

Sha Tin District Council
Minutes of the 2nd Meeting of
the Traffic and Transport Committee in 2023

Date : 25 April 2023 (Tuesday)
Time : 2:30 pm
Venue : Sha Tin District Office Conference Room 441
 4/F, Sha Tin Government Offices

| <u>Present</u> | <u>Title</u> | <u>Time of joining the meeting</u> | <u>Time of leaving the meeting</u> |
|--|---|---|---|
| Mr HUI Lap-san (Chairman) | DC Member | 2:32 pm | 6:12 pm |
| Mr MAK Yun-pui, Chris | DC Chairman | 2:33 pm | 5:10 pm |
| Mr SIN Cheuk-nam | DC Vice-Chairman | 2:33 pm | 6:12 pm |
| Mr CHOW Hiu-laam, Felix | DC Member | 2:33 pm | 6:12 pm |
| Mr CHENG Chung-hang | ” | 2:32 pm | 6:12 pm |
| Mr CHUNG Lai-him, Johnny | ” | 2:32 pm | 6:12 pm |
| Mr WAI Hing-cheung | ” | 2:32 pm | 6:12 pm |
| Ms CHEUNG Lam-yee, Alison (Secretary) | Executive Officer (District Council)4, Sha Tin District Office | | |

| <u>In Attendance</u> | <u>Title</u> |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Mr NG Wing-keung, Henry | Assistant District Officer (Sha Tin)1 (Atg) |
| Ms CHAN Cheuk-yu, Cherry | Senior Executive Officer (District Council) (Atg), Sha Tin District Office |
| Ms WONG So-man, Katrina | Executive Officer I (District Council)3, Sha Tin District Office |
| Ms TSANG Hing-kwan, Natalie | Senior Transport Officer/Shatin, Transport Department |
| Mr CHAN Yau-yau, Leo | Senior Transport Officer/Ma On Shan, Transport Department |
| Ms PANG Yee-lin, Rebecca | Engineer/Shatin 3, Transport Department |
| Mr YU Chung-him | Engineer/Bicycle Parking, Transport Department |
| Mr WAI Wah-kei | District Engineer/Shatin (1), Highways Department |
| Mr LIU Chi-kwong | District Engineer/Shatin (2), Highways Department |
| Mr YEUNG Wai-dor | Administrative Assistant/Lands (Atg), District Lands Office, Sha Tin |
| Mr WONG Pui-kai | Officer-in-charge, District Traffic Team (Shatin District), Hong Kong Police Force |
| Mr Utan WONG | Assistant Operations Director (East Division), The Kowloon Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited and Long Win Bus Company Limited |
| Mr Andy CHEUNG | Manager (Operations), The Kowloon Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited and Long Win Bus Company Limited |
| Mr Dennis LEE | Manager (Planning and Development), The Kowloon Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited and Long Win Bus Company Limited |
| Mr Karl HUEN | Assistant Manager (Public Affairs), The Kowloon Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited and Long Win Bus Company Limited |

In Attendance

Mr Leon LAI

Mr Clarence CHAN

Mr Alexander LO

Mr Sun LAI

Title

Planning Assistant,
The Kowloon Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited and
Long Win Bus Company Limited
Operations Manager (Kowloon & New Territories),
Citybus Limited and New World First Bus Services Limited
Chief Planning Officer,
Citybus Limited and New World First Bus Services Limited
Senior Corporate Communications Officer,
Citybus Limited and New World First Bus Services Limited

In Attendance by Invitation

Mr LEE Man-chow, Francis

Mr WU Kin-kei, Alan

Mr NG Hei-yin, Steven

Mr YIU Chi-ho, Cielo

Ms CHU Lai-yee, Rachel

Ms WONG Wing-wah, Janice

Mr NGAN Hung-fai

Mr LEE Chi-kin

Mr LI Kam-sang

Mr TONG Wing-ho, Tony

Ms Rysta SO

Ms Nicola LAM

Title

Project Team Leader/Pier Improvement,
Civil Engineering and Development Department
Senior Engineer/Projects 1,
Civil Engineering and Development Department
Engineer/Projects 1D,
Civil Engineering and Development Department
Civil Engineering Graduate/Projects 1D,
Civil Engineering and Development Department
Senior Transport Officer/Bus/New Territories East 1,
Transport Department
Transport Officer/Bus/New Territories East 1,
Transport Department
Operations Manager, Wai Ching Industrial Company Limited
Manager, Wai Ching Industrial Company Limited
Technical Director, Mott MacDonald Hong Kong Limited
Graduate Engineer, Mott MacDonald Hong Kong Limited
External Affairs Manager,
MTR Corporation Limited
Assistant External Affairs Manager,
MTR Corporation Limited

Absent

Mr MOK Kam-kwai, BBS

Dr LAM Kong-kwan

Title

DC Member (Application for leave of absence received)
" (")

Action

The Chairman welcomed members as well as representatives of government departments and organisations to the meeting.

Applications for Leave of Absence

2. The Chairman said that the Sha Tin District Council Secretariat (Secretariat) had received applications for leave of absence in writing from the following members:

Mr MOK Kam-kwai, BBS

Dr LAM Kong-kwan

Official commitment

”

3. The Traffic and Transport Committee (TTC) approved the applications for leave of absence submitted by the members above.

Election of Vice-Chairman of the Committee

4. The Chairman said that the Secretariat had not received any nomination form for the TTC Vice-Chairman by the end of the nomination period. As there were no candidates, the Chairman announced that the office of Vice-Chairman of the TTC remained vacant.

Confirmation of Minutes

Minutes of the Meeting Held on 21 February 2023 (TTC Minutes 1/2023)

5. The views of Mr WAI Hing-cheung were summarised below:
- (a) he said that he made enquiries about the bulging ground surface at the junction of Tai Wai Road and Tsuen Nam Road by way of a question at the last meeting, during which representatives of the Highways Department (HyD) indicated that resurfacing works would be carried out in late March. However, by the time of this meeting, the bulging ground surface had not yet been remedied. He opined that someone might be failing his duties in the incident and the Department did not handle the problem of road surface not properly restored after excavation; and
 - (b) he indicated that he had no interest in the shop at the aforementioned location. Yet, he observed that the Department had placed traffic cones right at the shop entrance and considered the arrangement inappropriate. He said that there was even a tripping accident at the aforementioned location in November last year, of which the Department was aware. Yet, the condition of the road surface had still not improved so far. He was dissatisfied with the situation and requested that the Department inform him of the timescale of the resurfacing works.
6. Mr Felix CHOW proposed amending “at about 8:00 pm” in paragraph 48 of the minutes of the meeting to “at about 8:00 am”.
7. Mr WAI Wah-kei, District Engineer/Shia Tin (1) of the HyD, gave a consolidated response as follows:
- (a) the Department had maintained communication with the Hong Kong Communications Company Limited (HKC), which confirmed in February this year that the manhole concerned had ceased to operate, and expected the resurfacing works to complete by March. However, the HKC informed the Department in April that owing to financial difficulties, the works needed to be postponed to May;
 - (b) the Department would discuss the matter at the Road Opening Co-ordinating Committee (ROCC) meeting on 25 April this year. It would consider carrying out urgent repair and follow up on the possible penalty to be imposed on the relevant organisation. The ROCC met regularly to review public utility-related excavation works in the district. He would inform Mr WAI Hing-cheung of the deliberation results after the ROCC meeting; and

- (c) the Department placed traffic cones at the aforementioned location to prevent pedestrians from tripping, with no intention to hinder business of the shop.

8. The Chairman hoped that the HyD could remedy the problem of bulging ground surface as soon as possible and requested that the Department provide the TTC with information, including the works commencement date and state of repair of the road surface, after the meeting.

9. Mr Chris MAK requested that the HyD relay the results of the ROCC's deliberation to Mr WAI Hing-cheung on the same date of the ROCC meeting, and inform the TTC of the same in writing within three days.

(Post-meeting note: The HyD's reply was provided in the supplementary information to "Question to be Raised by Mr WAI Hing-cheung on Road Safety in Tai Wai Area" (Paper No. TT 10/2023).)

10. Members unanimously endorsed the revised minutes.

Matters Arising

Responses of Government Departments and Organisations to Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting
(Paper No. TT 12/2023)

11. Members noted the paper above.

Discussion Items

Improvement Works at Ma Liu Shui Ferry Pier
(Paper No. TT 13/2023)

12. Mr Francis LEE, Project Team Leader/Pier Improvement of the Civil Engineering and Development Department, and Mr LI Kam-sang, Technical Director of the Mott MacDonald Hong Kong Limited, briefly introduced the content of the paper.

13. The views of Mr Felix CHOW were summarised below:

- (a) he was of the view that ecotourism should be developed in Hong Kong. Promoting more ferry routes could facilitate members of the public in travelling to remote but ecologically important areas, and Ma Liu Shui Ferry Pier could be developed as the relevant transportation hub;
- (b) he wished to know when the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) expected the works to complete and the ferry pier to be in service, whether piling was needed for the proposed design, the mobility of the floating dock blocks in the design, and the expected increase in the numbers of ferry routes and passengers after completion of the works; and
- (c) he wished to know the cost estimates of the entire project, whether the Department needed to seek funding from the Legislative Council, and whether it foresaw any factors that might affect the implementation of the project.

14. The views of Mr CHENG Chung-hang were summarised below:

- (a) according to his observation, Ma Liu Shui Ferry Pier had a high utilisation rate at weekends. Occasionally, passengers would even need to stride across other vessels for boarding a ferry. He was therefore pleased to see the commencement of the works;
- (b) he wished to know the distance between the floating platform and the water level, and suggested adding access points close to the water level to facilitate water sports enthusiasts to get in and out of the water at the pier;
- (c) he wished to know whether there were other public piers in Hong Kong that were also constructed of such a large floating platform;
- (d) he said from the photomontage, it could be seen that there was a staircase below the ramp that connected the shore and the floating platform. As residents and porters of the outlying islands relied on ferry access to buy and deliver daily necessities, he was concerned that if the ramp was too steep, passengers might trip and fall down the stairs. He therefore advised the CEDD to consider improving the design;
- (e) he would like to know what factors were taken into account by the Department in designing the size of the pier. He opined that the size of a pier would have a direct bearing on the number of ferry routes that could be accommodated, so he advised the Department to consider enlarging the pier;
- (f) he was concerned that providing a roof cover, seats and other facilities for the floating platform might attract members of the public to stay at the pier for leisure and give rise to accidents. He hoped that the Department could consider the relevant risks; and
- (g) he said that the pier adopted the floating platform design. He would like to know which department would be responsible for managing the pier and the on-shore facilities after they were constructed.

15. The views of Mr SIN Cheuk-nam were summarised below:

- (a) he would like to know whether there were other public piers in Hong Kong that were also constructed of a floating platform, whether the design was vulnerable to inclement weather, whether the structure of the staircase connecting the ramp and the floating platform would be affected by the rise and fall of the tides, and whether water sports enthusiasts could get in and out of the water at the proposed pier;
- (b) he hoped that the CEDD could illustrate in detail the current situation of inadequate berths at the existing pier, and asked the Transport Department (TD) whether it had plans to encourage ferry companies to increase the frequency of ferry services; and
- (c) he suggested that the CEDD put up clear queuing signage on the shore after the pier was constructed.

16. Mr WAI Hing-cheung would like to know whether the purpose of the present project was to alleviate the burden of the existing pier or to prepare for increasing the number of ferry routes. He also asked the CEDD whether it had considered constructing new piers or installing floating platforms in other areas of Sha Tin District, and whether it had plans to upgrade other piers in Sha Tin District in addition to Ma Liu Shui Ferry Pier.

17. Mr Johnny CHUNG said that the existing pier and landing were mainly used by two ferry companies. He would like to know whether the purpose of the project was to alleviate the pressure of the existing pier or landing, whether the CEDD had consulted the ferry companies and what their views were.

18. The Chairman inquired whether the level of the floating platform would change with the rise and fall of the tides, whether the provision of a roof cover, seats or other facilities would be made infeasible because of external factors, and how possible it was that the roof cover could ultimately be built.

19. Mr Francis LEE gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) the CEDD would gazette in due course the pier improvement works and conduct detailed design. It was anticipated that the works could commence in the first half of 2024 the earliest and would take around 1.5 years to complete. The initial cost estimate was about HK\$40 million;
- (b) the proposed project was aimed at providing more berthing spaces to alleviate the congestion problem of the existing Ma Liu Shui Ferry Pier so that passengers could board and alight ferry in an orderly manner to prevent accidents. Kaito ferry routes were mainly coordinated by the TD, which would generally give comprehensive consideration to the actual situation in deciding whether to increase the number of routes or frequency of ferry services;
- (c) with regard to the Pier Improvement Programme (PIP), further to the consideration of the utilisation rates of piers, the Committee on Piers determined which piers to be included in the PIP and prioritised the improvement works after taking into account various other factors in a holistic manner, such as public safety, connectivity to scenic and natural heritage attractions and local views, etc.; and
- (d) after the pier was constructed, the CEDD would be responsible for its repair and maintenance, the TD would manage the pier, while the Marine Department would take charge of navigational matters. The CEDD would work in tandem with the TD to put up relevant signage at appropriate places of the pier.

20. Mr LI Kam-sang gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) as there were inadequate berths at the existing pier, it was proposed under the present project that a new pier be constructed at about 250 metres away and piles be installed at appropriate places to fix the position of the floating platform. Depending on the size of the vessels, the new pier would offer an additional two to four berths;
- (b) the proposed construction works comprised mainly of seawall modification to make way for the provision of ramp, stairs, shelter and seats, as well as construction of floating platform and ramp, etc. It was estimated that the majority of the facilities

constructed under the pier improvement works, including the floating platform and ramp which accounted for about 70 per cent to 80 per cent of the project cost, could be redeployed for other uses. Should there be a need to remove and relocate the floating platform in the future, the Department could consider re-using those facilities;

- (c) after obtaining information on and considering the freeboard of different ferries, a floating platform with a freeboard of about one metre was proposed in the preliminary design to facilitate boarding and alighting of passengers. For the convenience of other smaller vessels with a lower freeboard, the Department would consider the necessity and feasibility of adding stairs;
- (d) the existing Ma Liu Shui Ferry Pier and the nearby landing had a high utilisation rate at weekends. Nearly 3 000 passengers were recorded to be using the pier and landing during peak periods in the past;
- (e) floating platform was very prevalent in foreign countries and it was also used locally. The proposed floating platform would move vertically with the rise and fall of the tides and a freeboard of about one metre would constantly be maintained. The public landing facility at Tuen Mun Area 27 was also in form of a floating platform, which had been in service for about 1.5 years. The preliminary design of the proposed floating platform was to use steel structure with piles fixing its position. Besides, in designing the ramp connecting the seawall and the floating platform, full regard had been given to a variety of factors including tide level changes;
- (f) the Department and consultant had consulted the ferry companies concerned in the course of conducting the feasibility study. They had given positive response towards the proposal and were pleased to note that the floating platform could facilitate the boarding and alighting of passengers in a safer and more convenient manner. After giving comprehensive consideration to crowd management and safety concerns, shelter and seats were proposed to be provided on the shore to avoid an excessive number of passengers gathering on the floating platform;
- (g) under the ramp that connected the seawall and the floating platform, there were both staircase and ramp, offering barrier-free access to people in need; and
- (h) the proposed floating platform was a rather large one in Hong Kong. Installation of floating platforms were also in progress at other piers included in the PIP. The freeboard of different piers would vary to accommodate different types of vessel.

21. The Chairman announced the end of the agenda item.

Transport Department Annual Plan 2023
(Paper No. TT 14/2023)

22. Mr Leo CHAN, Senior Transport Officer/Ma On Shan of the TD, and Ms Rebecca PANG, Engineer/Shatin 3 of the TD, briefly introduced the content of the paper.

23. The views of Mr Felix CHOW were summarised below:

- (a) he said that manpower shortage was often cited by bus companies and green minibus (GMB) operators as the cause of low service frequency. He asked if the TD had compiled statistics on the job vacancies of the bus and GMB routes in Sha Tin District, and how it would assist bus companies and GMB operators in staff recruitment so as to improve their services;
- (b) he inquired whether the Department had formulated an annual plan for monitoring the operation of bus and GMB routes for the purpose of collecting data to assess their service performance. He pointed out that after the epidemic had alleviated, quite a number of members of the public had complained to him about various problems with public transport services including low frequency of services and excessively long waiting time, and that the performance of some GMB service had not been satisfactory even after a fare rise. He hoped the Department would look into the aforesaid situation;
- (c) he said after several years of lobbying effort, the works for the installation of traffic lights at the crossing place of Tai Po Road had finally commenced. He was of the view that as traffic was faster on that road section, installing traffic lights could improve road safety. He would like to know when the works were expected to complete, and with the official intake of the residential development “El Futuro” taking place soon, he suggested confirming the installation of traffic lights at the section of Tai Po Road off Lai Ping Road as early as possible; and
- (d) he said that as Tai Wai Roundabout was close to residential area, the improvement works thereat had to be carried out late at night on multiple days. He wished to learn about the anticipated timescale and completion date of the works.

24. The views of Mr SIN Cheuk-nam were summarised below:

- (a) he said that railway services were not covered in the Transport Department Annual Plan 2023 (Annual Plan). He would like to know whether that was the case every year and the relevant details;
- (b) he said that the quality of GMB services had always been a matter attracting significant concern. He suggested that the Department could include service quality as a criterion in handling matters on franchise of GMB;
- (c) he said that the service quality of New Territories (N.T.) GMB Route No. 26 was an issue of considerable concern. The services provided fell short of passenger demand. He hoped that the Department could improve the situation; and
- (d) he said it was mentioned in the Annual Plan that the Department would add shelters and ancillary facilities to bus stops. He suggested that the Department could also review the facilities at GMB stops, in particular, the line-up marking on the ground. According to his understanding, the line-up markings at bus stops were managed by bus companies. However, it was unclear as to who was in charge of the line-up markings at GMB stops. Even though minibus operators were requested to follow up on the matter, they had not been responsive. As how passengers queued might

affect their safety, he hoped that the Department could follow up on the issue more closely.

25. The views of Mr WAI Hing-cheung were summarised below:

- (a) he said that traffic at Tai Wai Roundabout was heavy in day time. He would like to know whether the Department would opt for carrying out the improvement works at night time, how it would ensure that the nearby residents would not be affected by the works, and the anticipated completion date of the works; and
- (b) he would like to know whether low speed limit zone would be implemented at the entire or designated sections of Man Lai Road.

26. The views of the Chairman were summarised below:

- (a) he said that the new measure to convert Tai Wai Roundabout to a spiral roundabout would be implemented in the third quarter of this year. Upon implementation, it would be the first spiral roundabout in Sha Tin District. He would like to know whether the TD would enhance promotion and education to drivers before the measure was implemented; and
- (b) he said that residents of Yu Chui Court had complained about the longstanding problem of inadequate motorcycle parking spaces. Some members of the public had waited for a few years but still could not rent the motorcycle parking space under the Link. The problem was similar to that of Chung On Estate in Ma On Shan. While the Department had planned to provide roadside parking spaces at Chung On Estate, there had not been similar arrangement planned for Yu Chui Court over the years, resulting in serious illegal parking problem. He said some residents had put forward the suggestion of providing roadside motorcycle parking spaces near To Shek Street or Yuen Chau Kok Sports Centre. He hoped the Department could respond to such suggestion.

27. Mr Leo CHAN gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) the Annual Plan was drawn up with inputs from different sections of the TD. In light of the opinion expressed by some members that there was little coverage on railway and GMB services, the Department would review and reflect the matter to the relevant sections; and
- (b) the Department focused its efforts on overseeing the operation of GMB and franchised bus, and continually monitored public transport services in the district. It had not compiled statistics on the absence of bus captains or minibus drivers. The Department would, in light of the complaints and views of members and passengers, look into the matter from different perspectives, including making enquiries of operators about the reasons for the failure to observe service schedules in individual routes, and arranging on-site inspections to observe the operational situation.

28. Mr YU Chung-him, Engineer/Bicycle Parking of the TD, gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) the TD had already issued to the HyD the Works Request Form for the light signal crossing near Chung Chi Road and University Avenue. Advance preparatory work was being conducted by the HyD; and
- (b) to tie in with the completion of the residential development “El Futuro”, the Department had earlier issued the Works Request Form to the HyD for moving the existing crash barrier at the crossing place backwards so as to make way for the boarding and alighting of passengers.

29. Ms Rebecca PANG gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) the TD would install traffic lights at Piper’s Hill Road, Wilson Trail (Section 6), and the intersection between Tai Po Road Lookout and Tai Po Road. Works Request Forms had been issued to the HyD, which was now dealing with temporary traffic arrangements;
- (b) the Department anticipated that the improvement works at Tai Wai Roundabout would complete by the third quarter of this year, and would give early reminders to drivers and all bus and minibus operators by then about the traffic arrangements. Drivers may refer to the relevant pamphlet (https://www.td.gov.hk/filemanager/en/content_182/rs_bulletin_30.pdf) for the rules of using spiral roundabouts;
- (c) the Department had received residents’ suggestions on the provision of motorcycle parking spaces near To Shek Street. It was now studying the feasibility of the suggestion; and
- (d) low speed limit zone would be implemented at sections of Man Lai Road with schools nearby. The engineer in charge of the district would provide details to Mr WAI Hing-cheung after the meeting.

30. Mr WAI Wah-kei gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) the HyD received complaints from residents living close to Tai Wai Roundabout late last year about noise generated from the night-time works. It subsequently reviewed the timescale of all work processes with the contractor. Early this year, the Department held a meeting with the TD and Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF) to review the temporary traffic arrangements, and discuss how to reduce the frequency and shorten the duration of night-time works as far as possible. The HyD had re-submitted the proposal on temporary traffic arrangements, which was now under review;
- (b) it was anticipated that the improvement works of Tai Wai Roundabout could commence in late June after approval of temporary traffic arrangements had been obtained from the TD and HKPF and an application for Night Work Permit had been made to the Environmental Protection Department. The works consisted mainly of three parts, which were change of road markings, provision of a pedestrian refuge,

and resurfacing works. The Department anticipated that the works would be completed by the third quarter of 2023; and

- (c) the design of the traffic light installation works at the crossing place of Tai Po Road near Chung Chi Road was largely completed. Preliminary temporary traffic arrangements had been formulated with the contractor, and would be submitted to the TD and HKPF for approval after views of The Chinese University of Hong Kong were sought. With regard to the traffic light installation works near University Avenue, the Department would commence the works after the CLP Power Hong Kong Limited and the HKC had completed the electric cable diversion works and cable duct diversion works respectively. In respect of the works at the pedestrian crossing near Chek Nai Ping, the Department was in the process of drawing up the temporary traffic arrangements with the contractor having regard to the views of the villagers at Chek Nai Ping.

31. The views of Mr CHENG Chung-hang were summarised below:

- (a) he opined that there was insufficient coverage on enhancement of GMB service standard in the Annual Plan. He said that many residents and minibus drivers had told him that as bus service would usually be available for routes with high passenger demand, the profits gained from operating GBM routes would normally be lower, making recruitment difficult and the average age of minibus drivers continuing to rise. The demand for drivers from other industries had risen with the easing of the epidemic and the relaxation of travel restrictions. Many minibus drivers had chosen to drive other classes of vehicles instead. He was of the view that the TD should reflect on its role and responsibility in maintaining sufficient manpower of minibus drivers, review the role GMB played in public transportation, and enhance communication with the industry so as to understand the difficulties facing the industry and assist it in raising service quality; and
- (b) according to his understanding, the real-time arrival information system for GMB could not work well with the operator's mode of operation. He suggested that the Department and the operator put their heads together to come up with a solution to the problem.

32. The views of Mr Chris MAK were summarised below:

- (a) he said that GMB operators had reflected to the TTC for many years about their recruitment difficulties and low profits, yet they continued to bid for GMB routes every year so he suspected that they were only making excuses. He was of the view that the TD was duty bound to monitor the performance of minibus operators, while minibus operators were also duty bound to review its service standard and promote minibus service to members of the public;
- (b) he was of the view that manpower shortage of minibus drivers was caused by low salary. He said he was told that some residents, who were originally minibus drivers, had switched to the job of security guards of housing estates out of remuneration consideration. He also said that some minibus drivers had resumed duty after recovering from stroke and some even fell asleep whilst on duty, undermining public confidence in minibus service and causing passengers to choose other modes of public transport; and

- (c) he had personally witnessed that in an attempt to reduce service frequency, a minibus driver had redirected passengers of GMB Route No. 807A to GMB Route No. 807K in an evening departure of GMB Route No. 807, and altered the routing by himself/herself. This had antagonised passengers. He opined that the TD was under a duty to monitor the above situation.

33. Mr Felix CHOW opined that the job vacancy data of bus and GMB routes in the district was useful in formulating labour policies. He was astonished that the TD did not compile such data. He said that GMB operators had always been raising the issue of manpower shortage but no cause as to the phenomenon was offered. He opined that the Department should not assess the performance of operators based solely on whether they had observed the Schedule of Service but examine the problem seriously and effectively monitor service quality and assist in service enhancement of the routes.

34. Mr Leo CHAN gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) the TD maintained constant communication with GMB operators and monitored the operational situation and service quality of every group of routes. Follow-up work tailored to the specific needs of individual routes with manpower or frequency problems would be carried out. As different GMB routes were usually operated by different operators and that minibus stops inside bus bays were normally close to bus stops, there might not be sufficient space for clear queueing signage to be put up. The Department would coordinate all operators as far as possible;
- (b) the epidemic had resulted in substantial loss of manpower in the public transportation industry for the past few years. The Department hoped that the problem would gradually improve with the easing of the epidemic. In addition to the GMB industry, other public transportation industries had also attracted job applicants with higher wages. Although this might have an adverse impact on the financial condition of the operators, it was the Department's hope that they could maintain their income for sustainable operation of the routes concerned while providing reliable services; and
- (c) the Department would like to see passengers receiving reliable public transport services. Therefore it would coordinate different operators as far as practicable, help them deal with operational difficulties and improve services, minimising the impact on passengers.

Sha Tin District Bus Route Programme 2023-2024
(Paper No. TT 15/2023)

35. The views of Mr SIN Cheuk-nam were summarised below:

- (a) he said that according to the Bus Route Planning Programme 2023-2024 of Sha Tin District (BRPP), to cope with the future population growth and meet the traffic demand in Shap Sze Heung, new bus routes would be introduced. He was concerned that the population growth and introduction of new routes would overload the roads in Sha Tin District and Ma On Shan area. He advised that the TD should make traffic flow diversion plans as early as practicable; and

- (b) he said that the Department in the past cited the reason of low patronage for not converting KMB Route No. 274P to whole day service. In view of the population growth and increase in traffic demand in Shap Sze Heung in the future, he suggested extending the route of KMB Route No. 274P to reach Shap Sze Heung and its vicinity so as to increase patronage, and turning the route into a whole day service.

36. The views of Mr Felix CHOW were summarised below:

- (a) he supported the proposed service change to KMB Route No. 40X as it could speedily transport Ma On Shan residents to Shing Mun Tunnel (SMT) to change for other bus routes. However, he was worried that the proposed change would affect existing passengers at areas around Shek Mun, City One and Yuen Wo Road. He hoped that the Department could ensure existing passengers would not be affected when the proposal was implemented;
- (b) he said that KMB Route No. 46P, which was a circular route, would be converted into a one-way route because of low patronage for the section from Mei Tin to Kwai Fong, with its operating hours shortened. He would like to know the justifications for the arrangement, and whether existing passengers would be affected;
- (c) he said with reference to the BRPP, it was proposed that KMB Route No. T80, a special service departing from Mei Tin and Hin Keng respectively via Tate's Cairn Tunnel (TCT), would be introduced. For the departure from Hin Keng, the bus would operate via various en-route stops in Sha Tin District before reaching TCT. Having considered the distance of the route and traffic congestion problem, he opined that the journey time was rather long, which might reduce its appeal to passengers. He suggested strengthening the service of KMB Route No. 80X to carry passengers living near Sha Tin Wai to travel to and from Kowloon Bay, and adding a bus stop near Kowloon Bay business area to meet passengers' commuting needs;
- (d) he supported the suggestion of introducing a special service KMB Route No. 87C by redeploying resources currently devoted to KMB Route No. 87D but he was concerned that such arrangement might affect the existing services. He would like to know the number of vehicles that were intended to be redeployed, and whether there would be other arrangements to ensure that service would remain normal during off-peak hours;
- (e) he was of the view that the strengthening of KMB Route No. 274P service had not been pursued with sufficient vigour and requested that whole day service be provided;
- (f) he was of the view that redeploying the resources saved from KMB Route No. 900 to introduce KMB Route No. 900X which would omit Yuen Wo Road might in the long run render KMB Route No. 900 omitting Sha Tin District altogether. He pointed out that as there was currently no whole day bus service in Sha Tin District routing through Tsing Sha Highway and Western Harbour Crossing (WHC), he suggested turning Route No. 900 into a feeder service to carry passengers from Pok Fu Lam and surrounding areas to WHC where they could make an interchange for Sha Tin District during off-peak hours;
- (g) he advised the TD to conduct detailed consultation with residents as to the routing of bus routes which were yet to be tendered;

- (h) he said that KMB Route No. 263B was well-received among residents and asked that the Department consider increasing the frequency in the long run or extending the scope of service to include Tuen Mun and the nearby newly developed areas; and
- (i) he said that since the relaxation of travel restrictions, there was an increased demand among residents for bus services to and from the airport and boundary control points. There had also been views earlier that the airport bus service in Sha Tin District should be strengthened. He wished to learn about the relevant progress and the latest arrangement.

37. The views of Mr Johnny CHUNG were summarised below:

- (a) he supported re-routing some of the bus routes departing from Ma On Shan to urban areas via Ma On Shan Road in lieu of A Kung Kok Street as proposed under the BRPP. He opined that this would help shorten the journey time, enhance competitiveness of buses in the long run and divert traffic flow in A Kung Kok Street during peak hours in the morning;
- (b) he said that to tie in with the development of areas near Science Park and Pak Shek Kok, he had earlier lobbied together with other District Council Members for the conversion of KMB Route No. 274P into a whole day service but such proposal was not included in the BRPP. Besides, he pointed out that as Nai Chung was administratively an area in Tai Po District, residents of Nai Chung and Sai Kung North often needed to travel to the municipal facilities at Tai Po Town Centre to deal with applications relating to public service. Nonetheless, no direct public transport plying between the aforesaid areas was currently available. He therefore advised the TD to consider including Nai Chung into the scope of service of Route No. 274P;
- (c) he said there were a number of residential projects and university dormitories in the progress of development near Lok Wo Sha. Huge traffic demand was expected to be generated, and together with the fact that Lok Wo Sha was at some distance from the MTR station, he suggested increasing the frequency of bus services between Sha Tin Town Centre and Lok Wo Sha area;
- (d) he hoped that bus interchange network, in particular interchange service between buses of different companies, could be enhanced in the future;
- (e) he said that passengers currently relied primarily on N.T. GMB Route No. 811S to travel between Ma On Shan and Fo Tan. Residents living to the east of Yiu On Estate needed to make an interchange at Tai Wai MTR Station or University MTR Station to take a minibus for the Fo Tan Industrial Area. He suggested that the Department review and improve the situation; and
- (f) there was currently no dedicated service route operating within Ma On Shan area. When travelling within the district, members of the public had no choice but to take inter-district bus routes which were more costly or spend more time in waiting for a GMB. The problem was particularly serious for residents living near Kam Ying Road and Area 77 of Ma On Shan. He suggested that the Department should in the long run look for ways to enhance the bus network within Ma On Shan area while in the short run, it might make reference to the two-way section fares of public transport

services in Tin Shui Wai area, and in the mid-term, reference could be made to the special bus service arrangement adopted in Ma On Shan area in the past.

38. The views of Mr Chris MAK were summarised below:

- (a) he said that members attached great importance to the BRPP every year. Yet the TD had not ever formulated a plan for minibus route rationalisation and had also very rarely taken on board members' views. He said that maintaining stability was the priority of the Department's policy in managing minibus service and it had failed to properly manage the quality of minibus service. He said that at the moment, the performance standard of some minibus routes was overly poor. To passengers, whether the service existed or not did not make a big difference at all. He opined that the Department should not turn a blind eye to the continuously substandard service of minibus companies on the pretext of manpower shortage; and
- (b) he suggested that the Department include minibus route rationalisation into the annual BRPP to review all non-railway, land public transport service so as to enhance the land transport network in the community.

39. The views of Mr CHENG Chung-hang were summarised below:

- (a) he said that the congestion problem in Area 77 in Ma On Shan was getting more and more serious. Many residents had reflected that since the reduction of KMB Route No. 286M frequency, it became more apparent that there was a lack of public transport service in the district operating to and from Ma On Shan Town Centre. He suggested the TD introduce circular bus routes in Ma On Shan area and increase the frequency of N.T. GMB Route No. 810 to facilitate residents in the district in travelling to and from Ma On Shan Town Centre; and
- (b) he hoped that the Department could attend to the needs of residents living in Area 77 in Ma On Shan and consider how public transport resources in the district could be effectively distributed. Taking KMB Route No. 40X as an example, he was pleased to see that special service of the route omitting A Kung Kok, Shek Mun and Yuen Wo Road was provided to enable passengers to get to SMT more quickly.

40. Ms Rachel CHU, Senior Transport Officer/Bus/New Territories East 1 of the TD, briefly introduced the content of the paper and responded to members' views. Her response was consolidated as follows:

- (a) the TD noted member's concerns for the increased traffic burden which would potentially be posed on Ma On Shan and Sha Tin District by the development in Shap Sze Heung. The Department would keep in view the passenger demand, service quality and traffic load after the relevant routes were implemented, and adjust service to meet the overall demand as circumstances warranted;
- (b) the Department noted members' views on extending the scope of service of KMB Route No. 274P to include Shap Sze Heung and neighbouring areas and turning the route into a whole day service. After considering the views expressed by the local community over the past year, the Department came to the view that the service of the route should be enhanced and it would continue to monitor the service quality and

passenger demand of the route, and conduct service reviews with the bus company in a timely manner where necessary;

- (c) the Department proposed that KMB Route No. 40X special service be re-routed to meet passengers' commuting needs during peak hours in the morning. Existing passengers at A Kung Kok and nearby areas could continue to take the regular service of Route No. 40X. Data showed that the occupancy rate of the regular service of Route No. 40X for the busiest hour in the morning was about 60 per cent which could largely meet passenger demand. The Department noted members' concerns for the boarding situation at en-route stops and would continue to keep in close view the service quality after the proposal was implemented;
- (d) the highest occupancy rate of KMB Route No. 46P for the section from Mei Tin to Kwai Fong for the busiest hour was around 11 per cent, and the overall occupancy rate of the circular route stood only at around 40 per cent. It was therefore suggested that the afternoon departure be converted into a one-way trip departing from Kwai Fong to Mei Tin. Existing passengers travelling from Mei Tin to Kwai Fong could take KMB Route No. 46X at the bus stop located at Mei Fung House of Mei Lam Estate which was a few minutes' walk from Mei Tin;
- (e) the proposed introduction of KMB Route No. T80 offered express service for residents living around Mei Tin and Hin Keng to reach areas around Kwun Tong business area and Kowloon Bay via TCT. The terminating point of the route was proposed to be located at Wai Yip Street near Telford House in Kowloon Bay, which was just a few minutes' walk from areas along Lam Wah Street and Sheung Yuet Road. Passengers could also get directly to Kowloon Bay business area by taking the existing KMB Route No. 80A;
- (f) the proposed introduction of KMB Route No. 87C would offer residents of Ma On Shan a more convenient choice of bus service to travel to Yau Tsim Mong District. It was estimated that the travelling time could be reduced by some 10 minutes for Kowloon bound service and New Territories bound service in the morning and afternoon respectively, offering passengers along the section from Kam Ying Court to Yiu On Estate a speedier and more direct means of transport. If the proposal was materialised, the Department would continue to keep in view passenger demand and service quality of the route;
- (g) the proposed introduction of KMB Route No. 900X would render the differentiation of function between KMB Route No. 900X and Route No. 900 clearer. Passengers in Sha Tin District could still take Route No. 900 under the present arrangement. The Department would continue to keep in view passenger demand and service quality of Route Nos. 900 and 900X;
- (h) the Department was aware that passenger demand for bus services to the airport and boundary control points had risen with the relaxation of travel restrictions. Currently, the frequency of some airport bus routes had already increased. The Department would continue to review service arrangements with bus companies having regard to passenger demand; and

- (i) the Department noted members' views on whole day bus service for SMT in Fo Tan, traffic demand in Lok Wo Sha area, enhancement of bus interchange network, improvement of transportation between Ma On Shan and Fo Tan, and bus network in Ma On Shan, etc. It would continue to keep in view passenger demand and the overall operational situation, and review service arrangements with bus companies as appropriate.

41. Mr Leo CHAN said that the TD noted members' views on the management of rationalisation of minibus routes.

42. The views of Mr Johnny CHUNG were summarised below:

- (a) he was concerned about the whole day transports plying between Ma On Shan and the areas in Central and Sheung Wan. While he understood that the TD needed time to study the data upon the commissioning of the Shatin to Central Link, he reiterated that the Department should assist bus services in maintaining their competitiveness. He suggested that the Department should review the relevant transport arrangement as early as possible and consider converting the special trip passing through WHC to whole day service; and
- (b) he said that with the easing of the epidemic, when the Department reviewed the routing arrangement of airport buses in the future, it might attend to the need of the residents of Villa Athena by adding a bus stop there to provide residents with convenient service travelling to and from the airport.

43. The views of Mr Felix CHOW were summarised below:

- (a) he supported the proposals for the routes concerning Science Park in the BRPP, including the suggestion on extending KMB Route No. 64X. He opined that the overall transport interchange network and accessibility of Science Park could be enhanced;
- (b) he considered the patronage of KMB Route Nos. 900 and 900X stable, suggesting that the TD and The Kowloon Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited (KMB Company) should consider extending their routings to the area around Sha Tin Town Centre, so as to strengthen the interchange network by providing the public with more feeder services between Sha Tin and WHC or western part of the Hong Kong Island;
- (c) he suggested that the proposal for expanding airport bus network in Sha Tin District should be implemented as early as possible, which could benefit both the general public and bus company; and
- (d) he was glad to learn about the enhanced service of Citybus Route No. B8, but considered it still insufficient. Using one single route to cover both Sha Tin District and Tai Po District might hinder the route development. He suggested splitting the route or enhancing the service to facilitate passengers travelling to and from Liantang boundary control point during holiday.

44. Mr CHENG Chung-hang would like to know about the TD's planning on the transport of the area around Shek Mun and whether it would build bus terminus facility there. He said that as there was no bus terminus in Shek Mun, most bus routes plying between Ma On Shan and urban

area currently had to pass through Shek Mun first, slowing down the journey. He opined that building bus terminus facility there could respond to the transport demand of residents living around Shek Mun and benefit residents of Ma On Shan area as well.

45. Ms Rachel CHU gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) the TD noted members' views on the cross-harbour bus routes plying between Ma On Shan and the areas in Central and Sheung Wan as well as special trips in Sha Tin that travelled via WHC. The Department noticed that after the commissioning of the East Rail Line (EAL) cross-harbour extension, the patronage of related bus routes was affected as a result of the changes in demand and travelling mode of passengers. The Department would keep in view the change in patronage and service quality, and make suitable adjustment timely;
- (b) the Department noted members' views on the routings of airport bus routes in Sha Tin District and extending KMB Route No. 900 to the Sha Tin area. As changing the routings or adding en-route stops might lengthen the journey time, the Department would review how passengers would be affected by the changes as well as passenger demands when making relevant considerations; and
- (c) the Department noted members' views on Citybus Route No. B8 and adding bus terminus facility in Shek Mun. Timely review would be conducted.

46. Mr Dennis LEE, Manager (Planning and Development) of the KMB Company and Long Win Bus Company Limited, gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) the design of KMB Route No. T80 aimed to expand the interchange network at TCT to such areas as Tai Wai and Hin Keng which were not covered before. Examples were the areas around Hin Keng Estate, Lung Hang Estate and Sun Chui Estate, where passenger demands were high. The KMB Company was also prepared to adjust the routing after the route had run smoothly, so that the service provided to passengers in the relevant areas could become more convenient;
- (b) the KMB Company noted member's suggestion on making KMB Route No. 900 operating via Sha Tin Town Centre, and said that the EAL cross-harbour extension caused significant drop in the patronage of a number of bus routes. The KMB Company nonetheless noticed that new transport demand might emerge in Pak Shek Kok in the future. It would be happy to strengthen the service at appropriate juncture and would actively discuss the related proposals with the TD;
- (c) the overall resources allocated to KMB Route Nos. 87C and 87D remained unchanged, with only individual trips adjusted. The frequency of Route No. 87D during morning peak hours would also remain unchanged; and
- (d) the KMB Company noted members' views on routing adjustment of routes such as KMB Route No. 274P. It would actively liaise with the TD in order to strengthen the transport network in Sha Tin District.

47. The views of the Chairman were summarised below:

- (a) he said some residents reflected that there was currently no regular route travelling from Ma On Shan to Science Park or Tai Po Industrial Estate, suggesting that KMB Route No. 214P should convert to whole day service; and
- (b) he said that the existing KMB Route No. 97 plying between Tseung Kwan O and Ma On Shan was only in service during morning peak hours. Outside that period, residents of Ma On Shan area had to go to TCT to change for New World First Bus (NWFB) Route No. 798 in order to reach Tseung Kwan O area. However, the fare for taking NWFB Route No. 682 to change for Route No. 798 was higher than taking KMB route to TCT to change for Route No. 798. He suggested that the bus company should consider adjusting the above fare and Route No. 97 should be enhanced to whole day service.

48. Mr Alexander LO, Chief Planning Officer of the Citybus Limited and New World First Bus Services Limited, gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) the Citybus Limited and New World First Bus Services Limited (Citybus and NWFB) had already provided interchange concession for changing from NWFB Route No. 682 to NWFB Route No. 798. The Citybus and NWFB noted the relevant views and would review the arrangement; and
- (b) he said the frequency of Citybus Route No. B8 had increased shortly after its commissioning. The bus company had also reserved resources for Route Nos. B8 and B7 to provide extra trips timely depending on passenger demand. The Citybus and NWFB would continue to keep in view the operation of Route No. B8.

49. Members agreed to deal with the provisional motion moved by Mr Felix CHOW.

50. Mr Felix CHOW moved the following provisional motion:

“Provisional motion

As the society returns to normalcy and the numbers of inbound and outbound passengers are on the rise, the Traffic and Transport Committee of the Sha Tin District Council demands that the Transport Department, Kowloon Motor Bus, Long Win Bus and Citybus devote more resources to enhancing the bus services between Sha Tin District and various boundary control points (including but not limited to the airport, Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and Liantang boundary control point).”

Mr SIN Cheuk-nam and Mr CHENG Chung-hang seconded the motion.

51. The Chairman asked members whether they agreed to pass the provisional motion as stated in paragraph 50.

52. Members unanimously passed the provisional motion as stated in paragraph 50.

53. The Chairman announced that the meeting was adjourned for 10 minutes.

(After adjournment)

Questions

Question to be Raised by Mr CHOW Hiu-laam, Felix on the Services of New Territories Green Minibus Route Nos. 806A, 806B, 806C, 806M and 29
(Paper No. TT 16/2023)

54. The views of Mr Felix CHOW were summarised below:

- (a) he said that majority of the passengers of N.T. GMB Route Nos. 29 and 806 series were residents living around Pak Shek Kok and Science Park. Passengers from Pak Shek Kok had to pay full fare no matter travelling in the directions of Sha Tin or Tai Po, and could not enjoy section fare. He suggested that the operator should consider implementing additional section fare to make the routes more attractive;
- (b) he said that all routes in Route No. 806 series provided concessionary fare, and the original fare without concession was used in the fare increase application. He would like to know whether passengers could still enjoy concessionary fare if the fare increase application was approved;
- (c) he said that Route Nos. 29 and 806 series were of long journeys and often fully occupied before reaching the areas around St Martin and Solaria, causing the demand of residents at the relevant en-route stops not being met. He asked how the TD and operator would allocate operation resources to avoid left-behind passengers; and
- (d) he referred to the Department's reply that the trial periods of Route Nos. 806C and 806M were extended because of unable passenger demand. He would like to know the operator's views on the routes, such as efficiency of short-haul routes, service situation during peak hours and the fares, and how to maintain the sustainability of the routes concerned.

55. Mr LEE Chi-kin, Manager of the Wai Ching Industrial Company Limited, gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) in response to passenger demand, the operator had already offered section fare to the section from Wan Tau Tong to Ma Liu Shui Pier. At the same time, as Science Park still belonged to Tai Po District according to the boundary of administrative district and section fare would generally not be implemented across districts, section fare was not available to the section from Pak Shek Kok to Sha Tin;
- (b) as he understood, the TD would use the original fare when processing the fare increase application. The operator was discussing with the Department about the arrangement of concessionary fare. Generally speaking, the operator would continue to offer concessionary fare;
- (c) the routings of Route Nos. 29 and 806 series were planned by the TD. The operator had also discussed with the Department and relevant District Council Members about different proposals, and the proposal for Route Nos. 806C and 806M was finally adopted. As the average occupancy rate of Route No. 806C was only 30 per cent to

40 per cent and the change of patronage upon the easing of the epidemic was under observation, the route was still on trial at this stage; and

- (d) in view of the high passenger demands for travelling from Tai Po District, Pak Shek Kok and Science Park to Sha Tin during morning peak hours, the operator not only increased departures from the terminus, but also arranged special trips departed from Pak Shek Kok to alleviate the problem of passengers at en-route stops not being able to get aboard due to full occupancy. Nonetheless, the trips in the afternoon peak were affected by uncontrollable factors such as long journey time and the time required for return of vehicles. The operator had try its best to maintain the headway at an interval of 12 to 16 minutes, however depending on the actual traffic.

56. The views of Mr CHENG Chung-hang were summarised below:

- (a) he considered that the current fare of Route No. 806B was already high, but he still understood that the operator applied for fare increase due to operational pressure. He however hoped that while raising the fare, the operator could improve service quality, such as avoiding skipping stops;
- (b) he said that the operator decided which route section was offered section fares according to which district the route section was located in. But some areas of Science Park belonged to Sha Tin District according to administrative district boundary. He asked why the operator did not offer section fare to those areas. Besides, full fare was charged for travelling from Sha Tin District to Science Park, and he considered the fare too high. He suggested that the operator should review the arrangement and consider implementing section fare for that section; and
- (c) he suggested that the TD should consider extending Route No. 806B to other areas in Ma On Shan so that whole day service plying between Ma On Shan and Pak Shek Kok could be available.

57. Mr Johnny CHUNG would like to know the difference between GMB trial route and regular route, such as the regulation and required targets during the trial period.

58. Mr LEE Chi-kin gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) he said that complaint about Route No. 806B skipping stop had been received before. Upon receipt of a complaint, the operator would check the record to verify the situation based on the information provided by the passenger and ask the station master to follow-up. First offender would receive verbal advice, and re-offender would be requested to submit a letter of repentance. He said that there was a shortage of drivers and it was difficult to completely avoid the problem, and asked for members' understanding;
- (b) the operator noted members' views on offering section fare for passengers from Pak Shek Kok, and would review the situation; and
- (c) he said that whether to adopt the suggestion on extending Route No. 806B to other areas in Ma On Shan had to consider the views from various parties. The operator would, as far as possible, adjust its service according to passengers' need and the TD's request.

59. Mr Leo CHAN gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) as the existing one-dollar concession for full fare and section fare of GMB Route No. 806A (806B and 29) was offered by the operator separately, the TD, when processing the fare increase application, would use the original fare of the route as the basis for calculation. No matter before or after the fare increase application, it was for the operator to decide whether to offer the concession depending on its operation situation;
- (b) the Department encouraged the operator to provide concession to passengers as far as possible depending on its financial situation, but the operator was facing manpower shortage and needed a certain amount of financial resources to recruit drivers and retain manpower, leading to potential financial pressure. The Department hoped that the operator was able to strike a balance between fare and operational stability;
- (c) the Department noted member's suggestion on extending the service of Route No. 806B to the northern part of Ma On Shan. The Department would consider its feasibility after reviewing the traffic condition in the district and the possible impact; and
- (d) there was no extra restriction imposed on minibus routes on trial. Generally speaking, routes which achieved effective result during trial period would be converted to regular routes when the trial period ended, and there would be no special change or requirement. Concerning Route Nos. 806C and 806M, their actual passenger demand and operation situation during trial period were not seen to be stable so further observation was needed for the purpose of better utilisation of resources. On the other hand, the journeys of Route Nos. 806A and 806B were long and the design of Route Nos. 806C and 806M was intended to help diverting passengers. The current result was however still not satisfactory so the trial periods of the routes continued to be extended.

Question to be Raised by Mr SIN Cheuk-nam on the Operation and Patronage Changes after the Commissioning of East Rail Line Cross-Harbour Extension
(Paper No. TT 17/2023)

60. The views of Mr SIN Cheuk-nam were summarised below:

- (a) with the service resumption of various boundary control points, he asked about the change in overall patronage of the EAL after resumption of normal travel in 2023; and
- (b) he would like to know whether the TD and MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) had estimated the inbound passenger flows in the Labour Day Golden Week and whether special measures for that period were formulated to cope with the demand.

61. The views of Mr Felix CHOW were summarised below:

- (a) he said that the EAL cross-harbour extension had commissioned for nearly one year, and he was concerned about the service situation of nine-car trains and the operation upon resumption of normal travel through various boundary control points. He stated that since nine-car trains were used, despite the drop in occupancy rate, the

trains were crowded when reaching Fo Tan Station and Sha Tin Station during morning peak hours. There were even left-behind passengers and the issue might get more serious. He said that calculated by four standing persons per square metre, the current occupancy rate of the EAL in the busiest one hour in the morning peak had already reached 80 per cent. He would like to know how the MTRCL would solve the problem, and suggested that empty trains should be arranged to depart from Fo Tan Station or Sha Tin Station in order to increase the overall patronage;

- (b) he said that on Wednesdays with horse race meetings, the platforms of Fo Tan Station would become extremely crowded during evening peak hours. At the same time, upon relocation of boarding positions at the platforms, some positions for boarding and alighting were near escalators. Some passengers therefore had to walk near to or even beyond the yellow line, which was dangerous. He hoped that the MTRCL could pay attention to the issue, and asked whether it had any proposal for alleviating the crowding problem in the en-route stations along the EAL; and
- (c) he said the design of Fo Tan Station consisted of several platforms, suggesting that the MTRCL should make use of this feature by arranging empty trains to depart from Fo Tan Station at specific time periods so as to reduce left-behind passengers.

62. The Chairman would like to know whether the MTRCL would deploy additional manpower to Lok Ma Chau Station and Lo Wu Station during the Labour Day Golden Week to assist passengers in registering for the QR code for Health Declaration.

63. Ms Rysta SO, External Affairs Manager of the MTRCL, gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) upon resumption of normal travel, Lok Ma Chau Station and Lo Wu Station of the EAL re-opened for service in January and February this year respectively, with the respective daily numbers of passengers being over 10 000 and 60 000 on average at the early stage. The EAL was able to cope with the current demand, and the services of cross-boundary and local lines had been strengthened;
- (b) the MTRCL was keeping a close eye on the patronage of the EAL and passengers' mode of travel. It would enhance train service and manpower according to the actual situation in the Labour Day Golden Week to provide assistance to passengers and maintain order at stations;
- (c) the MTRCL implemented a series of measures to ease passenger flow in morning peak, including crowd management at stations with high passenger flow and real-time display of loading situation of each train car on the passenger information display panels. Besides, the MTRCL arranged short-distance trains departing from Sha Tin Station and Tai Po Market Station to carry Admiralty bound passengers. The MTRCL also noted member's suggestion on the arrangement at Fo Tan Station during peak hours. It would relay the suggestion to the operations department and continue to monitor the situation;
- (d) on Wednesdays with horse race meetings, the MTRCL arranged around three trips which operated via Racecourse Station and bypassed Fo Tan Station during the period from 6 pm to 7 pm to cater for the needs of different passengers. According to the observation, the operation of Fo Tan Station was generally smooth. The MTRCL

would continue to closely monitor the situation and make appropriate train arrangement; and

- (e) the QR code for Health Declaration had been rolled out for a period of time, and it was believed that passengers had become familiar with it. At this stage, the MTRCL therefore had no plan to deploy additional manpower at Lok Ma Chau Station and Lo Wu Station in the Labour Day Golden Week for assisting passengers in registering for the QR code.

Information Item

Progress Report of the Transport Department (Paper No. TT 18/2023)

64. The views of Mr Felix CHOW were summarised below:

- (a) he said that KMB Route No. 285A, departing from Chun Yeung Estate, was a circular route driven by one bus captain in one same bus during evening peak hours, with Fo Tan Station as one of the en-route stops. He considered that most passengers boarded at Fo Tan Station to head for Chun Yeung Estate, and the stopping time of the bus at Fo Tan Station was short, limiting the number of passengers that could be carried. He suggested that the KMB Company should consider reversing the direction of the route and arranging it to depart from Fo Tan Station at regular time intervals, so that passengers could plan their time to wait for the bus; and
- (b) he said that the routing of KMB Route No. 280X was diverted as a result of the construction of the Central Kowloon Route, causing the journey to take around ten minutes longer. He would like to know whether the TD and KMB Company would consider temporarily moving the stops to the vicinity of Austin Road or Jordan Road so as to avoid passing through inner streets and delaying the trip.

65. Mr Andy CHEUNG, Manager (Operations) of the KMB Company and Long Win Bus Company Limited, said that he noted member's suggestion on KMB Route No. 285A and would study its feasibility with the TD. He would provide supplementary information on the routing of KMB Route No. 280X to members after the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The routing of KMB Route No. 280X (Sui Wo Court bound) has changed since 28 May this year upon review with the TD. After entering Shanghai Street along its original routing, it has diverted to Shanghai Street and Jordan Road and then resumed its normal routing. The bus stop at Yan Cheung Road is suspended and a stop at Shanghai Street near Saigon Street is temporarily added.)

66. Ms Natalie TSANG, Senior Transport Officer/Shatin of the TD, said that the TD noted member's suggestion on KMB Route No. 280X. She would relay the view to the relevant section and study the feasibility of improving its temporary routing.

Information Papers

Report on the Progress of Works of the Highways Department (Paper No. TT 19/2023)

67. Mr Felix CHOW asked about the Project “Tai Po Road Ma Liu Shui near Hung Kiu Lane - To convert carriageway to footpath” (WRF No.: NE/17/0271). He would like to know its details, the obstruction caused by CEDD works, the estimated completion date of the CEDD works, and whether the works of adding pedestrian crossing near the roundabout at the junction of Lai Ping Road and Tai Po Road would also be affected.

68. Mr WAI Wah-kei said that the CEDD was carrying out works under the Landslip Prevention and Mitigation Programme at the site. According to the information provided by the CEDD in April this year, the road section concerned was required to be used for transporting materials. Also, the works of the slope were more difficult and complicated than expected, so the estimated completion date of the works was currently late December this year. The HyD was studying with the CEDD the feasibility of carrying out both projects simultaneously, and would keep monitoring the situation and commence the Project as soon as possible.

69. Mr Felix CHOW said that some residents were concerned about improvement on traffic facilities in the vicinity of Lai Ping Road, including whether the sight distance and traffic signs for slowing down were sufficient and whether the pedestrian crossing facilities were safe. He therefore hoped to conduct a site visit in the vicinity of Lai Ping Road with the TD.

Prosecution Figures on Traffic Offences in Sha Tin, Tai Wai and Ma On Shan (Paper No. TT 20/2023)

70. Mr CHENG Chung-hang said that shortage of motorcycle parking spaces was common in Sha Tin District. He suggested that the TD should get information from the Police on the black spots of illegal motorcycle parking in the district, so that the TD could review whether the locations concerned lacked parking facilities or there were other problems leading to the serious problem of illegal parking, and improve the situation accordingly.

71. The Chairman suggested that the TD should, after the meeting, invite members who were concerned about the shortage of motorcycle parking spaces for site visit, and review the feasibility of assigning parking spaces together.

72. Mr YU Chung-him said that the TD planned to add motorcycle parking spaces at Sai Sha Road near Hang Tak Street in Tai Shui Hang and Hang Hong Street near Chung On Estate in Ma On Shan, and had issued Works Request Forms to the HyD for the works. Besides, the TD had requested for the provision of public motorcycle parking spaces in the proposed project “Amenity Complex in Area 103, Ma On Shan”. In the future, the TD would continue to seek other locations in the district which were appropriate for adding roadside motorcycle parking spaces, and it welcomed members to give suggestions on the locations.

73. With regard to the statistics on issuance of fixed penalty notice in the information paper, Mr Johnny CHUNG would like to know the examples for vehicles belonging to “others” category.

74. Mr WONG Pui-kai, Officer-in-charge, District Traffic Team (Shatin District) of the HKPF, said that “others” category generally referred to special purpose vehicles which could not be categorised, for example concrete-pump truck or government vehicle, etc.

Report on the Operation and Works Progress of the MTR Corporation Limited
(Paper No. TT 21/2023)

75. Mr Felix CHOW said that the MTRCL had successively commenced the installation works of automatic platform gates. He would like to know the latest works arrangement and whether the MTRCL had faced any challenges in the works.

76. Ms Rysta SO said that the MTRCL had conducted a series of preparatory foundation works for the installation of automatic platform gates in a step-by-step manner. The current works progress was satisfactory, and it was estimated that the first batch of gates would be installed at Tai Po Market Station and Racecourse Station in mid-2023. The MTRCL would keep in view the works progress and make timely report of the latest status to members.

Report on the Flight Paths, Aircraft Noise and Incidents in Sha Tin
(Paper No. TT 22/2023)

77. Members noted the paper above.

Date of Next Meeting

78. The next meeting was scheduled to be held at 2:30 pm on 27 June 2023 (Tuesday).

79. The meeting was adjourned at 6:12 pm.

Sha Tin District Council Secretariat
STDC 13/15/45

June 2023