

(Translation)

Minutes of the 6th Meeting of the Traffic and Transport Committee of
Sham Shui Po District Council (7th Term)

Date : 5 December 2024 (Thursday)
Time : 9:30 a.m.
Venue : Conference Room, Sham Shui Po District Council

Present

Chairman

Mr CHAN Kwok-wai, MH

Vice-Chairman

Mr CHEUNG Tak-wai

Members

Mr HO Kwan-chau, Leo

Ms WU Wanqiu

Mr LEE Wing-man, MH

Mr LAM Wai-man, Raymond

Ms KWOK Yin-lai, MH

Mr CHAN Wai-ming, BBS, MH, JP

Mr CHAN Lung-kit

Ms CHEN Lihong

Ms CHUM Pik-wa

Dr WONG Chung-leung, JP

Ms LAU Pui-yuk, MH

Co-opted Member

Mr YEUNG Ying-sum, Samuel

In Attendance

Miss FUNG Yi-ching, Janice

Assistant District Officer (Sham Shui Po) 2

Mr LAI Yuk-fai

Station Sergeant of District Traffic Team, Sham Shui Po
District, Hong Kong Police Force

Mr YAU Kung-yuen, Corwin

Senior Transport Officer/Sham Shui Po, Transport
Department

Mr HO Chun-kit, Ethan

Senior Transport Officer/Events & Projects, Transport

Mr YU Wai-ho	Department Project Coordinator/Sham Shui Po, Transport Department
Mr POON Tsing, Leo	Engineer/Cheung Sha Wan, Transport Department
Mr HSIE Kwun-kuen, Joe	Senior Engineer/Walkability, Transport Department
Ms NG Ka-wai, Annisa	Senior Engineer/Works, Highways Department
Miss LAM Wing-ching, Larissa	Engineer/Walkability, Transport Department
Mr YIP Pui-lam, Paul	District Engineer/Sham Shui Po, Highways Department
 <u>Secretary</u>	
Ms LEE Hei-tung, Mandy	Executive Officer (District Council) 3, Sham Shui Po District Office

Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed members and representatives of government departments to the sixth meeting of the Traffic and Transport Committee of the seventh term of the Sham Shui Po District Council (“SSPDC”).

Item 1: Confirmation of Minutes of the 5th Meeting of the Traffic and Transport Committee

2. The Committee confirmed the above minutes without amendment.

Item 2: Provision of Cover to Walkway (New Round) (Paper No. 28/2024)

3. Mr Joe HSIE and Ms Annisa NG introduced Paper No. 28/2024.
4. The views of members were consolidated as follows: (i) with the successive completion of residential developments along Cheung Sha Wan Promenade in recent years, there was increasing pedestrian flow on Lai Ying Street. Most residents supported the provision of a cover to the walkway there. It was hoped that the feasibility study as well as the subsequent construction works could be completed as soon as possible for the betterment of the residents; (ii) expressed concern on the temporary traffic arrangements during the construction period, as the roundabout on Lai Ying Street only allowed one-way traffic and the pedestrian flow was expected to further increase following the opening of a nearby school in the third quarter of the coming year; (iii) pointed out that the proposed cover would only reach the lift at Exit B of MTR Nam Cheong Station. However, as relatively more people used the escalator at Exit B, it was suggested that the cover should be extended to the escalator at Exit B; and (iv) suggested extending the cover to private housing estates nearby.
5. Mr Joe HSIE gave a consolidated response: (i) according to the past records, for building a walkway cover, it took approximately five to six years on average to go through the processes from feasibility study to completion of construction works. The timespan would be affected by various factors, such as local opposition, the time required for relocating underground utilities and other engineering problems; (ii) if the Committee agreed to the proposal, the Highways Department (“HyD”) would immediately commence the technical feasibility study, and it was expected that the cover would be completed within five to six years; (iii) the Department would take into consideration Members’ suggestion on extending the cover to benefit more residents; (iv) according to the past experience, if the construction of a cover involved private housing areas, there might be more objections. Therefore, the Department inclined to add a cover to the walkway section near Hoi Lok

Court; and (v) the Department noted members' opinions and would revise the project details during technical feasibility study.

6. The views of members were consolidated as follows: (i) enquired whether the project would be cancelled or revised if there was objection from private housing estates; (ii) enquired whether the cover would be extended to the walkway leading towards the waterfront from the roundabout on Lai Ying Street; and (iii) enquired whether the Committee could suggest revisions to the project details in the future.

7. Mr Joe HSIE gave a consolidated response: (i) according to the past experience, if the construction of a cover involved private housing areas, there might be more objections from the local community, resulting in a longer period of time for processing and revising project details. For early commencement of the works, the Department suggested adding a cover to the walkway section near Hoi Lok Court only; and (ii) the Department would take members' suggestions into consideration and revise the project details accordingly.

8. The Chairman concluded that the Committee unanimously agreed to the proposal of the Transport Department ("TD") and HyD to add a cover to the walkway section near Hoi Lok Court on Lai Ying Street. The Committee would keep close tabs on the implementation details of the works and might suggest minor adjustments and revisions in the future. It was hoped that the departments would report on the progress of the project in a timely manner.

Item 3: Opinions of Yau Yat Tsuen Residents on Green Minibuses Serving the District (Paper No. 29/2024)

9. A member introduced Paper No. 29/2024.

10. Mr Corwin YAU gave a consolidated response: (i) currently, public transportation services around Tat Chee Avenue included KMB Route Nos. 203C and 203S, which travelled to and from Yau Tsim Mong District, Green Minibus ("GMB") Route Nos. 41M and 41A, which provided frequent short-distance shuttle services between MTR Kowloon Tong Station and Shek Kip Mei Station, and GMB Route No. 2A, which travelled to and from Whampoa Garden; (ii) GMB Route No. 2A took Tai Hang Tung Road towards Kowloon Tong and Tat Chee Avenue towards Whampoa Garden. Both roads were approximately the same distance from Festival Walk and Fa Hui Park. It was about a 10-minute walk, taking the longest route from Tai Hang Tung Road to Tat Chee Avenue via Begonia Road or Peony Road. It might be inconvenient for some residents taking the

Kowloon Tong bound trip. However, after taking into consideration the geographical environment, road network, population density, living habits of the residents and future development of the area, TD believed that rerouting Route No. 2A to take Tat Chee Avenue towards Kowloon Tong would have direct impact on the existing short-distance minibuses routes (i.e. Route Nos. 41A and 41M), which might lead to vicious competition and ultimately affect the stability of the short-distance shuttle services in the area; and (iii) the Environment and Ecology Bureau had set up the New Energy Transport Fund to subsidise the transportation industry, encouraging them to replace old minibuses with more environmentally friendly new energy vehicles.

11. A member enquired whether there was a statutory limit on the age of minibuses.

12. Mr Corwin YAU responded that every GMB was required to undergo an annual vehicle examination as stipulated, and only after passing the examination would TD approve its licence renewal. The Department would also encourage the industry to replace their vehicles in a timely manner through the scoring mechanism of the “mid-term review”.

13. The Chairman concluded that the Committee expressed concern on the accessibility around Yau Yat Tsuen and hoped that the Department would review whether there was room for improvement to facilitate residents’ travel. When adjusting GMB routes, TD had to take various factors into consideration, such as the existing public transportation services, the passenger demand, the impact of route adjustments on passengers, the traffic load capacity and the resource utilisation. At the same time, overlapping of routes in areas with lower population density should be avoided so as not to hinder the long-term development of all routes. TD noted members’ suggestions and it would continue to closely monitor the passenger need and service level of public transportation within the district, and conduct reviews as appropriate.

Item 4: Concerns about the Monitoring Mechanism and Risk Management of the Transport Department for Minibus Operators Arising from the Sudden Service Termination of Minibus Route No. 45M (Paper No. 30/2024)

14. A member introduced Paper No. 30/2024.

15. Mr Corwin YAU gave a consolidated response: (i) the operator of GMB Route No. 45M notified TD on 3 October (Thursday) that the responsible person of the business could no longer operate Route No. 45M due to personal reasons and decided to cease services starting from 7 October (Monday), emphasising that no financial factor was involved.

Upon receiving the notification, the Department immediately contacted the operator, stating clearly the requirement of a written notice to the Commissioner for Transport (“the Commissioner”) at least six months in advance if the operator decided to terminate in whole the scheduled service. The Department also proactively discussed with the operator the possibility of continuing the operation, including maintaining the service until the Department arranged a temporary alternative, so as to avoid any impact on passengers. However, the operator chose not to cooperate in the end; (ii) since Route No. 45M primarily served passengers travelling to Caritas Medical Centre, the Department urgently arranged for another GMB operator in the district to temporarily operate Route No. 75S starting from 7 October, with the same routing, service hours and fares. This ensured the continuous availability of public transportation service between Sham Shui Po and Caritas Medical Centre. The temporary GMB Route No. 75S would provide service until a new operator was selected under the established mechanism; (iii) as the performance of the operator of GMB Route No. 45M had been unsatisfactory over the previous two years, with no improvement despite appropriate guidance, the Department had proactively prepared a contingency plan to promptly respond to any emerging operational issues. The Department thanked the District Office and Committee members for supporting the contingency plan and for proactively assisting in explaining the latest situation to passengers, which ensured the seamless takeover by Route No. 75S within a short time without affecting existing passengers; (iv) the Department would follow up on the non-compliances by the operator of Route No. 45M under the established mechanism. Under the Conditions for the Operation of Public Light Bus (Scheduled) Service in the Passenger Service Licence (“PSL”), the operator who decided to terminate the scheduled service was required to notify the Commissioner in writing at least six months in advance. According to the Road Traffic Ordinance (Cap. 374), operators were obliged to comply with the conditions in the PSLs issued by the Department and provide services in accordance with the requirements stipulated in the Schedule of Service (including details regarding the route, timetable, fare table and number of vehicles). If there was any reason to believe that any vehicle under a valid PSL was in breach of the conditions therein, the Commissioner might appoint a public officer to conduct an inquiry in respect of the past or current breach of conditions of the vehicle under the relevant PSL. If it was confirmed in the inquiry that the licensee contravened relevant ordinance or licensing conditions, the Commissioner, having regard to the actual circumstances and gravity of the contravention, might impose penalty on the operator, such as suspending, cancelling or amending the PSL; (v) if a GMB operator ceased to operate the scheduled service and there was no suitable alternative public transportation service available for the affected passengers, TD would publish a tender invitation in Gazette, inviting interested parties to apply for operation. The Green Minibus Operators Selection Board (“the Selection Board”) would select a suitable operator based on, among other factors, the proposed operation plans and operational experience of applicants. The Department had already initiated the relevant procedures and prepared for the selection

exercise. The temporary GMB Route No. 75S would be in service until a new operator was selected; (vi) in recent years, some minibus routes were experiencing a decline in passenger volume as there were new railway lines come into operation. As such, the Department had provided various forms of assistance, including implementing the Labour Importation Scheme, offering advice on optimising the GMB operation and adjusting route fares, with a view to improving the business environment of the industry and enhancing operational efficiency; and (vii) the Department provided overnight parking spaces at the terminus for the operator of the temporary GMB Route No. 75S. Currently, the service of Route No. 75S was stable and the number of passengers increased to a volume greater than that of Route No. 45M before its cessation. The service level of GMB Route Nos. 75 and 75A was unaffected.

16. The views of members were consolidated as follows: (i) commended TD for its crisis management, which minimised the impact on residents; (ii) suggested that the Department should strengthen the monitoring of minibus operators, and prepare short-term contingency plans and medium- to long-term planning based on risk assessment to address unexpected situations; (iii) suggested that the Department should add a condition requiring operators applying for cessation to provide alternative solutions in order to avoid any impact on passengers; (iv) enquired about the operation period of Route No. 75S, whether the temporary contingency plan had impact on the drivers and staff of Route No.75 series, and the time required to select a new operator; (v) enquired about the final penalties for the operator of Route No. 45M, including whether there were any fines and if other GMB routes under the same operator were involved, and hoped that the penalty mechanism had a deterrent effect; (vi) suggested taking into consideration the past performance of the operator when evaluating its future tenders; (vii) commended the operator of Route No. 75S for deploying vehicles in response to the increased passenger volume, ensuring stable service; (viii) said that the past performance of Route No. 45 series was poor, with irregular service and low service quality, and hoped that the Department would strengthen the monitoring of the service quality of minibus to ensure that operators operated according to the conditions of contracts; (ix) suggested that the Department should include penalties in tender terms to prevent operators from suddenly ceasing operation; and (x) suggested establishing a scoring mechanism to enhance the monitoring of minibus operators.

17. Mr Corwin YAU gave a consolidated response: (i) regarding the emergency mechanism, TD regularly conducted risk assessments on the management capabilities and financial position of minibus operators. According to the requirements of PSL, operators had to periodically submit operational data, including revenue, number of passenger and vehicle kilometreage. The Department could therefore keep track of the operation status, and develop contingency plans for higher-risk operators, such as the contingency plan in

response to the sudden discontinuation of Route 45M; (ii) if a GMB operator ceased operation and there was no suitable alternative public transportation service available for the affected passengers, TD would publish tender invitations in the Gazette to invite interested parties to apply for operation. The Selection Board would then select a suitable operator. The operator of Route No. 75S had promised to provide service until a new operator was selected; (iii) according to the Road Traffic Ordinance (Cap. 374), if an operator violated the requirements of PSL, the Commissioner might appoint a public officer to conduct an inquiry in respect of the past or current breach of conditions of the vehicle under the relevant PSL. If it was confirmed in the inquiry that the licensee contravened relevant ordinance or licensing conditions, the Commissioner, having regard to the actual circumstances and gravity of the contravention, might impose penalty on the operator and decide whether its PSL should be suspended, cancelled or amended. For suspected contravention by operators, the Department would request explanations and conduct investigations based on the circumstances. For minor or first-time contravention, the Department would provide advice and guidance for the operators. For persistent cases despite repeated advice, the responsible persons might be called in for a meeting and the Department might consider issuing a written warning based on the situation; (iv) in captioned case, neither the licence holder nor the authorised person of Route No. 45M was operating other GMB routes or holding responsible positions. And the Selection Board would take into account the management capacities and past performance of the responsible persons in the selection; and (v) the Department would assess the operation of minibus routes based on the community development and the changes in passenger demand to ensure the provision of stable services of all routes.

18. The Chairman concluded that the Committee hoped that TD would strengthen its monitoring of minibus operators to improve the service quality and prevent the sudden discontinuation of minibus routes in the future. It was also suggested that an emergency mechanism should be established to minimise the inconvenience caused to the public by unexpected incidents. TD said that it would handle the non-compliances by the operator and select a new operator according to the established mechanism.

Item 5: Concerns about the Effectiveness and Enhancement Measures of the Smart Car Park in Sham Shui Po District (Paper No. 31/2024)

19. A member introduced Paper No. 31/2024.

20. Mr Leo POON gave a consolidated response: (i) the automated parking system (“APS”) in the short-term tenancy car park on Tung Chau Street was managed by a private car park company, which adopted a market-led operational model. Therefore, it was more

appropriate to allow the car park company to meet changing parking demands with flexible approaches. Matters related to promotion and parking discounts should be considered by the car park company; (ii) members' opinions were relayed to the private car park company, including enhancing promotion and offering parking discounts; (iii) according to the information provided by the private car park company, the utilisation rate of its APS was higher than that of other short-term tenancy car parks, and was comparable to other APSs; (iv) the underground car park with circular shaft lifting system on Yen Chow Street West was expected to be completed and put into service by 2026, with 30 traditional ground-level parking spaces equipped with electric vehicle charging facilities; and (v) TD noted members' suggestions and would continue to coordinate with relevant departments to explore the possibility of installing electric vehicle charging facilities for APS if technically and financially feasible.

21. The views of members were consolidated as follows: (i) enquired about the peak hours of the car park; (ii) reported the low utilisation of the car park and hoped that the Department would examine the reasons and make good use of resources to ensure that future smart car parks could achieve maximum efficiency; (iii) enquired about the technical issues involved in installing electric vehicle charging facilities for 170 underground automated parking spaces and hoped that the Department could provide relevant information; and (iv) hoped that the Department would strengthen cooperation with different departments in the planning of public facilities in the future, so as to streamline the process as far as possible.

22. Mr Leo POON gave a consolidated response: (i) according to the private car park company, other car parks equipped with APS might operate on a monthly rental basis, and drivers' parking behaviour was being observed. It was hoped that the private car park company could be given room to adjust the mode of operation according to market demand; (ii) members' suggestions, such as adding monthly parking spaces, would be relayed; and (iii) suggestion about the installation of electric vehicle charging facilities would be forwarded to the Architectural Services Department ("ArchSD") and relevant divisions, and the progress would be updated in due course.

23. Members hoped that after communicating with ArchSD and relevant divisions, the Department would provide more supplementary information for their reference regarding the installation of electric vehicle charging facilities for automated parking spaces.

24. Mr Leo POON responded that ArchSD and relevant divisions would be contacted after the meeting to obtain more information.

25. The Chairman concluded that the Committee expressed concern on the upcoming completion of Hong Kong's first underground smart car park with circular shaft lifting system on Yen Chow Street West. It was hoped that TD would provide timely updates on the progress of the project and explain details of the APS. The Committee also hoped that the car park would provide more electric vehicle charging facilities. TD said that it would continue to explore with ArchSD the possibility of installing electric vehicle charging facilities for APS if technically and financially feasible.

Item 6: Proposal to Examine the Widening of the Footpath at the Junction of Woh Chai Street and Tai Hang Tung Road (Paper No. 32/2024)

26. A member introduced Paper No. 32/2024.

27. Mr YU Wai-ho gave a consolidated response: (i) the footpath adjacent to the slope outside Exit B1 of MTR Shek Kip Mei Station on Woh Chai Street was about three to five metres wide; (ii) railings were installed along the footpath near the bus stop to prevent pedestrians from stepping onto the carriageway, and only a small number of pedestrians were observed stepping onto the carriageway in recent on-site inspections; and (iii) the footpath where Exit B1 of Shek Kip Mei Station was located was about two metres wide, which was narrower than the approximately three-metre-wide footpath outside the station, causing a bottleneck in pedestrian flow. Widening the footpath would not have a significant effect on diverting the pedestrian flow at the exit.

28. The views of members were consolidated as follows: (i) suggested removing the cover or railings at the bus stop to expand the usable space of the footpath; and (ii) suggested discussing with nearby schools to enhance behavioural education for students in order to minimise the impact on other pedestrians.

29. Mr YU Wai-ho responded that there was reservation about the suggestion to remove the railings as more pedestrians might step onto the carriageway, posing safety concerns.

30. The views of members were consolidated as follows: (i) the schools near the above footpath had coordinated and staggered their lunch hours, but it was difficult to reschedule school hours. The schools would continue to remind students to behave properly; (ii) Tai Hang Sai Estate was undergoing redevelopment and the construction works near Exit B2 of MTR Shek Kip Mei Station caused more pedestrian traffic on the footpath where Exit B1 was located; (iii) suggested that the railings of the bus stop cover, but not the railings along the footpath, should be removed; (iv) suggested that the Department should strengthen

crowd control during rush hours; and (v) suggested that the Department should consider other feasible measures to alleviate the situation of pedestrians stepping onto the carriageway.

31. Mr LAI Yuk-fai gave a consolidated response: (i) the Road Safety Team of Traffic Kowloon West had conducted an on-site inspection with members, and staff was arranged subsequently to enhance crowd control during morning rush hours and advise pedestrians not to step onto the carriageway; and (ii) there would be regular efforts to strengthen publicity and education in this road section.

32. The Chairman concluded that the Committee expressed concern on the conditions of the above footpath, especially the safety of schoolchildren. It was hoped that TD would review the footpath facilities of the road section, and suggested that members should collaborate with the Road Safety Team of the Hong Kong Police Force (“the Police”) to strengthen publicity and education with a view to making improvements.

Item 7: Project Items and Schedules of District Traffic Improvement Works Completed, under Construction or Under Planning within the Past Two Months by the Transport Department/Highways Department (Paper No. 33/2024)

33. Mr Leo POON introduced Paper No. 33/2024.

34. The views of members were consolidated as follows: (i) hoped to speed up Project Item 12 to complete the installation of bollards on Wing Hong Street near Yu Chau West Street; (ii) enquired why Project Item 14 regarding the painting of reddish-brown markings for the pedestrian crossing on Lai Ying Street near Ying Cheong House would take four months; (iii) the paper showed that Project Items 6 and 7 commenced works in early October and early November 2024 respectively, and Project Item 11 at the end of November of the same year. However, the detailed remarks for these three items still indicated that they were still under planning. It was thus enquired about the expected commencement dates of the works; (iv) suggested optimising the traffic facilities in the area around Tung Chau Street, Kweilin Street and Yen Chow Street where Project Items 4 to 7 were located, for example, by adding pedestrian crossing facilities and traffic lights; and (v) enquired about the details of Project 4, the optimisation of the pedestrian crossing on Tung Chau Street near Kweilin Street.

35. Mr Leo POON gave a consolidated response: (i) Project Item 12 was still under planning, and follow-up actions would be taken; (ii) regarding Project Item 14, HyD had

submitted a proposal for temporary traffic arrangements, which was pending approval by the Police, and it would be processed as soon as possible; (iii) due to the time gap between the paper submission date and the meeting date, the latest progress of the works would be reported during the meeting. The works of Project Items 4, 6, and 10 had already been completed; and (iv) some items were marked as commenced with the detailed remarks still showing that they were under planning because the temporary traffic arrangements were undergoing approval process by relevant departments. Once the temporary traffic arrangements were approved, the works would commence immediately.

36. Mr Paul YIP responded that Project Item 7 regarding the works of widening the pedestrian crossing on Kweilin Street near Tung Chau Street would commence on 16 December.

37. The views of members were consolidated as follows: (i) suggested adding the project of constructing a pedestrian crossing on Fortune Street near S.K.H. St. Clement's Primary School to the list in the paper for members' convenience in following up on the works progress; (ii) enquired about the details of Project Item 4 regarding the optimisation of the pedestrian crossing on Tung Chau Street near Kweilin Street; and (iii) the pedestrian crossing on Lai Ying Street near Ying Cheong House had high people flow and traffic accidents occurred from time to time. It was hoped that the Department would complete Project Item 14 regarding the painting of reddish-brown markings at the pedestrian crossing as soon as possible, and also consider improving crossing facilities to ensure pedestrian safety.

38. Mr Leo POON gave a consolidated response: (i) TD was proactively following up on the progress of the pedestrian crossing project on Fortune Street. Previously, an on-site inspection was conducted with members and the principal of the primary school, and it was preliminarily suggested that a pedestrian refuge should be provided nearby; (ii) as the proposed location of the pedestrian refuge was a parking space for school buses, the project could only commence after HyD had relocated the parking space. The Department was currently in discussion with the Leisure and Cultural Services Department regarding the arrangement of the transplantation or replanting for the trees at the proposed location of the pedestrian refuge, and would continue to follow up on this matter; and (iii) for Project Item 14 regarding the pedestrian crossing on Lai Ying Street near Ying Cheong House, the Department had already added "Slow" road markings to remind drivers to slow down, in addition to the planned reddish-brown markings. The Department would continue to communicate with members and explore various options to enhance the safety of the crossing.

39. Mr YU Wai-ho responded that the works of Project Item 4 regarding the optimisation of the pedestrian crossing on Tung Chau Street near Kweilin Street mainly involved removing roadside iron poles and adding a tactile guide path for the visually impaired.

40. Mr Paul YIP responded that for Project Item 14 regarding the painting of reddish-brown markings at the pedestrian crossing on Lai Ying Street near Ying Cheong House, the Department would complete the works as soon as the Police approved the temporary traffic arrangements.

41. The Chairman concluded that the Committee noted the content of the report and hoped that the Department could report on the latest progress of the traffic improvement works in the district in a timely manner.

Item 8: Any Other Business

42. Members did not raise any other business.

Item 9: Date of Next Meeting

43. The next meeting would be held at 9:30 a.m. on 13 February 2025 (Thursday).

44. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 11:56 a.m.

District Council Secretariat
Sham Shui Po District Office
January 2025