

**Minutes of the Seventh Meeting of
Traffic & Transport Committee (2020-21)
Central and Western District Council**

Date : 25 February 2021 (Thursday)
Time : 1:00 pm
Venue : Conference Room
14/F, Harbour Building
38 Pier Road, Central, Hong Kong

Present:

Chairman

Mr YIP Kam-lung, Sam*

Members

Ms CHENG Lai-king*	
Mr YEUNG Sui-yin, Victor	(beginning of meeting – 6:10 pm)
Mr KAM Nai-wai, MH*	
Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin	(1:11 pm – end of meeting)
Ms NG Hoi-yan, Bonnie*	
Mr NG Siu-hong	(1:14 pm – end of meeting)
Ms WONG Kin-ching, Cherry	(1:07 pm – end of meeting)
Mr LEUNG Fong-wai, Fergus*	
Mr PANG Ka-ho*	
Mr WONG Weng-chi*	
Miss YAM Ka-yi, Camille	(1:22 pm – 6:34 pm)
Mr YOUNG Chit-on, Jeremy	(1:13 pm – 6:32 pm)

Absent with Apologies:

Mr HUI Chi-fung
Mr HO Chi-wang

Remarks: * Members that attended the whole meeting
() The time of attendance of the Member

Guests:

Item 5(i)

Mr YAU Wai-fu, William	Senior Landscape Architect/VM(U&Is), Highways Department
Mr SHUM Sai-chun, Jacky	Landscape Architect/VM(HK)1, Highways Department

Item 5(ii)

Mr LEE Tin-chi, Cario	Executive Officer (District Council) 1, Central and Western District Office
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Item 6

Mr KEUNG Sin-kok, Patrick	Senior Engineer 2/Central Wanchai Bypass, Highways Department
Mr WONG Yee-lok, Enoch	Senior Engineer 4/Central Wanchai Bypass, Highways Department
Mr Alex LI	Executive Director, AECOM Asia Company Limited
Ms Tina CHAN	Senior Resident Engineer, AECOM Asia Company Limited
Mr Daniel KOO	Senior Resident Engineer, AECOM Asia Company Limited
Mr Eric CHEUNG	Senior Resident Engineer, AECOM Asia Company Limited
Mr FUNG Wai-yan, Ryan	Engineer/Central & Western 1, Transport Department

Item 7

Mr MA Kin-ye	Senior Engineer 5/Universal Accessibility, Highways Department
Mr LO Chun-chung	Engineer 9/Universal Accessibility, Highways Department
Mr YIP Wang-yu, Gordon	Engineer Central & Western 3, Transport Department

Item 8

Mr LAM Yun-hei, Brian	Engineer/ Peak, Transport Department
Mr WONG Lok-sang, Dominic	District Engineer/West, Highways Department

Item 9

Mr LAM Yun-hei, Brian	Engineer/ Peak, Transport Department
Mr WONG Lok-sang, Dominic	District Engineer/West, Highways Department

Item 10

Mr LAM Kai-sum	Western District Operation Officer, Hong Kong Police Force
Mr YONG Kwok-chung	Officer-in-charge of Western District Traffic Team, Hong Kong Police Force
Mr YIP Wang-yu, Gordon	Engineer/Central & Western 3, Transport Department

Item 11

Mr FUNG Wai-yan, Ryan

Engineer/Central & Western 1, Transport
Department

Item 12

Mr TAM Sze-wai, Vincent

Engineer/Central & Western 2, Transport
Department

Item 13

Mr FUNG Wai-yan, Ryan

Engineer/Central & Western 1, Transport
Department

Mr TAM Sze-wai, Vincent

Engineer/Central & Western 2, Transport
Department

Item 14

Mr LEE Kai-ho

Deputy District Leisure Manager (Central &
Western)2, Leisure and Cultural Services
Department

Mr FUNG Wai-yan, Ryan

Engineer/Central & Western 1, Transport
Department

Mr YIP Wang-yu, Gordon

Engineer/Central & Western 3, Transport
Department

Mr WONG Lok-sang, Dominic

District Engineer/West, Highways Department

Item 15

Mr FUNG Wai-yan, Ryan

Engineer/Central & Western 1, Transport
Department

Item 16

Mr LAM Kai-sum

Western District Operation Officer, Hong Kong
Police Force

Mr YONG Kwok-chung

Officer-in-charge of Western District Traffic
Team, Hong Kong Police Force

Mr FU Ting-hong, Derek

Senior Transport Officer/Central & Western,
Transport Department

Item 17

Miss Lilian YEUNG

Public Relations Manager-External Affairs,
MTR Corporation

In Attendance:

Mr LEUNG Chee-Kay, David, JP

District Officer (Central and Western)
(beginning of meeting – 5:20 pm)

Miss NG Wing-hei, Agnes

Assistant District Officer (Central and Western)

Mr WONG Yan-kwong

Senior Executive Officer (District Council),
Central and Western District Office

Secretary:

Miss TONG Wing-hei, Melody

Executive Officer (District Council) 2,
Central and Western District Office

Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed Members and representatives of government departments to the Seventh Meeting of the Traffic & Transport Committee (2020-21) (TTC). In order to facilitate the flow of the meeting, a “four-minute ceiling for all” mode would be adopted in the Q&A section. Each discussion topic would be open for one round of discussion, and a second round would follow, if necessary. In each round of discussion, a Member would have four minutes to ask questions, follow-up questions and listen to departmental answers. Representatives in attendance were requested to talk concisely when speaking and responding. Also, the Secretariat had received a notice of oral statement from Mr Fergus LEUNG before the meeting. According to S.26 and S.30 of the Standing Orders of the Central and Western District Council (C&WDC) (the Standing Orders), any statements and questions made at DC meetings shall not be inconsistent with the duties of the DC. An oral statement should not last for more than five minutes. Mr Fergus LEUNG was invited to proceed.

[Post-meeting note: As the Government found that the content of the oral statement did not conform to the functions of the DC specified in the District Councils Ordinance, the Secretariat would not provide secretarial services, including noting it down on the minutes of meeting or uploading the relevant recordings.]

2. The Chairman said that he had not approved the District Officer (DO) to speak just now. He expressed regret over DO's absence from the meeting when a Member was making an oral statement in accordance with the Standing Orders. Moreover, regarding Mr Fergus LEUNG's statement, he stated that he would not interfere with the content of the oral statement and such rights belonged to the Member. He reiterated that it was a right conferred by the Standing Orders. The Standing Orders had spelled out the rights of the DC, there were also preferential rights under the Rules of Procedure. Therefore, as to whether the content of Mr Fergus LEUNG's statement complied with the Standing Orders or the District Councils Ordinance, he did not see any problem. However, the department could have its interpretation and option of leaving the venue. He had no power to stop the department from doing so and expressed his deep regret once again.

3. Mr KAM Nai-wai hoped that this could be put on record. He was against the unauthorised absence of the staff of the District Office and the Secretariat. When a Member had, in accordance with the laws of Hong Kong, the District Councils Ordinance and the Standing Orders, given prior notice before the meeting about making a 5-minute oral statement to say something on issues related to the DC, there was nothing in conflict with the Standing Orders and the District Councils Ordinance. Therefore, DO of the C&WDC, all government departments and the Secretariat leaving the meeting was something that should be strongly condemned. The department should not have done so and the rights of Members should be protected. He hoped that the speech could be put on record.

4. Mr Victor YEUNG asked why DO had abruptly spoken without the permission of the Chairman while a Member was making his statement just now. He queried if there were any rules at the meeting. For him, it was serious that DO himself had overtly violated the rules. The act was condemnable and he requested the Chairman to follow up.

5. The Chairman stated that if a censure was made in the name of the Council, Members would have to vote to arrive at a majority view. The best way was to move a provisional motion and make a record. If Members considered that a provisional motion was unnecessary, they could take a simple vote for condemnation. The content of which was “The TTC of the C&WDC strongly condemns the DO(C&W) and a group of government officials for disregarding the Standing Orders and leaving the meeting without permission when Mr Fergus LEUNG was making his oral statement”. He asked Members’ opinions on the above content.

6. Mr Victor YEUNG stated that it was unnecessary to condemn other government officials. Obviously, they had reacted according to DO’s command. DO had initiated and instructed other government officials to leave. He said that DO’s disrespect of the rules and regulations of the Council was a serious problem. Should DO have any opinions, he should respect the meeting and the Chairman and abide by the Standing Orders, raise his hand to indicate to the Chairman, and speak when permitted to do so. He should not have spoken abruptly and disrupted the order of the meeting. Hence, it had nothing to do with other people. The censure should contain two parts, directed at DO.

7. The Chairman rephrased the content to “DO had left his seat and was away from his duties without permission while Mr Fergus LEUNG was making his oral statement, contrary to the Standing Orders of the DC”. He asked Members for their views on the content.

8. Mr Victor YEUNG stated that he violated the Standing Orders by speaking without the permission of the Chairman; and was also away from his duties, leading other government officials to leave the meeting with him.

9. The Chairman made a simple vote on the censure, which was adopted after voting.

Item 1 – Adoption of the agenda

(1:15 pm – 1:24 pm)

10. The Chairman stated that the paper on **Serious water leakage at Central - Wan Chai Bypass Request the department to give an explanation and take measures to ensure road safety** was related to **Standing item (i) - Central - Wan Chai Bypass and Island Eastern Corridor Link (CWB) Project Report on Works Progress**, so it was agreed to merge the paper with the standing item for discussion. Besides, the paper on **Strong request for improving the pedestrian crossing facilities near Pok Fu Lam**

Road Playground was related to the latest progress of **Standing item (ii) - Latest progress of items implemented under the Universal Accessibility Programme in Central and Western District**. At the last meeting, he had invited Members to submit papers on related matters. Therefore, discussion of the two papers would combine together. Furthermore, he considered that the paper on **Concern over the accident involving concrete falling from the ceiling near the escalator at MTR Central Station Exit B** was very important and urgent, so he agreed to accept discussion of the paper at this meeting. He also advanced the discussion of **Any other business at the meeting**. Moreover, he had submitted a paper on “Opening up of real-time data of KMB” before the paper submission deadline, but DO rejected its discussion at the meeting on the grounds that it did not comply with S.61 of the District Councils Ordinance. He had tabled the paper and proposed to discuss it as the last item of the agenda. However, no representatives from the bus companies and government departments were present. A motion was contained in the paper, so he proposed to send it to the Competition Commission to lodge a complaint in the name of the Council.

11. Mr KAM Nai-wai agreed to the above arrangement. He once again blamed DO for abusing his power and the District Councils Ordinance. He stated that discussion of that paper concerning people’s livelihood was fundamental. Requesting the KMB to open up the data was meant to facilitate the public to obtain relevant information and improve their livelihood. How could such fundamental discussion be deemed as violation of the Ordinance? He then queried why discussion of green burials or green community had not violated the Ordinance. There had been countless such instances discussed in the past and no violation of the District Councils Ordinance was mentioned. The current standards set by the Government for territory-wide issues were outrageously absurd. He did not understand why issues concerning people’s livelihood and topics that meant to facilitate the public were tagged as non-discussable in the DC, and DO and departments had to walk out altogether. It was extremely shameful. He said that “there was little he could do”. As an elected Member of the Council, “there was little he could do”. He hoped that the Secretary would clearly record his speech. If the purpose was to belittle DCs and render their work of null and void, at the time Members were asked to take oath in front of the so-called Bureau Secretary, he would ask the Government why the above issues could not be discussed. Had the Bureau Secretary taken oath to pledge effective operation of the SAR Government, given the fact that the above discussion was not allowed? A self-examination by the Government was needed and he hoped to put his words on record.

12. Regarding the paper on open data, DO stated that he had suggested to send it to the Competition Commission for information or discussion. Besides, regarding whether this could be discussed at the meeting, he had elucidated in the letter that if the Chairman or the Committee considered that discussion was necessary, the government officials and secretariat staff present at that time would leave the meeting and secretarial services would not be provided, including audio recording and minutes of meeting.

13. The Chairman added that he had received complaints from kaifongs and voters that KMB withheld its own data but used NWFB and Citybus data in its mobile app,

which caused unfairness. He said that he used to install the NWFB and Citybus app and switched to use the KMB app when checking the routes of the KMB. But now, the arrival information of NWFB and Citybus was accessible in the KMB app, so the public need not install the NWFB and Citybus app at all. Since the KMB app contained commercial ads, this directly constituted monopolistic behaviour. He stated that the original intention of submitting the paper was that the issue affected residents of the C&W District and it was reasonable for Members to reflect it to the Government. However, DO rejected it using the ground of no discussion on territory-wide issues. The paper was related to livelihood matters in the district, he could not see the reason for DO's objection, let alone whether he had such power to do so. Nonetheless, he could not stop departmental officials from leaving. Discussion of the paper would be set at the end and the agenda was adopted.

Item 2 – Confirmation of the minutes of the 5th TTC meeting held on 24 September 2020 and the 6th TTC meeting held on 19 November 2020

(1:24 pm – 1:25 pm)

14. The Chairman stated that amendments proposed by Ms Cherry WONG and Mr KAM Nai-wai had been received before the meeting, which were set out in the tabled paper. He reminded Members that there was a “970” paper at the fifth meeting and staff of the District Office had walked out then on grounds that it had violated S.61 of the District Councils Ordinance. Therefore, he suggested that adoption of the minutes of the fifth meeting should be temporarily withheld.

15. The minutes of the 6th meeting were passed and adoption of the minutes of the 5th meeting was temporarily withheld.

Item 3 – Action checklists on matters arising from the 6th meeting (C&W TTC Paper No. 16/2021)

(1:25 pm – 1:28 pm)

16. Regarding the issue “Concern over illegal parking at High Street” raised at the 6th meeting, Ms Bonnie NG had made enquires to the Police. Based on the short video provided by Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin, the Police was asked to follow up on the issue of non-enforcement and ways to deal with non-enforcement by police officers; and give their feedback after investigation. She had asked the Secretariat to follow up with the Police after the meeting.

17. Miss Camille YAM said that during the last meeting, she had asked the department to hold a meeting on traffic congestion on Western Street. Yet no meeting had been held until now. Moreover, there was no update on the meeting on “Matters relating to Green Minibus Routes 45A and 45S”. She asked about the time needed to organise the meetings and hoped that the department would proceed as soon as possible.

18. DO stated that the meetings were not held earlier due to the pandemic and arrangements would be made in due course.

19. With regard to the issue of “Request for improving the streets with uneven surfaces in Kennedy Town”, Mr Fergus LEUNG asked the Highways Department (HyD) about the progress of SmarTone’s application for backfilling of manhole and when the works would commence.

20. Mr Dominic WONG, District Engineer/West, HyD said that he had contacted SmarTone about the repair work of the manhole. SmarTone said it was applying for a permit for excavation. The HyD had reminded SmarTone to carry out the repair work as soon as possible.

Item 4 – Chairman’s report

(1:28 pm)

21. The Chairman stated that regarding the major traffic improvement works and its timetable (as of end of January 2021), the report had been forwarded to Members for their information before the meeting. The Secretariat had not received any comments from Members.

Discussion Items

Standing Items

Item 5 – Any other business (i) - Tree Management Plan for the Old and Valuable Tree No. HYD CW/1 at Bonham Road and Hospital Road in Western District

(1:28 pm – 2:03 pm)

22. Mr Jacky SHUM, Landscape Architect/VM(HK)1, HyD said that he had given a briefing to the Building Management, Environmental Hygiene & Works Committee (BEHWC) on 4th February, which involved a pilot road diversion plan. Therefore, he was going to report the outcome at this meeting. HYD CW/1 was located between Bonham Road and Hospital Road. The Chinese Banyan on the stone wall of 11SW-A/R434 was listed in the Register of Old and Valuable Trees and was maintained by the HyD. HYD CW/1 was diagnosed with Brown Root Rot Disease (BRRD) and the condition was found to be worsening in late 2020. After detailed inspection, the part rotted to a greater extent were the roots. At the meeting of BEHWC held on 4th February, various tree support systems as mitigation measures were proposed and the feasibility of individual support system was explained to Members, including the use of footpath space on Hospital Road and Bonham Road for support racks. At the meeting, Members reflected that the impact on Hospital Road would be greater. The team of engineers explained that the support scheme on footpath would have a serious impact on the slope and structure of the stone wall. Therefore, there was another option to place concrete blocks on Bonham Road and use pulling cables to stabilise the tree. In the end, Members agreed that the latter option was more feasible and the works was expected to

be completed by the end of March. The cable-drawing scheme involved occupation of footpath space and placement of concrete blocks at the location marked blue in the diagram. Furthermore, the feasibility of different traffic arrangements had been considered. The first was “detour”, where the public had to use the opposite footpath to get around though the area involved was not very large. However, it was learned that Members wanted to keep the passage open. So, there was another option: “road adjustment”. i.e., narrowing part of the traffic lane for footpath. He thanked the Transport Department (TD) and the Police Traffic Section for promptly handling the application for road adjustment. The HyD had also conducted a trial implementation of road adjustment from 19th to 23rd February. Before the trial, notices were also posted to inform the public that part of the road surface would be narrowed and water-filled barriers would be placed to separate the footpath and the road. On the first day of the trial, water-filled barriers were placed and the road was diverted at about 10 o’clock. Test for passing of heavy vehicles was successfully done at about 11 o’clock. Relevant photos of the trial were displayed. In the evening, the sloped passageway was also opened to trolleys, strollers and wheelchairs. During the period, there were also assistants to instruct the public about the new arrangement. The assistants were still there to assist the public to adapt to the change on the second day. The situation was generally smooth. The road conditions were restored at 10 o’clock on 23rd February. Meanwhile, comments were received from Members on improvement measures during formal implementation. These included the use of clean water-filled barriers, switch to metal inclined platforms to fill the gaps, replacement of small-holed manhole covers, and addition of pedestrian notice boards near High Street. The statistics on the pedestrian flow on the rerouted footpath was between 2.17 and 5.61 per minute, which was relatively low. There were also mitigation measures after the trial. It was expected that tree trimming and cable installation would be completed by the end of March, in order to keep the situation in good conditions during the rainy and windy seasons. In addition to the tree support plan, the HyD also had tree maintenance work, including regular tree monitoring, soil improvement and regular use of fungicides to contain the spread of BRRD. It would also continue to monitor any changes in the health or structure of the tree. The department would duly report on that, while various experts would jointly monitor the situation at the same time.

23. Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin said that she had discussed with the HyD at the scene then. Some kaifongs had also reported that there was a white line on the spot. She asked if it was related to the temporary traffic measures.

24. Mr William YAU, Senior Landscape Architect/VM(U&Is), HyD said that he had to refer to the original footpath layout. It might not be related to the road diversion. He would figure out the situation after the meeting and then revert accordingly.

25. Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin said that should the relevant plan was actually put into implementation in the future, the road may need to be closed for at least half a year. If the road marking on the ground was confusing, or the road sign next to it was unsuitable or need to be relocated, she wondered if there would be an updated plan and Members would be informed of it. In addition, it was not a problem for the public to push

wheelchairs on the S-shaped inclined platform, but some kaifongs asked whether the turning point of the inclined platform could be widened. She asked the department to study the above suggestions, review the plan again, and attend meetings to inform Members.

26. Mr William YAU of HyD said that he would figure out after the meeting. If widening the turning point was feasible, he would try his best to cooperate. However, there were also limitations. If large concrete blocks were placed in the future, it would take up a certain amount of space. The triangular spot in the diagram would also be used for pedestrian crossing in the future, so the turning point could possibly be widened. Yet the priority was accorded to the placement of the concrete blocks.

27. Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin said that she was not talking about widening the turning point on the side of the road. The exact location would be considered after placement of the concrete blocks. Since just one railing was removed now, if circumstances permit, two railings could be removed to widen the space.

28. Ms Bonnie NG said that she had discussed with Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin and the HyD during the trial. It was mentioned before that the concrete blocks would be placed in the early morning. She asked whether the work could be done in a single night and how many hours it would take to place 10 concrete blocks. Moreover, she suggested beautifying the concrete blocks, such as printing patterns on them to replace the simple grey colour. She also hoped to add informational materials alongside beautification work, such as info about BRRD and background principle of the plan, so that kaifongs could understand BRRD and the HyD's conservation work, etc.

29. Mr William YAU of HyD said that a lane would be closed during placement of the concrete blocks, so the work would be carried out at night. In order to minimise the impact on traffic, it would also be carried out overnight. Basically, the work could be done in one night. The HyD also supported the beautification of concrete blocks, and relevant information would also be added to explain to the public the difficulties of maintaining stone wall trees and methods to deal with them. Any suggestions were also welcome.

30. Ms Bonnie NG enquired about the noise generated by concrete blocks placement because the buildings in the vicinity were fairly low and there were many tenement buildings on High Street. She hoped to understand the noise impact on residents. If there would be noise nuisance, she hoped that the department would give prior notice.

31. Mr William YAU of HyD said that he would notify residents in advance. The work carried out at night was also subject to control by relevant laws, so the contractor would also handle it carefully. Should any noise complaint be lodged, the working team would have to suspend the work immediately, which implied great financial losses. Any violation of the law would also bring about serious consequences. Therefore, they knew very well the importance of the subject matter.

32. Ms CHENG Lai-king suggested regular cleaning of the water-filled barriers. She worried that the uneven surface of the concrete blocks would cause scratches to the skin, so she suggested to smoothen the surface of the concrete blocks. She also hoped to inform kaifongs about the tree-saving story with notices served to them. Regarding the temporary traffic management, she hoped that the nearby buildings could be informed so that the management office would be aware of the works. The works should also be done in a single night.

33. Mr William YAU of HyD said that he was aware of the views on cleaning of the water-filled barriers. Just now, Ms NG had also mentioned about beautifying the surface of the concrete blocks. The current treatment method usually involved overlaying the concrete blocks with patterns or information printed on them. He believed that the handling method could live up to the requirements of Members, and the nearby buildings would also be notified.

34. Mr KAM Nai-wai asked the department, first, the projected commencement date of the works; second, the temporary measures were expected to take six months, but was there any definite timeframe; third, he suggested written notification be sent to buildings within 100m or on both sides, stating the commencement date, the completion date and the hours when the night time works would be carried in one go. He then asked when the work would be completed.

35. Mr William YAU of HyD expressed his hope to complete all works before the end of March, including tree trimming, stone wall surveys, temporary traffic arrangements, and placement of concrete blocks. The beautification work might take more time, but the above work was expected to be completed by the end of March.

36. Mr KAM Nai-wai asked whether the plan could be completed by the end of March and how long the temporary road arrangement would last.

37. Mr William YAU of HyD expressed his belief that it could be completed by the end of March unless special circumstances emerged. Regarding the timeframe of the plan, he said that it was difficult to say. The issue in question was to save the tree. The condition of the tree was quite unique. Its condition seemed to be satisfactory, but its structure was problematic. Therefore, monitoring and investigation were conducted to understand its drifting movement. The movement of that tree was not normal.

38. Mr KAM Nai-wai said that he did not need detail explanation. He just asked whether the department had a projected timeframe.

39. Mr William YAU of HyD said that they would feel more relieved at least after the rainy season. Nonetheless, the growth and health of the tree after the rainy season had to be assessed again.

40. Mr KAM Nai-wai asked whether the assessment would be made after six

months.

41. Mr William YAU of HyD said that he would continue to monitor the situation. The target was to ensure the stability of the tree during the rainy season, and then reassess the condition of the tree and make a decision. The residents in the vicinity would also be notified.

42. Mr KAM Nai-wai said that the flanking buildings and tenements within 100m in front and behind should also be notified, including information like the time mentioned above and the completion time after the review, etc. The department was asked to notify the residents of all the information. A hotline for comments or complaints should be added, with follow up provided.

43. The Chairman said that in the briefing, area C and area A at the northern ground protection mat were similar, but area C was healthier than area A in terms of data, which was confusing. Hence, he hoped that the department would make amendments. Besides, he asked whether the briefing could be given to the Secretariat and uploaded to the Internet so that the public would also be aware of the plan. Moreover, regarding road closure arrangements, including the implementation of the plan, road closure for placement of concrete blocks and follow-up arrangements in March, he asked whether the TD would be notified so that the department could issue relevant notices to motorists.

44. Mr William YAU of HyD said that it could be uploaded. Besides, a project could only be carried out with the approval of the TD, the Police Traffic Section and the Fire Services Department (FSD). He also thanked various departments for their prompt processing of the project application last time to enable its implementation as scheduled.

45. Mr Ryan FUNG, Engineer/Central & Western 1, TD said that when applications for temporary traffic arrangements were received, under normal circumstances, the scope and impact of the applications would be reviewed. If road closures were involved, traffic notices would be issued to motorists. The TD would also study the temporary traffic arrangements for this plan, and if necessary, the relevant information would be released to motorists so that they could know the situation in advance.

46. The Chairman asked whether road signs would be added near the drip line of the tree crown to remind the public that the tree had BRRD, so that motorists could speed up when passing by. Even though safety measures were in place, potential risks still existed.

47. Mr William YAU of HyD said that he would discuss the arrangement with the TD later.

48. The Chairman asked whether special road signs would be added to remind motorists and pedestrians. He asked about the extent where concrete blocks would be located, and whether there would be railings or handrails near the side of the traffic lane.

49. Mr William YAU of HyD said that there would be handrails between the concrete blocks and the temporary railings to separate pedestrians and the concrete blocks. In the future, the concrete blocks may be beautified with the railings removed, but this had to be discussed later.

50. The Chairman suggested having them removed so that pedestrians could have more passing space.

51. Regarding road closure for placement of concrete blocks at night, Ms CHENG Lai-king suggested that a reminder be made in the traffic news on radio broadcast.

52. Miss Camille YAM said that temporary traffic measures would be maintained for over six months, and residents in the neighbourhood should be informed of the importance of the incident. She suggested that when notices were served to the buildings, it must be stressed in the project details that this was the last resort to save the old and valuable tree. She also suggested displaying somewhere in the vicinity of the temporary measures about the fact that it was an old and valuable tree and it was the last effort to save the tree, to make residents understand the issue and the importance of tree management and conservation.

53. Mr William YAU of HyD said that this information would be included in the beautification work of concrete blocks and integrated in the tree protection information.

54. The Chairman concluded the discussion on this topic. He asked the department to provide the revised briefing to the Secretariat for uploading and prepare a notice of traffic arrangements and notify residents in the neighbourhood. Mr KAM Nai-wai suggested serving the notice to buildings within 100m. Regarding the beautification works, the department was requested to note the suggestions raised by Ms Bonnie NG, Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin and Ms CHENG Lai-king on the safety of concrete blocks. The department should also examine whether the contents of the notice mentioned by Miss Camille YAM were feasible.

Item 5 – Any other business (ii) - Discussion on issues relating to C&WDC funds

(2:03 pm – 2:42 pm)

55. Mr Cario LEE, Executive Officer (District Council)¹, C&WDO said that Members had inquired about the funding for Community Involvement Projects (CIPs) for the current year at the previous DC meeting. He indicated that the total funding allocation for this year was approximately \$22 million. About \$19 million funding applications had been approved and about \$0.6 million funding applications were being circulated among Members, leaving a total of about \$2.5 million for allocation. He reminded Members that there was only about one month before the end of the fiscal year. As according to the set procedures, it may be necessary to study the feasibility of the activities proposed by Members and make corresponding quotation invitations, it would be difficult for the contractors to complete all services before the end of March. Based on past experience, the remaining funds could hardly be settled before the end of March

and need to be carried forward to the next year. He continued that according to the Manual on the Use of District Council Funds (the Manual), the annual commitment ceiling was 50% of the funding allocation for that year. In the past, the commitment of the C&WDC was about \$2.5 million to \$3 million. Due to the pandemic, most of the approved activities could hardly carry out as scheduled, and the commitment for the next year may reach some \$3 million. If Members decided to approve the remaining funding of about \$2.5 million, the commitment could be as high as some \$5 million. Moreover, the total funding allocated for next year was still unknown, it was possible that the commitment ceiling stipulated in the Manual may be exceeded. Members were requested to take this into account during the process. He said that the higher the amount of commitment, the less funding would be available for the next year. The committed amount must be set aside in the next year to cover the relevant expenses. Therefore, it was necessary to solicit the opinions of Members to facilitate earliest arrangements.

56. Ms Cherry WONG asked whether it was estimated that the commitment to be carried forward from this year to next year was some \$3.3 million.

57. Mr Cario LEE of C&WDO said that it was estimated that about \$3.3 million would be carried forward from this year to 2021.

58. Ms Cherry WONG asked about the expected commitment to be carried forward from this year to 2021-2022, i.e., items that could not be disbursed before 31st March. She asked if such figure was available.

59. Mr Cario LEE of C&WDO stated that after preliminary estimates, the annual commitment was about \$2.5 to \$3 million. The Secretariat was also calling up the successful funded NGOs in order to get a picture of the commitment amount, but the concrete figure was still unavailable at this stage. Based on past experience, the relevant range was about \$2.5 to \$3 million. He continued to point out that several funding applications were currently being circulated, and the funding amount was about \$0.6 million. Therefore, he believed that the commitment amount would exceed \$3 million.

60. Ms Cherry WONG asked whether the sum of study items and souvenirs was something around \$0.6 million.

61. Mr Cario LEE of C&WDO confirmed the statement.

62. Ms Cherry WONG asked whether other projects were funded CIPs.

63. Mr Cario LEE of C&WDO stated that the three funding applications under circulation were also approved CIPs.

64. Ms Cherry WONG asked whether the activities should be cancelled if they could not be completed before 31st March. If the activity date was postponed beyond 31st March due to the pandemic, was it the case that further postponement would be rejected

because the funding deadline was until 31st March.

65. Mr Cario LEE of C&WDO agreed to the view, but believed that some NGOs would still want to hold the events. Therefore, applications for postponement of the events were filed to the Finance Committee and those fundings were still counted as commitment. However, the Secretariat would still suggest the relevant organisations to complete the activities as soon as possible before the end of the financial year.

66. The Chairman stated that there was still an allocation amount of \$2.5 million left. Yet due to the commitment arrangement and only one month's time was left, the kind of activities that could be carried out were limited. He asked whether the remaining funds could be used for street cleaning and whether there was such experience before. He stated that funds had been allocated for street cleaning in 2019-2020 and wanted to know about the activity, the reimbursement time frame and whether the amount of commitment could be reduced accordingly. For example, if funding for street cleaning was decided today, circulated in two days to get an idea of the required spots, then a four-week work period to be started in early March, about \$1 million would be spent. He said that about \$0.5 million was used for street cleaning last time, with two spots in one district being cleaned. This time, the spots in one district could be increased to four with the duration lasted for one to two months. He asked if this was feasible and whether there were any estimates.

67. Mr Cario LEE of C&WDO stated that for the last street cleaning activity, about \$0.5 million was approved and the payment was completed in April 2020. He pointed out as it was necessary to collect Members' views, decide the cleaning time for the activity and reflect Members' feedbacks afterwards, the Secretariat had to wait for the time when everything was done before payment could be made to the contractor. Therefore, it was difficult to complete all the procedures in a short time.

68. Ms CHENG Lai-king said that if the remaining allocation of \$2.5 million were to be committed, it would offset part of the resources for next year. She said DO had clearly stated that no procurement of masks was allowed. Nonetheless, by means of this open meeting, she would like to ask DO again if it was a no-no to purchase of masks. She said that the first return bid price of the cleaning kit was more expensive than expected and re-tendering might be necessary. She also added that street cleaning at the odd-numbered locations of Caine Road was three times a week, but the even-numbered locations had not been cleaned even once in three months. The situation was really bad. She once asked colleagues concerned to conduct street cleaning for Caine Road. The only occasion she saw was a passing street-washing vehicle spraying water at around 9pm on a Saturday night, splashing the dirt of the road onto the pavement and causing pedestrians to run off. She hoped that someone would clean the street or a street washing smart device be put in place. She pointed out that there was dog faeces at No. 118 Caine Road. She had asked the Superintendent of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) to clean that road section in order to keep the C&W District clean and hygienic and prevent "COVID-19". She said that she had dealt with many cases of drainage leakage from upper floors recently, even the Joint Office for

Investigation of Water Seepage Complaints was also very concerned. However, even months after the inspection, the Joint Office has yet handled the water seepage problem. Many people were not aware of the problem of drainage pipes in buildings and back lanes in the community. She had proposed four spots for street washing last year, one of which was cleaned at least once. It was indeed cleaner and the kaifongs had shown their appreciation. From the perspective of hygiene, she suggested to conduct street cleaning. She also said that she did not know whether the FEHD should be responsible for cleaning the streets in C&W District. That was the responsibility of DO, whether he was capable of asking the FEHD to clean all streets without the need for the Council to allocate funds to do the job for the sake of prevention of COVID-19. She asked DO whether he just rejected purchase of masks and had no problem with other things. She also expressed the hope to buy face guard masks. Although some people considered that wearing face guard masks was more troublesome, people would use everything and even gloves in emergency situations. She hoped that the remaining funds could be used to fight the pandemic. The cleaning kits and masks distributed at the end of the year were well received by kaifongs and she hoped that could be continued.

69. DO pointed out that he had publicly stated in the last meeting that he had reservations about funding allocation for the purchase of masks. Environmental hygiene was indeed very important. If Members or the Council had comments on street cleanliness, the District Office was happy to follow up and report to the FEHD. Yet he had reservation about using DC funding for street cleaning. According to the Manual, the end use of DC funding should not overlap too much with the daily work of government departments. Street cleaning was the daily work of the FEHD. The District Office also conducted street cleaning work to a minor extent. Therefore, he had reservation about using DC funding for street cleaning.

70. Ms CHENG Lai-king asked residents of the C&W District to note the fact that DO stated that he would not approve and allocate funds for the purchase of masks and street cleaning, yet the former DO was able to spend \$500,000 on street cleaning. She asked the Assistant District Officer (ADO) to put on record that all even-numbered locations on Caine Road, from No. 92 to Caine Road Garden at No. 144, would like to have cleaning service tonight, and she would also be there to monitor the situation. She went on to say that there was no need to bother DO. She would forward the relevant photos to the FEHD. If the photos were sent to the FEHD, the department would follow up immediately. She reiterated that the Council was making use of public funds, but DO did not approve the purchase of masks and street washing.

71. The Chairman said that the former DO had approved \$500,000 for street cleaning, and he didn't see how it had overlapped with the work of the FEHD. The department was not cleaning every single street. He said that DO maintained that the FEHD was responsible for street cleaning, but he repeated that the department was not cleaning every single street. He asked the Secretary to verify with the department whether the water-filled vehicle spraying water to the bus station had something to do with street cleaning. He invited the HyD to answer. Or else, the Secretariat could ask if the method adopted by water-filled vehicle for traffic lane cleaning was spraying water

and splashing the dirt onto footpaths. If this were the case, it would serve no purpose even the FEHD was cleaning the streets multiple times. That undermined the look of the road surface and in his opinion, follow-up was needed. Though DO said that funds could not be used for street cleaning, the District Office had conducted cleaning for three-nail buildings and their back alleys. He asked why things that could be done last year were rejected this year, especially within the same term of DC. He expressed doubt on the issue.

72. Ms CHENG Lai-king asked DO or ADO to issue a form to the 15 Members for them to list out the dirtiest streets in the district and then conduct street cleaning immediately. She stated that if DC funding could not be used for this purpose, then the only option was to use the funds of the District Office to carry out the work. She had no idea how money was spent under the District-led Actions Scheme (DAS), which was beyond supervision. She asked for a form to be sent to Members to list out the streets to be cleaned. A minimum of three more streets should be cleaned in each constituency, and the number may be more than that.

73. ADO stated that she had previously sent letters to consult Members about the cleaning spots under the DAS. The third round of street cleaning services was now underway. Unlike the FEHD, the street cleaning services provided by the District Office was not a regular one. The current financial year was almost over, but the office could still try to arrange special street cleaning service, subject to the availability of corresponding resources and its feasibility in terms of time.

74. Ms CHENG Lai-king wondered why street cleaning was not provided though money was there and what corresponding resources meant. Street cleaning was possible last year, why not this year. The pandemic was still lingering and the residents were at its mercy.

75. Mr KAM Nai-wai said that every time before he attended a DC meeting, he had to take blood pressure medicine in advance because a friend, who had watched him talking via Facebook, told him to keep calm. However, how could one stay calm when facing DO or ADO? He remembered the last time when he asked about the time of street cleaning, he had requested a timetable to be provided to the DC for monitoring purpose. Yet, the District Office was unable to provide such information. The SAR Government's slogan "Together, We Fight the Virus!" was bullshit. He referred to DO's answer just now and in the last meeting – the District Office and the Social Welfare Department (SWD) had already provided pandemic prevention materials to those in need, so he considered that it was no longer necessary for the Council to do the same, which was the work of the District Office and SWD. How could this live up to "Together, We Fight the Virus"? Then DO stated that since other departments were doing the job, the DC should not duplicate. Looking at the example cited by Ms CHENG Lai-king just now, two street cleaning phenomena had occurred. The odd-numbered locations were not cleaned, while the even-numbered locations were cleaned. Now we were talking about using funding to clean the odd-numbered locations because neither did the District Office clean the spots nor approve the application. The issue about street cleaning and

purchase of masks was brought up in the last meeting. Mr KAM challenged DO how it had violated the District Councils Ordinance. Was it because things already done by the District Office could not be undertaken by the DC? “Together, We Fight the Virus!” was really “ridiculous”. Everything was politicised, nothing was allowed to be done. He drew everyone’s attention that it was not the DC that refused to fight the pandemic. The Council wanted to clean the streets, purchase anti-pandemic items and masks to enable more residents to better prevent the pandemic. DO’s response was disapproval and a no-no. Yet right after that, he allowed the leftists and the pro-establishment organisations to proceed with these tasks. He said that the information he mentioned in the last meeting was not very accurate. The DC had only 240 000 masks instead of 490 000 masks. The actual number of masks distributable at Members’ Offices was just 240 000, while the Government had allocated 560 000 masks to leftist organisations. The number was almost double that for Members. Politics covered even the level of mask distribution. There was political manipulation in mask distribution. He asked if he said something like “I’ll get on my feet and go to beat you up”, would he be later accused of violating the National Security Law and undermining the SAR Government’s governance. He said that he would not instigate others to assault DO, he would just criticise him verbally and in writing. The salary of DO was between \$100 000 to 200 000, but he was just there to stand in the way. Was he comfortable with that? Mr KAM said that he didn’t want to angry himself, it’s no big deal if the \$2 to \$3 million of allocations remained unused. Even before the Bill was passed, the Bureau Secretary already said some Members would be disqualified from their posts. How ridiculous! What kind of society was that? Hong Kong was not Hong Kong anymore. He said that he had been serving as a Member of the DC for more than 20 years. DC was not vested with substantial power. Now there was even constraint on purchase and distribution of masks. Would it be better to “wind up” and shut down the Council? The Government could transfer everything concerned to Area Committees, where there was a free hand to appoint anyone and allocate money to anyone. Stop pretending to say that elected DCs would lend their ears to the voice of people. “What a lie!” Please stop live broadcasting the meetings on Facebook to fool us all. He said that the reality didn’t correspond to the due functions of elected Council. Members were there to allocate resources on behalf of the public, yet they could do nothing now. The Government should not lie to the public in the Facebook live broadcast. He said that this was not the function of the elected Council. Members were supposed to allocate DC resources on behalf of the public, but there was no way to do so now.

76. Ms Cherry WONG said that not only had the former DO used the DC funding for street cleaning, she had also used the money for DAS for this purpose. It was described as a supplementary effort to the work of the FEHD as she understood that the service provided by the FEHD was inadequate during the pandemic, so money from DAS was also spent on the work. She stated that whether the money could be used for this purpose and whether the work and payment could be done within a short time frame was a matter of human effort. Nonetheless, the new DO chose not to do anything and ignore the needs of people’s livelihood. Ms WONG said that she often received complaints from the public about unclean streets, and street cleaning by the FEHD at Kennedy Town was not seen on a daily basis. Since there were public complains about unclean streets,

it meant that the frequency or quality of street cleaning was not good enough. DO stated that there was no need to use the funding for CIPs to repeat the work done by FEHD. She asked DO if he could request the FEHD to conduct daily street cleaning work in each constituency of the C&W District from next week onwards; and whether Members could provide the list of particularly dirty locations that necessitated cleaning right away and the frequency required. She asked if that was feasible.

77. DO stated that as mentioned earlier, should Members have comments, questions or suggestions on street cleanliness and hygiene, they were welcome to notify the FEHD or the District Office. As for the FEHD's work procedures, coverage area or frequency of street cleaning, he could not response on behalf of the FEHD right now. Nonetheless, the District Office had always been using money of DAS for street washing work.

78. Mr NG Siu-hong said that DC funding could be used for street cleaning in the past, but now the practice had been suspended. He asked DO whether the past decision of the former DO was wrong. Why things had changed? Funding approval was granted before, but not now.

79. DO stated that he would not comment on the work of the former DO. In fact, practices varied with times. According to the Manual, DC funded activity should not significantly overlap with the routine work of government departments. Since street cleaning was the routine work of the FEHD, the use of DC funding for street cleaning may not be in compliance with the Manual.

80. Mr NG Siu-hong asked how the situation this year was different from the past. DC funding for street cleaning had nothing to do with politics. Disapproval of such funding during the pandemic posed hazards to human life, and the health and safety of the public. He continued to ask how it was possible to disapprove funding for street cleaning during the pandemic, and how one could reconcile it to his conscience.

81. Mr Fergus LEUNG said that from what DO had said, it proved that he was a DO with his head in the clouds. He said that when the pandemic was relatively serious earlier, there were close to 10 confirmed cases in the C&W District every day. Members had also contacted acquainted staff of the FEHD to arrange street cleaning. FEHD staff had replied then no manpower could be deployed on the same day as there were many confirmed cases in the C&W District. He said that it was not that the FEHD did not provide cleaning services, just that everyone's standards for street cleaning had heightened during the pandemic. The FEHD was overwhelmed. Now the DC had the resources and the ability to do so, why the allocation of DC funding was turned down. He questioned if this was not a valid reason for funding, how could other DC funded activities, such as recreational activities organised by groups, held in the past be justified. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) also held a lot of recreational activities. He asked whether organisation of all recreational activities would be denied with their DC funding applications rejected in the future. He said that there would definitely be services provided by government departments that overlapped with DC funded activities. If street cleaning was an issue and need to be reviewed, a better

alternative was to totally withdraw the DC's funding power. This was what the Government most wanted to do – the DC could do nothing in the public eye. Please furnish no more excuses, just honestly admitted that it was the case.

82. DO stated that the Government's position had been stated just now, nothing to add.

83. The Chairman said that he could buy a "supplementary information notebook" for DO, so he would not always miss something to add. Members also pointed out that the former DO did approve funding for street cleaning. They also stated that it was not that the FEHD did not carry out street cleaning, just that the department had only limited number of street-washing vehicles and manpower. In face of the serious outbreak of the pandemic, even additional allocation from DAS could not be made available to assist the FEHD. Members used to inform the FEHD about the location of the building with COVID-19 cases, and the departmental code of practice was to clean it for a period of three days. He inquired whether the District Office could and would assist the FEHD. He asked ADO to respond whether assistance was given to the FEHD to fulfil the departmental code of practice, i.e., helping residents of the C&W District to clean their environment for a period of three days.

84. ADO supplemented on the content of the DAS. The duration of the third round of street cleaning services was from 18th January to 27th March, so street cleaning had been carrying out during this period. Regarding Caine Road, according to records, cleaning services were also provided to the section from No. 100 Caine Road to Caine Road Garden, Alassio at No. 100 Caine Road, No. 6 Castle Road, the back alley of Windsor Court and Castle Road.

85. Ms CHENG Lai-king asked which cleaning method was used.

86. ADO said water cleaning.

87. Ms CHENG Lai-king asked whether water-filled vehicle was used to spray water on Saturday night for street cleaning along the way.

88. ADO said that she had to find out the specific time of street cleaning.

89. Ms CHENG Lai-king asked ADO to clearly state the date, time, location and start time. She would oversee the matter and said that she had not seen any cleaning work done.

90. The Chairman stated that he had pointed out in the Full Council meeting last year that the \$500,000 DC-funded street cleaning work was not up to standard. At that time, the department replied that it would monitor the matter. A year had lapsed, the District Office expressed that it would use funding of DAS for street cleaning. He was not sure whether that sum was exceptionally valuable or it was money like "The Emperor's New Clothes". Air was used instead of water for street cleaning and the

result was invisible to public eyes after cleaning. Hence, he hoped to use the DC funding for street cleaning. The District Office stated that the DAS funds were its management, control and monitoring. Members had no say over that money. Was the DC empowered to use DC funding? Well then, approval was not granted. At the same time, it was said that the FEHD did clean the streets and there's no need for the Council to allocate funds for street cleaning. For him, the idea of using DC funding to engage people that knew how to do street cleaning work came from the fact that the FEHD lacked sufficient financial resources and manpower, while air-cleaning service was provided under DAS. Yet the idea was turned down. In case the outbreak of the pandemic was all over Hong Kong, the C&W District may need to be cordoned off. By then, Members would be described as not pitching in "Together, We Fight the Virus!" Someone was playing politics. If that was the case, please cut it short. Members were discussing how to make use of the \$2.5 million funding and identifying ways to promote the well-being of residents in the C&W District. Somehow, the government departments headed by the District Office were playing politics. They hadn't done their job well, but they were still there to obstruct the work of the DC. On the other hand, Members were described as "invalid". He asked DO to ask Secretary for Home Affairs Caspar TSUI how many times he had described DCs as invalid. Referring to yesterday's Budget, the number of district affairs consultations in the 18 districts of Hong Kong in 2020 reached more than 4 000, which was nearly double the number in 2019. He asked who was invalid. Apparently, the District Office and other government departments were now hindering the operation of the DC. He would not point his finger at other departments, he was just blaming the District Office. DO often stated that he had nothing more to add, a no-no for street cleaning. Please respond to Mr Fergus LEUNG's question. The LCSD also organised cultural and recreational activities. Would DC funding not be allocated to NGOs applying for cultural and recreational activities in future?

91. DO stated that the subject under discussion was street cleaning. As for cultural and recreational activities, there were many different types. He was not ready to discuss them with Members one by one now. Regarding the quality of street cleaning, as the District Office was using public funds, they were obliged to monitor the work somehow. With regard to contractors' street cleaning work, random checks were also conducted with assigned staff of the District Office to monitor the process. If a quality issue was identified, it would affect the company's future bidding with the District Office for street cleaning.

92. The Chairman said that he had discussed with the staff of the FEHD. They would take and send him photos before and after the work. The outsourced contractor of the FEHD would also "do their homework" by taking photos after street cleaning. Now DO was saying that only random checks were conducted towards the work done under DAS. He said that he didn't know what the hell they were doing. Then the Chairman of the DC confirmed that the street was washed with air instead of water and such cleaning was invisible to naked eyes. He expressed that the request to use DC funds to clean the streets was denied; Mr Fergus LEUNG's enquiry on whether relevant activities could not be held was not answered. DO just said there were many types of activities. There were also many sorts of TV programmes, were those programmes

suitable for everyone? Now you turned off the device because you did not want to watch it. No, no, no. You were not doing your job; you were playing politics. If the \$2.5 million funding was not allowed to be used on street cleaning and purchase of masks, what else could we do with the money? Please comment. What were things that the department considered workable but not yet done?

93. DO stated that he had no particular suggestions. If Members had any comments, he would give consideration over them.

94. The Chairman asked whether the \$2.5 million could be used to hire another person to replace DO. He said that there were a lot of things that he was not able do. Getting bogged down in this way was meaningless. Discussion on this issue had already lasted for 45 minutes, he invited Members to make a decision.

95. Ms CHENG Lai-king said that water-jet cleaning vehicles would splash the dirt from the road onto the pavement, alarming the crowd waiting for bus. Even she had to clean the entrance of her place after the vehicle had passed. She asked the HyD for an explanation and asked if the TD knew about it and whether the work was carried out by a contractor of the HyD.

96. Mr Dominic WONG, District Engineer/West, HyD said that the FEHD was responsible for routine street cleaning. Regarding Ms CHENG's observations, he would check with colleagues after the meeting. He asked for the name of street where the vehicle had passed through.

97. Ms CHENG Lai-king said that on Saturday nights, from 8 pm to 10 pm, starting from Caritas at No. 2 Caine Road up till No. 134 Caine Road. At the time she wanted to pursue, the vehicle had already passed Caine Road westbound onto Bonham Road. She went on to say that on the roads in the Mid-Levels, using this method to clean the streets would only make the footpaths more and more dirty. The dirt from the road would be washed onto the footpath, even tenants of ground level shops had to wash their shop front again. Pedestrians first. She was unsure if this was the right way to clean the streets.

98. The Chairman asked the HyD and the FEHD to figure out the situation regarding street cleaning and give a written reply afterwards.

99. Mr Dominic WONG of HyD expressed that he would do so.

100. The Chairman asked Members to make a decision on the remaining funding of \$2.5 million and asked if they would have any comments. DO had said that no street cleaning work was allowed as he was using air to clean the street. He hoped that those watching live broadcast would know it was not that the DC not doing anything, it was the Government who stopped them from action. Please put it on record.

Item 6 – Standing item (i) - Central - Wan Chai Bypass and Island Eastern Corridor

Link (CWB) Project Report on Works Progress (C&W TTC Paper No. 2/2021)

Serious water leakage at Central - Wan Chai Bypass
Request the department to give an explanation and take measures to ensure road safety (C&W TTC Paper No. 4/2021)

(2:42 pm – 3:46 pm)

101. Mr Patrick KEUNG, Senior Engineer 2/Central Wanchai Bypass, HyD said that with the full commissioning of the CWB at the beginning of 2019, the road optimisation works at Yiu Sing Street had been completed. All works in the C&W District, except the retention of Rumsey Street Flyover (RSF) eastbound down ramp, were also done. The main purpose of retaining the RSF eastbound down ramp (“retention of down ramp”) was to move the existing westbound traffic northwards to make room for the reconstruction of the westbound priority intersection of RSF into a merging traffic lane to facilitate vehicular flow entering RSF westbound from the Man Cheung Street Tunnel. The project was in progress and would be completed at the earliest time possible.

102. Ms Tina CHAN, Senior Resident Engineer, AECOM Asia Company Limited briefed on the works progress of the retention of down ramp. The construction started in May last year. Retrofitting of parapets at the northern side, drainage works and lighting facilities (eastbound) and connection of the two ramps (eastbound and westbound) structures had been completed. After that, the contractor had already implemented temporary traffic arrangements to move the two lanes on the westbound up-ramp bridge deck northwards to make room for drainage works, modifications of existing parapet at the south side of RSF and road resurfacing. The works were expected to be finished by mid-April, and the final greening works would be completed around the end of April.

103. The Chairman invited discussion on the paper.

104. Mr KAM Nai-wai said that the flyover project was almost towards the end. First, he asked when was the commissioning date last promised and whether it could proceed as scheduled, i.e., the project be completed in time providing three up-ramp lanes to the Flyover instead. Second, he said that a motion was passed at the last meeting related to residents coming from the Western Harbour Crossing (WHC) or Sai Wan having to go in circles to reach the Central District. He asked whether there were any studies or options available to shorten the time motorists needed to reach Central. Third, if not, he asked whether the department had considered the condition underneath the Flyover. Those who were familiar with the route would know that they had to go round and round in order to reach Central. Many residents now reflected that they would follow the road under the Flyover to get to Connaught Road Central directly and then to Central, evading those turns. At present, the instruction for vehicles heading to Eastern via the WHC was to go up the Flyover instead of beneath the Flyover. He asked if there were other tips for the residents.

105. Mr Patrick KEUNG of HyD stated that the retention of down ramp started in May 2020 and would be completed in about a year. That was to say, to be completed before end of April this year. The works were smooth overall and he hoped it could be completed on time.

106. Mr KAM Nai-wai asked whether early completion was possible as most of the works had already been done.

107. Mr Patrick KEUNG of HyD stated that it would depend on the progress of the project. It would be completed as soon as possible.

108. Mr KAM Nai-wai asked if Members would be duly informed should the works be completed earlier than schedule because the next meeting would not be held until May.

109. Mr Patrick KEUNG of HyD stated that he would notify Members after the meeting.

110. Mr KAM Nai-wai requested the department to notify them in advance, not just one day before the commissioning of the down ramp.

111. The Chairman asked about the traffic instruction towards Central from the WHC in order not to mislead motorists taking the Flyover and whether there were ways to reduce the traffic flow.

112. Mr Ryan FUNG, Engineer/Central & Western 1, TD said that the direction signs at the exit of the WHC indicated that vehicles heading for Central should keep to the right and go to Central via the RSF. If a motorist chose to use the ground road to go to Central via Sheung Wan, he would need to drive through the light-controlled intersection at the junction of Connaught Road West/Eastern Street. The journey time may be longer than the route directly via the RSF. Therefore, it was believed that the current traffic arrangements were appropriate. Moreover, the TD had supplemented a written document after the last meeting to explain the situation of the RSF before and after the commissioning of the CWB. He said that Mr KAM was more concerned about the eastbound traffic of the red dotted arrow. Before the commissioning of the CWB, vehicles could take the down ramp to go to Central District. Yet due to the construction of the CWB Central exit and the westbound slip road of the RSF, shown by the yellow arrow, it crossed over the down ramp (red arrow). At that intersection point, the maximum level difference between the westbound lane and the eastbound down ramp was about 0.7m. If the eastbound down ramp were to be retained, it must be elevated to connect to the CWB road surface, but then the crossfall of the road surface would fail to meet the standards. In view of this, many optimisation measures had been taken to improve the roads and intersections towards Man Po Street and Edinburgh Place via the RSF. Just now the HyD also mentioned that the Yiu Sing Street roundabout had been changed to a through road and the eastbound lane was widened. According to recent observations by the TD, although the traffic volume had increased after the holidays, the traffic was generally smooth. The journey time during peak hours was also the same as

before commissioning of the CWB.

113. The Chairman asked whether, technically speaking, it was possible to provide an additional lane to the eastbound fast lane of RSF, going over the westbound lane of the CWB and descending to the down ramp of RSF. He asked whether it was technically unfeasible, or it was feasible but too costly.

114. Mr Ryan FUNG of TD expressed that the department had also considered the relevant proposal. Nonetheless, newly built elevated road needed to maintain a clearance height of at least 5.1m from the existing road. Due to gradient requirement of road surface, in order to meet the headroom clearance, the relevant eastbound upward ramp had to start somewhere near Sai Ying Pun. Yet the space on both sides of the RSF was very limited. So, the proposal was extremely hard on the technical side.

115. Mr WONG Weng-chi showed some photos to those in attendance. He said that he had enquired about the traffic flow data of the CWB at the last meeting and asked whether the department could provide data in relation to spots circled red, blue and green on the photos to gauge the soundness of the proposal and its impact on existing eastbound and westbound traffic.

116. Mr Ryan FUNG of TD said that he had no exact data off hand, but he could provide the approximate traffic flow for Members' reference. The blue circle referred to the up-ramp spot to RSF westbound at Connaught Road Central. Surveys were done after the CWB was commissioned. The traffic flow was highest in the evening rush hour, and the traffic volume was about 3 000 vehicles per hour. There were more fluctuations in traffic volume during the pandemic, so no average figure was available now. The red arrow referred to the traffic flow of the RSF near the entrance of CWB. There were about 3 200 vehicles per hour in the eastbound direction. The peak hours were in the morning, and the westbound traffic was heavier than the eastbound traffic in the afternoon. The green circle referred to vehicles coming out from the Central Portal of CWB. There were close to 2 000 vehicles per hour. The peak hours were also in the morning, and the traffic volume at noon and evening was lower.

117. Mr WONG Weng-chi asked whether the relevant data could be sent to Members after the meeting.

118. Mr Ryan FUNG of TD answered in the positive, but the data was collected at the beginning of 2019. The traffic flow had changed significantly during the pandemic.

119. Mr Jeremy YOUNG expressed that he looked forward to the completion of the down ramp works and reminded the department not to consider the traffic volume last year because it was not regular data. During the pandemic, there were basically no vehicles or passengers after 6 o'clock. The International Finance Centre (IFC) was connected to Airport Express at the Hong Kong Station. Normally, the place was frequented with people and vehicles. The number of vehicles had started to drop significantly about 13 to 14 months ago. When the pandemic was over, there may be

retaliatory consumption and travel. Besides, he said that in the past, vehicles could U-turn at the pick-up/drop-off positions of the Hong Kong Station, but now they could only U-turn under the flyover. He also believed that many drivers may not be aware of the new arrangement. He hoped that the department would add temporary or permanent instructions for U-turning.

120. Mr Ryan FUNG of TD stated that after the department had closed the U-turn position at the light-controlled intersection of Man Cheung Street outside the Hong Kong Station in May 2019, stakeholders in the region, including the MTR Corporation (MTRC) and the property management company of IFC, responded positively. Now that the enhancement works at the junction had been completed, the department would also keep an eye on traffic conditions nearby, especially when the Airport Express was back to operation.

121. Mr NG Siu-hong expressed concern about the water leakage problem in the CWB. Some media reported that the water leakage was very serious, with splashing water and presence of white powder suspected to be salt particles. A similar situation was reflected in the Council before, but the explanation given was that there was allowance for ingress of sea water. He asked about the margins for allowable ingress of sea water and to what extent would it lead to structural problems.

122. Mr Alex LI Executive Director, AECOM Asia Company Limited said that the issue was mentioned in previous meetings. The tunnel part of CWB was laid deep underground and underwater, the design itself allowed limited groundwater seepage. The structures of the CWB were constructed in different ways at different stages, some were continuous wall structures and some were concrete box-shaped structures.

123. Mr NG Siu-hong asked whether supplementary information could be provided after the meeting because it was impossible to accept seeped water up to three feet deep. There must be an acceptable standard and he asked whether the current level was up to standard.

124. Mr Alex LI of AECOM stated that when the engineering team noted water seepage, they had already conducted on-site inspections with the contractor at once.

125. Mr NG Siu-hong asked whether the current situation was acceptable and within the permissible range.

126. Mr Alex LI of AECOM stated that some had exceeded the permissible limit.

127. Mr NG Siu-hong asked if the relevant standards could be revealed.

128. Mr Alex LI of AECOM said yes. He reiterated that the engineering team had made a site visit. The preliminary findings obtained after the inspection was that there was basically no adverse effect on the safety and integrity of the structure.

129. Mr NG Siu-hong asked how water had seeped into the tunnel, whether it had penetrated into the steel bars, and whether relevant tests were carried out. If the steel bars were corroded, there was clearly a serious structural problem.

130. Mr Alex LI of AECOM said that part of the CWB tunnel passed under the seabed. A part of the concrete surface was chipped open for checking during early inspection. Initially speaking, the integrity of the steel bars was up to a certain extent.

131. Mr NG Siu-hong suggested that inspections should be strengthened to avoid affecting the lifespan and safety of structures and buildings. Just now it was mentioned that the current situation was not up to standard, which could slow down car speed and cause skidding and affect normal driving. If the design or contract tolerance level was violated, action to hold the construction party liable may be considered. Otherwise, other contractors of government projects may also deviate from the guidelines.

132. Mr Alex LI of AECOM said that if the investigation revealed that the water seepage was caused by poor works quality, the contractor would be required to carry out repairs and be responsible for related costs in accordance with the contract terms. Regarding the issue of “skidding”, he added that the tunnel was designed to allow limited water seepage. There were also drainage devices on both sides of the road surface to drain water away.

133. Ms CHENG Lai-king pursued the problem of water leakage. She asked whether the warranty period had already lapsed and whether the leakage should be dealt with within the warranty period. Moreover, a motion was passed at the last meeting, hoping that there would be an eastbound lane to reach the tunnel at Connaught Road Central to facilitate access to Admiralty or Upper Mid-levels. However, the reply was that it was not feasible and all eastbound vehicles would have to detour in order to get to Central. She worried that the traffic in Central would be more congested. She also asked on behalf of the kaifongs about the greening area on the upper cover of the CWB. The DC back then had requested greening work be done on the upper cover of the CWB, but the kaifongs did not accept the design which looked like a snake head. She said that the DC probably hadn't seen the design back then and only mentioned the need for greening. She asked whether the warranty period had lapsed and whether there would be a chance to make amendment as the public only saw the design after the commissioning of the CWB.

134. Mr Alex LI of AECOM said that in general, the warranty period was one year from the actual completion date specified in the contract, some engineering contracts were still within the warranty period.

135. The Chairman asked about the actual date of the warranty period and whether the relevant documents were not yet issued.

136. Mr Daniel KOO, Senior Resident Engineer, AECOM Asia Company Limited said that the Certificate of Completion of some contracts had yet to be issued. In fact,

the entire CWB project was split into different contracts, with different warranty periods and completion dates.

137. The Chairman asked if the relevant list could be supplemented after the meeting.

138. Mr Daniel KOO of AECOM answered in the positive.

139. Mr Alex LI of AECOM added that a roving exhibition had been conducted on the design of the Ventilation Building outside IFC in Central during the design stage back then, and booths were set up at different MTR stations and the HKCEC to allow the public to vote on its exterior design. The HyD had also provided various options so that the public could express their opinions.

140. The Chairman asked whether the DC was consulted.

141. Mr Alex LI of AECOM said that the HyD had also attended the C&WDC meeting for consultation on the exterior design of the Ventilation Building then.

142. The Chairman said that Ms CHENG said that only greening was mentioned at that time.

143. Mr Alex LI of AECOM stated that the design concept of the Ventilation Building was a streamlined form, which looked like a leaf. At this stage, it would be quite difficult to make major changes to the design. He said that the building was equipped with a ventilation system for air circulation. So, its functional requirements were given priority. The design of its outlook could have an impact on the ventilation function. Regarding its design, public consultations were conducted then and the department had also attended the C&WDC for consultation.

144. Ms CHENG Lai-king said that a rooftop-looking design was requested back then. It was known that the structure was a Ventilation Building and greening was requested. Maybe it was mentioned before a leaf-like design was conceived, but it looked like a disturbing snake head upon completion. She asked the contractor responsible for greening work whether they could make it look like a leaf because the present design gave a dark feeling. If the warranty period had not yet lapsed, she hoped to make it look like a leaf. The kaifongs were also very anxious about the design.

145. The Chairman asked if there would be a way to identify the colour and type of plants on the greening roof or the steel frame near the facility to camouflage the snake head. The current design looked like a snake pouncing on the C&W District and the Legislative Council, which made people uncomfortable.

146. Mr Alex LI of AECOM said that he would review the design with the HyD after the meeting. He said that there were louvred openings and steel brackets at the roof of the cover. The first thing was to ensure that the structure and ventilation function would not be affected, then he would check with the HyD and related departments on its external

design.

147. The Chairman said that if the design was leaf-shaped, it should look like a leaf rather than a snake. The head of a snake was rounder and the tip of a leaf was more pointed.

148. Mr Alex LI of AECOM added that the Ventilation Building was surrounded by roads and had a limited floor space. Due to the clearance requirements, there was not much space to extend outward and there was also constraint on the terrain. So, it was relatively difficult to handle the tip.

149. The Chairman stated that he was also the Chairman of the Working Group on Environmental Improvement, Greening and Beautification Works in C&W District. The company was welcome to consult his opinions and maintain good communication with the DC.

150. Ms Cherry WONG said that as a layman of works project, her comment on water leakage was that the tunnel was so new yet had leaking problem. If leaking was found inside a newly-bought premises, one could only imagine that the works were poorly done. Nonetheless, the consultancy firm said that there was no structural problem. She could construe that the structure of a leaking building would be affected in the long run, much worse than one where the problem didn't exist. The contractor was obliged to "fix the problem" during the warranty period and she was not sure if the problem would be gone. If the problem could not be improved and water leakage continued, once the warranty period was over, the repair costs would be borne by the Government. In this case, she asked if there would be penalty or non-payment to the poorly performed contractor.

151. Mr Enoch WONG, Senior Engineer 4/Central Wanchai Bypass, HyD said that if the water seepage problem was caused by the quality of the project, as stated by the Mr LI of AECOM, the contractor should carry out repairs and be responsible for related costs in accordance with the requirements of the contract.

152. Ms Cherry WONG asked whether it was possible to prove technically that it was the contractor's responsibility.

153. Mr Enoch WONG of HyD said that because the situation was quite complicated, he had to figure it out first.

154. Ms Cherry WONG stated that the new tunnel was built by the contractor. There had never been any damage or accidents. Logically, it must be the responsibility of the contractor, not the road users, not others.

155. Mr Enoch WONG of HyD stated that the design of the CWB Tunnel allowed limited water seepage. At this stage, it was necessary to understand the condition of the location concerned first. If it was caused by the quality of the project, the contractor was required to carry out repairs and be responsible for related costs in accordance with

the contract requirements.

156. Ms Cherry WONG asked the department to elaborate on the design about permissible water leakage for clarification purpose. She asked whether it was meant for drainage or allowance for water leakage.

157. Mr Alex LI of AECOM added that the design of the CWB Tunnel was different from that of general water storage tank. The CWB Tunnel was not designed as a completely water tight facility. The concrete used was not an absolutely impermeable building material. A certain limit of water seepage was allowed in the design and there was drainage on both sides of the road surface in the Tunnel to drain away the seepage water. The most important thing was to ensure driving safety. Regarding Ms WONG's statement that there were multiple water seepages in the CWB Tunnel, he explained that the CWB Tunnel was different from other tunnels. Due to geographical constraints, the construction of the CWB Tunnel adopted the cut-and-cover method using diaphragm walls on both sides from ground level to over 30m deep down. The engineering team supervised the construction process according to the contract, and the contractor must fulfil the contract requirements. If it was found that the water seepage was caused by the quality of the project, the contractor would be asked to carry out repairs and be responsible for related costs in accordance with the contract.

158. Ms Cherry WONG asked when the cause of the water leakage would be investigated.

159. Mr Alex LI of AECOM said that after discovering the problem, the engineering team had already set out to check different locations as soon as possible. Due to the extensive length of the Tunnel and the Tunnel was in operation now, inspection work was done nightly for three to four hours during the early hours when the Tunnel service was suspended temporarily.

160. Miss Camille YAM asked further on the issue of water leakage. A representative concerned pointed out that a little water leakage was acceptable, but what she saw was not little at all. Compared to the minimal water leakage referred in the contract, she asked whether the prevailing condition shown on photos of media report had exceed the allowable range.

161. Mr Alex LI of AECOM said that water seepage did not occur in a single location, and the cause must be identified and clarified first.

162. Miss Camille YAM said that of course that should be on the agenda. The condition was far beyond what we had seen in the Eastern Harbour Crossing before. Although the construction method adopted was different, there should not be such a big gap between the two. One should not downplay the fact that the contractor had done something bad. She further asked about the timetable. Although it was difficult to have a precise timetable, the rainy season was ahead. She asked if the company could promise to complete the report before the rainy season, say in May or June. She was

worried that the heavy rain would affect the structural integrity, and expressed that the identified problem should not remain unresolved by the onset of the rainy season. It would be unacceptable if the investigation was not completed at the time of the rainy season. We should uphold our responsibility towards motorists.

163. Mr Alex LI of AECOM said that the rainy season may not aggravate the problem. The CWB went deep underground or under the sea. The impact of the rainy or dry seasons was not very irrelevant, but the investigation would be completed as soon as possible to clarify the cause.

164. Miss Camille YAM said that from the perspective of the general public, the rainy season would increase the urgency, so she hoped the problem could be resolved as soon as possible. Besides, she suggested adding greening elements in or near the structure to strip of the uneasy feeling, and asked from which angle it looked like a leaf.

165. Mr Alex LI of AECOM said that there were also high-rise buildings around the Ventilation Building. The design concept back then was to make it look like a leaf from an aerial view to beautify the entire structure. As for whether the green area could be expanded, he said that it may have an impact on the structural load. The surrounding area was also traffic lanes. Due to clearance requirements, there was not much space to extend outward, and there were also terrain constraints. Even back then, there were considerable challenges related to the design.

166. The Chairman stated that the works project was not acceptable to him. Ordinary motorists had seen multiple puddles in the Tunnel, while the consultancy company said that water leakage was allowed in the design. He requested an elaboration on the design. In this meeting, it was stated that water leakage at some locations were beyond the limit. In other words, there was an issue with the road, but then it was said that the cause needed to be clarified. To him, guaranteed driving safety was of primary concern. There were tens of thousands of vehicles passing through the Tunnel every day. He did not want the incident of the concrete collapse at the Central MTR station repeat again. Since the commissioning of the CWB, various problems were reported by the media, such as the substandard concrete in the Causeway Bay section, failure of the ventilation system and water seepage. He stated that he had put up questions in the paper – the locations of water leakage, how was the condition, how to inspect it, and the related work, etc. Nonetheless, the department had not answered correspondingly, but just responded in general terms. He said that if the figure above standards still met the design criteria, there was no problem. If not, please take remedial measures to ensure the safety of drivers before investigating the cause of the problem. He asked why the department had not prepared well before the meeting and what the standards were, how come there were such standards, and why the design allowed water seepage. The department failed to give any answer. He wondered how motorists could be pacified and feel at ease when using the road. He asked the department if it could provide additional information and provide information on leaks or seepage points in the Tunnel, the frequency of inspection, remedy measures and whether the works met the standards (the standards of compliance or the data of non-compliance). Please

provide detailed information based on the investigations currently conducted in the CWB. Moreover, for the request in the paper: “Please explain the reasons for the unevenness of the road surface and the mitigation plan”, the department only replied that repair would be arranged promptly if damage was found. He said that uneven road surface was mentioned before in previous meetings, but the department had not replied directly. He asked how the department was going to respond. In addition, it was just mentioned that because of the design, caissons could not be used. So, the technique adopted should have been bored tunnelling. The Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel also used boring technique and was under the seabed, he asked whether water leakage would also occur. Yet it seemed that there was no water leakage after its commissioning. He asked the department to explain why there was such a phenomenon.

167. Mr Alex LI of AECOM stated that the construction methods of the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel and the CWB Tunnel were totally different. The CWB Tunnel was close to the north shore of Hong Kong Island and diaphragm walls were mainly used in an “excavation and refilling” way. Each construction method had its own features. Subject to the requirements of individual project and geographical constraints, the most suitable construction method would be adopted.

168. The Chairman said that it was necessary to ensure that there was no water leakage or damage to steel bars in the Tunnel. In the past, there were media reports on different issues. The problem of water leakage was also discussed at least three times at the meeting, but the response given was that water seepage was allowable. At this meeting, it was pointed out that the limit was exceeded in some locations. He asked why there was no prior notification. Motorists need to avoid puddles, but the traffic lanes inside the Tunnel were double lined. He found such practice unreasonable and posing a safety hazard to motorists. He said that regardless of liability issues, the departments, consultancy firm and the contractor all owed us an explanation. He was particularly concerned about safety of motorists and public perception. The Tunnel had puddles of water which was not rainwater but sea water. The latter could do harm to vehicles. He asked whether the HyD or the contractor would be responsible for compensation. Response as to how to drain the stagnant water should be given so as not to affect the motorists. Please explain.

169. Mr Alex LI of AECOM said that during the time the Tunnel was closed, the engineering team would go inside for inspection. He said that driving safety was of primary concern. Drainage facilities would be strengthened when necessary to avoid water accumulation on the road surface.

170. The Chairman asked whether any supplementary information would be given after the meeting, such as the identified leakage spots and the related information; a list of standards and nature of permissible seawater seepage at various road sections, say leakage in the ceiling or along the edge, for instance.

171. Mr Enoch WONG of HyD said that he would provide relevant information after the meeting.

172. The Chairman said that the presence of lots of rubbish was also mentioned in the paper. The reply stated that the Tunnel was cleaned up every day. Nonetheless, there was still many rubbish. He asked whether the management of the Tunnel would be supervised and requested relevant information be provided.

173. Mr Enoch WONG of HyD stated that the “management, operation and maintenance” contractor of the CWB Tunnel was managed by the TD. As far as he knew, the tunnel operator would carry out cleaning work on a regular basis.

174. Mr Ryan FUNG of TD stated that in accordance with the “Management, Operation and Maintenance” contract of the CWB Tunnel, the operator should keep the tube Tunnel clean and tidy, including regular daily cleaning of rubbish on the road surface.

175. The Chairman said that “traffic cones” were seen inside the Tunnel from time to time, placed in a disorderly manner. The situation was not satisfactory. He asked the TD to liaise with the management company.

176. Mr Ryan FUNG of TD expressed his understanding and explained that the “traffic cones” or traffic signs placed on the road shoulder were there for use when temporary traffic arrangements need to be implemented inside the Tunnel. The materials placed on the road shoulder were kept at an adequate horizontal distance from the traffic lanes.

177. The Chairman asked the department to supplement substantial information after the meeting. He ended the discussion on this topic and adjourned the meeting.

[Post-meeting note: The meeting was adjourned from 3:46 pm to 4:00 pm.]

Item 7 – Standing item (ii) - Latest progress of items implemented under the Universal Accessibility Programme in Central and Western District (C&W TTC Paper No. 3/2021)

Strong request for improving the pedestrian crossing facilities near Pok Fu Lam Road Playground
(C&W TTC Paper No. 5/2021)

(4:00 pm – 4:35 pm)

178. Mr MA Kin-ye, Senior Engineer 5/Universal Accessibility of HyD briefed on the latest progress of items implemented under the Universal Accessibility (UA) Programme in C&W District. He stated that the Government had been working hard to add barrier-free access facilities to public walkways and had successively launched five plans: the “Original Programme”, the “Expanded Programme”, “The Second Phase”, “The Third Phase” and the “Special Scheme”. Prior to the launch of the UA Programme in August 2012, the Government had already followed the recommendations of the Equal Opportunities Commission and implemented the “Original Programme” to retrofit

barrier-free access facilities to public walkways. Public walkways referred to public footbridges, elevated walkways and subways maintained by the HyD. In August 2012, the scope of the plan was extended to public walkways with standard ramps; and the public was also invited to propose locations that required lift retrofitting. In the first half of 2013, the department invited the DCs to select three public walkways for the new projects proposed by the public for priority implementation under the “Expanded Programme”. In 2016, the scope of the Programme was further expanded, which no longer confined to public walkways maintained by the HyD as long as certain specific conditions were met. DCs were again invited to nominate up to three existing public walkways among those public proposals that met the scope of the “Expanded Programme” as the implementation projects of the “The Second Phase”. The criteria for meeting the scope of “The Second Phase” included walkways spanned across public roads maintained by the HyD; walkways that were open for public access from public roads at all times; walkways that were not privately owned; and the parties responsible for the management and maintenance of existing walkways agreed to such lift retrofitting proposals and were willing to cooperate with the Government during the implementation of the said lift retrofitting works as well as the subsequent management and maintenance works of the lifts. Moreover, no land resumption should be involved in the retrofitting projects to ensure the proper use of public funds. In the 2018 Policy Address, it was announced that a feasibility study on lift retrofitting proposals for the remaining walkways proposed by the public would commence. Amongst them, the feasible items would be taken forwards under “The Third Phase” so as to benefit the elderly and people in need. In 2019, the Government announced that the ambit of the UA Programme would be further expanded with the launch of a “Special Scheme”. If certain conditions were met, lifts would be retrofitted at the public walkways in or connecting to the common areas of three types of housing estates, namely the Tenants Purchase Scheme, the Buy or Rent Option Scheme and public rental housing estates with properties divested under the Hong Kong Housing Authority. Under the above-mentioned phased Programmes, a total of 15 projects had been launched in the C&W District. Under “The Second Phase”, there was a project launched at an existing public walkway, i.e., the public footbridge across Robinson Road near Vantage Park (Structure No. HF135). No projects under “The Third Phase” or the “Special Scheme” were present there.

179. Mr LO Chun-chung, Engineer 9/Universal Accessibility of HyD said that a total of 15 projects in the Central and Western District were being implemented under the UA Programme, of which 11 had been completed and four were in the design and preparation stage. Amongst them, the tendering exercise for the footbridge (HF81) across Pok Fu Lam Road near the University of Hong Kong was expected to be conducted in the first quarter of 2021, with expected completion date in the fourth quarter of 2024. Another project was the footbridge (HF135) across Robinson Road near Vantage Park, also with tendering exercise in the first quarter of 2021 and completion date in the fourth quarter of 2024. The proposed Lift No. 2 project under the footbridge (HF119) project across Connaught Road Central near the police station at the waterfront required implementation of temporary traffic measures, including the temporary closure of a section of the traffic lanes of Connaught Road Central. The affected vehicles would need to temporarily use the tramway on the side. The HyD was trying to reach a

consensus with the tram company on temporary traffic measures in order to get the project started as soon as possible. Another project was the footbridge (HF40) across Cotton Tree Drive near Lippo Centre. The HyD was now coordinating with the Planning Department (PlanD) and Lands Department (LandsD) to formulate its works plan and construction schedule. He also showed the attendees the current situation of the above-mentioned footbridges and simulated diagrams of the completed lifts. He also briefed on the 11 projects in the C&W District where the retrofitting of lifts/barrier-free access facilities were completed, including pedestrian subway HS3 across Cotton Tree Drive near the Murray Hotel in Hong Kong; footbridge HF37 along Connaught Road Central near Exchange Square; footbridge HF91 across Connaught Road Central between Infinitus Plaza and Rumsey Street Multi-storey Carpark building; footbridge HF93 at Man Po Street near Pier Road; footbridge HF119 across Connaught Road Central near the police station at the waterfront (Lift No.1); footbridge HF152 across Harcourt Road near CITIC Tower; footbridges HF118 and HF118A across Connaught Road Central near Shun Tak Centre and Western Market; footbridge HF137 across Connaught Road Central near Pottinger Street; footbridge HF142 across Connaught Road West to Sun Yat Sen Memorial Park; footbridge HF46 across Possession Street near Lower Lascar Row, and footbridge HF135 along Cochrane Street near Tun Wo Lane.

180. Miss Camille YAM said that there had been discussion about including the location near the Pok Fu Lam Road Playground to the barrier-free projects. Yet after inspection with the HyD, it was found that the proposed lift would compromise the retaining wall of the park, so the idea was shelved at that time. She hoped that the TD would study the possibility of directly adding a pedestrian crossing facility. A few days ago, she also had conducted inspections with the TD and the HyD. After study by the TD, if the area was directly converted into a pedestrian crossing facility, the view of motorists and pedestrians would be blocked. Therefore, the TD proposed the removal of the retaining wall. Such being the case, she also reconsidered whether pedestrian crossing facility or barrier-free facility should be added, and asked if other Members had any comments.

181. Mr Gordon YIP, Engineer Central & Western 3 of TD said that if signalled-controlled crossing were to be added, the current stop line at the intersection of Pok Fu Lam Road slip road must recede from the intersection towards the slip road. This change would narrow the view of motorists at the intersection when driving from the slip road into Pok Fu Lam Road. When pedestrians crossed the road at the said crossing, the retaining wall of the Pok Fu Lam Road Playground would also obstruct the pedestrian's vision. Therefore, the proposed signalled-controlled crossing would pose a potential traffic hazard. Moreover, the addition of signalled-controlled crossing implied time must be reserved for pedestrians during green light, thereby reducing the green light time allocated to vehicles. According to the assessment of the department, adding a signalled-controlled crossing at the intersection of Pok Fu Lam Road/Pok Fu Lam Road slip road would significantly reduce the remaining capacity of the intersection and cause traffic congestion.

182. Miss Camille YAM suggested lift construction due to the inherent planning

shortfall at the site and the presence of a pedestrian subway there. The construction of lift could facilitate pedestrians on both sides and reduce the impact on traffic flow. Although it was not the best method, it was a better alternative given the current limitations. She had also asked the LCSD when the retaining wall was built and the answer was 1974. The retaining wall was built at the same time the playground was constructed. She invited attendees to discuss whether the retaining wall could give way to lift construction.

183. The Chairman invited discussion on the paper.

184. Ms CHENG Lai-king said that the UA Programme was proposed by the former Chief Executive. Many projects in the C&W District were already opened to use by the public. Many elderly people appreciated that it was no longer necessary to use the stairs at Sun Yat Sen Memorial Park and Cochrane Street for connection to the Escalator and Walkway System at Mid-Levels. She asked about the location of HF135 at Robinson Road. The paper stated that the works was expected to commence at the third quarter of 2021. The HyD had expressed that there were objections. She asked whether the objections were received after the gazette notice and whether the issue was resolved before tender and actual works could be carried out. She said that there were several buildings nearby. Though the lift was located in public places, she asked if consultations in the neighbourhood were conducted or residents were notified that a lift would be built in the future.

185. Mr MA Kin-ye of HyD stated that the objection had been resolved and the project had been gazetted. Preparation for the tendering process was underway and the project would proceed afterwards. The department would also communicate with the stakeholders in due course.

186. Ms CHENG Lai-king said that if there was an updated timetable related to transportation of electric boxes of the lift, moving of planters or relocation of trees, etc., she hoped that the department would inform her when the work started and whenever necessary. She expressed her concern about the project.

187. Mr MA Kin-ye of HyD responded positively.

188. Mr KAM Nai-wai said that the Pok Fu Lam Road Playground was located on a busy road. The construction of signalled-controlled crossing was also mentioned in the last meeting, but colleagues worried that it would affect the traffic flow. If signalled-controlled crossing was not provided, the only solution would be construction of a lift. He stated that he had not opposed to the proposed lift construction. If the project was confirmed, it should be included in the Programme as soon as possible. He also believed that there would not be too much opposition to the proposed project as the number of pedestrians crossing that road was not high, yet the lift would be available for use by all residents in the neighbourhood. He said that the UA Programme was not initiated by the Chief Executive. During the review on related Ordinances against discrimination, it was found that many footbridges did not have barrier-free access.

After the law was enacted, in order to comply with the legal requirements, all footbridges were retrofitted with barrier-free access. Some lifts were built even though no one was going to use them in the end. Now, Member from that constituency had put forward the request. Given that the traffic flow there was relatively high, if a signalled-controlled crossing was not possible, he suggested that the location be included in the Programme. The progress of a project would slow down if there was opposition voice. Therefore, he suggested to accord priority to projects without opposition. He said that construction of some projects may take even three, five, or seven years. Based on past experience, the lift project opposite the Western Market and the Central Police Station had been stalled for seven to eight years. He would not bother to ask about the progress because not many people were going to the Central Police Station.

189. Mr MA Kin-ye of HyD stated that there was only one project in the C&W District under “The Second Phase”, namely the footbridge (structure No. HF135) across Robinson Road near Vantage Park. As each DC could nominate up to three items among existing public walkways as the implementation projects of the “The Second Phase”, if the DC agreed to include and implement the proposal of adding lift facility to the pedestrian subway (Structure No.: HS22) near Pok Fu Lam Road Playground under “The Second Phase”, the HyD would start a technical feasibility study for the retrofitting of lift facility as soon as possible.

190. Ms CHENG Lai-king asked if HF81 was mentioned in the previous term of DC. She reported that the public facilities next to Chiu Sheung School were too messy and too much, and asked whether construction works could be carried out there. She said that she had mentioned to the TD or HyD that there was a staircase next to the Baptist Church building at No. 50 Caine Road. Yet the TD stated that the staircase was within the parameter of the building, where the space underneath both sides of the Mid-levels Escalator and Walkway were also staircases. She hoped to understand whether escalators could be provided at No. 50 Caine Road to connect to the Mid-Levels Escalator and Walkway System. She also hoped that a small lift could be retrofitted, and asked if a relevant study could be done. She pointed out that the TD had once said that it was impossible. So, she hoped to raise up the issue again for re-study. She understood that the UA Programme was to add barrier-free access in response to the United Nations’ Disability Discrimination Ordinance. She said that there were papers mentioning hillside escalator links and elevator systems, such as the construction of escalators, moving walkways or lifts to Kotewall Road in the university district and the local district. She asked whether the two initiatives were exclusive of each other because many suggested places there could also be provided with lifts to ensure safety of residents accessing uphill areas in the C&W District.

191. Mr MA Kin-ye of HyD stated that the tendering exercise for project HF81 was scheduled in the first quarter, and works would start after that. He also stated that he had inspected Caine Road with the DC Chairman to discuss the proposal of building a lift there. After soliciting the opinions of departments concerned, it was concluded that the addition of a lift there would narrow up the footpath, affecting the plan for future expansion of the road. Furthermore, only addition of lifts or related barrier-free

facilities to existing footbridges, elevated walkways and pedestrian subways would meet the scope of the UA Programme, which was different from the construction of new uphill facilities.

192. Miss Camille YAM said that two options were open to the Pok Fu Lam Road Playground: pedestrian crossing facility or lift. Based on the cost, target beneficiaries, impact to traffic and the retaining wall, she preferred to support the lift proposal. She asked the Chairman to proceed with voting on the idea of including barrier-free facilities in the vicinity of Pok Fu Lam Road Playground in order that a feasibility study could be conducted. Otherwise, we would not know if the proposal was feasible. Hence, she hoped that support to include the proposal could be decided in this meeting.

193. The Chairman said that he had inspected the site with Miss Camille YAM and the HyD. One lift costed about \$20 million and two lifts would cost about \$40 million. He said that he would take the number of users and cost-effectiveness into consideration, but he also respected the decision of DC members. As for whether the retaining wall should give way to the proposed signalled-controlled crossing, he believed that the cost of adding a crossing was comparatively lower. If about the same number of people would be benefitted in the end, from the perspective of the “Walk in Hong Kong” initiative, pedestrians were better encouraged to walk on ground level rather than subways. Regarding the impact of east-west traffic on Pok Fu Lam Road, if Miss YAM, Councillor of that constituency, wished to include the location to the Programme and conduct a feasibility study, he had no objection. However, he hoped that the TD would also study the impact of the proposed crossing on the traffic flow and the scope; and provide drawings and price indexes. He said that there were various sorts of crossing signals used in the community, such as smart device with Octopus Card technology for the elderly, pushbutton function type and real-time adaptive traffic signal system. He asked the TD to carry out study and provide relevant details so that Members could consider in terms of utilisation rate, safety, traffic impact and cost. A voting would be conducted later on to decide whether the location should be included in the Programme. He expressed that he was for it in order that a feasibility study could be carried out. He also hoped that the TD would provide relevant data.

194. Mr Gordon YIP of TD said that the department would conduct a study to understand the impact on traffic flow, and then provide supplement information after the meeting.

195. The Chairman asked the TD to provide the estimated quotation breakdowns. If they could not be itemised on the paper, supplementary information after the meeting was also acceptable.

196. Mr Gordon YIP of TD said that he would ask the HyD to assist in the provision of quotation breakdown.

197. The Chairman said that the cost and technicality of road works and lift construction were different, and he was concerned about this. It was also mentioned in

the last meeting that the cost of a lift was \$20 million. To connect both sides, two lifts were needed. He asked the HyD whether this was construed as one project or two.

198. Mr MA Kin-ye of HyD stated that lift construction for the pedestrian subway was a single project. He added that he had conducted on-site inspections. One lift may be good enough because the exit on the other side was very near and a ramp could be used. Provision of two lifts were not obligatory. Adding a lift on the other end would affect the slope and involve complicated works.

199. Mr Fergus LEUNG preferred to add crossing facility at this location. He would pass by Pok Fu Lam Road occasionally. According to his observation, save those using wheelchairs or pushing a pram, many others would avoid the pedestrian subway and go directly over the railings to the opposite side for convenience's sake. The construction of lift would undoubtedly facilitate people who need barrier-free facilities, but in the long run, it may not solve the problem of pedestrians crossing the road directly for the sake of convenience. Therefore, he hoped that a comparison be drawn between the two options of road crossing and lift and the factors forming pedestrians' behavioural habits before a decision was made.

200. The Chairman asked the HyD whether none of the three types of housing estates, namely the Tenants Purchase Scheme, the Buy or Rent Option Scheme and public rental housing estates with properties divested under the Hong Kong Housing Authority, under the scope of the "Special Scheme" were present in the C&W District. Were Sai Wan Estate and Kwun Lung Lau also fell out of the above categories?

201. Mr MA Kin-ye of HyD said that they didn't belong to the said categories.

202. The Chairman conducted a simple voting related to support for inclusion of the pedestrian subway at Pok Fu Lam Playground into "The Second Phase" of the UA Programme for feasibility study. Members agreed unanimously for the voting.

203. The Chairman dealt with the motion voting procedures of C&W TTC Paper No. 5/2021 and invited Members to vote on the following motion. After voting, the following motion was adopted.

Motion: The Traffic & Transport Committee of the Central and Western District Council strongly requests the Transport Department and relevant departments to improve the pedestrian crossing facilities near Pok Fu Lam Road Playground.

(Proposed by Miss YAM Ka-yi, Camille and seconded by Mr YIP Kam-lung, Sam)

(11 affirmative votes by: Mr YIP Kam-lung, Sam; Ms CHENG Lai-king; Mr KAM Nai-wai; Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin; Ms NG Hoi-yan, Bonnie; Mr NG Siu-hong; Mr LEUNG Fong-wai, Fergus; Mr PANG Ka-ho; Mr WONG Weng-chi; Miss YAM Ka-

yi, Camille; Mr YOUNG Chit-on, Jeremy)

(0 dissenting vote)

(0 abstention vote)

204. The Chairman said that under “The Second Phase” of the UA Programme, there was still one remaining project available for proposition. Should Members had other suggestions, they could email to the Secretariat and submit papers for discussion under Standing Items. Departments were also requested to prepare relevant progress reports when attending each meeting. The Chairman concluded the discussion on this topic.

Item 8 – Request for replacing the inverted U-shaped railings along the footpath of Lyttelton Road with beautified bollards
(C&W TTC Paper No. 6/2021)

(4:35 pm – 4:47 pm)

205. The Chairman invited discussion on the paper.

206. Mr KAM Nai-wai declared that he lived there and had mentioned the problem of U-shaped railings. He said that there were many trees on Lyttelton Road. When installing U-shaped railings, it was necessary to avoid the trees. This caused obstruction to those residents accessing their buildings after getting off the vehicle. The location of the entrance was also inconvenient. It would be better if the U-shaped railings could be replaced by bollards. Bollards must be provided there to prevent illegal parking. Illegal parking occurred even though police officers in the area were there issuing tickets. So, if there were no bollards or railings, motorists would park their cars there wherever tiny space was available. Therefore, he proposed to put bollards there instead. Moreover, he stated that St. Stephen’s Girls’ College was a statutory monument, and the railings nearby were also different from ordinary railings. He quoted the bollards cited in the paper were similar to those near the Cyberport in the Southern District, but the HyD replied that they were not the same. He asked how many types of bollards were used by the department and whether different bollards were available at different times. There would be varied opinions on the type of replacement bollards. For example, Ms CHENG Lai-king had referred to a design similar to the snake head. Thus, he considered that bollard replacement was a sensitive issue. Or else, many complaints on the design would be received. In the paper, the department also agreed to replacement of bollards. Yet he believed that more thoughts on the style of bollards were needed. For example, the grey bollards were not pleasing to the eyes. He asked the department to tell them about the available types of bollards.

207. Mr Dominic WONG, District Engineer/West of HyD said that there were two main types of metal bollards installed by the HyD in the district, and the relevant photos had been provided to the Secretariat. The grey bollards just described should be of the style shown in photo 2. For the bollard shown in photo 1, the department may consider

painting it with colour in harmony with the surrounding environment.

208. Mr KAM Nai-wai asked whether the bollards in the Cyberport shown in the photos in the original paper were also Government ones.

209. Mr Dominic WONG of HyD stated that the HyD could carry out the works according to the standard plans of the two respective types of bollards.

210. Mr KAM Nai-wai asked what type of bollards was used in the Cyberport, and whether they were installed without government participation.

211. Mr Dominic WONG of HyD stated that there was no relevant information. If the TD requested the HyD to install the bollard shown in photo 1 on Lyttelton Road, the department may consider choosing a paint colour in harmony with the surrounding environment.

212. Mr KAM Nai-wai said that the department was not answering the relevant question. He would like to know the style of bollards used in Cyberport, and asked the department to reply after the meeting as to what bollards were used there.

213. The Chairman asked the department to supplement information after the meeting regarding the bollards used in Cyberport as stated in the paper; and whether those were private or government properties.

214. Mr Dominic WONG of HyD said that he would follow up after the meeting.

215. Miss Camille YAM said that the Council had conducted consultation on the removal of U-shaped railings in the past, but the proposal was rejected by the local residents as they worried that illegal parking might occur. Therefore, the proposal was now changed to replacing them with bollards to avoid obstructing residents' access and prevent illegal parking. She said that residents of Lyttelton Road had various feedbacks on this, and she learned that the department had commissioned the District Office to carry out district consultation, though the paper had yet reached her. She said that the purpose of the consultation and the choice of bollard style and colour should be clearly stated in the consultation document. Prior to consultation, the department must distinguish well the bollards shown in the photos of the paper and whether there were other options apart from the two types of bollards suggested by the department. Otherwise, the residents would feel confused.

216. The Chairman asked the Member who submitted the paper about the source of the photo.

217. Mr KAM Nai-wai stated that the photo was taken at Cyberport. Similar bollards were also seen everywhere at Cyberport. He said Mr Jeremy YOUNG might have a clearer idea.

218. The Chairman asked the HyD to try to figure out. The paper also mentioned that the District Office would conduct district consultations, so he asked about its progress.

219. Mr Brian LAM, Engineer/Peak, TD said that he had received from DO the information related to the scope of the consultation yesterday. He would also reflect relevant comments to the District Office. District Councillor of the constituency would be invited to the consultation exercise.

220. Mr KAM Nai-wai expressed concern about the consultation. If the consultation paper was too simple, the public would query the point of replacing the railings. He suggested that the consultation paper should list the background information. Prior to consultation, it must be agreed with the DC what type of bollards would be used for consultation to avoid unnecessary repercussions. He hoped that the department would confirm the style and colour of the bollards before consultation. He also suggested that the Chairman of the TTC and District Councillor of that constituency be consulted first before issuance of consultation materials for public consultation to avoid unnecessary trouble.

221. The Chairman asked the department to confirm with the HyD before consultation whether the bollards at Cyberport mentioned by Mr KAM could be installed in the district. Besides, the relevant background should be stated in the consultation paper, and relevant documents should be prepared for the Chairman of the TTC and District Councillor of the constituency. The paper for public consultation should be released only after the style and colour of the bollards were determined.

222. Mr Brian LAM of TD said there was no problem.

223. Miss Camille YAM requested that the consultation paper should spell out the background of the first consultation on direct removal of the U-shaped railings with detailed explanatory notes. Otherwise, the residents would think that it's the same consultation as before and reject again. The consultation paper should also clearly state that another approach was adopted this time to solve the prevailing problem.

224. The Chairman invited the TD and the HyD to cooperate and liaise closely, and consultations should be initiated only with the consent of Members. The Chairman dealt with the motion voting procedures of C&W TTC Paper No. 6/2021 and invited Members to vote on the following motion. After voting, the following motion was adopted.

Motion: The Traffic & Transport Committee of the Central and Western District Council requests the Government to look into replacing the inverted U-shaped railings along the footpath of Lyttelton Road with beautified bollards.

(Proposed by Ms NG Hoi-yan, Bonnie and seconded by Miss YAM Ka-

yi, Camille)

(13 affirmative votes by: Mr YIP Kam-lung, Sam; Ms CHENG Lai-king; Mr YEUNG Sui-yin, Victor; Mr KAM Nai-wai; Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin; Ms NG Hoi-yan, Bonnie; Mr NG Siu-hong; Ms WONG Kin-ching, Cherry; Mr LEUNG Fong-wai, Fergus; Mr PANG Ka-ho; Mr WONG Weng-chi; Miss YAM Ka-yi, Camille; Mr YOUNG Chit-on, Jeremy)

(0 dissenting vote)

(0 abstention vote)

225. The Chairman concluded the discussion on this topic.

Item 9 – Study the feasibility of adding anti-crash facilities at Severn Road
(C&W TTC Paper No. 7/2021)

(4:47 pm – 4:55 pm)

226. The Chairman invited discussion on the paper.

227. Mr Jeremy YOUNG said that Severn Road was a very narrow, bendy road with steep gradients at some parts. Although there were not many users, quite a number of hikers and vehicles, mainly private cars or taxis, did take this route. The location was not well illuminated and could become very foggy in the rainy season, with slippery and mossy road surface. Some bends were particularly dangerous as well. Although the Government had added railings in some areas, the lengths and styles of the railings were different. Therefore, it was hoped that the Government could conduct a comprehensive study and upgrade instead of just adding facilities thoughtlessly. For example, if high railings were added to the one-way traffic road section, the danger was even higher. He hoped that the relevant experts could give their advice. The proposal could also help to prevent hikers from accidentally falling down the slope and getting hurt.

228. Mr Brian LAM, Engineer/Peak of TD said that he would study the feasibility of installing railings on bends, provided that the road surface was wide enough. If the road section was not spacious enough for the installation of railing, he would consider adding black-and-white chevrons markings to remind drivers to slow down and drive safely when passing the sharp bend. TD would also consider adding road signs to remind drivers to pay attention to pedestrians.

229. Mr KAM Nai-wai said that based on past experience, the issue of railings used at places with vehicles and pedestrians was comparable to the situation of adding bollards on Lyttelton Road. In the past, there was a proposal to install railings on hiking trails,

but some residents opposed it, saying that the railings did not match the look of the place because the hiking trails were part of the green environment. The photos presented by Mr YOUNG showed that there were concrete bollards and commonly seen railings. He suggested that after the study, if the department considered that anti-crash facilities or railings should be added to prevent pedestrians or vehicles from falling off the road, careful consideration should be given to the choice of facilities. The current types used by the HyD were not good-looking, quite incompatible with the general hiking environment. The majority of hikers had complained about that. Therefore, if additional facilities were warranted after the study, he requested and proposed the department to provide the sample to the Chairman of TTC and the local Councillor for detail consideration to see whether consultation was needed. Otherwise, there would be objections after installation, which defeated the original purpose. He hoped the department would pay attention to that. He said that in some locations, the department may consider that added facility was necessary but the hikers could think otherwise. Somehow, adding facility or not was a delicate issue.

230. Mr Brian LAM of TD noted the views and said if suitable locations were found for installation of railings, an arrangement similar to that of Lyttelton Road would also be adopted.

231. The Chairman said that Severn Road was foggy and mossy. He asked whether the department would liaise with the FEHD to take measures such as application of anti-skid dressing to the road or more frequent road cleaning. He stated that the Residence of Secretary for Justice (SJ) was also located on Severn Road, and the anti-skidding measure was meant to prevent Secretary CHENG from slipping. He suggested not to add anti-crash guardrails because they occupied more space and required concrete bases. Their look may not be compatible with the surrounding environment. The paper still pointed out that Severn Road was rather narrow and there were no footpaths. Apart from the black-and-white chevrons marking, he asked whether other safety measures would be adopted, such as traffic signs to remind motorists of passing pedestrians.

232. Mr Brian LAM of TD said that there were left-turning and right-turning signs at the relevant bends. There were also signs to remind motorists of oncoming cars. The TD could as well add the “Slow” marking.

233. The Chairman stated that Mr KAM's suggestion was similar to the case of Lyttelton Road. The background should also be mentioned in the consultation, and circulation of the relevant paper should proceed only after consent of the Chairman and the local Councillor. SJ should also be consulted and he reminded the department not to miss her out. SJ was also a resident of the area. The Chairman concluded the discussion on this topic.

Item 10 – Request for installing a camera to prevent vehicles making illegal left turn from Cadogan Street onto Victoria Road
(C&W TTC Paper No. 8/2021)

(4:55 pm – 5:20 pm)

234. Ms Cherry WONG said that the Police replied that only one complaint about illegal left turn was received in the past year, but she had received many such complaints from the public. Since the left turning vehicles were passing at high speed, the public could not read the licence plates clearly. So instead of reporting to the Police, they lodged the complaints to her. The public was also worried about their safety in road crossing. She asked about the feasibility of installing a camcorder or camera at the location, and added that 24-hour CCTV was not necessary as it might infringe on privacy and was deemed inappropriate. She continued to ask which type of camera was fit for installation in this location, and pointed out that speed enforcement camera was unsuitable. Moreover, she asked whether the camera could have a sensor device, somewhere at the traffic lights on Victoria Road off Wellcome, that would trigger on the camera only when left-turning vehicles from Cadogan Street was sensed, in order to capture image of the vehicle and the traffic lights to prove that the vehicle was left-turning illegally.

235. Mr LAM Kai-sum, Western District Operation Officer, Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF) said that the Police had no such camera as mentioned. The most common ones used now were speed enforcement cameras and red-light cameras.

236. Ms Cherry WONG asked the Police how they enforced the law when vehicles made illegal turns. Unless a police officer was on the scene, otherwise immediate prosecution was impossible. The general public could not react fast enough to capture the instance when a vehicle violated the traffic regulations.

237. Mr LAM Kai-sum of the HKPF said that making illegal left turn could have violated the designated road signs or road markings. Clear road signs had been set up at the intersection. Vehicles turning left to Victoria Road must drive on Davis Street. If a vehicle turned left at the Wellcome, it had committed a traffic violation. The traffic section or patrol officers of the police district would also initiate prosecution. He said that witnesses were required for prosecution. The Traffic Section of the Hong Kong Island Regional Headquarters had launched the "Traffic Complaint e-Platform". If video evidence was used instead, the public could upload clear footage of the violation and provide the licence plate number, time, date and location, etc., and submit the information to the given phone number (96763102) for follow-up investigation. The informant may need to cooperate with the Police in statement taking. If Members or residents had video footage of traffic violations, they could follow up via the "Traffic Complaint e-Platform".

238. Ms Cherry WONG asked whether it was necessary to capture the status of the traffic lights to determine whether the vehicle was turning left illegally. She said that the illegal left-turning vehicles did so deliberately. She had seen taxi drivers, knowing that left turn was prohibited, made the turn straight away to avoid a detour.

239. Mr LAM Kai-sum of the HKPF agreed with the Member. He said that illegal left turns were mostly deliberate actions. The directional sign on the nearby street was

very clear. There was a no left turn road sign at this intersection. If the public saw any vehicle turning left illegally at this intersection and managed to take photos of the driver and his licence plate number, with details like the time, date and location, there would be preliminary evidence for the Traffic Section to follow up investigation.

240. Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin said that she did not buy the idea of a CCTV-monitored city. Nonetheless, there was no such technology or precedent to enable the use of camera to capture illegal turning by vehicles. She added that the problem of illegal turning did not occur only at that intersection, its presence at Eastern Street, Western Street, Des Voeux Road West and Queen's Road West was also discussed in the past. She said that the road sign at Wing Lok Street was clear. Though similar road signs were also found at the streets in question, but the warning level was not sufficient. The TD used to say that signposts should not be added indiscriminately. She asked the TD again if illegal turning was getting widespread, would the department considered to regularise the road signs and have them installed at illegal turning black spots. She understood that the TD had its own bureaucratic stuff, but the problem was there. Currently, there was no technology available to help the Police enforce the law. She asked whether the TD would consider amending the regulations or guidelines to minimise illegal turning behaviours by drivers.

241. Mr Gordon YIP, Engineer/Central & Western 3 of TD said that the yellow road sign at the junction of Wing Lok Street/Hillier Street was installed according to the specific circumstances of the intersection. The proposal to regularise the yellow background road signs would be further studied.

242. Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin said that she understood that the TD could not make an immediate decision and need to discuss with the Headquarters. If the relevant measure were applied, apart from the captioned intersection, she suggested that the same should also be added to the intersections mentioned earlier.

243. The Chairman requested the department to study the relevant suggestion.

244. Mr Gordon YIP of TD expressed that he had taken note of the comments and Members' requests.

245. Mr KAM Nai-wai said that he did not get what the TD wanted to say. The issue had been discussed a long time ago. He even slammed on the table to criticise the department for not installing additional road signs. At that time, the TD's replied that it could only be done under specific situation. He said that a request raised by the DC itself was already a specific situation. If no more vehicle made illegal left turn after the installation of the road sign, the department could remove it afterwards. The representative of the TD could have said something like he would seek the opinion of his supervisor for the proposed regularisation. "Look at them!", they were saying that regularisation was not feasible and contrary to the District Councils Ordinance. He said that proposal in question was about installation of road signs. We were now in February, while the relevant proposal was put forward half a year ago. One could see the junction

on Google Maps. Those drivers who were familiar with the traffic condition there would know some people were making illegal left turns deliberately. Any road sign put by the TD would be useless. The taxi driver just mentioned was an example. Those who were not familiar with this section of the road would easily think that left turn was allowed at the intersection because they had no idea that they need to left turn at the earlier intersection of Davis Street to access Victoria Road. Drivers not familiar with the place would not know left turn into Cadogan Street was prohibited. He said that he often drove to the place, but still, he would miss the turning intersection from time to time. At present, there was only green light indicating straight ahead and the blue background “ahead only” arrow road sign. He suggested to follow the example of Wing Lok Street in Sheung Wan by adding a large “ahead only” road sign. If that was not possible, at least a no left turn road sign should be added. A no right turn road sign was already installed at the intersection. He wondered why the relevant road sign could not be provided at Western Street mentioned by Ms WONG, Sands Street mentioned by many Members, and even the intersection mentioned today. He hoped that the department would deal with the issue as soon as possible, not on a routine basis but as a special measure taken for special time, in response to the request of the DC. The department could easily describe the addition of road sign as a pilot scheme, given that many motorists were making illegal left or right turn at the spot. He hoped that the department would have already dealt with the relevant issue before the next meeting. It would be good enough if the pilot scheme was in place, and the department need not respond further on this.

246. Mr Gordon YIP of TD stated that the “no left turn” traffic sign was already affixed at the traffic lights pole west of Cadogan Street and Belcher’s Street.

247. Ms Cherry WONG added that she had made a site visit with Mr YIP. She suggested increasing the size of the road sign, but the department said that there was no room to do so. She also suggested to put up “no left turn” road sign first, but the department said it was not necessary. She said that she seldom drove, but believed that it was more important for motorists to note the “no left turn” road sign than the “ahead only” sign.

248. Mr Gordon YIP of TD added that if the existing no left turn left sign was enlarged, it may cause obstruction to pedestrians. He also said that the corner of the intersection had been changed to a square corner to minimise illegal left turns.

249. The Chairman said that the Council had discussed the installation of additional road signs many times and believed that department could add temporary road signs. For example, road signs had been added in Sheung Wan, there was no reason why they could not be installed in other places. He understood that if there were too many road signs, it would cause confusion to motorists. Yet the problem of illegal left turns was very serious and it would also cause unease to passers-by since they were not sure if vehicles from Cadogan Street would turn left to Victoria Road and cause danger to them. He pointed out that Hong Kong’s road user guidelines give priority to pedestrians, and ensuring the safety of pedestrians was of utmost importance. Adding road sign was a

feasible approach. He asked the department to follow up on relevant opinions.

250. Ms CHENG Lai-king said that illegal turning was quite common in the district. First, on Caine Road westbound, the drivers would cross the double white line and turn into Aberdeen Street, causing panic to pedestrians. The paper proposed to install a video camera, but she worried that it would render our city a “police city”. She pointed out that there were already three large road signs on Caine Road reminding motorists to abide by traffic rules, but many neglected the rules at night time. She urged the Police to strengthen law enforcement on the above-mentioned situation. She also said that the Police enforced the law on the Caine Road bus only lane in the morning. Yet despite the presence of large road signs, many vehicles did break the rules and drive into the bus only lane on Caine Road westbound in the evening hours. She asked the Police how motorists could be convinced to follow the rules. Moreover, she asked whether the informant’s number was displayed when he uploaded related photos to the phone number of the “Traffic Complaint e-Platform”; whether summonses were issued based on the information provided; whether the accused would know the identity of the informant or the Police would disclose such information.

251. Mr YONG Kwok-chung, Officer-in-charge of Western District Traffic Team of HKPF said that for prosecution of traffic offences in motion under the “Traffic Complaint e-Platform”, the Police need short footage as evidence. Only the process of traffic violations was required to be covered. For example, if a vehicle illegally left turned within seconds, the footage only needed to capture the illegal left turn and the licence plate number of the vehicle. As for reporting, the Police would not disclose the identity of the informant. However, if the motorist denied the charge, the informant would become an eyewitness in court to provide evidence. During court hearing, he may meet the driver face-to-face, which was something inevitable. If the driver pleaded guilty and no trial was required, the informant’s particulars would not be disclosed during the entire process.

252. The Chairman stated that the Police would not disclose the particulars of the informant during prosecution action taken under the “Traffic Complaint e-Platform”. However, in court, the filed documents would contain the particulars of the informant because the Police need to specify the source of the evidence. He said that when the Police promoted the “Traffic Complaint e-Platform”, they had not stated that the particulars of the informant might be disclosed. Nowadays, the public attached great importance to personal privacy. Members also had privacy concerns about this. He advised the Police to specify that personal particulars might be disclosed during their promotion of the e-Platform, so as to save the Police from infringing the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance.

253. Mr WONG Weng-chi asked the TD about the left-turning issue. Regarding the illegal left-turning on Western Street, had the TD carried out any follow-up work or studied any feasible options.

254. Mr Gordon YIP of TD stated that the design of the current traffic signs at the

intersection were appropriate.

255. The Chairman said that he had suggested the department install temporary road signs at the junction of Water Street to remind the public that the lights were out of order and they should pay attention to the lights ahead. At first, the TD had added large yellow road sign with “Please mind the traffic signals” printed on it. Yet the font used was PMingLiU with a font size of 20, which was not very eye-catching. Later, members of the public, referring to the format of the TD, made a traffic banner. Yet they were accused of hanging up traffic slogans without permission. He said that while the approach was not in compliance with traffic regulations, the banner would attract the public to pay attention to the traffic lights. If the yellow road sign was a standard one with high visibility, it could enable motorists to visibly take note of the message. Although some motorists would ignore the road sign because the traffic signal was not specified, the TD should still take this into consideration. In the last meeting, the Council had adopted a motion requesting the TD to add a yellow road sign, but the department was unwilling to do so. He urged the department to respect the collective decision of the DC and Members in order to stop offences at the black spots of illegal left turn. If a vehicle turned left to Victoria Road on Cadogan Street, it may cause fatal accidents. Adding yellow road sign could help to remind motorists not to turn left. He requested the department to add the road sign and seriously implement the proposal. The Chairman concluded the discussion on this topic.

Item 11 – Request the Government to shelve the Queensway Plaza Redevelopment project
(C&W TTC Paper No. 9/2021)

(5:20 pm – 5:37 pm)

256. The Chairman asked the Secretary to note down that DO had left the conference room at 5:20 pm. He then invited discussion on the paper.

257. Mr NG Siu-hong said that Queensway Plaza was located amidst many densely-packed hotels, structures and government buildings, but the Government replied that more buildings should be built there in order to enhance Hong Kong’s competitiveness. He said that the construction of commercial buildings in high-density areas would aggravate the problems of congestion and insufficient parking spaces, and he had reservations about its overall impact on long-term development. Besides, the project should not cause ventilation, landscape, traffic, pedestrian flow and parking problems. He said that the key to competitiveness of long-term development was improved standard of liveability of the society. Therefore, he opposed high-density development in this area, which would affect the lighting, ventilation and landscape of the entire area. The Government should consult the public and the DC in order to establish good town planning.

258. Mr Ryan FUNG, Engineer/Central & Western 1 of TD said that the relevant project was promoted by the PlanD and the LandsD. He believed the Secretariat would also forward Members’ comments to the above-mentioned departments for follow-up

after the meeting.

259. The Chairman was unhappy with the absence of representatives from the PlanD and LandsD at the meeting as they were the one who proposed the redevelopment project of Queensway Plaza. From the perspective of traffic, he asked whether it was necessary to promote large-scale commercial development in this location. The space below the Queensway Plaza was part of the public transport interchange. Redevelopment may affect the traffic in the area. He asked whether the department could provide relevant data on the suspension or relocation of the public transport interchange during the redevelopment of Queensway Plaza; and whether the department had conducted any assessment or devised any temporary plan.

260. Mr Ryan FUNG of TD stated that according to the department's understanding, the PlanD had completed the "Planning and Design Study on the Redevelopment of Queensway Plaza, Admiralty Feasibility Study" in 2017 and had conducted various technical studies, including traffic and transportation. During the course of the Queensway Plaza Redevelopment Project, the operation of the taxi stand and bus terminus would need to be maintained. If the department received an application for temporary traffic arrangements, it would review the arrangements from a traffic perspective to see whether it would have unnecessary or excess impact on the operation of public transport and the safety and convenience of road users.

261. Ms CHENG Lai-king said that she heard about the disposal of the Queensway Plaza site and the construction of two screen-like buildings before. The replies of the PlanD and the LandsD stated that the proposed road works for Queensway Plaza Redevelopment was gazetted on 25th and 30th September last year. She asked whether government departments would carry out the redevelopment project after the gazette notice. The reply to question 5 of the paper also pointed out that the developer would provide multi-level pedestrian connections, but no relevant pictures and information was provided. She said that she was unclear about the future construction plan and hoped to ask further questions.

262. Mr Ryan FUNG of TD said that representatives of the PlanD and the LandsD had attended the TTC meeting held in January 2019. The paper submitted then also contained plans and other relevant information for the multi-level pedestrian connections.

263. Ms CHENG Lai-king stated that the department's reply stated that the rooftop garden of the elevated walkway should be enhanced for public enjoyment. She cited the example of the Harbour Building footbridge, and asked whether the lower part was pedestrian passage with a garden above it for public enjoyment. She also asked whether the public would be exposed to exhaust gas. The department also replied that developer had to submit a comprehensive pedestrian network plan (including 24-hour public passageway) for the provision of temporary and permanent multi-level pedestrian connections during construction and upon completion of the proposed development respectively for government approval. She said Queensway Plaza was an important network linking up Central to Wan Chai. She did not understand the meaning of the

department's reply because there was no picture and related information on the network connections. She asked if it was similar to the existing pedestrian passage of Queensway Plaza, flanked by various shops; and what places would they connect to. She said that the future private developer would be responsible for the pedestrian connections at the site, who had specified that the passage would be opened round the clock. Whether ownership of the site would go to the private developer was something that need to be considered before land sale. She said that she had seen many similar pitfalls in the past. In the end, it was often not for public good, but for the interests of the developer. Therefore, she was somehow worried.

264. Mr Ryan FUNG of TD said that he believed that the LandsD would take into account the views collected in the past, including the concerns raised by Members about the pedestrian connections, and duly include them into the Conditions of Sale and urge the developer to pay attention.

265. Ms CHENG Lai-king said that neither the PlanD nor the LandsD was in attendance. She said that the result of the motion must be furnished to the Director of Planning and the Lands Department, otherwise it would become a "neither fish nor fowl" project not designed for the public at all, but for the benefit of the developer. She did not want to see that happen.

266. The Chairman asked the Secretary to note that the result of the motion be submitted to the PlanD and the LandsD and replies from their Directors should be requested.

267. Mr KAM Nai-wai condemned the departments concerned for refusing to attend the meeting. They did not follow the good example, but adhered to the practice of the District Office. That was, attending meeting when the item was supported by the Council; absent from meeting when the item was disapproved and then made decisions in their own way. He said he had yet verified the minutes of meeting in 2019 mentioned by the TD, but he remembered that he had opposed to the redevelopment project of the Queensway Plaza at that time because that was a typical "infill" commercial development. The public were very familiar with Admiralty. The Queensway Plaza had also been there for a long time. But now, the "ventilation zone" would be converted into buildings. The Government would build "upside down skyscrapers" in the reclamation area. Lands for construction of Grade A office buildings were already in good supply. He queried the need to build infill structures at the site. He said that traffic congestion at Admiralty was already very heavy if not for the pandemic. Even after the commissioning of the CWB and the completion of new road along the waterfront, Admiralty was always congested. Given that construction work for the Sha Tin to Central Link and the South Island Line also took place at Admiralty, the traffic congestion problem at Admiralty was really a hard nut to crack. At the TTC, the Government did not take into consideration the impact on the overall traffic lifeline of Central, Admiralty, Wan Chai or Hong Kong Island. In face of the transitional development, the Government did not like to listen to relevant feedbacks. He said that Ms Carrie LAM had turned Hong Kong into an alienated Hong Kong. It was not a liveable city even in

the past, today's situation was even worse. Hong Kong had once again listed as the most expensive place to live in the world. Topping the charts of "the worst" would be seen more often in the days to come. He further asked about the way to handle the motion later because it was moved by Mr HUI Chi-fung and whether it was necessary to change it into a provisional motion.

268. The Chairman said that it was not necessary as Mr HUI Chi-fung had already notified in writing.

269. Mr KAM Nai-wai hoped to express the stance of this term of the DC that it did not approve of the development.

270. The Chairman said that the PlanD and the LandsD had not attended the meeting and were unable to listen to the voice of the Council. He also expressed dissatisfaction with this. He asked the Secretary to explain why the departments did not attend the meeting.

271. The Secretary stated that the paper was given to the PlanD and the LandsD, and the departments had also provided a written reply. She had no idea of the reason for not attending.

272. The Chairman said that the departments were ignoring the DC. He asked the Secretary to notify the Directors of PlanD and LandsD, and requested reply from the departments. The Chairman dealt with the motion voting procedures of C&W TTC Paper No. 9/2021. The Secretariat had received a written authorisation from Mr HUI Chi-fung before the meeting, who authorised Mr NG Siu-hong to move the motion on his behalf. Members were invited to vote on the following motion. After voting, the following motion was adopted.

Motion: Given that the development density of Admiralty is too high and the current demand for Grade A offices in Hong Kong is still debatable, this Committee urges the Government to shelve the Queensway Plaza Redevelopment project, and to consult the public and the District Council afresh on the development of Admiralty commercial area.

(Proposed by Mr HUI Chi-fung (authorised Mr NG Siu-hong to move the motion on his behalf) and seconded by Mr NG Siu-hong)

(11 affirmative votes by: Mr YIP Kam-lung, Sam; Ms CHENG Lai-king; Mr KAM Nai-wai; Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin; Ms NG Hoi-yan, Bonnie; Mr NG Siu-hong; Ms WONG Kin-ching, Cherry; Mr LEUNG Fong-wai, Fergus; Mr PANG Ka-ho; Mr WONG Weng-chi; Miss YAM Ka-yi, Camille)

(0 dissenting vote)

(0 abstention vote)

273. The Chairman concluded the discussion on this topic.

Item 12 – Request for paving the location of the emergency crash gate at the junction of Hollywood Road and Graham Street to convert it into a footpath (C&W TTC Paper No. 10/2021)

(5:37 pm – 5:57 pm)

274. The Chairman invited discussion on the paper and asked the department to make a brief introduction.

275. Mr Vincent TAM, Engineer/Central & Western 2 of TD said that the department had previously conducted district consultations through the C&WDO on the proposal mentioned in the paper. However, some people in the district raised objections. The department was now optimising the proposal and hoped to conduct another district consultation through the C&DDO as soon as possible. He said that the HyD initially considered the project feasible.

276. The Chairman asked about the objections from the consultation exercise and the ratio of for and against.

277. Mr Vincent TAM of TD said that the relevant information was not available off hand, but the main objections were about retaining the existing emergency crash gate and demanding the new footpath to be of similar level to the nearby road surface.

278. The Chairman said that the ground must be levelled off. He asked the department whether the public comments were about making the level of the footpath similar to that of the traffic lane.

279. Mr Vincent TAM of TD said that some of the comments received believed that the emergency crash gate should be retained; while some considered that the new footpath was of a higher level from the existing road surface next to it and a step could possibly be formed, which may cause inconvenience to pedestrians. Hence, they hoped the department could modify the plan.

280. The Chairman said that the emergency crash gates in Sai Ying Pun area were relatively narrow. He asked the department whether it was feasible to do so and whether they would consider reducing the size of the gates.

281. Mr Vincent TAM of TD said that he had studied with the HyD to replace a larger emergency crash gate. After an on-site inspection with the local Councillor, it was found that the proposal mentioned in the paper was more suitable. In his opinion, we could observe the traffic situation in the area after implementation of the proposal before enlargement of the gate was considered.

282. Ms CHENG Lai-king asked whether picture 1A contained in the paper was the proposed option under discussion. If the site was levelled up to the footpath, she asked whether it would start from Hollywood Road and connected to the “triangular traffic island” near Lyndhurst Terrace to prevent illegal turns by motorcycles. In addition, she asked whether “vehicles prohibited” or “except for access” was applied at that section of Graham Street, and whether ambulances could enter the section. In addition, she proposed to increase the size of the emergency crash gate because the existing gate was not wide enough to stop entry and exit of motorcycles. She asked whether it was related to police enforcement. Regarding removal of the gate to convert it into a footpath, she worried that an elevated footpath would make that road section even steeper.

283. Mr Vincent TAM of TD stated that picture 1A contained in TD’s reply was the option proposed during the district consultation exercise conducted through the C&WDO in September 2020; while picture 1 was the option proposed during the district consultation held in July 2020 earlier on. The existing emergency crash gate was retained in the former option. He said that the current proposal involved the section of Hollywood Road from Lyndhurst Terrace to Graham Street and would not affect the location of the “triangular traffic island”. He pointed out that those vehicles were prohibited to enter that section of Graham Street now. The department had solicited the views of FSD. Fire brigades could still access Graham Street at that junction during emergency even after the implementation of the proposal. He said that about two years ago, the largest emergency crash gate was also installed at the intersection of Hollywood Road and Elgin Street during the vehicle access prohibited hours to prevent vehicles from entering.

284. The Chairman asked the department whether two smaller gates could be used instead to block the entire road.

285. Mr Vincent TAM of TD said that after discussing with the local Councillor at that time, it was decided to install a larger and heavier emergency crash gate at the intersection of Hollywood Road and Elgin Street to increase its difficulty of movement and prevent the gate from being easily removed.

286. Mr KAM Nai-wai said that he was familiar with the location, but had not paid close attention to road crossing. He asked whether it meant that a pedestrian crossing Graham Street from the footpath on the east side to the footpath on the west side would be walking on a footpath instead of the road after the reconstruction. He said that the proposed approach would raise the level of the location one step up. It was originally an Emergency Vehicular Access where traffic was prohibited, designed to accommodate a raised footpath. He did not know whether there were vehicles accessing the area constantly. The paper mentioned that the nearby residents said that motorcycles were often parked in a line at the emergency crash gate, which heavily blocked the road. He said that food delivery staff might often park their motorcycles there. In the future, they may continue to park on the footpath. The revised proposal of the department was also for the retention of the gate. He also suggested keeping it. Yet after ensuring that the

ground was smoothed out, he wondered how the department could prevent motorcycles from parking there.

287. Mr Vincent TAM of TD said that after the completion of the project, pedestrians walking along Hollywood Road would no longer have to cross the road at the junction of Graham Street. They would be walking directly on the footpath. As the footpath was raised up compared to the traffic lane, it would be more difficult for motorcycles to illegally drive onto the footpath. The proposal may help reduce the situation of motorcycles parking on the footpath. The department would continue to monitor the traffic situation there and review the size and location of the gate in due course to prevent illegal entry of vehicles.

288. Mr KAM Nai-wai expressed his support for retaining the gate to minimise public opposition. He suggested lengthening the gate to the width of the intersection and erecting it on the footpath instead of its original location to enhance accessibility of the intersection. The gate should be retained to reduce the chance of food delivery motorcycles driving onto the footpath. He supported the retention of the gate and suggested to advance it a bit forward as the original position was more disposed to parking. Such move would not obstruct those getting to Graham Street, necessitate any size reduction of the gate and help to solve the problem.

289. Mr Vincent TAM of TD said that he would study the relevant proposal.

290. Ms Bonnie NG asked whether the steps at the turn of Hollywood Road would be retained after the footpath was raised up, and their height difference with the raised footpath. She was concerned about the higher rise of the steps and asked what improvement measure would be in place to prevent pedestrians from falling and hurting.

291. Mr Vincent TAM of TD said that the proposed footpath would be higher than the existing road surface. Therefore, it was proposed to reduce the height difference between the steps at the turn and the road surface. If necessary, addition of yellow warning strip could be considered to remind the public to mind the steps.

292. Ms CHENG Lai-king added that there were also trucks unloading on Graham Street every night. If the junction was converted into a footpath, the trucks would not be able to park on Graham Street for unloading and the operators may also oppose the proposal.

293. Mr Vincent TAM of TD said that vehicles may consider driving to the vicinity of Graham Market on Gage Street or other locations on Hollywood Road for loading and unloading. He understood that the proposal may cause inconvenience to certain parties in the area. Therefore, district consultation on the revised proposal would be conducted again.

294. The Chairman dealt with the motion voting procedures of **C&W TTC Paper No. 10/2021**. The Secretariat had received a written authorisation from Mr. HUI Chi-

fung before the meeting, who authorised Mr NG Siu-hong to move the motion on his behalf. The motion was still seconded by Mr NG Siu-hong. It would be dealt with in the same way as the previous item. He said that the motion was different from the proposed advancement of the emergency crash gate mentioned before; nor the opposed views received from the public during consultation just mentioned.

295. Mr KAM Nai-wai asked about the meaning of “refer to Figure 1B” in the motion.

296. The Chairman pointed out that “refer to Figure 1B” was the picture in the paper indicating the area in front of the gate that would be converted into a footpath.

297. Mr KAM Nai-wai confirmed to the Chairman that there was no conflict between the content of the discussion and the motion.

298. The Chairman invited Members to vote on the following motion. After voting, the following motion was adopted.

Motion: Food delivery motorcycles have been parking illegally at the emergency crash gate on the junction of Hollywood Road and Graham Street near Lyndhurst Terrace for a long time, seriously hindering pedestrians from crossing the road and causing nuisance to shop operators. This Committee requests the Government to improve the traffic condition of the above location, pave the location to convert it into a footpath and raise the ground surface to level with the footpath of Lyndhurst Terrace (refer to Figure 1B).

(Proposed by Mr HUI Chi-fung (authorised Mr NG Siu-hong to move the motion on his behalf) and seconded by Mr NG Siu-hong)

(11 affirmative votes by: Mr YIP Kam-lung, Sam; Ms CHENG Lai-king; Mr KAM Nai-wai; Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin; Ms NG Hoi-yan, Bonnie; Mr NG Siu-hong; Ms WONG Kin-ching, Cherry; Mr LEUNG Fong-wai, Fergus; Mr PANG Ka-ho; Mr WONG Weng-chi; Mr YOUNG Chit-on, Jeremy)

(0 dissenting vote)

(0 abstention vote)

299. The Chairman concluded the discussion on this topic.

Item 13 – Request the Government to study the provision of fee-charging temporary private car or motorcycle parking spaces at the roadside of designated streets from 8:00 pm to 7:00 am for residents living in the districts concerned

(C&W TTC Paper No. 11/2021)

(5:57 pm – 6:30 pm)

300. Mr KAM Nai-wai supplemented on the conception of this idea. Many places in overseas countries also allowed local residents to park their cars on the streets outside their houses. Such option was not available in Hong Kong. Taking Hollywood Road as an example. Local residents were allowed to park their vehicles there on a fee-charging basis from 8pm to 7am the next day to help tackle the problem of insufficient parking spaces. Some streets warranted careful consideration, while busy streets would be out of the question. However, its implementation could be considered on non-busy streets at night. There were also illegal parking problems, but the Police would keep issuing penalty tickets. He said that the Government had pinpointed the problem of traffic congestion and increased the license fee by about 30%. “That’s crazy!” Still, car owners could not find a place to park their cars. Parking problem in the C&W District was very serious. He suggested the department to consult the local Councillor regarding the more suitable places, streets and locations, etc. for parking. He hoped that the Government would consider allowing parking on certain streets from 8pm to 7am, charging a fee of several hundred to one thousand dollars. He believed that many drivers would be interested in this and park their vehicles at that location.

301. The Chairman invited discussion on the paper.

302. Ms Bonnie NG said that the TD replied that the number of vehicles was increasing. The department was currently considering adding on-street parking spaces at some locations, such as Lung Wo Road, Pok Fu Lam Road and High Street. The department also said that they had reservation on Member’s proposal and alternatively suggested adding parking spaces on the above-mentioned streets. She asked about the development of the proposal or whether any study had been launched. The paper also proposed a trial run on Hollywood Road between Queen’s Road West and Square Street. There was also enough space at Tung Street. In the past, cement trucks were parked on nearby roads and there was enough space for the provision of overnight parking spaces. She asked why the department had reservations about her proposal.

303. Mr Ryan FUNG, Engineer/Central & Western 1 of TD said that the department had been working hard to implement various measures to increase parking spaces. The situation of commercial vehicles was different. For private cars, they remained at the night parking spaces even during morning rush hours and the risk of causing traffic jams and affecting other road users was greater. Therefore, the TD had reservations about the relevant proposal. He said that road space was one of the considerations when setting up on-street parking spaces. If on-street parking spaces for private cars were provided on roads up to 6m wide, the remaining width of the road may not be sufficient for large vehicles to pass by. Regarding the situation mentioned by Ms NG’s that some temporary traffic arrangements were approved by the department even though the minimum 3.5m-wide carriageway requirement could not be met, he explained that the department would make an overall assessment when examining the temporary traffic arrangements.

304. Mr Vincent TAM, Engineer/Central & Western 2 of TD said that some sections of Hollywood Road were relatively wide. The department had earlier proposed to add 8 private cars parking spaces on Hollywood Road between Tung Street and Ladder Street, and conducted district consultation through the C&WDO. However, there were quite a number of objections and the proposal could no longer proceed.

305. Mr Ryan FUNG of TD said that the department had conducted district consultation related to several proposed locations for overnight on-site parking spaces for commercial vehicles before. However, during the consultation, some people in the district believed that the overnight parking spaces would affect the 24-hour commercial operation and so opposed the proposal. The department would continue to add on-street parking spaces at suitable locations in the district.

306. Mr KAM Nai-wai added that objections against increased overnight parking spaces for commercial vehicles received during the district consultation was something predictable. Local residents would definitely object to outside vehicles parking in the district. If parking spaces could be increased near the residential areas of local residents, he believed the objection would be less though opposition voice would always present. The department held that allowing private vehicles to park overnight would increase the chance of occupied spaces in the morning. He would say obstruction to traffic was both an issue of law enforcement and a matter of habit. The proposed practice was yet available in Hong Kong. The scenario in overseas countries was different. For example, in London and Berlin, there were parking spaces on busy city streets and residential locations. According to the replies from the TD, the number of private car registrations continued to increase. Even though the licence fee was increased by 30%, he believed that the growing number of private cars would not be contained. Hong Kong's roads or planning design had led to a serious shortage of parking lots. The Government held a fallacious belief that people would be discouraged to drive if there was no parking lot available. Hence, parking spaces were not provided in commercial buildings in the Central District. He said that this would not work in Hong Kong and the result was heavy traffic congestion. He hoped that the Government would have an open mind, and pointed out that addition of parking spaces, irrespective of the location, would always be a sensitive topic. Long-term discussions were needed to solve the problem of insufficient parking spaces for private cars.

307. Mr Jeremy YOUNG said that there were not many parking spaces in the C&W District, while the number of registered vehicles was on the increase. He hoped that the Government would have an open mind and make full use of technology to implement multiple uses in a single place. He said that stopping on trunk roads was not allowed during the day, but he suggested that parking be allowed at night on a fee-charging basis. Of course, this would imply application of the right technology to identify suitable locations and enforce the law in case of contravention. Our roads should be made use of, allowing the public to exercise their rights. Furthermore, the existing law did not regulate different categories of motorcycles, such as "commercial motorcycles" and private motorcycles. Many "commercial motorcycles" also occupied government

parking spaces. The space that people used to enjoy was now gone. “Commercial motorcycles” began to occupy parking spaces at night. Those riding their bikes to work could not find any parking spaces and could only park on the roadside illegally. During lunch hours, the “commercial motorcycles” left and vacated a lot of parking spaces, creating an absurd scene. He hoped that the Government would face up to the problem. Even if the pandemic had slowed down, the public would continue to use food delivery services.

308. Mr Ryan FUNG of TD said that he had taken note of the views of Members and that the department would add on-street parking spaces for private cars and motorcycles at appropriate locations.

309. Mr PANG Ka-ho said the department replied that it was actively looking for suitable places to add on-street parking spaces, such as Lung Wo Road and Pok Fu Lam Road. He asked when the study would start, the progress of the study and the expected completion time.

310. Mr Ryan FUNG of TD stated that the consultation on the 22 proposed on-street parking spaces outside Lung Wo Road General Post Office was over and no objections had been received. The relevant works were expected to be completed in the first quarter of next year.

311. Mr PANG Ka-ho asked about the progress of studies related to other locations.

312. Mr Vincent TAM of TD said that the department was studying the addition of on-street parking spaces for motorcycles somewhere near the lift off the David Trench Rehabilitation Centre at High Street. If the proposal was feasible, district consultation would be conducted through the C&WDO as soon as possible.

313. Mr PANG Ka-ho said that Hong Kong was a tiny city but the number of private cars kept going up. He hoped that the Government could study the relevant proposal. When the Government conducted study, the aspect of law enforcement should also be considered in addition to road obstructions. For example, whether parking spaces would be “sub-let” and whether property shares were used to determine the rights, say the owner of 10 premises was entitled to 10 parking spaces. He said the department should also consider the actual operation related to share entitlement.

314. Mr Gordon YIP, Engineer/Central & Western 3 of TD added that the HyD would add 10 on-street motorcycle parking spaces near the Pok Fu Lam Road Playground. The consultation for the proposed parking spaces for motorcycles under the Connaught Road West Flyover between Water Street and Ka On Street was in progress. Besides, the department had also received a request to set up parking spaces for the disabled outside the Hong Kong Plaza.

315. The Chairman said that the fees for motorcycle parking spaces outside Hong Kong Plaza were cheap, and the idea of replacing motorcycle parking spaces with parking

spaces for the disabled was not satisfactory.

316. Mr Gordon YIP of TD said that consultation on the above proposal to provide parking spaces for the disabled would be conducted through the C&WDO.

317. The Chairman asked the department to supplement the number of on-street parking spaces for the disabled after the meeting and pointed out that the situation in each district was different. Regarding the designated parking spaces for the disabled, he said further discussion could continue.

318. Ms CHENG Lai-king said that this motion requested the Government to study the provision of additional parking spaces at the roadside of designated streets for priority use by residents living in the districts concerned. She asked whether the motion, if adopted, would be in conflict with the Road Traffic Ordinance and if amendments were necessary. She hoped that the Government would study the issue.

319. Mr Ryan FUNG of TD said that the on-street parking spaces were currently available for everyone to use, so it was necessary to study whether the proposal would comply with the law.

320. Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin asked the department to increase parking spaces or motorcycle parking spaces on High Street.

321. Mr Vincent TAM of TD stated that the earlier proposal related to High Street was to provide on-street parking spaces for motorcycles. The location in question was near the white hatched marking off No. 1D and No. 1E, High Street, east of the lift connecting High Street to Bonham Road. About five additional on-street motorcycle parking spaces would be provided under the proposal.

322. Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin said that there was an old and valuable tree on the stone wall behind the double yellow lines. Although the location chosen by the department was not where the old and valuable tree was situated, there was a stone wall tree on the footpath and its roots grew directly onto the road. Its condition was pretty okay now, yet no anti-collision protection facility was provided so far. She asked whether the department would consider adding anti-crash barriers to protect the tree at the time the motorcycle parking spaces were provided. She did not want any works that would affect the condition of the tree to be carried out.

323. Mr Vincent TAM of TD said that the proposal just mentioned was still in the study stage, and trees were also one of the considerations. The department would study with the HyD whether the proposal would affect trees and discuss the feasibility of the proposal with relevant departments. He said that he had taken note of Member's view and if there were feasible suggestions, he would communicate with Miss CHEUNG again.

324. The Chairman said that the trunk roads in the district were rather spacious and illegal parking was commonly seen there at night time. Therefore, he believed there

was definitely room for implementation of this plan. The plan mainly served to cater for local residents, given the fact that parking spaces were in short supply in the district. He asked whether the TD would set up a central system to allow residents in the district to use parking spaces at designated streets, by drawing lots on a regular basis. The address of the registered owner of a vehicle would be used for entries and successful applicant would be issued with a permit to stick on the windscreen. The driver of the car could only park on designated streets, areas or traffic lanes. The law enforcement agencies also had to conduct on-site check regularly. He hoped that a pilot plan could be implemented in the C&W District, such as the section from Queen's Road West and Hill Road to Kennedy Town Praya, and asked whether it was feasible. He requested the department to provide additional information after the meeting to identify the number of vehicles with registered addresses in the C&W District. Although privacy issues might be involved and the department could not provide the information, he still hoped the department could reply after the meeting or provide similar figures for comparison. Whether sufficient parking spaces were provided for residents was also an important piece of information in the overall traffic planning of the C&W District. The Government had announced to increase the licence fee by 30%. To him, tax was not a solution to limit the number of vehicles. The Government should work more policy-wise. For example, an applicant for vehicle registration must prove that he has a parking space for his car. If the said proposal of allowing local residents to park their cars at designated streets at night could be trial run, it could help to ease the problem of parking spaces. In addition, the department stated that commercial vehicles would have priority in using parking spaces, but light goods vehicles (LGVs) could not use the parking spaces at Fung Mat Road. LGVs could only be parked in other locations or illegally. He asked the department to study in that direction as well so that commercial vehicles could benefit from the above plan.

325. Mr Ryan FUNG of TD stated that if long vehicles parked over time, the risk of obstructing the road was higher. Therefore, the on-street parking spaces for long vehicles need to be farther away from residential buildings. Therefore, the on-street parking spaces on Fung Wu Road were considered more suitable for long vehicle parking from the perspective of traffic planning. In addition, when conducting parking space demand study, the department would also consider parking space demand related to car ownership and car use. The last term of DC had also engaged a consultancy company to study parking space demands. The department had also provided relevant information including the number of vehicle owners in the C&W District to the consultancy company. He said that the consultancy firm's analysis indicated that the demand for parking spaces in the C&W District was a bit tighter for commercial vehicles; and the overall number of private car parking spaces exceeded the number of vehicles owned. So, the department would first deal with the supply of parking spaces for commercial vehicles. He said that the parking space demand study method adopted by the department and the consultants had been in use for traffic planning for a long time.

326. The Chairman said that there were minibuses, taxis and LGVs parked at Queen's Road West due to insufficient metered parking spaces in the area and the supply of a single public car park, Kennedy Town Carpark, in the Western District (the location of

Rumsey Street Carpark was inconvenient for drivers). There were similar situations in Sai Ying Pun, Shek Tong Tsui, Water Street and Centre Street districts. There were not enough parking spaces for commercial vehicles.

327. Mr Ryan FUNG of TD stated that the main parking spaces in the area were provided by private car parks. According to routine evening surveys, many private car parks still had vacant parking spaces at night, but there were also many illegally parked vehicles on the streets. It was very likely that individual drivers chose not to use the parking lots. He pointed out that the population density of the Central District was very high and the roads were not wide. Therefore, there were objective constraints on increasing the number of on-street parking spaces or public parking lots. The department suggested that motorists consider using private parking lots.

328. The Chairman asked the department to collect comments and submit relevant data after the meeting. He went on to deal with the motion voting procedures of C&W TTC Paper No. 11/2021 and invited Members to vote on the following motion. After voting, the following motion was adopted.

Motion: The Traffic & Transport Committee of the Central and Western District Council strongly requests the Government to study the provision of fee-charging temporary private car or motorcycle parking spaces at the roadside of designated streets during night time for residents living in the districts concerned.

(Proposed by Mr KAM Nai-wai and seconded by Ms NG Hoi-yan, Bonnie)

(12 affirmative votes by: Mr YIP Kam-lung, Sam; Ms CHENG Lai-king; Mr KAM Nai-wai; Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin; Ms NG Hoi-yan, Bonnie; Mr NG Siu-hong; Ms WONG Kin-ching, Cherry; Mr LEUNG Fong-wai, Fergus; Mr PANG Ka-ho; Mr WONG Weng-chi; Miss YAM Ka-yi, Camille; Mr YOUNG Chit-on, Jeremy)

(0 dissenting vote)

(0 abstention vote)

329. The Chairman concluded the discussion on this topic.

Item 14 – Strong request for improving and enhancing the pedestrian walking environment and safety of the promenade between Central and Kennedy Town
(C&W TTC Paper No. 12/2021)

(6:30 pm – 7:06 pm)

330. Mr KAM Nai-wai said that the written reply from the TD was rather strange.

The paper requested for improving and enhancing the pedestrian walking environment and safety of the promenade between Central and Kennedy Town. The first question was about improving the environment of the New Praya, Kennedy Town. The department stated that the proposal about footpath was feasible, but unnecessary. Regarding the enhancement of the pedestrian walking environment and safety of the promenade, he asked why the department considered it unnecessary. He also said he knew that Shun Tak Centre was private property and asked whether the department really got no data about the in and out traffic of the Shun Tak Centre. At that section, only one driveway of the two-driveway road was operational. He asked the TD if they had relevant data and how they coped with the traffic there. Although the Shun Tak Centre was not under the ambit of the TD, there were vehicles coming in and out of the area. He asked why there was no data related to the Shun Tak Centre, was it because the area was not under their ambit? This was really baffling to him. He said that the Marine Department (MD) did not attend the meeting. In their written response, it was stated that the Western District Public Cargo Working Area (WDPCWA) was used for cargo handling and the public were reminded not to enter. He said that the present situation was somehow different. Many people were actually spending their leisure time there. He said that he had never done so, but he passed by the waterfront promenade every day. So, he was familiar with the environment and had entered the area of WDPCWA. He asked whether the environment there could be improved, making reference to the design of the airport with respective access for pedestrians, vehicles and airplanes. At present, there were only vehicle traffic lanes in WDPCWA, so he wanted to ask the MD how they could ensure the safety of those working in the PCWA.

331. The Chairman asked the Secretariat to inquire the MD.

332. Mr Gordon YIP, Engineer Central & Western 3 of TD said that the footpath south of the New Praya, Kennedy Town had provided sufficient pedestrian facilities for the district. Therefore, from the perspective of pedestrian network connectivity, there was no genuine need for the provision of an additional footpath north of the New Praya, Kennedy Town. Moreover, the proposed footpath also necessitated some space for the installation of anti-crash railings, which would further take up road space. He said that many people went to take pictures there before the pandemic. If a footpath was set up there, more related photography activities would be encouraged. The merely 1m wide footpath could hardly handle the crowd and would only cause inconvenience to the public in the end. Over the longer term, it would be more appropriate to study the volume of people passing that area and their demand after completion of the planning for the western part of Kennedy Town.

333. Mr Ryan FUNG, Engineer/Central & Western 1 of TD said that the roads in Shun Tak Centre were public roads in private lots. Therefore, the TD would not collect traffic data there regularly. Regarding the questions in the paper, the department would also arrange for a study. Due to the pandemic, it would be conducted after the Lunar New Year. During the busy hours in the morning and early evening of this Monday, the traffic flow in Shun Tak Centre was 350 and 180 vehicles per hour respectively. The LandsD replied that the terms of the land grant stated that the public must be allowed to

drive on the road section free of charge. Therefore, the TD had no plans to add footpath to the area for the time being.

334. Mr KAM Nai-wai said that Mr Gordon YIP was just giving an official reply. Everyone knew that a 1m footpath was not wide enough and there were members of the public checking in there. Hence, he asked the department for advice about the right width of footpath that could accommodate photo-takers without obstruction to pedestrians. If he knew how to calculate, he could have taken the place of officials. He said that the DC was going to build a waterfront park worth millions of dollars outside the Cadogan Street Temporary Garden, linking up the waterfront to Central and beautifying the environment. There were footpaths at Belcher's Street opposite the proposed park, so according to the department's argument, accessible footpaths already existed. He hoped that the department would not simply suggest using those footpaths. The earth was round and certainly one could always go around. He asked the department not to talk nonsense. They knew very well that the focus of discussion was not about that, but they insisted there was an available footpath across the road. Did it imply that there was no need for discussion? He hoped that the department was attending the DC meeting for genuine discussion. The department clearly understood that Members were requesting to have a footpath along the waterfront to connect to the proposed waterfront park and the newly built area of the Harbourfront Commission, where many people would go and visit. This was the point that mattered. Mr Ryan FUNG said that the department would conduct relevant study at Shun Tak Centre and examine the data. He said he understood that Shun Tak Centre was a private place. There were two driveways at the Shun Tak Centre, one of which was often parked with vehicles. At its entrance, there was only one driveway. Therefore, he believed that there was enough space for conversion into a footpath. He stated that he had written to the Shun Tak Centre requesting a discussion on the matter. If the Government had actual data, they should do the same. He did not know why the department had not listed the data in the paper, and hoped that the information could be provided after the meeting, including data on pedestrians passing through the driveways on the ground floor of Shun Tak Centre. Relevant data at night time should also be collected. Some people would run through that area, especially on Saturdays and Sundays. The department should not just collect the data on weekdays. The study should also include the number of people running or walking past at night, as well as the data on the entry and exit of vehicles. He said that the pandemic should ease off in a few months. He hoped that the department could consolidate the findings and study the provision of a pedestrian passage on the western part of the waterfront, allowing the public to check in and pass through as well as avoiding frequent public complaints. He said that checking in there was very dangerous in the sense that one could easily bump into others. The department did not seek to resolve the problem, on the contrary, they advised the public to use the opposite footpath. Please stop that nonsense.

335. Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin said that funding for the project at the waterfront off Merton and the Cadogan Street Garden was approved at the District Works & Facilities Management Committee (DWFMC) earlier. Yesterday, she had communicated with the District Management Section of the C&WDO and Ms Cherry WONG. She learnt that

the design of the project would be finalised at the meeting to be held on 18th March. The Council had previously requested funding under the CIP, but DO raised his objection. The “short promenade” was about 400m long and would be opened to the public before the end of the year. She said that there was only a month or so before the end of the current financial year, and the entrance of the “short promenade” was at a turning point. When that section was opened for access, apart from those checking in, many more other members of the public would also visit the place. She pointed out that it was time to explore whether it was necessary to increase crossing facilities and footpaths. In case any problem emerged, it would be harder to take remedy actions after the “short promenade” was opened.

336. Ms Cherry WONG said that Members’ current discussion on the New Praya, Kennedy Town reflected that there were many drawbacks in the previous planning for Kennedy Town. There were three residential buildings near the New Praya, which reflected that the Government had never thought about opening up the waterfront for public use. Otherwise, residential buildings would not have been built at a location not even at a road’s distance from the waterfront. Under the proposed draft Kennedy Town & Mount Davis Outline Zoning Plan (OZP), the Government still continued with the development of Kennedy Town to build more housing for more people. This would cause congestion on the only road to Central, which was already crowded with commuters and vehicles. She said that there were some specialty restaurants there, and many vehicles were parked double or triple during meal time. If the pandemic began to ease off, more people would go check in there. She said that the public wanted to enjoy the promenade, but vehicles also had to drive through. She had discussed with architects and planners on how to connect the promenade, but no effective solution had come out after discussing various options. For example, the construction of a footbridge on the road had met objection by nearby residents and shops for obstructing the view; the road could not be extended outwards to the Victoria Harbour due to the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance; the public did not like the idea of a pedestrian subway; modification on traffic lane and footpath was limited by space and their width was unable to cope with the flow of people and traffic. She said that the TD had to face the problems caused by poor planning, and also hoped that the department would adopt innovative methods for connection.

337. Mr Gordon YIP of TD stated that if a footpath was to be constructed at the site, the traffic lane had to be narrowed. At present, the width of the newly built footpath in the urban area was generally not less than 2m. He said that this section was the main vehicular route connecting Cadogan Street to Shing Sai Road. If a footpath was to be constructed, it may be necessary to remove the on-street parking spaces or reduce the two traffic lanes to one. The department hoped to explore the need to construct that footpath after the temporary waterfront park was completed.

338. The Chairman said that he did running exercise in the Western District from time to time. He pointed out that there was only one lane for vehicles entering Shun Tak Centre, and two lanes for leaving, resulting in traffic congestion. There were also many vehicles of the Macau Jockey Club parked there. He stated that there was a 0.5m

to 1m wide footpath in some sections of the area for use by shoppers to proceed to the parking lot via the exit of arrival vessels and the escalators. Therefore, if the Shun Tak Centre agreed, there was room for a footpath. The department had to study the provision of a footpath at the site, which was also helpful to the image of the Shun Tak Centre and traffic safety. He said that he often saw runners dodging left and right to avoid dangerous situations, so he hoped that the TD could study the matter. In addition, the PCWA of the MD should not allow the public to pass through. A footpath was provided at the parking spaces near Shing Sai Road, but only traffic lanes were available at the spots where many people check in. Therefore, he considered that the MD should install a sign to let the public know that it was a traffic lane. Moreover, the HyD was responsible for the street lights there. He asked whether it implied that the area was a traffic lane and was overseen by the TD. The department could supplement the information after the meeting. Furthermore, at the turn of Cadogan Street into New Praya Kennedy Town, two traffic lanes had become three traffic lanes. However, after arriving at The Merton, it was no longer the case as some parking spaces were set up there. He said that the presence of parking spaces there implied that there was still spare capacity of traffic flow and there was room to retrieve a traffic lane for setting up a footpath. He said that New Praya Kennedy Town could provide three vehicular lanes at its maximum width. He suggested that the width of the lane near the waterfront be reduced to 2.5m to allow room for the provision of a footpath to link up the bus terminus at Kennedy Town Promenade to the Cadogan Street Temporary Garden and the \$8 million worth “short promenade” to be completed later. There was actually a footpath there, only that it was sealed off by the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD). If there were connectivity in the area, it would be helpful to accessibility and provide stronger reasons to deal with illegally parked vehicles. This measure would result in a reduction in parking spaces. Public parking spaces were under provided in the district, so the department should identify spaces to set up parking spaces, including requesting the LandsD to provide 200 public parking spaces when processing redevelopment applications. At present, due to the under performance of the TD, it had not asked the LandsD to face up to the problem of insufficient public parking spaces. As a result, the LandsD had not obliged the developers to provide parking spaces when project approval was granted. He asked the TD to study conversion of the north express route at New Praya Kennedy Town from a three-lane road to a two-lane road. Moreover, the parking spaces outside the three buildings should be removed and restored to a traffic lane, so that drivers entering Shing Sai Road could not park their vehicles there.

339. Mr Gordon YIP of TD stated that it was necessary to explore the impact of removal of on-street parking spaces on local traffic.

340. The Chairman asked why parking spaces were set up at the site in the first place, and whether it was requested by ex-Member Mr CHAN Hok-fung.

341. Mr Gordon YIP of TD said that after determining the need for additional footpath, the Chairman’s proposal to remove parking spaces could be studied.

342. The Chairman suggested that apart from removing parking spaces, the TD as

the traffic coordinating department, should discuss with the LandsD that any redevelopment projects by developers must provide public parking spaces to solve such shortage in the area.

343. Mr Gordon YIP of TD said that the department would advise suitable new or redevelopment project developers to provide more parking spaces for the projects; and require developers to provide public parking spaces in suitable projects.

344. The Chairman said that in terms of public accessibility, the need and urgency for a new footpath on the north shore of New Praya Kennedy Town was greater than the need and urgency for parking spaces.

345. Mr Fergus LEUNG expressed his support for improving the connectivity of the entire waterfront in the C&W District, but he had reservations about the construction of a footpath on the north shore of New Praya Kennedy Town. He said that during non-peak hours on weekdays, he often travelled from the Western District to the Central District. However, due to traffic jams at New Praya Kennedy Town, it would take him 10 minutes to leave Kennedy Town. If the two traffic lanes were reduced to one, it would cause backflow and vehicles would be stuck there. Theoretically speaking, he would say removal of parking spaces was possible. But the immediate reason for vehicles parking there was because of its proximity to the bar street. Even if there were no parking spaces, there would still be vehicles parking or double parking there. He pointed out that the current problem was a planning mistake in the entire area, but there was no feasible remedy. Since the two proposals were bundled up in Motion 2 and he could not agree to the first proposal yet, so he would vote against Motion 2.

346. The Chairman said that double parking did occur at the two traffic lanes and parking spaces there, reflecting the poor and arbitrary enforcement of the Hong Kong Police. He said that police enforcement was seasonal. There had been tickets issued to vehicles at parking meters with 9-minute parking time remaining and policemen telling discontented drivers to file a complaint. This showed that there was big room for improvement in law enforcement related to illegal parking. Mr Fergus LEUNG mentioned that the traffic jam at New Praya Kennedy Town would consume him 10 minutes. The reason behind that was the imbalance in traffic planning and ineffective traffic law enforcement. As the Council body, it should hold the Police accountable for its work in this regard. However, the Police no longer wanted to be a permanent representative of this meeting. No police representatives were invited to attend this item, so they could not be held accountable. He said that operators had the right to open their bars in any legitimate place. After Members voted on the motion, the department could carefully consider and implement the proposals as soon as possible because the “short promenade” was about to open.

347. Mr KAM Nai-wai said that some Members just mentioned that he would vote against a motion. He hoped to put it on record that the primary meaning of “provision of a one-metre wide footpath along the waterfront at New Praya Kennedy Town opposite The Merton” under Motion 1 was to add a footpath while retaining parking spaces and

two traffic lanes. This was also the original intent of the motion. He now learned that reducing traffic lanes would cause traffic congestion and reducing parking spaces would also cause opposition from residents and shops. Therefore, under this premise, he requested the TD to conduct a study on the addition of a 1m footpath and provide background information to all Members for reconsideration.

348. The Chairman said that narrowing the traffic lane for the provision of a footpath was also a feasible option.

349. The Chairman dealt with the motion voting procedures of C&W TTC Paper No. 12/2021 and invited Members to vote on the following motions. After voting, the following motions were adopted.

Motion 1: The Traffic & Transport Committee of the Central and Western District Council (C&WDC) strongly requests the Government to improve and enhance the pedestrian walkway environment and safety of the entire promenade between Central and Kennedy Town.

(Proposed by Mr KAM Nai-wai and seconded by Ms CHENG Lai-king and Ms NG Hoi-yan, Bonnie).

(10 affirmative votes by: Mr YIP Kam-lung, Sam; Ms CHENG Lai-king; Mr KAM Nai-wai; Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin; Ms NG Hoi-yan, Bonnie; Mr NG Siu-hong; Ms WONG Kin-ching, Cherry; Mr LEUNG Fong-wai, Fergus; Mr PANG Ka-ho; Mr WONG Weng-chi)

(0 dissenting vote)

(0 abstention vote)

Motion 2: The Traffic & Transport Committee of the C&WDC strongly requests the Government to study the provision of public pedestrian roads or accesses at the following places or roads, including:

- provision of a 1 m wide footpath along the waterfront at New Praya Kennedy Town opposite The Merton, connecting Cadogan Street Temporary Garden and the bus terminus of route no. 904 etc.;
- provision of an about 1 m wide pedestrian road along the two driveways on the ground floor of Shun Tak Centre.

(Proposed by Mr KAM Nai-wai and seconded by Ms CHENG Lai-king and Ms NG Hoi-yan, Bonnie)

(8 affirmative votes by: Mr YIP Kam-lung, Sam; Ms CHENG Lai-king; Mr KAM Nai-wai; Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin; Ms NG Hoi-yan, Bonnie; Mr NG Siu-hong; Mr PANG Ka-ho; Mr WONG Weng-chi)

(1 dissenting vote by: Mr LEUNG Fong-wai, Fergus)

(1 abstention vote by: Ms WONG Kin-ching, Cherry)

350. Mr PANG Ka-ho said that he shared similar views with Members from the Kwun Lung Constituency and Kennedy Town & Mount Davis Constituency. He was against removal of the metered parking spaces and for retaining the original number of traffic lanes. He said that improvement to the width of footpath was discussable, but it was difficult to reconstruct the footpath along the waterfront, which would render the traffic lane much narrower. If the TD got any innovative ideas, Members would reflect on them, but the traffic flow should never be compromised.

351. Mr Fergus LEUNG said that he did not oppose the proposal about “provision of an about 1 m wide pedestrian road along the two driveways on the ground floor of Shun Tak Centre”. Nonetheless, as two proposals were bundled up, he voted against the motion.

352. The Chairman asked the Secretary to put it on record and concluded the discussion on this topic.

Item 15 – Strongly request the Transport Department to rectify the incorrect “Western/Sai Wan Reclamation” signs and the vanished “Bonham Road” signs on Connaught Road West
(C&W TTC Paper No. 13/2021)

(7:06 pm – 7:18 pm)

353. Mr KAM Nai-wai supplemented to the background information of the paper. Regarding the “Western/Sai Wan Reclamation” and “Bonham Road” road signs mentioned in the paper, the “Western/Sai Wan Reclamation” signs were set up there since the commissioning of the WHC. For the “Bonham Road” sign, it was added upon insistence of the DC, in the form of a yellow road sign on the trunk road of Connaught Road West. Many motorists did not know the driving route from Connaught Road West to Mid-Levels, and the road sign could direct them to pass through Bonham Road. Then the authority talked out of both sides of their mouth, the “Bonham Road” sign was removed without consultation for reason of streamlining. He said that he did not understand why one road sign was written “Western” while the other was written “Sai Wan Reclamation”. The three road signs were distinctly different, “Western” and “Western Reclamation” respectively. Yet that direction did not lead one to Sai Wan Reclamation, but Western Fire Services Street, the harbourside and the waterfront promenade. There were only two locations there: the Treatment Works and the Fire Station. It was definitely not Western or Sai Wan Reclamation. He said that the entire flyover system of Connaught Road West was built on reclaimed land. The seaside was

originally the location of the tramway, and the whole area was Sai Wan Reclamation. The road sign indicated the direction to Sai Wan Reclamation. He suggested drivers to proceed along Western Fire Services Street and continue, moving forward to the direction of Sheung Wan or turning back to the direction of Western after passing the entrance of the Fire Station, i.e., head east for Sheung Wan or head west for Western. He hoped that the road signs could give guidance to disoriented drivers, should drivers wanted to return to Western, they could head towards Sai Wan Reclamation. But generally speaking, very few knew what destinations Western Reclamation would lead to. The authority talked out of both sides of their mouth. The Government had silently removed the “Bonham Road” sign. When he asked the department to rectify, they replied that the facility was located at Western Reclamation with reference to the Sai Ying Pun & Sheung Wan OZP. “How could they say something like that?” The wording of the road sign was based on the wording of the OZP. He could not tell whether it was the case in the first place. He hoped that the TD would stop being bureaucratic and get to know more about the drivers in the area. He hoped that clearer instructions could be given.

354. Mr Ryan FUNG, Engineer/Central & Western 1 of TD said that the yellow “Bonham Road” sign was a temporary sign. It was understood that the road network in the district had changed significantly after the completion of the WHC, so the temporary sign was erected accordingly. He said that the temporary road sign had been installed for years. When the CWB was opened to traffic two years ago, the department inspected the directional signs in the area. As Bonham Road was a neighbouring street in the Pok Fu Lam district, the TD believed that the current on-site directional sign to “Pok Fu Lam” could provide motorists with proper information. In order to streamline the content of the directional signs, the TD arranged for the HyD to remove the “Bonham Road” information from the signs. He understood that some yellow road signs in Hong Kong had been installed for many years, and said that the department would review the necessity for such road signs in a timely manner to facilitate drivers to choose the right driving routes. Moreover, regarding the “Western/Sai Wan Reclamation” road sign, he said that it was a misprint at the time the road signs were prepared. The road sign should actually read “Western Reclamation”. Upon receipt of Mr KAM's comments, the reason for providing that road sign was reviewed. In the 1980s, “Western Reclamation” referred to the reclaimed area from Kennedy Town to the present Sun Yat Sen Memorial Park and Western Fire Services Street. With the completion of various facilities, including the WHC and the Western Wholesale Food Market, the scope of the directional sign “Western Reclamation” was gradually narrowed down to Western Fire Services Street. He said that various government departments also use the term “Western Reclamation” to refer to Western Fire Services Street, its nearby government facilities and in short-term leases. He said that the department had considered the written proposal of Mr KAM. However, as far as the current traffic layout was concerned, vehicles heading eastbound on Connaught Road West to Kennedy Town or Pok Fu Lam should turn right at the junction of Connaught Road West/Eastern Street and then drive on Connaught Road West westbound. If Mr KAM's suggestion was adopted, motorists may be confused and continue to drive onto Western Fire Services Street via Connaught Road West eastbound.

355. The Chairman said that the “Bonham Road” sign has been set up for many years, and in his mind, it had become a permanent road sign. He asked whether the department would change the yellow “Bonham Road” sign to a blue road sign and reinstall it.

356. Mr Ryan FUNG of TD stated that if “Bonham Road” sign was to be added to the existing road signs, the size of that road sign had to be enlarged, which may affect the existing supporting structure and foundation.

357. The Chairman stated that the blue “Bonham Road” sign could be re-installed by pasting, because the original bracket was still on the road.

358. Mr Ryan FUNG of TD said that the TD had different design standards for blue permanent road signs and yellow temporary road signs. If “Bonham Road” were to be included in the existing “Pok Fu Lam” permanent road sign, “Bonham Road” had to be placed next to or below “Pok Fu Lam”. The overall size of the road sign would increase and further study on its feasibility was required.

359. The Chairman said that Connaught Road West was a trunk road. The department should also consider changing the road sign.

360. Mr Ryan FUNG of TD said that the road sign had displayed multiple destinations. If drivers were not familiar with the area, they may feel confusing. Therefore, the department had streamlined the road sign for the convenience of drivers.

361. Based on the contents of Mr KAM’s paper and his many years of experience in the district, and the fact that the “Bonham Road” sign had been installed and standardised for many years, the Chairman held that the department should straighten out the issue and consider working on the road sign.

362. Mr KAM Nai-wai said that the so-called temporary road signs could be added at any time, and the road sign “Ahead only” was also yellow road sign. The DC had repeatedly asked the departments to install the road signs. The authority talked out of both sides of their mouth. A road sign could be removed any time. The “Bonham Road” sign had been there for over two decades. It was there as early as the WHC was opened to traffic. He asked for the addition of a temporary yellow road sign, but the department said it was not possible. He said he had no clue of the reason. “Do more, err more; do less, err less”. The “Bonham Road” sign must have been removed upon someone’s request, otherwise the department would not have done so. But then, there were comments from concerned parties. He said that the “Bonham Road” sign was set up at that time for drivers who are not familiar with the area, indicating them how to drive to the Mid-levels from the WHC. The sign mainly catered for Mid-levels residents of the C&W District to indicate them the route to their destination. He hoped that the Government could listen to their advice and stop feeling irritated by the proposal of road sign addition.

363. Mr Ryan FUNG of TD added that the above two types of road signs were meant for different purposes. The blue background white arrow “Ahead only” sign was a traffic sign giving orders under the Road Traffic Ordinance. If a driver did not follow it, he was liable to prosecution. While for directional signs, it would not constitute any violation of the law even if a driver ignored them. Therefore, the requirements for the two were different. Regarding the yellow “Ahead only” road sign on Wing Lok Street, the department was planning to straighten the corner of the road to reduce illegal right turns at that time. Since the works project required some time to finish, so the sign was added there to remind motorists. He said that the works was completed now and the department would remove the temporary road sign in due course. Besides, Member’s views on the addition of a “Bonham Road” directional sign was noted.

364. The Chairman dealt with the motion voting procedures of C&W TTC Paper No. 13/2021 and invited Members to vote on the following motion. After voting, the following motion was adopted.

Motion: The Traffic & Transport Committee of the Central and Western District Council strongly requests the Transport Department to rectify the three incorrect “Western Reclamation” and “Sai Wan Reclamation” signs on Connaught Road West eastbound, and reinstall the “Bonham Road” signs on Connaught Road West westbound.

(Proposed by Mr KAM Nai-wai and seconded by Ms NG Hoi-yan, Bonnie)

(9 affirmative votes by: Mr YIP Kam-lung, Sam; Ms CHENG Lai-king; Mr KAM Nai-wai; Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin; Ms NG Hoi-yan, Bonnie; Mr NG Siu-hong; Ms WONG Kin-ching, Cherry; Mr PANG Ka-ho; Mr WONG Weng-chi)

(0 dissenting vote)

(0 abstention vote)

365. The Chairman concluded the discussion on this topic.

Item 16 – Erroneous planning of the taxi stands around Kennedy Town MTR Station and blocking of roads by taxis
(C&W TTC Paper No. 14/2021)

(7:18 pm – 7:37 pm)

366. The Chairman invited discussion on the paper.

367. Ms Cherry WONG said that she had been living in Kennedy Town for many years. Before, cross-harbour service was available at the taxi stand on Cadogan Street. The taxi stand on Davis Street was also in existence. The main purpose of setting up those two taxi-stands then was to provide services to residents of Kennedy Town in an

age when MTR services were not yet available. It had nothing to do with providing feeder service for MTR passengers. After the completion of the MTR, the Davis Street taxi stand was used by many residents. However, due to the pandemic, fewer people were taking taxi. She said she rarely saw long queues at the two taxi stands obstructing traffic now. Traffic queue at Cadogan Street was gone, while it was occasionally seen at Davis Street taxi stand. She suggested that the taxi stands could be reorganised and re-planned because the road conditions in this area were not ideal. Generally speaking, a taxi stand would be provided near the entrance/exit of a tunnel. As there were also taxi stands in Kennedy Town and their locations were also close to the entrance/exit of the WHC, she hoped that the reorganisation of the taxi stands could facilitate residents and smooth up the traffic in the area.

368. Mr Derek FU, Senior Transport Officer/Central & Western of TD said that there were three taxi stands near Kennedy Town Station. The North Street taxi stand was close to the MTR station, just one road away from it. Before the opening of the West Island Line, GMB No. 58 series used to pick up/drop off passengers at the present North Street taxi stand. With their relocation to the minibus terminus at Exit A of Kennedy Town Station, the site was rezoned as a taxi stand. He said that there were signs in the MTR station to indicate the direction of the taxi stand to passengers. The TD had noticed that most people were taking taxis at Exit A for the direction of Pok Fu Lam. The lay-by at Exit A could be used by any vehicle. If the location were designated as a taxi stand, then minibuses and other vehicles would not be able to stop there, which may affect other road users. Particular taxi passengers may choose to take taxis at Exit A in order to avoid the need to pass through two sets of traffic lights after boarding at North Street. There was no way the TD could regulate individual habits and behaviours. There was no better location than North Street to set up a taxi stand. Nonetheless, the TD would closely monitor the situation, communicate with the taxi trade associations, and liaise closely with the Police on law enforcement matters.

369. Mr PANG Ka-ho said that he did not oppose the retention of the North Street taxi stand. However, as long as taxis were allowed to pick up passengers at Exit A, the measure would not work. He believed that the department should pick one out of the two options. In their reply to the paper, the Police also said that there was illegal parking on Smithfield, but they were unable to determine whether it was really taxis that were blocking the minibus stations. Illegal parking was a very common scene, causing obstruction to minibuses and other traffic users, and aggravating road congestion. The TD had also replied that the authorities were implementing measures to relax the “no-stopping” restrictions on taxis. He asked about the details and background of the measures.

370. Mr Derek FU of TD said that the authorities had been implementing measures to relax “no-stopping” restrictions on taxis, which could be traced back to the SARS epidemic in 2003. At that time, the restrictions on pick-up and drop-off of passengers in restricted areas from 7 am to 7 pm, 8 am to 10 pm and 5 pm to 7 pm were relaxed. This policy had been in use since 2003, and the TD was considering a permanent relaxation. Therefore, the locations available for taxis to pick up and drop off

passengers in Kennedy Town were pretty sufficient.

371. Mr PANG Ka-ho added that he did not agree with the designation of the area outside Exit A, Kennedy Town Station as taxi stand to enable more vehicles to stop over. Henceforth, it could also avoid obstruction to minibuses. He asked the department to study the planning of a westbound taxi stand to facilitate the public to go to Pok Fu Lam Road and the southern district, as well as enhancement of the existing functions of the North Street taxi stand.

372. Mr Fergus LEUNG said that the low utilisation rate of North Street taxi stands may be due to the small number of taxis available at North Street taxi stand. Many taxi drivers parked their “out-of-service” taxis at the taxi stand, making it difficult for the public to take taxis. Gradually, passengers had gone directly to Exit A to take taxis. He hoped that various departments would step up coordination to ensure that taxi drivers would proceed to the taxi stand at Exit B. Taxi supply and taxi takers should be combined to produce a synchronised effect. Moreover, he pointed out that the height of the new taxi model was taller. When those taxis were parked at the minibus stations, they would block the sight of the public, which was very dangerous. He hoped that the department would face the problem squarely with a view to changing the habits of the public.

373. Mr Derek FU of TD noted the views of Members. He emphasised that he was not in a position to regulate the lawful behaviour of the public and taxi drivers, but he would strengthen communication with taxi associations. In addition, the TD would closely communicate with engineers and the Police regarding the problem of taxi bodies blocking vision. The junction was regulated by traffic lights. Theoretically speaking, minibuses coming out of the station would not be in conflict with vehicles driving on Smithfield southbound. Nonetheless, they would closely monitor the situation. He said that although there was no suitable place to relocate the taxi stand, the department would pay attention to road changes and study the feasibility of improving the situation.

374. Ms Cherry WONG said that many people chose to take taxis at Forbes Street at Exit C because it was easier to get one. That explained why few people were using the North Street taxi stand. She suggested relocating the North Street taxi stand, setting up a cross-harbour taxi stand opposite the cross-harbour minibus stop, and closing the Cadogan Street taxi stand, so as to make it easier for the public to cross the harbour via the WHC.

375. Mr Derek FU of TD said that he would study the relevant proposal after the meeting. The taxi route from Forbes Street to Smithfield required a detour.

376. Ms Cherry WONG said that people could take taxis at Exit A. She was not asking for a taxi stand there. It was rather a question of passengers taking taxis there to go to Pok Fu Lam; and taking taxis at Forbes Street to go to Victoria Road and Mount Davis.

377. The Chairman asked the department to study after the meeting and communicate with the MTRC to put more signs at the station to guide the public to the taxi stand and other convenient exits. Besides, the department should communicate with the trade associations about the arrangements in Kennedy Town, including reminding drivers to pay more attention to the reorganisation and facilities at the taxi stand. He hoped that after the reorganisation, the drivers would make good use of the taxi facilities. The department should also keep the Council informed of the follow up.

378. Mr Derek FU of TD said there was no problem with that.

379. The Chairman dealt with the motion voting procedures of C&W TTC Paper No. 14/2021 and invited Members to vote on the following motions. After voting, the following motions were adopted.

Motion 1: This Committee requests the relevant department to step up enforcement actions to combat illegal parking of taxis at the taxi stand on North Street.

(Proposed by Mr LEUNG Fong-wai, Fergus and seconded by Mr PANG Ka-ho)

(10 affirmative votes by: Mr YIP Kam-lung, Sam; Ms CHENG Lai-king; Mr KAM Nai-wai; Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin; Ms NG Hoi-yan, Bonnie; Mr NG Siu-hong; Ms WONG Kin-ching, Cherry; Mr LEUNG Fong-wai, Fergus; Mr PANG Ka-ho; Mr WONG Weng-chi)

(0 dissenting vote)

(0 abstention vote)

Motion 2: This Committee requests the relevant department to step up enforcement actions to combat the situation of taxis parking on Smithfield to wait for passengers and causing obstruction to traffic.

(Proposed by Mr LEUNG Fong-wai, Fergus and seconded by Mr PANG Ka-ho)

(10 affirmative votes by: Mr YIP Kam-lung, Sam; Ms CHENG Lai-king; Mr KAM Nai-wai; Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin; Ms NG Hoi-yan, Bonnie; Mr NG Siu-hong; Ms WONG Kin-ching, Cherry; Mr LEUNG Fong-wai, Fergus; Mr PANG Ka-ho; Mr WONG Weng-chi)

(0 dissenting vote)

(0 abstention vote)

Motion 3: This Committee requests the Transport Department to look into replanning the taxi stands around Kennedy Town MTR Station, cancel the existing taxi stand on North Street and reprovide the taxi stand on a nearby road with lower traffic flow, so as to meet public needs and improve traffic congestion at Smithfield.

(Proposed by Mr LEUNG Fong-wai, Fergus and seconded by Mr PANG Ka-ho)

(9 affirmative votes by: Ms CHENG Lai-king; Mr KAM Nai-wai; Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin; Ms NG Hoi-yan, Bonnie; Mr NG Siu-hong; Ms WONG Kin-ching, Cherry; Mr LEUNG Fong-wai, Fergus; Mr PANG Ka-ho; Mr WONG Weng-chi)

(0 dissenting vote)

(1 abstention vote by: Mr YIP Kam-lung, Sam)

380. The Chairman stated his reason for abstaining from voting was that the North Street taxi stand also had its value of existence. It was inadequate road planning and poor publicity that led to its low utilisation rate. He hoped that the department, the taxi associations and the MTRC would conduct a joint review and add signs to improve the current situation. The Chairman concluded the discussion on this topic.

Item 17 – Concern over the accident involving concrete falling from the ceiling near the escalator at MTR Central Station Exit B
(C&W TTC Paper No. 15/2021)

(7:37 pm – 7:59 pm)

381. The Chairman invited discussion on the paper. He said that there were insufficient notice boards on the day and the instructions in the station were not clear. The announcement after the accident was also broadcasted intermittently. Information to the public was not detailed enough, such as which exit path they could take if they had to avoid the escalator at Exit B. He said that he had raised relevant opinions with the staff at the scene, but regrettably the staff could not respond in time because the situation was rather chaotic at the time. He asked whether the MTRC could set up a hotline to notify Members in the event of emergency incidents; and whether it could study the possibility of providing corresponding information on the passenger info displays at platforms. Now emergency repairs were done. He asked whether the MTRC had investigated the reasons for the collapse of the concrete, such as moisture ingress or water seepage, and asked the MTRC to brief on the situation and the findings of the investigation.

382. Miss Lilian YEUNG, Public Relations Manager-External Affairs, MTR Corporation (MTRC) briefed on the incident and immediate arrangements. On the evening of last Saturday, at about 6:50 pm, a false ceiling loosened at the escalator

position near Exit B of the Central Station Concourse. The situation was spotted by station personnel and staff and engineering staff went to the scene immediately to deal with it. At the scene, small pieces of concrete bits were visible on the ground. That was why staff was deployed there immediately and the affected area was cordoned off. Notices were displayed in the station to remind passengers to use other entrances/exits. A number of staff were also deployed to Central Station for assistance. She said that no one was injured in the incident, and it had no impact on the entrance/exit of the station and the operation of train services. Regarding the works, she said that after the site was cordoned off that night, the works staff also took immediate follow-up action, including checking the affected area and the condition of the adjacent concrete, etc. The team had worked overnight and, after confirming the safety of the location, the area was reopened for public use next morning (i.e. 21st February). The MTRC was now conducting an investigation. The preliminary findings showed that the cause of the loosened ceiling was concrete spalling. The MTRC was highly concerned about the incident. In addition to assigning professional departments to conduct investigations, it also hired an independent accredited registered structural engineer as a third-party professional consultant to jointly investigate and assist in follow-up work with MTRC. She also thanked the Chairman for giving advice to the station colleagues at the scene. The MTRC was also responsive to the advice and added clear instructions at the station immediately.

383. The Chairman said that fortunately, no one was injured that night. After the incident, many kaifongs reflected that they were frightened because the location in question was a path frequently used. It was a place with a high concentration of pedestrian flow. From now on, the public would be wary when they passed by the location. He expressed that he did not want the public to feel uneasy when travelling in the C&W District, so he suggested the MTRC to conduct more inspections, especially when false ceilings were added in many stations nowadays. He pointed out that there were fewer false ceilings in the MTR stations in the past. Pendant lighting connected to piped wires were installed at places with high ceilings before, but now false ceilings were used instead. In the past, it was easier to observe water stains on the ceiling and the station staff could be notified. But now, it was not possible to observe directly and we must rely on the MTR staff to find out the problem on their own. Therefore, he wanted to know the MTRC's regular inspection work flow. If the information was not available now, it could be supplemented after the meeting.

384. Miss Lilian YEUNG of MTRC said that the MTRC would conduct regular structural inspections at stations. The corporation also had a professional team responsible for related matters. Taking Central Station as an example, large-scale inspections were carried out approximately every five years, and routine visual inspections were carried out annually. The Central Station was a sizable station. A new round of large-scale structural inspections had begun there in October last year, and the MTRC would continue to inspect various locations. In response to this incident, in addition to immediately handling the affected area and inspecting adjacent structures, large-scale inspections at the station would also be accelerated, enhanced and conducted within shorter intervals in the future.

385. Ms CHENG Lai-king said that luckily no one was injured in the accident. The escalator in question was used by many people. After the incident, many kaifongs asked her to question the MTRC on their behalf whether people need to wear armour when taking the MTR. She also expressed that the MTRC was “indifferent” to routine maintenance and asked when was the last inspection conducted and who had signed to confirm safety. She said that professionals should be the party conducting routine inspections at MTR stations. The MTRC also replied just now that the inspections were conducted in October last year. She asked whether the inspections were conducted annually or monthly, and whether the concrete was loosened due to water seepage and remained unnoticed because of the false ceilings. She further asked whether the location was confirmed safe during the routine maintenance and by the signed party.

386. Miss Lilian YEUNG of MTRC said that the MTRC regularly conducted structural and safety inspections at stations. Large-scale inspections were carried out every five years, and routine inspections were also carried out every year. The last large-scale inspection at the Central Station was carried out in 2015. In October 2020, a new round of large-scale inspections had begun, and different locations within the station would be inspected step by step.

387. Ms CHENG Lai-king said that the MTR station in question was designed more than 30 years ago. She hoped to take this opportunity to remind the MTRC that there were new and old facilities in the Central Station. She appreciated the addition of toilets in the new facilities and suggested that the inspections of older facilities should be conducted at shorter intervals.

388. Miss Lilian YEUNG of MTRC stated that in response to this incident, in addition to the routine and large-scale inspections at Central Station, MTRC also conducted overall inspections with other professional consultants, including structural inspections in the station and follow-up work after the accident. The corporation also attached great importance to this matter.

389. Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin said that the MTRC had conducted a large-scale inspection in 2015 and also started a new round of large-scale inspection in October 2020. She asked whether the inspections were already over.

390. Miss Lilian YEUNG of MTRC said that the new round of large-scale inspections was not yet completed. Structural inspections were being carried out at different locations throughout the station. However, in response to this incident, the MTRC would speed up the arrangements for large-scale inspections.

391. Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin said that the large-scale inspections started in October last year and five months had lapsed so far. She asked about the time required for the large-scale inspections. As the inspections were started in October last year, she asked whether the location in question had been checked.

392. Miss Lilian YEUNG of MTRC said that large-scale inspections were started last year. Due to the size of the Central Station, inspections at different locations need to be done one after another. Inspections at some areas could only be done after train service was suspended at night. The large-scale inspections had not yet covered the location in question at the time the accident occurred. However, in response to the incident, the MTRC immediately arranged to inspect the concrete above the ceiling in the affected area and similar locations nearby to confirm the structural safety.

393. Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin said that building structure was generally the responsibility of the Buildings Department (BD), including window inspection, building inspection and fire protection. She asked whether structure, fire protection, water and electricity, etc., within the MTR stations were inspected and verified by government departments or by authorised persons. She continued to ask whether the MTRC just followed up on routine inspections upon request by the department, or they themselves took the initiative to conduct inspections.

394. Miss Lilian YEUNG of MTRC said that the MTRC initiated the follow up and inspection work themselves, not upon the request of government department. The entire operation of the MTR involved cooperation with various government departments. After the incident, the relevant government departments also visited the site and liaised with the MTRC. The MTRC also provided relevant information to the departments.

395. Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin said that the concrete collapse accident was related to the structure. She asked whether the BD was the counterpart government department and whether the MTRC knew which department they should deal with.

396. The Chairman asked the TD and the District Office if they knew the answer.

397. Mr Derek FU, Senior Transport Officer/Central & Western of TD stated that he had no relevant information.

398. Mr WONG Yan-Kwong, Senior Executive Officer (District Council) of C&WDO expressed the need to study the issue.

399. Mr NG Siu-hong asked the MTRC if they knew which department they should deal with.

400. Miss Lilian YEUNG of MTRC said that the BD was one of the liaison departments of MTRC.

401. The Chairman said that the District Office and the TD also need to know which department was responsible for accidents and inspections.

402. Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin said that residential buildings would require owners to carry out major repairs after a certain period or every few years. She asked whether the BD had issued the same instructions or orders to the MTRC.

403. Miss Lilian YEUNG of MTRC said that it would be more appropriate for the departments concerned to respond regarding their own arrangements. The MTRC had also assigned a dedicated department to handle routine maintenance and inspections.

404. The Chairman asked if the departments could provide supplementary reply after the meeting.

405. Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin asked whether the Secretary could help to follow up.

406. The Chairman asked the Secretary to follow up with the ADO. He said that it was not possible to hold meetings of the DWFMC at the moment, so he requested the District Office to do so on his behalf. He did not want people to say that Members were not performing their function.

407. ADO said that she could help to get the answer.

[Post-meeting note: The government departments concerned included Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD), HyD and BD.]

408. Ms Cherry WONG asked which government department had contacted the MTRC and inquired about the incident afterwards.

409. Miss Lilian YEUNG of MTRC said that on the night of the incident, various government departments had contacted the MTRC, including the BD. The government departments concerned had also come to the station and contacted the MTRC to obtain relevant information.

410. Ms Cherry WONG asked which other government departments had contacted the MTRC besides the BD.

411. Miss Lilian YEUNG of MTRC stated that the Police were also at the scene on the night of the incident and the TD had been keeping in touch with the MTRC.

412. The Chairman asked the MTRC whether it could provide more communication channels to let the public know about MTRC's train operations, including announcements on the passenger info displays and mobile apps. If the station was suddenly closed due to an accident, he asked whether the relevant matter would be announced on the passenger info displays and inside the station. He urged the MTRC to study the feasibility of the suggestions.

413. Miss Lilian YEUNG of MTRC stated that there were staff and related instructions at the scene. There were also passenger info displays on the platform, which mainly released information on train services. The train services were in normal operation that night. Regarding provision of information on changes to entrances/exits access, she said that it would be clearer if other methods of display were used.

Nonetheless, she would also consider the Chairman's opinions and study the ways of releasing overall passenger information.

414. The Chairman said that passengers were confused about the latest situation, but the MTRC had not updated the information via the passenger info displays in real time. Regarding the closure of stations on "831" and "721", he said that notices like "station closed" were shown on the passenger info displays. He proposed the MTRC to implement similar measures and submit a written reply after the study. Besides, if a similar accident happened in future, he asked whether the Chairman of the TTC and the Chairlady of the DC could also be notified apart from the DC Member of that Constituency. In that case, they would be updated of the situation and able to inform the public about the impact and the latest arrangements of the MTR service. Members could offer their immediate advice as well. He asked the MTRC if they could follow up and deal with it.

415. Miss Lilian YEUNG of MTRC stated that the corporation would study the aspect of information release too.

416. Ms CHENG Lai-king said the floor tiles at Sai Ying Pun Station, HKU Station and Kennedy Town Station were very dirty. She hoped that the MTRC would look into the matter and follow up.

417. The Chairman asked the MTRC to reply directly to Ms CHENG Lai-king after the meeting, with notification sent to the Chairman. He would inform the Members concerned as necessary.

418. The Chairman dealt with the motion voting procedures of C&W TTC Paper No. 15/2021 and invited Members to vote on the following motion. After voting, the following motion was adopted.

Motion: The Traffic & Transport Committee of the Central and Western District Council requests the MTR and government departments to ensure station facility and train operation safety in the Central and Western District, regularly inspect station facilities, as well as closely liaise and work with the Council when emergencies occur, in order to ensure passenger safety.

(Proposed by Mr YIP Kam-lung, Sam and seconded by Ms WONG Kin-ching, Cherry and Mr WONG Weng-chi)

(10 affirmative votes by: Mr YIP Kam-lung, Sam; Ms CHENG Lai-king; Mr KAM Nai-wai; Miss CHEUNG Kai-yin; Ms NG Hoi-yan, Bonnie; Mr NG Siu-hong; Ms WONG Kin-ching, Cherry; Mr LEUNG Fong-wai, Fergus; Mr PANG Ka-ho; Mr WONG Weng-chi)

(0 dissenting vote)

(0 abstention vote)

419. The Chairman concluded the discussion on this topic.

[Post-meeting note: As the Government considered that the contents of the discussion were not in line with the functions of the DCs specified in the District Councils Ordinance, the Secretariat would not provide secretarial services, including taking minutes of meeting and uploading audio recordings.]

Item 18 – Right-turn pocket addition works at the junction of Magazine Gap Road and May Road

(C&W TTC Written Question No. 1/2021)

(8:08 pm)

420. The Chairman stated that the HyD had already given a written reply. Members were requested to read the relevant document.

Item 19 – Concern over regularisation of the bus frequency adopted during the epidemic without conducting consultation

(C&W TTC Written Question No. 2/2021)

(8:08 pm)

421. The Chairman stated that the TD and Citybus Limited and New World First Bus Services Limited had already given written replies. Members were requested to read the relevant documents.

Item 20 – Oppose the significant lengthening of journey time for the Kwun Tong bound evening departures of Cross Harbour Route 101X and suggest changing the catchment area to improve patronage

(C&W TTC Written Question No. 3/2021)

(8:08 pm)

422. The Chairman stated that Kowloon Motor Bus (1933) Company Limited, Citybus Company Limited and New World First Bus Services Company Limited had already given written replies. Members were requested to read the relevant documents.

Item 21 – Date of the next meeting

(8:08 pm – 8:09 pm)

423. The Chairman announced that the date of the next meeting of TTC would be held on 6 May 2021. Paper submission deadline for government departments was 15 April 2021 and paper submission deadline for committee members was 21 April 2021. He said that the Bus Route Planning Programme would be discussed at the next meeting, Members were requested to make preparations beforehand. The Secretary should circulate the relevant papers as soon as possible.

424. The meeting was adjourned at 8:09 pm.

The minutes were confirmed on 16 September 2021

Chairman: Mr YEUNG Sui-yin, Victor

Secretary: Miss Melody TONG

Central and Western District Council Secretariat
September 2021