

**Sha Tin District Council**  
**Minutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of**  
**the Health and Environment Committee in 2018**

**Date** : 15 March 2018 (Thursday)  
**Time** : 2:30 pm  
**Venue** : Sha Tin District Council Conference Room  
 4/F, Sha Tin Government Offices

<b><u>Present</u></b>	<b><u>Title</u></b>	<b><u>Time of joining the meeting</u></b>	<b><u>Time of leaving the meeting</u></b>
Mr WONG Yue-hon (Chairman)	DC Member	2:30 pm	4:21 pm
Ms Ms YUE Shin-man (Vice-Chairman)	"	2:46 pm	4:21 pm
Mr HO Hau-cheung, SBS, MH	DC Chairman	2:30 pm	4:15 pm
Mr CHAN Billy Shiu-yeung	DC Member	2:30 pm	4:16 pm
Mr CHAN Kwok-keung, James	"	3:15 pm	4:21 pm
Ms CHAN Man-kuen	"	2:30 pm	4:21 pm
Mr CHAN Nok-hang	"	2:45 pm	4:21 pm
Mr CHENG Tsuk-man	"	2:51 pm	4:21 pm
Mr CHING Cheung-ying, MH	"	2:51 pm	4:21 pm
Mr CHIU Chu-pong, Sunny	"	2:30 pm	3:29 pm
Mr CHIU Man-leong	"	2:30 pm	3:17 pm
Mr HUI Yui-yu, Rick	"	2:44 pm	3:23 pm
Mr LAI Tsz-yan	"	2:45 pm	4:21 pm
Ms LAM Chung-yan	"	2:30 pm	4:21 pm
Mr LEUNG Ka-fai, Victor	"	2:34 pm	4:05 pm
Mr LI Sai-hung	"	2:30 pm	4:21 pm
Mr LI Sai-wing	"	2:30 pm	4:13 pm
Mr LI Wing-shing, Wilson	"	2:30 pm	4:21 pm
Mr MOK Kam-kwai, BBS	"	3:39 pm	4:15 pm
Mr NG Kam-hung	"	2:30 pm	3:55 pm
Ms PONG Scarlett Oi-lan, BBS, JP	"	2:30 pm	4:21 pm
Mr PUN Kwok-shan, MH	"	2:30 pm	4:21 pm
Mr SIU Hin-hong	"	2:30 pm	4:15 pm
Mr TING Tsz-yuen	"	2:30 pm	4:21 pm
Mr TONG Hok-leung	"	2:30 pm	4:21 pm
Ms TUNG Kin-lei	"	2:30 pm	4:21 pm
Mr WAI Hing-cheung	"	2:37 pm	4:21 pm
Mr WONG Fu-sang, Tiger	"	2:30 pm	4:21 pm
Mr WONG Hok-lai	"	2:54 pm	4:21 pm
Mr WONG Ka-wing, MH	"	2:30 pm	4:21 pm
Ms WONG Ping-fan, Iris	"	2:34 pm	4:21 pm
Mr YAU Man-chun	"	2:30 pm	3:29 pm
Mr YIP Wing	"	2:30 pm	4:21 pm
Mr YIU Ka-chun	"	2:30 pm	4:03 pm
Mr YUNG Ming-chau, Michael	"	2:34 pm	4:21 pm
Mr MOK Man-lok, Mannix (Secretary)	Executive Officer (District Council) 1 / Sha Tin District Office		

**In Attendance**

Mr WONG Tin-pui, Simon  
Ms AU Wai-ha

Ms MOK Kit-yee

Mr LEE Chee-kwan

Ms CHAN Siu-kin, Ester

Mr YUEN Chun-kit, Derek

**Title**

Assistant District Officer (Sha Tin)  
District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Sha Tin) (Acting) /  
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department  
Housing Manager / Tai Po, North and Shatin 3 /  
Housing Department  
Senior Environmental Protection Officer (Regional North) 4 /  
Environmental Protection Department  
Deputy District Leisure Manager (District Support) Sha Tin /  
Leisure and Cultural Services Department  
Senior Executive Officer (District Council) / Sha Tin District Office

**In Attendance by Invitation**

Ms WONG Shuk-han, Diane

Ms HO Tsz-ting, Agnes

Mr CHIU Yu-chow

Mr LAI Chun-kwong

Mr YEUNG Chun-hoi

**Title**

Principal Assistant Secretary for Food and Health (Food) 2 /  
Food and Health Bureau  
Assistant Secretary for Food and Health (Food) 3 /  
Food and Health Bureau  
Assistant Director (Grade Management and Development) /  
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department  
Senior Superintendent (Operations) 3 /  
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department  
Public Niche Allocation Officer /  
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

**Absent**

Mr PANG Cheung-wai, Thomas, SBS, JP  
Mr LEE Chi-wing, Alvin  
Mr MAK Yun-pui  
Ms TSANG So-lai

**Title**

DC Vice-Chairman	(Application for leave of absence received)
DC Member	( " )
"	( " )
"	( " )

**Action****Welcome Message**

The Chairman welcomed members and representatives of government departments to the second meeting of the Health and Environment Committee (HEC) this year.

**Application for Leave of Absence**

2. The Chairman said that the Secretariat of the Sha Tin District Council (STDC) had received applications for leave of absence in writing from the following members:

Mr Thomas PANG	Attendance at another meeting under the Chinese Government
Mr Alvin LEE	Official commitment
Mr MAK Yun-pui	"
Ms TSANG So-lai	"

3. Members unanimously endorsed the applications for leave of absence submitted by the members above.

**Confirmation of the Minutes of the Meeting Held on 11 January 2018**

(HEC Minutes 1/2018)

4. Ms Scarlett PONG suggested that “had [worked with] private pharmacies” in paragraph 103(f) be amended to “should [work with] community pharmacists”, and that “would consider cooperation between the public and the private institutions” be added at the end of paragraph 109(e).

5. Members unanimously agreed with the above suggestion and confirmed the minutes.

**Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting**

**Responses of Government Departments to Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting**

(Paper No. HE 11/2018)

6. Mr Billy CHAN pointed out that on page 6 of the paper regarding the noise nuisance at the riverside of Shing Mun River, the Sha Tin District Office (STDO) responded and said it expected that the effectiveness of relevant measures could only be reviewed sometime after implementation. He asked how long “sometime” was meant to be.

7. Mr Simon WONG, Assistant District Officer (Sha Tin) responded that the STDO would discuss with relevant departments long-term solutions to the problem. As the implementation and effectiveness evaluation of these solutions would take time, they would rely on existing measures to handle the problem in the meantime. The progress would be reported in due course on a suitable occasion in the future.

8. Members noted the above paper.

**Discussion Items**

**Proposed Estimates and Funding Proposals of Local Organisations under Expenditure Head 4 (Health and Environment) of 2018/2019**

(Paper No. HE 12/2018)

9. Members unanimously endorsed the above paper.

**Extendable Allocation Arrangement for Public Niches**

(Paper No. HE 13/2018)

10. Ms Diane WONG, Principal Assistant Secretary for Food and Health (Food) 2 of the Food and Health Bureau (FHB) briefly introduced the paper.

11. The views of Mr TING Tsz-yuen were summarised below:

- (a) he welcomed measures to stabilise the provision of niches and agreed with the extendable arrangement. However, the difference between the number of deaths and the number of cremations would increase from around 3 000 at present to 16 000 in 2037. He asked if the FHB thought green burial would have become the norm by 2037. Aside from building niches, the FHB should strengthen public education on the adoption of green burial;

- (b) as the paper said the niches would be recovered after 18 months, he asked the FHB how it would handle cases where emigrants came back to Hong Kong to learn that the FHB had removed the niches of their family members; and
- (c) he suggested the FHB take the initiative to update contact details of members of the public ahead of time; perhaps to actively approach them in the 10<sup>th</sup> year, just as the Transport Department would request vehicle owners to update their contact details when they renewed their licences.

12. The views of Ms Iris WONG were summarised below:

- (a) she thought there were three main methods to handle the burial issue, including green burial, increasing the number of niches and regulating private columbaria. She hoped that the Government would strengthen the promotion of green burial and set up education centres in new columbaria to provide more venues and teaching materials for life and death education for schools and social welfare organisations;
- (b) with inadequate land resources, building niches would not be a long-term solution. She agreed that the aforementioned extendable arrangement was a viable approach, as it could increase the circulation of niches;
- (c) she asked if there was any policy to increase the circulation of old niches, what the differences between the allocation of new and old niches were and how the FHB promoted the policy;
- (d) after an initial period of 20 years, the niches could be renewed for 10 years. She opined that it would be sufficient for the second renewal to last for 5 years instead of 10, since the next generation was participating less in the process and the shorter period of 5 years could encourage the younger generation to seize the chance to express filial piety;
- (e) if niches were recovered, even if green burial was to be adopted, there should still be arrangements for scattering ashes in the Garden of Remembrance, notifying relevant descendants, as well as setting up memorial plaques to show respect;
- (f) collecting details of family members after 20 years was too infrequent, as a lot of changes could happen. She thought that descendants should be notified to update their details every 5 years to avoid losing information in the post; and
- (g) she asked about the niches that would be covered by the policy mentioned in the paper, as well as the progress of the columbarium at Shek Mun and whether the handling method of its niches was covered by the policy mentioned in the paper.

13. Mr PUN Kwok-shan asked about the method for calculating the time for recovering niches, and assuming the policy was implemented, if new niches would be covered. He also asked if there would be any transitional arrangements after the recovery of niches, such as to compress the cremated ashes for storage and to photograph relevant niches, so that the descendants could trace their roots.

14. The views of Ms CHAN Man-kuen were summarised below:

- (a) she understood that resources were limited and thus the arrangement had been introduced. She understood that the policy was currently targeting new columbaria; that would be unfair to old columbaria. The FHB should study ways to make good use of niches in old columbaria at the same time; and
- (b) on policy implementation, the public should be provided with comprehensive information, such as the arrangements for renewal of niches when family members could not be contacted, if there would be a transitional period and if memorial plaques would be set up for descendants to pay their respects.

15. Mr NG Kam-hung asked the FHB how it would handle unclaimed cremated ashes, and, besides columbaria, if the FHB could make good use of other cemeteries, such as Sandy Ridge, to house ancestors.

16. The views of Mr WAI Hing-cheung were summarised below:

- (a) in the past, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) had been relatively passive in dealing with the problem of private columbaria, which led to the emergence of many unauthorised private columbaria. The FEHD seemed to be actively handling the issue at present. Regarding this policy, he was worried that the public might think the time-limit applied only to public columbaria, but not private ones. Having such an impression, filial children might then move their ancestors' ashes to private columbaria, and thus private columbaria would be even more profitable; and
- (b) the FEHD seemed to think that fewer people from the younger generation would pay respects to their ancestors. If the Government took the number of people paying their respects at Ching Ming Festival and Chung Yeung Festival as the only indicator for future trends, its estimations might not be accurate. Taking himself as an example, he would not pay his respects during the busiest period, meaning the one or two weeks before and after the festivals. Under the prerequisite of not interfering with land use for the living, he hoped that the Government would more actively look for different locations for the development of columbaria, such as to build columbaria in remote locations like the outlying islands, so that it would not cause traffic congestion even if a lot of people went to pay respects to the deceased. If the Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works could be relocated to caverns, he asked if columbaria could be moved into caverns as well.

17. The views of Mr Tiger WONG were summarised below:

- (a) he asked if the FHB had considered cross-generation authorisation; and
- (b) he agreed with the concept of the suggestion, but he hoped that the FHB would monitor and see if the policy would cause a rise in the prices of private niches. He also asked how the niches housing more than one set of cremated ashes would be handled. The policy should only be introduced after comprehensive consideration.

18. The views of Mr WONG Hok-lai were summarised below:

- (a) he understood the policy was introduced due to limited niches supply. It was necessary to explain to the public clearly the ways to apply for renewal and to update information when the policy was introduced. Otherwise, members of the public might misunderstand that there was a 20-year limit, which could possibly encourage the growth of private columbaria. Besides, despite violating its land lease, the private columbaria listed in Schedule 2 used permanent niches as its selling point. These tactics emerged one after the other, but the FHB seemed unable to effectively control the situation; and
- (b) in relation to the figures, only 30% of niches in Cape Collinson Columbarium were being visited. As the FHB's policy targeted new niches, he asked how old niches would be handled and if unfairness would result.

19. The views of Mr CHING Chueng-ying were summarised below:

- (a) he asked how old niches would be handled and suggested the niches be given a 10-year occupation period. The fees were secondary; the main purpose was to give chances for the descendants to respond, as this was how they could show respect for their ancestors and learn to take up responsibilities; and
- (b) he agreed with the spirit of the paper and even thought that a 20-year period was too long. The descendants should be required to respond annually after 10 years to show that they valued and needed the niches, while the fees should be as low as possible. A 20-year period seemed too lenient. To strike a better balance, the method for descendants to submit their responses should be simple, such as to make payment online for the renewal.

20. The views of Mr WONG Ka-wing were summarised below:

- (a) he supported the policy, but was worried that it would directly push up the prices of private niches. For example, no time limit was put on the niches at Po Fook Hill for members of the public to purchase for their ancestors, while public niches required renewal. Members of the public might find the renewal troublesome; therefore the FHB had to step up its publicity efforts;
- (b) on updating contact details, the paper said that relevant persons were responsible for informing the FEHD; however, members of the public might forget to do so because they were busy sometimes. The paper said that relevant persons would be notified via SMS, but he was unsure if SMS would still be in use 20 years later under rapid technological advancement; and
- (c) he suggested notifying relevant persons via email every 2 or 5 years to remind them to update their details, so as to minimise disputes. The FHB also needed to provide clear guidelines on matters such as circumstances under which niches would be recovered, how the niches would be vacated, how cremated ashes would be preserved and how the process would be recorded. The FHB was required to announce the procedures to the public. Given Chinese people's respect for their ancestors, those having emigrated would be

upset for sure if they, upon their return to Hong Kong a few years later, found their niches recovered.

21. The views of Mr Michael YUNG were summarised below:

- (a) the direction of a renewable allocation arrangement was good, but the actual operation might be difficult. In paragraph 10 of the paper, it was mentioned that the renewable allocation arrangement for public niches would start from the niche allocation at the end of 2018, which meant the new niches to be allocated in 2018 would be handled with the new method. However, the FHB formulated the new allocation method based on the frequency of visits to the old niches, which seemed unfair to members of the public using new niches. He asked the FHB how it would manage the old niches and said that if without management, there would be two types of niches, one with time limit and the other without;
- (b) the paper said that cremated ashes would be scattered in the Gardens of Remembrance or designated Hong Kong waters. He asked if this would be decided by the FHB or specified by applicants during the application process. If cremated ashes were scattered in the Gardens of Remembrance, there would usually be memorial plaques with ancestors' details as a token of remembrance. He asked if similar plaques would be built. He also enquired about the handling of cremated ashes to be scattered at sea;
- (c) he knew private niches contracts required a one-off payment for a period of 50 years, while some fees were service charges with nothing to do with the cost of the niches, and thus were not subject to the period. He wondered if the time-limited occupation of new niches would encourage the development of private columbaria and speculation in private niches; and
- (d) merely extending the occupation period of niches might not be sufficient. He asked if the FHB had considered renovating and reusing coffin-occupying spaces and how the FHB would handle cemeteries such as the Chinese Permanent Cemeteries.

22. The views of Mr Wilson LI were summarised below:

- (a) he agreed that green burial had to be encouraged, new columbarium niches had to be built and the monitoring of both public and private niches had to be strengthened. He did not feel strongly about the occupation period of niches as it depended on the administrative costs;
- (b) he was concerned about how the FHB would contact the descendants of the deceased occupying the niches, as some of them might not live in Hong Kong. It was unacceptable if they lost their way of paying respects to their ancestors due to miscommunication;
- (c) if niche occupation was time-limited, it was necessary for the FHB to assess if the pricing of private columbaria would increase; and
- (d) the FHB should consider building new columbaria in remote locations like the outlying islands, so as to solve the shortage of burial places. As Chinese

people valued filial piety, he believed the descendants would not mind paying their respects to ancestors in remote locations.

23. The views of Ms Scarlett PONG were summarised below:

- (a) she supported the relevant policy, but she deemed it equally necessary to take old niches into consideration and asked how a balance could be struck. She asked if an online memorial service would be considered if niches were recovered. She opined there were a few methods to increase the supply of niches. During the Public Consultation on Review of Columbarium Policy in September 2010, the FHB mentioned the multi-storey columbarium blocks in Japan; she asked if the FHB would continue to consider this option. She hoped the FHB would continue to step up its publicity efforts in promoting green burial, as she remembered over 60% of the people were willing to adopt sea burial or have their ashes scattered in the Gardens of Remembrance, etc.; and
- (b) even though private niches were not permanent, it was necessary for the FHB to pay attention to the likelihood of businessmen seizing the opportunity to intensify their advertisements after the policy was launched.

24. The views of the Chairman were summarised below:

- (a) he asked if the FHB would consider using new technologies, such as to compress cremated ashes into crystals, so that the descendants would be left with a keepsake, even when their ancestors' niches were recovered as they forgot to renew them;
- (b) he asked if "memorial.gov.hk", the memorial website provided by the FEHD, could be a part of this policy by allowing descendants to check online whether their ancestors' niches remained and where they were located, in order to make things easier for them to pay respects; and
- (c) he hoped that the FHB could improve the ballot arrangement, so that the deceased could be offered niches sooner. He suggested that the FEHD refer to the Housing Department's ballot arrangement for allocating public housing units, where applicants were required to queue again after rejecting an allocated unit three times.

25. Ms Diane WONG gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) the FHB would give careful consideration to the many good suggestions that members provided. The FHB wished to introduce a new extendable arrangement for public niches under the basic principles of optimal land use, sustainable development, etc. The FHB would take public sentiments into consideration and lay down clear particulars for the new arrangement;
- (b) in respect of the length of the niche occupation period, the FHB's main concerns were to make better use of land resources and to speed up the circulation of niches. Before the allocation of new niches, the FEHD would enter into an agreement with the applicants who had been allocated niches and



explain to them relevant renewal arrangements. The FHB would also simplify renewal procedures. Besides, regarding new contact methods in the future, the FEHD would keep up with the times with practicable solutions;

- (c) members were concerned about the period difference between public and private niches. After the “Private Columbaria Ordinance” had taken effect, the niches sold from then on would be time-limited. For instance, if the columbarium was held by way of land lease, the licensee would not have a right to sell a niche for a period exceeding the lease term. The licence issued to private columbaria in the future would be valid for 10 years maximum. These restrictions would set the foundation for selling niches in the future; private columbaria had the responsibility to explain the restrictions clearly to consumers. The FHB would also closely monitor relevant developments;
- (d) the Government’s proposal at present was simply a first step that introduced an extendable arrangement for allocating niches starting from 2018. As for the ways of handling occupied niches that members mentioned, since no future arrangements were specified for the niches allocated in the past, the FHB had to consider issues such as technical and legal aspects. If social consensus was reached, the FHB would consider the suggestion;
- (e) limited by space, the paper only listed the data for up till 2037. If members wished to obtain more data in the future, the FHB would gladly provide supplementary information;
- (f) regarding the arrangements for cross-generation transfers and co-burials that members mentioned, the FHB would take their opinions into consideration and fine-tune its arrangements when consolidating the details;
- (g) members suggested setting up memorial plaques for the deceased whose cremated ashes had to be relocated. As electronic technology advanced, the FEHD would conduct electronic memorial plaque trials in the future. Besides, the FEHD would also further explore the possibility of providing an option for descendants to set up a designated memorial website on “memorial.gov.hk” for the deceased whose ashes had been relocated, as well as keeping records such as photographs. As for compressing cremated ashes into crystals, relevant technologies had already been introduced into the private market in Hong Kong in recent years;
- (h) in respect of the ballots, the FHB received opinions from members and society that some members of the public were not allocated a niche after multiple ballots. The FHB was researching a ballot mechanism that could increase the success rate for those who had not been selected in previous ballot(s), or those who would be housing more than one set of cremated ashes in the same public niche;
- (i) in respect of public niches, the FHB had been actively following up on the district-based public columbaria project, increasing the supply of public niches. In respect to member’s question about public cemeteries, according to the existing regulations, bodies buried there had to be exhumed after 6 years. Data showed that members of the public preferred niches. The FHB

would maintain an open attitude to suggestions such as transforming cemeteries into public niches and building niches in remote locations, provided that they were technically possible and obtained needed support;

- (j) in respect of the public columbarium at Shek Mun, the FHB would introduce its design to members when preparations were in place. The extendable arrangement would be applicable to all new public niches allocated from the end of 2018 onwards, including those in the public columbarium at Shek Mun; and
- (k) in respect of promoting green burial, the FHB had already set up the Working Group on Green Burial and Related Matters under the Advisory Council on Food and Environmental Hygiene to follow up. Besides stepping up its publicity efforts, the FHB would also build more Gardens of Remembrance and improve ferry services for scattering ashes at sea.

### Questions

Question to be Raised by Mr WONG Fu-sang, Tiger on the Noise Generated by Planes Flying across Siu Lek Yuen in Sha Tin Even When Easterlies or Southeasterlies Prevail  
(Paper No. HE 14/2018)

26. The Chairman said that the Civil Aviation Department (CAD) notified him in writing before the meeting that no representative could be sent to this meeting. He asked the Secretariat to enquire if the CAD would attend the next meeting; however, the CAD said it would not be able to send a representative to the next meeting because it had already set up a community liaison group. He informed members of the above and asked for their opinions.

27. Mr Tiger WONG said he had no further questions in respect of the contents of the paper.

28. Mr CHAN Nok-hang opined that the CAD was duty-bound to send a representative to attend the meeting and to answer members' follow-up questions, but the CAD representative was still absent despite receiving an invitation from the Chairman. He suggested sending a letter in the name of the HEC to their supervisors, or even the Chief Executive to deplore their disrespect for the District Council (DC).

29. Mr Michael YUNG said the departments often showed disrespect for the DCs. Although members were elected in geographical direct elections, the departments did not send representatives to attend meetings and answer members' questions even after multiple invitations. The situation had happened before and he found it unacceptable. The CAD mentioned in its letter that they had set up a community liaison group; however, not every member was a member of that liaison group and documents of the group were not available for public inspection. He asked if this should be relayed to the Transport and Housing Bureau (THB). He asked the Chairman how he thought the matter should be handled when he read the letter.

30. Mr Mannix MOK, Executive Officer (DC) 1 of the STDO responded that after receiving the CAD's response on 7 March and learning that they would not be sending a representative to attend the HEC meeting, he invited them again last week and this week, communicating members' expectations to them.

31. The Chairman thought he had already tried to accommodate the CAD by inviting them to the next meeting; however, they still could not attend. As he could not indefinitely postpone the discussion of relevant issues, he shared the letter with members on this day. He asked members if a letter should be sent to the CAD in the name of the HEC, or even sent by the STDC Chairman in the name of the STDC, as the CAD failed to send a representative to attend meeting when it had been invited ahead of time.

32. Mr YIU Ka-chun said the CAD's response to the Chairman was unsatisfactory. If all of the departments thought they needed not send representatives to attend meetings after setting up community liaison groups, they seemed to have little respect for the STDC. He asked if it was necessary for the STDO or the STDC to send a letter to the CAD to point out that the setting up of a community liaison group did not exempt it from attending meetings. Besides, he asked if it was necessary to send a letter to the THB, as he remembered Mr LI Sai-wing pointing out in his question during the last meeting of the Traffic and Transport Committee that some departments did not consider the DCs' motions important. In addition, he asked if it was necessary to send a letter to the Chief Executive's Office with a view to demanding officials at all levels to strengthen communication with the DCs.

33. Mr Michael YUNG said that the incumbent Chief Executive Mrs Carrie LAM got a lot of nominations from the DCs in the New Territories during the CE election. After the CE had assumed office, some media reported that she wished to strengthen communication with the DCs. The report said that the CE had promised to regularly visit the districts with the Secretaries to communicate with DC Members. She emphasised that the locals were the Government's important partners in handling district issues, reiterating that she would communicate more with them and that officials would regularly visit the districts to gauge public sentiments and opinions. However, it seemed that currently the Government only sought support from the districts when it had issued consultation documents, and failed to directly address the problems raised by the districts. He asked the STDO how it could follow up on the matter.

34. Mr Simon WONG said, as usual, departments would be requested to give a written reply if questions from members were received. Relevant departments would also be invited to strive to attend relevant meetings. If departments declined to send any representative to attend such meetings, they would be reminded of relevant DC Members' opinions on government departments having declined the same. The departments would decide for themselves whether to send representatives to attend meetings at the end. The District Management Committee had also sent letters to relevant departments in the past to remind them to strive to attend meetings when they received questions from the DC Members.

35. The Chairman said that it was not the meetings of certain committees that the departments declined to send representatives to. He wished that the STDC Chairman Mr Ho Hau-cheung could relay member's dissatisfaction to the Government.

36. Mr HO Hau-cheung said it was well within his duty to voice members' concerns when they needed him to relay their opinions on the operation of the STDC. When he had the chance to meet with senior officials of the Government in the past, he passed on member's dissatisfaction and demands for more than once. This was not an isolated incident, as it had happened and been handled before. If members thought the high echelon of the Government failed to properly manage relevant organisations or departments and needed him to send a letter or make an appointment personally or as the Chairman of the

STDC, or in the name of the HEC, he would give his support. Sometimes government departments might not respect the DCs despite attending meetings, as they could be giving irrelevant answers to questions, while those absent might not necessarily disrespect the DCs. He agreed that the CAD's attitude was unpleasant, as it did not provide an appropriate reason for their absence in its reply to the HEC Chairman's reminder. Therefore, he would respect the Chairman's follow-up arrangements later.

37. The Chairman suggested asking the STDC Chairman Mr HO Hau-cheung to help the entire STDC write a letter and relay the current situation to relevant departments, and asked if members had other opinions.

38. The Chairman did not receive other suggestions and members unanimously agreed to entrust Mr HO Hau-cheung to write the letter.

### **Information Item**

Report of Working Group  
(Paper No. HE 15/2018)

39. Members noted the above paper.

### **Information Paper**

Sha Tin District Anti-mosquito Campaign 2018 (First Phase)  
(Paper No. HE 16/2018)

40. The Chairman said Mr TSAI Yu-sing, Eric, District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Sha Tin) of the FEHD and Mr CHAU Wai, Senior Environmental Protection Officer (Regional North) 4 of the Environmental Protection Department had been posted out and therefore Ms AU Wai-ha and Mr LEE Chee-kwan attended the meeting in their place respectively.

41. Mr CHAN Nok-hang said it had been raining in the past few days and the stagnant water had to be removed as soon as possible to prevent mosquito breeding. He wished to move a motion to commend Mr Eric TSAI as he had been actively working on environmental hygiene in the past few years.

42. Ms TUNG Kin-lei said the STDO had set up the Anti-Mosquito Steering Group. After its inception, the ovitrap index had reduced to an ideal level. She thanked the FEHD staff, especially Mr Eric TSAI who had given a lot of effort in handling the problem. She hoped the new Superintendent would continue to assist the Steering Group in anti-mosquito and anti-rodent efforts.

43. Mr LI Sai-hung said the rainy season was imminent and hoped that the FEHD would monitor stagnant water in dark corners. For instance, he hoped the FEHD would more frequently remove the large amount of leaves accumulating in some of the drainage channels in Tin Sam Village. Besides, he hoped the FEHD would strengthen communication with the Housing Department to monitor stagnant water in each estate in the Sha Tin District to prevent mosquito breeding.

44. Mr LAI Tsz-yan said members of the public told him in the past two weeks that the problem of mosquitoes had started to emerge in the Yuen Chau Kok Park. He asked the FEHD to pay attention to the situation and strengthen anti-mosquito efforts in the Yuen Chau Kok area.

45. Mr TING Tsz-yuen said the anti-mosquito efforts carried out by Kam Ying Court in Ma On Shan within its private premises were unsatisfactory that it had to rely on the Government's anti-mosquito work outside the premises. He thus asked the FEHD to supervise relevant bodies' proper implementation of anti-mosquito work. Besides, he commended Mr Eric TSAI's services in the past few years; during which he handled problems on-site with members every time they relayed a hygiene issue.

46. Mr CHENG Tsuk-man said the FEHD's anti-mosquito work in public spaces was satisfactory, but he asked about the anti-mosquito work in private estates, such as Heng On Estate under the Tenants Purchase Scheme. Its Owners' Corporation (OC) carried out anti-mosquito work properly, but a lot of mosquitoes found their way to Heng On Estate because the Link Asset Management Limited (Link) did not implement anti-mosquito measures. The OC of Heng On Estate was consequently sometimes prosecuted by the FEHD. He found it unfair and had filed a complaint to the FEHD against the Link. He thanked Mr Eric TSAI for actively following up on the matter and asked if the FEHD would monitor and handle cases concerning private premises.

47. Ms AU Wai-ha gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) she thanked members for commending Mr Eric TSAI. As stagnant water caused mosquito breeding, the FEHD would strengthen the inspection of mosquito problems in each district, increase cleaning services provided by contractors in the rainy season, remove stagnant water and enhance anti-mosquito work; and
- (b) besides implementing preventive and anti-mosquito measures in public spaces, the FEHD would also arrange for pest control staff and the Link to inspect problematic private premises on-site together, such as the Link properties, to find room for improvement.

48. The Chairman asked the FEHD to follow up on respective places having hygiene issues with relevant members after the meeting. He saw that many members commended Mr Eric TSAI for his services in the past few years, as he not only sent staff to handle the cases, but also attended to the issues himself. He suggested writing a letter of commendation in the name of the HEC and minuting members' commendation for his service.

49. Ms CHAN Man-kuen opined that a letter could be sent to the FEHD in the name of the HEC to commend Mr Eric TSAI.

50. The Chairman did not receive other opinions and asked the Secretariat to help write a letter of commendation to the FEHD in the name of the HEC to commend Mr Eric TSAI's services.

Statistical Overview of Sha Tin District Environmental Hygiene Service (as at 31 January 2018)

(Paper No. HE 17/2018)

51. Mr LI Sai-hung said that according to the paper, the FEHD poisoned 120 rodents and captured 98 live rodents from 1 December 2017 to 31 January 2018, which seemed to be on the low side. He asked if the figures represented only the work of the FEHD, or included that of other departments or organisations as well. Many residents of Tai Wai said that there were fewer cats and more rodents. Many shopkeepers relayed to him during the meeting on Tai Wai Market earlier that the number of rodents had been increasing in the vicinity of the market and hoped that the FEHD would strengthen its cooperation with relevant departments and private organisations, such as the Link, to take joint anti-rodent action. Besides, a lot of restaurants in properties managed by the Link did not properly cover their rubbish bins. Thus, it was hoped that the FEHD would strengthen its monitoring of the hygiene condition involving restaurants' food waste disposal.

52. Mr LAI Tsz-yan said the FEHD had provided the figures of poisoned and captured rodents, and asked if the locations at which rodents were eliminated and captured as well as the number of locations could be provided next time, so that members would know which locations were more infested with rodents.

53. Mr CHAN Nok-hang asked if the FEHD captured rodents with cages, how they would handle the rodents afterwards and how the FEHD could help private estates tackle rodent infestation.

54. Ms AU Wai-ha said in response to the issue of rodent infestation that the figures in the paper were provided by the Sha Tin District Environmental Hygiene Office of the FEHD. Besides the fundamental measures of improving environmental hygiene, rodent infestation could also be tackled through poisoning and capturing rodents with cages. Captured rodents could be killed by neck snapping and sterilisation should be done with disinfectant. As for the locations of rodent elimination and captures, she would follow up on the issue with colleagues later. The STDO was currently leading a group to coordinate and organise other departments in publicity efforts for anti-rodent work and it would also carry out anti-rodent work focusing on certain sub-areas. Mr Simon WONG could briefly introduce the details.

55. Mr Simon WONG responded that the STDO promoted the project of "Hygiene Improvement with Enhanced Anti-Mosquitos/Grass-Cutting" work under the District-led Actions Scheme. The relevant anti-mosquito steering group already agreed in a previous meeting to use part of its resources to strengthen anti-rodent efforts within the district. According to opinions collected in the past, the group would first strengthen anti-rodent work in selected sub-areas as a pilot project, starting from the vicinity of Pok Hong Estate. Discussion would be held with all relevant departments and stakeholders in sub-areas on ways to strengthen anti-rodent efforts. If the project was successful, it would be implemented in other sub-areas.

56. Members noted the above paper.

**Date of Next Meeting**

57. The next meeting was scheduled to be held at 2:30 pm on 10 May 2018 (Thursday).

58. The meeting was adjourned at 4:21 pm.

Sha Tin District Council Secretariat  
STDC 13/15/40

May 2018