

TAC briefed on new ferry services and cycling-related issues

The following is issued on behalf of the Transport Advisory Committee:

The Transport Advisory Committee (TAC) was briefed today (June 2) on the progress of introducing the "Central – Hung Hom" ferry route and the pilot "water taxi" service, as well as the improvement works for cycle track networks in new towns and the latest operation of automated dockless bicycle rental services (ADBRS) in Hong Kong.

The Government announced in March 2020 that Fortune Ferry Company Limited (the operator) was selected to operate the "Central – Hung Hom" ferry and "water taxi" services. The two services are expected to commence operation on June 28 and at the end of 2020 respectively. The operator is actively gearing up for the service commencement. It has pledged to introduce newer and greener vessels to its fleet gradually, disseminate real-time arrival/departure information of the ferry routes via smartphone applications within six months of service commencement and enhance pier facilities, such as by providing free WiFi service.

The Government will closely monitor the preparatory work carried out by the operator, as well as provide and enhance ancillary transport facilities or arrangements in a timely manner to ensure the smooth introduction of the ferry routes.

The TAC Chairman, Professor Stephen Cheung, said, "Members welcome the introduction of the 'Central – Hung Hom' ferry and 'water taxi' services, which will provide the public with more diversified transport options. Members also offered views on the ferry services and the ancillary facilities."

In addition, Members were briefed by the Government on the improvement works for cycle track networks in new towns and the latest operation of ADBRS in Hong Kong.

The Government promotes cycling for recreation and short-distance commuting where road safety and conditions permit, in particular in new towns and new development areas. The Transport Department (TD) together with the Highways Department have been implementing the improvement works of the existing cycling facilities in nine new towns in three phases. By the end of 2021, both the Phase 1 and Phase 2 improvement works will cover altogether about 550 sites and provide about 3 000 additional public bicycle parking spaces.

Since the TD's promulgation of a Code of Practice, operators of ADBRS have introduced several improvement measures. The TD will continue to closely monitor the operation of ADBRS through the Code. At the same time, relevant departments will continue their efforts in conducting regular clearance

operations to remove illegally parked bicycles.

Professor Cheung said, "Members noted the latest progress of the improvement works for the cycle tracks in nine new towns as well as the operation of ADBRS, and welcome the Government's ongoing efforts in fostering a 'bicycle-friendly environment'."