

**Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Traffic and Transport Committee
under the Yuen Long District Council in 2021**

Date: 5 July 2021 (Monday)

Time: 2:30 p.m. to 4:55 p.m.

Venue: Conference Room, Yuen Long District Council, 13/F., Yuen Long Government Offices, 2 Kiu Lok Square, Yuen Long

<u>Present</u>	<u>Time of Arrival</u>	<u>Time of Withdrawal</u>
Vice Chairman : Mr CHAN Shu-fai	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Members : Mr AU Kwok-kuen	(2:40 p.m.)	(4:05 p.m.)
Ms CHAN Mei-lin	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Ms CHAN Sze-nga	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr CHEUNG Chi-yeung, Felix	(2:45 p.m.)	(End of the meeting)
Mr FONG Ho-hin	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr HAU Man-kin	(3:05 p.m.)	(4:25 p.m.)
Mr HO Wai-pan	(3:55 p.m.)	(End of the meeting)
Mr KWAN Chun-sang	(2:45 p.m.)	(End of the meeting)
Mr KWOK Man-ho	(2:55 p.m.)	(End of the meeting)
Mr LAI Kwok-wing, Samuel	(Beginning of the meeting)	(4:40 p.m.)
Ms LAI Po-wa	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr LAI Wing-tim	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr LAM Ting-wai	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr LEE Chun-wai	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr LEE Wai-fung, Deco	(Beginning of the meeting)	(4:35 p.m.)
Mr LEUNG Tak-ming	(2:40 p.m.)	(4:15 p.m.)
Mr MAK Ip-sing	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr MO Kai-hong	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr NG Hin-wang	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr SHEK King-ching	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Mr WONG Wai-yin, Zachary	(Beginning of the meeting)	(End of the meeting)
Ms WONG Wing-sze	(2:40 p.m.)	(End of the meeting)
Mr YOUNG Ka-on	(2:35 p.m.)	(2:55 p.m.)

Secretary : Miss TANG Hei-lam, Sophia Executive Officer (District Council)2,
Yuen Long District Office

In Attendance

Miss KWONG Hoi-ying, Rachel	Assistant District Officer (Yuen Long)2
Mr TSANG Kwong-wing, Kelvin	Senior Transport Officer/Yuen Long 1, Transport Department
Ms CHUNG Man, Emily	Senior Transport Officer/Yuen Long 2, Transport Department
Mr CHOW Yu-chung, James	Transport Officer/Bus (Lantau), Transport Department
Miss YU Wing-sze, Natalie	Senior Transport Officer/Bus (Lantau), Transport Department
Miss FOK Sze-man, Grace	Engineer/Yuen Long South, Transport Department
Mr MA Yik-kau, Victor	Engineer/ Tuen Mun Central, Transport Department
Mr LEUNG Ling-yin, Gary	Head of Operational Planning Department, Long Win Bus Company Limited
Mr TANG Ching-kit, Desmond	Assistant Manager (Planning & Development), Long Win Bus Company Limited
Mr YEUNG Chun-wai, Kelvin	Division Manager, Operations (New Territories West), Long Win Bus Company Limited
Mr WAN Wai-yim, Stephen	Manager (Operations), Long Win Bus Company Limited
Ms LEUNG Ka-yan, Betsy	Manager (Public Affairs), Long Win Bus Company Limited

Absent

Mr CHEUNG Sau-yin
Mr CHAN King-lun, Kisslan
Mr KWONG Chun-yu
Mr LAM Chun
Mr LI Chung-chi
Ms NG Yuk-ying

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Opening Remarks

1. In the absence of the Chairman due to illness, the Vice-chairman would preside over the meeting in his place.
2. The Vice Chairman welcomed Members and government department representatives to the special meeting of the Traffic and Transport Committee (“T&TC”) under the Yuen Long District Council (“YLDC”).

Item I: Questions raised by Members

- (1) **Mr AU Kwok-kuen, Mr CHAN King-lun, Kisslan, Ms CHAN Mei-lin, Mr CHAN Shu-fai, Ms CHAN Sze-nga, Mr CHEUNG Chi-yeung, Felix, Mr CHEUNG Sau-yin, Mr FONG Ho-hin, Mr HO Wai-pan, Mr KWAN Chun-sang, Mr KWOK Man-ho, Mr LAI Kwok-wing, Samuel, Mr LAM Ting-wai, Mr LI Chung-chi, Mr LEE Wai-fung, Deco, Mr LEE Chun-wai, Mr LEUNG Tak-ming, Mr MO Kai-hong, Mr KWOK Man-ho, Mr NG Hin-wang, Ms NG Yuk-ying, Ms LAI Po-wa, Mr HONG Chin-wah, Mr MAK Ip-sing, Mr SHEK King-ching, Mr LAM Chun, Mr KWAN Chun-sang, Mr HAU Man-kin, Ms WONG Wing-sze, Mr Hon KWONG Chun-yu and Mr WONG Wai-yin, Zachary proposed to discuss “Request for a review of the airport bus routes in Yuen Long District”
(T&TC Paper No. 59/2021)**
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2. The Vice Chairman welcomed the following persons to the meeting:

Transport Department

Transport Officer/Bus (Lantau)

Senior Transport Officer/bus (Lantau)

Engineer/Tuen Mun Central

Mr CHOW Yu-chung, James

Miss YU Wing-sze, Natalie

Mr MA Yik-kau, Victor

Long Win Bus Company Limited (LWB)

Head of Operational Planning Department	Mr LEUNG Ling-yin, Gary
Assistant Manager (Planning & Development)	Mr TANG Ching-kit, Desmond
Division Manager, Operations (New Territories West)	Mr YEUNG Chun-wai
Manager (Operations)	Mr WAN Wai-yim
Manager (Public Affairs)	Ms LEUNG Ka-yan

3. Members' views on the issue were summarised as follows: :

- (1) A Member pointed out that the airport bus routes in Yuen Long District had been diverted to Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel since 20 June this year. Although it was more direct for the buses to go via Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel than via Tai Lam Tunnel according to the journey distance, in actual operation, for the route to go via Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Tunnel, they would drive pass two congestion black spots, namely the section of Yuen Long Highway leading to Tuen Mun Road via Fuk Hang Tsuen and Wong Chu Road connecting to Tuen Mun Road;
- (2) A Member said that many complaints had been received from the public about being late for work from taking the bus during the morning peak hours due to the traffic congestion at Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel. They hoped that the problem of unstable journey duration during the morning and afternoon peak hours would be dealt with in a more focused manner; the traffic data provided by the LWB showed that the journey time of the same road section could vary by more than 10 minutes. Passengers heading to the airport were mainly office workers at present. They might lose their attendance bonus if they were late once;
- (3) A Member proposed that Route A36 and Route A37 would keep using Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel while Route E36 and Route E37 would resume using Tai Lam Tunnel to avoid congestion black spots along Yuen Long Highway and Tuen Mun Road. If it was not possible for Route E36 and Route E37 to go through Tai Lam Tunnel all day, special trips of Route E36 and E37 could be considered. During the morning peak hours, special trips could go through the original routes of Route E34A and E34B, heading to Tsing Ma Toll Plaza Interchange and Airport Logistics Area via Tai Lam Tunnel. During the afternoon peak hours, three special trips respectively of Route E36 and E37 for return could be operated;
- (4) A Member requested the LWB to supplement the data comparison of the journey

time before and after the diversion. In addition, since the number of passengers from and to the airport had been reduced currently, the traffic data after the diversion could only reflect the number of passengers during the epidemic. The concern was that the journey time of the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel route would be sharply prolonged after the resumption of operation of the aviation industry and that congestion during peak hours might be intolerable to commuters;

- (5) A Member said that Route A37 was diverted from Tin Shui Wai Stop to Long Ping Stop via the Wetland Park on its return trip to the airport making it circuitous. The public would generally take this airport route for their trips within the district, so they had to be reminded of the diversion arrangement;
- (6) A Member asked about the Disneyland bus services in Yuen Long District after the re-routeing of airport buses via Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel. After the re-routeing of bus routes “A” and “E” in Yuen Long District, the public were not able to interchange for the buses to Disneyland at the Tsing Ma Toll Plaza. Although they could interchange to the MTR at Tung Chung Town Centre, the fares were much higher than those of buses, and hence, there were a significant increase in both fare expenses and the journey time of commuters. It was hoped that some bus routes could be arranged to go through Tai Lam Tunnel during the morning and afternoon peak hours. Members asked whether bus companies could provide additional bus routes directly to the Disneyland at Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel.
- (7) A Member asked about the criteria and methods adopted by the Transport Department (TD) and bus companies for implementing temporary traffic diversions, such as when the diversion would be arranged, who could decide on diversion during traffic congestion, and how many frontline staff could be expected to be assigned for on-site monitoring of congestion, whether the T&TC would be informed of the diversions, and whether the temporary diversions would be a long-term arrangement;
- (8) A Member said that the front section of Tsing Tin Road was already congested when a traffic accident occurred on Tuen Mun Road recently. It was asked that what kind of temporary diversions would be arranged in the same situation;
- (9) A Member asked whether the special bus routes were the same as the original routes of Route E34A and Route E34B when special bus trips of Route E36 and Route E37 via Tai Lam Tunnel were arranged, and asked about the timetable to be implemented

for the special trips;

- (10) A Member said that the LWB responded that they would refer to Route E34B when arranging the routeing of special bus route of Route E36. The Member asked whether no special trips would be arranged for Route E37;
- (11) A Member pointed out that a road sign displaying the traffic flow at Long Tin Road showed the road conditions of Tai Lam Tunnel and Tuen Mun Road. There was still sufficient room for bus diversions at that location. It was asked that whether the bus captains could decide to divert to Tai Lam Tunnel on their own in accordance with the information provided by the road sign;
- (12) A Member said that some members of the public in Yuen Long District had reported that the journey time required via the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel had been sharply lengthened, for example, it originally took only 45 minutes to go from Tung Tau, Yuen Long to the airport by Route E34B via Tai Lam Tunnel, but it would take 65 to 75 minutes now when the route had been diverted to the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel; previously it would take residents in Kam Tin and Pat Heung only 40 minutes to go to Cathay City via Tai Lam Tunnel Interchange, but 96 minutes on the first day and 82 minutes on the second day after the diversion via Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel. It also took 82 minutes on the 22nd when temporary traffic diversion via Castle Peak Road was implemented, and 83 minutes on the 29th. So far, no journey time less than 80 minutes had been recorded;
- (13) A Member said that he had tried taking Route E37 to the airport at 7:00 a.m. on 22 June at the Tin Shui Wai Terminus. The whole journey to the airport took 105 minutes because of a 50-minute traffic congestion on Tuen Mun Road, which also delayed the departure of the next return trip of the bus by more than one hour with a serious impact on people working at the airport;
- (14) A Member said that the TD and the LWB had promised at previous meetings of the T&TC that they would divert the route to Tai Lam Tunnel temporarily in case of traffic congestion. However, at this meeting they had only indicated that the buses would head to Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel via Tsing Tin Road as an alternative. It was considered that the relevant arrangement had not resolved the issue of the use of the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel;
- (15) A Member said that there were already many existing bus routes passing through

Tuen Mun, and the traffic became congested when these buses passed through Lam Tei, Tuen Mun. If the Route “A” and Route “E” were re-routed via Tuen Mun, it would aggravate the congestion problem in Tuen Mun. It was difficult to improve the traffic conditions in Tuen Mun during the morning and afternoon peak hours. Hence, it was hoped that the number of vehicles going to Tuen Mun could be reduced. On the other hand, the Tai Lam Tunnel would normally be congested only in the event of a traffic accident. It was proposed that Route “E” be re-routed back to Tai Lam Tunnel, and Route “A” be re-routed to Tai Lam Tunnel during peak hours;

- (16) A Member said that the TD explained that the congestion was caused by traffic control due to strong winds sweeping the Lantau Link. It was likely to occur frequently during the typhoon season in the coming months. The TD was expected to draw up road maps for various traffic diversions and various temporary diversion schemes under different circumstances in advance for Members to assess the suitability of the arrangements;
- (17) A Member pointed out that Route E37 had cancelled the stop at the Terminal 1 after it was re-routed, and passengers working at the airport had to walk 10 minutes to their workplaces after getting off the bus. It was hoped that the relevant stop could be re-launched as more passengers would choose Terminal 1 as their destination when the number of passengers going to the airport rose again.
- (18) A Member said that congestion had been anticipated during the consultation on the route diversion of Route “A” and Route “E” going through Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel in Yuen Long District, but as the fare of Route “A” was reduced by more than \$10 after the route diversion, there was no objection to the diversion plan. However, after being diverted via Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel, the journey time of Route “E” now was longer, while still charging the original fare. It was asked whether there was room for lowering the fare of Route “E”;
- (19) A Member pointed out that the TD and the bus companies had indicated that the journey time in some districts, such as Shui Pin Wai Estate, had been shortened from more than 70 minutes to about 60 minutes after the buses were re-routed to Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel. The Member asked in which period was the relevant data were recorded;
- (20) A Member pointed out that the bus companies’ data showed that the journey time

error in the recent week had shortened to a few minutes. The Member asked about the reasons for the improvement in journey time;

- (21) A Member asked about how the bus companies improve journey time through traffic diversions; the Member said that efforts had been made to re-routeing buses to Castle Peak Road when Tuen Mun Road was congested, but Castle Peak Road was also congested with additional traffic as a result. The Member asked whether measures would be taken at the relevant road sections with temporary diversions to cope with the additional traffic flow, such as adjusting traffic signals;
- (22) A Member proposed that Route E36 be re-routed from Kam Ho Road to the eight stops along Pat Heung Road and Kam Sheung Road, which could avoid the inconvenience that passengers taking Route 251A and Route 251B had to walk up the slope with their luggage and then went to the Tai Lam Bus-Bus Interchange at Pat Heung Road for interchanging to Route E36;
- (23) A Member said that the departure time of the special trips of Route E36P, at 5:10 a.m. and 6:10 a.m., was too early to make the trip easier for people who usually went to work around 7 a.m. There were 14 buses operating on Route E36, two of which were arranged to run the special trips. It was hoped that another special bus departing around 7:00 a.m. could be arranged. The bus company could review when the departure time of the buses should be to serve the most of the residents heading to the airport from the vicinity of Pat Heung and Kam Tin by examining the passenger volume data of trip with different departure time;
- (24) A Member said that with the resumption of the aviation industry, re-clearance with the mainland and the development of river trade terminals, the traffic congestion on Tuen Mun Road would become more serious. It was considered that there was no condition for all buses of Route “A” and Route “E” in Yuen Long District to be diverted to Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel before the commissioning of the Tuen Mun Western Bypass;
- (25) A Member said that the example taken by the LWB that Shui Pin Wai Estate had shown a 10-minute shorter journey time failed to reflect the influence factors in changing Shui Pin Wai Estate Stop from the first stop to the last one. For the residents of Ping Shan, Route A37 was originally departing from Hung Shui Kiu and they could take the bus to the airport directly at stops along the route. Since Route A37 departed from Long Ping Estate, they had to interchange to Route E34B

at Shui Pin Wai Estate to reach the airport. With the further cancellation of Route E34B at Shui Pin Wai Estate, residents needed to take Route E36 at the Shui Pin Tsuen Stop on the opposite side of the road through the flyover. It was considered that the bus companies should take into account not only the location of the bus stops, but also the direction of the route to the destination when comparing the journey time;

- (26) A Member pointed out that Route A34, going through the entire rural area of Tuen Mun and Hung Shui Kiu, had taken longer to go round the district than to go to the airport. The Member thought that there was no need to set too many stops for Routes “A”;
- (27) A Member said that the public had no chance to select the way to Lantau Island except going through the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel. Members asked whether there were other options in Yuen Long District for going from Tai Lam Tunnel to Tsing Ma Toll Plaza, with a view to retaining at least one bus route via Tai Lam Tunnel, or even operating the special route E36P all day long instead;
- (28) A Member asked about the reasons why the bus companies had not provided the public with the original data and wished to know the average journey time of each trip. The bus companies’ reply indicated that the longer journey time of the diverted routes via Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel was due to unfamiliar surroundings at the early stage of its commissioning. However, the TD indicated that LWB had already prepared alternative routes, which meant that they had anticipated the congestion in Tuen Mun when planning the routes. Members asked about the difference between the forecast and actual figures in the traffic assessment conducted by the TD and the LWB at the time, and what kind of road conditions the forecast figures were based on;
- (29) A Member asked whether the assessed journey time of using the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel provided in the original consultation paper in the District Council was the most optimistic estimation, and asked how Members could obtain a more accurate estimate of the journey time. In addition, the Member asked why the journey time of buses was trade secrets;
- (30) A Member said that the LWB indicated in its consultation with the T&TC that the journey time of the Route “A” and Route “B” would be similar to the original one or even faster after the re-routeing, but the journey time of only part of the locations

had been shortened then. It was considered that the total journey time to the airport was more important;

- (31) A Member opined that the construction of the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel was costly and that the journey time was unreasonable even if it was similar to that of going through the Tai Lam Tunnel. It was proposed to try to avoid Wong Chu Road and divert to the roads within Tuen Mun District when planning the temporary traffic diversion scheme, in order to use the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel more efficiently, such as heading to Tuen Mun Hospital via Pui To Road or via Lam Tei Roundabout. It was hoped that the bus companies would provide Members with trial run data of different road sections in Tuen Mun District for their reference;
- (32) A Member said that the fare reduction of Route “A” was due to the reduction in mileage, but it was unreasonable for the journey time not to be reduced;
- (33) A Member said that despite the bus companies’ claim that the journey time had become stable since the second week of diverting to the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel, Members had still received complaints from the public about the substantial extension of journeys. The LWB needed to examine why its data was so different from the passengers’ experience;
- (34) A site visit to the Emergency Transport Coordination Centre (ETCC) of the TD was proposed for Members to observe the congestion of the bus routes associated with the use of the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel;
- (35) A Member asked about the time required for the TD and the LWB to complete data collection and implement short-term improvement measures. It was hoped that the LWB would discuss the traffic conditions of the buses going through the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel with the T&TC as soon as possible after collecting more data;
- (36) A Member asked whether the LWB could provide a preliminary timetable for resolving the problem if it intended to deal with the road sections with special problems first; and
- (37) A Member said that the last bus from the airport of Route E34B had been leaving at 12 midnight in the past, while the departure of the last trip of Route E36 was advanced to 11:30 p.m. at present, which caused some passengers to miss the bus.

Members asked whether the departure time of the last trip could be delayed.

4. The responses of Miss Natalie YU of the TD were summarised below:

- (1) She said that since the bus routes between Yuen Long District and North Lantau diverted to Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel on 20 June, the TD had received views from passengers and Members on the diversion arrangement, and understood the concerns expressed by passengers and Members about the journey time. The TD and LWB had been closely monitoring the operation of Routes A36, A37, E36 and E37 for more than one week since the diversion of the bus routes, and reviewing the journey times of the routes concerned. From the data submitted by the bus companies, it was noted that the journey time of buses between Tin Shui Wai and North Lantau and Route A36 was generally shorter than that before the diversion. However, it was also noted that the journey time of some routes was slightly longer. As regards Route E36, the TD noted that the journey time of passengers boarding at the eastern section of Castle Peak Road (Yuen Long Section) would be longer than that before the diversion, while the journey time of passengers boarding at the western section of Castle Peak Road (Yuen Long Section) would be shorter. Among the passengers' comments received by the Department, the main concern was the journey time of Route E36 during the morning and afternoon peak hours from Monday to Friday (except public holidays);
- (2) She said that residents of Yuen Long District were advised to take Route "E" to the Tung Chung Town Centre for interchanging to the MTR, or take Route A36 to the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge Hong Kong Port for interchanging to Route B5. The TD had all along been concerned about the views of passengers to and from the Disneyland in Yuen Long District. In the 2021-2022 Route Development Program, the TD proposed to extend the bus terminal of Lantau Bus Route 36 from Siu Ho Wan to Disneyland, and arrange a special trip, Route 36X, to the Disneyland. Residents could then take the Route "E" to Tung Chung Town Centre and interchange to Lantau Bus Route 36 or Route 36X to the Disneyland at the same stop, which was an additional choice of bus routes for passengers to go to the Disneyland and return;
- (3) She said that Members' written comments had been received. The amber rainstorm warning signal was hoisted on 22 June. When the rainstorm warning was in force, generally speaking, the speed of vehicles was relatively slow, which could have affected the journey time of buses. The TD was following up on the relevant

individual cases with LWB and would reply to Members on the written comments after the investigation. The Department would continue to monitor the operation of the diverted routes. The bus companies had also implemented corresponding measures, such as closely monitoring the road conditions and re-routeing bus trips to alternative routes when necessary, so as to minimize the impact on passengers;

- (4) She said that in general, the TD would coordinate the alternative service arrangements with various public transport operators (including bus companies) in the event of serious traffic accidents requiring temporary closure of roads; and the TD would inform the public of the latest traffic situation of the affected roads and nearby areas, and would advise the public to plan their journey in advance and use other public transport services to their destinations;
- (5) She said that the terminus of Route E37 was located at the Ground Transportation Centre outside the Terminal. Passengers going to Terminal 1 could get off at this stop and walk there;
- (6) She said that they hoped to collect Members' views on the preliminary ideas provided by LWB during the meeting for further follow-up and study by the Department and the LWB;
- (7) She said that the TD needed to take into account the impact of the relevant changes on the passengers of existing Routes E36 and E37 when considering the resumption of Route "E" to travel through the Tai Lam Tunnel, including the extension of the service area after the route diversion, for example, passengers in the vicinity of Kam Tin Road could take Route E36 to North Lantau and the airport directly, while passengers heading for the airport by bus at the western section of Castle Peak Road (Yuen Long Section) would have less journey time during most of the day than before the diversion, etc.
- (8) She said that the LWB had provided the TD with the journey time data before and after the commissioning of the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel. As the relevant data were owned by the LWB, the TD needed the consent of the LWB before providing them to the T&TC;
- (9) She said that in order to minimize the impact on passengers, the TD would examine and approve alternative routes in advance according to the conditions of individual routes. The bus companies would use the alternative routes based on the operating

conditions. In fact, pre-approved alternative routes were available for some sections of relevant routes before traffic diversions, with a view to reducing the impact of road conditions on passengers;

- (10) She noted that the journey time for the public from Tung Tau to the airport had been sharply lengthened, and residents of Ping Shan had to cross the road for interchange. The views on adjusting the departure time of Route E36P in the morning had also been noted. The TD and the LWB would continue to monitor the operation of the diverted bus routes to examine the impact of the diversions on passengers. The TD would follow up with the LWB timely when necessary. Passengers taking Route A37 in the vicinity of Hung Shui Kiu before the diversion could take Route A34 to the airport in the vicinity of Hung Shui Kiu;
- (11) When the TD planned the route diversion at earlier time, the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel was not commissioned. At that time, the TD requested the bus companies to submit the estimated journey time of the relevant routes based on the existing operation data; after the commissioning of the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel, the TD had also requested the bus companies to submit and review the journey time again to assess the relevant impact;
- (12) She said that the TD approved the fares of LWB's bus routes on the basis of the scales of fares. The government encouraged the bus companies to offer fare concessions to passengers as far as financially and operationally feasible, to reduce the cost of public transport. Whether franchised bus companies would offer fare concessions was an individual commercial decision in the spirit of free business;
- (13) She said that in terms of the request for site inspection at ETCC of the TD, further enquiries from the relevant sections were needed before reply was given; and
- (14) She said that bus management was an ongoing task and the operation of the bus routes concerned was going to be monitored continuously. The Department and the LWB were now focusing on following up on the views about journey time during peak hours after the traffic diversion. It was hoped that commuters' transport demands could be dealt with as soon as possible.

5. The responses of Mr Gary LEUNG of the LWB were summarised below:

- (1) He said that the problem of extended journey time mainly occurred during the

morning and afternoon peak hours. During non-peak hours, the journey time of the stops in Tin Shui Wai and main road were shortened after traffic diversions;

- (2) He said that there were plans to implement temporary traffic diversion on Routes E36 and E37 in case of congestion;
- (3) He said that when the black rainstorm warning signal was in force last Monday, trial buses were arranged to implement the temporary diverted routes. It was found that it took similar time to go to the airport via Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel or via Tai Lam Tunnel. The bus route via the Tai Lam Tunnel had taken longer than the route via Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel on Tuesday due to the congestion on the Lantau Link at that time. As the traffic conditions varied from day to day, it was hoped that more tests could be conducted to observe the impacts of temporary diverted routes and original routes on the journey time at the same time;
- (4) He said that the Tai Lam Tunnel might also be congested. The current recorded data showed that the impact on the journey time of Tin Shui Wai route was relatively minor, but the impact on the journey time of passengers boarding at the east of Castle Peak Road in Yuen Long District was more significant. More information on journey time could be added later;
- (5) He noted Members' advice on reminding the public that the diverted Route A37 would bypass the Wetland Park. The LWB would try to notify the public of the relevant information;
- (6) He said that it was difficult for the company to deploy a large number of vehicles to increase the bus services within a short period of time. It was hoped that targeted improvement measures could be provided for passengers first whose journey had been greatly extended, so as to achieve a stable journey time during peak hours. As to the special trip of Route E36, starting from Yoho Mall in the morning and heading for Tung Chung and other parts of North Lantau, the company was planning to re-route it via the Tai Lam tunnel with reference to the original Route E34B, which could provide an option for passengers to go to Disneyland via the Tsing Ma Toll Plaza Stop. However, this plan had to be examined and approved by the TD, and the views of Members had to be considered;
- (7) He said that the journey time of bus routes at the east of main road in Yuen Long Town had significantly increased, despite the traffic diversion arrangements. It was

hoped that resources could be pooled for providing improvement plans to the affected members of the public. With reference to the total capacity of the original buses and special trips of Route E36, it was estimated that there was still room for redeploying the special trips going through the Tai Lam Tunnel;

- (8) He said that the improvement plan was at the preliminary stage. It was not possible to give a definitive answer to the question that whether special trips would be arranged for Route E37, but the journey time of Route E37 was relatively stable under normal traffic conditions last Tuesday and Wednesday. Taking Tin Shui Wai Bus Terminus, Tin Yau Court as an example, the journey time to the Airport Ground Transportation Centre was about 60 to 69 minutes, the difference in journey time was within 5 minutes compared with the time required before the diversion to Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel;
- (9) He said that the journey time was relatively stable compared with the initial stage of the diversion, for example, Route E37 would be diverted to Tsing Tin Road in the morning to avoid traffic congestion, and the TD staff would also assist in adjusting the light signals when buses were diverted. The company had to make reference to more traffic data to determine whether the special trips were required for Route “E” bus service in Tin Shui Wai;
- (10) He noted Members’ views on re-launching the stop at Terminal 1;
- (11) He said that not all passengers had a longer journey time. Even during the morning peak hours, some places incurred similar journey time as that of the diverted route via Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel or even shorter, for example, the journey time to the airport for passengers in the vicinity of Hong Lok Road and the west of Hong Lok Road had been shortened. It used to take 71 minutes to the Airport Ground Transportation Centre by taking Route E34B from Shui Pin Wai Estate at 7 a.m., while it took only 65 minutes to the airport by taking Route E36 from Shui Pin Wai Estate during the morning peak hours. During the afternoon peak hours, due to the congestion at Pok Oi Highway Roundabout, it took 90 minutes to take Route E34B from the airport to Shui Pin Wai, Yuen Long at 5:00 p.m., and only 60 minutes after re-routed via Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel;
- (12) He said that Route E36 had expanded its service area, covering Au Tau and the nearby area. Besides, the added Route E36A could go from Tung Tau to Tung Chung North and Tung Chung West. If the Route E36 was changed to reuse Route

E34B, some areas would lose bus services, and there would also be a lack of bus resources for the new Route E36A;

- (13) He said that the journey time in the second week after the diversion was more stable than that in the first week. The journey time had been extended by more than 10 minutes during the rainy days in the first week after the diversion. However, in the second week, even when the black rainstorm warning signal was in force, the difference of journey time could also be controlled within a few minutes. The company hoped to observe more data about the journey time and then discuss the improvement plan with the TD;
- (14) He said that the complaints received by the company focused on the first week after the diversion, mainly from passengers in the eastern part of Yuen Long. There were also complaints from other passengers about some individual cases. For example, one day when there was an accident, the bus could arrive at the stop later than 100 minutes of the expected arrival time. The company needed time to get familiar with the arrangement of temporary traffic diversions, and began to grasp the rule of it. Unless Wong Chu Road and Tuen Mun Road were fully unobstructed, the special trips concerned would be subject to temporary traffic diversions constantly during peak hours. The company planned to divert the route via Tsing Tin Road and Castle Peak Road in the morning for the time being. The journey time had been relatively stable in the second week. The journey time of some routes may even be nearly 20 minutes different from that in the first week. The company would obtain more traffic data to review what service adjustment was required, and continue to discuss and refine the details of the temporary diversion plan with the TD;
- (15) He said that special trips of Route E36P had been arranged in the vicinity of Sheung Tsuen and Pat Heung to serve the nearby residents to the airport for work. The company would adjust the departure time of Route E36P in the morning in response to Members' concerns. The departure time in the afternoon had been adjusted to the off-duty hours of airport staff. The number of passengers was about 30 to 40 per bus, which had not yet recovered to the peak level before epidemic;
- (16) He said that passengers at the east of main road, including Pat Heung and Kam Tin, could take Routes 251A and 251B to interchange to special trips at Tai Lam Tunnel. The company had noted Members' views that it was inconvenient to interchange on Pat Heung Road. When there were no special trips during non-peak hours, the public in the vicinity of Pat Heung and Kam Tin could take other bus routes such as

Routes 54, 64K and 77K to the neighbourhood of Yoho Mall and Castle Peak Road for interchanging to Route E36. The public could still interchange at the same stops and enjoy interchange concessions by taking the abovementioned routes;

- (17) He agreed that there were frequent traffic congestions between Fuk Hang Estate and Siu Hong after entering Yuen Long Highway. However, Routes A37 and E37 during the morning peak hours had avoided relevant roads and diverted to the route via the Castle Peak Road-Lam Tei Section. Kowloon Motor Bus routes on weekdays might often need to stop at bus stops when passing through Castle Peak Road-Lam Tei Section. However, LWB routes generally ran smoothly on relevant roads after the diversion. There was also a bus-only lane at the end of Lam Tei, avoiding other vehicles heading for the Tuen Mun Road;
- (18) He said that the company would continue to collect traffic data and submit them to the TD, and would discuss with the TD on how to share the collated raw data and the timetable for implementing the improvement measures with Members;
- (19) He said that the company used to use stops closer to each other when comparing journey times. They understood that some passengers had to wait for buses at the opposite side and the walking distance to the stop was different after the Route E34B renamed as E36. However, there were contrary impact on the walking distance in the return journey. If the departure distance was longer, the stops on the return journey would be relatively closer. Members' views on inconvenience of Ping Shan residents in interchange had been noted. The current plan sought to arrange buses to the Tai Lam Tunnel during peak hours and provide interchange at bus stop of Route E34B in the past, which would be convenient for Ping Shan residents;
- (20) He said that information indicated that most of the passengers travelling through Tsing Ma Toll Plaza on weekdays were heading to Tung Chung, the airport or Disneyland. Passengers going to Tung Chung and the airport could currently choose buses via Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel. As to passengers going to the Disneyland, the company would make reference to the alternative option of providing Route R33 in Tuen Mun District to make it easier for residents there to get to the Disneyland, but it would take time to discuss the bus routes from Yuen Long and Tin Shui Wai to the Disneyland with the TD, with a view to reducing the number of interchange, or considering to provide other options for the public to go to the Tai Lam Tunnel and interchange with buses to the Disneyland via Tsing Ma Toll Plaza;

- (21) He said that the company mainly determined fares according to the fare scale, and had also increased interchange and fare concessions for Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel bus routes, such as concessions for Routes 54, 64K and 77K interchange with Route E36 and reduction of fares for Routes “A”. The concessions were also based on the mileage of the fare scale;
- (22) He said that not every passenger would travel from the first stop to the last stop. As each bus route started from different places, it was common to compare journey time between stops at the same location to the airport, for example, comparing the journey time from Shui Pin Wai Estate, Hong Lok Road and Tin Yau Court to the airport, so as to provide a more objective analysis; and
- (23) He noted that residents of Pat Heung and Kam Tin hoped to be able to interchange to other buses at Tai Lam Tunnel. It was possible to consider adding the option that residents there could get to the airport directly, or consider increasing other special trips to Tai Lam Tunnel in Yuen Long Town, which could allow residents of Pat Heung and Kam Tin to take Routes 251A or 251B and interchange to buses in Yuen Long Town for Tai Lam Tunnel. The company would discuss with the TD and Members for a better option.

6. The responses of Mr Desmond TANG of the LWB were summarised below:

- (1) He said that it was a great challenge for the bus service in the past two weeks because of the traffic and weather conditions after the traffic diversions. Raintorm warning signals were in force during the morning peak hours on June 22, 24, 26 and 28, affecting the journey time;
- (2) He said that the traffic condition at the traffic black spots in Tuen Mun did affect the journey time. A number of targeted measures had been implemented in the past two weeks to improve the stability of journey time;
- (3) He said that the journey time of buses diverted to Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel in the past few days had been collected. It showed that the journey time from Tin Shui Wai to the airport had not changed much after the diversion. Taking Route E37 in Tin Shui Wai as an example, it took about 60 minutes from Tin Yau Court, the last stop of Tin Shui Wai, to the Airport Ground Transportation Centre during the

morning peak hours before the traffic diversion, while the journey time after the diversion was about 50 to 74 minutes. The journey time from the airport to Tin Shui Wai during peak hours in the afternoon after the traffic diversion was about 60 minutes, similar to the journey time before. In addition, the last stop of Route A37 in Tin Shui Wai was Tin Tsz Estate. It took about 45 minutes to reach the airport during peak hours in the morning before the traffic diversion, and 39 to 50 minutes after the traffic diversion. In some cases, the traffic diversion could shorten the journey time. The journey time from the airport to Tin Shui Wai was about 42 to 45 minutes before the traffic diversion, and about 30 to 47 minutes after the traffic diversion;

- (4) He said that the journey time of Route E36 during the peak hours was 1 to 2 minutes longer than in the past, after having been re-routed to go via Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel at Shui Pin Wai and Hong Lok Road in Yuen Long. The journey time from Hong Lok Road to the airport was about 58 to 70 minutes before the diversion, and about 62 to 70 minutes after the diversion. If people boarded the bus at Shui Pin Wai Estate, the journey time could be shortened. For Yuen Long bound, the journey time during peak hours used to be about 60 to 83 minutes, but 70 to 80 minutes at present.
- (5) He said that if passengers took Route A36 from Hong Lok Road to the Airport Ground Transportation Centre, the journey time before the diversion was more than 60 minutes and about 50 to 60 minutes after the diversion, representing that the journey time of some routes could be significantly shortened; the journey time from the airport to Yuen Long during peak hours used to be about 50 to 60 minutes, and about 50 to 58 minutes at present, which were about the same; it was agreed that the journey time during peak hours would be longer than before, especially in the vicinity of Yoho Mall. The company was seeking a solution to change such a situation; however, taking Tin Shui Wai as an example, the journey time after the diversion was generally short, and even significantly shorter when the traffic conditions in Tuen Mun were good during non-peak hours;
- (6) He said that the company was aware of the actual traffic conditions and had also learnt from the public's views that the journey time had become longer, in particular the traffic conditions on Tuen Mun Road, Hung Kiu and Wong Chu Road. The field staff in Tuen Mun District would inform bus captains to temporarily divert to other sections, such as Tsing Tin Road, Lung Mun Road, Tsing Wan Road, etc., without affecting the stop arrangement in the past two weeks when necessary. The stability

of journey time had been enhanced after the temporary diversion;

- (7) He understood that the public wished for more stable journey time during the morning peak hours. The company would continue to collect traffic data under good weather for studying with the TD to see how to adjust the routes and the overall planning; and
- (8) He said that Route E36A was a new route from Tak Yip Street to Yat Tung Estate, which was convenient for residents without Route “E” bus service in the vicinity of Tung Tau previously. The views on the longer journey expressed by passengers boarding at Tung Tau had been noted. The company would continue to monitor the service level and adjust the routes and bus frequency timely.

7. The responses of Mr Kelvin YEUNG of the LWB were summarised below:

- (1) He said that the LWB had arranged field staff to monitor the road conditions at different locations on the bus network. If the TD and the Police Force had special arrangements of road closure and traffic diversions, the LWB’s control centre would also be notified. The company would implement temporary traffic diversion based on the locations of congestions during peak hours. For example, when Wong Chu Road and Tuen Mun Road were more congested, buses would be diverted to Tsing Tin Road. During the morning peak hours, if there was congestion on Yuen Long Highway and Tuen Mun Road (airport bound), it would be re-routed to the Castle Peak Road-Lam Tei Section. There was no serious congestion last week on the day when the black rainstorm warning signal was in force, so no traffic diversion was arranged. Field staff at intermediate stops or major junctions were going to inform the bus captains of traffic diversions if necessary;
- (2) He said that in the event of serious congestion or large-scale road closure, the diversion to the Tai Lam Tunnel would be taken into consideration, if the congestion was predicted to last for a long time. The company would make further arrangements after communicating with TD representatives;
- (3) He said that the company and the TD were drawing up a scheme for special trips travelling through the Tai Lam Tunnel. They considered working out the routes for special trips based on the journey time data with reference to the route of Route E34B in the past. Detailed information would be reported to Members when

available;

- (4) He noted that Members proposed to let the bus captains make their own decision on temporary traffic diversions at Long Tin Road. The company had to further study the feasibility of the proposal;
- (5) He said that there was a delay in the departure of Route A37 at the airport on 22 June this year. In addition to the amber rainstorm warning signal in force on that day, there was also a speed control on the Lantau Link due to strong winds. If the bus travelled through the Tai Lam Tunnel on that day, the journey time would also be affected by traffic control and the bus would be delayed. Bus companies would determine the routes to the airport via Tai Lam Tunnel, Tsing Tin Road or Castle Peak Road-Lam Tei Section according to the effectiveness of traffic diversion; and
- (6) He said that since re-routeing via the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel on 20 June, the company had also asked field staff to monitor the traffic at the main intermediate stops each day during morning and evening peak hours, and maintained close contact with the ETCC of the TD to gradually grasp the change patterns of traffic along the route and finally reduce the journey time. For example, temporary traffic diversions were arranged at around 8:00 a.m. on the first day. The company decided to advance the temporary traffic diversions to around 7:15 a.m. In addition, Wong Chu Road was expected to be congested around 6:00 p.m. and the diversion was advanced to around 5:15 p.m.

8. The responses of Mr Stephen WAN of the LWB were summarised below:

- (1) He said that Members' proposal on re-routeing within Tuen Mun District was in line with the company's current strategy of temporary traffic diversion, such as bus routes would be diverted to Castle Peak Road-Lam Tei Section in the morning when Yuen Long Highway was congested, and diverted to Lung Mun Road, Tsing Wan Road, Ming Kum Road and Tsing Tin Road in the afternoon to avoid the traffic congestion on Wong Chu Road and Tuen Mun Road; the feasibility of re-routeing via Tsing Lun Road would be studied with reference to Members' suggestions; and
- (2) He said that the route was temporarily diverted to Castle Peak Road-Lam Tei Section due to traffic congestion on Yuen Long Highway in the morning. As the traffic condition of Wong Chu Road was still acceptable, Wong Chu Road continued to be used; it took more than 70 minutes for Route E36 to go from Hong Lok Road

to the airport before the temporary traffic diversions, and 60 to 70 minutes to the airport after the re-route via Castle Peak Road - Lam Tei Section, which was close to the original journey time via the Tai Lam Tunnel.

9. Ms CHAN Mei-lin moved the following motion, which was seconded by Mr AU Kwok-kuen, Ms CHAN Sze-ng, Mr Felix CHEUNG, Mr FONG Ho-hin, Mr HAU Man-kin, Mr KWAN Chun-sang, Mr KWOK Man-ho, Ms LAI Po-wa, Mr LAM Ting-wai, Mr LEE Chun-wai, Mr Deco LEE, Mr LEUNG Tak-ming, Mr MO Kai-hong, Mr NG Hin-wang, Mr SHEK King-ching, and Mr Zachary WONG. The motion was as follows:

“This Committee strongly requests that the Route E in Yuen Long District should be re-diverted to go via Tai Lam Tunnel to the airport to avoid the serious traffic congestion in Tuen Mun District.”

10. Voting was conducted by a show of hands with Members’ names recorded manually. Ms CHAN Mei-lin, Mr CHAN Shu-fai, Ms CHAN Sze-ng, Mr Felix CHEUNG, Mr FONG Ho-hin, Mr HO Wai-pan, Mr KWAN Chun-sang, Mr KWOK Man-ho, Mr LAI Wing-tim, Mr LAM Ting-wai, Mr LEE Chun-wai, Mr MAK Ip-sing, Mr MO Kai-hong, Mr NG Hin-wang, Mr SHEK King-ching, Mr Zachary WONG, and Ms WONG Wing-sze voted for the above motion.

11. The Vice Chairman said that the motion was passed by an absolute majority of Members with 17 votes in favour, 0 against and 0 abstentions.

12. The Vice Chairman concluded that Members hoped the TD and the LWB to accept their suggestions, including that the special bus trips of Route E36 and Route E37 could be re-diverted to the original routes of Route E34A and Route E34B travelling via Tai Lam Tunnel, the LWB and the TD were expected to provide an alternative scheme in two weeks, at least meeting the commuters’ needs during morning and afternoon peak hours. He also hoped that the TD and the bus companies would follow up on the issue about setting up a stop at Terminal 1 for Route E37. The diverted bus routes via the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel would have been reviewed after three months, so the bus companies and the TD were asked to provide operation data as soon as possible for views of Members and residents. Regarding the bus routes to the Disneyland, he said that residents taking Route A34 had to go to Tung Chung for interchanging with other vehicles via the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Tunnel. It was hoped that the bus companies and the TD would cater for the needs of people heading for the Disneyland. Finally, the TD was invited to provide follow-up replies on whether a visit to the ETCC of the TD could be arranged, and the bus companies and the TD were invited to provide follow-up replies to Members’ suggestions on delaying the departure time of last bus of Route E36.

(Post-meeting note: The Secretariat relayed Members' views to the TD on 4 August and forwarded the relevant replies of the TD to Members for their reference on 10 August and 13 August this year respectively. In addition, the bus company had launched Route E36S on 30 August 2021.)

Item VII: Any other business

13. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:55 p.m.

Yuen Long District Council Secretariat
August 2021