

**Minutes of the Third Meeting of
Food, Environment and Hygiene Committee (2024-2025) of the
Seventh Term of the Central and Western District Council
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region**

Date : 30 May 2024 (Thursday)
Time : 10:00 am
Venue : Conference Room
14/F, Harbour Building
38 Pier Road, Central, Hong Kong

Present:

Chairman

Mr YEUNG Hok-ming, MH

Vice-chairman

Mr LUI Hung-pan

Members

Dr WONG Sin-man, Mandy
Mr NG Yin
Mr LEE Chi-hang, Sidney, MH
Mr QIU Song-qing, MH
Ms JIN Ling, MH
Mr SHIH Jan Noel
Mr WU Man-hin
Dr ZHANG Zong
Ms CHEUNG Ka-yan
Mr YOUNG Chit-on, Jeremy
Mr YEUNG Hoi-wing
Mr YIP Wing-shing, SBS, BBS, MH, JP
Mr IP Yik-nam, JP
Ms CHIU Wah-kuen, MH
Mr LAU Tin-ching
Mr LAW Kam-fai

Guests:

Item 3

Mr CHAN Tat-ming, Neil	Principal Tobacco and Alcohol Control Inspector, Department of Health
Mr CHENG Shiu-kin, Simon	Chief Tobacco and Alcohol Control Inspector, Department of Health
Mr PAU Chung-on	District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Central/Western), Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Ms LEUNG Siu-hung	Senior Health Inspector (Cleansing & Pest Control) Central/Western 2, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Item 4

Mr PAU Chung-on	District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Central/Western), Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Ms LEUNG Siu-hung	Senior Health Inspector (Cleansing & Pest Control) Central/Western 2, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Item 5

Mr YEUNG Fai-fai, Felix	Fauna Conservation Officer (Operation) ³ , Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
Dr WONG Yick-him, Simon	Veterinary Officer (Avian Influenza Surveillance), Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
Ms CHAN Choi-cheung, Coco	Field Officer I (Avian Influenza), Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
Mr PAU Chung-on	District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Central/Western), Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Ms LEUNG Siu-hung	Senior Health Inspector (Cleansing & Pest Control) Central/Western 2, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Mr LEE Kai-ho	Deputy District Leisure Manager (Central & Western) ² , Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Item 6

Mr PAU Chung-on	District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Central/Western), Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Ms LEUNG Siu-hung	Senior Health Inspector (Cleansing & Pest Control) Central/Western 2, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Item 7

Mr TSE Yip-kei, Alvin Senior Environmental Protection Officer (Regional South)1, Environmental Protection Department

Mr PAU Chung-on District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Central/Western), Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Ms LEUNG Siu-hung Senior Health Inspector (Cleansing & Pest Control) Central/Western 2, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Item 8

Mr PAU Chung-on District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Central/Western), Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Ms LEUNG Siu-hung Senior Health Inspector (Cleansing & Pest Control) Central/Western 2, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Item 9

Mr TSE Yip-kei, Alvin Senior Environmental Protection Officer (Regional South)1, Environmental Protection Department

Mr KO Kwok-kuen, German Police Community Relations Officer, Central District, Hong Kong Police Force

Mr WONG Chi-ngon Inspector of Police Central District Licensing (Temp.), Hong Kong Police Force

In Attendance:

Ms CHEUNG Kwok-ying, Sherry Senior Executive Officer (District Council), Central and Western District Office

Ms LAU Mei-ling, Tenny Senior Liaison Officer (Building Management)1, Home Affairs Department

Mr TSE Yip-kei, Alvin Senior Environmental Protection Officer (Regional South)1, Environmental Protection Department

Secretary

Ms CHEUNG Wai-ting, Kelsey Executive Officer (District Council)4, Central and Western District Office

Opening Remarks

(10:01 am)

The Chairman said that as the quorum was reached, he announced that the third meeting of the Food, Environment and Hygiene Committee (FEHC) (2024-2025) of the Seventh Term of the Central and Western District Council (C&WDC) would begin and welcomed the attendees to the meeting. In order to identify the attendees, staff of the Secretariat would check the staff cards of every person entering the Conference Room, and obtain their respective business cards. Media reporters and assistants to Members should register their real names and mobile phone numbers for the Secretariat's record. In addition, he suggested that each discussion item should be proceeded in the format of "four-minute question-and-answer inclusive" for a more effective discussion. Representatives present were reminded to deliver speeches and give responses as concise as possible. The Chairman reminded Members to pay attention to and make appropriate declarations of interest where necessary.

Item 1: Confirmation of the minutes of the 2nd FEHC meeting held on 28 March 2024

(10:02 am)

2. The Chairman said that the Secretariat did not receive before this meeting any suggested amendments of the minutes (draft) of the second FEHC meeting. Since Members present did not raise any comments regarding the minutes, the Chairman announced that the minutes concerned were confirmed.

Item 2: Chairman's report

(10:02 am – 10:03 am)

3. The Chairman said that the Secretariat had earlier circulated the following papers among Members for their information:

Paper No.	Paper Title	Date of Circulation
14/2024	Food and Environmental Hygiene Department Results of Year End Cleansing Activities 2024 in Central & Western District	9 April 2024
15/2024	Central & Western District Office Notification on Removing Dangerous Trees in Central & Western District	12 April 2024
16/2024	Food and Environmental Hygiene Department Anti-mosquito Campaign 2024 (Phase II) in Central & Western District	25 April 2024
25/2024	Food and Environmental Hygiene Department Second Phase of Anti-rodent Campaign 2024 in Central & Western District	28 May 2024

Item 3: Strong request to follow up on the gathering of smokers at exits of MTR stations in the Central and Western District

(C&W FEHC Paper No. 17/2024)

(10:03 am – 10:32 am)

4. The Chairman invited Members to express their views and make enquiries on the issue. Speeches by Members were consolidated as follows:

- (i) A Member said that a substantial number of complaints had been received about the crowd who would gather and smoke beside the cigarette butt containers next to Exit C of Sai Ying Pun Station and Exit C of Kennedy Town Station respectively. As students from neighbouring schools were required to take these routes to attend classes and return home, the Member recommended that the cigarette butt containers be moved away from the locations to safeguard the health of the elderly and students nearby. The Member also enquired about the possibility of imposing a smoking ban that covered the area within 30 metres of an MTR station.
- (ii) A Member said that the issue with the cigarette butt container at Ki Ling Lane Exit of Sai Ying Pun Station had been raised to the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) previously, to which the FEHD promptly responded, and the relevant cigarette butt container was removed. The Member expressed gratitude towards the FEHD's cooperation but suggested that another hygiene issue would arise as a result. As smokers failed to locate a cigarette butt container, they would dispose of their cigarette butts on the ground or into the bushes. The Member hoped that the FEHD could consider the needs of various stakeholders when it identified sites to place a cigarette butt container in the future, thereby striking a balance.
- (iii) A Member recommended that the department could set up a booth next to a cigarette butt container where smokers would gather, so as to promote information on quitting smoking.
- (iv) A Member enquired about the possibility of building a negative pressure room for smokers. The Member said that technologies with smoke filtration and air purification were very advanced. If the government could offer a site for smokers correspondingly, their impact posed to other members of the public could be minimised.
- (v) A Member asked the FEHD for specific standards on placing a cigarette butt container. At present, cigarette butt containers were placed beside gardens or sitting-out areas next to various commercial buildings. Smokers would therefore gather at these public sitting-out areas, causing serious disturbance to

those taking a rest there. The Member hoped that the FEHD could reassess and adjust the locations where cigarette butt containers were placed, under which a ban on placing cigarette butt containers at schools, parks or sitting-out areas should be imposed.

5. Representative of the Department of Health (DH) gave a consolidated response to Members' speeches and said that the Tobacco and Alcohol Control Office (TACO) of the DH primarily hoped to reduce the number of smokers, thereby enhancing public health. The principles on designating no smoking areas in Hong Kong were different from other places. For instance, Singapore had an extensive outdoor smoking ban where smoking was only allowed in designated zones. However, Hong Kong's situation was the opposite as smoking was allowed in any place but the statutory no smoking areas. The DH would not encourage the public to smoke, so it would not inform the smokers of the locations where smoking was allowed. According to the Smoking (Public Health) Ordinance, both indoor areas in public places and any places enclosed at least up to 50% of the total area on all sides were statutory no smoking areas. Moreover, the DH was actively examining the imposition of a ban on the act of "smoking whilst walking". In 2023, the DH issued over 10 200 Fixed Penalty Notices on illegal smoking, which was around 40% more than those issued in 2022. To step up law enforcement actions, the TACO's staff would usually patrol in plainclothes. As they would no longer wear a black vest as an identification, prosecutions could be instituted more efficiently. The DH was gradually stepping up law enforcement actions and education in the hope of raising public awareness over illegal smoking and reducing the negative impact of second-hand smoke on non-smokers, and the goal was to reduce the smoking rate to 7.8% by 2025.

6. Representative of the DH supplemented some information on smoking cessation. The DH launched the Chinese Medicine Ear-point Patches for Smoking Cessation Trial Programme for the first time, under which those who wished to quit smoking could collect free Chinese medicine ear-point patches at some 40 Chinese medicine clinics across the territory. In addition, they might join the Chinese Medicine Acupuncture for Smoking Cessation Programme free of charge whenever they wished to or two weeks after using the Chinese medicine ear-point patches for smoking cessation on a trial basis. Furthermore, the DH would distribute free medication on smoking cessation to the public and publicise the message through advertising on various media, such as television, radio and public transport networks.

7. Representative of the FEHD responded that the cigarette butt container at the exit of Sai Ying Pun Station would be taken away, and that the department would have a study on relocating other cigarette butt containers, thereby minimising the impact on non-smokers.

8. The Chairman asked whether the DH could provide some publicity leaflets and posters of the Quit in June campaign, such that Members could help promote it.

9. Representative of the DH responded that the publicity materials would be delivered to the Secretariat of the C&WDC for distribution.

[Post-meeting note: On 7 June 2024, the Secretariat distributed the publicity posters offered by the DH to Members.]

10. A Member raised a follow-up enquiry on how the FEHD would decide on the locations where cigarette butt containers were placed. The Member believed that a cigarette butt container should not be placed near schools or parks to minimise the impact on the elderly and children.

11. Representative of the FEHD responded that there were no specific rules governing the locations where the cigarette butt containers should be placed. The FEHD would review the locations of the cigarette butt containers in the district and arrange to place them at locations away from schools or parks as far as practicable.

Item 4: **Strong request to follow up on the problem of dog fouling in public places in the Central and Western District**
(C&W FEHC Paper No. 18/2024)
Concern over the hygiene problem caused by dog fouling in the streets of the Central and Western District
(C&W FEHC Paper No. 24/2024)

(10:32 am – 11:09 am)

12. The Chairman invited Members to express their views and make enquiries on the issue. Speeches by Members were consolidated as follows:

- (i) A Member noticed that many dog walkers in the district would leave the scene after their dogs fouled the streets. Therefore, the FEHD was asked to step up inspections and initiate prosecution against those who allowed their dogs to foul the streets to achieve better deterrent results.
- (ii) A Member noticed that various dog owners would delegate the caring responsibilities of their dogs to foreign domestic helpers. As foreign domestic helpers were not familiar with the relevant local laws and regulations, they might be liable to prosecution. The Member believed that penalties should be imposed on dog owners instead of those who assisted in walking the dogs. Also, the Member recommended that the FEHD should consider distributing additional publicity materials in multiple languages, particularly in languages with which foreign domestic helpers were familiar, with a view to raising their awareness on the relevant laws and regulations, such that contraventions owing to misunderstanding could be minimised.
- (iii) A Member said that only dog faeces were within the ambit of the existing legislation, and that no penalties would be imposed on dog walkers who failed to clear dog urine. It was therefore hoped that the department could study and improve the relevant legislation. Besides, the Member received some feedback from a citizen who was prosecuted for using diluted bleach to wash away dog

urine. The Member would like to confirm with the FEHD on whether such practice would be seen as an offence.

- (iv) A Member believed that the existing efforts in educating dog owners were severely inadequate. The means of publicity, primarily leaflets and posters, were too monotonous. It was recommended that the department should step up its efforts in educating dog owners by developing their sense of civic-mindedness. The department could also consider adopting approaches that were more interactive, such as organising regular gatherings with dog owners to promote public health responsibilities on dog ownership.
- (v) A Member suggested that additional dog excreta collection bins with a pedal be placed in the streets where many would walk their dogs, and that cleansing tools and bleaching agents be provided to facilitate the cleaning up by dog walkers.
- (vi) A Member said that while many dog walkers would leave the scene after their dogs fouled the streets, the FEHD only issued two Fixed Penalty Notices to offenders who allowed their dogs to foul the streets last year. The Member asked whether the FEHD had any difficulties whilst enforcing the relevant laws and regulations, resulting in a small number of Fixed Penalty Notices issued. The Member also noticed that some paid dog carers would leave the scene after their dogs fouled the streets and asked whether the FEHD would consider having a study on the policies that would specifically target them, thereby keeping the streets clean and hygienic.
- (vii) A Member said that the hygienic conditions at a footbridge near Sun Yat Sen Memorial Park were horrendous. With visible urine stains and strong odours, the FEHD was asked to step up cleansing and law enforcement actions to tackle the relevant issue. In addition, several Members received complaints from the public who said that some foreign domestic helpers would allow their dogs to foul the streets at Western Street Flyover. Not only did the behaviour affect the environmental hygiene of the flyover, it also had an impact on pedestrians beneath it, so they hoped that the FEHD could follow up on the issue appropriately.
- (viii) A Member said that various locations, such as Caine Road, Prince's Terrace and the staircase in Shing Wong Street, were black spots for dog faeces in the district where the overall cleanliness of the Central and Western District was undermined by some inconsiderate members of the public. The Member believed that law enforcement actions should be stepped up in the short run and recommended that the FEHD should install CCTV cameras to assist in enforcing the law.
- (ix) A Member said that while there were stinky smells along the road connecting The Belcher's and the MTR station, only one A3-sized notice was posted there.

Non-educational in nature, the notice only served to inform the public that it was an offence to allow their dogs to foul the streets. The Member recommended that bigger banners or flyover notices with more guidelines in multiple languages be posted, thereby achieving better publicity results.

- (x) A Member would like to know whether dog latrines were available in the Central and Western District.
- (xi) A Member asked the FEHD to, in the light of the doubled number of pets in the district, deploy additional staff and resources to initiate prosecutions against those who allowed their dogs to foul the streets.

13. Representative of the FEHD gave a consolidated response to Members' speeches and said that members of the public would not be prosecuted for using diluted bleach to flush away dog urine. The Member was invited to provide information on the relevant case after the meeting, such that the department could follow up on the situation. When the FEHD's staff prosecuted those who allowed their dogs to foul the streets or the public places with faeces, they had to prove that the dog carers had failed to clean up the location where dog faeces were found before leaving. Sometimes, members of the public unwilling to cooperate would have some excuses, making the prosecution more challenging. In response, the FEHD would step up its internal training to handle the relevant situation. In the meantime, to cope with current hygiene conditions in the streets in the Central and Western District, the FEHD would step up street cleansing and deploy cleansing vehicles to clean the streets as soon as possible upon receipt of a complaint. Besides, the department would have a study on printing publicity banners and materials in Filipino and Indonesian, such that foreign domestic helpers who assisted in dog walking could also avail themselves of the relevant information. As the pavements in Hong Kong were relatively narrow, it was not possible to identify suitable locations to install more dog latrines with specific dimensions for the time being. The department would identify more locations to place dog excreta collection bins with a pedal, whereas Members were also welcomed to suggest suitable locations.

14. The Chairman suggested that the Secretariat should issue a questionnaire to Members to collect their recommendations on the sites where publicity materials should be displayed, as well as the locations where dog excreta collection bins with a pedal should be placed respectively. In this regard, the FEHD could refer to these recommendations.

[Post-meeting note: On 5 June 2024, the Secretariat issued a questionnaire to Members to collect their views on the sites where publicity materials should be displayed, as well as the locations where dog excreta collection bins with a pedal should be placed respectively. Members' views were relayed to the FEHD on 19 June 2024.]

15. The Chairman supplemented by asking whether Members would concur with making the issue with dog fouling in the Central and Western District a standing item of the FEHC, such that the FEHD could present the number of complaints, the number of prosecutions and the department's measures to the Committee on a regular basis. As Members did not raise an objection to the relevant recommendation, the Chairman announced that the relevant

recommendation on making the issue with dog fouling in the Central and Western District a standing item of the FEHC was endorsed.

Item 5: Strong request to follow up on issues of wild pigs and feral pigeons in the Central and Western District

(C&W FEHC Paper No. 19/2024)

(11:09 am – 11:48 am)

16. The Chairman invited Members to express their views and make enquiries on the issue. Speeches by Members were consolidated as follows:

- (i) A Member said that the issue with the illegal feeding of feral pigeons had all along caused disturbance to those in the Central area, and that the issue where feral pigeons would gather had been the most serious in Central Market and Gutzlaff Street, Central. He hoped that the administration could step up law enforcement actions with the application of various technologies, such as webcams, so as to tackle the issue with the illegal feeding of feral pigeons.
- (ii) Once the Wild Animals Protection (Amendment) Bill 2023 came into effect on 1 August 2024, appointed officers of various departments would be able to take law enforcement actions against activities associated with illegal feeding. A Member enquired about the work allocation among the departments and the anticipated difficulties facing them whilst enforcing the law.
- (iii) A Member enquired about the progress of the pilot scheme on feeding feral pigeons with contraceptive drugs.
- (iv) A Member came across a street counter managed by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) in Sai Ying Pun where the message of a ban on feeding wild animals was promoted. However, the Member believed that the AFCD's publicity leaflets were too cartoonish. As observed by the Member, some children and foreign domestic helpers would feed the pigeons with their bread when they passed by the street counter and believed that this was a positive behaviour. The Member therefore hoped that the department should pay attention to this in its future publicity events.
- (v) A Member discovered during home visits in the Peak area that many residents were not aware of the government's existing policy on humanely dispatching wild pigs, indicating that there was still room for improvement in the government's publicity efforts. To promote the message in the Peak area with more detached big houses, direct door-to-door visits might be particularly necessary. Furthermore, the Member understood that instead of taking immediate action, the Police would only act after receiving a certain number of

complaints. The Member would like to know the specific criteria upon which the AFCD's capturing operation was based and whether an operation would only be carried out upon receipt of a certain number of complaints.

- (vi) A Member received multiple feedback from residents who claimed that food remnants had been found outside the entrance of a coffee shop at 51 Caine Road. It was therefore suspected that someone had been feeding feral pigeons illegally. After the Member relayed this to the FEHD, the situation had improved. As indicated by the Member, the FEHD's staff mentioned that the section of Caine Road with odd street numbers was relatively narrow, hence water tankers would not be deployed to cleanse the section. Instead, some staff would be arranged to cleanse the section during nighttime at weekends. The Member would like to confirm with the FEHD on whether the information was true.
- (vii) A Member was aware that wild pigs would be humanely dispatched only if they entered the urban area, and that those on the hills would not be humanely dispatched by the AFCD. The Member hoped that the AFCD could control the number of wild pigs at source by feeding them on the hills and through sterilisation, such that the department would not be blamed for humanely dispatching the wild pigs.
- (viii) A Member once discovered that some wild pigs were foraging for food from bags of rubbish placed outside a building in Conduit Road. The Police mentioned upon arrival that they would first cordon off the site, such that pedestrians would not come any closer. There they waited until the wild pigs left the location. The Member asked whether the department could only adopt a passive approach in face of wild pigs and how the general public should react when they came across them.
- (ix) A Member observed that some wild pigs would visit specific locations to forage for food at specific times. While some litter bins were affixed to the railings upon completion of the improvement works, they could still be damaged by the wild pigs with ease. Hence, the Member hoped that the department could figure out ways to improve the situation.

17. Representative of the AFCD gave a consolidated response to Members' speeches and said that to further curb the activities associated with the illegal feeding and enhance the deterrent effect, the government had submitted the Wild Animals Protection (Amendment) Bill 2023 to the Legislative Council, and that specific guidelines on law enforcement had been formulated by the AFCD in concert with various law enforcement departments. Since November 2021, new measures had been implemented by the AFCD, under which the department would regularly capture and humanely dispatch wild pigs in locations where multiple wild pigs were seen, in places involving assault cases associated with wild pigs and on sites where wild pigs might pose a hazard to the general public. In addition, the department would take relevant actions as necessary upon receipt of a report from the public or other government departments in relation to wild pigs. Furthermore, the publicity leaflets were

originally designed with the intention to educate the public to keep a safe distance and be respectful for each other's living space when they came across wild animals. Noting Members' views on the illustrations in the publicity leaflets, the department would amend them as appropriate.

18. Representative of the AFCD responded that The City University of Hong Kong was finalising the statistical analysis and assessment on its two-year pilot scheme on feeding feral pigeons with contraceptive drugs. The AFCD would consider various factors, such as the analysis and recommendations on the effectiveness of the scheme, so as to formulate the next steps and release the relevant results to the public as soon as possible.

19. Representative of the FEHD responded that under the existing legislation, the FEHD could only prosecute persons who fouled public places by feeding wild birds. While the videos captured by a webcam could not be used directly for prosecution, they could be used by the department to identify offenders, through which it could arrange for law enforcement actions in line with the surveillance records. The FEHD issued eight Fixed Penalty Notices to persons who fouled the public places by feeding wild birds in Central Market. As the flyover was managed by the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD), the FEHD would have a study on ways to improve the relevant situation with the EMSD.

20. Representative of the AFCD supplemented that the AFCD's staff would be on duty throughout the day to deal with issues with nuisance arising from wild pigs. Should members of the public come across wild pigs, they should remain calm without taking the initiative to approach, interfere with or evict them. If they were disturbed by wild pigs, they could contact the 1823 Call Centre and relay it to the department for follow-up. In case of emergency, they should call the Police at 999 immediately. If it was assessed by the police officers at the location that the prevailing situation was not dangerous, they would usually allow the wild pigs to leave and might not necessarily ask the AFCD to handle the situation at the location.

Item 6: Concern over the progress of the overhaul of public markets in the Central and Western District

(C&W FEHC Paper No. 20/2024)

(11:48 am – 11:59 am)

21. The Chairman invited Members to express their views and make enquiries on the issue. Speeches by Members were consolidated as follows:

- (i) A Member asked the FEHD to provide a written response to the two recommendations mentioned in the paper.

[Post-meeting note: On 11 July 2024, the Secretariat relayed the FEHD's written response to Members by email.]

- (ii) A Member said that a community group had carried out a detailed survey on the

issue with the vacant uppermost floor in Sai Ying Pun Market but its recommendations were not accepted by the FEHD. As a result, the Member would like to know the specific situation regarding the vacant site on the uppermost floor in Sai Ying Pun Market and whether a transitional proposal would be available in the absence of a detailed plan, such as setting up more short-term tenancies, shops, recreational facilities or social welfare sites.

- (iii) A Member said that although modernisation projects had been carried out by the FEHD in Shek Tong Tsui Market and Smithfield Market respectively, the results appeared to be unsatisfactory. The Member enquired about the project details in the two markets and asked whether the department would consider implementing a large-scale modernisation and transformation programme, similar to the one completed in Aberdeen Market, in these two markets.
- (iv) A Member said that as mentioned by the FEHD previously, it was possible for Shek Tong Tsui Market to be included in the Market Modernisation Programme at the coming stage, such that the current situation where hawker stalls in the market were relatively small could be improved. Owing to its history, the internal space of Shek Tong Tsui Market was used inefficiently and very few would visit the market, resulting in a waste of public resources. It was therefore hoped that the department could improve the environment in Shek Tong Tsui Market comprehensively.
- (v) A Member said that in the past ten years, multiple surveys, petitions and signature campaigns regarding the issue with the vacant uppermost floor in Sai Ying Pun Market had been carried out, and that negotiations with the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene had been organised in the hope of identifying a suitable use for the venue on a temporary basis. Nevertheless, it was mentioned by the FEHD that its venue could not be used by other departments, and that the FEHD could only invite tenants to place bids. However, nobody had placed any bids, so the venue had all along remained vacant. Residents felt very disappointed with the FEHD as it had all along been unwilling to open the venue to the community. The Member hoped that there would be a breakthrough in the existing policies, such that a viable solution could be reached.

22. Representative of the FEHD said that the department was planning to merge Centre Street Market and Sai Ying Pun Market, and that a detailed plan would be provided after the meeting. The FEHD did not have any plans to incorporate Centre Street Market and Sai Ying Pun Market into the Market Modernisation Programme for the time being.

23. The Chairman hoped that the FEHD could formulate a timetable on merging Centre Street Market and Sai Ying Pun Market as soon as possible, such that Members could offer assistance in the entire relocation process.

Item 7: Strong request to improve the environment and facilities at the public refuse collection points in the Central and Western District

(C&W FEHC Paper No. 21/2024)

(11:59 am – 12:15 pm)

24. The Chairman said that the remainder of the meeting would be chaired by the Vice-chairman.

25. The Vice-chairman invited Members to express their views and make enquiries on the issue. Speeches by Members were consolidated as follows:

- (i) A Member said that the environmental hygiene conditions of the existing refuse collection points in the district were not satisfactory. Owing to issues with serious accumulation of water and rodent infestation, the public was unwilling to visit the refuse collection points. It was therefore recommended that the department should consider refurbishing and renovating these refuse collection points and install ancillary facilities, such as food waste recycling machines and recycling bins, such that residents would have a greater incentive to use the facilities.
- (ii) A Member said that issues with the refuse collection point in Lyttelton Road had been raised in the C&WDC as early as in 2017, during which multiple government departments mentioned that they would examine the feasibility of setting up a new refuse collection point. In August 2023, the FEHD mentioned that the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) had submitted a consultancy report to the FEHD, indicating that the slope works would have a serious impact on the three trees at the location, therefore the FEHD was not recommended to carry out the relevant works. The Member said that multiple complaints about the relevant refuse collection point had still been received at present and hoped that the department could submit the consultancy report as soon as possible, such that the issue could be resolved properly.
- (iii) A Member supplemented that after having a site visit at the refuse collection point in Lyttelton Road on 17 April this year, it was discovered that the area among the three trees were rather spacious, therefore there should be enough room to build a refuse collection point. The Member stressed that a final decision should be made in the light of the professional assessment report and hoped that the FEHD could submit the consultancy report for reference as soon as possible. In addition, as mentioned by a foreman at the refuse collection point, there was a decrease in the frequency of waste collection. It was therefore hoped that the FEHD could improve the relevant situation.
- (iv) A Member said that there was limited useable flat land at the refuse collection point in Lyttelton Road. Built on a slope, there was insufficient space to place

all refuse and cleansing devices, so cleansing workers had no choice but to place some items in the outdoor area, posing an impact to the cleanliness and scenery of the surrounding environment. Owing to an improper schedule for the waste collection, residents complained about an accumulation of refuse in the open area. The Member recommended that the FEHD could optimise the refuse collection point to improve the environment in the neighbourhood.

- (v) A Member observed that while many rodents were found at the refuse collection point from time to time, the staff there were indifferent to their presence. The Member believed that not only would the presence of numerous rodents at the refuse collection point every night have an impact on the environment hygiene, it would also pose a threat to the health and safety of the frontline staff, hence it was hoped that the FEHD could adopt anti-rodent measures that were more effective.

26. Representative of the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) gave a consolidated response to Members' speeches and said that at present, food waste recycling points were available at three refuse collection points managed by the FEHD in the Central and Western District (including those in Lok Ku Road, Smithfield Municipal Services Building and Shek Tong Tsui), whereas food waste recycling bins had also been placed in Sheung Wan Market and Sai Ying Pun Market respectively to serve residents nearby. To identify a public venue for the installation of a smart food waste recycling bin, multiple factors, such the availability of adequate space and energy supply, had to be considered. As a result, the EPD would continue to explore the feasibility of installing smart food waste recycling bins at suitable refuse collection points with the FEHD.

27. Representative of the FEHD said that the department would follow up on the report requested by Members with the ArchSD. Starting from April, the FEHD had started to place alcoholic rodent traps at the refuse collection points in the Central and Western District on a trial basis, with a view to achieving better results in rodent disinfestation.

**Item 8: Concern over the Rodent Absence Rate in the Rodent Activity Survey for the first half of 2024 by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
(C&W FEHC Paper No. 22/2024)**

(12:15 pm – 12:27 pm)

28. The Vice-chairman invited Members to express their views and make enquiries on the issue. Speeches by Members were consolidated as follows:

- (i) A Member asked the FEHD to list the locations where a thermal imaging camera was installed, as well as the locations where the 4 761 “thermal images of rodents” were captured.
- (ii) A Member said that the statistics on “Rodent Absence Rate” seemed too

idealistic, which failed to faithfully reflect the seriousness of rodent infestation. The Member said that should both the presence of one rodent and 100 rodents in an image be counted as “one thermal image of rodents”, it would fail to reflect the real situation on rodent infestation. Hence, the FEHD was asked to set out the specific locations where a survey had taken place, such that Members could learn about the black spots with more severe rodent infestation, such that suitable rodent disinfection measures could be taken.

- (iii) A Member said that as shown in the statistical data, there was only a 4% chance for rodents to be captured in the images. In reality, however, the public would still have a perception of a serious rodent infestation should rodents be seen. The Member recommended that the FEHD should organise large-scale anti-rodent and cleansing campaigns in the Central and Western District to give the public the impression that the department would cope with the issue seriously.
- (iv) A Member enquired about the FEHD’s follow-up actions in response to the results of the survey on “Rodent Absence Rate” and whether the results would have an impact on how the FEHD would handle the matter afterwards.

29. Representative of the FEHD responded that the first stage of the survey on “Rodent Absence Rate” only covered locations where pest control services were provided by the FEHD, and that private rear lanes did not fall within the scope in the first stage of the survey. Where necessary, the FEHD could also offer technical support to managers of the private places. Representative of the FEHD concurred with the Member’s recommendation on having a large-scale anti-rodent operation and said that Members were welcomed to express their views on locations with serious rodent infestation, such that the department could allocate resources to focus on these locations.

30. The Vice-chairman opened the floor for Members to deliver their second round of speeches. Speeches by Members were consolidated as follows:

- (i) A Member asked the FEHD to design a simple questionnaire on rodent infestation for Members. In this way, Members could set out suitable locations by completing the questionnaire, whereas the FEHD could give a brief account of the resources available to cope with the situation.
- (ii) A Member raised a follow-up enquiry on how the FEHD would follow up on the results of the survey on “Rodent Absence Rate”.

31. Representative of the FEHD supplemented that the new rodent surveillance programme had been taken up by an outsourced service agent where thermal images of rodents would be analysed with the aid of the artificial intelligence technologies. The department would supplement the calculation method on “the number of thermal images of rodents” and set out the subsequent follow-up items after the meeting.

[Post-meeting note: On 19 June 2024, the Secretariat relayed the FEHD’s written response and

questionnaire to Members by email. Questionnaires completed by Members were relayed to the FEHD for follow-up on 2 July 2024.]

Item 9: Concern over the persistent noise from bars and restaurants around Central and Sheung Wan

(C&W FEHC Paper No. 23/2024)

(12:17 pm – 12:49 pm)

32. The Vice-chairman invited Members to express their views and make enquiries on the issue. Speeches by Members were consolidated as follows:

- (i) A Member received some feedback from residents living in the vicinity of Staunton Street who indicated that bar customers would gather and make noises in the streets nearby at around 3:00 am to 4:00 am, causing serious disturbance to their sleeping quality. The Member believed that the relevant departments should step up its law enforcement actions.
- (ii) A Member recognised that while the issue was related to striking a balance between economic development and people's livelihood, the issue with noises did cause a serious nuisance to local residents. The Member understood that as the Police did not have a professional device to measure the noise levels, they could only give advice or issue a reminder upon receipt of a complaint. As a result, the Member recommended that the EPD should step up its collaboration with the Police by deploying its staff to measure the noise levels and take law enforcement actions at the location in the small hours. Besides, the Member would like to know whether the Police or the EPD could take enforcement actions based on the audio or video clips recorded by residents themselves.
- (iii) A Member said that the mechanism involving the management of existing noise complaints was ineffective and believed that the Police should relay its views to the Liquor Licensing Board (LLB), which could impose additional licensing conditions to bars with multiple contraventions to achieve a deterring effect.
- (iv) A Member believed that bars might be persuaded to lodge complaints against their counterparts should the LLB be able to revoke a business licence on the basis of the number of complaints received, hence it was not feasible to make the number of complaints the sole criteria in the process of vetting applications for a liquor licence. The Member said that even if the LLB had asked the bar to adopt additional noise mitigation measures during license renewal, the issue with noises could not be resolved completely. Meanwhile, the existing practice of the EPD also had its limitations because an inspection might not be carried out at the time when a complaint was received, such that often was it not possible to measure the accurate noise levels. The Member therefore recommended that the EPD should monitor and study the situation actively by setting up

surveillance spots in Central and Sheung Wan, through which statistics on noises could be collected, with a view to identifying the actual periods and locations with noise nuisance and solving the issue in a targeted manner.

33. Representative of the EPD responded that during an investigation on whether noises emitted from bars and food premises would cause disturbance to residents, the department would usually arrange to have an assessment in a residential unit. In deciding whether noises emitted from the premises would constitute nuisance, the department would adopt the standard where music emitted from bars and food premises could not be heard in the residential units after 11:00 pm. If it was confirmed that the relevant noise level exceeded the standard above, a Noise Abatement Notice would be issued to the persons-in-charge of the premises in accordance with section 13 of the Noise Control Ordinance, under which they would be required to take effective measures to reduce the noise levels within a specified period. Failure to comply with the relevant requirements was an offence and the persons-in-charge would be liable to prosecution. As regards noises emitted from those who gathered outside bars or food premises, the EPD would deploy its staff to have an inspection at the bars, during which they would distribute the guidelines to the persons-in-charge and explain to them the legal requirements. They would also be reminded to be aware of the noises during business hours to minimise the impact on residents nearby.

34. Representative of the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF) gave a consolidated response to Members' speeches and said that the Police would generally have a site inspection upon receipt of a complaint. Should there be a breach of licensing conditions, the Police would issue a corresponding warning, record the number of complaints and relay the relevant information to the LLB. When the Police Licensing Office received an application for licence renewal, it would recommend the LLB to consider requesting the licensed premises to adopt additional noise mitigation measures in cases where serious noise nuisance was detected. While the video footages submitted by the public might not be directly applicable to the prosecution, it could serve to assist the Police in identifying the source of noises, which would help manage the overall issue with noises.

35. Representative of the HKPF supplemented that as a general condition stipulated in a liquor licence, the doors and windows of the premises had to be closed between 11:00 pm and 9:00 am. Should the advice given be ignored or in the event of an increased number of complaints, noise mitigation measures of a more stringent nature would be imposed on the liquor licence of the premises when an application for licence renewal was processed. For instance, the premises would be required to shut the doors and windows as early as from 6:00 pm onwards or be banned from using an amplifier after 11:00 pm. Administrative measures could also be taken to restrict the licensed premises, such as only granting a 6-month or 9-month licence during licence renewal. The Police Licensing Office would submit its views on the application for licence renewal of the licensed premises to the LLB by setting out the number of complaints received and attaching a report detailing each occasion where the Police handled the complaint at the location. Over the past two years, the Police Licensing Office of the Central Police District issued 41 summonses. Successful charges were made in 35 cases, whereas court hearings had yet to be scheduled for the remaining cases.

Item 10: Any other business

(12:49 pm)

36. The Vice-chairman said that there were no other business.

Item 11: Date of the next meeting

(12:49 pm)

37. The fourth meeting of the FEHC would be held on 18 July 2024 and the paper submission deadline would be 3 July 2024.

38. The meeting ended at 12:49 pm on 30 May 2024.

The minutes were confirmed on 18 July 2024

Chairman: Mr YEUNG Hok-ming, MH

Secretary: Ms CHEUNG Wai-ting, Kelsey

Central and Western District Council Secretariat
July 2024