

Sha Tin District Council
Minutes of the 5th Meeting of
the Food, Environment and Hygiene Committee in 2024

Date : 29 August 2024 (Thursday)
Time : 2:30 pm
Venue : Sha Tin District Office Conference Room 441
 4/F, Sha Tin Government Offices

<u>Present</u>	<u>Time of joining the meeting</u>	<u>Time of leaving the meeting</u>
Dr LAM Kong-kwan (Chairman)	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Mr DENG Kairong, BBS, MH, JP (Vice Chairman)	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Mr WONG Wai-shing	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Mr KU Wai-ping	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Mr CHU Wun-chiu	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Miss LEE Ching-ye, Janet	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Mr NG Kai-tai	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Ms LAM Siu-man	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Ms LAM Yuk-wa	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Mr YIU Ka-chun, MH	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Mr AU Chi-on, Paul	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Mr LEUNG Chun-pong, Maverick	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Mr LEUNG Ka-fai, MH	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Ms CHAN Sin-ming	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Mr CHAN Tan-tan	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Miss MOK Hei-man	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Mr WONG Yue-hon	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Ms WONG Po-ye	2:31 pm	3:27 pm
Mr YEUNG Ying-hon, Ronald	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Miss TUNG Kin-lei	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Mr TSOI Ming-yang	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Mr PUN Kwok-shan, BBS, MH, JP	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Mr CHOI Wai-shing	2:30 pm	3:17 pm
Mr LAU Tak-wing	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Miss LAW Yuen-pui	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Ms LO Tai-suen, Ada	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Ms KUNG Mei-chi	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Ms WONG Lok-yi	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Ms SUN Wan	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Mr TANG Hoi-chung	2:30 pm	3:27 pm
Mr WONG Chiu-kwan, Andy (Secretary)	Executive Officer (District Council)3, Sha Tin District Office	

In Attendance

Ms TSANG Ka-yi, Carmen
Mr LEE Man-fai, Dave

Mr HO Kin-nam, David

Mr HUI Tsz-ming, Jaco

Mr LEUNG Man-lung

Mr CHAN Ka-kui

Ms NGAN Wai-ye

Title

Assistant District Officer (Sha Tin)2
Senior Executive Officer (District Council),
Sha Tin District Office
Executive Officer I (District Council)1,
Sha Tin District Office
Executive Officer II (Support)1,
Sha Tin District Office
Senior Environmental Protection Officer (Regional North)4 (Atg),
Environmental Protection Department
District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Sha Tin),
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Chief Health Inspector (Sha Tin)3,
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

In Attendance by Invitation

Mr SHEK Chung-tong

Ms YIP Yuen-ming, Louisa

Mr WONG Yuk-man, Patrick

Title

Senior Fauna Conservation Officer,
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
Fauna Conservation Officer (Operation)5,
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
Housing Manager/Tai Po, North and Sha Tin 3,
Housing Department

Absent

Mr HA Kim-kwan
Ms LAW Yi-lam

Title

District Council Member (Application for leave of absence received)
" (")

The Chairman welcomed members and representatives of government departments to the fifth meeting of the Food, Environment and Hygiene Committee (FEHC) this year.

Applications for Leave of Absence

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

Mr HA Kim-kwan Sickness
 (with medical certificate submitted to the Secretariat)

Ms LAW Yi-lam ()

3. The FEHC unanimously consented to the applications for leave of absence submitted by the members above.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Minutes of the Meeting Held on 27 June 2024
(FEHC Minutes 4/2024)

4. Members unanimously endorsed the above minutes.

Questions

Question Raised by Mr KU Wai-ping on Littering near Christian Alliance Cheng Wing Gee College (Paper No. FEHC 16/2024)

5. The Chairman asked members if they had any further enquiries.
6. Members' further enquiries and views were as follows:
 - (a) a member thanked the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) for actively rearranging the refuse bins near the location concerned;
 - (b) a member said that the principal of Christian Alliance Cheng Wing Gee College had recently witnessed littering behaviour and submitted relevant photos and videos to the Tin Sum Division Police Station. The Police had promised to step up patrol operations; and
 - (c) a member enquired about other suggestions the FEHD could provide to the persons in charge of private areas for similar incidents in the future.
7. A representative of the FEHD gave a consolidated response as follows:
 - (a) since the offenders threw garbage into privately owned school premises, the Fixed Penalty (Public Cleanliness and Obstruction) Ordinance was not applicable; and
 - (b) it was suggested that similar incidents in private areas should be referred to the Police for handling, while littering in public places could be referred to the FEHD for follow-up.
8. The Chairman announced the end of discussion of the agenda item.

Question Raised by Mr NG Kai-tai on the Introduction of Internet of Things Technologies for Rodent Prevention and Control (Paper No. FEHC 17/2024)

9. The Chairman asked members if they had any further enquiries.
10. Members' further enquiries and views were as follows:
 - (a) a member indicated that the Rodent Control Pilot Project (Pilot Project) was being implemented at Yeung Uk Road Market in Tsuen Wan and wished to know whether the FEHD had a timeline for expanding the Pilot Project to other districts;
 - (b) a member wished to know the locations in the district targeted by the rodent activity survey. Given that there had been online videos revealing rodent infestation in the vicinity of Sha Tin Wai and Sha Kok, it was asked whether the FEHD would conduct rodent activity surveys targeting these locations;
 - (c) a member asked whether the FEHD would carry out targeted measures to address rodent infestation in certain rodent black spots (particularly in markets);

- (d) a member wished to know about the actual status of the rodent control work by the Housing Department (HD). Since some of the commercial properties had been sold and were managed by Link Asset Management Limited (Link), it was asked whether the HD would coordinate with Link and oversee the rodent control work; and
- (e) a member wished to know whether the FEHD would provide technical guidance to the HD.

11. A representative of the HD stated that Link was responsible for addressing rodent infestation within its shopping malls, while handling rodent infestation in the public areas of housing estates outside the malls was the responsibility of the HD. The HD would coordinate with Link to strengthen rodent control measures to eradicate rodent infestation.

12. A representative of the FEHD gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) the Pilot Project was launched two years ago at Yeung Uk Road Market. Wireless motion sensors, rodent traps with motion sensors and T-shaped bait boxes were placed in multiple hard-to-monitor and hard-to-reach places for rodent control;
- (b) no information had been received regarding the expansion of the Pilot Project to other districts;
- (c) this year, the FEHD adopted a new method combining thermal imaging cameras with artificial intelligence technologies to investigate rodent activity. The advantage of this approach was its greater coverage and enhanced sensitivity and accuracy with the use of new technologies that reduced the influence of environmental factors; and
- (d) if rodent activity was found, the HD could contact the FEHD to conduct on-site inspections together. The FEHD would provide advice, rodent prevention knowledge and technical guidance.

13. Members' further enquiries and views were as follows:

- (a) a member indicated that he/she had received reports from residents on rodent infestation not only at housing estates but also the areas near markets;
- (b) a member wished to know whether the FEHD would introduce thermal imaging cameras into markets; and
- (c) a member wished to know whether the HD would utilise technologies to adjust its rodent control strategy.

14. A representative of the HD gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) the HD had introduced a mobile infra-red monitoring system into housing estates since last year to detect rodent activity; and
- (b) if rodent activity was found at specific locations, the HD would target these areas by deploying more rodent bait, T-shaped bait boxes and rodenticides to enhance rodent control effect. Utilising the mobile infra-red monitoring system, the Department had identified 14 new locations with rodent activity in the housing estates within the district and had stepped up rodent control measures in these areas.

15. A representative of the FEHD said that although the Pilot Project had not been confirmed for implementation, in the coming months, the Department would allocate more resources and deploy additional personnel to address rodent infestation in markets by other methods, such as using more glue traps, in hope of effectively containing rodent infestation.

16. The Chairman announced the end of discussion of the agenda item.

Question Raised by Mr CHAN Tan-tan on the Use of Innovative Technologies for Anti-mosquito Work in Sha Tin District
(Paper No. FEHC 18/2024)

17. The Chairman asked members if they had any further enquiries.

18. Members' further enquiries and views were as follows:

- (a) a member pointed out that the use of "large robotics ultra-low volume foggers" ("foggers") by the FEHD for mosquito control mainly focused on the area around Ma On Shan and wished to know whether "foggers" would be used for mosquito control in other locations;
- (b) a member wished to know whether the cost of using a "fogger" once would be comparable to the cost of deploying a team to conduct a mosquito control operation;
- (c) a member wished to know the suitable circumstances to employ "foggers" and the situations where manual methods were more appropriate for mosquito control;
- (d) a member enquired whether the FEHD would consider using other types of mosquito control devices in the future, for example, the new mosquito traps introduced earlier by the FEHD that contained bait liquid to attract mosquitoes, making it easier to eliminate them or prevent their breeding;
- (e) a member pointed out that "foggers" could also be used for mosquito control at the hillside behind Lung Hang Estate;

(Post-meeting note: The FEHD conducted an inspection of the mosquito control work at Lung Hang Estate with members on 4 September.)

- (f) a member pointed out that the FEHD was actively employing new mosquito control methods and suggested that the Department should promote innovative technologies to other departments. For example, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) and the HD also needed to apply innovative technologies for mosquito control in parks and residential areas;

(Post-meeting note: The LCSD noted the opinion.)

- (g) a member pointed out that the grass cutting work by the District Lands Office, Sha Tin (DLO/ST) and the Highways Department (HyD) in the district was not satisfactory, and suggested that various departments should collaborate on mosquito control;

(Post-meeting note from the DLO/ST: The FEHD regularly provided information on mosquito-prone areas to the Lands Department (LandsD), which then took action at

unleased and unallocated government land based on the information. In this regard, the LandsD and the DLO/ST carried out over 800 grass-cutting activities and applied larvicidal oil approximately 120 times for government land in Sha Tin District from January to August 2024. Additionally, for mosquito-prone locations within private areas or land under Government Land Licences or short-term tenancies, the DLO/ST sent letters requesting relevant owners, licence holders or tenants to take action in support of mosquito prevention in the district.)

(Post-meeting note from the HyD: Grass cutting was part of vegetation maintenance. According to the division of responsibilities for vegetation maintenance on government land among various departments, the HyD was responsible for maintaining plants on roadside slopes and within expressway areas under its purview. The HyD had been regularly conducting appropriate maintenance work for the plants at the areas under its purview in the district, including weeding and pruning when needed. In locations seriously infested with mosquitoes, the HyD also took proper mosquito control measures near roadside slopes under its purview, such as applying anti-mosquito spray and removing stagnant water.)

- (h) a member pointed out that residents of Tai Wai New Village and students from Pui Kiu College reported the mosquito problems in the nearby hillside area. It was suggested that the FEHD should increase the frequency of applying anti-mosquito spray in those slope areas;

(Post-meeting note: The FEHD conducted a mosquito control operation in the vicinity of Pui Kiu College on 31 August and an on-site inspection with members on 11 September.)

- (i) a member hoped that the FEHD could intensify mosquito control efforts in response to the start of the school year, for example, enhancing mosquito control measures at schools located close to hillsides;
- (j) a member wished to know about the frequency of applications of anti-mosquito spray by the HD in public housing estates; and
- (k) many public areas in the district had overgrown weeds that affected the cityscape. Therefore, a member wished to know why the weeds had not been trimmed for a long time and mentioned that he/she had not received any response from relevant departments after making contact. It was also pointed out that the high gravidtrap indices in Sha Tin District might be related to the overgrowth of weeds.

19. A representative of the FEHD gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) due to operational restrictions, the use of “foggers” had to be monitored throughout by qualified technicians, and the contract also limited the number of days per week for using “foggers”;
- (b) the gravidtrap indices in Sha Tin District, especially in Ma On Shan, were not satisfactory. Thus, the FEHD would focus the application of “foggers” on mosquito control in Ma On Shan;
- (c) the FEHD noted that members wished to use “foggers” for mosquito control in areas other than Ma On Shan. The locations suggested by members would be recorded

and on-site inspections would be carried out to assess the feasibility. The FEHD would make relevant arrangements to its best with limited resources;

- (d) the FEHD would record the mosquito-infested locations mentioned by members. With the new school year approaching, the Department would use other methods, such as spraying larvicidal oil, to reduce mosquito infestations before the start of the new school year; and
- (e) depending on whether the relevant locations were managed by government departments or privately owned, mosquito control for lawns in different places of the district was conducted by the corresponding departments or property owners. Members could provide information, if any, for the FEHD to assist in following up and making referrals.

20. A representative of the HD gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) the task force of the HD headquarters would pay attention to new technologies for mosquito control and consult experts from the FEHD. If there were suitable new technologies for use in public housing estates, the HD would consider adopting them;
- (b) the HD had introduced some new tools such as Gravidtrap; and
- (c) anti-mosquito spray was generally applied in housing estates at least twice a month, and the frequency would be increased accordingly if there was a special need.

21. A member pointed out that luxuriant weeds grew along the road from the outside of Yiu Shun House to the entrance of Yiu On Estate, and the increased number of mosquitoes affected the residents. It was hoped that the FEHD could mount operations for cleanup and mosquito control.

22. A representative of the FEHD said that mosquito infestation in Yiu On Estate was noted and an inspection would be conducted. The FEHD would take follow-up actions if the issue fell within its purview; referrals would be made if the issue fell within the purview of other departments.

(Post-meeting note: Yiu On Estate was a housing estate sold under the “Tenants Purchase Scheme”. Its daily management, weed trimming and mosquito prevention were the responsibilities of the owners’ corporation and its appointed property management company. Regarding the issue of overgrown weeds and mosquito infestation outside Yiu Shun House mentioned by the member, the owner’s representative of the HD had expressed concern to the owners’ corporation and requested that appropriate follow-up actions should be taken.)

23. The Chairman announced the end of discussion of the agenda item.

Question Raised by Mr TSOI Ming-yang on the Nuisance Caused by Wild Monkeys to Residents in Tai Wai Area

(Paper No. FEHC 19/2024)

24. The Chairman asked members if they had any further enquiries.

25. Members’ further enquiries and views were as follows:

- (a) a member pointed out that there had been nuisance caused by wild monkeys in the area around Pak Tin Village, Heung Fan Liu and Mei Tin Estate in recent months.

The member played a video showing wild monkeys climbing up the external walls of residential buildings, causing nuisance to the residents;

- (b) a member received reports from the public indicating that they had encountered wild monkeys snatching handbags and even grabbing hold of children;
- (c) a member thanked the FEHD for taking prompt measures to replace the refuse bins near Mei Tin Estate with pedal-operated bins that prevented wild monkeys from searching for food in the bins;
- (d) a member thanked the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) for organising the “All for No Feeding” campaign to remind the public not to feed wild animals;
- (e) a member enquired whether the microchips the AFCD implanted in monkeys were equipped with tracking capabilities;
- (f) there was a need to enhance public education. Although pedal-operated bins had been adopted, the public sometimes did not step the pedal to open the bin but left their garbage beside the bin out of laziness;
- (g) a member pointed out that refuse bins with big openings were still placed on Heung Fan Liu Street and Pik Tin Street. Therefore, it was suggested that the FEHD should rearrange the distribution of different types of refuse bins on streets and reduce the number of bins with big openings;
- (h) since a pedal-operated bin had a relatively small capacity, making it easy for garbage to overflow, it was hoped that the FEHD could upgrade the bin by increasing its capacity to accommodate more garbage;
- (i) a member thanked the AFCD for capturing some wild monkeys in an operation launched last month, which had mitigated the nuisance;
- (j) a member pointed out that there was also nuisance caused by wild monkeys in Tai Wai Tsuen and rural areas;
- (k) a member pointed out that the refuse bin behind Chik Fuk Street had not been replaced with pedal-operated bin, and hoped that bins with big openings in rural areas could also be replaced with pedal-operated bins;
- (l) a member pointed out that wild monkeys would snatch offerings used by indigenous inhabitants for their rituals, and opined that the public should learn how to coexist with wild monkeys;
- (m) a member illustrated that the “All for No Feeding” campaign by the AFCD was not effective in promotion. Therefore, it was suggested that future promotional activities should target specific groups rather than merely locations. For example, the concept of “All for No Feeding” and the current legislation should be promoted to the property management staff of housing estates, including security and cleansing personnel, so that they could relay the message to residents;

- (n) a member suggested promoting the “All for No Feeding” campaign at elderly centres and shops in housing estates. Furthermore, the combination of online and offline promotion might yield better results;
- (o) a member pointed out that since the public had insufficient knowledge about wild monkeys, they often panicked when encountering them. Therefore, it was suggested that education and publicity should be enhanced in the community to help the public better understand how they should deal with wild monkeys;
- (p) a member suggested holding talks at housing estates and community halls to provide more information to the public and owners’ corporations;
- (q) a member suggested conducting trial educational activities targeting individual housing estates; and
- (r) noting that the number of monkeys captured between January and July 2024 significantly decreased, a member enquired the reason for the decline.

26. A representative of the AFCD gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) the AFCD implanted microchips in captured monkeys for identification, but these microchips did not have tracking capabilities. In the past, the AFCD used collars for tracking studies, but collars were of larger size, unlike microchips which could be implanted in monkeys;
- (b) regarding the promotion for the “All for No Feeding” campaign, in addition to setting up educational booths, the AFCD had also been holding talks at elderly centres since last year and conducting sharing sessions and lectures at schools to educate the public about the habits of the wild animals and what to do when encountering them;
- (c) the AFCD visited various estate management offices to share with security personnel methods for deterring monkeys and the relevant legislation. The Department also hoped that there could be more opportunities to explain to the public in the community the importance of the knowledge about these wild animals and the relevant legislation. Members could reach out to the AFCD if they found that educational talks were suitable to be arranged for a community group. The Department would then do its utmost to make relevant arrangements; and
- (d) regarding the number of monkeys captured from January to July this year, the period between February to August each year was the pregnancy and birth season of monkeys. It was not appropriate to capture them during this period, so the number of captures was relatively low. Capture operations would be conducted in cooler weather and the Department would sterilise the captured monkeys.

27. A representative of the FEHD gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) after adopting the new pedal-operated bins, some members of the public might not have got used to using them properly. Some probably did not apply sufficient force to the pedals and could not open the covers, subsequently leaving the garbage beside the bins; others might apply too much force, causing damage to the bins and reducing their durability;

- (b) the FEHD hoped that the public could learn to use pedal-operated bins properly but understood that the pedals might not be convenient for children and the elderly to operate;
- (c) members' concern on the relatively small capacity of pedal-operated bins, which easily resulted in overflowing, would be forwarded to the headquarters to explore the possibility of increasing the capacity of the bins. However, it was also necessary to consider the increased weight that came with an increased amount of garbage, as this might pose difficulties to the clearance of refuse from the bins; and
- (d) regarding the replacement of refuse bins at Heung Fan Liu and other locations, the FEHD would conduct on-site inspections and would replace them with pedal-operated bins if appropriate.

(Post-meeting note: The FEHD had replaced four refuse bins with pedal-operated bins at Heung Fan Liu and Pik Tin Street.)

28. The Chairman announced the end of discussion of the agenda item.

Information Papers

Sha Tin District Anti-mosquito Campaign 2024 (Third Phase)
(Paper No. FEHC 20/2024)

29. Members noted the above paper.

Statistical Overview of Sha Tin District Environmental Hygiene Services (as at 31 July 2024)
(Paper No. FEHC 21/2024)

30. The Chairman asked whether the FEHD had any supplementary information.

31. A representative of the FEHD provided supplementary information as follows:

- (a) different from former approaches, the FEHD adopted a new indicator called "Rodent Absence Rate" (RAR) to measure the severity of rodent infestation starting from this year. While conducting a rodent survey, the FEHD selected several locations to install thermal imaging cameras to capture images of rodents for three consecutive days, and utilised artificial intelligence technologies for analysis. These cameras automatically captured images every two minutes from 7 pm to 7 am the following morning. Subsequently, the FEHD checked the images for any sign of rodents and obtained a percentage by dividing the number of thermal images with no rodents by the total number of thermal images taken. A higher percentage indicated less severe rodent infestation in an area; and
- (b) the FEHD conducted two surveys each year. The RAR recorded in Sha Tin District for the first half of this year was 98.4%, ranked third among all districts in the first survey. During the survey, the FEHD discovered that the RARs in certain areas of the district were relatively lower, indicating more serious rodent infestation. The FEHD would concentrate resources to enhance rodent control efforts in these areas.

32. The Chairman asked members if they had any other enquiries.

33. Members' enquiries and views were as follows:

- (a) a member wished to know about the quantity and distribution of thermal imaging cameras currently deployed in Sha Tin District;
- (b) a member pointed out that if thermal imaging cameras were installed in areas where rodents might not be present, the results could appear more satisfactory than they actually were; and
- (c) a member wished to know whether the Department planned to primarily install thermal imaging cameras in the rodent black spots reported by members to obtain more accurate data and improve the effectiveness of rodent control.

34. A representative of the FEHD gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (a) the FEHD had taken a series of factors into consideration for the deployment of thermal imaging cameras, including the data of rodent complaints received and the numbers of live and dead rodents captured. Furthermore, the FEHD would collaborate with other departments to install cameras in the public areas concerned based on the feedback received;
- (b) the ongoing surveys were primarily focused on public areas, and the Department would also submit suggestions on the locations of cameras to the headquarters based on the opinions of the local community; and
- (c) this was the first time the FEHD had conducted such a survey. The FEHD would continuously refine the survey details, and members were welcomed to put forward their suggestions to the Department.

35. Members noted the above paper.

Date and Time of Next Meeting

36. The next meeting was scheduled to be held at 2:30 pm on 31 October 2024 (Thursday).

37. The meeting was closed at 3:27 pm.

Sha Tin District Council Secretariat
STDC 13/15/70

October 2024