

## **Summary of Minutes of the 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Traffic and Transport Committee (2012-2013)**

### **Meeting**

The Traffic and Transport Committee (TTC) held its 9<sup>th</sup> meeting on 10 May 2013.

### **“Our Future Railway” Stage 2 Public Engagement Exercise** **Railway Development Strategy 2000 – Support for the Option of Extension of West Rail Line to Tuen Mun Ferry Pier**

2. Under Secretary for Transport and Housing (USTH) introduced “Our Future Railway” Stage 2 Public Engagement Exercise to Members. The consultant then introduced the ideas of the seven local enhancement schemes in the exercise. The Member who submitted the paper on “Railway Development Strategy 2000 – Support for the Option of Extension of West Rail Line to Tuen Mun Ferry Pier” said that the south extension of West Rail Line would not only meet residents’ need, but also significantly relieve passengers’ demand on Light Rail (LR) services and even facilitate the development of Tuen Mun West in the future. In addition, he considered that the most expeditious plan was to build a viaduct railway along Tuen Mun River to Wu King Road, and suggested building a station above Wu King Road. He also suggested combining Airport Express, Tung Chung Line and West Rail Line South Extension to extend to Hung Shui Kiu and then Qianhai, and connecting with Northern Link to Lok Ma Chau, with a view to coping with the overall development in Tuen Mun West and the westward and northward trend of Hong Kong’s future economic development.

3. Members raised comments on Tuen Mun South Extension and Hung Shui Kiu Station, Tuen Mun to Tsuen Wan Link (TMTWL), and other issues on railway. USTH responded that the Bureau had a clear understanding that Members supported the development of Tuen Mun South Extension and hoped for the Government’s early response to the request for TMTWL. All these comments could facilitate the overall railway planning. The Government would consider the consultants’ final recommendations and compiled the railway development blueprint of the next stage having regard to transport demand, cost-effectiveness and the pace of development of new development areas. After discussion, the Chairman concluded that the Committee supported the railway development plan and asked the Bureau to take the Committee’s comments into consideration.

### **Transport Department’s Traffic and Transport Work Plan (2013-14)**

4. The representative of the Transport Department (TD) said that the paper had listed their

objectives of the coming year. The highlights in facilities included improvement to the road network, cycling tracks and ancillary pedestrian facilities. For public transport services, the Department was discussing with the Committee a series of arrangements to tie in with the operation of the interchange (both bounds) and the alteration of other routes. Members raised comments on the traffic planning of Tuen Mun District and issues related to cycling tracks, buses, railways and public light buses (PLB). The Chairman hoped that TD would study the comments of Members.

### **Calling for Improvement of Road Safety**

5. Members who submitted the paper said that the village representative and villagers of Kei Lun Wai had repeatedly reflected the parking of many vehicles near the public toilets and the opposite yellow line. As these locations were adjacent to LR tracks and traffic lights, the parking seriously affected traffic safety and even obstructed the LR flow. They hoped that the departments concerned would improve the situation as soon as possible. The representative of TD responded that she would conduct a site visit with the Members who submitted the paper and representative(s) of the Tuen Mun District Office. The stopping ban was currently imposed at the junction but the Department's observation revealed that parking was serious and affected the LR road junction. In this regard, the Department would consider enhancing traffic control. In addition, TD would study how to meet drivers' need. After discussion, the Chairman asked the Working Group on Traffic Problems within Tuen Mun District to take follow-up action.

### **Calling for Installation of Red Light Cameras at the Section of Castle Peak Road Near Lam Tei Main Street and Reduction of Speed Limit of Road Sections Nearby to 50km/hr**

6. The Member who submitted the paper supplemented that he had suggested TD to add transverse yellow bar markings to remind drivers to slow down. However, the Department said the addition was not feasible due to legislative constraint. Only the sign "Slow" could be painted on the road. Therefore, the Member put up the suggestion again. In addition, he hoped that TD would reduce the speed limit of the road section from Siu Hong Bridge to the junction of Tin Sam Road, Yick Yuen Tsuen to 50km/hr. After discussion, the Chairman asked TD to handle the issue as soon as possible and asked the Working Group on Traffic Problems within Tuen Mun District to take follow-up action as well.

### **Provision of Directional Signs to Pedestrian Facilities**

7. The representative of TD responded that the Department and the Highways Department (HyD)'s contractor would install temporary directional signs on the four new pedestrian bridges as short-term measures. For long-term planning, the Department would study the feasibility of installing signs having regard to the availability of space, structural safety of the bridges and needs,

etc. Besides, for the suggestion of installing signs for tourism attractions in the district, the Tourism Commission (TC) made an initial response that there were about 30 signs in the district directing tourists to the major attractions along the routes suggested by the Tourism Board. TC would conduct reviews from time to time and install signs for new attractions when necessary. The Member who submitted the paper agreed to the Department's arrangement and suggested placing maps around Tuen Mun Town Centre. After discussion, the Chairman asked TD to study the suggestion above.

### **Solving the Bottleneck Problem at Wong Chu Road**

8. The comments of the Member who submitted the paper were summarized as follows:
  - (a) with the development in Tuen Mun West, it was anticipated that the traffic flow in Tsing Tin Road and Wong Chu Road would be very high, and the traffic would be very congested;
  - (b) he considered that Wong Chu Road, especially the On Ting and Yau Oi section, was the most dangerous. Vehicles had to proceed at slow speed. The Yuen Long bound and the Kowloon bound traffic under Wong Chu Road flyover intersected with each other. When the vehicles changed their lanes, the traffic behind would be very congested and the situation was getting worse;
  - (c) insufficient lighting on the road had also caused traffic accidents;
  - (d) he said that TD and HyD had suggested building new roads to tackle the traffic problem at Wong Chu Road but the suggestion was finally shelved. He also said that he did not wish the design of Tuen Mun Western Bypass would cause traffic congestion at Tsing Tin Road and Wong Chu Road;
  - (e) he considered that the Department should solve the problems at Wong Chu Road, especially those relating to traffic black spots; and
  - (f) he suggested applying anti-skid dressing on the road section for the left-turning traffic of Wong Chu Road to Yuen Long so that drivers had to slow down when making the turn.
9. The representative of TD gave a consolidated response as follows:
  - (a) according to the statistics from the Department, the traffic flow of Wong Chu Road had decreased, but the number of heavy vehicles had increased. The overall traffic condition was similar to that in the past. There was no serious traffic congestion for the time being;
  - (b) since the reconstruction and improvement of Tuen Mun Road was under way, quite a few temporary traffic arrangements were in force. The traffic of Wong Chu Road might not be very smooth at present. Wong Chu Road would be able to cope with the current traffic flow upon completion of the works;
  - (c) the Department would continue monitoring and conduct regular review on the traffic condition of Wong Chu Road, and would actively study ways for improvement; and

- (d) the Department would request the traffic consultant(s) of the departments responsible for the major future development plans in Tuen Mun West and North to conduct detailed traffic impact assessments on main carriageways such as Wong Chu Road and Tuen Mun Road in addition to Lung Mun Road and Lung Kwu Tan Road . TD would also request these departments to plan the necessary road facilities appropriately.

10. After discussion, the Chairman asked TD to consider and study Member's comments.

**Strongly Opposing to Transport Department's Forcible Cancellation of Services of Citybus Route No. 962 on Mondays to Saturdays (Non-peak Hours), Sundays and Public Holidays after the Operation of Tuen Mun Road Bus-bus Interchange (Tuen Mun Bound)**

11. The representative of TD responded that the Department and Citybus had made revision in various aspects after collecting views from different parties. They had derived four options and recommended Option 1 among the options ready for implementation after consolidating Members' comments. The pre-requisite was that the Option would only be implemented when the bus routes on Hong Kong Island called at the interchange after it was operated on both bounds. The implementation of Option 1 would enhance the frequency, service and choice of buses for residents along Castle Peak Road. The representative of Citybus then explained the changes and details of routes in different areas if Option 1 was implemented. Members had different views on the issue. Finally, the motion on this issue was rejected with 8 votes for, 10 votes against and 4 abstentions. The Chairman then concluded by asking TD to implement the original plan, i.e. Option 1. However, Members could lodge an objection and request for alteration if the situation was found unsatisfactory upon review.

**Calling for Enhancement of Cross-company Bus-bus Interchange Concession at Tuen Mun Road Bus-bus Interchange**

**Calling for Allowing Access of Public Light Bus and Other Means of Public Transport to Tuen Mun Road Bus-bus Interchange**

**Calling for Improvement of Facilities at Tuen Mun Road Bus-bus Interchange**

**Calling for Provision of Bus Stop Assistants at Tuen Mun Road Bus-bus Interchange**

12. The representative of TD briefly introduced the bus routing arrangements in Tuen Mun Road Bus-bus Interchange (BBI). The representatives of Kowloon Motor Bus (KMB) and the Department of Health gave response to the facilities and manpower arrangements at the BBI and other issues. Members then raised comments on the routing, interchange concession, and the facilities and manpower arrangements at the BBI, etc. After discussion, the Chairman concluded that the Committee could not agree to the cancellation of bus routes, and the cancellation or reduction of frequency of special departures on Saturdays before the BBI was in full commission. The Committee was of the view that TD and the bus companies should make observation and

consideration after the BBI had operated smoothly, and then implement the rationalisation plan having regard to the change in the mode of interchange for passengers. They also had to report the arrangements concerned to the Committee first and the total amount of fare paid by the passengers affected should not exceed the original amount. Besides, the Working Group on Tuen Mun External Traffic would continue following up the BBI arrangements.

### **Calling upon Bus Companies to Reactivate the Fresh-air Extraction Function of Their Buses**

13. The representative of KMB said that as the company's study found that there were more pollutants in the bus compartments when the fresh-air extraction function was activated than deactivated, KMB had decided not to activate the fresh-air extraction system since 2002. There were good air-conditioning systems and air sterilisers in KMB's bus compartments. The data inside the compartments had along been monitored to ensure that the air quality could meet the international standard. Members who submitted the paper hoped that KMB would explain the merits of not extracting fresh-air over extracting fresh-air. After discussion, the Chairman asked KMB to provide detailed information.

### **Calling for Provision of Directional Signs of Other Means of Public Transport at the Footbridges of LRT Town Centre Stop in Tuen Mun**

14. The representative of TD responded that signs were installed to indicate LR route information at one of the platforms under the footbridges of LRT Town Centre Stop in Tuen Mun connected to the bus stops and PLB stands on Tuen Mun Heung Sze Wui Road. Given there was already quite a lot information in a limited space, addition of other information would cause confusion. Moreover, route details were already shown in the bus stops and PLB stands. The Department therefore considered installing signs indicating that there were bus stops, PLB stands and taxi stands underneath instead of listing all the route information. The Member who submitted the paper said that other than light rail lines, there were Citybus and PLB lines with higher patronage under the bridge. Therefore, she hoped the Department could study the arrangement concerned. In addition, she said that the way of indication was not important but showing the information clearly was of utmost importance. After discussion, the Chairman asked TD to study the arrangement concerned.

### **Proposed Provision of a PLB Stand for Route No. 41 outside Caritas Li Ka Shing Care and Attention Home**

15. The representative of TD said that as PLBs needed to make a U-turn on the narrow road outside the care and attention home, the study conducted by the Department's engineers showed that PLBs had to move forward and reverse. Moreover, there were elderly going in and out of the care and attention home. The addition of a PLB stand would pose a risk on loaded PLBs and

pedestrians. The operator said that the addition of a stand would affect the overall journey. The PLBs heading to Tuen Mun Town Centre had to make a detour, which might affect the frequency. Members who submitted the paper said that PLBs also had to move forward and reverse in different road sections, and believed that there should be enough space for PLBs to make U-turns since even coaches were able to enter the road section. However, they also understood passengers' concern over the detour and that the PLBs might be fully loaded. After discussion, the Chairman asked TD and the minibuss operator to study Members' suggestion.

### **Calling for Improvement of Environment of Bus Stops for Waiting Passengers**

16. Members who submitted the paper suggested TD and KMB to work out a schedule for improving the railing design of bus terminuses with reference to the design of queue railings at Tuen Mun Road BBI and Tuen Mun Town Centre Bus Terminus. In addition, they suggested Mass Transit Railway considering building covers for feeder bus stops. The Chairman asked the Working Group on Traffic Problems within Tuen Mun District to take follow-up action.

### **The New Policy of "Universal Accessibility" Programme**

17. The Chairman said that the Working Group on Traffic Problems within Tuen Mun District had selected three priority projects by voting. These priority projects were recommended for the Committee's endorsement and for the Civil Engineering and Development Department to conduct technical feasibility studies:

- (a) NS42 (Across Tuen Hing Road near Tuen Mun Road);
- (b) NF174 (Across Tuen Mun Road connecting Tsing Hang Path and San Wo Lane); and
- (c) NF315 (Across Lung Mun Road near Lung Mun Light Rail Station).

18. The Committee endorsed these three priority projects. A Member suggested that if resources were available in the future, the remaining projects could be implemented according to the priority set by voting. The Chairman agreed that if the technical feasibility studies showed that any of the three priority projects was not feasible, the fourth project in the voting, i.e. NF98 (Across Wu King Road near Siu Hei Court Commercial Centre), should then be implemented.

Secretariat, Tuen Mun District Council

Date: 25 June 2013

Ref: HAD TM DC/13/30/TTC/4