

## **Summary of Minutes of the 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Traffic and Transport Committee (2014-2015)**

### **Meeting**

The Traffic and Transport Committee (“TTC”) held its ninth meeting on 13 March 2015.

### **Solution to Traffic Congestion at Castle Peak Road (Harrow International School Hong Kong Area)**

2. The Chairman said that the purpose of the paper was to ask the Transport Department (“TD”) and the Harrow International School Hong Kong (“HISHK”) to study the suggestion of making use of the existing uphill road near the Crossroad Foundations to solve the traffic congestion problem and reply whether they considered the suggestion feasible. In response, a representative of the TD said that the TD had been liaising with the HISHK to enquire about the statistics on the number of school buses and private vehicles, and meetings had also been held between the TD and other relevant government departments to study the suggestion. Moreover, the Education Bureau (“EDB”) had held a meeting with the HISHK in February this year to discuss the arrangements on traffic control measures. The TD would continue to follow up the effectiveness of the concerned measures and maintain liaison with the EDB for the purpose of setting up meetings where the HISHK and Members could be invited to discuss the issue. The Chairman requested the TD to follow up the feasibility of the suggestion, the traffic measures as well as the meetings concerned and make arrangements correspondingly.

### **Further Request for MTR’s Procurement of New Light Rail Train Compartments to Increase Service Frequency and Improve Service Quality**

3. Members held discussion on the item and the written reply of the Transport and Housing Bureau (“THB”). The highlights of discussion included: (a) how to calculate the hourly loading of the Light Rail (“LR”) during the rush hours mentioned in the written reply of the THB; (b) the Mass Transit Railway Corporation Limited (“MTRCL”) should follow the recommendation made by the Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways under the Panel on Transport of the Legislative Council in respect of the carrying capacity permitted to lower the standard loading of the LR from six ppsm to four ppsm; (c) since the reserve vehicles would be put into service in

case of accidents and the repairing work might take time, there was hardly any vehicle left for frequency enhancement. Therefore, the criteria for procuring LR vehicles should be discussed as soon as possible; and (d) in the face of growing population in Tuen Mun, the only things that the MTRCL had done were to employ more platform assistants and remove some of the seats inside the train compartments to increase the space for standees. However, the trains were mostly full after calling at the first few stations which had affected residents in Tuen Mun, Yuen Long as well as Tin Shui Wai. After discussion, the TTC resolved that a letter be written to the THB and the Chief Executive Officer of the MTRCL making enquiries and expressing opinions.

#### **Bus Route Programme for Tuen Mun District (2015-2016)**

4. The Chairman suggested that last year's practice of holding a special meeting to discuss the item should be followed. The Chairman also requested the TD to consider the views initially put forward by the Members at the meeting and respond to them at the special meeting.

#### **Widening of Fuk Hang Tsuen Road (between Castle Peak Road and Fuk Hang Tsuen Lane)**

5. A Member expressed the hope that the Highways Department ("HyD") could speed up the works and suggested that a crossing should be provided at Fuk Hang Tsuen Road near the basketball court. In response, the representative of the HyD said that the provision of a signal controlled pedestrian crossing had already been included in the design of the re-provisioning works of traffic lights at the junction of Castle Peak Road and Fuk Hang Tsuen Road. The HyD would, subject to the support of the TTC, arrange the gazettal of the works and come up with the detailed design for the works. The Chairman asked the HyD to consider the views of the Members and commence the works as soon as possible.

#### **Service Adjustment of Long Win Route No. N30**

6. The representatives of the Long Win Bus Company Limited ("Long Win") and the TD said that according to the proposed adjustment, Route Nos. N30, N20P and N30S would provide direct bus services from the airport to Tuen Mun, Tin Shui Wai and Yuen Long respectively while services from Tuen Mun, Tin Shui Wai and Yuen Long to the airport would remain unchanged. Under the arrangement, frequency of Route No. N30 would be increased and passenger flow heading to the New Territories

could be alleviated. It was expected that the adjustment could pool the passengers heading to Tuen Mun from the airport so as to improve the number of passengers. After discussion, the Chairman asked the representatives of the TD and the Long Win to consider the views of the Members.

### **Request the Public Transport Operators to Implement Fare Reduction**

7. A representative of the TD remarked that the THB had indicated in its written reply that transport fares were affected by a number of factors and fare adjustment was subject to the overall changes in operating costs and revenue. The Government was concerned about public transport fares and understood the public aspiration that public transport fares should be reduced with the drop in oil prices. The Government would continue to monitor whether there was space for public transport fares reduction. The TTC opined that since the international oil prices had decreased significantly, the Government should urge the public transport operators to expeditiously reduce the fares. The TTC also resolved a letter be written to the THB, expressing their views on and request for public transport fares reduction.

### **Request for Speedy Improvement to the Problem of Pedestrian Safety outside Wu Shan Road Community Hall**

8. The Member who submitted the paper said that since no sign had been installed at the gate of the community centre, the car park and the footpath, a driver had failed to pay attention to a pedestrian crossing the road, which had resulted in a fatal accident. He opined that the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department should explain in details the improvement measures to avoid the potential risks. Moreover, since the accident location was situated at a long straight road, clear signs should be provided by the TD to remind vehicles heading to Marina Garden not to follow vehicles bound for Yuet Wu Villa and to reduce speed before the pedestrian crossing. He also hoped that the Police could strengthen the safety of pedestrians crossing the junction outside Yuet Wu Villa. In response, a representative of the TD said that the TD had visited the location and conducted pedestrian and vehicular flow surveys. During the site visit, the TD noted that the visibility was good, "SLOW" markings were printed respectively in front of and behind the crossing, an island was provided in the middle of the crossing and the pedestrian and vehicular flows were not high. Therefore, the TD considered the existing arrangement for the crossing appropriate. Having said that, the TD could visit the location with the Member who submitted the paper again, maintain liaison

with the Police and act in line with the prosecution against illegal parking. The Chairman requested the TD to visit the location with the Member of the constituency and examine the suggestion.

### **Request for Comprehensive Improvement to Transport Services of So Kwun Wat**

9. The Member who submitted the paper said that the THB, the TD and the Planning Department should work together to meet the traffic demand of the increasing population in the area incurred by the development, and that the decline in the level of public transport services of the area had affected people relying on the services. She enquired whether reasonable services regarding land lots involved in the applications for change in land use as well as newly completed housing estates and the relevant time table could be provided. A representative of the TD responded that the TD had all along monitored the traffic situation of So Kwun Wat and Castle Peak Road and opined that the demand of passengers could be broadly met. The TD would maintain liaison with the Member of the constituency and listen directly to the views of residents of the area, and strengthen the services if necessary. Regarding the planning of Tuen Mun East, the TD would communicate with the departments concerned and adequate provision would be reserved according to the actual pace of development to meet the future additional service needs. The TD would consult the TTC when the specific plan was available. After discussion, the Chairman requested the TD to follow up the views of the Members and handle the failure of the Citybus Limited to honour its undertaking to provide compensation measures in respect of the cancellation of Route No. 962.

### **Request for Enhancement of Services of Green Minibus Routes Running between Tuen Mun and Sheung Shui**

10. The Member who submitted the paper said that though dispatchers had been deployed for Green Minibus ("GMB") Route No. 44A, the minibuses were mostly full and skipped stops after calling at Tsing Tin Road. Passengers taking GMB Route No. 44B also faced the same problem that they could not get on a minibus. It was hoped that the TD could monitor the service performance of GMB Route No. 44 Series. A representative of the TD remarked that the TD had conducted on-site surveys at a number of locations and noted that the services for the stops before San Wai were sufficient and stable, and that the TD had, jointly with the operator, made arrangements under which some empty GMBs would depart respectively from Po Tin, Tai Hing Police Station and Siu Hong in morning peak hours. Besides, the TD had

also studied whether it was possible to increase the number of trips departed from Tsing Lun so as to improve the situation. Noting the increase in demand during the afternoon peak hours, the TD had, on a trial basis, made arrangements under which empty GMBs would depart from Po Tin at an interval of 15 to 20 minutes and call at Tai Hing Police Station and Tsing Lun Road. The TD would continue to follow up the issue according to the actual situation. In conclusion, the Chairman requested the TD to consider the views of the Members.

### **Request for Improvement to the Facilities and Signage in Tuen Mun Road Bus-bus Interchange**

11. The Member who submitted the paper said that there had not been any progress in the provision of permanent toilet facilities at Tuen Mun Road Bus-bus Interchange (“BBI”). He pointed out that while the number of signs guiding users to the mobile toilets was insufficient, the mobile toilets had caused hygiene and other problems. He also suggested that since the shelter of the BBI was too narrow to keep out the rain, the panel next to it should be raised. He also hoped that the Octopus add-value service and section fares could be provided at the BBI. In response, a representative of the TD said that the TD could visit the BBI with departments and bus companies concerned to work out how to improve the problems. The TD had received applications for the provision of customer service centre and manual add-value service from the bus companies and would process the applications concerned according to the established procedures. The representative of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (“FEHD”) responded that regarding the provision of the toilet facilities, the FEHD was waiting for the grant of the site by the Lands Department (“LandsD”), and that to commence the works, the FEHD would sign a contract with a contractor as soon as the site was granted. The FEHD would also maintain liaison with the Drainage Services Department in respect of the connection of the drains of the toilet facilities. In response, the representative of the LandsD said that the LandsD would look into the matter and process the application as soon as possible. After discussion, the Chairman requested the departments concerned to considerate the views of the Members.

### **Request for Rearrangement of the Taxi Stand and Public Light Bus Stand at Tuen Shun Street**

12. The Member who submitted the paper said that after the arrangement, the situation of the public light bus (“PLB”) stand at Tuen Shun Street had worsened

because as the PLB stand was occupied by the taxis queuing in front of it, the PLBs drivers had to circulate or double parked their vehicles on the roads in Town Centre and were given traffic tickets and fined. She suggested that the taxi stand located in front of the PLB stand should be cancelled in order to provide sufficient area for PLBs to pick up/drop off passengers. In response, a representative of the TD said that the TD had visited the location mentioned in the paper and found that double yellow lines had already been marked on the road section in front of the PLB stand. The TD also found that as the road section was occupied by a queue of taxi, the PLBs could not leave the stand. The TD would liaise with the Police for enforcement action. In fact, the TD had carried out consultation on the cancellation of the taxi stand half a year ago and the results had indicated that there was public demand for taxi service. Therefore, the proposal on cancelling the taxi stand had to be studied carefully. In conclusion, the Chairman requested the Secretariat to arrange a site visit and remarked that a decision would be made on whether the suggestion mentioned in the paper would be implemented after the site visit. The Chairman also requested the Police to take enforcement action against illegal parking taxis.

### **Request for Immediate Increase in the Frequency of Bus Route No. E33 to Enhance the Service Level**

13. The Member who submitted the paper said that the bus service to and from the airport was often inadequate. During the morning peak hours, more than half of the buses of Route No. E33 calling at Siu Lun were full. The problem was so serious that passengers sometimes could not even board a bus at Goodview Garden. It was hoped that the TD could examine the possibility of increasing the frequency of Route No. E33 with the Long Win. A representative of the Long Win responded that the Long Win had closely monitored the operation, the passenger needs as well as the change of habits of passengers. The Long Win had also conducted customer surveys at Tuen Mun Road BBI and found that only some of the bus trips were heavily patronised by passengers. Moreover, the Long Win had deployed three buses for Route E33 since 2013 and had proposed to continue to increase the number of buses, allocate additional resources to peak hours services and enhance the service of Route No. E33P in the current year and the next year. Furthermore, the Long Win would alter the routing of Route No. E33 series in response to the completion of the Tuen Mun – Chek Lap Kok Link and deploy more resources to meet the service need. The Chairman requested the Working Group on Tuen Mun External Traffic to follow up the item.

### **Service Alteration of Route Nos. E33 and E33P**

14. A number of Members expressed their disapproval of the procedures adopted by the TD regarding the service adjustment of Route Nos. E33 and E33P, and were of the view that the TD should consult the TTC before the implementation of the adjustment. They also opined that the resources for the two routes could not be shared with each other. A representative of the Long Win said that Route Nos. E33 and E33P would be regarded as routes of the same series and the shared fleet until 2016. For periods where service of E33P was not available, additional resources would be allocated to enhance the service. Therefore, a study could be conducted to examine the provision of more trips for Route No. 33 during peak hours with such additional bus resources. A representative of the TD responded that the TD would review the services concerned in view of Members' opinions and provide a reply to the Members concerned directly.

Secretariat, Tuen Mun District Council

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