

(Translation)

Islands District Council
Minutes of Meeting of
Food, Environment and Hygiene Committee

Date : 3 June 2024 (Monday)
Time : 2:30 p.m.
Venue : Islands District Council Conference Room,
14/F, Harbour Building, 38 Pier Road, Central, Hong Kong

Present

Chairman

Mr HO Siu-kei

Vice-Chairman

Mr LAU Chin-pang

Members

Mr NG Man-kit
Mr YU Hon-kwan, MH, JP
Mr CHOW Yuk-tong, SBS, MH
Ms KWOK Wai-man, Mealoha
Mr HUI Chun-lung, MH
Mr WONG Man-hon, MH
Ms WONG Chau-ping
Mr WAN Yeung-kin
Mr WONG Hon-kuen, Ken
Mr YIP Pui-kei
Ms LAU Shun-ting
Mr LUO Chenghuan

Attendance by Invitation

Mr TANG Chi-sum, Terence	Property Service Manager/Service (Hong Kong Island & Islands)5, Housing Department
Dr Kristie WOO	Veterinary Officer (Animal Management) Hong Kong, Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
Mr YIM Ming-wai	Senior Field Officer (Animal Management) Hong Kong, Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
Mr TSANG Ka-kim	Field Officer I (Animal Management/Hong Kong)1, Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
Mr LAU Yin-pong	Nature Conservation Officer (Lantau), Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

In Attendance

Mr MOK Mong-chan	Assistant District Officer (Islands)1, Islands District Office
Mr CHAN Ka-leong	District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Islands), Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Mr YAN Ka-kit, Ric	Chief Health Inspector (Islands)1, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Ms KWOK Pui-lai	Senior Health Inspector (Hawker & Market) Islands, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Mr YAU Pak-lun, Esmond	Senior Environmental Protection Officer (Regional South)5, Environmental Protection Department

Secretary

Ms KWONG Tsz-wing, Wing	Executive Officer (District Council)2, Islands District Office
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**Welcoming Remarks**

The Chairman welcomed the representatives of the government departments and Members to the meeting. He then introduced Ms KWOK Pui-lai, Senior Health Inspector (Hawker & Market) Islands of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD), who stood in for Ms CHEUNG Suk-man.

I. Confirmation of minutes of the meeting held on 8 April 2024

2. The Chairman said that the captioned minutes had incorporated the amendments proposed by government departments and had been distributed to Members for perusal before the meeting.

3. The minutes were confirmed unanimously without further amendments proposed by Members.

II. Food and Environmental Hygiene Department – Refurbishment of Sheung Ling Pei Public Toilet  
(FEHC Paper No. 17/2024)

4. The Chairman invited the representatives of the FEHD to present the paper.

5. Mr CHAN Ka-leong briefly presented the paper.

6. Members expressed their views as follows:

- (a) Members supported the project and called on the FEHD to expedite its progress. Members enquired whether the mobile toilets mentioned in

the paper were solar-powered mobile toilets.

- (b) The FEHD would need to consider whether there was sufficient space for the mobile toilets at the project site and whether the number of mobile toilets was adequate to meet the demand. Members asked about the number of mobile toilets to be set up and whether the FEHD had communicated with the village representative of Sheung Ling Pei Village on the subject project.
- (c) Flies were spotted in some rural public toilets. Therefore, Members suggested that the FEHD should install deodorising devices in the public toilets during the refurbishment.
- (d) Considering that several public toilets in Mui Wo needed refurbishment, Members asked when the FEHD would commence those projects. In addition, some public toilets in Mui Wo had unpleasant odours, hence Member requested the FEHD to step up cleaning efforts.
- (e) In view of the fact that the Tung Chung Fort was a popular tourist spot, and as Sheung Ling Pei Public Toilet was the only toilet in the vicinity, Members urged the FEHD to expedite the progress of the works to minimise the impact on residents and tourists.
- (f) Members asked whether the FEHD had penalties in place for delays in works completion and suggested that the FEHD should put in place a mechanism for penalties to help ensure that contractors would complete the works as scheduled.

7. Mr Ric YAN gave a consolidated response, saying that the mobile toilets as described in the paper were all equipped with solar-powered lighting and ventilation. Before commencing the refurbishment of Sheung Ling Pei Public Toilet, the FEHD had already liaised with the village representative regarding the project details. After the meeting, the FEHD would further discuss with the village representative the appropriate locations for installing the mobile toilets and the number of toilets to avoid causing inconvenience to the villagers. In addition, the FEHD would closely monitor the usage of the mobile toilets and consider adjusting the number of toilets in a timely manner. Regarding the refurbishment works of certain public toilets in Mui Wo, those projects were still at the preparatory stage. Once the preparatory work was completed, the paper would be submitted to the FEHC. The FEHD was aware of the impact of the project on residents and tourists, and would maintain contact with the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) and closely monitor the progress of the project to ensure timely completion. As for the monitoring of the work progress of the contractor, the ArchSD had already set a deadline for the project with the contractor. If the project was not completed as scheduled, the ArchSD would follow up with the contractor.

(Post-meeting note: Public toilets managed by the FEHD were generally provided with mechanical ventilation supported by air exhaust systems and oscillating fans to improve ventilation. Air fresheners were also provided for odour control.)

8. The Chairman called on the FEHD to step up cleaning of the mobile toilets and to maintain communication with stakeholders on their placement.

III. Food and Environmental Hygiene Department – Anti-rodent Campaign 2024 (Phase II) in Islands District  
(FEHC Paper No. 18/2024)

9. The Chairman invited the representatives of the FEHD to present the paper.

10. Mr CHAN Ka-leong briefly presented the paper.

11. Members expressed their views as follows:

- (a) Members thanked the FEHD for implementing the campaign. According to the paper, the success rate of capturing live rodents and collecting dead rodents through the placement of rodent cages, traps and poison during the first phase of the anti-rodent campaign was only 3.7%, displaying limited effectiveness. Members suggested that the FEHD should explore other ways to enhance rodent control effectiveness.
- (b) There were staff from food premises in Cheung Chau South and Cheung Chau North washing dishes in the back alleys and left miscellaneous articles there, which affected environmental hygiene. Members suggested that if the food premises failed to make improvement after warnings, the FEHD should issue summons against them.
- (c) The FEHD's routine inspections primarily covered public places and public markets, but public housing estates (PHEs), private housing estates and construction sites also had rodent issues. In this regard, Members suggested that the FEHD should conduct joint anti-rodent operations with the Housing Department (HD) and the relevant departments. In addition, noting that the FEHD's rodent control efforts did not cover the markets at Ying Tung Shopping Centre, Yat Tung Estate and Mun Tung Estate in Tung Chung, Members requested supplementary information from the FEHD in this regard.
- (d) Members suggested that the FEHD should step up rodent control efforts at refuse collection points, food premises and drainages.
- (e) On Lamma Island, many food premises disposed of food waste between 7 p.m. and 8 p.m., but the FEHD staff only collected the refuse the next day. Members expressed concern that such arrangement would easily lead to gathering of rodents and hence suggested that the FEHD should arrange for staff to collect the refuse at around 10 p.m.

12. Mr Ric YAN gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) The numbers of live rodent captures and dead rodent collections stated in the paper only included rodents found at the locations covered by the anti-rodent campaign, which might result in lower numbers compared to those found during FEHD's routine inspections. The FEHD noted Members' feedback and would actively explore other methods for catching rodents to improve effectiveness.
- (b) The FEHD was aware that the staff of some food premises in Cheung Chau washed dishes in the back alleys. The FEHD would step up enforcement action to improve the situation.
- (c) The FEHD conducted promotional and educational activities related to rodent control at various locations (including private markets), targeting residents and different stakeholders.
- (d) Currently, the cleansing contractor collected refuse at around 9 p.m. The FEHD would discuss with the contractor after the meeting to explore the possibility of adjusting the refuse collection time to around 10 p.m.

13. Members expressed their views as follows:

- (a) The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) was implementing a food waste collection scheme at the food premises in Yung Shue Wan. However, the capacity of the food waste recycling bins provided by the EPD was insufficient to handle all the food waste from the food premises. In this connection, many restaurants disposed of their food waste at refuse collection points instead. Members highlighted that this situation could easily lead to rodent issues and suggested that the EPD should increase the capacity of the food waste recycling bins. In addition, Members said that many food premises in Sok Kwu Wan would like to participate in the food waste collection scheme and requested that the FEHD expand the scheme's coverage.
- (b) Members asked whether the FEHD had adopted techniques relating to information technology (including infrared thermography) to monitor rodent issues in the Islands District.
- (c) Last year, experts from the Guangdong Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) visited Hong Kong to exchange views with personnel from the FEHD and discussed rodent control matters. Members asked whether the FEHD had considered the advice of the CDC in formulating corresponding rodent control measures.

(Post-meeting note: Regarding the exchange with the CDC, the FEHD had all along adopted multipronged strategies for rodent prevention and control, and reviewed from time to time the rodent prevention and

disinfestation methodologies and techniques having regard to the latest developments and research results overseas and in the Mainland. The FEHD would continue to exchange experiences with experts in different places to keep abreast of the latest information on rodent prevention and control, and to ensure that the methodologies and techniques adopted by the FEHD were in line with international initiatives.)

14. The Chairman agreed that food waste at refuse collection points could easily lead to rodent issues and enquired about the details of the EPD's food waste collection scheme.

15. Mr CHAN Ka-leong gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) The FEHD had fully adopted thermal imaging cameras with artificial intelligence technology for conducting the Rodent Activity Survey (RAS), replacing the original Rodent Infestation Survey from 2024 onwards. The RAS was conducted in 19 districts of the FEHD across the territory once every six months. Compared with the traditional survey method using sweet potato baits, the new method had greater sensitivity and precision, with a more comprehensive coverage and a lower risk of interference by environmental factors. Therefore, it was more effective in reflecting the distribution and severity of rodent infestation in districts.
- (b) When conducting the RAS, the FEHD would take into account a basket of factors, including information verified from investigation of rodent-related complaint cases, the number of live rodents caught and dead rodents collected, inspection results and the views of local representatives. This was done to identify about 300 locations with potential rodent problems in each district as the sampling frame. For each survey, based on factors such as geographical distribution and verified complaint figures, etc., approximately 100 locations would be selected from the sampling frame via stratified random sampling for installation of thermal imaging cameras, in order to effectively deploy resources and ensure the representativeness of the sampled locations. The thermal imaging camera would capture two thermal images at every two-minute interval from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. the following day for three consecutive nights. Artificial intelligence would be utilised to analyse the images and identify the presence of rodents. The FEHD would consolidate the analysis results of artificial intelligence for each district and enumerate a Rodent Absence Rate for that district. The RAS of the first half of 2024 was still underway. After collating and analysing the data, the FEHD would announce the results in the second and third quarters of this year.

16. Mr Esmond YAU gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) The EPD adopted a waste management strategy that prioritised waste

reduction and promoted a “food wise” culture to reduce food waste. To this end, the EPD had launched the Food Wise Hong Kong Campaign and designed a promotional figure called the “Big Waster.” In addition, the EPD was actively expanding the food waste collection network.

- (b) The contractor at the Outlying Island Transfer Facilities would transport food waste collected from the food premises in Yung Shue Wan to a food waste processor to convert the food waste into organic compost. Regarding the suggestions on implementing the food waste collection scheme in other areas of the Island District, including Sok Kwu Wan, Peng Chau and Tai O, as well as adjusting food waste collection time, he said that they would be relayed to the relevant divisions for consideration after the meeting.
- (c) The current standard capacity of food waste recycling bins was 120 litres. Regarding the suggestion to increase the capacity of food waste recycling bins, the EPD needed to consider whether staff could move fully loaded food waste bins as well as occupational health and safety issues. After the meeting, the suggestion would be relayed to the relevant divisions for consideration and examine the feasibility of adjusting the number of food waste recycling bins to align with the operations of food premises.

(Post-meeting note: The EPD relayed the suggestions to the relevant divisions after the meeting.)

17. Members pointed out that food premises often disposed of food waste after closing at night, but since EPD staff would collect food waste the next morning, food premises tended to discard the food waste in regular rubbish bins, thus affecting the effectiveness of recycling. Members suggested that the EPD should arrange manpower to collect food waste after the closure of food premises.

18. The Chairman said that many PHEs only had one food waste recycling bin, which was insufficient to meet the demand. He opined that the EPD should optimise the food waste collection scheme and called on the EPD to follow up on Members’ suggestions.

19. Mr Esmond YAU gave a consolidated response, stating that he would forward the suggestion regarding adjusting the food waste collection time to the relevant divisions for consideration after the meeting. The personnel responsible for PHEs and private housing estates could arrange timely replacement of inner bins based on the usage of food waste recycling bins. The EPD would consider providing additional food waste collection points in PHEs and private housing estates with higher utilisation rate. The EPD also planned to double the number of food waste collection facilities within a year.

20. The Chairman suggested that the FEHD and the EPD should enhance co-operation with the local community.

IV. Food and Environmental Hygiene Department – Anti-mosquito Campaign 2024 (Phase II) in Islands District  
(FEHC Paper No. 19/2024)

21. The Chairman invited the representatives of the FEHD to present the paper.
22. Mr CHAN Ka-leong briefly presented the paper.
23. Members noted the content of the paper.

V. Question on the mosquito problem in the Islands District  
(FEHC Paper No. 20/2024)

24. The Chairman said that the FEHD's written reply had been distributed to Members for perusal before the meeting.
25. Mr YIP Pui-kei briefly presented the question.
26. Members expressed their views as follows:
  - (a) The surveillance scope of the Area Gravidtrap Index and Area Density Index only covered Cheung Chau North, Cheung Chau South and Tung Chung, excluding areas such as Lamma Island, Peng Chau, Tai O and Mui Wo. Members were of the view that the above indices failed to fully reflect the mosquito problem in the Islands District.
  - (b) In addition to mosquitoes, the issue of biting midges also had a significant impact on the livelihood of residents. With the onset of the rainy season, the biting midge problem worsened. Residents suggested setting relevant surveillance indicators for the problem of biting midges.
  - (c) Members requested the FEHD to step up anti-mosquito efforts in markets, public places and residential areas that were not under its administration. Furthermore, Members were aware that the FEHD would collaborate with the HD and private property management companies for anti-mosquito operations, and they requested further details on such collaboration.
27. Mr CHAN Ka-leong gave a consolidated response as follows:
  - (a) The FEHD had developed a surveillance programme with reference to the recommendations of the World Health Organisation for monitoring dengue fever vectors. The FEHD had selected 64 surveillance areas across Hong Kong and identified suitable locations within these areas to place ovitraps. Information regarding these locations had been uploaded



to the FEHD's website. In addition, the FEHD also monitored the distribution of *Aedes albopictus* at various major ports.

- (b) Ovitrap were mainly placed in areas where dengue fever cases had been reported and densely populated areas such as PHEs, private housing estates and schools. The FEHD would adjust the scope of surveillance and the placement of ovitraps in the light of the development of the area and public health needs.
- (c) As biting midges were not vectors that carried disease, the FEHD currently did not have specific surveillance indicators for biting midges.
- (d) The FEHD and the HD had conducted joint anti-mosquito operations in Cheung Kwai Estate in Cheung Chau, Yat Tung Estate, Mun Tung Estate and Fu Tung Estate in Tung Chung on 26 March, 25 April and 30 April this year respectively. The FEHD also held roving exhibitions on mosquito control and prevention in Fu Tung Estate and Mun Tung Estate in Tung Chung on 4 March and 25 April respectively, as well as a seminar on pest control in Yat Tung Estate and Mun Tung Estate on 8 March this year. The FEHD would maintain liaison with the HD and continue with joint operations and publicity work.

28. Mr Terence TANG gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) The HD attached great importance to the problem of mosquito infestation and had been implementing mosquito prevention measures within PHEs. During the rainy season, the HD stepped up anti-mosquito efforts and distributed pamphlets on mosquito control to residents. In addition, the HD had previously conducted joint anti-mosquito operations with the FEHD. The HD would advance the Anti-mosquito Campaign 2024 in collaboration with the FEHD by playing an active role in mosquito prevention and control to eliminate potential mosquito breeding grounds within PHEs.
- (b) The HD conducted fogging operations once or twice a week at planter areas in Fu Tung Estate, Ying Tung Estate, Mun Tung Estate, Yat Tung (1) Estate, Yat Tung (2) Estate, Kam Peng Estate, Lung Tin Estate and Ngan Wan Estate. In addition, due to densely grown plants in the vicinity of Cheung Kwai Estate and Nga Ning Court on Cheung Chau, fogging operations in these areas were conducted more frequently, up to three to four times per week. The HD would also spray larvicidal oil once or twice a week in locations such as drainages and refuse rooms within PHEs for pest and mosquito control.
- (c) In order to step up control over adult mosquitoes and reduce mosquito breeding sources, the HD conducted regular inspections of black spots of mosquito infestation within PHEs, including walkways, refuse rooms, planters and drainage outlets. The HD would also trim grass at least

once a month and clear drainages at least one to two times per month.

29. Members expressed their views as follows:

- (a) As bushes were breeding grounds for pests and mosquitoes, Members called on the FEHD and the HD to clear roadside weeds when spraying larvicidal oil and mosquito control pesticides. Furthermore, due to recent heavy rainfall exacerbating the mosquito problem, Members urged the relevant departments to step up larvicidal oil spraying and stagnant water clearance efforts.
- (b) Lantau Island was a vast area but only some of the locations were equipped with ovitraps, which could not reflect the full extent of the mosquito problem in the area. Members called on the FEHD to explore ways for improvement and enquired whether it would consider placing ovitraps in other areas in the Islands District, including Peng Chau and Lamma Island.
- (c) Various projects were under way in both Tung Chung West and Tung Chung East, where construction sites were prone to mosquito issues. Members requested the FEHD to step up inspections of construction sites to ensure timely clearance of stagnant water by site workers.
- (d) Members thanked the FEHD and the HD for their recent anti-mosquito operations and mosquito prevention and control publicity campaigns in Yat Tung Estate, Fu Tung Estate and Mun Tung Estate. As some residents reported that there were many mosquitoes at Mun Tung Estate Bus Terminus, Members requested the relevant departments to intensify anti-mosquito efforts at the location.

30. The Chairman asked the FEHD to increase the frequency of larvicidal oil spraying and enhance publicity efforts to remind the public to take personal mosquito prevention measures to prevent mosquito bites. He also asked Members to maintain close liaison with the FEHD regarding the mosquito problem in the district.

31. Mr Terence TANG said that the HD had arranged contractors to conduct regular weeding and clearance of stagnant water within PHEs. Furthermore, the HD also actively encouraged residents to properly remove stagnant water to prevent mosquito infestations.

32. Mr CHAN Ka-leong gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) FEHD staff and contractors would pay closer attention to mosquito issues during the rainy season and increased the frequency of stagnant water clearance and larvicidal oil spraying.
- (b) The FEHD regularly inspected the operation of mosquito traps in the district.

- (c) The FEHD would pass on suggestions made by Members regarding the placement of ovitraps in other areas within the Islands District to the relevant divisions and would consider adjusting the monitoring locations as necessary. Members would be informed of this in a timely manner.

VI. Question on the environmental hygiene problem and the facilities of refuse collection points in Peng Chau  
(FEHC Paper No. 21/2024)

33. The Chairman said that the FEHD's written reply had been distributed to Members for perusal before the meeting.

34. Ms LAU Shun-ting briefly presented the question.

35. Mr CHAN Ka-leong presented the FEHD's written reply.

36. Members expressed their views as follows:

- (a) Members expressed gratitude for the FEHD's follow-up work. They also said that there was a serious rodent issue near Wing Hing Street Refuse Collection Point due to piling up of miscellaneous articles. Therefore, Members suggested that the Islands District Office (IsDO) should coordinate an inter-departmental joint operation to clear the miscellaneous articles in that area, including construction materials and abandoned vehicles in rural villages, so as to improve the environmental hygiene of Peng Chau.

(Post-meeting note: The IsDO contacted the relevant departments after the meeting to follow up on the matter.)

- (b) Since the legislation prohibiting the feeding of feral pigeons would not come into effect until August this year, Members requested the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) to intensify monitoring of feeding of feral pigeons by the public before the legislation took effect.
- (c) Between 5 April and 22 May this year, the FEHD had captured 19 live rodents and collected 48 dead rodents in the vicinity of Wing Hing Street. Members considered the anti-rodent work to be effective and suggested that the FEHD should extend the rodent capture methods to other districts.

37. Mr CHAN Ka-leong said that the FEHD would continue with the anti-rodent work.

38. Members expressed appreciation for the FEHD's prompt response to rodent issues in the district every time and acknowledged the effectiveness of the FEHD's anti-rodent work. Members pointed out that with the weather turning increasingly hot, rodents were more likely to appear near village drainages, and hence they called on the FEHD to strengthen anti-rodent measures in rural areas.

39. The Chairman urged the FEHD to continue their anti-rodent efforts.

VII. Question on the community problems caused by wild and stray dogs in Cheung Chau  
(FEHC Paper No. 22/2024)

40. The Chairman said that the written replies from the AFCD and the FEHD had been distributed to Members for perusal before the meeting.

41. Ms Mealoha KWOK briefly presented the question.

42. Members expressed their views as follows:

(a) After receiving complaints from residents of Cheung Chau regarding issues with wild and stray dogs, Members had actively followed up with the relevant departments, resulting in a recent decrease in the number of complaints.

(b) Members asked whether the FEHD would prosecute those who fed stray animals.

43. Mr TSANG Ka-kim presented the AFCD's written reply.

44. Mr CHAN Ka-leong said that the FEHD would take prosecution action if anyone dirtied public places while feeding animals.

45. Members expressed their views as follows:

(a) In the past, there had been stray dogs roaming in both Cheung Chau South and Cheung Chau North. Over the past decade, the number of stray dogs in Cheung Chau South had significantly decreased. However, the situation in Cheung Chau North had worsened, and Members believed it was due to feeding of stray dogs by the public. Members pointed out that there were approximately 20 stray dogs roaming around Sin Kung Tung at the end of Bela Vista Villa, exhibiting aggressive behaviour that posed a threat to pedestrian safety. Members requested the AFCD to step up the efforts to capture stray dogs and hoped that after the enactment of the Wild Animals Protection (Amendment) Ordinance 2024, there would be increased deterrence to feeding of stray dogs by the public.

- (b) Members hoped that the AFCD took the problem seriously and enquired whether they would immediately capture stray dogs upon discovery or only in specific circumstances. It was pointed out that there were many tourists in Cheung Chau, and the issue of stray dogs not only affected residents but also posed a threat to the safety of tourists. He believed that an “instant capture” approach would be necessary for the AFCD to address the problem.
- (c) Members requested detailed information from the AFCD regarding inspection times and locations. Members were aware that the AFCD had conducted multiple inspections and understood the difficulties encountered during the capture of stray dogs. However, Members were of the view that the effectiveness was unsatisfactory, considering that only four stray dogs had been captured in 35 inspections conducted by the AFCD. Members also found it difficult to explain this to residents. Pointing out that stray dogs were more active during evening and night time, Members requested the AFCD to consider shifting the inspection time to night time.
- (d) Over 20 aggressive stray dogs frequented Tung Wan Beach on Peng Chau and had attacked residents before. Their gathering might have something to do with the public feeding them. Members expressed that the AFCD had only advised individuals against feeding stray dogs, which had shown little effectiveness. Therefore, the AFCD should consider increasing the relevant penalties.
- (e) In the past, the AFCD had collaborated with the Hong Kong Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) on a Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) programme to reduce the number of stray animals while upholding humane principles. Members supported this programme and enquired whether the AFCD had reviewed the programme, such as enhancing efforts with the SPCA on the TNR operations for wild and stray dogs to ensure conservation while improving the problems.

46. Mr TSANG Ka-kim gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) Upon receiving complaints, the AFCD dispatched staff to inspect the relevant locations, observing the distribution and roaming times of stray dogs, as well as the surrounding terrain, with a view to devising a capture plan.
- (b) Stray dogs in Cheung Chau often lingered near hillsides and beaches. When AFCD staff arrived, the dogs typically immediately fled to hillsides and other open areas, making capture efforts somewhat challenging. If necessary, the AFCD would resort to encircling tactics.
- (c) The scenario shown in the enclosed image had occurred during evening. At that time, individuals had been feeding stray dogs at the location,

leading to a large gathering of stray dogs. In the past, when AFCD personnel conducted capture operations, people at the scene often sang and shouted loudly in an attempt to alert the dogs to flee, which increased the difficulty of the operations. Therefore, AFCD staff chose to conduct capture operations during periods when there were fewer visitors to reduce the chance of conflicts with the public and the risk of dogs injuring people when they fled.

47. Dr Kristie WOO said that the AFCD had collaborated with the SPCA on a three-year trial programme from 2015 to 2018 involving the TNR of stray dogs in Cheung Chau South. At that time, the AFCD set three main targets for the programme, including (1) neutering at least 80% of stray dogs in the trial sites during the first six months of the programme; (2) achieving an average of 10% annual decrease in the population of stray dogs in the sites during the trial period; and (3) the number of complaints received should be matching with, or lower than, the territory-wide average during the trial period. Independent consultants had been appointed by the AFCD to oversee the progress of the trial programme and assess its effectiveness, but it was found that none of these targets had been achieved, indicating that the programme's effectiveness was unsatisfactory. Furthermore, due to the relatively short study period and the care and treatment provided by the coordinating organisation, the health conditions of stray dogs had improved. This improvement had resulted in a relatively limited number of natural deaths among stray dogs, and the overall number of dogs had not significantly decreased during the study period. Currently, there was no animal welfare organisation applying to the AFCD to implement a TNR programme in Cheung Chau North. She pointed out that the success of such a programme relied on the support of residents in the area. If the AFCD received an application, they would consult the stakeholders, including District Council members, to gather opinions and assess the suitability of the proposed locations for implementing the programme.

48. Mr CHAN Ka-leong said that the Wild Animals Protection (Amendment) Ordinance 2024 would come into effect on 1 August this year. It was understood that wild pigs and monkeys were classified as wild animals and were protected under the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance. Feeding wild animals was illegal and the relevant departments would take enforcement actions. He requested the AFCD to provide supplementary information regarding whether wild and stray dogs were protected under the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance.

49. Mr TSANG Ka-kim said that the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance primarily focused on wild animals such as pigeons and monkeys, while cats and dogs were considered pets and thus were not covered by the Ordinance. He said that there were currently no laws in Hong Kong regulating the feeding of stray cats and dogs.

50. The Chairman acknowledged the challenges faced by the AFCD in conducting capture operations but expressed concerns from the public due to past incidents of stray dog attacks. In addition, apart from Cheung Chau, there were also problems with stray dogs in Peng Chau and Tai O. The Chairman was of the view that the AFCD had to pay closer attention to these situations and enhance communication with Members.

51. Members expressed their views as follows:

- (a) Near Cheung Pak Road and Cheung Kwai Estate in Cheung Chau were all residential areas where many residents, especially children, were fearful due to the stray dog problem. Members considered that the AFCD had to address the problem properly to alleviate residents' concerns.
- (b) Members noticed that the AFCD used catching nets to capture stray dogs and enquired whether the AFCD could consider adopting the method used for capturing wild pigs by anaesthetising the dogs with a tranquiliser gun first to reduce the difficulty of capture.

52. The Chairman asked the AFCD whether the captured stray dogs would be handed over to the SPCA, and asked for details on the subsequent procedures.

53. Dr Kristie WOO gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) In recent years, the number of stray dogs euthanised had significantly decreased, and the AFCD was actively assisting stray dogs in finding suitable adopters.
- (b) Captured stray dogs were taken to Animal Management Centres. After veterinary assessment of the dogs' temperament and health, if they were deemed suitable for adoption, the AFCD would arrange for them to be transferred to partner animal welfare organisations for adoption by the public.
- (c) The AFCD would select appropriate capture methods based on environmental conditions, taking into account the safety of both the public and animals. In most cases, the AFCD used dog cages to lure and capture dogs, as well as dog-catching poles, which were bamboo poles with a loop made of rattan for encircling the dog. Dog-catching poles did not have any sharp components and generally would not harm animals.
- (d) Tranquiliser guns took 10 to 15 minutes to take effect. However, when a dog was shot and felt pain, it might immediately flee. Therefore, the AFCD rarely used tranquiliser guns to capture dogs.

54. Members expressed their views as follows:

- (a) Members understood that capturing stray dogs presented certain difficulties, but the stray dog problem had persisted for many years, posing a threat to residents' safety. Members considered that the AFCD had to take action to solve the problem. In addition, Members enquired about the number of AFCD personnel responsible for capturing stray

dogs and suggested that the department should adjust manpower according to the number of stray dogs.

- (b) Members called on the AFCD to prioritise residents' safety when dealing with the stray dog issue. Furthermore, Members considered that simply returning captured dogs to their original habitats would not solve the problem.

55. Mr TSANG Ka-kim gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) After capturing a dog, the AFCD would check if the dog had an implanted microchip. If a microchip was found, the AFCD would contact the dog owner to reclaim the dog and investigate whether the owner had failed to properly restrain the dog. If the dog was a stray, after a veterinarian conducted a temperament assessment and confirmed that the dog was in healthy condition, the AFCD would arrange for adoption as appropriate.
- (b) The AFCD assigned five to six staff members for each capture operation, and would increase manpower and inspection frequency as necessary.

56. Members opined that the AFCD should not simply respond by citing the difficulties in capturing dogs. It was suggested that the AFCD should establish clear targets for addressing the stray dog issue to address public concerns.

57. The Chairman called on the AFCD to maintain close liaison with Members, and also encouraged Members to promptly notify the AFCD upon encountering stray dogs, so as to minimise their impact on residents.

(Post-meeting note: The Secretariat provided the contact information of the AFCD's responsible officers to all Members on 17 June 2024. Regarding the stray dog problem in Cheung Chau North, the AFCD dispatched the Animal Management Team to Cheung Chau North for six inspections in June and early July 2024, successfully capturing three stray dogs during these operations. Furthermore, on 14 June, Ms Mealoha KWOK informed the AFCD that residents in the vicinity along Cheung Kwai Road towards Cheung Kwai Estate and the hillside behind Block E of Tung Tai San Tsuen had been troubled by wild dogs for an extended period, causing real disturbance to the residents. The AFCD then followed up on this matter and on 27 June, sent staff to the complaint location to meet with Ms Mealoha KWOK to understand the situation, explain relevant regulations and proceed with the follow-up actions. Subsequently, the staff and Ms Mealoha KWOK conducted inspections in the vicinity of Cheung Kwai Estate, Cheung Kwai Road and Tai Kwai Wan in Cheung Chau. A stray dog was captured on Cheung Kwai Road towards Cheung Kwai Estate during the inspection. The AFCD would continue conducting surprise inspections and operations to capture stray dogs.)



VIII. Question on the environmental hygiene impacts of the mangroves in Tai O  
(FEHC Paper No. 23/2024)

58. The Chairman said that the FEHD's written reply had been distributed to Members for perusal before the meeting.

59. The Chairman briefly presented the question.

60. Mr LAU Yin-pong gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) The mangrove replanting area next to Tai O Waterfront Promenade was maintained by the AFCD, which conducted regular inspections of the ecological environment in that area and arranged for contractors to clean up refuse, remove dead trees and replant seedlings to ensure that the area remained suitable for wildlife habitation and reproduction.
- (b) Regarding the mosquito and pest issue near Tai O Bus Terminus and Tai O Waterfront Promenade, staff from the AFCD would keep a close eye on the environmental hygiene there during inspections and would request the cleansing contractor to make every effort to clear accumulated rubbish and containers with stagnant water. The AFCD would also prune the mangroves regularly to ensure that the tree canopy maintained a certain distance from the waterfront promenade and nearby leisure spaces.
- (c) In recent inspections, the AFCD did not find that the mangroves adversely affected the public's enjoyment of the scenery on the waterfront promenade and near the bus terminus. If there were specific locations that required improvement, the AFCD welcomed Members to provide relevant information for further follow-up.

61. Mr CHAN Ka-leong said that the FEHD would monitor the environment along the coast and the operation of mosquito traps from time to time. The FEHD would also adjust the number and placement locations of mosquito traps where necessary.

62. Members said that the area of the mangroves in question included not only the replanting area but also the vicinity of the stilt houses in Sun Ki. Therefore, the AFCD might need to work with other relevant departments to address the issue. Apart from ensuring a certain distance between the mangroves and the roads/facilities, the AFCD should also ensure that the height of the mangroves was maintained at an appropriate level. Members said that the rapid and excessive growth of the mangroves was obstructing the views in many areas, including the vicinity of the waterfront promenade. Members emphasised the prominent need for short-term, medium-term and long-term solutions, as cleaning up marine refuse, pruning and maintaining the growth of the mangroves involved different areas of work. Members called on the IsDO to coordinate follow-up actions among relevant departments, and suggested that the Environment and Ecology Bureau could take the lead and invite departments such as

the EPD, the AFCD, the FEHD and the Marine Department (MD) to collaborate to resolve the issues.

63. Mr MOK Mong-chan expressed willingness to engage in further communication with the relevant departments after the meeting, and would arrange for the Secretariat to coordinate joint follow-up efforts among the departments.

64. Mr LAU Yin-pong said that the mangroves had a certain ecological value, and the AFCD could prune mangroves at suitable locations, so as to facilitate the public's appreciation of the landscapes in the vicinity and the mangroves.

65. Mr CHAN Ka-leong said that the FEHD would actively participate in inter-departmental operations.

66. Members said that the mangrove replanting area in Tai O was established to serve the overall interests of Hong Kong, but the current growth status of the mangroves differed from what had been previously explained by the relevant departments. As pointed out by the AFCD, selectively pruning mangroves at only one or two locations to expand the landscape for public enjoyment was not the most ideal solution. Moreover, the clearance of rubbish within the mangrove area was also not up to par. Members further suggested that the AFCD should consider drawing reference from the practice of the Mai Po Nature Reserve and explore the possibility of installing facilities like wooden bridges and bird hides in the mangrove replanting areas for the development of eco-tourism.

(Post-meeting note: The establishment of the mangrove replanting area aimed to compensate for the impacts of the Chek Lap Kok Airport project on the surrounding environment. The scale and ecological functions of this area differed from those of the Mai Po Nature Reserve, and the AFCD had no intention to change the use of the replanting area.)

67. The Chairman acknowledged the ecological value of the mangroves and expressed the desire to strike a balance between conservation and maintaining environmental hygiene. He asked the IsDO to provide appropriate assistance on the matter.

(Post-meeting note: The Secretariat contacted various departments after the meeting. Upon coordination, it was confirmed that the MD (responsible for cleaning up floating refuse), the AFCD (responsible for pruning the mangroves in the vicinity of Nam Chung Tsuen in Tai O, Tai O Bus Terminus and Tai O Waterfront Promenade), the Lands Department (LandsD) (responsible for pruning the mangroves near the stilt house area, Sun Ki) and the FEHD (responsible for cleaning coastal refuse<sup>note</sup>) could jointly handle the issue. After that, the Secretariat immediately invited all Members to conduct an on-site inspection with the aforementioned departments.

The on-site inspection was successfully conducted on 10 July 2024. Mr HO Siu-kei, the Chairman, Ms Mealoha KWOK, Mr YIP Pui-kei, Ms LAU Shun-ting and Mr LUO Chenghuan attended the inspection and reached a consensus with the relevant

departments on the specific follow-up actions to be taken by each department. In the afternoon of the same day, the MD completed the cleaning of floating refuse near Sun Ki Street; the AFCD would prune the mangroves near the Tai O Bus Terminus and miscellaneous trees near Nam Chung Tsuen; the LandsD would prune non-conserved mangroves in the vicinity of the stilt houses in Sun Ki and Shek Tsai Po; and the FEHD would arrange for the contractor to clean up coastal refuse at the respective locations once the pruning work was completed by the relevant departments.

<sup>Note</sup> However, if cleansing workers were unable to reach or access the coastlines due to geographical constraints, the FEHD might not be able to provide the necessary cleansing services or might only be able to provide limited services.)

IX. Any Other Business

68. No further business was raised by Members.

X. Date of Next Meeting

69. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:39 p.m. The next meeting was scheduled for 5 August 2024 (Monday) at 2:30 p.m.

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