

Islands District Council

Paper IDC 59/2017

Transport Department

Traffic and Transport Working Plan 2017-2018

Purpose

This Paper presents the Traffic and Transport Working Plan of the Transport Department for Islands District in 2017-2018.

Work Objectives

2. We hope that the work programmes planned for implementation in 2017-2018 can achieve the following objectives:

- (i) To monitor and improve the traffic and transport facilities to cope with the local development needs;
- (ii) To adjust existing public transport services to meet the demand of the public; and
- (iii) To coordinate different public transport modes in order to provide efficient public transport services to the public.

Brief Description of Work

A. Traffic Management

3. One of the major objectives of traffic management is to improve the traffic flow and to ensure the road safety. We will continue to closely monitor the overall traffic situation and to design and implement suitable traffic management scheme, if necessary, to improve the efficiency, performance and safety of the road network. The following traffic management programmes have been planned for implementation in 2017-2018:

(a) Monitor the Traffic Network and Management Measures

4. We will continue to monitor the traffic network of Islands District to enhance the safety and improve its efficiency. The major items include:

- (i) To monitor and review the road traffic situation of Tung Chung Road and south Lantau, and to implement suitable traffic management measures, if necessary;
- (ii) To monitor and review the operation of major junctions in the district, including the operational efficiency of road and pavement junctions, and to enhance their safety; and
- (iii) To regularly meet the project contractors in the district for the assessment of temporary traffic arrangement.

(b) Road Network and Traffic Facilities Improvement Projects

5. We will continue to follow up the following projects (some projects are in progress) to improve the road network and traffic facilities:-

- (i) Minor improvement works to some bends at Keung Shan Road;
- (ii) Minor improvement works to bend at South Lantau Road near San Shek Wan;
- (iii) Extensions of bus-laybys at South Lantau Road near San Shek Wan, and Tai O Road near Lung Tin Estate; and
- (iv) Provision of additional cycle parking spaces behind Cheung Chau Municipal Services Building.

B. Public Transport Service

6. Railways are environmentally friendly and efficient mass carriers. It is the Government's transport policy to develop railways as the backbone of Hong Kong's public transport system. Therefore, we will promote maximum utilisation of railways supplemented by feeder public transport services. We will also continue to encourage other public transport operators to improve the quality of their services. On the premises of environmental protection and efficient use of resources, we will continue to enhance the public transportation network, review and coordinate various public transport services to avoid route duplication and vicious competition.

(a) Franchised Bus

7. Franchised bus services will continue to play an important role in public transport system. We will consider the following factors in planning bus route development:

- (i) the existing and planned public transport services in the district;
- (ii) the development of the district;
- (iii) the completion of transport infrastructure;
- (iv) the impact of the programme on traffic, environment, the public transport operators and passengers concerned;
- (v) the cost-effectiveness of the programme; and
- (vi) the comments and suggestions from the public.

8. To better understand the service demand and consider improvement measures, we will continue to conduct surveys regularly and collect opinions from the public through district councils and other channels. We will encourage franchised bus companies to provide more bus-bus interchange schemes at appropriate and feasible locations to facilitate passengers to travel to different destinations with concessionary fares. This will reduce the demand for long haul and direct “point-to-point” bus services. As a result, the road space and bus resources will be better utilised and the efficiency of the bus network will be enhanced. The congestion and environmental problems caused by the overlapping of bus services can also be relieved.

9. To meet the passenger demands, the bus companies have implemented a number of bus service improvement measures in 2016-2017, of which 44 items involve increase in bus departures, frequency adjustment or deployment of additional buses while 23 items involve expansion of service coverage, introduction of special bus services and route rationalisation.

10. At the meeting on 20 March 2017, the Traffic and Transport Committee (“TTC”) under the Islands District Council (“IDC”) was briefed on the Bus Route Planning Programme for Islands District in 2017-2018. There are 13 items of route adjustment and 13 items of deployment of additional buses and adjustment of frequency in the Programme.

(b) Ferry Services

11. The licences of the six major outlying island ferry trunk routes (namely “Central – Cheung Chau”, “Inter-islands”, “Central – Mui Wo”, “Central – Peng Chau”, “Central – Yung Shue Wan” and “Central – Sok Kwu Wan” routes) will expire in mid-2017. In March 2017, the Transport Department approved the licence

extension application of the above routes for a period of three years to mid-2020¹.

12. With the support from the Legislative Council Panel on Transport and Islands District Council in April 2016, the Government commenced negotiation with the two incumbent operators of the six major outlying island ferry routes, i.e. The New World First Ferry Services Limited (“NWFF”) and three subsidiary companies of Hong Kong & Kowloon (Holding) Ferry Limited (“HKK”), on the conditions of licence extension. The detailed arrangement of the next licence period (2017-2020) was reported to the Legislative Council Panel on Transport and Islands District Council in November and December 2016 respectively, and the Finance Committee (“FC”) of the Legislative Council (“LegCo”) has approved a commitment of about \$410 million to facilitate the Government to provide the six ferry routes with the Special Helping Measures (“SHM”) during the next three-year licence period from mid-2017 to mid-2020.

13. The Government will complete the mid-term review of the implementation of SHM in the 2017-2020 licence period in the first half of 2019, and the best long-term operation model of ferry service in view of financial viability will also be reviewed in the exercise. The scope of the review includes the advantages and disadvantages of providing existing SHM as the long-term operation model of ferry services (while comparing with other possible arrangements such as extending the effective period of a licence with refined SHM, and the idea of outsourcing the service operation of the Government procured and owned ferries), and whether SHM and other arrangements should be applicable to the other eight outlying islands ferry routes². Specifically, the Government will explore in detail the various issues above.

14. Besides, in order to further enhance the service level of “Central – Cheung Chau” route with a view to catering for the passenger demand, NWFF intended to increase 20 seats on every 400-seater fast ferry to increase the carrying capacity. Subject to the approval from the Marine Department, the first fast ferry with increased

¹ The “Central-Mui Wo” ferry route licence which expired on 31 March 2017 has been extended for 3 years to 31 March 2020. The rest of 5 ferry route licences will expire on 30 June 2017 and have been extended for 3 years to 30 June 2020.

² The eight other outlying island ferry routes include:

- (1) “Aberdeen – Cheung Chau”;
- (2) “Aberdeen – Yung Shue Wan via Pak Kok Tsuen”;
- (3) “Aberdeen – Sok Kwu Wan via Mo Tat”;
- (4) “Tuen Mun – Tung Chung – Sha Lo Wan – Tai O”;
- (5) “Discovery Bay – Central”;
- (6) “Discovery Bay – Mui Wo”;
- (7) “Ma Wan – Central”; and
- (8) “Ma Wan – Tsuen Wan”.

seats will be put into service not later than August 2017, and the remaining ones will be put into service from Q4 of 2017 to 2018. Meanwhile, NWFF also proposed to deploy the “New Ferry II”, a fast ferry with relatively high carrying capacity (about 430 seaters), in the operation of the “Central – Cheung Chau” route to further enhance the carrying capacity. Additionally, NWFF intended to provide the monthly ticket passage in the second half of 2017. As for the suggestion we received during the consultation regarding the provision of multi-ride ticket of the route and the extension of monthly ticket passage to those multi-ride ticket users, NWFF will complete the study soon and the Transport Department will monitor the progress and report to the Islands District Council in due course. Apart from the above, an additional morning trip will be provided by HKK in the service of “Central – Yung Shue Wan” route at 5.30 a.m. departed from Yung Shue Wan to cater for the need of the Yung Shue Wan residents. The commencement date of the above additional service is 1 July 2017.

15. To better cater for the needs of the passengers, we will continue to conduct regular surveys on ferry services to monitor the performance of ferry operators to ensure that the ferry services can meet passengers’ needs and comply with the conditions of licences. The survey results also provide reference for study on service improvements.

16. We will continue to liaise closely with members of the District Council, listen to the opinions of the members of the public and actively consider the traffic and transport issues in the district.

Transport Department

June 2017