

Minutes of the 1st Special Meeting of
the Traffic and Transport Committee (2016-2017) of
the Tuen Mun District Council

Time : 21 March 2016 (Monday)

Date : 9:34 a.m.

Venue : Tuen Mun District Council (TMDC) Conference Room

<u>Present</u>		<u>Time of Arrival</u>	<u>Time of Departure</u>
Mr SO Shiu-shing (Chairman)	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr YIP Man-pan (Vice-chairman)	TMDC Member	9:34 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr LEE Hung-sham, Lothar, MH	TMDC Vice-chairman	9:44 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr TO Sheck-yuen, MH	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr CHU Yiu-wah	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	11:45 a.m.
Ms KONG Fung-yi	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	1:21 p.m.
Mr NG Koon-hung	TMDC Member	9:31 a.m.	12:13 p.m.
Mr CHAN Yau-hoi, MH, JP	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	1:38 p.m.
Ms WONG Lai-sheung, Catherine	TMDC Member	9:53 a.m.	End of meeting
Ms HO Hang-mui	TMDC Member	9:32 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr LAM Chung-hoi	TMDC Member	9:41 a.m.	1:57 p.m.
Mr TSUI Fan	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	10:33 a.m.
Ms CHING Chi-hung	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Ms LUNG Shui-hing	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr CHAN Manwell, Leo	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Ms CHU Shun-nga, Beatrice	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr TSANG Hin-hong	TMDC Member	10:02 a.m.	End of meeting
Ms SO Ka-man	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr KAM Man-fung	TMDC Member	9:53 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr MO Shing-fung	TMDC Member	9:36 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr YEUNG Chi-hang	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr YAN Siu-nam	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr TAM Chun-yin	TMDC Member	9:30 a.m.	End of meeting
Mr NG Kwai-wah	Co-opted Member	9:31 a.m.	11:15 a.m.
Mr IP Chun-yuen	Co-opted Member	9:33 a.m.	11:44 a.m.
Mr LAI Yu-lok	Co-opted Member	9:35 a.m.	11:09 a.m.
Miss NGAI Tsz-yan, Tina (Secretary)	Executive Officer (District Council) 2, Tuen Mun District Office, Home Affairs Department		

By Invitation

Ms WONG Yee-fang, Eva Senior Transport Officer/Bus/New Territories West,
Transport Department

Ms CHOI Siu-man, Sherman Transport Officer/Bus/New Territories West,
Transport Department

Mr KUI Kin-ping Senior Marine Officer/Ferry Terminals, Marine Department

Ms LEUNG Wai-chung Assistant Marine Controller/Tuen Mun Ferry Terminal (Acting),
Marine Department

Mr YUEN Wai-on Marine Officer I/Tuen Mun Ferry Terminal, Marine Department

Mr TSE Lai-chi District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Tuen Mun),
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Ms LAM Yin-ching, Jone Senior Health Inspector (Cleansing/Pest Control),
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Mr Dennis LEE Manager, Planning & Development, The Kowloon Motor Bus
Company (1933) Limited

Mr Gary LEUNG Assistant Manager, Planning & Development, The Kowloon
Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited

Mr LAW Yiu-wah Planning and Support Officer I (Administration and Planning),
Long Win Bus Company Limited

Mr TSZE Chi-ho Senior Operations Officer, Long Win Bus Company Limited

Ms Annie LAM Assistant Public Relations Manager - External Affairs, MTR
Corporation Limited

In Attendance

Mr MOK Ka-sing, Mark Senior Transport Officer/Tuen Mun, Transport Department

Ms CHING Hoi-ying Engineer/Housing & Planning/New Territories West,
Transport Department

Ms CHAM Suet-ying, Cheryl Engineer/15 (New Territories West), Civil Engineering and
Development Department

Mr MOK Hing-cheung Administrative Assistant/Lands (District Lands Office, Tuen
Mun), Lands Department

Mr LIU Hing-wah District Engineer/Tuen Mun, Highways Department

Mr Francis Thomas CARROLL District Operations Officer (Tuen Mun), Hong Kong Police Force

Mr WONG Lap-pun Station Sergeant, District Traffic Team (Tuen Mun),
Hong Kong Police Force

Mr WAN Yin-chiu Senior Manager, External Affairs Section, The Kowloon Motor
Bus Company (1933) Limited

Mr Kelvin YEUNG Senior Operations Officer, The Kowloon Motor Bus Company
(1933) Limited

Mr KUNG Syu-yan	Operations Manager (Department Two), Citybus Limited
Mr POON Chun-kong	Assistant Manager (Traffic Operations), Long Win Bus Company Limited
Mr LEUNG Wai-shing, William	Assistant District Officer (Tuen Mun)2, Home Affairs Department

Absent

Mr KWU Hon-keung	TMDC Member
Mr CHAN Man-wah, MH	TMDC Member
Mr CHEUNG Hang-fai	TMDC Member
Mr HO Kwan-yiu	TMDC Member

I. Opening Remarks

1. The Chairman welcomed all present to the first special meeting of the Traffic and Transport Committee (“TTC”) (2016-2017) to follow up on the Bus Route Planning Programme 2016-2017 for Tuen Mun District (“Bus Route Planning Programme”) and handle the issues carried over from the second TTC meeting (TTC Paper Nos. 11/2016, 13/2016, 14/2016, and 16/2016 to 20/2016).

2. The Chairman reminded Members that any Member who was aware of a personal interest in a discussion item should declare the interest before the discussion. The Chairman would, in accordance with Order 39(12) of the Tuen Mun District Council Standing Orders, decide whether the Member who had declared an interest might speak or vote on the matter, might remain in the meeting as an observer, or should withdraw from the meeting. All cases of declaration of interests would be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

II. Absence from Meeting

3. The Secretariat had received no applications from Members for leave of absence.

III. Matters Arising

(A) Bus Route Planning Programme 2016-2017 for Tuen Mun District

(TTC Paper No. 3/2016)

Request for Provision of Bus Service between Tai Hing and Kwun Tong

(TTC Paper No. 11/2016)

4. The Chairman welcomed Ms Eva WONG, Senior Transport Officer/Bus/New Territories West, and Miss Sherman CHOI, Transport Officer/Bus/New Territories West, of the Transport Department (“TD”); Mr Dennis LEE, Manager, Planning & Development, and Mr Gary LEUNG, Assistant Manager, Planning & Development, of The Kowloon Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited (“KMB”); and Mr LAW Yiu-wah, Planning and Support Officer I (Administration and Planning), and Mr TSZE Chi-ho, Senior Operations Officer, of Long Win Bus Company Limited (“LWB”).

5. The Chairman said that as this discussion item was related to TTC Paper No. 11/2016 titled “Request for Provision of Bus Service between Tai Hing and Kwun Tong”, it had been decided at the second TTC meeting that they should be discussed together. In addition, the programme could be broken down into the following parts as per Paper No. 3/2016:

(i) Adjusting the routeing and service frequency of Route 57M and redeploying

its resources to Routes 66M, 258D, 961P and 260X in accordance with actual passenger demand;

- (ii) Enhancing Route 62X to a whole-day service, revising the routeing of Route 259D and accordingly, adjusting the service frequency of Routes 59M, 60M, 61X, 258D and 259D in accordance with actual passenger demand;
- (iii) Increasing the service frequency of Routes 67M and 67X in accordance with the guidelines to meet the population growth in Area 54 of Tuen Mun;
- (iv) Launching Route 258X plying between Po Tin and Kwun Tong Pier during peak hours;
- (v) Increasing the service frequency of Route 259X operating from Kwun Tong Pier to Lung Mun Oasis during the afternoon peak hours;
- (vi) Cancelling Route 267S and redeploying its resources to launch Route 267X plying between Siu Hong Court and Lam Tin during peak hours;
- (vii) Increasing the service frequency of Route 960P during the morning peak hours;
- (viii) Increasing the service frequency of Routes B3A and B3X in accordance with the guidelines;
- (ix) Launching Route 962E plying between So Kwun Wat and Taikoo/Quarry Bay during peak hours;
- (x) Enhancing Route A33 to a whole-day service and launching express trips;
- (xi) Adjusting the service frequency of Route 53 to every 45 minutes;
- (xii) Increasing the service frequency of Route 63X and revising its routeing;
- (xiii) Revising the Tsing Yi bound routeing of Route 68A; and
- (xiv) Increasing the service frequency of Route 258P operating from Hung Fuk Estate to Lam Tin during peak hours.

6. For higher efficiency, the Chairman suggested the TD's representatives be invited to give a brief introduction to the programme and respond to the comments made in Paper No. 11/2016, following which Members would be invited to comment on the above 14 parts in sequence, and then Members might express their views on other bus routes as usual. Members had no comment on the above arrangement.

7. Ms Eva WONG of the TD explained as follows:

- (i) Over the past several years, the TD had continued to develop a transportation system centred on public transport with railways as the backbone, in a bid to alleviate road congestion and roadside emissions. This year, further efforts would be made to optimise the public transport system, pursue bus route rationalisation, boost the efficiency of bus service networks as well as the quality of services, and rationalise the functions and roles of various means of

public transport, so that the public could enjoy efficient services while various means of public transport could develop in a sustainable manner;

- (ii) In fact, bus route rationalisation involved not only reductions of bus routes or trips but redeployment of resources to areas with the strongest needs. The rationalisation served to cancel bus routes with low patronage, consolidate the services of overlapping routes, revise circuitous routes and reduce the service frequency of routes with low usage rates, so that bus companies could use the resources so saved to launch new bus routes or increase the service frequency of the existing routes, making bus services more attractive;
- (iii) The Bus Route Planning Programme for the current year mainly covered various types of bus service modifications. The first type involved launching new bus services or enhancing the existing services to cater for district development, under which (a) resources had been earmarked for higher service frequency of Routes 67M and 67X to meet the future population growth in Area 54; (b) it was proposed that two trips of Route 258X, which would call at selected stops only to save the time for passenger drop-off/pick-up and the whole journey, be operated from Po Tin to Kwun Tong during the morning peak hours to meet the development of Kowloon East and serve residents with such a commuting need, and that fixed departure time would be set at the Tuen Mun Road Bus-Bus Interchange (“Interchange”) to complement other special bus services to Kowloon Bay Business Area and bring convenience for passengers to change buses; (c) the TD proposed two additional return trips of Route 258X be provided during the afternoon peak hours from the fourth quarter of this year to bring convenience to Tuen Mun residents working in Kowloon East; (d) the TD proposed enhancing the service of Route 259X, a route launched in late 2015 and well received by residents in the district, by providing return trips operating from Kwun Tong Pier to Lung Mun Oasis via Kowloon Bay during the afternoon peak hours; (e) it was proposed that in view of the population growth along the areas of Route 960P, the service frequency of the route be increased from four trips to six trips during the morning peak hours, so as to strengthen the bus services to Hong Kong Island; (f) it was proposed that the service frequency of Route 258P operating to places in Lam Tin be increased from four trips to six trips during the morning peak hours; (g) Route 962E would be launched plying between So Kwun Wat and Taikoo/Quarry Bay via the Interchange and Sham Tseng during peak hours to bring convenience to Tuen Mun residents working at Taikoo and Quarry Bay; and (h) It was proposed that Route A33 be enhanced to a whole-day service as no airport bus services were available in So Kwun Wat and Gold Coast, and that express trips be provided plying

between Tuen Mun Town Centre and the airport via Goodview Garden and Tuen Mun Road. Coordinated bus services operating to and from the airport at a 30-minute headway should be provided to serve residents living at places between Tuen Mun West Rail Station and Goodview Garden;

- (iv) The second type of bus service modifications involved reductions of services in accordance with the demand for bus routes, such as the adjustment to the service frequency of Route 53;
- (v) The third type involved adjustments to the service hours or the routing of bus routes such as 57M, 259D and 63X. It was expected that the patronage of Route 57M would see no significant rise, given its low usage during non-peak hours and the fact that there were more bus routes at more attractive fares and service frequency available for passengers to choose at the Interchange after its commissioning. Moreover, the routing of Route 57M overlapped with that of Route 66M, except for the section near the former route's terminus of Shan King Estate. For better use of resources, the TD proposed that Route 57M be converted into a one-way service to urban districts during the morning peak hours with its route truncated at Kwai Fong Estate, offer a two-way service at a one-hour headway during the day time, and provide one-way return trips to Shan King Estate during the evening peak hours. The resources saved from Route 57M would be redeployed to Route 66M and other bus routes in the district with higher patronage (Routes 258D, 260X and 961P). Furthermore, to improve the routing of Route 259D during non-peak hours, the TD proposed the route not travel via Tuen Mun Town Centre, Yau Oi, On Ting and Goodview Garden throughout the day and Route 62X be enhanced to a whole-day service. It was expected that passengers currently taking Route 259D at the above places might alternatively take Route 62X, which plied between Tuen Mun Town Centre and Kowloon East directly. As Route 259D would no longer travel via Tuen Mun Town Centre, the time for journeys from Lung Mun Oasis and Tuen Mun Ferry Pier to Kowloon East could be shortened by 10 to 15 minutes. To provide express trips for Tuen Mun residents, it was proposed that Route 63X be diverted via West Kowloon Corridor during the early morning and late evening hours to shorten the journey time by about 10 minutes;
- (vi) The TD noted the paper titled "Request for Provision of Bus Service between Tai Hing and Kwun Tong" submitted by Members, and would discuss the paper together with the current discussion item. It was proposed in the Bus Route Planning Programme for the current year that Route 258X buses departing from Po Tin should travel via places in Tai Hing before heading for the business areas of Kowloon East and Kwun Tong. The TD believed that

this proposal would satisfy the demand in the area; and

- (vii) Members were encouraged to comment on the Bus Route Planning Programme, and the TD and the bus companies would respond to Members' comments and enquiries.

8. The Chairman asked Members to discuss the items in sequence.

Adjusting the routeing and service frequency of Route 57M and redeploying its resources to Routes 66M, 258D, 961P and 260X in accordance with actual passenger demand

9. A Member opined that the Bus Route Planning Programme focused only on saving resources, saying that the TD should neither draw up a Bus Route Planning Programme that could lead to scrambles for bus resources among different areas, nor propose a reduction in the service of Route 57M for redeployment of buses to other routes. He pointed out that the TD had proposed the cancellation of Route 57M many years before but failed to realise it eventually. As a step towards the cancellation of Route 57M in the future, the TD deliberately reduced the service frequency of the route to every one hour. He said a Route 57M bus arrived at a bus stop only after the arrival of seven or eight Route 58M buses, and this was an example showing that the TD was already using the resources of Route 57M to supplement other bus services. The Member also indicated that the service frequency of Route 57M was so low that passengers had to switch to other bus routes to Tuen Mun for transfer, and a false impression of low patronage was thus created. In addition, it was expected that the under-construction Home Ownership Scheme ("HOS") court next to King Mei House would be occupied in 2018 or 2019, after which the population of the area would increase by 2 000. Also, it was believed that the proposed modification to the route would hardly be supported by Members of the places where Route 57M travelled via, such as Greenland Garden, Tai Hing Garden and Yeung Siu Hang Village. The Member further pointed out that there were many residents having to work on weekends, a large elderly population and schools to be built in that area, while the neighbouring Area 54 was also developing. He added that there was demand for bus services as no direct railway services were provided between the area and urban districts. For these reasons, he strongly opposed the TD-proposed modification to Route 57M, opining that the department should instead sustain the route by making improvements to its routeing, such as extending the route to Kowloon.

10. In response to a Member's enquiry, the Chairman stated that each Member might make a 3-minute speech on the proposal for each route in the first round of

discussion.

11. The comments of other Members were as follows:
- (i) A Member opined that the TD should increase the frequency of Route 57M instead of cutting its service, as its patronage had reached 63% during peak hours. Given the needs of residents, KMB should continue operating the route even though its patronage was relatively low in other hours. In fact, Routes 57M and 961 were the only routes departing from Shan King Estate and there were no bus services to Tsuen Wan and Mong Kok in that area after the cancellation of Route 66, which departed from Tai Hing; therefore no further reduction should be made to the service of Route 57M, which headed for places in Kwai Chung. The Member hoped the TD would retain Route 57M and explore ways to increase its patronage, such as extending its route and increasing its service frequency;
 - (ii) There was objection to the proposed modification to Route 57M. When proposing the cancellation of Route 66 in a previous Bus Route Planning Programme, the TD had stated that the resources so saved would be redeployed to Routes 66M, 66X and 57M, but it had failed to keep its promise. Merely aiming to cut the service, the TD-proposed modification to Route 57M was a step backward that would deprive residents in the area of a choice;
 - (iii) It was opined that the bus services should be studied in the context of the transport network of Tuen Mun as a whole. In case of inadequate buses, KMB should purchase new vehicles or surrender the franchise of the route concerned, and the TD should not use a cut in the service of Route 57M as the solution. All Members should not be inward-looking as they were of service not only to residents in their respective areas, but to the public of Tuen Mun. Besides, the bus services had reduced rather than grown, because the TD had effected the proposed modification to Route 59A without informing the TMDC during the suspension of the TMDC's operation in the previous year;
 - (iv) A Member concurred with the view of the above Member, indicating that the TD had promised to redeploy the bus resources saved from the cancellation of Route 66 to Route 66M, but the current number of buses under Route 66M was the same as before. Therefore, the Member did not believe that KMB would redeploy the resources saved from the service cut in Route 57M to other bus routes. He also opined that the TD should not allow KMB to reduce the frequency or service of this route. With the completion of HOS courts in Area 2B in the future, there would be greater passenger demand, so the service of Route 57M should not be reduced. Moreover, passengers had

different demand for Route 66M and 57M: as the latter route travelled to Lai King North via Tsuen Wan and Kwai Fong, some residents living in the Tai Hing area took it to Kwai Fong and this substantiated the demand for Route 57M. The Member disagreed with cutting the service of Route 57M, opining that efforts should be made to explore ways to enhance its service, so that the route could better serve Area 2B in the future;

- (v) It was opined that not only were the TD representatives out of touch with the traffic condition of Tuen Mun and misled by others, but they had not examined the bus company's proposals before tabling them to the TTC for discussion. In Tuen Mun, where the railway system was deficient, the transport network nevertheless had to rely on redeployment of resources among buses because the TD had failed to take measures, such as devising alternative routes and making coordination arrangements, to benefit the public;
- (vi) A Member remarked that the TD's redeployment of bus trips from some routes to others was merely an ineffective measure that "robbed Peter to pay Paul". Route 57M had been launched before with a view to answering the needs of residents in the area concerned, and she believed such needs still existed as she had evidenced that some residents took Route 57M at the Interchange on their return trips to Tuen Mun. While it was mentioned in the proposed modification to Route 57M that resources would be redeployed to Routes 258D and 260X, she held that the TD should fairly distribute resources across the entire Tuen Mun, instead of following the approach it had used in the cancellation of Route 66 in 2013 to cut the service of Routes 57M and 58M;
- (vii) A Member called on other Members to unite to request the TD to put things right and stop the practice of using the resources of major bus routes in an area to supplement other routes, which was neither sensible nor effective. Even though the resources of Route 57M were redeployed to Routes 66M, 258D, 961P and 260X, it was unlikely that the services of these routes would be much improved. Moreover, while the TD had mentioned that railways served as the backbone of transport services, the railway network of Tuen Mun was deficient as evidenced by the fact that railways had yet to reach the newly developed Area 54. She was against the proposed modification to 57M as she disapproved of the approach specified in the Bus Route Planning Programme, which involved cancelling the trips of some bus routes for redeployment to others. The TD should provide more buses to enhance the services of the bus routes, or else the bus services would fail to meet residents' needs after they moved into the area; and

(viii) A Member indicated that during the suspension of the TMDC's operation, the TD had reduced the service frequency of Route 59A despite the objection raised by TMDC Members of the Tuen Mun Ferry Pier area. He opposed reducing the service of Route 57M, while at the same time hoping that the TD would accede to Members' desires and consider increasing the service frequency of Route 59A. Moreover, the principle behind any addition and reduction of bus services was not clearly explained in the Bus Route Planning Programme. At present, the TD might reduce the service frequency of any route failing to attain an average patronage rate of 85% within 30 minutes during peak hours. However, places for standees already accounted for 25% of the maximum carrying capacity of a bus; so in other words, even if the seats of a bus were full, the TD might still reduce the service frequency of the bus route concerned on the grounds of low patronage. The Member further pointed out that it took at least one hour to travel on routes via expressways or long-haul routes, and standees did not buckle up and were thus more vulnerable to risks in case of accidents on expressways. Therefore, he suggested places for standees not be counted in the calculation of the patronage of these routes. He also pointed out that the number of persons per square metre had been lowered in calculating MTR train patronage, but the TD and bus companies still used the old calculation method. He hoped the TD would give a response in this regard.

12. The Chairman reminded Members that they should speak as concise as possible and the TTC would vote on the proposals afterwards. He said that Members needed not use all the 3-minute speaking time to raise similar views.

13. A Member indicated that as some proposals in the Bus Route Planning Programme were interrelated, it was difficult to vote separately on each of the proposals. A Member suggested the speaking time for each Member be trimmed down; whereas another Member suggested a closing time be set for this meeting, upon which any outstanding items would be carried over to another meeting, so that Members could feel at ease in their speeches.

14. A Member also said that as some proposals in the Bus Route Planning Programme correlated with other routes, it was difficult to vote separately on each of the proposals. Moreover, although the TD and KMB had effected the reduction of the service frequency of Routes 59A and 259E in December 2015 without the endorsement of the TTC of this term, she did not see any increase in the service frequency of Route 59M and it was difficult for residents to take the route on

weekends. She hoped the TD would enhance the service of Route 59M, and it followed that she objected to the proposed modification to Route 57M.

15. A Member recalled that the Bus Route Planning Programme for the previous year was discussed by area rather than route. She suggested using the previous mode of discussion in order to save time.

16. The Chairman said he had no views as to whether the matter was to be discussed by area or by route, or alternatively, it could be passed to a working group for follow-ups.

17. A Member said that if it was discussed by area, Members might not speak even if they disagreed with the principle behind the modifications to the services of bus routes. As the proposal on Route 57M involved the general principle on service frequency, it was worth spending time to discuss and clarify it.

18. The Chairman indicated that Members might decide the mode of discussion at meetings, and he was willing to join Members in the discussion. All in all, the TTC opposed the proposed modification to the service of Route 57M.

19. Upon Members' requests, the Chairman asked Members to vote on the subject proposal. With zero vote for, 22 votes against and one abstention, the TTC resolved to oppose the proposed modification to the service of Route 57M.

20. Ms Eva WONG of the TD responded as follows:

- (i) The TD proposed adjusting the service of Route 57M in accordance with its patronage, which was very low during non-peak hours;
- (ii) Apart from trimming down the service frequency of some bus routes, the Bus Route Planning Programme for the current year also proposed launching new routes in light of changes in the population and infrastructure of the district. For instance, the return trips of Route 259X would be provided, and Routes 962E and 258X would also be launched;
- (iii) The reasons for Members' objection to the proposal were noted. But she hoped Members would understand that after three buses were removed from Route 57M as recommended in the proposal, there would be four routes each provided with one additional bus, so more bus resources would be devoted to Tuen Mun as a whole;
- (iv) In working out the Bus Route Planning Programme, the TD had considered not only whether patronage met the guidelines on bus service improvement

and reduction (“guidelines”) but other non-quantitative factors, such as the availability of alternative routes in the affected areas, the operational arrangements for buses, and the impacts on the environment and operational effectiveness;

- (v) The contents of the guidelines were set out in the first few pages of the paper. The guidelines had been amended and issued after consultation with the Panel on Transport and the Panel on Environmental Affairs of the Legislative Council (“LegCo”) at a joint panel meeting in 2010. The comments raised at the panel meeting had been included in the guidelines;
- (vi) The TD indicated that careful consideration should be given to the idea of excluding places for standees in the calculation of patronage on long-haul bus routes. If only seats were counted in patronage calculation, bus companies would have to purchase a large number of additional buses, which would have negative impacts on roads and exacerbate problems such as noise and air pollution. Besides, with a surge in the number of buses, bus companies would have to hire more drivers and maintenance workers while purchasing additional facilities. Passengers would also be affected as the higher operating costs so incurred would add pressure to fares. Various factors including passengers’ demand for routes, the use of resources, cost effectiveness and the impacts on roads and the environment, had been balanced in the formulation of the current set of bus guidelines, so it was a more advisable arrangement; and
- (vii) After gauging Members’ opinions on the Bus Route Planning Programme at this meeting, the TD would have discussion with the bus company in a hope that the programme could fit the bus network in Tuen Mun and the needs of residents.

21. The Chairman said that the TTC opposed the service modification to Route 57M and hoped the TD would consider Members’ views.

22. A Member reiterated that there were problems with the TD’s concept. The railway network of Tuen Mun, a remote district, was flawed and imperfect (as exemplified by the abandonment of the proposal for the Tuen Mun-Tsuen Wan Line) and residents travelled to and from urban districts by bus only. Therefore, the Government’s concept of railway-based transport was not applicable to Tuen Mun. Besides, railway and bus services should not be mixed up. Moreover, if bus companies did not have adequate vehicles and manpower, the TD should study the reasons and provide the relevant data.

23. The Chairman concurred with the view of the above Member and indicated that the Government should first confirm the proposal for the Tuen Mun-Tsuen Wan Line.

Enhancing Route 62X to a whole-day service, revising the routeing of Route 259D and accordingly, adjusting the service frequency of Routes 59M, 60M, 61X, 258D and 259D in accordance with actual passenger demand

24. A Member said he had been striving for the whole-day service of Route 62X for years, so that residents living in the places of On Ting and Yau Oi Estates needed not take buses at different locations during peak and non-peak hours. At present, Route 62X operated only during peak hours on Monday to Friday at a 10 to 20 minutes' headway. During other hours, residents had to take Route 259D, which operated at a 15 to 20 minutes' headway. However, it was proposed that after route rationalisation, Route 62X operate at a 30-minute headway, an even lower service frequency, so the journey time would shorten while the waiting time would increase. Therefore, the Member disagreed with the above arrangement and hoped that the services of Routes 62X and 259D to Kowloon East would be more stable. In addition, he noticed that residents vied to take Route 62X between 7:15 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. and this pointed to the inadequacy of the route's existing service, but the paper stated that the number of buses under Route 62X would remain at 12 under the proposed modification, so he doubted whether its service could be improved. The Member concluded by saying that he supported making Route 62X a whole-day service, provided that its service frequency had to be stable for the convenience of residents in southeast areas.

25. Another Member indicated that she had long been striving for the whole-day service of Route 62X. Yet, it was unacceptable for the route to be a mere 12-strong fleet operating at a 30-minute headway, because it was a major route carrying residents to Kowloon East for work. She opined that drawing reference from Route 259D, Route 62X should be a 24-strong fleet; otherwise it was unfair to the residents served by the two routes. As the West Rail was often full, residents resorted to bus to travel to and from urban districts but disappointingly, the TD had just said that the purchase of additional buses would have negative impacts (e.g. impacts on roads, pollution and worries about the operation of bus companies). But anyway, KMB should not cut the frequency of services for commuting residents. Therefore, she requested that Route 62X should follow Route 259D in operating as a whole-day service.

26. The Chairman remarked that a headway of more than 20 minutes was already

unacceptable, and suggested the TD consider a headway of no more than 20 minutes.

27. The comments of other Members were as follows:

- (i) A Member agreed that a headway of more than 20 minutes was unacceptable and pointed out that Route 59A even operated at a one-hour headway during non-peak hours. As Members of southeast areas had long been striving for the whole-day service of Route 62X, she was not going to raise objection as long as the service frequency of other routes including 59M, 60M, 61X, 259D and 258D would not be adjusted in accordance with passengers' demand - that meant there should be no reduction in the service frequency of other routes;
- (ii) While agreeing that Routes 259D and 62X should be split to serve residents in different areas, a Member considered that the service frequency of Route 62X recommended in the rationalisation proposal was too low. From his personal experience, Route 259D buses did not reach stops at the time specified on the mobile application, failing to meet the standard headway of eight to 20 minutes. Moreover, the patronage of some bus routes, such as Routes 259D and 62X and cross-harbour routes during non-peak hours (e.g. 10:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. on weekends), was even higher than that during peak hours on weekdays. The Member enquired how the TD defined "non-peak hours". Besides, he said the fact that passengers could hardly take Route 259X buses in Kowloon Bay evidenced how full the route was, and he hoped TD would do observation in this regard. He believed that while no Members would object to making Route 62X a whole-day service, they would find it difficult to give an account to residents if it turned out that its service was not enhanced;
- (iii) It was hoped that the TD and KMB would understand that the current service frequency of Route 62X was inadequate during peak hours and the buses of the route were very crowded. While the whole-day service of Route 62X deserved support, it was not acceptable for the route to operate only at a 30-minute headway during peak hours;
- (iv) A Member who served the Tuen Mun Ferry Pier area agreed that Route 259D should not operate via Tuen Mun Town Centre throughout the day, but hoped this would not prejudice the interests of residents living in Tuen Mun Town Centre, On Ting and Yau Oi Estates. Given that Route 259D currently operated at a 12 to 15 minutes' headway during non-peak hours, it was actually a service cut if Route 62X operated at a 30-minute headway during non-peak hours. Furthermore, in view of the proposal that the service frequency of other routes would be adjusted in accordance with their patronage, the Member remarked that the proposal actually served to cut the services of other routes. The Member hoped the TD would give a clear

account;

- (v) A Member called on Members to unite against any proposal to reduce bus services (including Route 53) in a bid to ensure adequate services for the growing population in southeast areas. The political party the Member belonged to had earlier conducted a questionnaire survey to collect 100 residents' opinions on the proposed modification to the service of Route 62X. The survey result showed that 100% of the residents agreed that a 30-minute headway was far from adequate. While agreeing that Route 62X should be developed into a whole-day service, she could hardly accept it operating at a 30-minute headway. She also pointed out that the service frequency of buses operating from urban districts to Tuen Mun was inadequate around 3:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.
- (vi) It was opined that the TD's proposal was tricky: it was specified in the proposal for the whole-day operation of Route 62X that the services of other five routes would be adjusted in accordance with actual needs, but it did not explain what was meant by actual needs. It was also believed that Members would not be consulted again when the services were adjusted in the future. The TD should do more than just accede to KMB's proposals and bank on the Interchange. For example, it was proposed that four buses be redeployed to other routes after three buses were taken away from Route 57M, so it should be fine to first put an additional bus into service; and
- (vii) A Member agreed with the general direction of Route 259D not taking a circuitous route before heading for Tuen Mun Road. Yet, the 30-minute frequency of Route 62X reminded him of an unreasonable arrangement implemented by the TD during the suspension of the TMDC's operation in the previous year, under which Route 59A operated at a one-hour headway during non-peak hours. The guidelines served as the principles behind the Bus Route Planning Programme for various areas and the TD claimed that it had conducted consultation on the guidelines, but Members of the areas had not been included as the target groups of the consultation. Noting that the guidelines allowed the inclusion of places for 30 to 40 standees in the calculation of patronage, he did not see how the lower deck of a bus could accommodate more than 40 persons given that no passengers were allowed to stand beyond the yellow line. In his view, this calculation method was already outdated, and standing passengers were vulnerable to accidents on expressways. Moreover, Routes 59M and 59X had become more crowded since the service frequency of Route 59A was reduced, and the service of Route 59M would be cut if the services of Routes 62X and 259D were rationalised. Furthermore, he had doubt as to where the resources previously

saved from the service cut in Route 59A had gone to.

28. The Chairman said it seemed from Members' comments that they had no objection to the proposed modification to the service of Route 62X provided that the frequency of any services in the proposed modifications should not be lower than every 20 minutes.

29. A Member indicated that to his understanding, Members did not oppose the split of Routes 62X and 259D provided that the services were to be maintained at the current level or even upgraded. It was already difficult for passengers to get on buses during peak hours, so more bus resources should be provided and any arrangements made at the expense of other routes would not be accepted.

30. In her response, Ms Eva WONG of the TD said the TTC's no-objection stance on the whole-day operation of Route 62X and its opinion that a 30-minute headway was too low during non-peak hours were noted, adding that the TD would study Members' comments with the bus company after the meeting. She further said that the proposal was merely to extend the service of Route 62X to non-peak hours and its service during peak hours would remain at the same level. The TD would study the details of this proposal with the bus company. If the patronage of Route 62X rose during peak hours, the TD would study with the bus company if there was a need to adjust its service frequency. Regarding Members' views on the guidelines set out in the first several pages of the paper, the TD had put forward the guidelines to the Panel on Transport and the Panel on Environmental Affairs of the LegCo for consultation at a joint panel meeting in 2010, and the contents of the guidelines had been amended before they were issued, with LegCo members' comments incorporated therein. In case of higher demand for the service of a certain bus route, the bus company might explore the feasibility of increasing its frequency in light of actual circumstances. The rationalisation or revision of bus routes were based on the use of bus resources in the entire district and served to deploy more resources to routes with strong passenger demand, so that suitable services would be provided for passengers.

31. The comments of other Members in the second round of discussion were as follows:

- (i) The guidelines were not applicable to Tuen Mun and the words to the effect that service frequency would be adjusted in accordance with patronage should be deleted. The TD should focus on making proper arrangements for the whole-day operation of Route 62X without cutting the service frequency of other routes such as 60M and 61M, and should strengthen Route 62X to a

24-strong fleet by drawing reference from the operation of Route 259D; otherwise it was only putting the cart before the horse. The bus company should not put profits first, and bus services could hardly be enhanced if it only worried about the impacts of purchasing additional buses;

- (ii) A Member said that in the proposal for the whole-day operation of Route 62X, it was stated that the service frequency of five routes, including Route 258D, would be adjusted in accordance with patronage. The Member had no objection in principle to this proposal, but she reiterated that the TD should not cut the service frequency of Route 258D for redeployment of resources to Route 62X. The Member requested the TD to explain clearly the details of the five bus routes that would be subject to service frequency adjustment in accordance with patronage;
- (iii) A Member said the TTC had for years been criticising the requirement that service frequency could increase only when patronage reached 85%. He believed that there had been LegCo members raising the same view when the guidelines were put forward to the LegCo Panel on Transport for consultation in 2010. He suggested the TD provide the pre-consultation version of the guidelines, the comments given by the LegCo Panel on Transport in 2010 and the final version of the guidelines for comparison. Given that the guidelines set out the criteria for addition and reduction of bus services in the 18 districts, it would just be a waste of Members' time if the discussion was to continue before doubts were dispelled. He had joined TTC meetings for more than a decade and to his memory, the guidelines had never been amended. He also said the guidelines were unreasonable, as evidenced by the fact that it was impossible to have places for as many as 40 standees on a bus;
- (iv) A Member indicated that the Bus Route Planning Programme was discussed every year, but to her memory, little improvement had been made to the guidelines over the more than 10 years of her service as a District Council ("DC") Member. Based on the calculation method of the TD, there had to be more than 40 standing passengers aboard in order for a bus to reach a 100% patronage. It meant there had to be passengers standing on the staircase and near the bus door, but this was risky as no safety belts were provided at places for standees. The TD representative had mentioned that purchase of additional buses would have impacts on roads, cause pollution and add to the demand for manpower. However, passengers' safety should be put first and there had earlier been two door-related accidents. The consequences would be even more severe if accidents happened on expressways. Besides studying passenger data, the TD should also assign its staff to take buses during the morning peak hours to experience the difficulties of passengers. It

should also separate buses via expressways and urban buses in calculating patronage;

- (v) A Member added that the TD should study the increase of service frequency without waiting until after the split of the services of Routes 62X and 259D, and the service frequency arrangements should be carried out at the same time as the split was put into implementation. The Member believed that disputes over the proposal would continue if the problem caused by inadequate service frequency was left unsolved;
- (vi) A Member added that the TD should not attempt to muddle through, and she would support the split of Routes 62X and 259D only if (a) the services would be provided at a headway of less than 20 minutes; and (b) the service frequency of Routes 59M, 60M, 61X, 258D and 259D would not be adjusted - that meant the resources of the above routes should not be redeployed to Route 62X; and
- (vii) A Member said the TD and KMB stated in the proposal for Route 57M that the buses released following the service cut in Route 57M would be redeployed to Routes 66M, 258D, 961P and 260X, whereas it was mentioned in the proposal for Route 62X that the service frequency of some routes, including 258D, would be adjusted in accordance with actual patronage. It was suspected that the ultimate purpose was to redeploy resources to Route 62X. While claiming that the services of bus routes would be adjusted in accordance with patronage, the TD and the bus company would actually decide the deployment of resources on their own. This tricky arrangement was unfair to residents and created big conflicts among Members.

32. The Chairman concluded by saying that the TTC had no objection to enhancing Route 62X to a whole-day service, provided that the existing service frequency of the route would be maintained at no more than 20 minutes. In addition, a Member said that the TD did not mention the adjustments to the services of other routes in the proposal.

Increasing the service frequency of Routes 67M and 67X in accordance with the guidelines to meet the population growth in Area 54 of Tuen Mun

33. The comments of Members were as follows:

- (i) It was nice to see the TD enhanced the service frequency of Routes 67M and 67X in view of the development of Area 54, but the degree of increase in the numbers of additional bus resources for the two routes was unsatisfactory: the TD proposed adding only one bus to Route 67M and two to Route 67X, despite the large population in Area 54. Residents had voiced opinions on

the crowdedness on the buses of Routes 67M and 67X, and it was expected that the route would be unable to meet the demand after people moved into the housing estates in Area 54 in the future. Moreover, the residents affected by the cancellation of Route 267S might switch to Routes 67M and 67X in the future, so the services of the two routes would be inadequate;

- (ii) There would be an additional population of about 40 000 in Area 54. Given the lack of railway facilities in the area, the addition of one bus to Route 67M and two buses to Route 67X could not be effective enough to reduce passenger crowds. Besides, Area 54 Site 2 would be completed in early 2017 but it was proposed in the paper that the addition of buses would be carried out only in the third quarter of 2017. The TD was asked whether passenger demand along the routes could be met in a timely manner;
- (iii) While supporting the provision of additional bus resources for Routes 67M and 67X, a Member criticised the TD and KMB for being too late in making the proposal and tabling matters on housing, facilities and bus services in Area 54 at different meetings. Residents living in the areas of Tsing Lun Road and Siu Hong Court had told her that the trips of Routes 67M and 67X were inadequate. Therefore, even if Area 54 Site 2 was not to be completed, the TD should still act promptly to address the needs of residents living in Siu Hong Court, Tuen Mun rural areas and the future Area 54, instead of leaving it until the third quarter of 2017 to increase the service frequency of Routes 67M and 67X;
- (iv) It was opined that the TD's plan to increase bus resources for Routes 67M and 67X was a measure to prepare for the future growth of the population in Area 54. It was estimated that some 17 000 people would live in Area 54 Site 2 in the future, and transport facilities should dovetail with the time for residents moving in to their homes. More efforts should also be made to collect residents' opinions before adjustment;
- (v) A Member said that with the present populations of about 10 000 in Siu Hong Court, about 20 000 in Fu Tai Estate and about 20 000 in the area of Prime View, buses were often full during the morning peak hours, and the increase in bus resources for Routes 67M and 67X could just slightly ease the pressure on the bus services. The Member said that according to his research on the service frequency of Route 67X in Mong Kok, buses of the route came at an interval of about 20 to 25 minutes during non-peak hours, whereas there were two buses of Route 58X calling at a bus stop in 20 minutes. Given the additional population of some 40 000 in the future, the addition of merely three buses to Routes 67M and 67X was obviously far from adequate. Moreover, housing estates in Area 54 would be occupied in early 2017, but

half-heartedly, the TD and KMB proposed that additional bus resources for Routes 67M and 67X be provided only in the third quarter of 2017, making it difficult for Members to give an account to residents in the areas concerned; and

- (vi) In addition, it was pointed out that only residents living in Area 54 Site 2 would take Routes 67M and 67X, whereas people in other sites, which were too far away, would choose other means of transport. However, to serve the new population of 40 000, the TD should keep in view the development of the area, arrange transport services accordingly, and observe the situation of students going to and parents escorting their children to nearby schools. As residents would move in Area 54 only in 2017 at the earliest, the impacts on Routes 67M and 67X were still uncertain. What could be done was just to ask the TD to closely monitor the situations.

34. Ms Eva WONG of the TD responded that the TD would keep close tabs on the completion and occupation of housing estates in Area 54 and, if necessary, would join the bus company in considering early enhancement of the service frequency of Routes 67M and 67X to meet the new passenger demand.

35. The Chairman concluded by saying that there was no objection to adding bus resources to Routes 67M and 67X and it was hoped that the TD would implement the proposal as soon as possible. He further indicated that Members should first allow the TD to promptly add three buses to Routes 67M and 67X and request additional buses after residents moved in to the housing estates. In addition, a Member requested the TD to synchronise the addition of bus resources to Routes 67M and 67X with the pace of residents moving in to the housing estates.

Launching Route 258X plying between Po Tin and Kwun Tong Pier during peak hours

36. A Member supported the launch of a trip of Route 258X during peak hours as the morning trips of Route 258D were often full. The Member enquired about the departure time of Route 258X trips during the morning peak hours on Monday to Friday.

37. Another Member, who also supported the launch of Route 258X, said that express routes should be well-received by residents. Besides, she asked the TD whether the new route was launched with new resources or by redeployment of the existing resources of Route 258D. As the service of Route 258D were inadequate, the TD should use new resources to launch Route 258X and specify the departure

time of Route 258X trips.

38. Ms Eva WONG of the TD responded that Routes 258D and 258X would share the same bus fleet and it was tentatively proposed that Route 258X trips would depart from Po Tin at 7:00 a.m. and 7:15 a.m. In fact, if the patronage of Route 258D was persistently high and met the guidelines for service enhancement, the bus company should put in more resources to upgrade the service of Route 258D even without the proposal for Route 258X.

39. The comments of other Members were as follows:

- (i) A Member said it was certainly desirable to launch the morning trips, but she disagreed with the redeployment of Route 258D resources to Route 258X. She enquired of the TD which trip of Route 258D would be redeployed to Route 258X. In fact, there was still space in the bus terminus of Po Tin Estate, which was currently used for parking of KMB buses. She suggested the TD and KMB make good use of the space to launch more routes for the area;
- (ii) A Member indicated that as many residents had to travel to Kowloon East for work, the demand for Route 258D was very strong and the route's buses were often full when they ran to the areas of Tai Hing Estate after passing all large housing estates in Tuen Mun North West. Upon his request, KMB had provided two special trips of Route 258S to address the transport needs. Yet, the services were still not adequate, particularly after the cancellation of two trips of residential coaches operating from Tai Hing Estate to Kowloon East due to the TD's curb on the operation of residential coaches in recent years. Residents had no option but to take Route 258D or walk to more distant bus stops to get on buses. A paper was therefore submitted to propose launching bus services in the areas of Shan King Estate and Tai Hing Estate. The Member held the view that the addition of two Route 258X trips was not adequate, and consideration should be given to dispatching half-vacant buses to end stops or operating special routes to the relief of residents living near the end stops, so that they needed not stand for 1.5 hours on their journeys to Kowloon East;
- (iii) A Member said that while it was desirable to launch Route 258X, the service should not be launched with the bus resources of Route 258D. With different routeing, Routes 258X and 258D should be taken as two separate routes. Moreover, the departure time of Route 258X buses were too early and they might depart at 7:10 a.m. and 7:30 a.m. instead. Some 100 people were affected by the cancellation of two residential coach trips operating from

Tai Hing Estate to Kowloon East. In view of this, the TD should draw reference from the routing of the residential coaches, which headed for Kowloon Bay and Wai Yip Street via Telford Gardens, so that residents could alight there or change to other means of transport for work. He submitted a paper proposing to provide special trips in Tai Hing Estate because residents there had to stand on their journeys until the buses reached Kowloon East during peak hours. To the relief of residents, the TD should not allow places for standees on long-haul routes. The Member hoped the TD would consider providing special trips to serve residents in Shan King Estate and Tai Hing Estate in light of the demand of the areas;

- (iv) In addition, a Member pointed out that if Route 258X was launched by redeployment of resources from Route 258D, the terminus of the route would merely be Kwun Tong Pier rather than Lam Tin, so she would not agree with the proposal. She would only support using new resources to launch the route; and
- (v) A Member added that while supporting the launch of Route 258X, she disagreed with launching it by redeployment of resources from Route 258D. It was because Route 258X would take a route very different from that of Route 258D after travelling via the Interchange, and the trips of Route 258D departures at 7:00 a.m. and 7:15 a.m., though very important, were not adequate. Nevertheless, she would be glad if the TD sought resources elsewhere to launch Route 258X as soon as possible.

40. The Chairman said that some bus services had once been provided by residential coaches; but at present, the TD kept a rein on the services of these coaches but provided little extra bus resources. He reckoned that the TD should let residential coaches operate some routes for the convenience of people travelling to and from urban districts. Summarising the views of Members, the Chairman stated that the TTC supported launching Route 258X without redeploying resources from Route 258D to it and hoped KMB would provide extra bus resources.

41. Ms Eva WONG of the TD responded that Members' views on Route 258X were noted. She indicated that the target group to be served by the proposal was the existing passengers of Route 258D: Route 258X would travel via Kowloon Bay Business Area and Wai Yip Street in Kwun Tong, so passengers might take Route 258X for a direct trip without having to alight at Kwun Tong Road and then go to their workplaces on foot or by other means of transport. The TD proposed that two trips of Route 258X first be launched during the morning peak hours, which would be followed by the launch of two return trips during the afternoon peak hours to further

enhance its services. According to the policies in force, residential bus services should serve to facilitate passengers' transport to railway stations or public transport interchanges nearby, and they were not supposed to exacerbate congestion in urban districts. In this light, the TD had reservations about the suggestion of launching residential bus services operating from Tuen Mun to Lam Tin.

Increasing the service frequency of Route 259X operating from Kwun Tong Pier to Lung Mun Oasis during the afternoon peak hours

42. A Member was glad to see the provision of return trips of Route 259X during the afternoon peak hours, while hoping that the TD would explain whether the bus resources for the above trips would come from other routes.

43. Mr Dennis LEE of KMB responded that the new trips of Route 259X would be launched with new bus resources, so there would be no impacts on other bus routes.

44. Satisfied with KMB's firm response, another Member enquired whether adjustments could be made to the departure time of Route 259X trips during the afternoon peak hours. As these trips, which departed from Yau Tong, were already full when they reached Kwun Tong, Kowloon Bay and Choi Hung, there were still many people queuing for the buses at 7:00 p.m. The queuing scene at the above locations might be ameliorated if the departure time of Route 259X could be slightly staggered and postponed. Besides, he hoped the TD could expedite the provision of return trips of Route 259X during the afternoon peak hours without waiting until the fourth quarter of 2016.

45. The Chairman concluded by saying that no Members were against the above proposal.

Cancelling Route 267S and redeploying its resources to launch Route 267X plying between Siu Hong Court and Lam Tin during peak hours

46. A Member said it was necessary to retain Route 267S despite its low patronage, since there were still some residents in the area of Siu Hong Court going to Tsim Sha Tsui and Mong Kok by bus. As there was just one trip of Route 267S operating in the morning of each weekday, KMB should be able to retain the route. He strongly supported the launch of Route 267X. A questionnaire survey he conducted in the areas of Siu Hong showed that residents in general needed a trip departing for Lam Tin at 7:30 a.m., so he hoped the TD would adjust the departure time of the trip.

47. Ms Eva WONG of the TD responded that the TD and the bus company were aware of the transport needs created by the development of Kowloon East in recent years. To meet these needs, it was proposed that Route 267S be cancelled for its low patronage, so that resources could be redeployed to launch Route 267X operating to Kowloon East. To meet passenger needs, the TD and the bus company would study the feasibility of adjusting the departure time of Route 267X trips.

48. A Member disagreed with the cancellation of Route 267S, because the route served as a supplementary service operating from Monday to Friday, given that West Rail was often full. Besides, the MTR had earlier launched a promotion under which holders of the West Rail monthly pass might enjoy concessions for journeys on some bus routes. This showed that West Rail was saturated and therefore, Route 267S needed to be retained. She welcomed the launch of Route 267X and hoped that in the longer future, special trips could be provided during the afternoon peak hours in addition to the morning peak.

49. The Chairman concluded by saying that the TTC agreed with the launch of Route 267X but opposed the cancellation of Route 267S.

50. Ms Eva WONG of the TD responded that apart from launching Route 267X operating to Kowloon East during the morning peak hours, the TD planned to further enhance special services during the afternoon peak hours in the future: one additional trip would be provided during the morning peak hours, and then one return trip would be provided during the afternoon peak hours from the fourth quarter of 2016, with a target to provide two trips of Route 267X during the morning and afternoon peak hours respectively from the third quarter of 2017.

Increasing the service frequency of Route 960P during the morning peak hours

51. Members had no comment.

Increasing the service frequency of Routes B3A and B3X in accordance with the guidelines

52. While having no strong view on the proposal to increase the service frequency, a Member said the service of Route B3 was suspected to be skewed towards cross-boundary passengers as it operated at a 30-minute headway despite the population of nearly 100 000 around Tuen Mun Ferry Pier. She suggested adjusting the service frequency of Route B3 to every 15 to 20 minutes.

53. A Member indicated that the TD should explore ways to improve the services of the Route B3 series. Another Member enquired about the service frequency of Route B3A after an additional bus was provided for it.

54. In his response, Mr KUNG Syu-yan, Operations Manager (Department Two) of the Citybus Limited (“CTB”), proposed that the service frequency of Routes B3A and B3X be increased to meet passenger demand when their patronage met the requirements in the TD’s guidelines. As the patronage of Route B3 was some way lower than that of the above routes and was not up to the level specified in the TD’s guidelines, its service frequency could hardly be increased in the current programme. When the patronage of Route B3 rose, CTB would be willing to propose an increase in its service frequency in the Bus Route Planning Programme or to the TD directly in case of urgent needs. For the time being, CTB would continue to work in line with the TD’s arrangements.

55. The comments of other Members were as follows:

- (i) The service frequency of 20 minutes was hardly acceptable. Moreover, passengers were inconvenienced by the unstable frequency of CTB route operating at a 30-minute headway and by the absence of a mobile application on the estimated bus arrival time system. He recalled that CTB had proposed the development of the mobile application on the estimated bus arrival time system even earlier than KMB, but it was unsatisfactory that the current progress of the technological development was slow and the service frequency was not enhanced. CTB considered nothing but the patronage of routes, so it cared only about the service of Route B3X with no intention to improve Routes B3 and B3A;
- (ii) A Member pointed out that many residents living around Tuen Mun Ferry Pier went to Tuen Mun Town Centre by various means of transport for transfer to Route B3X, but CTB had never studied the patronage of these passengers. She remembered that there had been a CTB representative saying that the service frequency of more than 20 minutes was not acceptable, but Route B3 still operated at a 30-minute headway via Tuen Mun Town Centre, so CTB did not use resources in a fair manner. She was not against the increase of the service frequency, but opining that CTB should serve residents around Tuen Mun Ferry Pier and in Area 18 as well;
- (iii) It was pointed out that residents in the areas of Siu Lun Court and Tsui Ning Garden originally preferred to take Route B3, but they eventually chose to take the Light Rail or taxis to Tuen Mun Town Centre for transfer to Route B3X, because they could neither estimate the service frequency of Route B3

nor did they want to wait 30 minutes in vain because of lost trips. CTB should review the operation of Route B3, avoid skewing its services to Route B3X, and increase the service frequency of Route B3. This would help easing the pressure on the frequency of Route B3X while saving the residents the journey to Tuen Mun Town Centre for transfer to Route B3X;

- (iv) The service frequency of 30 minutes would only drive residents around Tuen Mun Ferry Pier to give up on Route B3. Any route operating at a more than 30-minute headway was unacceptable in Tuen Mun. The TD should accede to Members' views and resume the original service frequency of Route B3; and
- (v) The paper stated that Route B3A currently operated at a 25 to 35 minutes' headway and it was planned that an additional bus would be provided only in the fourth quarter of 2017. A Member guessed that this served to forestall Members' criticism that the frequency of Route B3A had fallen short of the previous standard of every 25 to 30 minutes. She had long suggested Route B3A operate at a 15 to 20 minutes' headway on Saturday and during peak hours on Monday to Friday, but under the current proposal, the addition of bus resources would be effected as late as 2017, subject to patronage. The TD should promptly increase the frequency of the morning services on Monday to Friday to every 15 to 20 minutes.

56. The Chairman said that the original journey time of Route B3 was one hour and 20 minutes, so he requested CTB to launch an express route of B3X; but at present, the TD should study the bus resources required by the routes under the Route B3 series to meet residents' demand.

57. Mr KUNG Syu-yan of CTB responded as follows:

- (i) Residents who knew that short trips to the Mainland would be organised might provide information such as the time and number of people by fax or phone beforehand, and CTB would, as always, arrange special trips for them. This could also avoid impacts on the existing weekend morning bus services to commuting residents;
- (ii) In fact, the service frequency of Route B3 had also been increased. For instance, school bus-like trips had been provided at Shenzhen Bay at 7:10 a.m. and 7:15 a.m. to take students to schools around Tuen Mun Ferry Pier. Facilitating arrangements for after-school hours would be also made as far as possible to meet the transport needs of students;
- (iii) The fourth quarter of 2017 was merely the estimated time for the increase in service frequency. If patronage met the TD's guidelines, it was possible for

CTB to put the proposal into early implementation;

- (iv) When the new franchise of CTB commenced, it had been proposed that the estimated arrival time system for franchised bus routes on Hong Kong Island should be put into full operation and available for use on the company's mobile application and website in 2018. After the development of pages for the application's basic operation, the databases had to be further updated and developed before the system was put into real operation. CTB would do the preparations step by step. After confirming the proposal with the TD, it would invite tenders and examine qualified contractors for acquisition and installation of the supporting equipment for the system, and match it with the database before the function operated. It was thus expected that the system could only be commissioned in 2018. Yet, CTB would expedite the introduction of the estimated arrival time function to the relevant buses as far as possible; and
- (v) While operating the Route B3 series in accordance with the TD-approved schedule, CTB would also increase or adjust its trips to reduce the number of waiting passengers at the boundary, fulfilling its normal responsibility as a bus company by answering passenger needs.

58. Ms Eva WONG of the TD added that as the CTB representative explained, the implementation date of this proposal was an estimated time. She believed that the bus company would be willing to make early facilitating arrangements if there was any significant increase in patronage that warranted adjustments to services.

59. A Member believed that as there were many groups in the district organising tours, it was difficult for them to arrange special trips with CTB on every occasion. As residents around Tuen Mun Ferry Pier and those living in the southeast areas and Area 18 could hardly be sure about the service frequency of Route B3, they often resorted to take other means of transport for transfer to Route B3X. In her view, CTB should adjust the service frequency of Route B3 and provide data on passengers' transfer.

60. A Member was dissatisfied with the TD's response and suggested passing this issue to a working group for follow-ups. Resources were taken away from Routes B3, B3A and B3M to achieve a significant increase in the service frequency of Route B3X, but actually Route B3 could also serve to divert passengers from Route B3X and therefore, the service frequency of Route B3 should be increased to serve local residents. The bus services should not be provided only for tourists or people going to shop at Tuen Mun Town Centre.

61. Another Member asked why the service frequency of Route B3A had been changed to every 25 to 35 minutes. The Member said that CTB should not change the frequency on its own, as Members had noted that delays had already occurred before when the route operated at a 30-minute headway. Moreover, CTB actually had spare bus resources, as evidenced by the fact that it could arrange special trips for the groups, so the company should put in more bus resources without waiting until the fourth quarter of 2017.

62. The Chairman concluded by saying that Members' concerns would be conveyed to the Working Group on Tuen Mun External Traffic for further follow-ups.

Working Group
on Tuen Mun
External Traffic

Launching Route 962E plying between So Kwun Wat and Taikoo/Quarry Bay during peak hours

63. The Chairman remarked that while it was good to launch the new route, other routes should not be cancelled as a result.

64. A Member said any new routes were welcomed and residents living along the above route should have demand for its service. But at present, no bus services to Taikoo or Quarry Bay were available in the Castle Peak Road section from Sam Shing Estate and Hanford Garden to Tai Lam Chung. The Member hoped the route would start at Sam Shing Estate to benefit more residents. Besides, she suggested two outbound and two inbound trips of Route 962E be provided during peak hours. She also hoped CTB would explain its ideas in designing the route and its stops.

65. Another Member indicated that he was always in support of and eager for bus companies' service enhancement. He had suggested increasing the service frequency of Routes 962X and 962C before, but CTB had replied that no bus resources were available. Nonetheless, it had adequate resources to launch Route 962E at present. CTB should not respond to Members' demands with excuses, which was unfair to Members. He hoped the TD would give an account.

66. The Chairman said he raised no objection to the launch of Route 962E, but disagreed with the proposed routeing. As the Member of the constituency concerned, he did not hope the starting point of the route was located at So Kwun Wat (Avignon), and suggested the route operate via locations such as Chi Lok, Tuen Mun Town Centre, Sam Shing and the Interchange to bring convenience to residents living at places along Castle Peak Road. He also hoped that the TD would not replace the

trips of Route 962 with those of Route 962E in the future, repeating the mistake of replacing Route 962 with Route 962B.

67. Ms Eva WONG of the TD responded that she noted Members' views on Route 962E, and the new Route 962E could provide a convenient cross-harbour bus service during the morning and afternoon peak hours for commuting residents who lived between So Kwun Wat and Sham Tseng.

68. The Chairman said he did not agree that Route 962E should operate via Sham Tseng, worrying this would only prejudice the benefits of Tuen Mun residents.

69. Mr KUNG Syu-yan of CTB gave the following responses to Members' enquiries:

- (i) Route 962E would only provide a limited service during the morning peak hours and consideration would be given to increasing its service frequency in light of passenger demand;
- (ii) The replacement of Route 962 by Route 962B was entirely different from the present proposal for Route 962E in that the previous bus route rationalisation proposal did not involve trips provided during the morning peak hours;
- (iii) Avignon was the only choice for the starting point of Route 962E, because there was no adequate parking space available at locations such as Chi Lok and Sam Shing Terminus for the bus company to set up parking, waiting and bus regulator facilities, and the choices of locations for departures of special trips were also limited (for example, it was difficult for special trips of Route 962 to depart from Gold Coast);
- (iv) Route 962E was proposed to come into service in the fourth quarter of 2017. As the route was a new service, it was necessary to make assessment based on various factors such as the development and population of the areas and the transport network nearby, while step-by-step implementation was also required. Therefore, no parallel should be drawn between the new service of Route 962E and the additional trip of the existing Route 962X at 8:30 a.m.; and
- (v) If the patronage of Route 962C rises, the bus company would also consider increasing its service frequency in accordance with the TD's guidelines.

70. A Member hoped CTB would consider implementing the plan for Route 962E promptly to answer the transport needs of residents living in the area of Avignon, as there were currently no public transport services available around Avignon.

71. A Member concurred with the views of the Chairman, agreeing with the launch of Route 962E but disagreeing with its proposed routeing. He also worried that the proposal could only serve the interests of Sham Tseng residents at the expense of Tuen Mun residents. Besides, he knew that CTB would cease to operate some Hong Kong Island routes, so he hoped the resources concerned could be redeployed to Tuen Mun to serve its residents.

72. The Chairman reiterated that he agreed with the launch of Route 962E provided that the needs of residents living along Castle Peak Road were also addressed, and he disagreed with the route operating via Sham Tseng. If the TD did not accept the routeing he suggested (e.g. operating via places such as Chi Lok, Sam Shing and the Interchange), he would not support the proposal.

73. A Member indicated that as there was no bus company willing to provide services for residents in the area of Avignon, she hoped CTB's proposal on Route 962E would not come under objection just because of concerns over its routeing. In fact, the proposed routeing of Route 962E covered two constituencies as the route would operate via the Avignon to Tai Lam section of Castle Peak Road; therefore, it could serve the residents of the two constituencies. Besides, only one additional trip of Route 962E would be provided under the current proposal, so presumably, the mistake once made in the case of Route 962B would not be repeated. Therefore, she hoped CTB could provide public transport services in the area of Avignon as soon as possible to serve the needs of residents there.

74. The Chairman responded that although only one additional trip of Route 962E would be provided under the current proposal, more trips might be provided in the future. In view of this, he would not consider CTB's proposal on Route 962E unless CTB promised that no more than one additional trip of the route would be provided.

75. A Member agreed that Route 962E should operate via the Interchange before heading for urban districts, and suggested the issue concerning the launch of Route 962E be passed to the Working Group on Tuen Mun External Traffic for further follow-ups.

76. The Chairman concluded by agreeing with the above suggestion.

Working Group
on Tuen Mun
External Traffic

Enhancing Route A33 to a whole-day service and launching express trips

77. A Member expressed support for the proposal. Moreover, she pointed out that the TTC had discussed the proposal on Route E33P in the previous year but the service enhancement had not been implemented as yet. She therefore hoped the TD could give an account and provide the relevant data.

78. Ms Eva WONG of the TD responded that the TD proposed enhancing Route A33 to a whole-day service in order to serve residents living in the areas of So Kwun Wat and Gold Coast, where no franchised bus services to the airport were available. The TD also proposed that express trips of the route be provided, plying between the airport and the locations of Tuen Mun Town Centre and Goodview Garden via Tuen Mun Road.

79. The comments of other Members were as follows:

- (i) An enquiry was made about the details of the provision of express trips of Route A33, especially the arrangements for the coordinated services with a 30-minute headway, and how the public could identify the express trips;
- (ii) A Member asked about the source of buses for the service enhancement of Route A33 and queried about the urgency of enhancing the route to a whole-day service. Moreover, as LWB had indicated in the previous year that Route E33P would be enhanced to a whole-day service from the third quarter of 2016, she would like to know the progress;
- (iii) A Member welcomed the proposal to enhance Route A33 to a whole-day service, and requested LWB to give an account of its plan to enhance the service of Route E33P. Besides, compared with the some 70% difference between the fares of Routes A31 and E31 plying between Tsuen Wan and the airport, there was an even more than 90% difference between the fares of Routes A33 and E33 plying between Tuen Mun and the airport. LWB was requested to give an explanation in this regard;
- (iv) A Member welcomed the proposal to enhance Route A33 to a whole-day service. Moreover, he requested LWB to give an account of the progress of the service enhancement of Route E33P. He also hoped that LWB would pay more attention to the strong demand for the route during the morning peak hours on Monday to Friday (especially at Glorious Garden and Sun Tuen Mun Centre);
- (v) A Member said the service of Route A33, though beneficial to residents living along the route on Castle Peak Road, failed to cater for the needs of residents in Chi Lok, while the existing interchange discounts could hardly be an effective solution. Besides, the Member reckoned that not only were the

services of LWB inadequate to meet the reasonable expectations of the public, but the bus company was even unable to monopolise the market of transport services to and from the airport. He therefore requested the TD to make coordinating arrangements and follow up on this;

- (vi) The TD was requested to consider providing fare concessions on Route A33 or introduce monthly tickets for commuters who travelled to and from the airport every day;
- (vii) Support was given to the proposal to enhance Route A33 to a whole-day service;
- (viii) A Member requested enhancing Routes E33 and E33P to whole-day services and urged the TD to help the bus company concerned to satisfy its needs for facilities such as parking spaces. Furthermore, she suggested passing the issue in relation to enhancing Routes E33 and E33P to whole-day services to the Working Group on Tuen Mun External Traffic for follow-ups;
- (ix) It was hoped that the TD would show its goodwill by launching the whole-day service of Route E33P in addition to strengthening the service of Route A33;
- (x) A Member indicated that for residents living along Castle Peak Road, they had used to go to the Interchange for transfer to airport shuttle buses when they wanted to travel to the airport by public transport except taxi. After years of striving, the proposal on the whole-day bus service of Route A33 operating with a one-hour headway was worked out eventually. Therefore, she would support the proposal and hoped LWB would provide the service as soon as possible. Besides, Route E33 was more in demand than Route A33 among commuters travelling to and from the airport, but the TD and LWB decided on Route A33 for service enhancement. Besides, the routes of some existing bus services operating to and from the airport overlapped with each other, whereas some places in the district were not covered by bus services. The Member requested the TD and LWB to give reasons for this; and
- (xi) A Member concurred with the above view and hoped the TD and LWB would consider providing airport bus services in places such as Siu Hong and Prime View for the benefits of residents with the transport need.

80. The Chairman supported the proposal to enhance Route A33 to a whole-day service and hoped the service could be launched as soon as possible. Moreover, he opined that the TD and LWB should review the current fare of Route A33 and suggested passing this matter together with the discussion item on enhancing Routes E33 and E33P to whole-day services to the Working Group on Tuen Mun External Traffic for further follow-ups.

Working Group
on Tuen Mun
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81. A Member concurred with the Chairman's suggestion, and suggested that the TD be required to explain at the meeting of the Working Group on Tuen Mun External Traffic the assessment criteria for choosing Route A33 for service enhancement.

82. The Chairman agreed with the suggestion.

Adjusting the service frequency of Route 53 to every 45 minutes

83. The Chairman indicated that some members of the public had voiced opinions on their demand for the service of Route 53, so he disagreed with the TD's proposal to adjust the service frequency of the route to every 45 minutes. Moreover, he hoped the TD would not cancel the service.

84. The comments of other Members were as follows:

- (i) A Member said she could hardly accept the proposal to adjust the service frequency of Route 53 to every 45 minutes and called upon other Members to raise objection. Before this meeting, she had had a site visit at the areas on Castle Peak Road, and found that residents there had very strong demand for Route 53 during the morning peak hours. Moreover, she had conducted a questionnaire survey to collect the public's views on the proposal and learnt that the public disagreed with adjusting the service frequency of Route 53 to every 45 minutes. She hoped the TD and KMB would take these views into consideration. Besides, the service frequency of Routes 52X and 61M was low, so the service of Route 53 could serve as a supplement to these routes. If the TD decided to reduce the service hours of Route 53, the burden on Routes 52X and 61M might probably increase;
- (ii) A Member opposed the proposal to adjust the service frequency of Route 53 to every 45 minutes and suggested increasing it to every 20 minutes;
- (iii) A Member indicated that as trips of Route 53 often delayed, it sometimes took some 45 minutes to wait for a trip. She therefore concurred with the above Member's view that the service frequency should be increased to every 20 minutes;
- (iv) A Member pointed out that the problems of delayed and lost trips were very serious in Route 53. He considered that it was impossible to further adjust its service frequency to every 45 minutes. Moreover, he disagreed with redeployment of the bus resources so saved to districts outside Tuen Mun;
- (v) A Member said that the low patronage of Route 53 was mainly attributed to its delayed and lost trips. As there were still no alternative routes in the places along the route, the Member reckoned that the TD should try its best to

improve the service of the route instead of considering a reduction of its frequency; and

- (vi) A Member indicated that the main objective of the proposal to cut the service frequency to every 45 minutes was probably to further discourage the public to take Route 53 while solving the problems of delayed and lost trips at the same time. He opined that it was not possible to further cut the frequency of Route 53 as transport services on Castle Peak Road were already acutely inadequate. Besides, he expected that the fares of minibus services in the district would rise immediately if the TD decided to cancel the route. Therefore, he hoped the TD would think carefully.

85. The Chairman concluded by saying that many Members had raised objection to the proposal to adjust the service frequency of Route 53 to every 45 minutes. He hoped the TD would consider their views.

86. Ms Eva WONG of the TD said the department noted Members' views on the proposed adjustment to the service of Route 53, and it would study and consider their views.

Increasing the service frequency of Route 63X and revising its routeing

87. A Member said he would support the proposal if the revision to routeing would not affect the residents living along its existing Tuen Mun bound route. Besides, as the route operated via many places such as Hung Shui Kiu, Chung Uk Tsuen, Nai Wai, Miu Fat Buddhist Monastery and Lam Tei, the buses were almost full when they reached Lam Tei; therefore, he suggested the TD and the bus company consider increasing the service frequency of the route.

88. Ms Eva WONG of the TD responded that no passengers would be affected by the proposal as the revision involved the West Kowloon Corridor section of the routeing of Route 63X only and there was no reduction in the number of stops. On the contrary, the revision could reduce the journey time by about 10 minutes and thus bring more convenience to the public. Yet, as the bus route concerned was a cross-district service, the TD had to further consult other DCs and consolidate the views. If the TD noticed that the patronage of the route rose in the future, it would join the bus company in studying and, as appropriate, adjusting the service.

89. Members who had expressed views hoped the TD would pay more attention to the problem of delayed trips of the route to avoid residents being affected by lost trips.

Action

90. The Chairman said that in view of Members' concerns over the service of the route, the issues would be passed to the Working Group on Tuen Mun External Traffic for further follow-ups.

Working Group
on Tuen Mun
External Traffic

Revising the Tsing Yi bound routeing of Route 68A

91. A Member welcomed the proposal. He requested the TD and KMB to address Tuen Mun rural residents' demand for the services of Routes 68A, 63X and 53, and to consider relocating the bus terminus of Route 68A to Tuen Mun.

92. The Chairman said that the TTC welcomed the proposal and would pass the issue to the Working Group on Tuen Mun External Traffic for further follow-ups.

Working Group
on Tuen Mun
External Traffic

Increasing the service frequency of Route 258P operating from Hung Fuk Estate to Lam Tin during peak hours

93. A Member enquired about the departure time of the trips.

94. Ms Eva WONG of the TD responded that currently there were four trips of Route 258P in total during the morning peak hours. To enhance its service, the TD proposed that two additional trips be provided, and it was preliminarily proposed that the revised departure time for the six Route 258P trips were: 6:55 a.m., 7:10 a.m., 7:20 a.m., 7:30 a.m., 7:40 a.m. and 7:50 a.m.

95. Members supported the above proposal.

Comments on other bus routes

96. A Member said that the TD had changed the daytime service frequency of Route 59A to every one hour in late 2015 without the consent of the TMDC. In view of this, the Member requested the Chairman to pass the issue to the Working Group on Tuen Mun External Traffic for further follow-ups.

97. The Chairman agreed with the suggestion.

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98. A Member indicated that the TD had promised to expand Route 66M to a nine-strong fleet when it cancelled the service of Route 66 in 2013, but the promise had not been fulfilled as yet. He requested the TD to follow up on this, and to

provide all information on bus routes in Tuen Mun for Members' reference.

99. The Chairman agreed with the above Member's views and said that, if necessary, the issue could be passed to the working group for further follow-ups.

[Post-meeting note: at the meeting of the Working Group on Tuen Mun External Traffic on 13 April, the Convenor reminded the TD to promptly provide TTC Members with the information on bus routes in Tuen Mun.]

TD

100. A Member noted that, as stated in the paper, the TD would redeploy the bus resources saved from the modification in Route 57M to Route 961P for service enhancement in accordance with actual passenger demand. In view of this, he would like to know whether the modification would affect the existing service of Route 961, i.e. whether the frequency of Route 961 would be reduced.

101. Mr Dennis LEE of KMB responded that the above proposal would enable redeployment of the bus resources so saved to other bus routes with stronger demand. If there was a need to increase the service frequency of other routes, KMB and the TD would still address it under the mechanism. The modification proposed above had no bearing on the bus resources of Route 961, nor would it result in any reduction in the frequency of Route 961. Besides, KMB and the TD noted Members' views on the service of Route 57M and would further study them to improve its service.

102. A Member suggested again that issues concerning the enhancement of the service of Route 59A be passed to the Working Group on Tuen Mun External Traffic for further follow-ups. The Chairman agreed with this.

103. The Chairman said the TTC had made numerous comments on the Bus Route Planning Programme 2016-2017 for Tuen Mun District. He hoped the representatives of the TD and the bus companies would take them into consideration.

IV. Discussion Items

(A) Concern over Safety of Escalators in West Rail Stations

(TTC Paper No. 13/2016)

Request for Prompt Completion of Conversion of Existing West Rail Line Trains into Eight-car Trains and Monitoring Operation

(TTC Paper No. 16/2016)

104. The TTC discussed the above items together as they were both concerned with the services of the West Rail Line ("WRL"). The Chairman welcomed Ms Annie

LAM of the MTR Corporation Limited (“MTRCL”) to the meeting.

105. Ms Annie LAM of the MTRCL gave the following responses to Paper No. 13/2016:

- (i) Each year the MTRCL invested more than \$6 billion in renovating and maintaining its assets. Also, it had a strict and sound system in place for maintenance of railway network facilities (including escalators);
- (ii) An incident of escalator breakdown caused by a foreign object (a screw) happened in Tuen Mun West Rail Station on 7 January this year. The escalator concerned had been checked on 2 January this year. After the breakdown happened at 8:10 a.m. on 7 January, the MTRCL staff immediately enclosed the escalator and called the contractor concerned for inspection and repairs. After it was found that the breakdown was caused by a screw, a thorough inspection was carried out with the affected and damaged parts of escalator combs and steps replaced. The escalator resumed normal operation at about 3:10 p.m. on that day;
- (iii) All the suppliers and maintenance service providers hired for the MTRCL’s railway networks were contractors registered with the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (“EMSD”). All the inspections, tests and maintenance works carried out by them were in compliance with the requirements of the Lifts and Escalators Ordinance and the code of practice on the relevant design and construction. The escalators came into service only after the EMSD’s examination and approval, and were subject to regular maintenance and inspections by registered contractors approved by the Government. The EMSD would also conduct random sampling checks on their repair and maintenance records;
- (iv) Apart from the annual large-scale maintenance checks, the MTRCL conducted bi-weekly routine inspections and maintenance on its escalators during non-peak hours or after train service hours to ensure their safe and reliable operation. Passengers might use other escalators, lifts or staircases to enter or exit a station during the checks and maintenance;
- (v) She understood Members’ concern on the vulnerability of escalator operation to small foreign objects and the design of escalators. The design of the existing escalator systems met the relevant legal requirements. A safety sensor was installed in an escalator system as an important part of its design. If the safety sensor detected any small objects dropping into and jamming an escalator, it would stop the operation of the escalator and send a signal to the station master’s office for assistance; and
- (vi) Common escalator accidents in recent years included passengers’ loss of

balance, clothes or shoes jammed in the space between escalator steps, combs or plates caused by passengers standing too near the edges of steps, bulky baggage carried by passengers and so forth. The MTRCL always attached great importance to promoting messages on the safe use of escalators to passengers.

106. A proposer of Paper 13/2016 said it was understood that the MTRCL would comply with the law and the EMSD's provisions and requirements. But it was mentioned in the EMSD's written response that "where necessary, the responsible person for an escalator might also explore with the escalator contractor ways to enhance the safety setting of the escalator." In view of this, the Member asked whether the MTRCL would consider improving the design of its escalators to minimise accidents caused by foreign objects, given in particular the fact that the foreign object involved in the said incident was just about one inch long, so various objects on passengers could cause similar incidents again.

107. Ms Annie LAM of the MTRCL gave a supplementary response, saying that safety sensors were installed in escalators under the current mechanism. She added that when the sensors were activated, escalators would cease to operate to ensure safety. There were more than 1 000 escalators in MTR stations for use by numerous passengers. On one hand, the MTRCL ensured the design, inspections and maintenance of escalators were up to the relevant standards, installed sensor-activated devices in escalators and carried out regular repairs and maintenance; on the other hand, it educated passengers about the safe use of escalators. She further said that small foreign objects were not a major cause of escalator incidents and reiterated the common causes of escalator accidents in recent years. The MTRCL would closely adhere to the current stringent repair and maintenance system and step up efforts in promoting the proper way to use escalators among passengers.

108. A Member noted an MTRCL advertisement promoting the message of "stand on the right and hold the handrail". She enquired whether this implied that the MTRCL allowed passengers to walk up or down on the left of an escalator. She said that passengers walking up or down an escalator might fall down easily when the escalator stopped.

109. Ms Annie LAM of the MTRCL concurred with the Member's view. In fact, a reminder was given by the announcement systems and staff in MTR stations, strongly recommending passengers not to walk on escalators while reminding them to hold the handrails and stand firm, to avoid keeping their eyes on mobile phones and

running, and to use lifts when carrying large baggage. The MTRCL would continue to strengthen publicity in this regard.

110. A proposer of Paper 16/2016 noted that eight-car trains had come into service on the WRL on 2 January and expected the MTRCL to further improve and increase compartments in the future. Yet, while the passenger waiting situation had been ameliorated to some extent after the commissioning of eight-car trains, the problems of trains reaching their carrying capacity remained unsolved. The Member hoped the MTRCL would consider increasing train frequency and enhance its services in light of its new project (e.g. the “East-West Corridor” of the Shatin to Central Link and the Tuen Mun South Extension).

111. Ms Annie LAM of the MTRCL responded that since the previous year, the MTRCL had maintained close communication with Members, keeping them updated about the progress of the commissioning of eight-car trains. The first eight-car train had come into service on 2 January and it was expected that 28 WRL trains would be expanded into eight-car trains in 30 months, poised for the works of the “East-West Corridor” of the Shatin to Central Link. In fact, the works for conversion into eight-car trains were quite complicated. First, an existing seven-car train had to be separated into two parts. The many interlinked systems in a car (including the signalling system, braking system, door control system, information system and so forth), which involved more than 1 000 signalling lines and system lines, had to be reconnected during the conversion. After that, the eighth car had to be linked to the other cars with their signalling and system lines connected, and repeated trials on the operation of the train’s systems and equipment had to be conducted during non-service hours. As the first eight-car train had encountered some minor problems on the first day of its service, the MTRCL wanted to spend more time on trials, but the target of completing the conversion into eight-car trains within 30 months remained unchanged. Besides, in view of the growth of the community and population in Tuen Mun, the Government’s Railway Development Strategy Study proposed the construction of the Tuen Mun South Extension. The MTRCL would actively work in line with the Government’s development project.

112. A Member requested the MTRCL to provide the relevant schedules or regularly report on the progress at TTC meetings, so as to facilitate the TTC’s monitoring of the progress.

113. Another Member enquired about the feasibility of further addition of cars to the eight-car trains. Besides, the Member noted that lost trips was a serious problem

for the MTR feeder bus Route 506, and hoped the MTRCL would pay attention to this and enhance its feeder services by aligning the trips of the route with those of WRL trains.

114. Ms Annie LAM of the MTRCL responded that after the works for expansion into eight-car trains, the carrying capacity of WRL trains would rise by about 14%. After the commissioning of the rail line along the “East-West Corridor”, the MTRCL would adjust the service frequency in accordance with passengers’ demand.

115. The Chairman said that time should be allowed for the MTRCL to complete the works for expanding WRL trains into eight-car trains before any study on the feasibility of further addition of cars. He would like the MTRCL to provide the schedules for the above works, and passed the agenda item “Request for Prompt Completion of Conversion of Existing West Rail Line Trains into Eight-car Trains and Monitoring Operation” to the Working Group on Tuen Mun External Traffic for follow-ups.

MTRCL and
Working Group
on Tuen Mun
External Traffic

[Post-meeting note: The MTRCL provided the Working Group on Tuen Mun External Traffic with a written response on the above item on 12 April 2016.]

(B) Request for More Frequent Ferry Trips to Macau and Objection to Charging of Terminal Service Fee

(TTC Paper No. 14/2016)

(Written Response of Marine Department)

116. The Chairman welcomed Mr KUI Kin-ping, Senior Marine Officer/Ferry Terminals, Ms LEUNG Wai-chung, Assistant Marine Controller/Tuen Mun Ferry Terminal (Acting), and Mr YUEN Wai-on, Marine Officer I/Tuen Mun Ferry Terminal, of the Marine Department (“MD”) to the meeting. He said the MD had provided a written response before the meeting and the Secretariat had forwarded it to Members on 9 March.

117. Mr KUI Kin-ping of the MD responded that to answer district demand, the MD had launched an open tender exercise on the cross-boundary ferry services provided at Tuen Mun Ferry Terminal in 2015. The tender exercise had been completed last October and the MD had signed a tenancy agreement with Hongkong Macao Hydrofoil Company Limited (“HMHCL”), under which Tuen Mun Ferry Pier would be commercially operated to provide passenger ferry services from Tuen Mun to Macau or Pearl River Delta. Based on the then existing pier facilities, HMHCL had spent two months on preparations including replacement and reinstatement of the

systems and equipment required for the pier's operation, as well as berthing trials and supporting services. HMFCL had commenced the cross-boundary ferry services starting from 28 January 2016, running four trips per day between Tuen Mun and Macau (Outer Harbour) Ferry Terminal, and two trips per day from Tuen Mun to Shenzhen Airport plus one return trip per day. Starting from 1 March, the services had been enhanced to seven trips per day between Tuen Mun and Macau (Outer Harbour) Ferry Terminal, whereas the frequency of the service to and from Shenzhen Airport remained unchanged due to a low number of passengers.

118. In addition, Ms LEUNG Wai-chung of the MD provided passenger data since 28 January, the commencement date, as follows:

Month	Daily Average Number of Passengers	Average Occupancy Rate
January (28 and 29 January)	946	31.86%
February	1 445	44.23%
March (March 1 to 15)	1 461	25.58%

119. The comments of other Members were as follows:

- (i) A Member fully supported the proposals in the paper. The journey distance from Tuen Mun to Macau was shorter than that from Sheung Wan to Macau, but HMFCL charged passengers a terminal service fee of \$28 for a single Tuen Mun-to-Macau trip, which represented 16% of the fare, so a passenger had to pay an additional \$56 in total for a round trip. The Member hoped government departments could negotiate with or impose monitoring on HMFCL in order that the terminal service fee could be cancelled;
- (ii) A Member said this issue had been raised before. She hoped Tuen Mun Ferry Pier could be operated by the Government so that HMFCL was not required to pay a monthly rent as high as \$4.68 million and the ferry fare could thus be reduced. Residents found it strange that the terminal service fee was charged at Tuen Mun Ferry Pier only, as they did not know the pier was operated commercially. Moreover, she noted that HMFCL's fee was not mentioned in the tenancy terms and asked whether government departments would discuss the fare arrangements with HMFCL or HMFCL could decide on its own the charging of the terminal service fee;
- (iii) A Member noted from MD's data that the Tuen Mun-to-Macau cross-boundary ferry services had potential for development. He wondered

why the Government was unwilling to operate the pier despite the district demand but, on the contrary, took a commercial approach by putting the cross-boundary ferry services at Tuen Mun Ferry Pier up for tender. He opined that what the Government did on the issue of the terminal service fee was unfair to Tuen Mun. He hoped the TTC would request the Transport and Housing Bureau (“THB”) to provide subsidies for HMMHCL to return benefits to the public, otherwise it was unjust to take revenues from rental;

- (iv) The monthly rental had been merely some \$1 million when tenders were invited many years before, but it was surged to \$4.68 million when another tender invitation exercise was conducted in response to district demand, so HMMHCL was compelled to pass the rental cost onto passengers. While there was demand for cross-boundary ferry services among residents in New Territories West, the Government responded that Tuen Mun Ferry Pier should be operated on a commercial basis because there was spare carrying capacity in China Ferry Terminal and Hong Kong - Macau Ferry Terminal. However, it was not only absurd to ask the residents to take buses to urban districts for the ferry services, but unfair to charge them the terminal service fee, which might further increase in the future. It was thus hoped that the MD could re-consider lowering the rental and the terminal service fee;
- (v) A Member said that the termination of the services of Hong Kong North West Express remained fresh in memory. Though not having much confidence in the sustainability of HMMHCL’s operation, he was consoled with the satisfactory passenger figures. As mentioned in the MD’s written response, the \$28 terminal service fee was a commercial decision made by HMMHCL, yet it was possible that the fee would further increase in the future. He hoped the Government would re-consider operating the pier. He asked the MD whether it played a regulatory role on the issue of the terminal service fee and how it would negotiate and review the issue with HMMHCL to safeguard residents’ interests;
- (vi) A Member said the Government should treat the piers in Tuen Mun, Tsim Sha Tsui and Sheung Wan in the same way such that they were operated to serve residents, and it should not single out Tuen Mun Ferry Pier for commercial operation and such a high rental that pushed HMMHCL to charge the \$28 terminal service fee. What the Government did was unfair to Tuen Mun residents;
- (vii) A Member remarked that the Government’s attitude towards Tuen Mun Ferry Pier was not proactive enough and HMMHCL had to operate in the red as a result. The Member worried that the services would cease in the future due to unaffordable costs, and suspected if there was any favouritism towards the

service providers of the other two piers. What the Government was doing could hardly be effective, but only succeeded in indirectly forcing Tuen Mun residents to take buses to urban districts for cross-boundary ferry services. From the point of view of public transport service, the Government should waive the rental on the pier;

- (viii) A Member attributed the problem to the high pier rental, saying that while there were government-operated piers in Kowloon and Hong Kong Island, the pier in New Territories was operated on a commercial basis with HMMHCL suffering business losses. Such a policy was unfair to residents in New Territories; and
- (ix) A Member pointed out that the ferry services between Tuen Mun and Hong Kong Island once provided at Tuen Mun Ferry Pier had been terminated after cross-harbour bus services were available. He said this was an example showing that directions of pier operation should be analysed from multiple angles. In his view, the “user pays” approach was inevitable in today’s society (e.g. in medical services). He suggested observing HMMHCL’s operation in the coming one or two years before reviewing whether to charge the \$28 terminal service fee.

120. The Chairman said that calculating on the basis of 1 000 passenger trips per day on average, HMMHCL might suffer a loss of more than \$100,000 per month after deducting the rental expenditure. After years of hard work, the TTC had once again successfully striven for the provision of cross-boundary ferry services at Tuen Mun Ferry Pier. Members’ efforts should not go down the drain, so the Government should render support to keep the services competitive and sustainable. He hoped the MD would consider Members’ views and suggested that a letter be issued to the THB requesting the Government to provide subsidies, e.g. fuel subsidy or rental reduction/waiver, for HMMHCL to ensure the cross-boundary ferry services could sustain until at least 2019 when the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge was commissioned.

121. A Member added that even if the cross-boundary ferry services at Tuen Mun Ferry Pier had a 100% occupancy rate, the incomes would still be insufficient to cover the pier rental. In his belief, HMMHCL could sustain the services for about two years only because it was under Shun Tak Holdings. Furthermore, he said he had been communicating with the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (“CEDB”) on the cross-boundary ferry services at Tuen Mun Ferry Pier, so he suggested to the Chairman that the letter be issued to the CEDB instead requesting restoration of the old monthly rental of \$1.5 million to \$1.8 million so that HMMHCL

could sustain its operation while offering ferry services at competitive fares.

122. Mr KUI Kin-ping of the MD responded that Hong Kong - Macau Ferry Terminal and China Ferry Terminal were directly operated by the Government, and the \$28 terminal service fee was not mentioned in the tenancy agreement for Tuen Mun Ferry Pier. Besides, he said that the cross-boundary ferry service providers of the three piers might decide the fares and other charges on their own.

123. The Chairman expressed sympathy with the operating difficulties facing HMMHCL. He concluded by saying that the TTC would write to the CEDB putting forward Members' suggestions. He also asked the MD to consider Members' views.

Secretariat
and MD

[Post-meeting note: The above letter was sent to 3 May 2016, and the CEDB indicated in its reply on 5 May that the issue had been passed to the THB for follow-ups and direct response.]

(C) Request for Setting Up Taxi Stand in Vicinity of Nerine Cove and The Sea Crest

(TTC Paper No. 17/2016)

124. A proposer of the paper said a pregnant resident had told him that it was difficult to hire a taxi near Nerine Cove and The Sea Crest unless through taxi-call services on mobile applications. Taxi stand-like facilities had been provided on Fung On Street and Hoi Chu Road with taxis parked there sometimes; but as these locations were not formal taxi stands, there might not always be taxis available for hire by residents. As residents would need taxi services in case of emergency, he suggested providing taxi stands on vacant land in that area (e.g. the government land outside Nerine Cove near the terminus of bus Route 61M and the vacant land outside Tuen Mun Swimming Pool near Hang Fu Street) or converting the taxi stand-like facilities on Fung On Street into a taxi stand. Besides, he enquired about the criteria and procedure for provision of a taxi stand - for example, whether it related to the proportion of population in an area or the Planning Department. The Chairman responded that taxi-related matters should fall on the TD.

125. A Member said the bus stop of Route 61M, though called "Yau Oi South", was not located in Yau Oi Estate. He went on to say that if adequate space and facilities were available in the area, he would support the paper's proposal to provide a taxi stand, as it could not only reduce illegal picking up/setting down of passengers but offer different transport choices for residents living in the housing estates nearby.

126. Another Member indicated that no formal taxi stand was provided on Fung On Street at present, but there were many housing estates nearby, so there were often residents awaiting taxis for hire on that street and this evidenced the demand for taxis in the area. Therefore, the Member hoped the TD would consider the paper's proposal.

127. Ms CHING Hoi-ying of the TD responded that the TD normally set up taxi stands at places with high pedestrian flow, such as MTR stations, major public transport interchanges and large shopping malls, provided that traffic flow would not be thus affected. The areas of Nerine Cove and The Sea Crest specified in the paper did not fall within the places mentioned above, and in the absence of no stopping/parking zones on Fung On Street, Hang Fu Street and Hang Kwai Street, taxis were free to pick up/drop off passengers in the above locations. For these reasons, the TD could not support the paper's proposal at the moment, but it would continue to study the measures to serve the district's demand for taxi services.

128. The Chairman indicated that taxis were often parked on Fung On Street despite the absence of a formal taxi stand there. He would like the TD representative to join the related Members for a site visit there. Besides, he passed this issue to the Working Group on Traffic Problems within Tuen Mun District for follow-ups.

Working Group
on Traffic
Problems within
Tuen Mun
District

(D) Request for Improvement to Facilities of Tuen Mun Road Bus-Bus Interchange
(TTC Paper No. 18/2016)
(Written Responses of KMB, Highways Department and Food and Environmental Hygiene Department)

129. The Chairman welcomed Mr TSE Lai-chi, District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Tuen Mun), and Ms Jone LAM, Senior Health Inspector (Cleansing/Pest Control) (Tuen Mun), of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department ("FEHD") to the meeting. Besides, he said KMB and the FEHD had provided written responses before the meeting and the Secretariat had forwarded them to Members on 3 and 9 March.

130. A proposer of the paper would like to comment on the written responses of the department and the bus company. She welcomed the works for the permanent toilets which, as mentioned by the FEHD, would be carried out in the second quarter of this year. She remarked that the heat insulation measures mentioned in the HyD's written response were not inadequate, and hoped that government departments would

respond to the proposal put forward earlier on the installation of fans at the Interchange. KMB had stated that the proposal to install Octopus Add Value Machines at the Interchange would be implemented in late 2015, but it seemed that there was no completion time for the installation. She enquired about the details of the application for land grant and any problems encountered therein. To her understanding, KMB's plan was to set up a customer services centre with an area similar to that of a vending machine, a drinking fountain or a regulator kiosk for selling souvenirs and providing Octopus add value service. Therefore, she did not understand why time was needed for land grant.

131. Mr TSE Lai-chi of the FEHD responded that to provide better services for residents, the FEHD would build permanent toilets at the urban bound and the Tuen Mun bound sides of the Interchange. He said that the works for the toilet on the Tuen Mun bound side of the Interchange had been commenced and were expected to be completed in the middle of this year, while the design drawings for the toilet on the urban bound side had been completed and the works would be commenced as soon as possible.

132. The comments of other Members were as follows:

- (i) A Member said that when papers were submitted in the previous term to discuss heat insulation facilities at the Interchange, it had been mentioned that the heat insulating covers of the Interchange were not very effective in summer and, in particular, the temperature at the urban bound side of the Interchange was very high. The HyD's written response showed that the department was not receptive to Members' opinions (e.g. provision of an additional layer of heat insulating materials on the cover or installation of fans). The Member was disappointed that the HyD had made little progress over the previous six months, and hoped it could provide additional facilities before summer this year in a bid to reduce the temperature at the Interchange and residents' dissatisfaction;
- (ii) A Member supported the proposals in the paper, including improvements to the heat insulating covers of the Interchange. He was glad to know that a timetable was eventually drawn up for provision of permanent toilets at the Interchange, and hoped the department concerned could complete the works as soon as possible. The proposal to set up Octopus Add Value Machines at the Interchange had been raised many years before, but land had not been granted by the District Lands Office, Tuen Mun ("DLO/TM"), as yet. Some residents had said that sometimes they had to pay fares in cash because their Octopus card had a negative value and the Member had the same experience;

therefore he hoped the above facilities could be provided promptly for the convenience of the public. He would like to know the considerations of the DLO/TM in examining and approving the land application and asked, for example, whether it was because the size of the customer services kiosk was too large that KMB's application had not yet been approved;

- (iii) A Member indicated that Members of the previous term had on many occasions made recommendations to the departments on the proposals in the paper, but after listening to Members' views, the departments might need to further consider them. As the Interchange was situated an exposed place, some residents had suggested to her that rain shields should be put up there to shelter people from rain and cold wind. She also agreed that fans should be installed at the Interchange to facilitate heat dissipation, making it less hard for passengers to wait for buses there. Besides, she indicated that Octopus add value service was relevant to Paper No. 19/2016, as residents could not enjoy interchange discounts and had to pay fares in cash if their Octopus card had a negative value. In addition, she enquired why the application for the land grant for the customer services kiosk was made by KMB. She hoped that anyway, sound basic facilities could be provided at the Interchange as soon as possible;
- (iv) A Member said that Members' views had been put forward before. He cited the example of San Tin bus stop, which had been converted from a bus stop with simple covers into the present air-conditioned stop, to show that it was possible for the Interchange to be enhanced in the future. He believed that the Interchange, which represented the culmination of years of hard work by the TTC, should be further upgraded in the long run to house a convenient store, a light refreshment kiosk or even a restaurant in addition to the permanent toilets and Octopus add value service facilities. He also opined that the covers of the Interchange could be elevated for more effective heat insulation;
- (v) A Member was glad about the progress made on the permanent toilets. Yet, she opined that the covers of the Interchange were not effective in shielding people from wind, rain and sunlight, so the HyD should improve the the environment for passengers awaiting buses. With regard to Octopus add value service, it had been mentioned at a meeting in the previous term that it was necessary for the DLO/TM to change the land use before Octopus Add Value Machines could be set up in a light refreshment kiosk or a convenient store at the Interchange. The Member enquired about the progress of land approval;
- (vi) A Member said he had recommended that mid-night bus services, permanent

toilets, Octopus add value service and section fares, etc. be provided at the Interchange when the Tuen Mun bound side of the Interchange was commissioned in July 2013. He hoped the departments would promptly study and implement the recommendations so that passengers could enjoy not only facilities but fare concessions on bus services;

- (vii) A Member asked whether Octopus add value service was operated by add value machines or manually, whether security and service hours were taken into consideration, and how the progress of the DLO/TM's land approval was; and
- (viii) A Member said that the Interchange had been seen by the TD and other departments as the model of interchanges in Hong Kong since its commissioning, so its facilities should be further improved. He suggested that misting fans be installed to lower the temperature at the Interchange during hot weather. He also suggested that solar panels be installed on the covers of the Interchange not only to serve as sunshades and enhance energy efficiency, but even to provide charging services.

133. The Chairman said that the departments should consider Members' views and the issue concerning heat insulating covers could be passed to the Working Group on Tuen Mun External Traffic for follow-ups. He invited the representative of the DLO/TM to give a response on the progress of land approval.

134. Mr MOK Hing-cheung of the DLO/TM responded that the customer services kiosk proposed by KMB would be operated as a convenient store and Octopus value adding was merely one of its services. In view of this, the DLO/TM had urged KMB to elaborate on its proposal.

135. A Member asked whether Octopus add value service had to be provided by a customer services kiosk of KMB. Another Member said she had thought that the customer services kiosk mentioned by KMB would only provide Octopus add value service in addition to selling souvenirs. She added that if it was operated as a convenient store, an open tender exercise should be conducted. She supported passing this issue to the working group concerned for follow-ups.

136. A Member reckoned that the TD should clarify whether the understanding of the above Member was correct. Another Member remarked that the department should also clarify whether the Interchange could house both a customer services kiosk for souvenir sale and a convenient store. Besides, a Member asked about the TD's role in the current application in respect of the customer services kiosk and the

reasons for granting the operating right of the customer services kiosk to KMB.

137. Mr MOK Hing-cheung of the DLO/TM added that KMB would be asked to further clarify the details of its plan to operate the customer services kiosk as a convenient store.

138. Mr Mark MOK of the TD responded that the department had been reporting on the progress of the issue at the meetings of the TTC or its working groups. He further pointed out that it was common for bus companies to set up customer services kiosks at bus termini such as Star Ferry Pier in Tsim Sha Tsui, Mei Foo Station and Lam Tin Station. A bus company wishing to set up a customer services kiosk at a public transport facility might make an application to the Lands Department directly. The TD knew that KMB was interested to apply for setting up a facility at the Interchange and the facility would be similar to the customer services kiosk at the Tai Lam Tunnel Bus-Bus Interchange, which was popular among passengers. The TD supported the setting up of the customer services kiosk as it could provide better services for passengers.

139. A Member enquired whether other bus companies were aware of KMB's application in respect of the customer services kiosk.

140. Mr WAN Yin-chiu of KMB added that it was the company's hope to answer Members' request and passengers' need for Octopus add value service at the Interchange, but as explained at a previous meeting, the Octopus company believed that security-wise it was not feasible to set up add value machines at the Interchange, so consideration was given to providing the add value service manually. Besides, the customer services kiosk at the Tai Lam Tunnel Bus-Bus Interchange provided passengers with services, such Octopus value adding and sale of daily necessities and food. By reference to its operation, KMB believed that a similar facility could be provided at the Interchange in Tuen Mun, so it made an application to the Lands Department and would further negotiate with the department.

141. The Chairman concluded by saying that this issue would be passed to the Working Group on Tuen Mun External Traffic for follow-ups.

Working Group
on Tuen Mun
External Traffic

(E) Request for Alignment of Section Fares at Tuen Mun Road Bus-Bus Interchange and Other Bus Stops in Tuen Mun
(TTC Paper No. 19/2016)
(Written Responses of KMB and LWB)

142. The Chairman said KMB and LWB had provided written responses before the meeting and the Secretariat had sent them to Members on 3 and 9 March respectively.

143. A proposer of the paper said it had been suggested for many times that as the Interchange was located in Tuen Mun, the section fares at the Interchange should be aligned with those at other bus stops in Tuen Mun. The section fare of Tuen Mun bound buses at their first stops in Tuen Mun - for example, Tuen Mun Town Centre - had been \$4 or more before. KMB had pushed ahead with the implementation of bus services modifications and introduce section fares at the Interchange on 19 December last year. However, after its commissioning, the Interchange had become the first stop in Tuen Mun for buses coming from urban districts, but the section fares KMB charged there were different from those charged at other bus stops in Tuen Mun. If a passenger took a bus in an urban district and his Octopus card had a negative value after paying the fare, he had to pay a higher section fare in cash at the Interchange. As just a few passengers would be affected, the Member suggested that the bus company should align the section fares at the Interchange with those at other bus stops in Tuen Mun.

144. Mr Dennis LEE of KMB and Mr Mark MOK of the TD had no comments on the suggestion put forward by the proposer for the paper. Dissatisfied with this, the proposer of the paper requested passing the issue to the Working Group on Tuen Mun External Traffic for follow-ups.

145. The Chairman said that the attending representatives would probably give similar responses if the issue was passed to the Working Group on Tuen Mun External Traffic for follow-ups.

146. A Member indicated that as passengers in general believed that fares correlated with journey distances, the bus company should give an account of this.

147. Mr Mark MOK of the TD explained that the full fares of bus routes were determined according to the scale of fares approved by the Executive Council, whereas section fares and concessions were determined on a commercial basis by bus companies. The TD always encouraged to the bus companies to, where practicable, provide fare concessions and section fares having regard to their operation and the

views raised by Members.

148. The Chairman said that while the location of the Interchange might not fall within Tuen Mun town, section fares there should be lowered as far as journey distances were concerned. For instance, if the section fare of a journey from Tsuen Wan to Tuen Mun was \$6, the section fare at the Interchange should be \$4, because upon arrival at the Interchange, the bus had finished two-third of its journey.

149. A Member said the fares of the MTR feeder buses running in neighbouring areas were \$4 to \$6, which were lower than the section fare of \$8 currently charged at the Interchange. Most residents assessed fares based on journey distances, so it was unreasonable to charge an \$8 section fare at the Interchange. The department and the bus company should accept positive opinions and lower the section fares at the Interchange, so as to boost the public's and Members' trust with it.

150. The Chairman concluded by saying that this issue would be passed to the Working Group on Tuen Mun External Traffic for follow-ups.

Working Group
on Tuen Mun
External Traffic

V. Reporting Items

Report by TD

(TTC Paper No. 20/2016)

151. Members perused the paper and had no comment.

VI. Any Other Business and Date of Next Meeting

152. There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 2:53 p.m. The next meeting would be held at 9:30 a.m. on 13 May 2016 (Friday).

Tuen Mun District Council Secretariat

Date: 20 April 2016

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