

(Translation)

**Minutes of the 1st Meeting of
Food, Environment and Hygiene Committee,
the 7th Term Kwun Tong District Council**

Date: 16 January 2024 (Tuesday)

Time: 2:30 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.

Venue: Conference Room, Kwun Tong District Office,
Unit 05-07, 20/F, Millennium City 6, 392 Kwun Tong Road,
Kwun Tong, Kowloon

Present

Mr TAM Siu-cheuk (Chairman)

Mr LAM Wai (Vice-chairman)

Mr YU Siu-lun

Mr YU Ka-ming

Mr NG Ting-fung

Mr LUI Tung-hai, MH

Mr LEE Ka-hang

Mr LAM Fung, MH

Ms KAM Kin

Mr MA Yat-chiu, MH

Mr CHEUNG Yiu-pan

Mr CHEUNG Pui-kong

Mr HSU Yau-wai

Mr CHAN Yiu-hung, Jimmy, MH

Mr TSANG Wing-fai

Ms CHING Hoi-yan

Ms FENG Yunsi

Mr WONG Chun-ping, MH, JP

Mr WONG Kai-san

Mr LAU Kar-wah

Mr AU YEUNG Kwan-nok

Mr CHENG Keung-fung

Mr LAI Wing-chun, MH

Mr KWAN Kin-wing

Mr PANG Chi-sang

In Attendance

Ms CHAN Wai-chun, Regina Assistant District Officer (Kwun Tong)1

Mr CHOW Lap-kan, Douglas Senior Executive Officer (District Council),
Kwun Tong District Office

Miss CHOW Tak-sum, Amy Senior Executive Officer (District Management),
Kwun Tong District Office

Mr PAU Chung-on District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Kwun Tong),
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Mr FONG Chi-wai Senior Health Inspector (Hawker),
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Mr HO Pok-man Senior Health Inspector (Cleansing & Pest Control) Kwun Tong 2,
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Mr NG Kai-ming, Alfred Senior Environmental Protection Officer (Regional East)3,
Environmental Protection Department

Secretary

Ms TSOI Hung-man, Anna Executive Officer (District Council)(2),
Kwun Tong District Office

In Attendance by Invitation

Mr CHEN Kin-wun, Edwin Senior Environmental Protection Officer
(Waste Collection & Charging)1,
Environmental Protection Department

Dr LAM Kwok-lun, Alain Waste Management Manager,
Environmental Protection Department

Miss TAM Wan-chi, Bonnie Assistant Environmental Protection Officer
(Waste Collection & Charging)13,
Environmental Protection Department

Item I

Absent

Mr KAN Ming-tung, MH

Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed all Members of the Food, Environment and Hygiene Committee (“FEHC”) and government representatives to the 1st meeting of FEHC under the 7th Term Kwun Tong District Council (“KTDC”).

2. The Chairman said that the Secretariat had received a notice of absence from Mr KAN Ming-tung before the meeting. FEHC gave consent to Mr KAN’s application for absence due to its compliance with Order 64 (1) of the Kwun Tong District Council Standing Orders.

I. Introduction of Municipal Solid Waste Charging

3. The representative of the Environmental Protection Department (“EPD”) presented the paper.

4. Members raised views and enquiries as follows:

4.1 Members said that some buildings had not hired caretakers, which they believed would

make it difficult to take enforcement action.

- 4.2 Members enquired about what assistance EPD would provide to the environmental industry in implementing Municipal Solid Waste Charging (“MSW charging”).
- 4.3 Members expressed support for the implementation of MSW charging and suggested that EPD take this opportunity to promote to the public the practice of repairing or refurbishing bulky furniture as an alternative to disposal.
- 4.4 Members were concerned about food waste recycling supporting facilities and suggested providing food waste recycling bins in public housing estates.
- 4.5 Members said that EPD should step up publicity on MSW charging.
- 4.6 Members were worried that MSW charging would shift the responsibility onto property management companies (“PMCs”) and cleaning workers.
- 4.7 Members enquired about the enforcement powers of staff, including whether they could initiate prosecution.
- 4.8 Members said it was understood that EPD prohibited the free distribution of designated bags (“DBs”) for MSW charging, and thus enquired whether it was against the law for non-profit-making organisations to distribute DBs to the elderly or disadvantaged families.
- 4.9 Members enquired whether it would constitute an offence if members of the public disposed of household waste in public litter containers on the streets.
- 4.10 Members enquired about the definition of oversized waste, including its size and weight limits, and asked how furniture of different sizes should be disposed of.
- 4.11 Members enquired about the materials of DBs.
- 4.12 Members said that if PMCs distributed DBs, they might charge households additional management fees. This would be unfair to households using less DBs and in effect would obviate the need for other households to reduce waste, which was contrary to the original intent underlying the scheme.

5. The representative of EPD responded to Members' views and enquiries as follows:
- 5.1 Buildings without hiring caretakers: EPD expressed concern about the situation and hoped to discuss with the Kwun Tong District Office how to contact the cleaning workers of such buildings.
 - 5.2 Support for the environmental industry: EPD said it has been providing support for the recycling industry through the Recycling Fund. In addition, government departments would take the lead in green procurement and MSW charging would encourage recycling by the public, which would presumably help promote the development of the recycling industry.
 - 5.3 Food waste recycling: EPD stated that it had installed smart recycling bins at 100 public housing estate buildings, and expected to provide such facilities and collection services in public housing estates across the territory by the end of the year. Furthermore, the department provided subsidies to large private housing estates to encourage them to install smart recycling bins.
 - 5.4 Publicity: EPD was continuously stepping up its publicity and education efforts, and would strengthen publicity on the arrangements for purchasing DBs and designated labels ("DLs") in the next two months.
 - 5.5 EPD stated that the first six months after the introduction of MSW charging would be a phasing-in period, during which EPD would analyse public reports and complaints about non-compliant cases to ensure effective enforcement. EPD clarified that PMCs had no enforcement powers but the department was providing training for them so that they could understand their role and responsibilities when handling non-compliance of households.
 - 5.6 EPD said that with strong adhesion and anti-tampering design, DLs were not susceptible to complete removal. Therefore, there was no need to worry about the labels being re-used.
 - 5.7 EPD stated that the legislation prohibited profit-making businesses from distributing DBs for free. However, there was no problem for Members to distribute DBs to the public for publicity and education purposes.
 - 5.8 EPD said that a few years ago, the Government began to gradually reduce the number of litter containers on the streets and narrowed the openings of litter containers to

prevent the public from misusing them for disposal of household waste.

5.9 EPD pointed out that members of the public could put relatively bulky furniture into DBs but must ensure that the DBs were fastened properly.

5.10 EPD explained the details of charging for oversized waste based on its weight and using DLs under the MSW charging scheme.

5.11 EPD said that PMCs were encouraged to distribute DBs to households in the early stages of the implementation of the scheme in the hope of helping households adapt to the use of DBs for waste disposal. Yet, in the long run, it was hoped that PMCs would let households purchase DBs on their own.

6. Members raised follow-up views and enquiries as follows:

6.1 Members enquired about the thickness of DBs.

6.2 Members enquired whether EPD would subsidise the installation of closed circuit television cameras in various types of buildings to monitor public waste disposal, and who would perform the monitoring role after installation.

6.3 Members hoped that EPD would strengthen and improve GREEN@COMMUNITY recycling services to facilitate recycling by the public during holidays, and suggested that EPD allow members of the public to redeem DBs with GREEN\$ points.

6.4 Members were concerned about the details of EPD's enforcement work, saying that residents dumped oversized waste in corridors or lift lobbies from time to time but there was no way to stop it. Therefore, it was hoped that EPD would come up with effective enforcement proposals.

6.5 Members opined that EPD should step up publicity and education on MSW charging.

6.6 Members suggested simplifying the procedures for using smart food waste recycling bins to make it more age-friendly.

6.7 Members enquired whether the mobile application for public reporting of non-compliance cases required real-name registration.

6.8 Members suggested that EPD consider devolving enforcement powers to enhance the

effectiveness of the scheme.

6.9 Members were concerned about the solid waste disposal procedures for three-nil buildings and squatter areas, hoping that EPD would engage in frequent communication with residents.

6.10 Members enquired whether members of the public could opt for charging by weight or using DLs for oversized waste disposal.

6.11 Members enquired about EPD's long-term goals for setting up recycling points.

6.12 Members enquired about what types of non-compliance would be subject to prosecution by way of summons and who would be the target of prosecution.

7. The representative of EPD responded to Members' views and enquiries as follows:

7.1 Thickness of DBs: EPD said that it had earlier distributed DBs to some members of the public for trial use under the pilot MSW charging scheme. Many users relayed that DBs were thicker than ordinary household garbage bags.

7.2 EPD advised that in order to help members of the public adapt to the MSW charging arrangements, the department would distribute DBs to residents of public housing estates, three-nil buildings and village houses for use in the first six months. As for private housing estates, EPD would encourage PMCs to distribute DBs to households during the phasing-in period, and a service fee equivalent to 3% of the prescribed price of each DB would be rebated to PMCs in order to cover their additional operating costs.

7.3 Publicity and education: EPD would collaborate with PMCs, DCs, Care Teams or chambers of commerce of different industries to strengthen publicity and education.

7.4 Enforcement action: EPD advised that law enforcement agencies would appropriately beef up inspection and enforcement action after the phasing-in period.

7.5 Recycling supporting facilities: EPD stated that metal cages had been placed outside GREEN@COMMUNITY recycling stations for the public to place recyclables there during the closing hours of the stations. The department would keep the opening hours of recycling facilities under review. In addition, it also planned to allow members of the public to redeem DBs with GREEN\$ points. Details would be announced later.

- 7.6 Food waste recycling: EPD expressed the hope that food waste collection services would be rolled out in public housing estates across the territory by the end of this year.
- 7.7 Enforcement action: EPD advised that it would collect intelligence and data during the phasing-in period and work out strategies based on the data for effective enforcement after the phasing-in period. As for devolving enforcement powers, the department said that in the early stages of formulating the MSW charging scheme, it had received concern from the property management industry about being empowered to take enforcement action, and ultimately decided not to have staff of PMCs responsible for enforcement. EPD would carefully plan the manpower arrangements for enforcement work.
- 7.8 Squatter areas: EPD thanked Members for their views, saying that it would communicate with Members again to learn more about the situation in squatter areas.
- 7.9 The community recycling network, GREEN@COMMUNITY: EPD advised that there were currently 170 public collection points under the GREEN@COMMUNITY network, serving 80% of single-block residential buildings across the territory, including relatively small buildings and three-nil buildings. To further strengthen recycling support for public housing estates, EPD had started setting up small-scale Recycling Stores in 50 public housing estates progressively from the end of 2023, providing convenient recycling channels for public housing estates and nearby residents. The department would further review whether there was a need to expand the network.

8. Members raised follow-up views and enquiries as follows:

- 8.1 Members stated that if PMCs had no enforcement powers, EPD should step up supervision and maintain coordination and communication with PMCs.
- 8.2 Members suggested that EPD make identification tags for DBs to identify buyers, which would presumably facilitate enforcement and enhance deterrence.
- 8.3 Members enquired about the details of implementing MSW charging in schools, such as whether the costs of DBs were borne by schools or students.
- 8.4 Members recommended that EPD use environmentally friendly materials to produce DBs.

- 8.5 Members suggested that EPD expedite the installation of food waste recycling machines in public housing estates.
 - 8.6 Members enquired about the implementation details of the scheme, including whether DBs would be made available for purchase by members of the public who needed them at refuse collection points (“RCPs”), and how to assist shops and eateries where no RCPs were nearby.
 - 8.7 Members enquired which department would be responsible for enforcement after EPD received reports via the mobile application.
 - 8.8 Members reckoned that EPD’s publicity campaign should highlight how to separate and recycle waste rather than the cost of DBs, with a view to achieving waste reduction at source and reinforcing public awareness of environmental protection.
 - 8.9 Members recommended that EPD follow the example of the Producer Responsibility Scheme on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (“WPRS”) and arrange for sellers to dispose of used items for consumers, so as to handle oversized waste more effectively.
 - 8.10 Members enquired whether EPD had coordinated with other government departments.
9. The representative of EPD responded to Members’ views and enquiries as follows:
- 9.1 Modes of handling oversized waste: EPD advised that if housing estates collected oversized waste through the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (“FEHD”), DLs would be used. If oversized waste in housing estates was collected by private collectors using refuse collection vehicles without rear compactors (such as grab-mounted lorries), it would be charged by weight.
 - 9.2 Prosecution: EPD stated that non-compliant households were generally liable to a fixed penalty of \$1,500 and would be prosecuted for more serious offences. For instance, if PMCs deliberately allowed households to dispose of non-compliant waste and had no intention of wrapping non-compliant waste in DBs or were even not amenable to repeated advice, EPD would consider prosecution.
 - 9.3 Lack of enforcement powers of PMCs: EPD expressed its understanding of PMCs’ concerns. Not only they might lack the necessary capacity to carry out enforcement,

but the targets of enforcement were also their clients. Therefore, EPD understood the difficulties of PMCs and would closely communicate with them to enhance enforcement effectiveness.

- 9.4 Division of work among enforcement departments: EPD advised that the department would be responsible for enforcement in general private residential or commercial and industrial buildings while FEHD would carry out enforcement action at RCPs and against littering and other offences. The police were not entitled to take enforcement actions related to MSW charging. In addition, despite its lack of enforcement powers, the Housing Department (“HD”), as the management authority of public housing estates, would assist in monitoring non-compliance in the estates and providing intelligence to fully collaborate with EPD in enforcement action.
- 9.5 Details of implementing MSW charging in schools: EPD stated that schools only needed to wrap all waste properly in DBs and put it in refuse collection vehicles. Neither students nor teachers were required to wrap their waste in DBs.
- 9.6 Making DBs with environmentally friendly materials: EPD said the contract stipulated that each DB must contain at least 20% recycled plastic.
- 9.7 Food waste recycling: EPD reiterated the hope that food waste collection services would be rolled out in public housing estates across the territory by the end of this year.
- 9.8 Enforcement action at RCPs: EPD stated that FEHD staff posted at RCPs would monitor non-compliance. FEHD would also step up inspections at non-compliant black spots.
- 9.9 Publicity on waste separation and recycling: EPD agreed with the need to strengthen education in relevant aspects. The department currently had arranged for the Green Outreach to set up booths in various housing estates to educate the public on recycling methods.
- 9.10 EPD advised that in addition to WPRS, the department implemented the Producer Responsibility Scheme on Glass Beverage Containers last year and would gradually formulate the producer responsibility schemes on plastic beverage containers, beverage cartons, vehicle tyres, lead-acid batteries and electric vehicle batteries in the short term.

10. Members raised follow-up views and enquiries as follows:

- 10.1 Members hoped that EPD would formulate a more effective and well-thought-out enforcement strategy.
 - 10.2 Members enquired whether additional recycling points of GREEN@COMMUNITY would be set up in Kwun Tong District besides GREEN@KWUN TONG, GREEN@YUE MAN SQUARE and GREEN@KAI YIP.
 - 10.3 Members enquired whether oversized waste in housing estates with owners' corporations must be charged by weight, or if they could use DLs instead.
 - 10.4 Members enquired whether the mode of handling oversized waste in public housing estates was the same as that in private housing estates.
 - 10.5 Members enquired what types of non-compliant acts would be subject to a fine of \$25,000 or imprisonment.
 - 10.6 Members reckoned that not many cities implemented solid waste charging, adding that overemphasis on law enforcement might affect social harmony and suggesting that public education take the place of law enforcement in the long run.
 - 10.7 Members hoped that EPD would cite examples to explain the circumstances which would be subject to prosecution by summons.
11. The Chairman enquired how many staff members of EPD had been assigned for future enforcement work.
 12. The representative of EPD responded to Members' views and enquiries as follows:
 - 12.1 EPD stated that the focus of MSW charging did not lie on enforcement but on the effectiveness of waste reduction. The department hoped that through the implementation of MSW charging, coupled with publicity and education efforts and recycling incentives, the social environment would be changed where the public were encouraged to cultivate the habit of reducing waste and recycling with a view to achieving the ultimate objective of waste reduction.
 - 12.2 GREEN@COMMUNITY recycling points: EPD would set up additional recycling points in public housing estates in Kwun Tong District. The exact locations would be announced in due course.

- 12.3 Handling oversized waste: EPD reiterated that the management of oversized waste depended on the types of collection services adopted by housing estates. DLs were used for oversized waste in public housing estates which was mostly collected with the assistance of FEHD, while oversized waste in most private housing estates was collected by private waste collectors using grab-mounted lorries and was thus subject to charging by weight.
- 12.4 Types of non-compliant acts to be prosecuted by summons: EPD stated that it would review and adjust the enforcement strategy from time to time. Generally speaking, if individual households disposed of waste in a non-compliant manner at public RCPs, EPD was unlikely to issue summonses for prosecution and would only issue fixed penalty notices. However, if housing estates deliberately allowed households to dump non-compliant waste and had no intention of wrapping the non-compliant waste in DBs or were even impervious to repeated advice, prosecutions were likely to be initiated. EPD agreed that it was worth considering including more examples in leaflets or posters to help the public understand the details of the scheme.
- 12.5 Staff arrangements for enforcement: EPD said that it would continuously review the overall situation, including adjusting staff deployment with reference to the actual data collected during the phasing-in period.
- 12.6 EPD reiterated that the original intention behind MSW charging was not to crack down on offenders but to educate the public so that they were aware of the need to pay a price for polluting the environment.

13. The Chairman stated that FEHC was concerned about not only the enforcement of MSW charging but also the implementation details of the scheme. The Chairman hoped that the representative of EPD would continue to attend meetings of FEHC for at least the next six months so as to follow up on the implementation and effectiveness of MSW charging and report to Members on the progress of the GREEN@COMMUNITY and food waste recycling schemes.

14. Members noted the paper.

II. First Phase of Anti-rodent Campaign 2024 of FEHD in Kwun Tong District (KTDC FEHC Paper No. 1/2024)

15. The representative of FEHD presented the paper.

16. Members said that the rodent problem was still serious in the rear lane of Tung Ming Street, and hoped that FEHD would pay more attention to it.

17. Members noted the paper.

(Post-meeting note: the Environmental Hygiene Section (Kwun Tong) of FEHD said that it had stepped up anti-rodent work in the rear lane of Tung Ming Street and nearby areas. The department stated that it would continue to keep in view the situation of the above site and take appropriate action.)

**III. FEHD Kwun Tong District Year-end Clean-up 2024
(KTDC FEHC Paper No. 2/2024)**

18. The representative of FEHD presented the paper.

19. Members raised views and enquiries as follows:

19.1 Members suggested that FEHD focus on cleaning up feral pigeons' congregation black spots in Kwun Tong District, including Ngau Tau Kok Market or Upper and Lower Ngau Tau Kok Estates.

19.2 Members enquired about the prosecution figures on illegal feeding of feral pigeons, and whether FEHD would strengthen public education in this aspect.

19.3 Members hoped that FEHD would provide information on bed bugs, including preventive measures and eradication methods.

20. The representative of FEHD responded to Members' views and enquiries as follows:

20.1 FEHD advised that some feral pigeons' congregation black spots in the district were located in areas under the management of HD. The department would communicate and collaborate with HD and step up cleaning operations.

20.2 Prosecution figures on illegal feeding of feral pigeons: FEHD stated that it was unable to deploy manpower to monitor the illegal feeding of feral pigeons on a long-term basis. That said, there had been plain-clothed officers conducting enforcement operations. FEHD would continue to strengthen relevant work.

20.3 The problem of bed bugs: FEHD said that the problem did not fall within its purview but added that it had provided pamphlets to teach the public how to tackle and prevent bed bugs. Relevant information could later be forwarded to Members through the Secretariat.

21. Members noted the paper.

(Post-meeting note: FEHD's Guidelines on Bedbugs Prevention and Control in Domestic Premises had been forwarded to Members by the Secretariat on 9 February 2024.)

IV. Introduction of the 2024 Lunar New Year Fair in Kwun Tong District
(KTDC FEHC Paper No. 3/2024)

22. The representative of FEHD presented the paper.

23. Members noted the paper.

V. Date of Next Meeting

24. The next meeting was scheduled to be held at 2:30 p.m. on 19 March 2024 (Tuesday).

25. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

The minutes of the meeting were confirmed on 19 March 2024.

Kwun Tong District Council Secretariat
March 2024