

Minutes of the 2nd Meeting of
the Food, Environment and Hygiene Committee (2024-2027) of
the Tuen Mun District Council

Date : 18 April 2024 (Thursday)

Time : 2:30 p.m.

Venue : Tuen Mun District Council (TMDC) Conference Room

Present

Mr TSUI Fan, MH (Chairman)	TMDC Member
Mr TSANG Hin-hong, MH (Vice Chairman)	TMDC Member
The Hon LAU Ip-keung, Kenneth, SBS, MH, JP	TMDC Member
Mr CHAN Yau-hoi, BBS, MH, JP	TMDC Member
Mr CHAN Manwell, Leo, MH	TMDC Member
Ms SO Ka-man	TMDC Member
Mr YIP Man-pan, MH	TMDC Member
Ms LAI Ka-man	TMDC Member
Mr HO Jun-hang, Benton	TMDC Member
Mr LAM Tik-fai	TMDC Member
Dr CHAN Kwai-wao	TMDC Member
Mr CHUI King-hang	TMDC Member
Mr FUNG Yuk-fung, MH	TMDC Member
Mr TSANG Hing-chung	TMDC Member
Mr YIP Kat-kong, Kenneth	TMDC Member
Mr IP Chun-yuen	TMDC Member
Mr CHENG Yin-kwan, Andy	TMDC Member
Mr TSOI Shing-hin	TMDC Member
Mr CHUNG Kin-fung	TMDC Member
Ms YU Cheuk-ling, Katherine (Secretary)	Executive Officer (District Council)3, Tuen Mun District Office, Home Affairs Department

By Invitation

Mr CHAN Tat-ming, Neil	Principal Tobacco and Alcohol Control Inspector, Department of Health
Mr CHENG Shiu-kin, Simon	Chief Inspector of Police, Department of Health

In Attendance

Mr LI Chiu-hung

Mr KUNG Yiu-kwok, Jerdick

Mr FUNG Koon-yue

Mr CHAU Man-sang

Mr LEUNG Kam-hon

Mr LAU Shu-kai

Mr TSANG Chun-wang, Roy

TMDC Member

Senior Liaison Officer (2)(Acting),

Tuen Mun District Office, Home Affairs Department

District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Tuen

Mun), Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Chief Health Inspector (Tuen Mun)1,

Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Chief Health Inspector (Tuen Mun)2,

Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Senior Health Inspector (Cleansing & Pest Control)

Tuen Mun (Acting), Food and Environmental Hygiene

Department

Senior Environmental Protection Officer (Regional

West)1, Environmental Protection Department

I. Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed all to the 2nd meeting of the Food, Environment and Hygiene Committee (2024-2027) (FEHC).

2. The Chairman welcomed Mr KUNG Yiu-kwok, Jerdick, Senior Liaison Officer (2)(Acting), of the Tuen Mun District Office to the meeting for the first time. On behalf of the FEHC, he thanked Miss YU Mei-yu, Melinder, the former Senior Liaison Officer (2), who had been posted out, for her past contributions to the FEHC.

3. The Chairman also asked Members to note that those who were aware of their personal interests in any matters discussed at the meeting should declare the interests before the discussion. The Chairman would, in accordance with Order 22(4) of the Tuen Mun District Council Standing Orders, decide whether the Members who had declared interests might speak or vote on the matters, might remain at the meeting as observers, or should withdraw from the meeting. All cases of declaration of interests would be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

II. Absence from Meeting

4. The Secretary reported that no applications for leave of absence had been received from Members.

III. Confirmation of the Minutes of the Last Meeting

5. As Members proposed no amendments to the minutes of the last meeting, the Chairman announced that the minutes of the 1st meeting of the FEHC (2024-2027) were endorsed.

IV. Discussion Item

(A) **Suggestions for Enhancing Guidance to Optimise Support Service in Tuen Mun District after Banning Single-use Plastic Products on 22 April**

(FEHC Paper No. 9/2024)

(Written Response from the Environmental Protection Department)

6. The first proposer of the paper said that he supported the measures for regulating disposable plastic tableware and other plastic products, which would be implemented on 22 April 2024, and had summarised the opinions collected from relevant stakeholders into six key proposals in the paper. He hoped that

the Government could provide a clear guideline on the implementation of the policy and improve the supporting measures for plastic use control.

7. Mr TSANG Chun-wang, Roy of the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) gave a PowerPoint presentation on the measures for regulating disposable plastic tableware and other plastic products.

8. Members' comments and enquiries on the measures for regulating disposable plastic tableware and other plastic products were summarised as follows:

- (i) Members said that there were many misunderstandings and concerns about the control measures in the community, and suggested that the Department carry out adequate publicity and education work during the adaptation period, such as educating the public on whether an alternative to plastic products was disposable, so as to prevent the public from being caught unaware;
- (ii) Members suggested stepping up publicity campaigns among young people by promoting "plastic-free" takeaway measures on campus and strengthening support for recycling facilities at schools, such as extending the recycling spots of GREEN@COMMUNITY to schools to promote recycling;
- (iii) Members were concerned about how the "plastic-free" policy could be implemented effectively, and suggested that the Department explain clearly the content of the regulation to people in the industry and the public so as to assist them in making a smooth transition and adapting to the new measures;
- (iv) Members asked whether businesses could continue to use their stock of plastic products during the six-month adaptation period and how the Department would help businesses handle the surplus plastic products after the adaptation period;
- (v) Members said that restaurant operators were worried about an increase in operating costs under the "plastic-free" policy, and suggested that the Department understand more about the impact of the policy on the operation of restaurants and provide appropriate support;

- (vi) Members asked if there were any supporting measures to assist stores with limited space and restaurants in providing recycling facilities;
 - (vii) Members suggested using advice and warnings as the primary approach to address non-compliances. Given that the regulated plastic products had been widely used in the market, it would take some time for the trades to adjust their business operations;
 - (viii) Members asked whether the Department would consider extending the adaptation period if businesses still had difficulties in understanding the “plastic-free” policy after it had been implemented; and
 - (ix) Members asked whether the public were required to use designated bags for takeaways after the “plastic-free” policy had been introduced, and suggested that a standard price control on designated bags should be introduced.
9. Mr Roy TSANG of the EPD gave a consolidated response as follows:
- (i) During the six-month adaptation period, businesses could still use their stock of plastic products and should exhaust their stock within the adaptation period;
 - (ii) He pointed out that there were differences between the “plastic-free” policy, which would take effect on 22 April, and the waste charging scheme in terms of the applicable scope and policy objectives. The former targeted the supply of plastic products and sought to regulate plastic products from their sources. He also said that the Department would strengthen its publicity and education work;
 - (iii) In response to the enquiry on designated bags, he said that the “plastic-free” policy only regulated disposable tableware and other plastic products, and the purchase of designated bags for waste disposal was a measure under the waste charging scheme. In addition, under the “plastic-free” policy, citizens ordering takeaways were not suppliers of plastic products and thus would not violate the law. Restaurants had a responsibility to make sure the products provided had met the requirements of the legislation. To help restaurant operators source

compliant alternatives, the Department had set up a platform, enlisting the products that had been verified as compliant with the law;

- (iv) When considering other alternatives to plastic products, the Department had fully considered whether the supply of relevant alternatives was mature, available and affordable; and
- (v) The Department would take into account factors such as the effectiveness of implementing the first phase of the regulation, the adaptability of the public, as well as the prevalence of other alternatives to plastic products, before deciding on the implementation details of the next phase and the relevant implementation work.

10. Members noted the responses from the EPD and made the below comments:

- (i) Members suggested the Department provide financial assistance to businesses in need so that they did not have to worry about an increase in operating costs due to the “plastic-free” policy and could avoid passing on the rising costs to consumers;
- (ii) Members suggested that the Department focus on stepping up school education; and
- (iii) Members suggested that the Department set up an incentive programme to encourage the public to participate actively and collaborate on the policy.

11. The Chairman asked the EPD to look at the suggestions put forward by Members so as to improve the supporting measures for regulating plastic products.

(B) Suggestions for Providing Public Toilets in Tuen Mun Promenade and Renovating the Temporary Public Toilet at Tuen Mun Ferry Pier (FEHC Paper No. 10/2024)
(Written Response from the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department)

12. The first proposer of the paper said that regarding the lack of public toilets at Tuen Mun Promenade, he suggested that permanent public toilets be provided

in the vicinity of Marina Garden to meet the needs of the public. Separately, he was concerned about whether temporary toilets would be provided at Tuen Mun Ferry Pier during the construction of Tuen Mun South Extension.

13. Mr FUNG Koon-yue of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said that to accommodate the construction works for Tuen Mun South Extension, the public toilets at Tuen Mun Ferry Pier would be demolished and reprovisioned at a nearby site. During the works period, the MTR Corporation Limited (MTR) would provide temporary toilets for public use. In addition, the Department had suggested that MTR provide container-type temporary toilets with facilities such as wash hand basins for public use. As for the proposed construction of new public toilets, the Department would take into account a number of factors, such as the actual needs of the district, the availability of other toilet facilities for public use in the vicinity of the proposed location, the pedestrian flow in the vicinity, the cost effectiveness, and the feasibility of providing new public toilets as well as the availability of suitable land at the proposed location, environmental or technical constraints. Judging from the present situation, the Department had no plans to construct new public toilets at the above site.

14. Members' comments and enquiries on the captioned matter were summarised as follows:

- (i) Members said that the lack of public toilets and public toilet facilities at Tuen Mun Promenade and in the vicinity had caused inconvenience to the public. Since there were no toilets, some members of the public might defecate at the waterfront, leading to environmental hygiene problems;
- (ii) Members suggested that the FEHD take the initiative to discuss with the LCSD and study the provision of public toilets along Tuen Mun Promenade;
- (iii) Members suggested that the FEHD step up its supervision of MTR and properly maintain the facilities in the temporary public toilets, as well as ensure inspections were done properly; and
- (iv) Members asked for the location of the container-type temporary public toilets, which would be provided in light of the Tuen Mun South Extension project.

15. Separately, the Chairman asked the FEHD whether the temporary public toilets would be managed by MTR.

16. Mr FUNG of the FEHD gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (i) Regarding the suggestion of constructing new public toilets, the Department needed to consider multiple factors, including whether the proposed location was a venue managed by other government departments. Thus he suggested that Members put forward their views to venue management departments;
- (ii) The Department would keep close watch on the situation and hold regular meetings with MTR to monitor the works progress. MTR planned to enclose the existing public toilets from July to August and had pledged to provide temporary public toilets by then; and
- (iii) While the temporary public toilets would be managed by MTR, the reprovisioned public toilets would be managed by the FEHD. The Department would strengthen communication with MTR to ensure the quality of the facilities in the temporary public toilets were comparable to facilities in existing public toilets.

17. After discussion, the Chairman decided to write to MTR to put forward the suggestion of providing temporary toilets in a timely manner in light of the Tuen Mun South Extension project and urged MTR to step up the control over the quality of temporary toilets.

[Post-meeting note: The Secretariat sent a letter to MTR on 28 May 2024 to reflect Members' concerns.]

(C) Suggestions for Tackling and Stepping up Enforcement Actions against Smoking in Statutory No-smoking Areas in Tuen Mun District

(FEHC Paper No. 11/2024)

(Written Response from the Department of Health)

18. The Chairman welcomed Mr CHAN Tat-ming, Neil, Principal Tobacco and Alcohol Control Inspector, and Mr CHENG Shiu-kin, Simon, Chief Inspector of Police, of the Tobacco and Alcohol Control Office (TACO) under the Department of Health (DH) to the meeting.

19. The first proposer of the paper asked the TACO about the mode and frequency of inspection on the black spots of smoking offences and other no-smoking areas, the types of promotional campaigns for smoking cessation and the training of front-line management staff. He also suggested that the TACO step up enforcement efforts at the black spots of smoking offences, such as the Tuen Mun Pier area.

20. Mr CHAN Tat-ming of the TACO gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (i) To enhance the effectiveness of enforcement, the TACO would deploy plain-clothes law enforcement staff to prosecute those who had violated the smoking ban;
- (ii) The TACO had strengthened inspections on the black spots of smoking offences at public transport interchanges;
- (iii) The TACO would step up its publicity and education through a multi-pronged approach and organise regular smoking cessation programmes, such as Quit Month. The TACO would also produce promotion leaflets and posters to disseminate smoking cessation messages;
- (iv) Regarding the distribution of smoking product advertisements, the TACO had established a co-operation mechanism with the Housing Department (HD) at the end of 2022. When any smoking product leaflet distribution was found, the HD would contact the Police and refer the case to the TACO for prosecution. The Customs and Excise Department was dedicated to combating smuggling of illicit cigarettes. As for prosecutions against the distribution of smoking product leaflets, there were difficulties in enforcement since sufficient evidence was required to initiate a prosecution; and
- (v) The TACO understood the difficulties faced by the front-line staff in taking enforcement actions, and had seconded a Chief Inspector from the Police to provide training to front-line staff.

21. Members' comments and enquiries on the captioned matter were summarised as follows:

- (i) Members suggested that the TACO establish a regular communication mechanism with the TMDC so that Members could provide information on the black spots of smoking offences to the TACO. Members also hoped that representatives from the TACO could be invited to the meetings of the TMDC more frequently to facilitate exchanges of views;
- (ii) Members asked the TACO which law enforcement department was responsible for taking enforcement actions against the distribution of smoking product leaflets, and suggested that government departments coordinate with relevant organisations with clear delineation of responsibilities so as to enhance the effectiveness of tobacco control;
- (iii) To combat the problem of illegal smoking, Members suggested that the Government conduct cross-departmental coordination, enhance information sharing among departments in charge of different areas and strengthen follow-up actions;
- (iv) Members suggested that the TACO step up its publicity and education efforts to let the public know about the hazards of tobacco; and
- (v) Members asked whether Hong Kong Council on Smoking and Health had organised large-scale anti-smoking publicity campaigns in the Tuen Mun District.

22. Mr CHAN of the TACO gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (i) The TACO was pleased to attend meetings of the TMDC to communicate with Members actively, and would let the DH know that it was invited to attend the meetings on a regular basis;
- (ii) While the DH seldom organised large-scale events in the Tuen Mun District, the TACO would still step up its publicity efforts to promote a smoke-free culture; and
- (iii) He said that some members of the public had misunderstood the scope of the smoking ban, and pointed out that only designated bus interchanges and public transport interchanges were no-smoking areas.

23. The Chairman said that if the department required assistance from the

TMDC for future activities or publicity campaigns, it could contact the Secretariat to make further arrangements.

V. Items for Information

(A) Strategy and Work on Improvement of the Environment and Hygiene of Hong Kong by Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHC Paper No. 12/2024)

24. Members noted the content of the paper.
25. Mr FUNG of the FEHD outlined the content of the paper.
26. Members' comments and enquiries on the captioned paper were summarised as follows:
 - (i) Members reported that it took quite a long time for the Joint Office for Investigation of Water Seepage Complaints (JO) to handle a report on water seepage in buildings, which made it difficult to tackle water seepage problems in a timely manner;
 - (ii) Members suggested that the Department change the installation locations of the Internet Protocol cameras at hygiene black spots;
 - (iii) Members suggested that the Department step up patrols of public places where wild birds congregated, and enhance its publicity, education as well as enforcement against people who dirtied public places by feeding wild birds;
 - (iv) Members suggested regular street cleansing and crackdowns on illegal feeding of wild birds at black spots of feral pigeon congregation, such as San Hing Tsuen in Lam Tei, the footpath linking Yan Tin and Siu Hong as well as the footbridge at Lam Tei Stop;
 - (v) Members suggested enhancing the design of the footbridge at Lam Tei Stop to alleviate the problem of pigeon fouling on the street, so as to improve environmental hygiene;
 - (vi) Members hoped that the Department would provide the Rodent Infestation Rate and information on its anti-rodent operations to keep Members

abreast of the situation of rodent infestation;

- (vii) Members asked the Department about the shop front extension situation in the Tuen Mun District, and urged the Department to step up law enforcement to deter the illegal behaviours of shop operators occupying public places;
- (viii) Members asked how many surveillance devices would be installed to detect rodent activities, how long the devices would be in operation and where the devices would be installed, as well as whether information on the installation locations of the surveillance devices could be accessed by the public. Members also suggested installing such devices at more rodent black spots; and
- (ix) Members urged the Department to tackle the problems of rubbish accumulation at the planters near the shopping mall at Kar Wah Building, dog faeces at the planters near Rosedale Gardens Shopping Mall and Lucky Building, as well as the obstruction of the entrance at Tat Yan Square Refuse Collection Point by rubbish bins.

[Post-meeting note: The FEHD said after the meeting that staff of the Department had followed up on the above issues and replied to Members concerned.]

- 27. Mr FUNG of the FEHD gave a consolidated response as follows:
 - (i) Staff of the JO, after receipt of a report on water seepage, would contact the informant and arrange for officers to inspect the building concerned. During inspection, the JO's officers would visit the premises affected by water seepage to ascertain if the seepage was caused by defective water pipes. If building or drainage pipe defects were found during the investigation, the JO would refer the case to the Building Department for investigation, follow-up and enforcement action. Depending on the complexity of a case, the time required to handle a report varied from case to case. For details of the work of the JO, Members could invite representatives of the JO to the meeting for elaboration;
 - (ii) Regarding rodent prevention work, the Department had stepped up patrols of rodent black spots last year, and relevant situation had improved;

- (iii) Regarding the use of intelligence surveillance systems for detecting rodent activities, the Department would carry out a survey in all districts of the FEHD every six months, having regard to various factors such as the number of rat spotting reports, inspection results, and the suggestions put forward by the public and Members. At the moment, the Department had installed 300 thermal cameras and selected 100 locations randomly for monitoring. Subject to the findings of the survey, the Department would review its strategies for rodent prevention. In response to Members' comments on the installation locations of thermal cameras, the Tuen Mun District Environmental Hygiene Office (TMDEHO) would get in touch with the Pest Control Advisory Section (PCAS) to follow up on the issues; and

[Post-meeting note: After the meeting, the FEHD said that in response to Members' comments on the obstruction of a pedestrian link by the thermal cameras installed at the footpath along Wong Kong Wai Road, the TMDEHO had referred the matter to the PCAS for review and follow-up.]

- (iv) Regarding the problem of feral pigeon feeding, the Department would strengthen enforcement actions and adopt a zero-tolerance attitude towards people who dirtied public places by feeding feral pigeons, as well as carry out blitz operations. The Department would also step up publicity and education, such as hanging banners at bird-feeding black spots to enhance the deterrent effect. Earlier, the Department had carried out a series of enforcement actions at Lam Tei Stop and in the vicinity of Tuen Tsz Wai, and had prosecuted one person by issuing a fixed penalty notice. As for the design of the footbridge, the Department would raise the issue with the Highways Department (HyD) for follow-up.

[Post-meeting note: The FEHD said after the meeting that the Department had hung banners at relevant locations to enhance deterrence against fouling of public places due to feral pigeon feeding. Regarding the design of the footbridge, the Department learnt that Members had earlier raised the matter with the HyD for follow-up.]

- 28. Mr LEUNG Kam-hon of the FEHD responded that the Task Force on District Governance was tasked with combatting hygiene black spots with illegal

shop front extensions leading to street obstructions. Apart from issuing fixed penalty notices, the FEHD would also issue electronic notices to appeal to relevant stakeholders to remove articles causing obstruction on the streets. The FEHD and the Police had adopted a joint enforcement mode in all districts across Hong Kong to remove goods that were illegally placed in public places, and the fixed penalty for such offences had increased from \$1,500 to \$6,000. The low number of complaints received from Chi Lok and San Hui areas in the Tuen Mun District had reflected that the problem of shop front extensions leading to obstruction had improved significantly in many areas.

(B) Anti-mosquito Campaign 2024 in Tuen Mun District (Phase II)
(FEHC Paper No. 13/2024)

29. Members noted the content of the paper.

VI. Any Other Business and Date of Next Meeting

30. There being no other business, the Chairman announced the meeting closed at 4:33 p.m. The next meeting would be held on 20 June 2024 (Thursday) at 2:30 p.m.

Tuen Mun District Council Secretariat

Date: May 2024

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