

## **Summary of Minutes of the 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Traffic and Transport Committee (2014-2015)**

### **Meeting**

The Traffic and Transport Committee (“TTC”) held its tenth meeting on 8 May 2015.

### **Obstruction of Traffic Lights at Tsing Hoi Circuit**

2. The Member who submitted the paper pointed out that the Transport Department (“TD”) had failed to push the Buildings Department (“BD”) to urge the contractor to carry out improvement works, and enquired whether the former could adopt other measures to avoid the contractor’s procrastination in carrying out improvement works. In response, a representative of the TD said that as the obstruction of traffic lights by hoardings fell within the ambit of the BD, the TD had relayed the views of the Member concerned to the BD and asked the contractor and the responsible person of the construction site to take follow-up actions. After discussion, the TTC requested the TD and the Hong Kong Police Force (“HKPF”) to follow up the issue expeditiously. It also resolved to write to the BD to express its concern over the obstruction of traffic lights by hoardings.

### **Tendering Exercise of the Ferry Services between Tuen Mun Ferry Terminal and Macau**

3. The Member who submitted the paper said that since the Hong Kong North West Express Limited’s termination of services in 2012, he had requested the Government to operate the Tuen Mun Ferry Terminal (“TMFT”) in public mode which was in line with the China Ferry Terminal (“CFT”) and the Hong Kong - Macau Ferry Terminal (“HKMFT”). He stated again that the Government should not carry out the tender exercise in private mode. A representative of the Marine Department (“MD”) remarked that the MD would carry out the tender exercise in accordance with the existing policy and lease out the TMFT in commercial mode for the provision of cross-boundary ferry services. The content of the tender was broadly the same as that of the previous tender. As the existing cross-boundary ferry services were operated by private sector in commercial mode and on commercial principles, the destination, service frequency, etc were determined by operators according to market needs. The MD was focusing on the preparation of the tender

exercise and would reflect Members' views to the Transport and Housing Bureau ("THB") for consideration. The Chairman concluded that the TTC requested the Government to operate the TMFT in public mode which was in line with the CFT and the HKMFT, and resolved to write to the Legislative Council Panel on Transport, the Legislative Councillors of the New Territories West and the THB to call a meeting to discuss the issue.

#### **Seating Capacity of Green Minibuses and Red Minibuses should be Raised to 20 Seats**

4. The Member who submitted the paper remarked that as the Government had already held the Legislative Council Public Hearing on raising the seating capacity of minibuses to 20 or 24 seats, he hoped that the departments concerned could expeditiously implement the plan where the seating capacity of minibuses could be increased to 20 seats at the initial stage and then to 24 seats at the later stage. He pointed out that currently, minibuses of longer bodies were originally fitted with 20 seats, and they had to have four of their seats removed before they might be ridden on roads. Therefore, the suggestion to raise the seating capacity of minibuses to 20 seats could facilitate the optimal use of resources and increase the carrying capacity which would help solve difficulties encountered by operators. In response, a representative of the TD said that the Government had actively addressed the aspiration of the trade to conduct a policy study on the role of minibus, its positioning and the theme, and it took time to study Members' views which were mostly related to the implementation aspect. She added that there were 4 350 minibuses in Hong Kong and 90% of them were those of shorter bodies which were subject to limitations in terms of weight and space. For those of longer bodies (i.e. minibuses of 7 metres in length and 5.5 tonnes in weight), though their design was similar to small buses which allowed the provision of more seats, safety issues still had to be taken into account. She would relay Members' views collected at the meeting to the THB for consideration.

#### **Request for Provision of Transport Half-fare Concession for Elderly Aged between 60 and 64**

5. The Member who submitted the paper said that under the current policy, elderly people could enjoy the \$2 transport fare concession only when they reached the age of 65. However, some of the members of the public were forced to retire in their early 50s. They had no income and could not withdraw their Mandatory

Provident Fund until they were 65 years old. In this regard, it was suggested that the definition of elders should be revised to cover people aged 60 and that transport fare concession should be provided to them. A representative of the TD responded that as the \$2 transport fare concession scheme was led by the Labour and Welfare Bureau (“LWB”), Members’ views would be reflected to the LWB for consideration. The TD would keep on encouraging bus companies and other public transport operators to, as far as possible, provide fare concessions to people aged 60 and above. The TTC agreed unanimously with the suggestions set out in the paper and resolved to write to the LWB to express their views and requests on the provision of transport half-fare concession for the elderly aged between 60 and 64.

#### **Request for Provision of Interchange Concessions for Passengers of Routes 58M, 61M and 67M interchanging to Routes 290 and 290A at Tai Wo Hau**

6. The Member who submitted the paper remarked that regarding Routes 290 and 290A running between Tsuen Wan and Tseung Kwan O which were newly introduced by the TD, fare concessions were offered to passengers who interchanged to these two routes from Routes 61X, 62X, 258D and 259D at the bus-stop at Lung Cheung Road, Wong Tai Sin. However, as the services of Routes 61X, 62X, 258D and 259D did not cover the entire Tuen Mun District, some of the residents had to interchange twice during the journey to Tseung Kwan O. In view of this, it was hoped that the TD could consider offering fare concessions to passengers who interchanged from other Tuen Mun bus routes (including Route 58M) to Routes 290 and 290A at the bus-stop at Tai Wo Hau. In response, a representative of the Kowloon Motor Bus Co (1933) Limited (“KMB”) said that interchange concessions had been offered to Tuen Mun residents. While they could travel to Tseung Kwan O by interchanging from Routes 61X, 62X, 258D and 259D to Routes 290 and 290A and enjoy interchange discounts, they could also make use of a series of long haul bus services provided by the KMB where only two interchanges were involved during the journey. The arrangements were considered more effective and efficient. Having said that, the KMB would take Members’ views into account when conducting the review on the service of the route in future.

#### **Request for Actions to Combat Noise Nuisance Caused by Bicycles in Late-night Hours**

7. The Member who submitted the paper said that people riding bicycles fitted with speakers playing music loudly had caused noise nuisance to residents when they

passed by domestic premises. She expressed the hope that departments concerned could address the situation and take measures to prevent the recurrence of the problem. She also enquired whether there was any legislation regulating such situation and whether the Police could increase the number of static post duty and patrol performed to prosecute cyclists and drivers of motor cycles which generated noise nuisance. In response, a representative of the HKPF said that the Police would take appropriate actions after detailed locations or written supplementary information was received from the Member who submitted the paper. The Police could take follow-up actions according to Section 5(1)(b) of the Noise Control Ordinance (Cap. 100) in respect of the use of any loud-speaker, megaphone, or other device or instrument for magnifying sound. A representative of the TD remarked that enquiries about the legislation regulating the construction of bicycles would be made to the engineer concerned. After discussion, the Chairman asked the HKPF to pay attention to the locations affected by noise nuisance involving bicycles and continue to perform patrol duties.

#### **Request for Improvement and Enhancement of Facilities at Taxi Stands**

8. The Member who submitted the paper said that the demand on traffic and transport services in the town centre and the vicinity of the Century Gateway had increased, and residents had put forward requests for improvement on taxi stands which included: (i) providing clear direction signs and pedestrian crossings at the taxi stand located near the glass door of the Century Gateway at ground level to serve more people and prevent the site from turning into a taxi-parking area; (ii) relocating the taxi stand currently situated at Tuen Fat Road near JUSCO to its original location at Tuen Shing Street; and (iii) allowing taxis and emergency service vehicles to enter the section of Castle Peak Road near the interchange station with a view to facilitating people's interchange to taxis. In response, a representative of the TD said that he had visited the taxi stand at the Century Gateway with the Member who submitted the paper, and that the TD could provide clear direction signs in the area outside the glass door and other suitable locations. The setting up of a permanent taxi stand at Tuen Shing Street should be feasible and convenient for members of the public. The TD would implement the project after the consultation. Members of the public could take taxis at the section of Castle Peak Road near the interchange station as it was not a prohibited zone for picking up and dropping off of passengers. Given the limited length and space of the car park of the interchange station and the need to take into account the provision of public bus services, it was not suggested to allow taxis to enter the car park. After discussion, the Chairman asked the TD to consider the suggestion mentioned in the paper to provide taxi services at the interchange station

(Tuen Mun bound) and submit the results of the study in written form to the TTC.

**Request for Provision of Bus Stops for Route N30 and N30P at Tuen Mun Road Bus-bus Interchange**

9. The Member who submitted the paper said that there were only two bus routes passing through the Tuen Mun Road Bus-bus Interchange (“the BBI”) during late night hours, and opined that to facilitate passengers commuting to and from the airport, Routes N30 and N30P should be routed via the BBI and cross-company bus-bus interchange concessions should be provided. In response, a representative of the Long Win Company Limited (“LW”) said that the suggestion to add a stop was feasible and that the proposal could be implemented after consulting other districts. Regarding the interchange concession, since other bus companies were involved, the suggestion would be considered after the review of the effectiveness of the provision of the new stop. In conclusion, the Chairman asked the TD and the LW to consider Members’ views and consider the suggestion in respect of Route N30 and N30P set out in the paper.

Tuen Mun District Council Secretariat

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