

Summary of Minutes of Meeting of Islands District Council

Date : 16 December 2013 (Monday)
Time : 2:00 p.m.
Venue : Conference Room, Islands District Council, 14/F., Harbour Building,
38 Pier Road, Central, Hong Kong.

I. Visit of Commissioner for Transport to Islands District Council

The Commissioner for Transport said she was glad to visit Islands District Council (IDC) and exchanged views with members on matters related to traffic and transport.

The Assistant Commissioner for Transport/New Territories gave a powerpoint presentation on the work of the department in Islands District.

A member said that the representative of the Transport Department mentioned in the previous meeting of IDC that the Government provided subsidy to five ferry routes because they had the highest numbers of passengers. She said that the Discovery Bay Ferry was in fact the one with the highest numbers of passengers, but no subsidy was allotted to it. Two years earlier, the Government said that subsidy was not provided for Discovery Bay Ferry because it could be reached by land transport. She queried that Mui Wo could also be reached by land but subsidy was provided for it. She requested for an explanation for the matter.

A member was concerned about the effects of high bridge and tunnel toll fees on Lantau Island, and he worried that toll would be imposed on the future Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Link. He hoped that the Government would review Lantau Island's toll fees so that its development would not be hindered. He also requested the Transport Department to review whether Cheung Tung Road was suitable for cycling. If negative, the Department should urge the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) to build a cycling track near North Lantau Expressway.

A member said that Cheung Chau ferries were often full and repeated requests for additional trips were rejected. He asked the Transport Department and

Marine Department to give an explanation. The Cheung Chau Ferry Pier was not adequate to meet the growing number of passengers and extension works should be carried out. He also enquired which government department would be responsible for law enforcement of the future parking spaces for bicycles in Cheung Chau, and whether illegal parking outside the designated area would be prosecuted.

A member said that there was a much greater demand for Lantau taxis with the growth in population and development of the tourist industry. The waiting time for taxis at the taxi stand on holidays outside the Tung Chung MTR Station was excessively long, and so was the waiting for radio-called taxis. He requested for issuance of more Lantau taxi licenses.

A member said that the policies of the Transport Department could not tie in with the development of Islands District. Residents often had difficulties in boarding ferries, which were the only means of transport connecting the city.

A member said that there was a genuine need for improving the Cheung Chau Pier and a feasibility study should be conducted as soon as possible. He said that the subsidy for the “Cheung Chau-Central” ferry route was not adequate as the number of passengers continued to increase. Residents often found it difficult to board ferries during peak hours and on holidays, sometimes resulting in arguments with ferry staff. The Marine Department required seats in Deluxe Class on ferries be fixed onto the floor, and quarrels between passengers often broke out as a result. He said that there was a lack of co-ordination between the Marine Department and the Transport Department, although they belonged to the same policy bureau. He opined that ferry services had not been improved because there was a lack of competition among contractors. He proposed that the Government should gradually establish a fleet of ferries, and private companies would compete for ferry services through tender. Monopoly could thus be avoided. He also requested the setting up of an A11 bus stop near Central Piers.

The Vice-Chairlady said that Cheung Tung Road was not suitable for cycling, and she proposed the opening of the seafront promenade as a cycling track on a trial-run basis. She said that existing bus services could not meet the demand of Yat Tung Estate. With the opening of North Lantau Hospital and taking into account of future development and increase in population, she hoped that the Transport Department would consider introducing various means of transport into Tung Chung. She was very supportive of the proposal of issuance of more Lantau taxi licenses. She

also proposed adjusting the route of “E” buses to shorten the journey time from Tung Chung to the Airport, so as to provide convenience for residents working at the Airport. She requested the provision of seats in the waiting area at Tsing Ma Bridge for buses from Tung Chung to the city.

A member concurred with previous members on their views of inadequacies of existing ferry policy and the difficulty in boarding Cheung Chau ferries. He urged the Transport Department to enhance the management of bicycle parking to prevent deterioration of the problem. In consulting the local members of IDC on issuance of licenses for motor carts, the Transport Department had not provided adequate information for members. He pointed out that there were many problems in the existing licensing mechanism and that parking spaces should be provided for these carts, which would be convenient to both the drivers and management staff.

A member said that the Tung Chung Road was the main road connecting North and South Lantau, but its design had limited its capacity. He thus proposed the planning of more roads connecting North and South Lantau in future planning.

A member said that Keung Shan Road was the only land transport of Tai O. Residents had over the years demanded improvements of the road, but only partial improvements had been effected. Existing transport facilities were not adequate to meet the growing number of tourists. In 2008, the Government rejected the request for construction of a seaside highway connecting Tung Chung and Tai O on grounds that there was not adequate population in Tai O. Based on the statistics of passengers in 2012 provided by New Lantau Bus Company Limited, and taking into account of travellers using other means of transport, the number of people travelling to and from Tai O these days should be adequate for the construction of the seaside highway. He hoped that the Transport Department would consider the proposal. He also said that Tai O residents had great difficulties in boarding buses on holidays, and he hoped the Transport Department would urge the ferry company to deploy large vessels to take Tai O residents to and from the city.

A member said that the Government only provided subsidy to six ferry routes, and kaitos were not included. To meet new requirements set by the Government after the vessel collision incident off Lamma, kaito operators had to incur extra expenditure. As kaitos were an important means of transport for residents of Islands District, she hoped that the Government would also provide subsidy for kaito-operators. The three year period for existing ferry licenses was too short and

could not encourage ferry companies to make long term investment. She hoped that the license period could be lengthened, and that non-fare box revenue could be increased with the extension of Central Piers 4, 5 and 6.

A member said that there were not sufficient parking spaces in Mui Wo and he hoped that the Transport Department would consider opening the emergency access.

A member proposed widening bends of South Lantau Road and Keung Shan Road, and that parking spaces should be increased in villages.

The Commissioner for Transport responded as follows:

(a) Ferry services

The \$190 million subsidy provided would be used to assist the operators for their operational expenditure in the following three-year (mid-2014 to mid-2017) period. The amount of subsidy had been raised to tie in with the increase in maintenance costs and other expenses. It was an established government policy that public transport services should be operated on commercial principles to enhance efficiency. Thus operators would have to be responsible for fuel and staff costs. Otherwise, all increase in costs would be passed onto passengers if there were no government subsidy and fares would increase dramatically.

Subsidy was not provided to Discovery Bay and Ma Wan Ferries because these two places had more convenient land transport compared with Mui Wo.

For the issue of having difficulty to board ferries during peak hours, the Transport Department had conducted a field study(s). It was found that one or two fast ferries from Cheung Chau departed earlier than scheduled because they were full already. However, services of other time periods were still adequate to meet demand. The Department would discuss with the ferry company to make improvements.

The Department was open to prolong the period of license for ferries and it was pro-actively planning to construct additional floors in

Central Piers 4, 5 and 6 to boost non-fare box revenue for operators. The authorities welcomed members' proposals and the issue would involve amending legislations and policies.

The Marine Department required that seats in Deluxe Class on ferries be fixed onto the floors on grounds of safety. It hoped that passengers would be considerate and tolerant. For matters related to subsidizing kaito operators, the Transport and Housing Bureau would discuss with the industry and try to provide assistance.

The Transport and Housing Bureau had made it clear at the Legislative Council while submitting application for the \$190 million funding earlier that, the capital expenditure for purchasing ships was huge (\$1.7 billion as estimated in 2010) and that the Government would have to bear management and maintenance costs as well. On the other hand, ferry companies would have the competitive edge in commercial operation. Thus the proposal for the Government to purchase ships was considered to be not feasible. The Department would study with ferry companies to find ways to improve services to meet demand in the long run, especially after the implementation of the Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities.

(b) Cheung Chau Pier

The Transport Department had commissioned the Buildings Department to conduct improvement works for Cheung Chau Pier, so that its space would be better utilized, queuing arrangements would be improved, and facilities and ventilation in the waiting room would be enhanced. The reconstruction plan for Cheung Chau Pier would have far reaching consequences, and the seabed might be affected. Thus the Transport Department would need to conduct detailed discussion with departments concerned.

(c) Lantau taxis

The Transport Department was open to the proposal of increase of licenses for Lantau taxis, and members' suggestions were welcome.

(d) Yat Tung Estate bus service

In September 2013, the Transport Department had requested the bus company to increase frequencies of No.38 buses from once every 2 to 3 minutes to once every 1.5 to 3 minutes during 7 to 8 am. The Department had also asked the company to deploy staff to maintain queuing order at Yat Tung Estate Bus Terminus. The Department had conducted on-site inspection and found that passengers would be able to board buses in three minutes, and it had urged the company to continue improving its services.

(e) Minibus services

The Transport Department was open to the proposal of introducing minibus services, but it would require careful planning. The high fuel, insurance and maintenance costs and shortage of drivers had made operation of some urban green minibus routes difficult. Thus the Department had to ensure the sustainability of new routes being proposed. There was an on-going major re-organization of urban bus routes, and thus new minibus routes had to be carefully planned to avoid duplication of public transport services. North Lantau Hospital had yet been fully open, the Transport Department would maintain close contact with the Hospital Authority to monitor the need of new public transport services. New residential blocks would be completed in Tung Chung North and the Transport Department would conduct overall planning in considering the introduction of new minibus routes in the area.

(f) S64 bus route

The existing route of S64 was relatively long. The Transport Department was discussing with the bus company to make it more convenient for passengers.

(g) Proposal of installing seats at Lantau Link Bus Stop

The Transport Department was improving ancillary facilities at major bus stops and interchange stations. The proposal of installing seats at Lantau Link Bus Stop would be followed up on.

(h) Licensing of motor carts

The Transport Department would review and improve existing arrangements, and more information would be provided for member.

(i) Toll fees

Toll fees were a common practice around the world as such project investments were huge. The Transport Department would constantly review toll fees of Lantau Link, and the Government had yet made any decision with regard to Tuen Mun Chep Lap Kok Link.

(j) Cheung Tung Road

The number of vehicles using Cheung Tung Road was not high, and the Transport Department had arranged works to improve its safety. The Transport Department could not stop cyclists from using the road if they adhered to traffic rules and regulations, and it would ask the police to enhance law enforcement against violators. The seafront promenade was being planned and the proposal of a cycling track would be forwarded to departments responsible for its planning. Many work projects were being conducted along the seafront, and the proposal of cycling track on a trial-run basis would be related to departments concerned.

(k) Bicycle parking

The Transport Department would follow up with the Lands Department, and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) on the matter of misuse of bicycle parking spaces in the vicinity of Cheung Chau Pier. More joint actions would be taken to ensure there would be no abuse of the parking spaces.

(l) Long term road planning

The Government would consider the infrastructure of Lantau in the light of its development. Factors such as number of tourists had been taken into account in design and planning of existing roads, and thus they should be able to cope with vehicular flows. The Transport Department would continue to monitor local situations to make necessary changes in planning.

Improvement works at seven bends along Keung Shan Road had been completed, and some others were being conducted. Both sides of Keung Shan Road were slopes and there were many trees in the country park areas, and thus technical requirements for improvements were demanding and complicated. The Transport Department would gradually improve the safety and bends along the road based on existing plans to ensure smooth traffic flow.

(m) Emergency access and parking spaces in Mui Wo

Emergency access was mainly for the use by emergency vehicles. Opening the access might affect emergency rescue actions and planning of the whole area. The Department currently had no plan to open the access. The Mui Wo Facelift work carried out by the CEDD would relocate and increase parking spaces in the area.

A member requested the Commissioner to assist Tai O residents to resolve their difficulty in boarding buses.

The Commissioner for Transport said that the Department had requested the bus company to increase frequencies of No.11 buses connecting Tung Chung and Tai O. The bus company had deployed an additional bus for the route, bringing in ten more trips as a result. More buses were deployed to embark from mid-route, and the Department's survey in August 2013 had found that the bus-full problem encountered by mid-route passengers had somehow eased.

A member reiterated that there was urgency for issuing more Lantau taxi licenses and the request was echoed by another member.

II. Comprehensive Waste Management Blueprint 2013-2022

The Secretary for the Environment (SEN) gave a powerpoint presentation on the Comprehensive Waste Management Blueprint 2013-2022.

The Chairman said that the second meeting of Working Group on Concern about Construction of Integrated Waste Management Facility on Shek Kwu Chau had been held on 26 November 2013, and its report was attached to Paper IDC 127/2013.

A member said that the results of the Waste Reduction Plan introduced in 2007 were less than satisfactory, and that whether the goal of reducing municipal solid waste by 40% in the coming ten years could be achieved was not certain. She had studied the 2008 consultant's report and had made a comparison between the two sites of Tsang Tsui in Tuen Mun and Shek Kwu Chau. She said that Tsang Tsui was a better choice in terms of natural and marine ecology, effects on the fisheries industry and collaboration with existing waste management facilities. Transportation of waste to Shek Kwu Chau could only be carried out by sea, and the construction period, risk involved and operational costs of the facility were all greater than Tsang Tsui. She queried that the Government's site selection of Shek Kwu Chau was political in nature, and was made under influence of pressure groups. Among the six measures proposed in Comprehensive Waste Management Blueprint 2013-2022 (the Blueprint), she supported waste reduction at source, recycling and reduction of emissions. She urged the authorities to enhance their support of the recycling industries. She said that the moving-grate incineration technology had become outdated and new technologies should be adopted. She worried about safety in the process of transportation of waste to Shek Kwu Chau, and also the emission of noxious emissions. She hoped that the SEN would take public opinions into account in construction of incinerator(s).

Another member said that Cheung Chau residents were concerned about the effects of incinerator on health, air quality and the fisheries industry. Thus, he would not support the construction of incinerator on Shek Kwu Chau without satisfactory reduction of waste at source.

A member queried the former decisions to close incinerators in West Point and other parts of the New Territories, and that the current site selected for the integrated waste management facility (IWMF) was not suitable.

A member pointed out that the entire judicial review process in respect of IWMF on Shek Kwu Chau had not been completed, and there were comments that the Government did not respect the judicial system by implementing the plan at the current stage. He enquired about the progress of the existing judicial procedures. He was also concerned of low-value materials (such as plastic or glass bottles) being ended up in landfills or incinerators. He enquired what would be done to ensure that recycled materials would not end up in landfills or incinerators.

Another member said that incinerator was still necessary even if other means of recycling and waste reduction had been effected. Although the Government had on many occasions explained that the reason for selecting Shek Kwu Chau was to avoid the effects of land transport on other areas, he hoped the Government would further elaborate its grounds for site selection. Residents of Islands District, those of Cheung Chau in particular, were still very worried about the matter. He enquired if the Government would be able to provide some sort of incentives or compensation, to make it easier for them to accept the arrangement. He asked how much waste-to-energy electricity could be provided by the incinerator. He said that the issue of waste management was already very serious and an expeditious decision was needed.

A member said that Lantau South was a very scenic area and the air was fresh. The construction of incinerator on Shek Kwu Chau would have serious impact on the area. He did not accept the saying that the facility would not affect the environment.

A member said that the decision to construct incinerator on Shek Kwu Chau was not wise because it would affect the beautiful environment of the district. If people would travel to Shek Kwu Chau via Cheung Chau, it would make residents more difficult to board the already-full ferries. He asked the authorities to consider constructing the incinerator elsewhere.

Another member said that Cheung Chau residents were concerned about the effects of incinerator on health and air quality. She said that the Government should resolve the worries of the residents.

A member hoped that the SEN had heard Cheung Chau residents' concerns during his visit to the island the previous week. He supported the "5R" approach and said that the incinerator should not be constructed unless reduction of waste at source had been carried out effectively. He was concerned about the large scale reclamation at Shek Kwu Chau because it was an irreversible process. He said that he would not support the construction of incinerator at Shek Kwu Chau unless recycling and education had been done well.

The SEN responded as follows:

- (a) The Government proposed the Blueprint at issue so that people could join their efforts to resolve the problem.
- (b) Hong Kong currently faced a very serious problem in waste management. The authorities would need to increase the percentage of recycled materials in end-of-pipe treatment. We needed to treat thousands of tonnes of waste daily, and landfills would be saturated in two to six years' time. Thus end-of-pipe treatment was a territory-wide issue that had to be resolved. In the community's discussion in almost the whole of the preceding year, most people held that the proportion of waste-to-energy treatment should be increased, so as to rely less on landfills. Some thought that the 23% of waste-to-energy treatment target as proposed in the Blueprint was too low. The discussion of construction of incinerators had been going on for more than ten years, and the actual process of construction would take about seven years. If decisions were not made, Hong Kong would not have a waste-to-energy facility in the ten years to come.
- (c) With regard to waste reduction at source, it was the first time ever for the Government to roll out three waste reduction policies and legislations in one legislative year, which evidently reflected the Government's pro-activeness in its support of the local recycling industries. As the process of legislation enactment would take time, the results of the measures would only be seen until a year or two after implementation.
- (d) The Government would study policies and measures to enhance recycling industries. As land resources and some other arrangements would be involved, the Government needed time to formulate and implement policies.
- (e) The issue of waste management was very urgent. Measures proposed in the Blueprint had to be carried out simultaneously, including enacting legislation, enhancing recycling and education, etc, in order to resolve waste management in Hong Kong in the short and medium terms.

- (f) The Government started the study of site-selection in 2008, and environmental impact assessment (EIA) reports of both sites were presented in 2011. The relevant proposals were submitted to the Town Planning Board in 2012 and all information was open and transparent. Members of the public could access the information to fully understand the process of site-selection.
- (g) There would be concern wherever the selected site was located. The decision of Shek Kwu Chau was reached after taking into account overall layout of waste management facilities in Hong Kong, the environment and efficiency in transport, etc. Locating the IWMF at the southern end of Hong Kong would balance the overall layout of such facilities, and it was a reasonable decision. The facility in Shek Kwu Chau would mainly be used to handle waste collected from Hong Kong Island and Kowloon, and transportation of waste by sea would reduce the dependence on land transport.
- (h) The Government did not exclude the possibility of more waste-to-energy facilities in the future. Currently, one such facility could handle one third of waste produced in Hong Kong, and 22% of waste would still need end-of-pipe treatment in landfills. Thus there might be need for more facilities of the same in the future. The Environment Bureau would make such consideration with future development in technology. The authorities opined that the existing site selection of Shek Kwu Chau and the technology to be adopted were both suitable.
- (i) The Government would adopt the standard of the European Union (EU), which was the most stringent currently, to safeguard public health. The standard would be achieved through design of the facility and subsequent monitoring, the latter would be jointly conducted by the Bureau, members of the public and stakeholders.
- (j) Many people believed that by incinerating, the issue of waste management could be solved and renewable energy could be produced. It was currently estimated that the Shek Kwu Chau IWMF could produce 1% of electricity needed by Hong Kong households.

- (k) Any claims for compensation from the fisheries industry would be handled in accordance with existing mechanism.
- (l) The court had ruled in favour of the Government in July 2013, and concerns about EIA report and health had been addressed. Appeal against the ruling might take a few years. The schedule was tight and the Government had to be responsible to the public. It was imperative to have the Legislative Council (Legco) and the community to discuss the proposal, and simultaneously apply funding from the Legco so that preliminary tendering work could begin. It was believed that relevant judicial proceedings would have been finished before tender was confirmed, ensuring that no time would be wasted.

A representative of the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) gave further information on waste disposal technologies as follows:

- (a) The Environment Bureau attached great importance to effects of waste-to-energy facilities on public health, and thus the emission standard of the EU, currently the most stringent, was adopted. The moving-grate incineration technology proposed by the Government was currently the mainstream advanced technology which was safe and reliable. The technology was being used by around 900 facilities in more than 20 countries or regions. Most facilities constructed after 2009 adopted that technology.
- (b) Gasification was not a new technology but it had yet been fully matured. In the previous ten years, there had been cases of its failures and closures of such facilities in Germany and the United Kingdom variously.
- (c) The EPD had closely monitored the development of plasma gasification technology. Reviews conducted in 2007 and 2009 suggested that the technology had yet been fully matured, and it was not suitable to be used in large scale treatment of municipal solid waste. Existing facilities adopting the technology revealed that its scale and capability were limited. Some facilities had experienced technical and maintenance difficulties and were closed eventually. The EPD had

reservation about the technology but would continue to monitor its development.

A member said that the younger generation he came across was more positive about the construction of waste treatment facility on Shek Kwu Chau, provided that it would meet the highest standard. While he agreed that source separation of waste and increase in recycling were necessary, he was concerned that previous schemes rolled out by the Government had not been successful. He hoped that the Government would step up its supervision of contractors and imposed heavier penalties on illegal disposal of waste at rubbish bins. While data seemed to suggest that Tsang Tsui might be a more suitable site for waste treatment facilities, he also understood that there were already many offensive facilities in Tuen Mun. He urged the Government first to carry out effective waste separation and recycling, then consider the option of incinerator.

The Vice-chairlady said that the issue of waste management was very urgent. Waste collected had to be properly treated so that it could be turned into energy. The recycling industry was concerned about whether there were governmental policies to assist and support the industry in treatment of waste collected. She hoped that relevant policies and measures would be formulated the soonest possible. She gave the example of lesser-value wastes ending up in landfills to urge the Government to allocate resources to assist the industry, and thus alleviate pressure on landfills. She also proposed the provision of incentives for residents and lift certain restrictions on planning in the District to make it easier for their reception of offensive facilities.

The SEN further responded as follows:

- (a) The overall rate of recycling in Hong Kong was fair, and the Environment Bureau was determined to ameliorate the situation of 3-coloured roadside recycling bins. New terms would be included in new tenders issued to contractors to ensure that ordinary rubbish would not be mixed with recycling materials, for example, by using transparent bags.
- (b) The Government was determined to advance the development of the recycling industry. Thus a steering committee under the leadership of the Chief Secretary for Administration was set up to co-ordinate work of various bureaux and departments.

- (c) The Government had commissioned a consultant to study how it could assist the recycling of materials of lesser value, such as plastic products.
- (d) The Government was open to proposals of waste-to-energy opportunity and bringing improvements to nearby areas.

The Chairman concluded that while IDC understood the urgency of resolving the issue of waste management in Hong Kong, residents were concerned about the effects of construction of the facility on Shek Kwu Chau on health and other aspects of life. Before implementing the project, the Government had to make the following pledges and propose concrete action plans, or else IDC would not support the construction of incinerator at Shek Kwu Chau:

- (a) Level of emissions had to meet the EU standard, and emissions data during operation had to be publicized timely for public monitoring;
- (b) To set up a committee with participation of local people to follow up the residents' concerns about the incinerator, and requests, and conduct monitoring in the stages of design and operation;
- (c) To compensate the affected fishermen for reclamation to be carried out;
- (d) To pledge to follow up on the requests of the local community, such as enhancing community facilities, etc.

III. Council for Sustainable Development Public Engagement on Municipal Solid Waste Charging – “Waste Reduction by Waste Charging · How to Implement?”

The Programme Director on Municipal Solid Waste Charging, Council of Sustainable Development briefed the meeting of the charging mechanism, coverage of the charging scheme and charging level of municipal solid waste.

A member said that the implementation of municipal solid waste charging based on quantity would be difficult, as people of different districts had different ways of disposing waste. He proposed the implementation of the programme in stages, and the implementation should tie in with "Hong Kong: Blueprint for Sustainable Use of

Resources 2013-2022". In the first stage, a building as a whole should be used as units for charging, and a baseline for waste from the whole building should set. No charging should be imposed for buildings with quantity of waste below the baseline, and charging would be imposed on those above it. Awards should be given to buildings with quantity below the baseline as an incentive. Then waste separation should be extended to families and individuals, similar to the pattern used in Japan and Taiwan.

The Vice-chairlady said that the emphasis should be on education, whereas charging should aim at reducing waste, and that incentive should be provided for recycling. The first stage of consultation conducted by the Government revealed that more than 60% of members of the public supported charging based on quantity of waste. However, she stressed the importance of educating the public in reducing waste at source. The Government should formulate policies and allocate resources to assist waste-to-energy industries. She gave an example to illustrate that pre-paid designated garbage bags would achieve better results in reducing waste than by charging the whole building collectively. She proposed that education and law enforcement should be conducted in tandem to tackle the problem of illegal disposal of waste.

Another member was very supportive of the direction and policy principles as laid out in the consultation paper. The imposition of Environmental Levy on Plastic Shopping Bags had reduced the quantity of plastic bags issued by retailers by 90%, and the success of the municipal solid waste charging in Taiwan and South Korea was evident. She thus opined that Hong Kong should strive in the same direction. As more than 90% of people in Hong Kong lived in buildings with property management, charging of waste could either be carried out on basis of weight or size. She proposed making good use of food waste as fertilizer and using pre-paid designated garbage bags in Islands District. As food waste was mostly generated by restaurants, she urged the Government to encourage people to bring home unfinished food.

The Programme Director on Municipal Solid Waste Charging responded as follows:

- (a) The setting of baseline was not a common practice overseas, as waste disposal was a personal responsibility. The Council of Sustainable Development would study the proposal to lower charges for those with less quantity of waste. It was generally opined that the grassroots

produced less waste, and if they indeed produced less than the baseline, then no fees should be charged on them. However, it would be complicated in actual practice.

- (b) The Government was constructing two facilities, each of which could treat 200 to 300 tonnes of food waste daily. The industry held that food waste should be separated from other wastes at disposal. Some people believed that part of the revenue from waste charges should be used to fund industries treating recycling materials of lesser commercial value.
- (c) Overseas experiences revealed that there would still be loopholes for the system of pre-paid designated garbage bags. Taipei and Seoul both enacted legislations to forestall illegal disposal of waste when municipal solid waste charging mechanism was to be implemented.

IV. Question on Columbarium

The representative of the FEHD said that EIA and traffic review had to be conducted as the columbarium was located inside country park area. The Architectural Services Department was commissioning a consultant to carry out the studies and review required. If everything went well, it was anticipated that the reports would be completed and environmental permit would be issued in the third quarter of 2015. The FEHD would proceed to consult IDC once the site was confirmed to be suitable for construction of columbarium.

A member enquired when Cheung Chau residents could start to apply for niches in the columbarium. She urged the FEHD to plan ahead for supply of niches to ensure adequate supply.

The representative of the FEHD said that he would give a reply after the meeting.

V. Question on works of South Lantau Mountain Bike Trails Network

The member who raised the enquiry briefed the meeting of the contents of his question. He was not satisfied with the written reply given by the CEDD. He said

that the layout plan for the project had been prepared but funds had yet been approved. He hoped that the project would be implemented the soonest possible.

A member said that the CEDD should pro-actively handle the project, instead of simply giving a written reply. She also said that roads should be open to cyclists in the country park on condition that they were safe. She hoped that the FEHD would cover that matter in conducting environment and traffic assessment for the columbarium in Lai Chi Yuen Cemetery.

VI. Question on Facelift of Mui Wo Works

The member who raised the enquiry hoped that the CEDD would expedite the progress of the project.

A member enquired the grounds for turning down the only tender submitted for the project.

The representative of the CEDD said that the only tender submitted was turned down as the contractor lacked “suitable experience” for the project. After improving the conditions for the tender, invitation for submissions were once again extended on 29 November 2013.

A member enquired whether invitations were extended only to contractors approved by the CEDD.

The representative of the CEDD said that notification of tender would be extended to “Group C Approved Contractors for Public Works”.

VII. Question on Village Vehicles

The representative of the Transport Department said that roads on Cheung Chau were generally used by both pedestrians and vehicles. Conditions for issuance of village vehicles stipulated that such vehicles should install only one forward gear and one reverse gear. After consulting relevant sections of the Transport Department and the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF), it was decided that existing requirements should be maintained. There was no existing legislation limiting speed of village

vehicles. However, the Transport Department had included the gear requirements into conditions of license of village vehicles so as to enhance safety.

A member enquired about the contents of the reply given by the police. He said that the requirement of one forward gear and one reverse gear would not be able to limit the speed of the vehicles, nor would it safeguard safety of pedestrians.

A member pointed out the village vehicles of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) were not subject to the same limitation. She proposed limitation of speed by the Transport Department and law enforcement by the police, and not by setting requirement of gears. She also hoped that the use of environmental-friendly fuel would be encouraged.

Another member said that there should be speed limit for vehicles for roads shared with pedestrians. Conditions for license of village vehicles should fall in line with existing legislations, which stipulated that imported vehicles were not to be converted. He queried whether there were loopholes in existing legislations, and if there was no speed limit of roads, the police would not be able to take law enforcement actions and consequences could be serious.

The representative of HKPF said that the first priority of the police was law enforcement, and it had no special views on the proposal given by the first member.

The representative of the Transport Department said that according to the existing Road Traffic (Village Vehicles) Regulations, village vehicles owned or used by government departments did not need to apply permit from the Transport Department.

A member said that it was very unreasonable that village vehicles of government departments were not subject to regulation, whereas others were. Without speed limit requirements, the police would not be able to take law enforcement actions. He proposed that the Transport Department should include speed limit into the conditions of license for village vehicles. He also pointed out that many problems would be caused if driving license was not required for driving village vehicles.

A member said that there should be speed limit for vehicles on roads on Cheung Chau. He was also critical of the Transport Department for not providing

adequate information to members in consulting their opinions on licensing of village vehicles.

A member said that the Transport Department did not perform well in supervising the speed of village vehicles, and that in turn had caused members to be criticized by members of the public.

A member asked the Transport Department to clarify the type of village vehicles of the Government which were not subjected to regulation.

The representative of the Transport Department said that the law stipulated that village vehicles owned or used by government departments, including those of “driving-type”, did not need to apply permit from the Transport Department. However, these vehicles had to be inspected by the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department before putting into use.

A member said that it was not satisfactory for village vehicles to have only one forward gear and one reverse gear. As far as he understood it, most of these vehicles were driven by petrol and they could go very fast. He opined that there should be restrictions on their speed.

The representative of the Transport Department pointed out that roads on Cheung Chau were to be used both by vehicles and pedestrians, and it was difficult to impose speed limit restrictions, which was similar to the case of cycling tracks.

A member pointed out that permits were not necessary for bicycles, but they were for village vehicles, and thus it was inappropriate to make a comparison between them. He reiterated that the requirement of only one forward gear and one reverse gear was not reasonable, and could not safeguard road safety. He demanded the inclusion of speed limit in the conditions for permits, so that law enforcement actions could be taken.

VIII. Question on urging the Government to support rehabilitation of abandoned farmland in Islands District and the New Territories

The representative of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) said that the Department and members of the industry regularly held talks to promote agriculture in Hong Kong, and overseas visits and exchanges were also organized for the same purpose. The Department encouraged rehabilitation of abandoned farmland, but responses were not enthusiastic. There were some successful cases and he cited a farm in Mui Wo as a case in point. He also pointed out that the price of agricultural produce sold was very important for the revival of agriculture. The Department had recently published a guidebook on farms in Hong Kong, which provided useful information for visiting and learning more about farms in Hong Kong.

A member said that there had been no progress for his request lodged years before for provision of water for irrigation in Lantau South.

A member said that transportation of fertilizers and agricultural produce, and provision of water for irrigation had to be solved in the first place.

A member asked whether the AFCD would assist in clearing overgrown grasses to rehabilitate farmland.

The representative of AFCD said that the Department did provide services for rehabilitation of farmland, on pre-requisites that actual farming had to be carried out and there was water source in the vicinity. He would check information of the case of Lantau South and reply the enquiry. He said that transportation of produce to areas further away would increase costs and farmers should try to resolve the problem. The Department could lend machinery for clearance of land free of charge.

IX. Question on request to increase the quota of Tung Chung General Out-patient Clinic and to establish Chinese medicine service and
Updates on North Lantau Hospital

The Chairman said that the two agenda items were related, and thus would be jointly discussed.

The representative of the Hospital Authority responded to enquiries as follows:

Chinese Medicine service

- (a) The Hospital Authority had begun to set up Chinese medicine services in Hong Kong since 2003. The Chinese medicine clinic in Islands District was jointly run by the Hospital Authority, a non-governmental organization and a local university.
- (b) The Chinese Medicine Centre for Training and Research in Islands District was located in the previous Tung Chung General Out-patient Clinic. If works were carried out smoothly, it was anticipated that the Centre would start operation in the second half of 2014/15.

Tung Chung General Out-patient Clinic Service

- (c) The Tung Chung General Out-patient Clinic had been moved to the Community Health Centre at North Lantau Hospital since 30 September 2013, and its quota and services remained unchanged.
- (d) Various measures had been taken to enhance general out-patient services. A series of primary medical services had been implemented to strengthen medical care for patients with chronic illnesses, hoping that resources thus relieved would be made available to out-patients.
- (e) The Hospital Authority understood that there was great demand for general out-patient services, and it would closely monitor the effectiveness of the measures taken. Appropriate actions would be taken to deal with the issue in due course.

A member enquired the number of quota provided by the Tung Chung General Out-patient Clinic, and whether the Hospital Authority would increase the quota and what factors had to be taken into account. He asked whether the Hospital Authority had figures related to complaints against Tung Chung General Out-patient Clinic after it was moved to North Lantau Hospital. He further enquired the name of the non-governmental organization running the Chinese Medicine Centre for Training and Research in Islands District, and when in 2014 the Centre would start operation.

The representative of the Hospital Authority responded as follows:

- (a) The number of quota for Tung Chung General Out-patient Clinic had not decreased. As North Lantau Hospital was close to Yat Tung Estate and thus a greater number of residents would approach the Clinic for service. The Hospital Authority had in fact received complaints from Yat Tung Estate residents that it was difficult to make appointments. There was a great demand for out-patient services in all of Hong Kong, and it would continue to monitor the situation in Tung Chung.
- (b) The Chinese Medicine Centre for Training and Research in Islands District would be operated by Yan Oi Tong, and the time for its opening would be provided after the meeting.

Another representative of the Hospital Authority supplemented as follows:

- (a) The demand for out-patient services might increase in winter because it was the “flu season”. Thus Tung Chung residents might find it harder to make appointments. Patients with chronic illnesses would be given medicine for a longer period of time if their conditions were stable, so that manpower and resources could be relieved to be used by episodic patients.
- (b) The Hospital Authority would be able to deploy “substitute” doctors when necessary. However, there would be a greater demand for doctors in winter, and the Hospital Authority would effectively deploy manpower.
- (c) The availability of medical staff was an important factor in determining the quota to be provided for out-patient services. While there was a great demand for the service, there was a shortage of doctors.

The Vice-chairlady said that there was more space in North Lantau Hospital, and she hoped that the quota could be increased. She also hoped that the Hospital Authority would explain to the residents the difficulties they encountered. She also welcomed the measures taken to deploy resources better.

A member said that the great demand for services reflected that residents

held favourable view of the quality of services. However, he hoped that the telephone appointment system would be improved to provide choice of time for appointment.

A member asked whether the number of quota in 2014/15 would be increased, the number of existing quota, and whether the number of quota would be affected by unexpected absence from duty of doctors.

The representative of the Hospital Authority responded as follows:

- (a) There was currently a shortage of medical staff and doctors. The Hospital Authority had to prioritize various needs in the services and development of North Lantau Hospital. While review was being conducted on the quota of Tung Chung General Out-patient Clinic in 2014/15, it was unlikely, due to shortage of doctors, that there would be a big increase. The Hospital Authority would introduce measures to alleviate the great demand for service and try to provide more quota for patients of episodic illnesses.
- (b) The opinions about the telephone appointment system would be related to the Hospital Authority.

In reporting the progress of North Lantau Hospital, the representative of the Hospital Authority said that patients leaving the Accidents and Emergency (A&E) Department found it hard to catch taxis. The situation might worsen when 16-hour service would be introduced. He hoped that IDC would be able to provide assistance.

The Vice-chairlady appreciated the fulfillment of pledge of the 16-hour A&E services. She enquired whether in-patient service would be provided after the implementation of 24 hour A&E services. She urged the Transport Department to follow up on the request of increase of Lantau Taxi licenses.

The representative of the Hospital Authority said that there would be limited in-patient services after the implementation of 24 hour A&E services.

X. Question on request to improve bus service for Yat Tung Estate

The representatives of the Transport Department said that the Department was aware of the importance of Route No. 38 for Yat Tung Estate residents. Frequencies of the route had been increased since end of September to once every 1.5 minutes. The study conducted by the Department in November showed that during 7:40 to 8 am, the average waiting time was 3 minutes at Yat Tung Estate Bus Terminus. He said that queuing arrangements at the Terminus in the evening could be improved. The bus company had been urged to deploy more staff to ameliorate the situation. The proposal of division of Route S64 would be submitted to IDC for discussion when a concrete proposal would become available. The proposal of a special bus route from Yat Tung Estate to Asia World Expos would not be implemented at the current stage as there was not a great demand for it, and that resources had to be deployed effectively.

The representative of the New Lantao Bus Company Limited said that the company had deployed 30 buses for Yat Tung Estate in the morning peak hours, and one or two additional buses would be deployed for school children travelling to Tung Chung North. He opined that the queuing order at Yat Tung Estate Bus Terminus in the evening was not bad, and the company was recruiting part-time staff to maintain queuing order at the Terminus.

The representative of Long Win Bus Company said that there were more Yat Tung Estate residents working in the Airport. The company would discuss with the Transport Department whether it was necessary to enhance relevant bus services.

A member said that No. 38 buses were mostly full when they departed from the Yat Tung Estate Bus Terminus. Passengers at the North Lantau Hospital bus-stop (Hospital bus-stop) found it difficult to board buses. The member proposed that space should be left on buses departing from the Terminus to make possible for passengers of the Hospital bus-stop to board buses.

A member said that queuing order for No. 38 buses at Yat Tung Estate Bus Terminus would be improved if staff was deployed to maintain order. He supported the division of S64 route, as it would provide convenience for Yat Tung Estate residents going to work at the Airport. He also proposed that some bus routes with Air Passenger Terminal as destination should be divided to reach Asia World Expos.

A member queried the veracity of surveys conducted by the Transport Department. He clarified that complaints lodged by residents were directed at the period between 7:40 to 8am. He enquired whether frequencies in the following two to three months would be increased. He concurred that staff should be deployed at Yat Tung Estate Bus Terminus to maintain order for No. 38 buses. He said that the proposal of dividing S64 route had been raised long before, and he requested for a timetable for implementation of the proposal. Alternatively, free interchange should be provided if special buses to Asia World Expos could not be arranged shortly.

The representative of the New Lantau Bus Company Limited said that leaving space on No.38 buses departing from the Yat Tung Estate Terminus would be technically difficult as passengers were unlikely to co-operate. He proposed passengers to take No. 38X bus instead. The Company was recruiting part-time staff, and approval had been given by the Transport Department to deploy two more buses for No. 38. He further clarified that the Transport Department would not notify bus companies concerned in advance of conducting field survey.

The representatives of the Transport Department said that surveys carried out by the Department would not be rigged. Where resources were available, the Department would conduct more field survey(s) in order to achieve a practical understanding of the actual situation. The Department was actively liaising with the bus company on the division of S64 route. He hoped that the proposal would be materialized the soonest possible to address to local demand.

A member said that No. 38X buses were not frequent enough to effectively ease the difficulty encountered by passengers at the Hospital bus-stop. He believed it was more effective if space was left for mid-way passengers by deploying staff at the departing terminus.

XI. Amendments to the South Lantau Coast Outline Zoning Plan

A member enquired whether the piece of land at issue was originally planned for low-density residential development, and whether the amendments being proposed were to increase the number of floors and blocks. He also proposed more land in Lantau South be changed to residential purpose.

The representative of the Lands Department said that the piece of land in Lantau South was originally planned for low-density residential development. After taking into account of the capacity of existing infrastructure and the surrounding environment, the authorities decided that there was room to increase its development density. The amendment being proposed was to increase the plot ratio from 0.4 to 0.8.

Another member concurred with the previous member's opinion on changing the usage of more land in Lantau South to residential purpose, and that the Government should be well planned in transportation facilities and that South Lantau Road should be widened.

XII. Conversion of Tin Lee House in Lung Tin Estate into a Home Ownership Scheme Block

A member enquired whether the public housing residents of nearby Tin Ning House would have the priority in purchasing Home Ownership Scheme flats in Tin Lee Court, and how many flats there would be in Tin Lee Court.

The Vice-chairlady asked when renovation works would be completed in Tin Lee Court and date of sale for the Court.

The representative of the Housing Department responded as follows:

- (a) Tenants of Tin Ning House would have the same priority as other public housing tenants, whereas the first priority would be given to original tenants of Tin Lee House.
- (b) The renovation works of the building(s) was anticipated to be completed by end of the current year and work outside the Court would be completed by early the following year. The date of sale had yet been determined as some land issues had to be resolved first.
- (c) There would be 86 flats in Tin Lee House. One would be reserved for the owners' corporation and the management office, so there would be 85 flats for sale.

XIII. Updates on Islands District Signature Project

The Vice-chairlady hoped that there would be opportunities for the local people to give their opinions about the design of the projects.

The Assistant District Officer (Islands) said that the second-round proposal and the technical feasibility statement were being prepared, and that preparation for engaging project technical adviser(s) was being conducted. Opinions of the public would be incorporated into the design when the consultant would begin work. Opinions collected in the earlier public consultation would be related to the consultant.

Islands District Council Secretariat
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