

**Minutes of the Fourth Meeting of the
Food, Environment and Hygiene Committee (2024-2025) of the
Seventh Term of Central and Western District Council**

Date : 18 July 2024 (Thursday)
Time : 10:00 am
Venue : Central and Western District Council 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

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 4

Mr PAU Chung-on	Food and Environmental Hygiene Department	District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Central/Western)
Ms HUI Man-wai, Fion	Food and Environmental Hygiene Department	Chief Health Inspector (Central/Western)3

Item 5

Mr PAU Chung-on	Food and Environmental Hygiene Department	District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Central/Western)
Ms HUI Man-wai, Fion	Food and Environmental Hygiene Department	Chief Health Inspector (Central/Western)3

Item 6

Mr PAU Chung-on	Food and Environmental Hygiene Department	District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Central/Western)
Ms HUI Man-wai, Fion	Food and Environmental Hygiene Department	Chief Health Inspector (Central/Western)3

Item 7

Mr PAU Chung-on	Food and Environmental Hygiene Department	District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Central/Western)
Ms HUI Man-wai, Fion	Food and Environmental Hygiene Department	Chief Health Inspector (Central/Western)3
Mr WONG Ka-chun, Tommy	Central and Western District Office	Executive Officer (District Management)1
Miss LUK Ka-man, Carmen	Central and Western District Office	Executive Officer (District Management)2
Mr LEE Kai-ho	Leisure and Cultural Services Department	Deputy District Leisure Manager (Central & Western)2

Item 8

Mr LAU Kai-chung	Electrical and Mechanical Services Department	Senior Engineer/Municipal/HK
Mr PAU Chung-on	Food and Environmental Hygiene Department	District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Central/Western)
Ms HUI Man-wai, Fion	Food and Environmental Hygiene Department	Chief Health Inspector (Central/Western)3
Mr HO Hon-tung	Highways Department	District Engineer/West
Mr LEE Kai-ho	Leisure and Cultural Services Department	Deputy District Leisure Manager (Central & Western)2

In Attendance:

Ms LAU Mei-ling, Tenny	Central and Western District Office	Senior Liaison Officer (Building Management)1
Mr TSE Yip-kei, Alvin	Environmental Protection Department	Senior Environmental Protection Officer (Regional South)1

Absence with Apologies:

Dr ZHANG Zong

Secretary:

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

(10:01 am)

1. The Chairman said that as the quorum was reached, he announced that the fourth meeting of the Food, Environment and Hygiene Committee (FEHC) (2024-2025) of the Seventh Term of 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 inspect the staff card of the persons entering the conference room and request for their name cards, and members of the press who wished to conduct interviews there and the assistants of Members were also required to register their real name and mobile number for record purposes. He proposed that for better efficiency of discussion, each item should be discussed in a “4-minute-question-and-answer” format. He also asked the representatives to make their speech and reply as concise as possible. The Chairman reminded Members that they had to declare their interests as appropriate.

Item 1: Confirmation of the minutes of the 3rd FEHC meeting held on 30 May 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 third FEHC meeting. Since Members present did not raise any other suggested amendments as regards the minutes (draft), 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 received a Notification of Absence from Meetings submitted by Dr ZHANG Zong prior to the meeting, stating that he was unable to attend the fourth meeting of the FEHC (2024-2025) to be held on 18 July 2024 because he had to leave Hong Kong for attending thematic study activities organised by the Shaanxi Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference. As Members did not raise any comment, the Chairman announced that the FEHC accepted Dr ZHANG Zong’s application for absence from the meeting in accordance with Order 64 of the C&WDC Standing Orders.

Item 3: Action checklist on matters arising from the last meeting

(C&W FEHC Paper No. 31/2024)

(10:04 am)

4. The Chairman invited Members to note the paper.

Item 4: Standing item - The problem of dog fouling in public places in the Central and Western District

(C&W FEHC Paper No. 26/2024)

(10:04 am – 10:30 am)

5. The Chairman said that the paper was submitted by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) and invited the FEHD to introduce the paper.

6. The representatives of the FEHD said that during the period from May to June 2024, the Central/Western District Environmental Hygiene Office had received a total of 25 complaints about dog fouling, and the offence involving any person who allowed one's dog to foul in the streets with its excreta had not been detected. According to the suggestions raised by Members, the FEHD had placed dog excreta collection bins at suitable locations for public use and arranged cleansing contractors for cleaning the black spots of dog excreta.

7. The Chairman invited comments and questions regarding the item from Members, and the remarks given by Members were summarised as follows:

- (i) Members had conducted several site visits to Prince's Terrace and identified various environmental hygiene problems. As the street involved private property ownership, it was difficult for DC Members to intervene in this matter. Members enquired whether the FEHD had relevant guidelines to co-ordinate residents and help them resolve such problems.
- (ii) Members pointed out that the areas around Sands Street and Ching Lin Terrace were of unsatisfactory environmental hygiene conditions. As some dog owners did not properly handle the excreta of their dogs, dog urine would evaporate under high temperature and became very smelly. So, they requested the departments concerned to follow up on it.
- (iii) Members welcomed that the FEHD had given positive response to Members' views. Thinking that the relevant efforts had achieved certain results, they hoped the FEHD to continue to follow up the issue regarding utilisation of dog excreta collection bins. Besides, Members suggested that the FEHD should make targeted adjustment to the time of law enforcement for tackling the situation and conduct enhanced impromptu visits during time slots, such as in the morning, when many people would walk their dogs.
- (iv) Members enquired whether the FEHD could provide specific prosecution figures and suggested that the FEHD should consider installing Internet Protocol Cameras at various black spots of dog excreta for enhanced deterrent effect.

8. In response to the remarks given by Members, the representatives of the FEHD gave a consolidated reply, stating that the FEHD would not enter private places for cleaning. To strategically tackle the situation of Prince's Terrace, the FEHD had given reminder to the owners' corporation (OC) concerned, stressing that owners had the responsibility to maintain the

environmental hygiene of the area concerned properly. He said that the existing legislation mainly targeted the offence involving dog excreta but did not have clear regulation against people who allowed one's dog to foul any public place with dog urine. The FEHD understood that even though some people had tried to use water to clean up the soiled area with dog urine, the residue would still cause odour in hot weather. So, the FEHD would increase the frequency of street washing to reduce the odour problem. In the past two months, the FEHD had received 25 related complaints covering several issues and not all of them involved dog fouling. During this period, the offence involving any person who allowed one's dog to foul in the streets with its excreta had not been detected.

9. The Chairman invited the second round of discussion on the item by Members, and the remarks given by Members were summarised as follows:

- (i) Members indicated that the environmental hygiene at two footbridges in the district was poor, including the footbridge across Western Street for access to and from Sun Yat Sen Memorial Park and the one connecting Connaught Garden to Kwan Yick Building Phase III. He said that even though the department concerned had arranged for cleaning these footbridges daily, it was still not effective in solving the environmental hygiene and odour problems there. They hoped that the FEHD would increase the frequency of cleaning at the footbridges concerned.
- (ii) Members observed that some dog owners would only spray water at the soiled areas for cleaning the urine of their dogs. This was not only ineffective in cleaning but would also help spread dog urine to a larger area. Members hoped that the FEHD could have further elaboration on the standard of law enforcement against people who did not clean up the urine of their dogs in public places and would step up enforcement action to ensure environmental hygiene.
- (iii) Members suggested that the FEHD should step up its efforts in educating pet owners and set aside a budget for distributing materials to the public for cleaning up pet droppings, such as publicity leaflets, reusable bags, plastic bags and disinfecting spray, aiming to enhance the awareness of pet owners. Members also said that there were not enough dog latrines in the Central and Western District (C&W District).
- (iv) Members enquired whether the closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras in the rear lanes at Shek Tong Tsui and Sheung Wan were installed by the FEHD. He recommended installation of CCTV cameras at the black spots of dog excreta by the FEHD because CCTV cameras would act as a deterrent even if they could not be used for the purpose of prosecution.

10. The representatives of the FEHD added that it needed to confirm whether the CCTV cameras as mentioned by Members were installed by the FEHD. The CCTV cameras installed by

the FEHD were at present mainly used for monitoring littering black spots and illegal refuse deposit black spots. Under the existing legislation, it was difficult to tackle the problem of fouling public places by dog urine through prosecution. The FEHD would continue to strengthen education and publicity and consider distributing souvenirs when such activities were held. Moreover, it was required to submit applications to the Lands Department for granting temporary government land allocation sites to provide dog latrines. Since it was a rather complicated procedure, the FEHD suggested that dog excreta collection bins available should be placed at locations in question and welcomed Members to raise proposed locations for placing the bins.

11. The representative of the Central and Western District Office (C&WDO) added that the ownership of Prince's Terrace involved OCs and "three-nil" buildings. According to the current policy, the management and cleaning of private places should be the responsibility of the owners concerned. In response to the complaints about Prince's Terrace, the C&WDO would include Prince's Terrace in the scope of cleaning under the District-led Actions Scheme this year. It was expected that the cleaning operations would commence by the end of the year. As planned initially, the cleaning operation would be conducted once a month and further adjustment would be made subject to the availability of resource and manpower. For assessment of the effectiveness of the cleaning operations and for further adjustment of the arrangement, the C&WDO also welcomed Members and residents to continue to reflect their views after the commencement of the cleaning operation.

Item 5: Concern over mosquito infestation in the Central and Western District
(C&W FEHC Paper No. 27/2024)

(10:30 am – 10:50 am)

12. The Chairman welcomed the representatives of the FEHD to the meeting. He invited the first round of discussion on the item by Members, and the remarks given by Members were summarised as follows:

- (i) Members mentioned a species of insect called biting midges and enquired whether the general anti-mosquito measures would also be effective against midges. Having cited the gravidtrap index published in the FEHD website, Members pointed out that the gravidtrap index of the survey area "Central and Admiralty" had reached Level 3 of the alert level in July, indicating that it was a level of serious mosquito infestation. The gravidtrap index had increased significantly when compared with that in June, showing that the mosquito problem was becoming more serious. Members requested the FEHD to strengthen the mosquito control work. Besides, Members pointed out that mosquito infestation was serious in large public rental housing estates near slopes such as Kwun Lung Lau and Sai Wan Estate. They suggested that the FEHD should strengthen communication with these estates and carry out the anti-mosquito work effectively.
- (ii) Members pointed out that mosquito infestation had become increasingly

serious at many parks managed by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD). They suggested that the LCSD should increase the frequency of fogging operations for mosquito control and requested it to provide data on its anti-mosquito work.

- (iii) Members mentioned that the staff of some property management companies (PMCs) had no idea of the proper methods of mosquito prevention and control. They therefore recommended the FEHD to enhance the publicity and education efforts for PMCs and residents with a view to disseminating the proper information and methods of mosquito prevention and control. Members suggested that the FEHD should give prior notification to the housing estates and residential premises in the vicinity, have co-ordination with the PMCs concerned and give early notification to the affected residents before conducting large-scale anti-mosquito operations.
- (iv) Members suggested that the FEHD should consider adopting some practices of rodent control, such as placing signs at locations where anti-mosquito work had been completed, to facilitate residents to understand the situation. Besides, Members enquired whether the chemicals used for anti-mosquito work would have negative impact on children and animals.
- (v) Members opined that the Government should focus on conducting anti-mosquito work in public space since residents should be responsible for conducting such work on their own in private place. Members suggested that the Government should enhance anti-mosquito measures in public space such as parks with a view to protecting the health of the public, especially children and the elderly.

13. In response to the remarks given by Members, the representatives of the FEHD gave a consolidated reply, stating that the calculation of the gravidtrap index was based on the number of mosquitoes collected by gravidtraps, and that a larger number stood for a more serious level of mosquito problem. The gravidtrap index in C&W District was maintained at a reasonable level. As it was far below the alert level, there was no cause for excessive concern over the problem. The FEHD would closely monitor the gravidtrap index and take immediate action in the case of irregularities detected. As regards mosquito infestation in private housing estates, the owners or PMCs concerned were mainly responsible for tackling the problem. The FEHD might organise seminars for explaining measures of mosquito prevention to the public, such as ways of clearing stagnant water and applying larvicidal oil. The FEHD would continue to carry out the mosquito prevention work in public places on a regular basis, such as clearing stagnant water and conducting fogging operations. It would also maintain communication with various departments such as the LCSD at regular meetings, conduct joint operations to tackle mosquito infestation in public space such as parks, and explore enhanced anti-mosquito measures for areas such as the Peak.

14. The Chairman suggested that the LCSD should provide Members with the timetable of conducting fogging operations to eradicate adult mosquitoes in advance, thereby allowing them

to give prior notification to the affected members of the public or property management offices of housing estates in a timely manner.

[Post-meeting note: The Secretariat sent the written reply submitted by the LCSD to all Members by email on 14 August 2024.]

Item 6: Concern over water dripping from air-conditioners in the Central and Western District

(C&W FEHC Paper No. 28/2024)

(10:50 am – 11:07 am)

15. The Chairman welcomed the representatives of the FEHD to the meeting. He invited the first round of discussion on the item by Members, and the remarks given by Members were summarised as follows:

- (i) Members mentioned that despite the increase in the number of complaint cases about water dripping from air-conditioners (dripping air-conditioners) in recent years, the number of Nuisance Orders issued had decreased. They therefore had enquired why it was so. The FEHD replied that it had completed the investigation of and given the response to all complaint cases lodged from 2020 to 2023. In this regard, Members wanted to further enquire whether the FEHD had properly handled all the cases because it seemed that the situation of dripping air-conditioners in the district still persisted.
- (ii) Members pointed out that the FEHD would generally let the property management offices concerned tackle the problem of dripping air-conditioners in private housing estates and hold the related mediation by themselves. Members believed that although the property management offices might have spared no effort in tackling the problem, they had no statutory authority to ensure any effective solutions to the problem. So, they suggested that the FEHD should adopt a more active approach to tackling the problem of dripping air-conditioners in private housing estates.
- (iii) Members enquired whether the FEHD would take any further action in some cases in which the FEHD failed to detect the source of dripping air-conditioners at site upon receipt of such complaints. Members hoped that the FEHD would provide the definition of a successful case completed and the related data instead of simply stating that investigation had been completed and replying in such a way.
- (iv) Members enquired whether the FEHD would take the initiative to conduct inspection and tackle the problem of dripping air-conditioners.

16. The representatives of the FEHD responded that the FEHD had changed the investigation practices since this May, tackling the problem of dripping air-conditioners in a more proactive manner. It would deploy staff to conduct patrol at the black spots and would immediately issue Nuisance Notices once the cases of dripping air-conditioners were detected. As at the end of this June, the FEHD had issued a total of 79 Nuisance Notices, which was a larger number than that in the past. Targeting at cases of dripping air-conditioners which would become more serious at night, the FEHD would try to arrange inspections in the early morning as much as possible. The FEHD would continue to actively conduct inspections and tackle the problem of dripping air-conditioners. It also welcomed Members to provide information on the black spots of dripping air-conditioners with a view to focusing resources to solve the problem.

17. Members enquired about how the FEHD would issue Nuisance Notices.

18. The representatives of the FEHD responded that Nuisance Notices were generally issued by registered mail, informing the owner of the flats concerned of the situation and relevant legal responsibilities, and requiring them to abate the nuisances within a specified period. Any person who without reasonable excuse failed to make improvement within the specified period might be prosecuted.

19. Members suggested that the FEHD might consider having collaboration with private housing estates in future. If it was so, technicians might be arranged to assist in conducting inspection to detect the problem of dripping air-conditioners in buildings prior to the onset of the rainy season and provide recommendations for improvement.

20. The representatives of the FEHD noted Members' views.

Item 7: Inadequate management of roadside flower beds

(C&W FEHC Paper No. 29/2024)

(11:07 am – 11:37 am)

21. The Chairman said that discussion on the remaining agenda item would be chaired by the Vice-chairman.

22. The Vice-chairman welcomed the representatives of the FEHD, C&WDO and LCSD to the meeting. He invited comments and questions regarding the item from Members, and the main points of the remarks given by Members were summarised as follows:

- (i) A Member observed that many roadside plants had withered for a long time. He also pointed out that he had complained about unauthorised growing of vegetables in the public flower beds at Water Street by some residents. The Member enquired whether inspections would be conducted by the departments concerned on a regular basis or only upon receipt of complaints.
- (ii) Members had observed the way of watering plants by some outsourced

contractors. Their staff had to stand on a goods vehicle in movement and watered the plants out there. Such practice was not only a potential hazard to the safety of the staff but also an inefficient method which would easily wet passers-by as well. Members questioned whether such practice was permitted by government departments and what measures were in place for monitoring the method of watering plants.

- (iii) Members pointed out that it was difficult for members of the public to differentiate which departments were responsible for the management of the flower beds concerned. So, if they found that there were littered flower beds, they would lodge complaints to the LCSD or the FEHD in general. However, as some of these complaints might need to be referred to the department responsible for handling, this resulted in inefficient handling of complaints and would easily cause misunderstanding among the public. Members recommended establishment of a coordinating mechanism among various government departments to centrally handle public complaints about flower beds.
- (iv) Members enquired whether the difference in the quality of flower bed maintenance was related to the difference in contractors. If the same contractor was engaged in the maintenance of all flower beds, they wondered why some flower beds were better maintained while some were not.

23. In response to the remarks given by Members, the representative of the LCSD gave a consolidated reply, stating that the LCSD was responsible for the horticultural maintenance of plants grown in planting areas of a street other than that in country parks and along expressways. Maintenance of the plants therein were carried out by the LCSD's horticultural contractor, which included irrigation, fertilisation, undergrowth cutting services, plant replacement and pest control, etc. The LCSD would inspect its flower beds on a regular basis and immediately deploy staff to tackle the problem detected at the flower beds. Shrubs had already been grown in some flower beds to prevent unauthorised planting by the public. As regards the method of irrigation mentioned by Members, the LCSD would request the contractor for improvement. In general, the LCSD was responsible for maintaining the plants grown in the flower beds, while the FEHD would undertake the cleansing work. The maintenance of plants in all flower beds in the district was outsourced to only one contractor and factors, such as species of plant, water source and staff, might affect the growth of plants. The LCSD would step up inspections and follow up on flower beds in which the growth of plants was unsatisfactory.

24. The representatives of the C&WDO said that the C&WDO was responsible for the management of six roadside flower beds in C&W District at present, which were maintained by one contractor. Under the contract terms, duties of the contractor included regular irrigation, undergrowth cutting services, soil aeration, rubbish removal, as well as replacement of plants and replanting. Moreover, the C&WDO would also deploy staff to inspect the growth condition of the plants in flower beds under the management of the C&WDO. According to the inspection reports, the C&WDO would give instructions to the contractor for cutting plants or replacing the dead ones.

25. The representatives of the FEHD added that its cleansing work would only be carried out in general streets. Its cleaners would remove refuse from flower beds provided in public place while the maintenance of flower beds would be undertaken by the departments or owners concerned.

Item 8: Concern over the hygiene condition of the Central-Mid-Levels Escalator and Walkway System and the escalators in markets in the Central and Western District

(C&W FEHC Paper No. 30/2024)

(12:15 pm – 12:27 pm)

26. The Vice-chairman welcomed the representatives of the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD), FEHD, Highways Department (HyD) and LCSD to the meeting. He invited comments and questions on the item from Members, and the main points of the remarks given by Members were summarised as follows:

- (i) Members pointed out that according to the surveys conducted in the four markets in C&W District in the past two years, there was a significant increase in the bacterial index of escalators when compared with that of 2019, being a few times more than the standard on average. He said that the problem of bacterial growth had reduced effectively after installing disinfection devices at the escalators of some buildings in the district. Members enquired whether the FEHD would consider installing the same kind of disinfection devices at the escalators in the markets to solve the problem of bacterial growth in the long run.
- (ii) Members pointed out that the hygiene condition of the footbridge at the Central Market was poor and there was frequent gathering of feral pigeons. They enquired whether the HyD would strengthen the cleaning of the footbridge to ensure the hygiene and safety of pedestrians.
- (iii) Members pointed out that the cleansing work of some public facilities was at present undertaken by a number of government departments. For example, the HyD was responsible for removing the stains left by graffiti while floor cleansing was undertaken by FEHD. As a result, the public would easily be confused. Members suggested that the departments concerned should provide clearer guidelines, elaborating on the information such as the type, frequency and schedule of various kinds of cleansing work undertaken by different departments. This would facilitate Members to give response to public enquiries and handle relevant complaints more effectively.

27. The representatives of the FEHD responded that the FEHD had installed UVC sterilisation devices at the escalators in markets, which would carry out sterilisation once an hour. No related complaints had been received after the installation of the UVC sterilisation devices.

The FEHD would ensure the hygiene of escalators in the markets. The FEHD was in general responsible for the cleansing work, such as cleaning and washing, of the streets in all public places. As regards the maintenance of facilities such as footbridges and lifts, it would be carried out by the departments to which the facilities belonged. There were established guidelines and co-operation mechanisms among the departments.

28. The representative of the HyD said that the HyD was responsible for cleaning the structure and external walls of the Central to Mid-levels Escalator and Walkway System (the System). As the HyD had taken note of Members' views on the hygienic condition of the escalators of the System, it would enhance the monitoring and carry out regular cleaning of the escalators.

29. The representative of the EMSD said that, as engaged by the Transport Department, the EMSD was responsible for the maintenance of the electrical and mechanical equipment of the System as well as the cleaning of the escalators of the System as required.

Item 9: Any other business

(12:49 pm)

30. The Vice-chairman indicated that there was no further business for discussion.

Item 10: Date of the next meeting

(12:49 pm)

31. The fourth meeting of the FEHC would be held on 26 September 2024 and the paper submission deadline would be 10 September 2024.

32. The meeting was adjourned at 12:49 pm on 18 July 2024.

The minutes were confirmed on 26 September 2024

Chairman: Mr YEUNG Hok-ming, MH

Secretary: Ms CHEUNG Wai-ting, Kelsey

Central and Western District Council Secretariat
September 2024