better transport option for residents of Yuen Long to go to North District. The travelling time from Yuen Long to Kwu Tung would decrease from 60 minutes for road traffic to 12 minutes. Railway operations were also more reliable than road traffic. For example, during night peak, buses sometimes skipped Castle Peak - Yuen Long when one wanted to take a bus in Sun Yuen Long Centre;
- (7) said that the Northern Link connected East Rail and West Rail Lines to form a loop in New Territories Northwest which enhanced connection between New Territories West and East. It was highly possible that residents or travellers travelling southward to Kowloon West chose the Northern Link and interchange for the Tuen Ma Line. The company would certainly review patronage and travelling mode in planning the Northern Link project to cope with future needs of passengers;
- (8) said that MTRC would work with the Government and the independent consultancy to stringently assess operational costs, each work item and preliminary cost estimation when carrying out detailed planning and design;
- (9) said that the Northern Link would enter construction stage after planning. MTRC would consider organising employment talks and exhibitions along the railway line to attract local residents to join their construction team. They would look into the feasibility of increasing local employment through employment exhibitions after the

meeting;

- (10) said that MTRC would conduct an EIA on the Northern Link project including assessment of underground water if necessary;
- (11) said that MTRC mainly intended to introduce the project and was willing to report further progress to DC;
- (12) said that empty direct trains to main stations could be arranged when there were too many waiting passengers. Currently, similar arrangement was available when there were too many passengers of the Island Line waiting for a train of the Tsuen Wan Line at the platform. MTRC needed to further review the patronage and travelling mode before considering for special trains. Members' views would be relayed to the design team. However, whether immediate implementation of the arrangement would be subject to passenger flow;
- (13) said that the works of the Hong Kong Section of the XRL commenced in September 2018. Residents of Ngau Tam Mei highly concerned about underground water level during construction and MTRC commissioned a loss adjuster to follow up on the issue based on existing mechanism;
- (14) said that MTRC was still dealing with the remaining works of the Hong Kong Section of the XRL in Ngau Tam Mei, such as fencing and returning government land to the Lands Department. MTRC would continue to communicate with local villagers;
- (15) said that the main line of the Northern Link from Kam Sheung Road to Kwu Tung run through a lot of rural communities. With the experience of the Hong Kong Section of the XRL, MTRC promised to have more communication with local villagers on the Northern Link project. The company would set up a community liaison office and community liaison team later to make use of general meetings as a communication channel. They wanted to enhance coverage, scale and frequency of communication, as well as the liaison mode in rural area, so as to minimize the impact of the works on the environment and villagers;
- (16) said that he would follow up on the remaining works in Pak Heung with DC Members of relevant constituencies after the meeting;

- (17) said that the works schedule would be formulated based on complexity of works and required time for detailed project planning and design. The first phase which involving construction of Kwu Tung Station would commence in 2023 and end in 2027. The second phase which involving construction of the main line would commence in 2025 and end in 2034. Upon preliminary study, Kwu Tung Station was better placed to complete the works earlier, compared to the main line of the Northern Link. Therefore, it was suggested that the works of the Northern Link should be divided into two phases to allow earlier opening of Kwu Tung Station to serve the public;
- (18) said that the Hong Kong Section of the XRL and the Shatin to Central Link adopted the concession approach while the Northern Link adopted the ownership approach. The company owned the railway and was responsible for finance, design, construction, operation, repairs and maintenance of the project. The company would also negotiate with the Government on financing arrangements to ask for subsidy on excess amount to make the project financially feasible;
- (19) noted Members' concern about future congestion of the Tuen Ma Line. Latest planning figures would be reviewed when carrying out detailed design. New developments in Kam Tin South, future population increase in Yuen Long and the additional passenger flow in case the East Rail Line was out of order and passengers shifted to the West Rail Line would be considered so that the company could accurately review the patronage and travelling mode when designing the project; and
- (20) said that the proposed alignment of the Northern Link in Yuen Long mainly ran through rural area, involving rural committees (RCs) of Kam Tin and San Tin. After briefing DC, the next step was to contact the chairmen of the two RCs and introduce the project to members of executive committees, representatives of villages, etc. so that they could establish a close connection with the rural community.

16. The responses of Mr FUNG Wai-chung, MTRC were summarised below:

- (1) said that the Hong Kong Section of the XRL and the Shatin to Central Link adopted the concession approach under which the Government owned the railway and entrusted MTRC with the construction. The Government needed to seek funding from the Legislative Council in terms of finance. The financing arrangement and mode were different for the Northern Link project which adopted the ownership

approach. MTRC owned the railway and was responsible for finance, design, construction, operation, repairs, maintenance, etc. of the project. After negotiating the subsidy arrangement with the Government, they would supervise MTRC from various aspects such as cost, quality, time, etc. until the project was completed. MTRC would fully undertake the costs and risks afterwards, so the company concerned much about cost control and promised to prudently manage their finances;

- (2) said that the Capital Works Committee under the Board of Directors was formed by the engineering team and other departments and needed to regularly report the overall financial situation to the Board of Directors. The Capital Works Committee commissioned an independent consultancy for the project in 2018. The project consultancy proposed to monitor construction expenditure by a comprehensive management system and a digital site supervision system was introduced in 2019. Building Information Modelling (BIM) was also adopted to supervise the works. For the purpose of cost control, a committee would inspect project costs every month and check all variables to anticipate risks and changes. During detailed planning and design, MTRC would review the overall construction, operation and costs of the works with the independent consultancy of the Government. The company would also conduct regular risk assessment meetings to ensure prompt identification of risks and implementation of appropriate mitigation measures;
- (3) said that the estimation of project expenditure was based on the price level on the date of settlement and the base year. Costs could be adjusted even in case of early or late completion as they would be calculated based on the price level of that day;
- (4) said that development of topside properties was one of the feasible modes but they needed to discuss with the Government before making any decision;
- (5) said that reduction of carbon emissions and make environmental contributions were the social targets of every railway line of the company. Latest international environmental standards would be complied with when constructing stations of new extensions. Moreover, the company would consider whether passengers would accept stations with natural ventilation and without air-conditioning. This would be part of the public consultation;
- (6) regarding the suggestion on using the shared platform of Sheung Shui as an interchange of the Northern Link, northbound East Rail Line currently reaches Lo Wu or Lok Ma Chau. If the Northern Link also designated Sheung Shui as

interchange, the railway would become a tree network which brought about more complicated service arrangements. The company created models based on points of departure and destinations of passengers of each district to review sections with more passengers and arrangements of interchange stations. If the Lok Ma Chau Spur Line of the East Rail Line was used to reduce the number of interchanges, only alternate trains or one in a few trains would connect the Northern Link. For example, only one in three trains of Tseung Kwan O Line went to the Lohas Park which lengthened the waiting time. If destinations of most passengers were within major sections and interchanges were arranged at those with fewer passengers, the overall travelling time would be shorter;

- (7) MTRC noticed the complaints on loss of underground water in Ngau Tam Mei when building the XRL. The EIA for the Northern Link would also assess the impact of the works on underground water level;
- (8) said that the company had many feasible design in terms of hardware of railway network and a department of transportation planning was responsible for monitoring points of departure and destinations with highest patronage. The department would make special train arrangements at major road sections to cope with the number of passengers;
- (9) said that signalling system and legal restrictions were the key to control the travelling time of the whole railway system. For example, speed of the West Rail Line from Kam Sheung Road to Tsuen Wan West was restricted by law when running through the Lantau Island. It was hoped that trains could be more frequent after enhancement of the signalling system. The company might also provide special trains and short-distance trains to cope with passengers' needs by increasing the overall loading capacity; and
- (10) pointed out that upon completion of the Northern Link, the loop included four railway sections. Even when one of them was out of order, the remaining three could still form another network which minimised the risk. If the railways were fully connected, service area would shrink drastically when the system network was out of order. The Northern Link diverted passengers of New Territories East and West to the East Rail and West Rail Lines. If accidents took place, the remaining loading capacity could maintain the whole transportation system.

17. The Chairman concluded that Members unanimously had reservation on the current

schedule, budget and plans of the Northern Link project. Members asked HyD and MTRC to deal with the problem of underground water in Ngau Tam Mei and submit a more concrete design and plan of the Northern Link to DC later. Members also wanted MTRC to follow up on the arrangement of special trips of Kam Sheung Road Station.

**(5) Mr CHEUNG Sau-yin proposed to widen the barrier-free access facilities as part of the improvement works at LTR Yuen Long Station
(T&TC Paper No. 13/2021)**

18. The Chairman welcomed the following persons to the meeting:

MTR Corporation Limited

Public Relations Executive - External Affairs

Mr HO Hei, Jazz

Public Relations Manager - External Affairs

Ms LAM Yuen, Annie

19. Mr HO Hei, MTRC briefed the Paper on the works of widening the barrier-free access in Yuen Long Light Rail Station.

20. The Chairman concluded that Members unanimously supported the works and hoped that the works could be completed as soon as possible.

Item II: Matter arising (Cont-d):

**(2) Mr CHEUNG Sau-yin, Mr CHEUNG Chi-yeung, Felix, Mr KWOK Man-ho, Mr LEE Chun-wai, Mr LEE Wai-fung, Deco, Mr LI Chung-chi, Ms NG Yuk-ying, Mr SZETO Pok-man and Mr WONG Pak-yu proposed to discuss the derailment of a light rail train
(T&TC Paper No. 53/2020)**

21. The Chairman concluded that Members noted the content of the MTRC report and wanted that MTRC could implement the improvement measures as soon as possible and seriously follow up on the safety issue.

Item III: Questions raised by Members (Cont-d):

- (6) **Mr SZETO Pok-man, Mr LEE Chun-wai, Mr FONG Ho-hin, Mr WONG Wai-yin, Zachary, Mr MAK Ip-sing, Hon KWONG Chun-yu, Ms CHAN Mei-lin, Mr TO Ka-lun, Mr CHAN Kinglun, Kisslan, Mr SHEK King-ching, Mr CHEUNG Sau-yin, Mr LAI Kwok-wing, Samuel, Mr LAM Ting-wai, Mr LEUNG Takming, Mr CHAN Shu-fai, Mr CHEUNG Chi-yeung, Felix, Mr AU Kwok-kuen, Mr HAU Man-kin, Mr HO Wai-pan, Mr NG Hin-wang, Ms NG Yuk-ying, Ms LAI Po-wa, Mr LAM Chun, Ms CHAN Sze-nga, Mr LEE Wai-fung, Deco, Mr NG Kin-wai, Mr HONG Chin-wah, Mr KWOK Man-ho, Mr KWAN Chun-sang, Mr WONG Pak-yu, Mr MO Kai-hong, Mr LI Chung-chi and Ms WONG Wing-sze proposed to review the overall planning of both internal and external transport links in the Tai Tong area (T&TC Paper No. 14/2021)**
- (7) **Mr CHEUNG Sau-yin proposed to discuss traffic congestion problems at Tai Tong Road (T&TC Paper No. 15/2021)**
-

22. As the above two items were interrelated, the Chairman suggested discussing them altogether.

23. The Chairman welcomed the following persons to the meeting:

Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited

Assistant Manager (Planning & Development)

Manager (Operations)

Manager (Public Affairs)

Mr TANG Ching-kit, Desmond

Ms WONG Yee-ling, Debby

Ms LEUNG Ka-yan, Betsy

MTR Corporation Limited

Public Relations Manager - External Affairs

Ms LAM Yuen, Annie

24. Members' views on the issue were summarised as follows: :

- (1) said that Members' traffic improvement suggestions were supported by figures. According to the opinion survey of last year, 80% of passengers of K66 route considered that the travelling time was too long while 80% of passengers of K66 route wanted the route to be extended to Yuen Long Station;

- (2) asked whether Member's suggestion on special buses from Tai Tong via Yuen Long Station of the West Rail Line and Tai Lam Interchange was feasible. KMB cross-district buses during morning and night peaks of both 968X and 968A had 2 to 4 buses. This proved that there were sufficient passengers in the industrial area. KMB's estimation on number of passengers in Tai Tong was asked;
- (3) wanted MTRC to promptly increase the number of K66 special buses before the red leaves season returned. Reference could be made to the special bus route K66A which only operated during that season when considering the route of K66. The congested section of Kau Yuk Road could be avoided, so that buses could reach the West Rail Line station more quickly and fewer vehicles would travel to Kau Yuk Road;
- (4) asked KMB whether they would re-launch the weekend bus route 68R and suggested adding an intermittent station at Yuen Long Station, so as to divert passengers of K66 and provide one more option for local residents to go to Yuen Long Station;
- (5) was of the view that launching of bus services could reduce the number of private cars. Therefore, TD should not refuse adding bus routes in Tai Tong Road due to busy traffic. As the bus stop of Wong Nai Tun was not available for use, it was suggested setting the terminus at the pavilion of Tai Tong Shan Road. Two bus companies used that location as bus terminus in the previous red leaves season without facing much difficulty. KMB was asked whether the estimated number of passengers was high enough;
- (6) said that in view of the transport demand of hiking travellers during weekends, it was considered appropriate to extend the service hours of the special route K66S;
- (7) considered that it was not possible for the two trial special buses in rural area to paralyse road traffic. TD should not use the excuse of traffic congestion to ignore the rural transport demand. It was said that TD also provided special buses for newly completed housing estates with only few thousand residents. However, the rural area of Tai Tong might involve more than 10,000 people and they should be able to enjoy public bus services;
- (8) said that local rural organisations wanted to make an application for residents' bus

service. As new residents' services were rare in recent years and it was hard to put forward point-to-point routes in rural area as requested by TD, Members asked the Department to consider relaxing the application criteria for residents' buses in rural area by allowing multiple boarding/alighting spots;

- (9) said that more passengers went to Yuen Long Station from Tai Tong and so Members wanted MTRC to relocate the bus terminus from Long Ping Station to Yuen Long Station;
- (10) said that as there was serious congestion in Tai Tong Road, many vehicles failed to follow the yellow grids at the junction of KOLOUR to park; and
- (11) said that taxis were always queuing from Kau Yuk Road to Tai Tong Road and so vehicles were hard to make a turn there. Letters of taxi association was received, stating that they wanted to keep the pick-up/drop-off point while local residents suggested that TD could carry out improvement works at the pick-up/drop-off point in Kau Yuk Road. The Department was asked to look into how to respond to these two types of views.

25. The responses of Ms LEUNG Ka-yan, KMB were summarised below:

- (1) said that KMB held an open attitude towards the route proposed by Members and would continue to discuss with Members and TD;
- (2) said that KMB route 68R was a special route approved by TD to operate on designated days during the red leaves season. This route was allowed to run for three days last year. KMB understood that more and more people were interested to hike in Tai Tong and could continue to look into regularisation of 68R; and
- (3) said that more and more people worked in Kwun Tong and Kowloon Bay and KMB noticed that overall transport demand during commuting hours was rising. They would report to Members if they conducted a survey on patronage demand in the future.

26. The responses of Ms LAM Yuen, MTRC were summarised below:

- (1) said that MTRC had been communicating and conducting site inspection with Members on traffic situation of the series of K66 bus services at the early, interim

and later stages of the red leaves season to understand the community concern on bus services during weekdays and holidays. MTRC was reviewing room for improvement of current services;

- (2) said that K66 had been providing service during holidays and special buses when necessary. K66S provided service during holidays and Sundays from January to 28 February. Buses between 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. started service in Ping Cheong Path while those between 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. started from Tai Tong Shan Road. The company noticed that the transport demand significantly dropped after the red leaves season and understood the regular demand of hiking visitors. According to preliminary planning, K66S which was originally scheduled to stop service on 28 February would extend and provide services on Sundays. The details were still being discussed both internally and with TD; and
- (3) understood the problem of traffic congestion in Kau Yuk Road in the morning and would actively look into providing special morning buses which skipped Kau Yuk Road.

27. The responses of Mr Kelvin TSANG, TD were summarised below:

- (1) said that the Department encouraged passengers to make use of the interchange plan and existing mass transport resources. Currently, passengers of Tai Tong could take MTRC shuttle bus K66 and then choose to take a train to Kowloon East or Kwun Tong or interchange for a bus to Kwun Tong, like 268C, 268A, 268P, etc. of KMB;
- (2) noted the public expectation and demand for point-to-point transport. TD had existing mechanism to process applications for residents' buses and would pay attention to the population increase in Yuen Long South and the local traffic. They would look into the possibility of increasing public transport and select a suitable operator based on existing procedures when necessary;
- (3) said that the Department held an open attitude towards the suggestion on MTRC shuttle bus K66 skipping Kau Yuk Road and would study current travelling figures with MTRC to understand the possibility of opening special buses between Long Ping Station and Wong Nai Tun Tsuen without travelling via Kau Yuk Road during peak hours;

- (4) said that the Department had communicated with MTRC after the red leaves season of Tai Tong. MTRC currently provided a few special buses between Long Ping Station and Tai Tong Shan Road on Sundays. As patronage dropped after the red leaves season, they had reservation on regularisation of route 68R of KMB. They would pay close attention to the passengers' demand of Tai Tong and select a suitable operator based on existing procedures when a new route was necessary;
- (5) pointed out that as roads in Tai Tong were rather narrow and traffic was congested under geographical restrictions, some of the bus stops at Wong Nai Tun Tsuen needed to be given up in order to have a terminus at the pavilion which affected some villagers, so the Department hoped that passengers could use the current bus stop;
- (6) said that geographical environment was considered when determining location of the terminal. Currently, staff needed to be deployed there help the MTRC shuttle buses K66 u-turn at the Wong Nai Tun Terminus. It was hard to accommodate more operators to share the facilities at this stage. TD would consider increasing public transport services when necessary, subject to increase in local demand;
- (7) noted Members' view on having trial run for special buses during peak hours in the afternoon. The Department would review travelling figures with MTRC and carry out follow-up actions; and
- (8) said that TD could not make any promise on processing of applications for increasing the number of pick-up/drop-off points of residents' buses. They needed to assess traffic situation of individual spots.

28. The responses of Mr Wilson MAN, TD were summarised below:

- (1) said that "No stopping" zones of 7 a.m. - 7 p.m. or 7 a.m. - midnight were set up at the junction of Tai Tong Road turning into Kau Yuk Road. Site inspection found that illegal parking led to traffic congestion. TD had requested the Police to enhance enforcement and the Police would make appropriate prosecutions based on the law. As the location was close to a road junction, loading/unloading there would have a more serious impact on traffic congestion. TD would consider setting up a 24-hour "No stopping" zone which was commonly known as double yellow lines; and

- (2) pointed out that queuing was not allowed at a pick-up/drop-off point in principle. The Department did remind taxi associations and considered setting up a 24-hour "No stopping" zone before the taxi stand to prevent queuing.

29. The Chairman concluded that TD and the Police were asked to follow up on congestion caused by taxis in Kau Yuk Road. Moreover, as Members had made several investigations on traffic of Tai Tong, they hoped that KMB and TD could accept Members' suggestions.

**Item V: Traffic improvement measures in the area of Fung Kam Street, Yuen Long
(T&TC Paper No. 4/2021)**

30. The Chairman welcomed the following persons to the meeting:

Transport Department

Senior Engineer Strategic Studies 1
Engineer/Strategic Studies 6

Mr. HUI Ka-chun, Billy
Ms. CHIU Chi-heng, Sharon

MVA Hong Kong Limited

Associate Director
Assistant Traffic Engineer

Mr CHING Kam-shing, Gary
Mr YUEN Ka-lok, Eric

31. Mr Billy HUI, TD and Mr CHING Kam-shing of the consultancy briefed the above Paper.

32. Members' views on the issue were summarised as follows: :

- (1) opined that the overall planning included too many traffic lights;
- (2) said that the main reason for congestion in Fung Cheung was the significant increase in private cars brought by population increase in Yuen Long. Vehicles were hard to get to Fung Cheung Road from Fung Yau Street North;
- (3) said that only half of Fung Kam Street was changed to one-way road and the effect would not be significant;
- (4) said that vehicles of Fung Kam Street could originally turn right into Fung Yau Street South. When vehicles were waiting to turn into Fung Yau Street South, those at westbound Fung Yau Street South could exit. In the future, vehicles of Fung Kam

Street could only go straight and it would be more difficult for vehicles at Fung Yau Street South to exit;

- (5) considered that even green lights at Fung Cheung Road and Fung Ki Road could not clear the queue as many vehicles could not right turn into Fung Ki Road and the queue reached Fung Yau Street South;
- (6) changing Fung Yau Street South into one-way traffic might bring about smooth traffic. It was also pointed out that the consultancy assumed that there was no illegal parking at Fung Yau Street South. Congestion would still exist if illegal parking was not reduced;
- (7) considered that the suggestion on forbidding vehicles to enter Fung Kam Street North from Fung Yau Street was not feasible. Vehicles could only enter from the end of Fung Kam Street near the fire station. If a traffic accident occurred there, vehicles would be hard to go to Kai Tei and its surrounding;
- (8) agreed with the suggestion on retrieving the planters at the junction of Kin Lok Street for a wider junction but they did not understand why kerb was put at the middle of Fung Cheung Road and the junction of Kin Lok Street after widening the junction. They also had reservation on the suggestion on forbidding vehicles to turn left from Fung Cheung Road into Fung Yau Street North and worried that all vehicles of the town centre would travel via Fau Tsoi Street and Yau San Street, instead of Kin Lok Street. Vehicles would mainly exit from the junction of Yau San Street and Hop Yick Road while the vehicular flow of Yau San Street and Hop Yick Road was already very high. The junction of Hop Choi Street and Hop Yick Road at the back was also very congested. They worried whether the junction of Hop Yick Road could accommodate the increase in vehicular flow after such change in Kin Lok Street. They asked whether TD had conducted a study on vehicular flow;
- (9) opined that widening the junction of Fung Cheung Road for vehicles entering from Fung Kam Street and one-way traffic of Fung Kwan Street were more feasible, as Fung Kwan Street was rather narrow and illegal parking was common there. It was also suggested redirecting the traffic direction towards YOHO MALL;
- (10) said that fewer pedestrians used Fung Cheung Road and opined that narrowing the pedestrian path to increase one more northbound lane was preferable;

- (11) had reservation changing Fung Yau Street North from two-way into one-way road and changing road surface into parking spaces. The road surface there was wide and so it was suggested maintaining the two-way road. Changing into one-way road would urge vehicles to speed up. It was considered that such arrangements were not needed in residential area;
- (12) said that according to a local opinion survey, 80% and 70% of interviewees supported one-way traffic at Fung Kwan Street and Fung Yau Street South respectively, while only about 50% supported changing Fung Yau Street North into one-way road. It was suggested implementing the measures with more support first. As the plan on Fung Yau Street North was more controversial, the consultancy should conduct site visits and collect local views. Members hoped that the plan could be adjusted;
- (13) asked about the schedule of project as it involved land resumption;
- (14) asked about the exact opening date of Ma Tong Road Connection;
- (15) opined that congestion of the whole Yuen Long District was out of illegal parking. Illegally parked vehicles on both sides made the road no difference with one-way road. Members asked about the planning criteria of lay-bys and parking spaces with meters. The current plan designated one side of the lane of Fung Yau Street North as lay-by while the side near Shun Fung Building was used as parking spaces with meters. Only one lane was left and road traffic flow could not be sped up. Three outdoor carparks were set up in Kai Tei. Members suggested that the Government should encourage those with loading/unloading needs to make good use of the nearby carparks. Some Members also agreed with addition of parking spaces with meters and considered that congestion at certain spots was not related to illegal parking. For example, the junction of Fung Yau Street North turning into Fung Cheung Road was a "dead end" where drivers were difficult to look at the traffic clearly. Illegal parking at Fung Yau Street North, Fung Kwan Street, Fung Yau Street South, etc. was very serious. Even frequent enforcement actions could not improve the situation;
- (16) said that drivers were used to the current driving mode. It was suggested that the plan should be implemented in phases so that they could get adapted and the Department had to provide clear traffic instructions. The Department was also suggested reviewing the arrangements and local needs of Yuen Long South and

making comprehensive consideration on the overall traffic network;

- (17) asked whether the amended plan would be submitted again for TTC discussion;
- (18) pointed out the arrangement of one-way road would be inconvenient for stores to unload their goods and asked how the Government would persuade them;
- (19) had reservation on significantly moving forward the pedestrian crossing at the bend of Kin Lok Street. After the adjustment, the public needed to walk past a sharp bend when using the connection bridge of the residential properties of the West Rail Line. Members asked whether there was existing standard on the curved design of the bend and suggested that the Department could keep the current pedestrian crossing for those living in Yan Ting House to use the bridge; and
- (20) suggested that TD could consider removing the remaining half of the planters at Kin Lok Street for bicycles or motorcycles to park there.

33. The responses of Mr Billy HUI were summarised below:

- (1) hoped that junction efficiency could be enhanced by the improvement plan to bring about smoother traffic. For example, a vehicle needed to wait for a certain period of time if it needed to exit from Kin Lok Street near Transport Plaza and enter Fung Cheung Road. If it needed to turn right into Fung Yau Street North, it also needed to wait for the traffic light at the pedestrian crossing of upper Fung Cheung Road to turn green and stop other vehicles. If a traffic light was added as planned, vehicles could exit from a few link roads orderly. The Department would also consider Members' views and further look into details of distribution of traffic lights;
- (2) said that kerb at the middle of the road could help drivers identify traffic direction so that unfamiliar drivers or those with poor attitude would not use the same old method to make turns and block the traffic. Moreover, kerb was also required to help set up traffic lights. The Department would visit the site and look into a more detailed design;
- (3) said that currently roadside vehicles narrowed Fung Yau Street North. If a large vehicle came from the opposite lane, vehicles on both sides needed to avoid each other while one-way traffic could prevent such scenario. This could help enhance traffic safety. Members' concern about drivers with poor attitude might speed up

after road adjustment was noted. The Department would widen the pedestrian path at the same time to shorten the crossing distance;

- (4) said that existing problems could not be solved if no change was made. For example, vehicles occupying side of pedestrian crossing might block the view of pedestrians and children crossing the road which could be dangerous;
- (5) noted Members' suggestion on implementation in phases. The Department would consider launching more mature measures first and would look into how to implement the plan in phases after the meeting. For example, they would deal with the congestion at the junction of Fung Yau Street South turning left into Wing Yan School first. As there were always vehicles waiting to turn right into Fung Cheung Road in the front, a queue was formed which blocked the junction at the back. If one more lane was added at the entrance of Fung Kam Street Fire Station for the queue, the situation could be improved. Upon completion of the project, the Department could review whether the improvement in traffic flow matched their target to establish trust on the plan of the local community;
- (6) hoped that the plan could be implemented in phases soon. However, as this plan was about traffic concepts, the progress was affected by possible works of underground public utility;
- (7) said that the Department would improvise their plan after soliciting views of DC, conduct local consultation and then further launch the plan;
- (8) trusted that the enforcement department would fight against illegal parking according to the law but understood the actual needs of the public to load/unload there. Changing into one-way lane and provision of parking spaces were believed to effectively reduce congestion brought by meeting of large vehicles at both sides and thus improving traffic flow. At the same time, pedestrians only needed to observe vehicles of only one direction after narrowing the pedestrian crossing. Traffic safety could be improved, but driving habits were hard to tell. There might be some exceptions;
- (9) noted Members' concern that the plan might worsen the traffic of the road section from Fung Kam Street to Fung Cheung Road. The plan would redistribute traffic flow and the consultancy would have an overall review on the loading capacity of each junction. Overall, the proposed plan would help bring about smooth local

transport;

- (10) noted Members' concern about changing Fung Yau Street North into one-way lane and forbidding turning left from Fung Yau Street North near Fung Cheung Road. Setting of traffic lights was rather complicated which needed to connect with the ones down at the Castle Peak Road. If design of traffic lights could not be matched, the arrangement of no left turn needed to be remained. They would make further design at the next stage of local consultation. The overall travelling time could be shortened if the whole plan could be put into practice;
- (11) said that local consultation would be conducted before implementing the works in phases. Only significant changes in the plan would be submitted for Members' discussion again;
- (12) regarding the criteria for setting up parking spaces with meters and lay-by, the Department would carry out investigation in advance to calculate the number of vehicles parking at roadsides and observe the type of activity being carried out. Parking vehicles with presence of drivers or goods would be counted as loading/unloading. Empty vehicles would be considered as illegal parking. Vehicles in the new development area would be parked inside the residential development area. The principle of "single site, multiple use" would also be adopted to provide more public parking spaces. However, considering the actual situation of Yuen Long that parking and loading/unloading needs of certain locations were pressing, illegal parking was still found even when such locations did not provide any parking space. The Department could only designate parking spaces as regulatory measure. They would try to maximize the space for loading/unloading while the remaining space would be considered to be used as fee-charging parking spaces or parking spaces for disabled persons when necessary. There was no standardized practice as every location had its own circumstances;
- (13) in order to minimise the impact, the "stop" line of exiting Kin Lok Street to Fung Cheung Road needed to be moved forward. The pedestrian crossing of Kin Lok Street needed to be moved forward for two meters and the footpath needed to be narrowed to allow vehicles of 12 metres in length could turn left at Yan Ting House. The Department would listen to Members' view and adjust the arrangements; and
- (14) said that the Department would look into whether it was possible to remove the remaining planters at Kin Lok Street and turn the space into bicycle parking spaces.

34. Miss Grace FOK, TD said that HyD was carrying out a new project of constructing a new connection between Kin Tak Street and Ma Tong Road to facilitate vehicles of Hop Yick Road to go to Yuen Long South via the new connection. In the past, about 2/5 of vehicles exiting the junction Hop Yick Road and going to Fung Cheung Road headed southwards. It was expected that the connection could alleviate the traffic there.

35. The responses of Mr CHING Kam-shing were summarised below:

- (1) pointed out that vehicles of Fung Kam Street going into Fung Cheung Road were blocked by those turning left or right. Therefore, the third part of the plan worked on this problem and proposed widening Fung Kam Street outside the fire station into two lanes. Vehicles turning left or right would not be blocked by those coming from the opposite direction;
- (2) pointed out there was only one lane for vehicles of Fung Yau Street South turning into Fung Kam Street. After changing into one-way traffic, two lanes, one turning left and another turning right, could be set up in Fung Yau Street South for vehicles going to Fung Kam Street. Even those turning left were blocked, those turning right could still use the new lane to turn into northbound lane of Fung Kam Street. Therefore, overall speaking, road surface was more in order; and
- (3) said that the junction of Fung Yau Street North was rather busy. The Department had tried different designs of traffic lights, including remaining all current traffic directions. However, keeping individual leftward or rightward junctions would cause overloading. Therefore, traffic directions with less loading needed to be cancelled to allow signalling system at junctions to bring about acceptable junction performance.

36. Ms CHEUNG Pui-yan, HyD said that temporary traffic arrangement test had been carried out at the traffic junctions of Ma Tong Road and Kin Tak Street in December 2020 and the test was passed. They were currently waiting for the granting of excavation permit and hoped that the works could be commenced and completed in the second quarter of 2021.

37. The Chairman concluded that Members saw room for improvement in the plan. They hoped that the Government could implement the plan in phases by putting into practice the less controversial measures. They also hoped that more local consultation could be done before launching the plan. The Department was asked to contact local DC Members on any amendments to the plan.

Item III: Questions raised by Members (Cont-d):

- (8) Mr MAK Ip-sing proposed to discuss the request to address the nuisance caused by car speeding activities to residents in Fung Cheung Constituency, Yuen Long District (T&TC Paper No. 16/2021)**
-

38. Members' views on the issue were summarised as follows: :

- (1) said that car speeding activities at night were frequent in December last year. The situation was improved in January and February possibly because of bar closure, the prohibition on group gatherings, etc. They expected that the Government would gradually relax restrictions on group gatherings and wanted the Police to concern about resurgence of car speeding activities;
- (2) said that more people, including those outside the district, joined car speeding after drinking alcohol in group gatherings which posed much danger to the public;
- (3) asked the Police whether they made prosecution on illegal modification of vehicles, apart from car speeding;
- (4) said that car speeding and illegally modified vehicles were also found in areas like Tin Tsz Road and the Wetland Park of Tin Shui Wai during holidays. Residents of Park Royale also complained about suspicious sounds of illegally modified vehicles. It was hoped that the Police could enhance inspection of those locations;
- (5) said that car speeding activities were serious in Tin Ying Road, Tin Sau Road, Tin Wah Road and Tin Kwai Road and asked whether the Police set up barricades and enhanced inspection;
- (6) considered that TD should not solely rely on inspection of the Police and the problem occurred in different areas. As police inspection was limited, it was suggested installing speed enforcement cameras at black spots. TTC had repeatedly made such request but did not receive any response from TD. The Department was asked about the criteria for installing speed enforcement cameras and future installation plan; and
- (7) TD once said that there were insufficient speed enforcement cameras and Members

suggested installing fake cameras as a sign of warning. Not much progress was seen and Members were of the view that the Department should seek funding for buying more cameras.

39. Mr LEUNG Kei-ching, the Police were summarised below:

- (1) said that the Police had been paying attention to the area near Kai Tei. As there were more traffic lights and the distances between them were short, he had reservation on car speeding there and the Police did not find such problem. However, the Police would send vehicles making noises to vehicle examiners for examination;
- (2) pointed out that loud noises of vehicles were not illegal but the Police would send vehicles making noises to vehicle examiners to see if they were illegally modified. The Police would make prosecution if the vehicles were found to be illegally modified or posed danger;
- (3) pointed out that two major towing operations were conducted by the Traffic New Territories North Headquarters in the past 1-2 months, sending a large number of vehicles for examination. Such operations would continue to take place from time to time; and
- (4) said that locations, time and details of speed enforcement actions could not be disclosed. Manual and non-manual speed enforcement spots were set up along routes of Tin Shui Wai. If car speeding activities of a location were still serious in spite of frequent use of laser guns, the Police would ask TD to consider installing fixed speed enforcement machines. Relevant figures were taken care by the Traffic Headquarters and he did not have actual figures in hand.

40. Mr Wilson LEE, TD noted Members' suggestion on installing more speed enforcement machines. The Department and the Police would review traffic accident records and car speeding of main road sections. They would identify suitable locations and priority of installing speed enforcement cameras when necessary. A number of factors such as geography and surrounding environment, speed enforcement cameras would be taken into consideration.

41. The Chairman asked the Police and TD to note Members' views.

- (9) **Mr CHEUNG Sau-yin proposed to discuss the proposal to improve the pedestrian crossings at Pok Oi Hospital**
(T&TC Paper No. 17/2021)
-

42. The Chairman said that a site inspection would be conducted first. Discussion on the item would continue in the next meeting.

- (10) **Mr CHEUNG Sau-yin and Mr LI Chung-chi proposed to discuss the illegal use of Ngau Tam Mei Road by vehicles exceeding seven metres in length**
(T&TC Paper No. 18/2021)
-

43. Members' views on the issue were summarised as follows: :

- (1) asked when the Department would put up a sign to forbid entrance of vehicles exceeding seven metres in length there;
- (2) asked whether the road section was directly linked to the Barracks and whether military vehicles would be exempted. Warehouses were found nearby and it was asked whether permits would be provided; and
- (3) asked how TD blocked illegal entrance to the site.

44. The responses of Mr TSE Ho-hang, TD were summarised below:

- (1) said that the Department was conducting a feasibility study on putting up a sign of forbidding entrance of vehicles exceeding seven metres in length and was looking into feasible improvement measures there with HyD. More time was required to look into the details of works. They would follow up with the Chairman in case of any special occasion;
- (2) one road section of Greenavres Villa at Ngau Tam Mei Road was linked to the Barracks. Permit holders could enter. They could not provide any information on whether military vehicles were allowed or exempted;
- (3) said that permit applications of villagers and persons with special needs would be assessed on individual basis. Therefore, there might be exemptions; and

(4) said that the sign of forbidding entrance of vehicles exceeding seven meters in length had been put up at the junction by TD. Two more signs were added at San Tam Road. Police assistance was required to follow up on illegal acts of vehicles.

45. Mr LEUNG Kei-ching, the Police said that they had informed the Border District of the situation.

46. The Chairman concluded that Members wanted TD and HyD to deal with the issue as soon as possible.

**(11) Mr CHEUNG Sau-yin proposed to discuss the disposal of used vehicles in the district
(T&TC Paper No. 19/2021)**

Item II: Matter arising (Cont-d) :

**(3) Mr CHEUNG Sau-yin, Ms CHAN Sze-nga, Mr MO Kai-hong, Mr WONG Pak-yu, Mr KWOK Man-ho, Ms NG Yuk-ying, Mr NG Hin-wang, Mr LEE Chun-wai, Mr FONG Ho-hin, Mr SZETO Pok-man, Mr LI Chung-chi, Mr LEE Wai-fung, Deco and Mr CHEUNG Chi-yeung, Felix proposed to discuss the numbers of parking spaces and meters in Yuen Long District
(T&TC Paper No. 58/2020)**

47. As the above two items were interrelated, the Chairman suggested discussing them altogether.

48. Members' views on the issue were summarised as follows: :

(1) said that used vehicles beside parking meters of Fung Yau Street North had stayed there for nearly three years. TD should have the ownership record and wanted the Department to tow away the vehicles and contact the owners to pay the penalties as soon as possible;

(2) said that the Police posted notices on the vehicles that the matter was transferred to the District Lands Office (DLO) and asked for their schedule of dealing with the disposed vehicles;

(3) asked the District Office (DO) about the progress of joint clearance operation;

- (4) pointed out that used vehicles were mainly found at roadsides, outdoor carparks with or without meters and roads for maintenance use beside catchment drainage channels. It was asked how to determine the responsible department of the above types of vehicles;
- (5) Members had sent a letter on locations of used vehicles to DO two years ago. Miscellaneous items and garbage also accumulated beside the disposed vehicles which involved a number of departments, but DO said that both the Police and HyD refused to deal with these cases. Yuen Long DO was asked whether they currently had the right to coordinate and deal with these issues or they were still waiting for other districts to run a trial. In case of the latter, they wanted to know which department was currently responsible for dealing with these used vehicles;
- (6) asked why DO needed to wait for other districts to carry out an operation first and considered that they could distribute these matters to different departments currently;
- (7) considered that vehicles had been occupying there for an unreasonably long time, which should be considered as disposed and that vehicles disposed at parking spaces with meters should be taken care of by TD. Those vehicles occupying spaces with meters were the loss of TD and public money. Members did not understand why TD needed to wait for DO for a joint operation;
- (8) asked whether the Police could treat the vehicles as illegally parked and towed them away;
- (9) owners of the used vehicles should have received notification letters of penalty tickets. If they failed to attend the hearing and pay the penalties, they should be on the list of wanted persons. It was asked whether those owners were wanted persons and whether TD and the Police would seek legal recourse against them;
- (10) said that as the management department, DLO needed to deal with used vehicles on government land and those reported to DLO still existed after a few months. The Police should issue penalty tickets for vehicles occupying government land, and DLO also needed to enhance management of government land and speed up the processing procedures;

- (11) asked which department would take charge of the follow-up if registration plates of disposed vehicles were removed after disposal;
- (12) asked why the trial was run in Yau Tsim Mong first but not Yuen Long, despite Yuen Long dealt with the largest number of disposed vehicles;
- (13) pointed out that the Police declared possible to find the owners even without vehicle licences and registration plates and asked about the processing mechanism of TD and DO. It was said that there should be a number of follow-up procedures in dealing with used vehicles, including towing, storage and processing. The penalties on owners and the number of cases in Yuen Long were asked. It was considered that only heavy penalties on owners could prevent such irresponsible behaviour;
- (14) asked about the implementation schedule and locations of the 6 new parking spaces with meters in Tin Sau Road;
- (15) wanted DO to coordinate the handling of the problem of disposed vehicles in the carpark of Fung Yau Street North. Disposed vehicles should be towed to government carparks under management of DO and then other departments contacted and followed up with the owners;
- (16) pointed out that many people parked their disposed vehicles in government lands in rural area to charge for toll fee. The current processing of DLO encouraged this kind of illegal acts. It was considered that DLO should tow away the vehicles after issue of notices;
- (17) asked whether it was allowed by law for the public to pay the fees and clear away the vehicles;
- (18) considered that there was more space to increase the number of parking spaces with meters in Fung Yau Street North. The usage rate of the parking spaces was so high. Members wanted departments to conduct a site inspection and consider whether to install meters;
- (19) said that there were 110 parking spaces in the outdoor carpark of Ping Tong Street South but vehicles under repair of nearby garages were always occupying more than 10 parking spaces with meters. TD was suggested increasing parking spaces with meters there; and

- (20) said that although Ping Yan Court was close to a station of West Rail Line, residents there still had parking needs. The possibility of increasing parking spaces with meters in Kiu Fat Street or Kiu Wong Street was asked.

49. The responses of Mr SHIU Wai-ming, DLO were summarised below:

- (1) the disposed vehicles mentioned in the question were found at roadsides which were rather special. DLO would deal with disposed vehicles (including motorcycles) at roadsides, parking spaces, pedestrian paths and public transport interchanges based on existing mechanisms. Relevant government department had formulated operation mode of joint operations. TD posted notices on used vehicles according to Article 6 of the Land (Miscellaneous Provisions) Ordinance (Cap. 28). Upon expiry of the notice period and if the vehicles were still there, HyD was responsible to send those vehicles to a storage centre managed by the Lands Department (LandsD). District offices helped coordinate and organise joint clearance operation. The Police continued to deal with vehicles posing immediate danger to road users or blocking traffic while LandsD continued to deal with those on unleased or ungranted government lands apart from public roads;
- (2) DLO would review the land category of the locations and deal with used vehicles on unleased or ungranted government lands apart from public roads. If the land was under administration of other departments, the Office would contact relevant departments for follow-up;
- (3) DLO needed to post notices on used vehicles according to Article 6 of the Land (Miscellaneous Provisions) Ordinance (Cap. 28) and request owners to remove the vehicles before the deadline stated in the notices. Apart from asking the Police whether the vehicles were reported lost or were related to other cases, the Office also need to ask TD for the correspondence addresses of the registered owners to make the notification. The Office could arrange a contractor to remove the vehicles only if the vehicles were still there upon expiry of the notice period; and
- (4) as the handling of used vehicle involved legal issues, DLO shall follow existing legal procedures to deal with the issues to avoid unnecessary conflict.

50. The responses of Miss Grace FOK, TD were summarised below:

- (1) said that handling of used vehicles was generally coordinated by respective DO and they would contact relevant government departments. TD posted notices on disposed vehicles on public roads under their administration and HyD cleared away the vehicles and put them into a warehouse of LandsD. They would follow up based on investigation of LandsD;
- (2) said that when DOs coordinated a joint clearance operation, TD would deal with disposed vehicles at locations managed by them and post notices on disposed vehicles according to the Land (Miscellaneous Provisions) Ordinance; and
- (3) said that the suggestion on increasing parking spaces in Fung Yau Street North could be considered together with the traffic improvement plan.

51. The responses of Mr Wilson MAN, TD were summarised below:

- (1) said that lay-by beside the skylight market of Tin Sau Road was only marked by yellow lines. The Department was considering whether turning that location into a parking spaces with meters for the public to go to the market and the park. Local consultation would be conducted after TD finished the drawings. Currently there was no schedule but the Department hoped that local consultation could be conducted in April;
- (2) said that the Department had discussed with the Rural Committee and DC Members of relevant constituencies, and the Department held an open attitude towards adding meters inside the carpark of Ping Tong Street North. Local consultation had been conducted also; and
- (3) said that night parking spaces for buses were originally available in Kiu Fat Street and Kiu Wong Street but some of them were removed. They would look into the use at that vacant space, including the feasibility of adding parking spaces with meters. Local consultation would be conducted if they had any planning.

52. The responses of Mr LEUNG Kei-ching of the Police were summarised below:

- (1) said that they would first review the effectiveness of the new towing system. The Police would first help tow away vehicles which caused serious congestion or danger. If a disposed vehicle did not cause serious congestion or immediate danger, the Police would not deal with it. In the past, when DLO found a vehicle which was

disposed for long, they would also inform the Police to handle it;

- (2) said that Yuen Long had handled a few hundred used vehicles, ranking one of the first among all districts in Hong Kong;
- (3) said that even an owner was wanted, the Police might not know where he was. Moreover, if a registration licence had been expired for too long, they might not be able to track the owner's record. He also pointed out that there were cases which the Police successfully dealt with the vehicles, such as those parked in Tai Tong Road. After DC Members reported that there was a vehicle blocking pedestrian path, the Police took charge of the case and the owner was willing to drive away the vehicle and be prosecuted;
- (4) said that if the registration plate was removed, the Police would assess whether the vehicle was disposed and find the ownership information based on numbers of vehicle licence and chassis. Therefore, removal of registration plate did not mean that the offence could be escaped; and
- (5) said that clearing away vehicles within private land was fine but the same would be illegal in public places.

53. The responses of Ms Christina OR, DO were summarised below:

- (1) said that in order to deal with the used vehicles (including motorcycles) disposed at roadsides, parking spaces, pedestrian paths and public transport interchanges, DOs would coordinate and organize joint clearance operations and TD would post notices on used vehicles on public roads according to Article 6 of the Land (Miscellaneous Provisions) Ordinance (Cap. 28). Upon expiry of the notice period, if the vehicles were still there, HyD would send them to a storage centre managed by LandsD while the Police would continue to deal with those posing immediate danger to road users or blocking the traffic. LandsD would continue to deal with those on unleaded or ungranted government lands, apart from public roads;
- (2) said that a trial joint clearance operation was run in Yau Tsim Mong in January and February this year. Relevant departments would review the operation and extend it to other districts based on actual circumstances and allocation of resources; and
- (3) said that there was no joint clearance operation in Yuen Long. DO would

consolidate all complaints and deal with them in one go during the joint operation.

- (4) **Mr LAI Kwok-wing, Samuel, Mr CHAN King-lun, Kisslan, Mr LEUNG Tak-ming and Mr AU Kwok-kuen requested removal of mesh fences along footbridges in Yuen Long District**
(T&TC Paper No. 17/2020)
-

54. Members' views on the issue were summarised as follows: :

- (1) asked whether the new footbridge under construction in Fung Cheung Road which connected the shopping centre merged design of the original footbridge and whether the existing footbridge would be renewed to improvise the design of mesh fences. Many people reflected that the mesh fences blocked their view when taking pictures of the sunset of Castle Peak Road. Design reserving space for cameras could be considered;
- (2) said that the old and new footbridges would connect but the Department said earlier that the lift construction works took four years. The Department was asked to speed up the construction. It was proposed that construction of lifts and footbridge should be carried out simultaneously; and
- (3) opined that the mesh fences blocked air ventilation and hoped that they would be removed and would never be installed again.

55. Mr Wilson LEE, TD said that the footbridge was a commissioned project of the West Rail and would relay such views to the project proponent.

56. Mr SHIH Yung-chi, HyD said that he did not receive any update on removal of the mesh fences and would make follow-up if he received such update.

57. The Chairman concluded that discussion on the item would continue until the mesh fences were removed.

Item VI: Report Items:

- (1) **Progress report from the Highways Department**
(T&TC Paper No. 6/2021)

Item III Questions raised by Members (Cont-d):

- (12) Mr SHEK King-ching and Mr LAM Ting-wai proposed that the whole footpath outside Ho Shun Fuk Building Car Park in Kiu Lok Square be resurfaced (T&TC Paper No. 20/2021)**
-

58. As the above two items were interrelated, the Chairman suggested discussing them altogether.

59. The Chairman welcomed the following persons to the meeting:

Highways Department

Assistant District Engineer/Works (North West)

Mr CHAN Chi-kwong

60. Members' views on the issue were summarised as follows: :

- (1) said that many vehicles of the market used the junction of Kiu Lok Square to access Sau Fu Street and the road section there was dilapidated. Although HyD had repeatedly repaired the road surface, it would be damaged again within a short period of time. It was suggested resurfacing it to solve the problem in the long run and reduce the workload of the Department;
- (2) asked the Department when to start finding a contractor to carry out the resurfacing works, when to initiate the project and when the works were expected to start;
- (3) asked whether DC Members of relevant constituencies would be consulted during local consultation, whether temporary traffic arrangements of this project were endorsed and whether the works could be commenced after obtaining support from local consultation;
- (4) opined that the Department should consult Ho Shun Fuk Building Car Park and tenants of Tai Kiu Market as the works might hinder loading/unloading and access of other vehicles during midnight. Therefore, such arrangement might not be endorsed at the consultation stage. It was suggested that the Department could consider closing the carpark from morning to noon to carry out the works. Some Members also said that nearby commercial tenants might need to load/unload there

in the morning;

- (5) asked whether the works could be completed within three months if the works were started after public consultation;
- (6) HyD mentioned in the last TTC meeting that resurfacing works of footpath of Kiu Sau Path would be completed in the first quarter of 2021 but there was no follow-up since then. The progress of the works was asked and it was hoped that the problem of uneven surface could be solved before the rainy season came;
- (7) said that it was easy for residents to have accidents when walking past that road section during the rainy season. They were very concerned about the problem and Members were willing to discuss it with department representatives and commercial tenants;
- (8) said that last year was an ideal time to carry out widening works of the bus station at Hung Tin Road as the traffic during commuting time was less severe. However, the Department only conducted a year-end review. The gas company replied that the works had to be delayed until June 2021. It was asked why the company needed 6 months to carry out the works despite they already knew the problem last December; and
- (9) pointed out that as the gas company was a private enterprise, Members were hard to follow up on the issue through DC. HyD was asked how to exert pressure on the gas company in case of similar situation in the future. The works were currently expected to be carried out from June to August. It was asked whether weather was considered. For example, the rainy season might further delay the works. HyD was asked whether an excavation permit could be applied for first so that the works could be commenced in September as scheduled.

61. The responses of Ms CHEUNG Pui-yan, HyD were summarised below:

- (1) said that a contractor had been found to draft the temporary traffic arrangements for the resurfacing works of Kiu Lok Square. The works were scheduled to be conducted from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. on a weekday. The Department would reply on the date of project initiation after the meeting. The temporary traffic arrangements had been submitted to TD and the Traffic Headquarters of the Police. Nearby affected persons needed to be consulted on the works implementation time, such as Ho Shun

Fuk Building Car Park and the residents. If they showed support, the Department would apply for a permit of works at night from the Environmental Protection Department (EPD). The Department hoped that the resurfacing works could be started soon;

- (2) said that more information, such as area of works, on the resurfacing works would be provided to DC Members of relevant constituencies. The Police and TD did not raise much opposition to the temporary traffic arrangements. Resurfacing works at night was also possible but it was very difficult to obtain a permit works at night from EPD. The Department hoped that the public could show support and EPD could understand the situation;
- (3) said that the Department had considered working in the morning. However, as the traffic there was rather busy and the public had the need for loading/unloading, it was estimated that works at night would impose a smaller impact on shops nearby;
- (4) said that she needed to confirm the estimated completion date of the works with the Maintenance Section after the meeting;
- (5) noted that Members would help communicate with nearby shops and markets tenants and hoped that the Department could work with Members to minimise the impact of the works on the public; and
- (6) said that the works of resurfacing the footpath was once planned to be implemented at night from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m. on the next day. Commercial tenants considered that the time period created less nuisance for them but the noise would affect nearby residents. Therefore, the works would be implemented in phases in the morning. Currently, the plan was still under amendment. The Department hoped to reach a consensus with DC Members, residents and commercial tenants.

62. The responses of Mr SHIH Yung-chi, HyD were summarised below:

- (1) said that the underground utilities drawing had been studied at the early stage of the Hung Tin Road works and knew that the gas pipes there were deep enough. However, it was found after digging that the actual gas pipes were shallower than expected. At that time, the gas company said that they would try to apply for a shallow cover but the Maintenance Section of HyD considered that gas pipes were more dangerous and objected to the application. The Department requested the gas

company to apply for an excavation permit for underground works. The gas company said earlier that the pipes relocation works were expected to be completed in August 2021. HyD would soon commence the works to aim at prompt completion;

- (2) said that the gas company needed to obtain a permit from LandsD before setting up related facilities on ungranted government lands (including roads). Also, they needed to obtain an excavation permit from HyD according to the Land (Miscellaneous Provisions) Ordinance (Cap. 28) before carrying out any excavation works. If the gas company was requested to relocate facilities out of road improvement works, normally the works needed to be completed within a specified period of time. If relocation of underground public utilities brought about a delay, the gas company was required to submit works progress and make report in the meeting with various service providers. The Department would consider taking an action based on the situation;
- (3) said that the implementation period from June to August was provided by the gas company and could not confirm whether there would be further delay. However, HyD would monitor the works progress. He could further the gas company and answer Members; and
- (4) said that as an excavation permit had time limit, the Department would timely apply for the permit, subject to the progress of the gas company.

63. The Chairman concluded that responsible Members were asked to help HyD solicit views from the Market Management Consultative Committee. Any difficulty in coordination could be further discussed by TTC.

Item VI: Report Items (Cont-d):

- (2) **Statistics on cycling accidents and related enforcement actions**
(T&TC Paper No. 7/2021)
-

64. Members noted the above Paper.

- (3) **Temporary Traffic Arrangements in Yuen Long District**
(T&TC Paper No. 8/2021)
-

65. The Chairman welcomed the following persons to the meeting:

Water Supplies Department

Engineer/New Territories West (Distribution 3) Mr. LAI Chun-fung

66. Members' views on the issue were summarised as follows: :

(10) HyD was asked about item 35 of the works of extending bus stop. It was pointed out that buses run on two directions at the Light Rail Station near Wetland Park Road in Tin Shui Wai. Members asked which direction was the target of the works; and

(11) HyD was asked about item 47 of the works of Tai Tong Road and Tai Kei Leng Road in Yuen Long. Temporary traffic arrangements were said to be implemented from the fourth quarter of 2021 to the third quarter of 2022. However, item 18 of Paper No. 6 of this meeting showed that the same works could be completed in the fourth quarter of 2021. The Department was asked to explain the works arrangements and the difference between the two Papers.

67. Mr SHIH Yung-chi, HyD said that the works of Tai Tong Road and Tai Kei Leng Road were mainly about widening of traffic lanes of Tai Kei Leng Road. As stated in Paper No. 6, the works was scheduled to be completed in the fourth quarter of 2021. However, the Department made reference to the information on the excavation permit when drafting the temporary traffic arrangements. The completion date was the estimated latest completion date. Therefore, there was difference between the two Papers.

68. Mr Wilson MAN, TD said that the loading bay would be extended by about 10 metres after the works. Kerb was narrowed to accommodate one more taxi pick-up point. The location was near the Wetland Park Light Rail Station.

69. The Chairman concluded that Members wanted departments to continue to submit information in the next meeting.

Item III: Questions raised by Members

- (13) Mr MO Kai-hong and Mr WONG Pak-yu proposed to discuss the request for increased frequency of Bus Route 265M
(T&TC Paper No. 21/2021)
- (14) Mr MO Kai-hong and Mr WONG Pak-yu proposed diverting 265M and 269M to operate via Metro Plaza
(T&TC Paper No. 22/2021)
- (15) Mr MO Kai-hong and Mr WONG Pak-yu proposed extension of Bus Route 967 to Causeway Bay
(T&TC Paper No. 23/2021)
- (16) Mr WONG Pak-yu and Mr MO Kai-hong proposed extension of Bus Route 69C to a whole-day service
(T&TC Paper No. 24/2021)
- (17) Mr LEE Chun-wai, Mr FONG Ho-hin and Mr SZETO Pok-man proposed to discuss the routinised arrangement for designated bus routes to drive along Kam Tin Road during peak hours on weekday afternoons
(T&TC Paper No. 25/2021)

Item VI: Report Items :

- (4) Progress report from the Transport Department
(T&TC Paper No. 9/2021)

Item VII: Bus Route Planning Programme 2020-2021 of Yuen Long District
(T&TC Paper No. 5/2021)

70. As the above seven items were interrelated, the Chairman suggested discussing them altogether.

71. The Chairman welcomed the following persons to the meeting:

Transport Department

Senior Transport Officer/Bus (New Territories Mr. LIU Kin-wai, Rick North West)

Transport Officer/Bus/ New Territories North West Miss SIU Ka-yan, Catherine

Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited

Assistant Manager (Planning & Development) Mr TANG Ching-kit, Desmond

Manager (Operations) Ms WONG Yee-ling, Debby

Manager (Public Affairs) Ms LEUNG Ka-yan, Betsy

Citybus Limited

Operations Manager Mr KUNG Syu-yan, Louis

Citybus Limited and New World First Bus Services Limited

Assistant Planning and Scheduling Manager Mr CHAN Man-wai, Simon

New Lantau Bus Company (1973) Limited

Assistant Manager – Operation Support Mr WONG Leung-ting, Billy

72. Members' views on the issue were summarised as follows: :

- (1) received complaints from villagers that the bus stop at Fung Chi Tsuen was relocated. Currently, only bus routes 276P and 269D operated via Fung Chi Tsuen for the whole day. After relocation of the bus stop, villagers needed to walk 5 to 10 minutes more for a farer bus station. This was inconvenient especially to those going to work in the morning. Members hoped to maintain the route of 276P which travelled via Wang Tat Road and Fung Chi Tsuen, and asked about the figures of passengers boarding at the bus stop of Fung Chi Tsuen. Villagers also proposed that the bus could exit Fung Cheung Tsuen via Shui Pin Wai Road to skip one traffic light;
- (2) said that the Bus Route Planning Programme this year could not help those living in Shap Pat Heung and wanted TD to consider regularisation of KMB buses travelling via Kam Tin Road and Castle Peak Road. It was also hoped that there was direct bus service from Shap Pat Heung Road to the urban area and intermittent stops at Ko Po Tsuen, Ha Ko Po Tsuen, etc. could be added to make transport more convenient;
- (3) pointed out that the idea of the new bus route from Tin Shui Wai North to Wang Chau was good. It had been repeatedly requested to provide bus service for Tai Tong. However, even the request for special buses was not responded. Members further suggested providing bus service from Tai Tong to Yuen Long to mitigate congestion.

Moreover, passengers could have more interchange options if there was a bus route to Tai Lam via Tai Tong;

- (4) said that the Bus Route Planning Programme on Kam Tin was 8 years ago but the bus services at Kam Tin was still not reviewed after 8 years;
- (5) said that the bus company once proposed a bus route from Pak Heung and Kam Tin to Kowloon East and asked TD why such proposal was not put into practice;
- (6) asked about the number of affected passengers of route 63X after the route was redirected to run between Hung Shui Kiu and Meifoo. Moreover, those living in Ping Yan Court requested route 63X to stop at Tin Shui Wai Transport Interchange for easier access of Ping Yan Court;
- (7) welcomed extending route N368 to Hung Fuk Estate;
- (8) said that the service area along route 76K lacked public transport ancillary facilities and the number of buses were extremely insufficient;
- (9) wanted the circular route of Yuen Long to operate via Tung Tau and Yuen Long Town on top of Long Ping;
- (10) said that the Bus Route Planning Programme ignored some residential area which those living there always considered that bus services were lacking, such as the area surrounding Yuen Long Park and the residential courts along Shap Pat Heung Road;
- (11) wanted to make use of the interchange function of route 68F to cope with the needs for special buses to districts like Sheung Shui, Sha Tin, etc.;
- (12) suggested that interchange discount for Octopus Card users could be provided at any station, instead of individual interchange stations and wanted for full implementation of two-way section fare;
- (13) said that many people went to the countryside during the epidemic and they might need to interchange for one or two times before reaching some parts of the rural area in Yuen Long. It was suggested that TD and KMB could consider providing holiday routes for hiking;

- (14) suggested allowing passengers with pet bags to carry pets to take certain routes by making reference to the standards of Taiwan of allowing to carry pets to take public transport, provided that those passengers did not create nuisance for others. Other government departments also started to improve animal rights in recent years, such as inclusive parks for pets proposed by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department. It was suggested that KMB could consider allowing animals of a certain size to take holiday buses or organising trial for pet-friendly buses at certain periods of time. It was considered that having some pet-friendly buses could significantly improve animal rights in public space. As it was expected that Hong Kong would make an animal rights law in the near future, Members wanted KMB to help launch these measures on a company level before the law was made;
- (15) apart from the bus routes in the annual Bus Route Planning Programme, Members wanted the Department to provide overall information on bus routes serving Yuen Long, including those without change in service, for Members' reference;
- (16) asked whether the trial on installation of solar panels would be extended to covers of other bus stops and suggested making good use of solar energy to reduce environmental damage and use of fossil fuels. Bus companies should not give up installing solar panels at some bus stops just because electricity supply was already available. Similarly, buses using current engine system could still have solar panels installed on top. Members asked KMB to launch this programme more actively;
- (17) said that the Bus Route Planning Programme did not increase the number of buses travelling via Yuen Long Town Centre and suggested increasing the number of buses of Yuen Long Town Centre, including routes 269D, 268C and 968;
- (18) said that new routes of Tin Shui Wai and Yuen Long could not cover the whole Tin Shui Wai, especially Tin Shui Wai South, and suggested that TD should consider adding a new bus route which travelled via Tin Shui Wai South;
- (19) said that there were not many routes going to Hong Kong Island. Route 969 needed about 30 minutes to travel the whole Tin Shui Wai after extension and this was a poor design. Members understood many routes to the airport, Ocean Park, etc. of Citybus recorded severe loss, but route extension might urge the public to choose other modes of public transport. This might not benefit the bus companies and Members worried that this might lead to overall reduction of bus services in the end. Members asked about the actual operational pressure of the bus companies and

pointed out that their operational costs would drop after expiry of Western Harbour Crossing and Tai Lam Tunnel franchises in 2023 and 2025 respectively. Bus fares should be reduced and two-way section fare should be implemented after lengthening of travelling time;

- (20) said that the bus company reduced the number of night buses of route 967 and proposed merging with 967X. However, route 967 was also very full between 5:45 a.m. to 7:30 a.m. Members hoped that bus services from Hong Kong Island to Tin Shui Wai North and South could remain separated. The bus company was asked to provide figures to show that passengers of Central and Admiralty could still board a bus after the Causeway Bay bus stop. They understood that there were not sufficient passengers travelling from Tin Shui Wai to Hong Kong Island, but Citybus should undertake social responsibility. They hoped that the bus company could fulfil their promise of maintaining the number of buses and provide extra buses when necessary, if the bus company insisted to implement the adjustments;
- (21) said that the proposed 967X needed to travel via more districts of Hong Kong Island while the travelling time at Hong Kong Island might reach 30 minutes due to congestion. Such adjustment might also create promotion problem as the public needed to be reminded to take 967 when leaving Tin Shui Wai and take 967X when they returned;
- (22) pointed out that it was controversial for the bus company to enhance bus services to cope with the intake of Tin Shui Wai North Areas 112 and 115 while merging routes 969, 967 and 967X in view of insufficient number of passengers in Tin Shui Wai North. It was considered that the patronage of route 969 was already so high. The bus company could further observe the patronage of route 967 after intake of Wetland Seasons Park. It was suggested reducing number of 969 and 967 buses first, instead of regrouping the routes;
- (23) said that although the number of 69C buses had increased, whole-day service was still unavailable. It was expected that there would be more demand for going to Kowloon East as population of Tin Shui Wai North continued to increase. The bus company could make reference to route 259D of Tuen Mun which could also provide full-day service;
- (24) said that route 265M was responsible for connection and interchange of the whole Tin Shui Wai. Many residents relied on route 265M to go to Tai Lam and

interchange for other buses to Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and Tai Po. Currently the waiting time of route 265M during non-peak hours was 20 minutes. Members wanted the Government to seriously look at the need for more 265M buses;

- (25) welcomed introduction of route 269X from Tin Shui to Kowloon West via Tin Shui Wai North. However, there was only one bus from Kowloon West back to Tin Shui Wai which started at 6:10 pm. Members hoped that TD and the bus company could enhance the services in view of the patronage increase. Moreover, after cancellation of the residents' bus of Vianni Cove, there was no direct transport service to go to places outside Yuen Long. It was expected that such demand would increase after intake of Wetland Seasons Park and it was suggested setting up a bus stop at the nearby residential court Vianni Cove. It was also suggested adding an intermittent stop at Tin Tsz Estate;
- (26) said that there was only one 65X bus going to Tai Po and wanted that more buses were available as demand increased. Members also wanted that routes 64X and 65X could provide return trips soon;
- (27) wanted the starting point of route N269 to extend from Meifoo to Mong Kok;
- (28) said that many passengers working from 6 am took buses at 4 a.m. to 5 a.m. and wanted overnight buses running between 4:25 a.m. and 5:15 a.m. to travel via Tai Lam Tunnel or Western Harbour Crossing. The patronage at different periods of time was also asked;
- (29) said that route N969 after adjustment would take 10 minutes more to go to Causeway Bay from Lam Tei. Lengthening of the route would be very inconvenient for those going to Hong Kong Island from Tin Shui Wai. Rural passengers could choose other "N" route buses to the urban area while those living in Tin Shui Wai would not consider a direct bus to Causeway Bay with lengthened route attractive. It was suggested that Citybus could look into other cost-saving plans, such as travelling via Cross-Harbour Tunnel, Tuen Mun Road, etc. or reducing number of trips during non-peak hours;
- (30) said that the last bus of route N969 started at 5:10 a.m. which was close to the first bus of route 969 to Hong Kong Island which started at 5:30 a.m. However, the bus fare of N969 was \$11.9 higher than 959 and passengers would not choose an "N" route bus for sure. It was suggested that the last trip of N969 departing at Tin Shui

Wai should be changed into the first bus of route 969;

- (31) said that many blue-collar workers of Tin Shui Wai needed to interchange for a bus in MetroPlaza of Kwai Fong to go to Kwai Tsing Container Terminals. Therefore, it was suggested that routes 265M and 65M could directly stop at MetroPlaza to bring convenience to those taking buses of Yuen Long and Tin Shui Wai to Kwai Chung; and
- (32) suggested replacing 276P with 276 to serve passengers of Fung Chi Tsuen going to and returning from Sheung Shui, as well as passengers of Ping Shan going to Pok Oi Hospital.

73. The responses of Mr Rick LIU, TD were summarised below:

- (1) said that about 300 passengers would be affected by the arrangement of 276P no longer travelling via Fung Chi Tsuen on weekdays. The Department understood that passengers of Fung Chi Tsuen needed to go to a farer bus stop to take 276P to Sheung Shui after rerouting. In this regard, the Department would review the plan with the bus company to reduce impact on passengers;
- (2) understood that as rural population of Yuen Long continued to rise, different communities would have more pressing needs for point-to-point bus services. Due to limited roads and bus resources, the Department encouraged the public to use interchange function of the public transport system to reach their destinations. At the same time, the Department would pay close attention to local development and change in passenger needs to timely enhance bus services;
- (3) noted Members' suggestion on review and adjustment of some bus routes. The Department would review the operation of individual bus routes with the bus companies and timely adjust the services when necessary;
- (4) noted Members' views on individual circulatory bus routes and would reflect them to related sections;
- (5) noted Members' concern about sustainable development of Shap Pat Heung Road and their request of enhancing bus services there. He said that the Department would look into adjustment of individual routes and jointly operated buses with bus companies to reduce the waiting time of passengers;

- (6) said that information on bus routes serving Yuen Long would be provided for Members' reference later;
- (7) noted Members' request of expanding the scope of two-way section fare and their views on interchange arrangements which would be relayed to bus companies for their consideration;
- (8) noted Members' suggestion on introducing hiking routes and would discuss with bus companies when necessary;
- (9) noted Members' view on allowing pets on franchised buses. However, franchised buses needed to prioritise public transport demand and the Department needed to balance the needs of different parties. The Department had reservation on opening pet-friendly bus routes. Having said that, the Department understood Members' view on allowing pets on franchised buses and would review suitability of the arrangement in view of social development;
- (10) said that the Department and bus companies would pay close attention to patronage change of routes, especially those with high usage, such as 269D, 268C, 968 etc. The Department would deploy resources and increase bus frequency when necessary;
- (11) thanked Members' support on the proposed new routes which coped with the population increase of interim housing in Tin Shui Wai North and Tung Tau Industrial Area. The Department would continue to pay attention to local development and timely enhance bus services;
- (12) said that in order to cope with intake of new residential courts in Tin Shui Wai North, the Department would enhance existing bus services and provide new routes, such as lengthening service hours of 69C, increasing the trips of 265M and opening new routes like 65X, 269X, etc. The Department would also look for room for improvement of further service enhancement. Moreover, the Department suggested adjustments of routes 967, 967X and 969 to optimize use of resources. As there was lower demand for going to commercial areas of Hong Kong Island from Tin Shui Wai in the evening, route 969 was arranged to extend to Tin Shui Wai North, serving the transport needs of those going to Hong Kong Island from both Tin Shui Wai South and North. As the demand for going from Hong Kong Island to Tin Shui Wai

was higher in the evening, rerouting of 967 and 967X, as well as adjustment of travelling directions of 967 were suggested. Overall, operational efficiency of routes 967, 967X and 969 would be enhanced. At the same time, those living in Tin Shui Wai North could also use bus service to go to or return from Causeway Bay in the evening;

- (13) noted Members' concern about whether route 967 could keep running at an interval of 15 to 20 minutes during non-peak hours after merging of routes. He said that the bus company would maintain the original service arrangement to cope with the needs after merging of routes;
- (14) noted Members' view on the proposed rerouting of N969 and said that although rerouting might lengthen the travelling time of some existing passengers, the service area of overnight buses of Hong Kong Island could be expanded. The new route covered areas of Yuen Long and Tuen Mun currently without such services, such as Ping Shan, Hung Shui Kiu, Chung Uk Tsuen, Lam Tei, etc. He considered that the proposal had its merits. The Department noted Members' request of providing two-way section fare from Tin Shui Wai to Tuen Mun. The Department would review it with bus companies;
- (15) understood Members' worries about regrouping of routes 969, 967 and 967X, as well as the impact of rerouting N969 on existing passengers. He reiterated that after looking at operation and patronage of the route, the plan should be able to efficiently use the resources and expand the service area. He hoped that Members could understand these concerns;
- (16) understood that there were pressing needs to return Tin Shui Wai from Hong Kong Island during evening peak. Therefore, the proposed adjustments of 967 and 967X would be implemented after peak hours. The suggested time of the last trip was 6:45 p.m., so routes 967 and 967X would overlap for a certain period of time to help solve the passengers' needs at that time. The Department thanked Members for their views on the Programme and was willing to keep discussing with Members to improvise rerouting arrangements;
- (17) noted Members' views on introduction of section fares for route N969 and fares of other routes. The Department would conduct review with the bus companies;
- (18) said that the Department would pay attention to the operations and change in

passenger needs after opening of routes 269X, 64X and 65X. They would discuss service enhancement with bus companies when necessary;

- (19) said that the Department had been paying close attention and increasing frequency of 69C buses. In view of development of Tin Shui Wai North, the Department proposed to further lengthen service hours of the route this year. Buses to Kwun Tong would be extended from morning peak to noon while return trips would be increased. The Department and the bus company understood and would pay close attention to the demand for bus service between Tin Shui Wai North and Kowloon East. Service would be further enhanced depending on passengers' needs; and
- (20) said that the Department would review the suitability of adjusting the plan on 276P to minimise the impact of service adjustments on residents.

74. The responses of Mr TANG Ching-kit, KMB were summarised below:

- (1) said that rural bus servings would be enhanced to cope with population increase and government policies. Route 251A provided extra trips to cope with new development in Kam Sheung Road to facilitate access to Kam Sheung Road Station of the West Rail Line and Tai Lam Tunnel Bus Interchange;
- (2) noted Members' diverse view on 276P not travelling via Wang Tat Road and Ma Wang Road. In terms of road design, after rerouting 276P via Hung Shui Kiu, a bus going to Fung Chi Tsuen needed to u-turn in Wang Tat Road before going to Shan Shui House. The bus company would further discuss with TD the measures to help those living in Fung Chi Tsuen to reach the urban area. It was also considered replacing 276P with 276 but travelling needs of residents and overall operational efficiency needed to be balanced;
- (3) thanked Members' support on the arrangement of extending route N368 to Hung Shui Kiu;
- (4) considered that rerouting at Pok Oi Interchange during peak hours could save travelling time and stabilise bus services, especially at night when congestion was more serious. However, impact on existing passengers needed to be assessed before actual regularisation of this arrangement. The arrangement when Road traffic was smooth also needed to be considered. The bus company could further look into the feasibility of certain arrangement on other routes with TD;

- (5) said that considering that there were other routes travelling via Meifoo at Tuen Mun Interchange such as 59X, 60X, 66X and 67X, and no other routes skipping Meifoo, route 63X skipping Meifoo should be feasible and it served a faster option for those going to Yau Tsim Mong;
- (6) said that the company would make further review on whether services of 76K were sufficient and increase number of trips when necessary;
- (7) said route 64X from Yuen Long to the Science Park via Tai Po was introduced to respond to Members' request of providing express services to Tai Po;
- (8) noted Members' view on routes 68E and 68F. The bus company would prepare an interchange proposal first. The section fare of route 68E also encouraged passengers to interchange which reduced the needs for new bus service. Although this Bus Route Planning Programme did not cover an interchange proposal, the bus company would discuss the detailed proposal with Members once available;
- (9) said that interchange arrangements had been extending to other stops, such as Kwun Tong Road and Wong Tai Sin, apart from the designated interchanges of Tai Lam and Tuen Mun Road. Those stops might not be situated at a tunnel entrance with interchange facilities. The bus company would look into how to increase interchange facilities and extension of interchange arrangements;
- (10) noticed the increase in demand for hiking routes under the epidemic and would actively follow up with TD on trial hiking routes;
- (11) said that a regular mechanism was in place to review bus routes not covered in the Bus Route Planning Programme. Previous Programmes reserved resources to cope with the demand for routes 269D, 268C and 968. The epidemic of last year affected patronage and delayed the original planning of trip increase. Routes with higher patronage such as 968X and 968 would increase number of trips, subject to the patronage after the epidemic mitigated;
- (12) said that the company would review the patronage after launching the new routes such as 65X and 269X, and increase number of trips when necessary;
- (13) noticed the new developments and population increase near the Wetland Park and

Tin Shui Wai North. The service standard of route 69C would be enhanced subject to actual growth in passengers after intake of local new residential courts. The service hours of route 69C were significantly lengthened. The bus service would be further enhanced as population grew and the ultimate target was to provide whole-day services. Other routes like 265M or 269D would be adjusted to cope with public demand when necessary;

- (14) noted the suggestion on extending route 63X to Ping Yan Court but the bus company needed to consider whether residents would choose to take 63X from Tin Shui Wai to Mong Kok via Tuen Mun, the impact on travelling time and actual demand;
- (15) was glad that new routes of 269X, 64X and 65X, as well as extension of route 69C were welcomed. The number of buses would increase in view of the patronage;
- (16) said that the company had looked into the suggestion on routes 265M and 269M driving into Kwai Fong Station. As the bus stop at Kwai Fong Station was already very congested during peak hours at night and there were many buses to Kwai Chung, upon discussing with operation colleagues and TD, it was hard to have one more loading/unloading space there. As route 69M of Tin Shui Wai had a stop there, those living in Tin Shui Wai was suggested taking 69M while those going to Tin Shui Wai North could interchange at Tai Lam Tunnel;
- (17) said that the new route 279B helped those living in Tin Shui Wai and Yuen Long to reach Kwai Hing and Kwai Fong more quickly. Although the bus departed in the North District, the route was included in the Tai Lam Tunnel Interchange Programme and directly headed to Kwai Fong and Kwai Hing along Tsuen Wan Road via Tai Lam Tunnel. Previous bus routes had been using Castle Peak Road, Kwai Chung Road and went to Tsuen Wan and Tai Wo Hau before reaching Kwai Fong and Kwai Hing. If the new route received support of different districts, passengers could directly go to Kwai Fong and Kwai Hing without going to Tsuen Wan and Tai Wo Hau first. The number of trips would increase when necessary after opening of the route; and
- (18) said that the company and TD would look into the measures to compensate for the problem of 276P in Fung Chi Tsuen to reduce inconvenience for the villagers.

75. The responses of Ms LEUNG Ka-yan, KMB were summarised below:

- (1) said that solar panels were installed on old-style corrugated covers without electricity supply. The installation was finished but the company would install lighting fixtures, seats, covers, display monitors, etc. at bus stops when necessary. If Members considered that certain bus stops needed more facilities, she could follow up with them after the meeting;
- (2) if electricity supply was available at other bus stops or new covers, there was no actual need to install solar panels;
- (3) said that the company supported the use of green energy. Solar panels were installed on top of new buses so as to save fossil fuels and provide battery charging services for USB devices. Currently, improvised bus stops adopted new type of cover which provided a display monitor. Electricity supply provided by solar panels was limited which supported lights but not display monitors; and
- (4) said that the bus company held an open attitude towards pet-friendly routes but according to the Public Bus Services Ordinance, apart from guide dogs accompanied by blind persons, buses could not carry pets. Pet-friendly buses involved law revisions. The bus company could further look into pet-friendly buses with TD and was willing to implement corresponding service and hygienic measures.

76. The responses of Mr CHAN Man-wai, Citybus and NWFB were summarised below:

- (1) wanted to consider rerouting of routes 969, 967 and 967X according to the travelling directions. The number of passengers going to Hong Kong Island were significantly low after 6 p.m. while the operational costs of traveling via Tai Lam Tunnel and Western Harbour Crossing were so high. The company wanted to make good use of resources;
- (2) considered that the rerouting proposal brought about more merits than demerits to residents of Tin Shui Wai. All daytime services to the urban area remained unchanged, but not evening time services. After extension of 969 in place of 967, departure of the last bus was delayed from 22:40 p.m. to 12 a.m., providing whole-day services to Causeway Bay. The rerouting proposal started after 6 pm while each trip after 6 p.m. carried about only more than 10 passengers. The impact was so slight. Passengers going to Causeway Bay did not even need to interchange.

Moreover, regarding extending 969 to Tin Shui Wai North, company figures showed that the average travelling time would increase by about 12 to 14 minutes from 5 p.m. to midnight. After rerouting, the service hours could cover weekends and there were extra weekend services from Hong Kong Island to Tin Shui Wai. Earlier service from 6 p.m. could also be considered. As for returning to Tin Shui Wai, existing services of 967 remained unchanged until 7 p.m. and 967X started to run at 6:15 p.m. in conjunction with 967. Traffic of Hong Kong Island at 7 p.m. could be alleviated. Travelling time from Causeway Bay to Admiralty could stay within 15 minutes in general. Figures showed that exceptional conditions were rare and so the trips could be very stable. The only concern was that passengers after Admiral would be hard to board a bus as there were more passengers in Causeway Bay. The company guaranteed that bus frequency after replacing 967 with 967X would remain unchanged and more trips could be provided in case of high patronage; and

- (3) said that although Members suggested different routes for Yuen Long South and North, the patronage there to the urban area in the evening was low while that returning to Tin Shui Wai was high. It would be more beneficial to provide service from Causeway Bay to Tin Shui Wai, so the company wanted to run a trial on this travelling direction.

77. The responses of Mr KUNG Syu-yan, Citybus and NWFB were summarised below:

- (1) said that route N969 heading to Tuen Mun, Yuen Long and Tin Shui Wai used Tuen Mun Road while those heading to the urban area used the old route. Such arrangement had been maintained for over 6 years;
- (2) said that the company once received public request of providing overnight bus service to Hong Kong Island via Tuen Mun Road to assist some passengers to access the urban area, so they included such plan in the Bus Route Planning Programme of this year;
- (3) noted Members' suggestions on fare adjustments, adjustment of early morning buses to fit current daytime buses, as well as replacing the last trip of N969 with the first bus of 969, which would be discussed with TD after the meeting; and
- (4) once considered using the Cross-Harbour Tunnel and making reference to N368, just like what Members suggested. However, the travelling time would be further

lengthened and involved additional bus resources, manpower and costs of ancillary arrangements. Moreover, bus stops of and N969 would be found in different lanes under such arrangement which might cause confusion and misunderstanding. The plan of changing from Tai Lam Tunnel to Tuen Mun Road would be more simple and direct. The company would discuss the plan with TD to try to answer Members' request.

78. The Chairman concluded that Members asked TD and bus companies to note Members' views, including providing return trips of 64X and 65X in trial or other means. They also wanted that route 69X could provide whole-day service soon, increase the number of buses and enhance promotion. Moreover, regarding adjustments of routes 967, 967X, 969 and N969 and new routes of 276P and others would be followed up by the Working Group on Bus Services. Some of the routes also needed the input of Tuen Mun, including 63X, B2 and 258P. Members supported the remaining adjustments.

Item VIII: Any other business

(1) Matters in relation to Members' withdrawal from the working groups of T&TC under Yuen Long District Council

79. The Chairman concluded that Members endorsed after discussion that Mr WONG Pak-yu withdrew from the Working Group on Traffic and Pedestrian Congestion in Yuen Long and Mr HONG Chin-wah withdrew from the Working Group on Bus Services.

80. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 6:35 p.m.

Yuen Long District Council Secretariat
April 2021