

(Translation)

Minutes of the 6th Meeting of the Food, Environment and Hygiene Committee of
Sham Shui Po District Council (7th Term)

Date : 21 November 2024 (Thursday)
Time : 9:30 a.m.
Venue : Conference Room, Sham Shui Po District Council

Present

Chairman

Ms LAU Pui-yuk, MH

Vice-Chairman

Dr PONG Chiu-fai, MH

Members

Mr HO Kwan-chau

Ms WU Wanqiu

Mr LEE Wing-man, MH

Mr LAM Wai-man, Raymond

Ms WU Sze-wan

Mr CHEUNG Tak-wai

Mr CHAN Wai-ming, BBS, MH, JP

Mr CHAN Kwok-wai, MH

Mr CHAN Lung-kit

Ms CHEN Lihong

Ms CHUM Pik-wa

Co-opted Members

Ms CHEUNG Ying-ying

Mr TAM Chun-yu

In Attendance

Miss FUNG Yi-ching, Janice Assistant District Officer (Sham Shui Po) 2

Ms WONG Yu-hang, Anita Senior Liaison Officer 3, Sham Shui Po District Office

Mr CHEUNG Wing-kai	Acting District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Sham Shui Po), Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Mr CHAN Pui-lun	Chief Health Inspector (Sham Shui Po) 2, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Mr CHAU Chun-yin	Chief Health Inspector (Sham Shui Po) 3, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Dr LEE Yin-chun, Sally	Senior Environmental Protection Officer (Regional West) 5, Environmental Protection Department
Ms TAM Sze-chai, Cindy	Environmental Protection Officer (Regional West) 53, Environmental Protection Department
Mr LI Yiu-ming, Leo	Assistant Police Community Relations Officer (Sham Shui Po District), Hong Kong Police Force
Mr SUEN Sze-ming	Neighbourhood Police Coordinator, Police Community Relations Office (Sham Shui Po District), Hong Kong Police Force
Mr NG Tsz-wing, Ricky	Chief Estate Officer/Land Control/Kowloon West, Lands Department
Ms WU Lai-fan, Grace	Chief Health Inspector (Cemeteries & Crematoria)3, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Mr YU Cheuk-man	Superintendent of Catholic Cemeteries, Diocesan Board of Catholic Cemeteries
Ms CHU Wing-yi	Secretary, Diocesan Board of Catholic Cemeteries
Mr TAM Sze-lam, Patrick	Administrator, Diocesan Building and Development Commission, Diocesan Board of Catholic Cemeteries
Mr SIN Ka-chung, Michael	Executive Director, Spence Robinson Limited
Ms LAM Pui-ling	Deputy District Leisure Manager (Sham Shui Po) District Support, Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Mr KWAN Kwok-fung, Paul	Assistant District Leisure Manager (Sham Shui Po) 4, Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Secretary

Miss YUEN Cheuk-lam, Cheryl	Executive Officer (District Council) 4, Sham Shui Po District Office
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Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed members and representatives of government departments to the 6th meeting of the Food, Environment and Hygiene Committee (“FEHC”).

Item 1: Confirmation of Minutes of the 5th Meeting of the Food, Environment and Hygiene Committee

2. The minutes were confirmed without amendment.

Item 2: Proposed Columbarium at Section 26 of St. Raphael’s Catholic Cemetery, Cheung Sha Wan (FEHC Paper No. 28/2024)

3. Ms Grace WU introduced Paper No. 28/2024.
4. Mr YU Cheuk-man introduced details of the construction project for the columbarium at St. Raphael’s Catholic Cemetery, Cheung Sha Wan.
5. Mr Michael SIN introduced the site and design plans of the project using PowerPoint slides.
6. The Chairman added that the District Officer of Sham Shui Po and several members previously conducted a site visit to St. Raphael’s Catholic Cemetery, Cheung Sha Wan and they expressed concern on the project’s impact on nearby traffic.
7. The views of members were consolidated as follows: (i) pointed out that Caldecott Road was a single-lane carriageway and private cars were often parked in front of a nearby school and along Tai Po Road. Therefore, they suggested that traffic control measures be implemented by relevant departments during Ching Ming and Chung Yeung Festivals to guide the public to use the access point of the Cemetery leading to Caritas Medical Centre, thus preventing traffic obstruction; (ii) as works vehicles would pass by the school, expressed concern on the safety of students entering and leaving the school and the impact of the construction works on them; (iii) pointed out that while an eco-friendly concept had been adopted in the project design, the columbarium was not categorised under green burial and suggested that relevant departments promote green burial; (iv) enquired about the current waiting time for niches in the Cemetery and the expected construction period and the term of expiry for niches of the new columbarium; (v) enquired about the height restrictions of the new

columbarium and expressed concern on whether it would obstruct the views of nearby residential blocks; and (vi) enquired whether there was any plan to plant vegetation in the Cemetery for environmental greening.

8. Mr YU Cheuk-man gave a consolidated response as follows: (i) the vehicular access of St. Raphael's Catholic Cemetery, Cheung Sha Wan was on Wing Ming Street, but not Caldecott Road. Therefore, access to the Cemetery by members of the public would not affect the students as they entered and left the nearby school. The police would also strengthen traffic control and deal with illegal parking during Ching Ming and Chung Yeung Festivals; (ii) contractors would be required to implement pedestrian protection measures, such as by installing hoardings and safety nets, under their construction contracts. Large vehicles also had to meet safety standards before they were allowed to enter and exit the site so as to minimise the impact of the construction works on the surrounding areas; (iii) the Cemetery had ceased the construction of permanent burial lots and all existing burial lots there were subject to extension. If no extension application was made for a burial lot, the Cemetery would release the burial lot for the newly bereaved to apply for. To promote green burial, the Cemetery had also constructed a Garden of Remembrance with existing coffin burial lots being divided into several more lots for ash interment. The ashes would decompose naturally, and the burial lots could be reused after ten or twenty years; and (iv) during peak periods, there were about 600 applications for niches per year, and in this case, no waiting list for niches would be drawn up. As the Cemetery had launched the Garden of Remembrance, which could sustainably dispose of ashes, it was expected that the annual demand for niches might decrease. Furthermore, the new columbarium was planned to be constructed with prefabricated components to speed up the work progress. Therefore, it was estimated that 4 000 niches would be available by 2026, adequate for use in the coming six to seven years.

9. Mr Michael SIN added as follows: (i) the new columbarium was subject to a height restriction of 1-storey as stipulated in the Cheung Sha Wan Outline Zoning Plan prepared by the Town Planning Board; and (ii) the walls of the new columbarium would allow for the planting of climbing or weeping plants, and considerations would be made to cultivate low-growing plants in the open areas of the Cemetery for environmental greening. The relevant design was yet to be finalised.

10. The Chairman concluded that the Committee noted the Department's report and supported the construction of a new columbarium at Section 26 of St. Raphael's Catholic Cemetery, Cheung Sha Wan. It was hoped that the project would help alleviate the shortage of niches after its completion. The Committee also expected the contractors to minimise the impact on the surrounding environment during the construction period. Besides, it was hoped that relevant departments would

strengthen publicity and implement crowd control measures during peak grave-sweeping periods, such as Ching Ming and Chung Yeung Festivals, to reduce the impact on the community from grave sweepers.

Item 3: Briefing on 2025 Lunar New Year Fair (FEHC Paper No. 29/2024)

11. Mr CHEUNG Wing-kai introduced Paper No. 29/2024.

12. The views of members were consolidated as follows: (i) reports were received in previous years from members of the public that the closure of the access point facing Fat Tseung Street of the Lunar New Year (LNY) Fair at Cheung Sha Wan Playground caused inconvenience to residents. Furthermore, the passageway to the kiosk in the direction of the roller skate ground of Cheung Sha Wan Playground was blocked, which affected the shop's turnover. Therefore, members suggested that the Department open the access point at Fat Tseung Street and ensure the passageway to the kiosk remained unobstructed to facilitate public access and consumption; (ii) enquired whether the Department planned to utilise new technologies to indicate the crowd size inside the LNY Fairs; (iii) enquired whether the Department would communicate with vendors to promote and implement environmental measures and encourage visitors to bring their own shopping bags and reusable utensils so as to reduce waste created at the LNY Fairs; (iv) enquired how the Department would monitor food safety and hygiene of the temporary food stalls; (v) enquired about the underlying reasons for the respective decrease in the number of stalls at Fa Hui Park and Cheung Sha Wan Playground LNY Fairs from 184 and 115 in 2019 to 136 and 84 in 2024; (vi) enquired whether the Department would provide services such as sharing of shopping bags and lending of tableware at the Fairs to promote Green LNY Fairs; (vii) as over twenty vacant stalls were still available to the public for renting, enquired whether the Department had any plan to invite green groups to rent stalls at the LNY Fairs; and (viii) suggested that the Department invite ethnic minorities to bid for stalls to sell ethnic specialty foods, so as to attract spending by the public and revitalise the local economy.

13. Mr CHEUNG Wing-kai gave a consolidated response as follows: (i) the Department would open the access point of Cheung Sha Wan Playground at Fat Tseung Street for the public to enter and exit the LNY Fair site. Relevant departments would implement crowd control measures based on the crowd size inside the Fair, and the Department would support these measures accordingly. By that time, the access point might be used as an exit only. The Department would also take into account members' opinion on the location for setting up railings, so as to keep the passageway around the kiosk unobstructed; (ii) the Department would continue to use technology to monitor the LNY Fairs in real time and display the latest crowd status in a "green, amber and red lights" format. The admission to and exit from the fair sites would also be

monitored via a supporting application such that the police could make necessary adjustments in a timely manner; (iii) the fast food stalls in the Fairs mainly sold light refreshments and were required to comply with the new legislation pertaining to the regulation on disposable plastic tableware and other plastic products; and (iv) vendors had to apply in advance to the Department for a temporary food factory licence, which would only be granted when relevant conditions were met. During the operation of the stalls, the Department would also send staff to carry out on-site inspections, ensuring that the vendors complied with the licensing conditions with a view to safeguarding food safety.

14. Mr CHAN Pui-lun added as follows: (i) due to the impact of the pandemic, the overall number of stalls had yet to return to the level in 2019. Currently, the number of stalls in the LNY Fairs was roughly 70% of the total number in 2019. The Department would conduct annual review on the open auction and the footfall of the LNY Fairs to decide on the number of stalls for the following year; (ii) if vacant stalls were still available after the open auction and the first-come, first-served allocation arrangement, the Department would review the situation and consider offering them to suitable organisations or departments for use according to actual needs; and (iii) currently, all stalls were available to the public for renting by way of open auction. Prior to the open auction, the Department had already published the relevant information on its official website. In addition, the suggestion of inviting ethnic minorities to participate in the auction bidding for stalls would be duly relayed to the headquarters.

15. The views of members were consolidated as follows: (i) enquired whether the vacancy of stalls in the LNY Fairs was affected by factors such as the prices for the stalls in the open auction, stall locations and the types of goods that could be sold; and (ii) enquired about the price difference of stalls in the open auctions between the current year and previous years.

16. Mr CHEUNG Wing-kai gave a consolidated response as follows: (i) economic impacts might have led to the vacancy of stalls in certain LNY Fairs; and (ii) only one fast food stall was unrented in the LNY Fair at Cheung Sha Wan Playground, while the Fa Hui Park LNY Fair still had seven wet goods stalls and 19 dry goods stalls available for renting. The upset price for fast food stalls at Cheung Sha Wan Playground was \$2,290, while the upset prices for wet goods and dry goods stalls in the Fa Hui Park LNY Fair were \$3,540 and \$7,800 respectively. In open auctions, stalls would be rented out to the highest bidders, and the remaining stalls would be allocated to interested parties at their upset prices on a first-come, first-served basis. If vacant stalls were still available after these two rounds of allocations, the

Department would review the situation and consider offering them for use by suitable organisations or government departments based on actual needs.

17. The views of members were consolidated as follows: (i) enquired about the differences in stall applications between the current year and previous years, as well as the procedures for handling vacant stalls; (ii) the footfall in the LNY Fair at Cheung Sha Wan Playground was low and some members of the public had switched to shopping outside Hong Kong. Therefore, they enquired about the annual footfall data for the LNY Fairs and suggested that the Department reassess the suitability of the current locations of the LNY Fairs and think of new attractions to encourage spending by the public at the LNY Fairs; (iii) enquired about the channels through which non-profit organisations in the community could learn about vacant stalls and the application procedures for renting those stalls; and (iv) suggested that the Department communicate with the person-in-charge of the kiosk at Cheung Sha Wan Playground to coordinate arrangements for placing railings near the kiosk.

18. Mr CHEUNG Wing-kai gave a consolidated response as follows: (i) in the past, the LNY Fairs in various districts would have vacant stalls after open auctions, and quite a few vendors would indicate their interest in renting stalls during the subsequent allocation on first-come, first-served basis. If vacant stalls were still available after these two rounds of allocations, the headquarters would consolidate the vacancy situation of stalls across districts and consider offering them to suitable organisations or departments for use based on actual needs; (ii) the LNY Fairs resumed in 2023 with only wet goods stalls provided. However, as the pandemic subsided, the return of fast food and dry goods stalls contributed to a gradual rise in the number of visitors; and (iii) the Department would inspect the venues before the LNY Fairs were held and maintain communication with the person-in-charge of the kiosk at Cheung Sha Wan Playground.

19. The Chairman concluded that the Committee was grateful for the assistance of relevant departments in organising the LNY Fairs in the district and hoped that the Department would follow up on the suggestions put forward by members to respond to the needs of the public. The Committee suggested that relevant departments prioritise the donation of leftover materials collected from the LNY Fairs such as flowers, to local social welfare organisations to promote Green LNY Fairs. Besides, the Committee suggested stepping up publicity of the LNY Fairs to attract more interested individuals to rent stalls, thereby increasing business opportunities. In the meantime, the Committee suggested that relevant departments leverage both technologies and the characteristics of Sham Shui Po District to enhance the appeal of the LNY Fairs in the district.

Item 4: Concern about Rodent Infestation in Park Facilities in the District (FEHC Paper No. 30/2024)

20. A member introduced Paper No. 30/2024.

21. Ms LAM Pui-ling introduced Response Paper No. 30a/2024.

22. The views of members were consolidated as follows: (i) there were a significant number of live and dead rodents recorded in Tung Chau Street Park and street sleepers dwelling in the park had led to the accumulation of miscellaneous articles and food residues. Besides, some street sleepers urinated or defecated in the park's ponds, which affected environmental hygiene. Therefore, members suggested that the Department implement anti-rodent strategies based on the specific conditions of different areas; (ii) suggested that the Department strengthen enforcement against the above-mentioned offenders and enquired whether any closed-circuit television ("CCTV") monitoring system had been installed in the park to record such offences, so as to use the footage as evidence for prosecution by summons and monitor the hygiene condition in the area concerned; (iii) the Department had recorded a continuous increase in the number of rodents caught since April this year. Therefore, they enquired whether the temperature would have any influence on the rodent population. And as there were significant fluctuations in the numbers of rodents caught before and after April, they enquired whether this was ascribed to the adjustments of the Department's anti-rodent strategies; (iv) suggested that the Department review the effectiveness of using rodent baits in order to get a higher ratio of baits gnawed by rodents; (v) enquired whether the 63 rodent trapping devices in Tung Chau Street Park were mainly bait boxes or alcohol rodent trapping devices; (vi) enquired about the arrangement of relevant departments for the application of technology by adopting thermal imaging in rodent control work; and (vii) S.K.H. St. Mary's Church Mok Hing Yiu College reported that rodents were found in school areas, and therefore they suggested that relevant departments provide assistance in rodent control and take follow-up actions.

23. Ms LAM Pui-ling gave a consolidated response as follows: (i) the Department had always been very concerned about the cleanliness and hygiene conditions in Tung Chau Street Park. In addition to regular cleaning work, special cleansing operations would also be conducted to improve the environmental hygiene of the park. Furthermore, the Department would collaborate with the Social Welfare Department and the police to advise street sleepers to stay alert to environmental hygiene and remove miscellaneous articles; (ii) the Department would initiate prosecutions against offenders under the Pleasure Grounds Regulation when there was sufficient circumstantial evidence/witnesses; (iii) due to the ineffectiveness of rodent

bait devices being placed in Tung Chau Street Park to track rodent activities in the past, the Department had therefore placed additional rodent traps in more locations across the park since April 2024 to enhance the effectiveness of rodent control. As a result, with a greater number of rodent traps, the number of rodents caught in Tung Chau Street Park had also increased accordingly since April 2024. The Department would continue to assess the efficiency of rodent trapping and it would also adjust its strategies in a timely manner; and (iv) the Department had consistently referred to the rodent control guidelines provided by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (“FEHD”) when implementing anti-rodent measures in the park. Besides, the headquarters of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (“LCSD”) would also hold regular meetings with FEHD and distribute the latest guidelines on rodent prevention and control to various districts for the staff of relevant venues to follow, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of anti-rodent work. Furthermore, the Department had previously invited staff from FEHD to conduct an on-site inspection in Tung Chau Street Park to understand the rodent infestation situation there and provide professional advice.

24. Mr CHEUNG Wing-kai gave a consolidated response as follows: (i) the Department had introduced thermal imaging cameras with artificial intelligence technology to track rodent activities this year. In the first phase, thermal imaging cameras were installed in public areas serviced by the Department and the survey locations were adjusted based on survey results. The Department planned to expand the application of this technology to venues under the purview of LCSD and the Housing Department in 2025. Thermal imaging cameras would help the Department track rodent activities and study the causes of rodent infestation, thereby strengthening rodent prevention and control efforts at those locations; (ii) the Department had been undertaking rodent prevention and control measures in public places in the proximity of venues under the purview of LCSD and would step up such efforts having regard to the situation. Besides, the Department had established overnight rodent control roving teams for carrying out night-time rodent prevention and control work; and (iii) regarding the rodent infestation problem on Sham Mong Road, the Department would strengthen rodent control and prevention efforts in the area concerned, and it would also contact the affected schools to provide them with technical advice.

25. Mr CHAU Chun-yin added that some of the overnight rodent control roving teams were additional resources deployed by the headquarters to the district, and their main task was to strengthen anti-rodent work in public places where rodents frequented, such as rear lanes and areas near the refuse collection points.

26. The views of members were consolidated as follows: (i) as the accumulation of garbage and food residues might lead to rodent infestation, enquired

whether the Department had issued summonses to persons who piled up miscellaneous articles in parks and suggested that the Department strengthen enforcement; (ii) enquired whether there was any CCTV monitoring system installed in parks to look into the causes of rodent infestation and assist with enforcement; and (iii) enquired whether the Department had any plan to collaborate with other departments to clean parks and carry out anti-rodent work, and suggested that the Department work with other departments during the year-end clean-up campaign to clean parks under its purview and assist street sleepers in organising their belongings and clearing miscellaneous articles.

27. Ms LAM Pui-ling gave a consolidated response as follows: (i) if a person was found littering, generally the enforcement officers of the Department would give verbal advice to the person concerned and then arrange for cleaning workers to clean up the relevant area to maintain cleanliness and hygiene; (ii) CCTV monitoring systems in parks could not cover the entire park area, and the Department currently would not use relevant footage for rodent activity survey; and (iii) regarding the rodent infestation problem in Tung Chau Street Park, the Department would collaborate with other government departments to undertake the year-end clean-up campaign.

28. Mr Paul KWAN added as follows: (i) the Department currently surveyed rodent activities by observing their excreta and smears to determine suitable locations for placing rodent traps, and it would also refer to the professional advice of FEHD in this regard; and (ii) the Department would conduct large-scale cleansing operations regularly to remove miscellaneous articles from parks and then carry out further cleaning work.

29. Mr CHEUNG Wing-kai gave a consolidated response that the Department would conduct joint inspections with other departments at venues under its purview, providing the staff with technical support and assisting in addressing the rodent infestation problem.

30. Miss Janice FUNG added as follows: (i) some street sleepers in Tung Chau Street Park were unable to provide valid proof of identities or addresses, making it difficult for the enforcement officers of LCSD to verify their identities and issue summonses to them; and (ii) the District Office would coordinate with relevant departments to mount cleansing operations in a joint effort to address the rodent infestation problem and other community issues.

31. A member enquired with the police about how they would handle situations where summonses had to be served on individuals whose identities could not be verified.

32. Mr Leo LI added that when the police was going to serve a summons on a person but was unsuccessful due to his/her failure to provide any proof of identity, the person would be arrested. The internal enforcement procedures of the police differed from those of LCSD. If the enforcement officers of LCSD encountered difficulties while taking enforcement actions, they could contact the police for on-site assistance. However, the subsequent procedures for the issuance of summons should still adhere to the internal guidelines of LCSD.

33. The views of members were consolidated as follows: (i) reported that members of the public had spotted dozens of rodents hiding in three large litter bins near the entrance of Sham Shui Po Park under the Tung Chau Street Flyover. Park staff once drove the rodents off, leading to their dispersal; (ii) suggested that the Department review the locations where rodent traps were placed; (iii) park staff were hesitant to approach the dwellings of street sleepers to carry out cleaning work, resulting in hygiene blind spots; and (iv) the implementation of waste charging measures had led to a reduction in the number of litter bins in the community, which might cause increased littering by the public. Therefore, members suggested that relevant departments work jointly to carry out street cleaning.

34. Ms LAM Pui-ling gave a consolidated response as follows: (i) the Department would review the placement of litter bins and rodent traps to enhance the effectiveness of rodent control; and (ii) the Department would seek information on enforcement actions from the police for reference.

35. The Chairman concluded that the Committee hoped that relevant departments would follow up on the rodent infestation problem in the parks of the district and suggested stepping up anti-rodent efforts by developing tailored anti-rodent strategies for different areas and introducing various anti-rodent tools. As for Tung Chau Street Park, the Committee hoped that relevant departments could improve the park environment and strengthen enforcement against illegal acts such as littering, to improve hygiene conditions and mitigate rodent infestation in the park. On the other hand, the Committee hoped that relevant departments would collaborate with the Sham Shui Po District Office under the “District-led Actions Scheme” to enhance publicity and education, so as to help street sleepers in Tung Chau Street Park to upkeep hygiene. In the meantime, relevant departments could work with the Committee in the year-end clean-up campaign to promote messages about maintaining cleanliness and hygiene in the park.

Item 5: Any Other Business

36. Miss Cherolyn YUEN said that the exhibition “A Platform to Celebrate the

Beauty of Workwear” would be held at DX Design Hub from this day onwards to 27 November, while the Outdoor Workwear Bazaar would be held on 22 and 23 November at the open ground next to Shed No. 3 of Tung Chau Street Temporary Market. She hoped that members would actively support and promote these events to boost the footfall and economy of the district.

Item 6: Date of Next Meeting

37. The next meeting would be held at 9:30 a.m. on 23 January 2025 (Thursday).

38. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 11:20 a.m.

District Council Secretariat
Sham Shui Po District Office
January 2025