

Minutes of the 5th Meeting of
the Food, Environment and Hygiene Committee (2024-2027) of
the Tuen Mun District Council

Date : 17 October 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 CHAN Tsim-heng	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
Mr NG Ka-chun	Co-opted Member of TMDC Member
Mr YAN Chi-hong	Co-opted Member of TMDC Member
Ms LAM Hau-yi, Natalie (Secretary)	Executive Officer (District Council)3, Tuen Mun District Office, Home Affairs Department

By Invitation

Mr SHUM Kai-shing	Engineer/15 (West), Civil Engineering and Development Department
Mr LAU Tin-sing, Alvin	Project Coordinator/District 4, Civil Engineering and Development Department
Mr MA Ping-hing	Project Coordinator / Maintenance 1 D, Civil Engineering and Development Department
Ms CHAN Pik-shan, Eva	Senior Land Executive/Land Enforcement 3, District Lands Office, Tuen Mun, Lands Department

In Attendance

Ms HUNG Mei, Eunice	Senior Liaison Officer (2), Tuen Mun District Office, Home Affairs Department
Mr TSANG Chun-wang, Roy	Senior Environmental Protection Officer (Regional West)1, Environmental Protection Department
Mr FUNG Koon-yue	District Environmental Hygiene Superintendent (Tuen Mun), Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Ms CHAN Wan-ching	Chief Health Inspector (Tuen Mun)2, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Mr LEE Chun-kit	Senior Health Inspector (Cleansing & Pest Control) Tuen Mun, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

I. Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed all to the 5th meeting of the Food, Environment and Hygiene Committee (2024-2027) (FEHC).

2. The Chairman welcomed Miss Natalie LAM, the new Committee Secretary, to the meeting of the FEHC for the first time. On behalf of the FEHC, he also thanked Ms YU Cheuk-ling, Katherine, Executive Officer (District Council)³ of the Tuen Mun District Office (TMDO), who had been on transfer, for her contributions to the FEHC in the past.

II. Absence from Meeting

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

III. Confirmation of the Minutes of the Last Meeting

4. As Members proposed no amendments to the minutes of the last meeting, the Chairman announced that the minutes of the 4th meeting of the FEHC (2024-2027) were endorsed.

IV. Discussion Items

(A) **Desilting and Cleaning Work for Tuen Mun River**
(FEHC Paper No. 28/2024)
(Written Response from the Drainage Services Department)
(Written Response from the Civil Engineering and Development Department)
(Written Response from the Environmental Protection Department)
(Written Response from the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department)

5. The Chairman welcomed Mr SHUM Kai-shing, Engineer/15 (West), Mr MA Ping-hing, Project Coordinator/Maintenance 1 D, and Mr Alvin LAU, Project Coordinator/District 4, of the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) to the meeting.

6. The first proposer of the paper was concerned about the odour, sludge on the riverbed and refuse problems arising from Tuen Mun River. He asked the departmental representatives about the geographical distribution, sources of misconnections and follow-up actions relating to the cases of misconnection of sewers. He also asked the Drainage Services Department (DSD) about the frequency of carrying out regular river channel clearance work. Moreover, he was concerned about the standard adopted by the CEDD in

executing the river channel clean-up operations, and whether any clean-up operations had been conducted over the past four years.

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

- (i) Regarding the sewage treatment issue, Members asked whether the DSD had provided or planned to provide water treatment facilities at Tuen Mun River, and asked about the frequency of cleaning up the river channel as well as the relevant planning arrangement;
- (ii) Members asked about the progress of the CEDD's work on the clearance of structures and unauthorised building works at the Tuen Mun River embankment, and the desilting plan and arrangement for Tuen Mun River in the future;
- (iii) Members said that it might be more difficult to carry out river channel clean-up work after commencement of the Tuen Mun South Extension Project, and asked whether the CEDD and departments concerned had drawn up any corresponding river channel clean-up proposals in response to the commencement of the project;
- (iv) Members suggested that the relevant departments, including the CEDD, the DSD, the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) should study the possibility of having one department centrally responsible for co-ordinating the work relating to the regulation of Tuen Mun River in the future;
- (v) Members asked about the department responsible for monitoring the odour from Tuen Mun River and the pollutants in the river, and suggested carrying out regular detection of odours and establishing appropriate objective standards so that the department concerned could perform desilting work according to the standards. In addition, Members suggested that the EPD should, by making reference to the practice in the Tsuen Wan District, carry out detection of hydrogen sulphide in the Tuen Mun District and regularise the practice. Besides, Members also suggested comparing the concentrations of hydrogen sulphide at Tuen Mun River in different months and assigning professionals from the Environmental Committee to assess the odours from Tuen Mun River with a view to taking corresponding actions to clear the refuse in Tuen Mun River;
- (vi) Members asked about the present main functions of Tuen Mun River;

- (vii) Members suggested increasing the frequency of conducting inter-departmental inspection and joint clean-up operations at Tuen Mun River;
- (viii) Members reflected that the odour from the section of river channel between Tuen Mun Park and Choi Yee Bridge was found to be stronger and it was considered that various departments should take actions proactively in order to solve the odour problem arising from Tuen Mun River;
- (ix) Members opined that a set of standards for clearing refuse in Tuen Mun River should be established so as to clarify the division of labour among departments and regularise the clean-up operations; and
- (x) Members suggested that the matter should be made an item for ongoing concerns by the TMDC or the District Facilities and Works Committee, and the overall regulation of Tuen Mun River should be handed over to an ad hoc committee or a working group for follow-up so that the departments concerned could tackle the Tuen Mun River problem.

8. Mr Roy TSANG of the EPD gave a consolidated response as follows:

- (i) The EPD was mainly responsible for tracing the sources of sewage discharge and through conducting sewage tracking surveys, the Department inspected stormwater drains and manholes to judge whether any foul water sewers had been misconnected;
- (ii) Seepage or misconnection of the sewer and stormwater drainage systems was mainly caused by damaged sewers due to prolonged lack of repair or damage to the original system due to works. The Department would refer the cases to the DSD for rehabilitation. Moreover, misconnection of building sewers to stormwater drainage systems was more common in old buildings. The Department would refer the cases to the Buildings Department (BD) for follow-up actions. In the past two years in the Tuen Mun District, the EPD had identified a total of eight cases involving misconnection of sewers in private properties, which were located in old buildings near San Hui, west of Tuen Mun River. Among those cases, five of them were completed in 2022 and for the remaining three which occurred in 2023, the BD had already issued repair orders. Given the time required for carrying out the works, the Department would continue to follow the cases up with the BD;
- (iii) The EPD would monitor the water quality of the river regularly. Six monitoring points had been set up along Tuen Mun River, and two of them were located at the upstream area. When water flow was relatively low, river water from upstream watercourses would be intercepted by a dry weather flow interceptor near West Rail

Siu Hong Station and diverted to the sewage treatment plants of the DSD for appropriate treatment before flowing into Tuen Mun River. The other four monitoring points were located at the midstream and downstream areas;

- (iv) In the light of the DSD's revitalisation scheme for Tuen Mun River, the Department had ongoing exchange of information with the DSD's project team for more comprehensive identification of the sources of sewage discharge;
- (v) During the TMDC meeting held on 9 September 2024, a DSD representative said that the water discharged from Tuen Mun Hospital was that of the district cooling system. The EPD had been monitoring the situation at that location and there was no detection of sewage wrongly discharged into Tuen Mun River; and
- (vi) The current monitoring of hydrogen sulphide level at the Tsuen Wan waterfront was not regular in nature. Hydrogen sulphide was a representative indicator of odour caused by sewage. However, given the present absence of monitoring standards for hydrogen sulphide, the Department mainly judged the effectiveness of sewage screening and rectification work through analysing the changes in hydrogen sulphide concentration before and after carrying out the work.

9. Mr MA Ping-hing of the CEDD said that the CEDD had assisted the DSD in monitoring the riverbed level of Tuen Mun River along the river channel (from the south of the West Rail Tuen Mun Station to the river estuary), including conducting regular bathymetric surveys and deploying staff to inspect the river channel, and carrying out maintenance dredging works as and when required. According to the latest data of the bathymetric surveys, the riverbed level of the aforesaid river section had not reached the flood protection alert level set by the DSD. The CEDD would continue to monitor the riverbed level and take appropriate actions. As for matters relating to the clearance of refuse in Tuen Mun River, the odour and the tracing of the sources of sewage discharge, they were within the purview of other departments and the CEDD would provide assistance where necessary.

10. Mr Alvin LAU of the CEDD said that the Department noted the concern of Members and the public about the illegal structures on the embankment of Tuen Mun River. The Department took part in a joint operation on 23 August 2024 with the DSD, the FEHD, the District Lands Office, Tuen Mun (DLO), the TMDO and the Marine Department to clear the illegal structures on the river embankment. The Department also took part in a joint operation conducted on 11 July 2023.

11. The Chairman asked the Secretariat to reflect Members' concern to the DSD and hoped that the DSD would provide supplementary information after the meeting to answer Members' enquiries. He hoped that the departments would enhance co-ordination, and with

the support of relevant co-ordinating committees, strive to improve the hygienic condition of the Tuen Mun River channel.

[Post-meeting note: The DSD emailed the aforesaid information to Members via the Secretariat on 12 December 2024.]

V. Items for Information

**(A) Report on Environmental Hygiene Services by the Tuen Mun District Environmental Hygiene Office
(FEHC Paper No. 29/2024)**

12. Members noted the content of the paper.

13. A Member said that the effectiveness of mosquito prevention and control work could be seen from the fact that the gravidtrap indices at So Kwun Wat from August to September were lower than those in the past and regarding that point, asked about the recent anti-mosquito work performed by the Department.

14. Mr FUNG Koon-yue of the FEHD said that given the rising ovitrap indices for *Aedes albopictus* at So Kwun Wat which had reached the alert level in May and June, and that the relatively more extensive distribution of *Aedes albopictus*, the Department had carried out anti-mosquito work on various fronts, such as removing mosquito breeding sites and stepping up inspections and enforcement actions at construction sites in the vicinity of So Kwun Wat. The Department also stepped up publicity on anti-mosquito work in nearby housing estates and liaised with other departments, including the Leisure and Cultural Services Department and the Lands Department, with a view to strengthening anti-mosquito work at locations or venues managed by the departments. Moreover, the recent drier weather had contributed to the substantially improved situation of the mosquito problems. The Department would continue to conduct inspections and step up anti-mosquito work.

**(B) Water Quality of Tuen Mun Beaches
(FEHC Paper No. 30/2024)**

15. Members noted the content of the paper.

**(C) Air Quality Health Index of Tuen Mun Air Quality Monitoring Station
(FEHC Paper No. 31/2024)**

16. Members noted the content of the paper.

**(D) Tai Shui Hang Water Quality Monitoring Records
(FEHC Paper No. 32/2024)**

17. Members noted the content of the paper.

**(E) Reports of Other Government Departments
(FEHC Paper No. 33/2024)**

(i) Environmental Monitoring Report on Mud Pit No. 5

18. Members noted the content of the paper.

(ii) Report on Water Seepage in Buildings in the Tuen Mun District

19. Members noted the content of the paper.

(iii) Grass cutting and mosquito larvicidal oil spraying on Government land in the Tuen Mun District

20. Members noted the content of the paper.

21. A Member said that the demand for grass cutting increased significantly in various areas in Tuen Mun after the rainy season, and therefore asked about the co-operation between the DLO and the FEHD on the work of grass cutting and spraying mosquito larvicidal oil.

22. Ms Eva CHAN of the DLO said that Members could suggest specified locations that required grass cutting to the DLO or suggest grass cutting locations that might be incorporated into the District-led Actions Scheme for the DLO to follow up and examine the situation.

23. The Chairman remarked that Members could put forward suggestions on the locations for stepping up anti-mosquito and grass-cutting work to the departments concerned after the meeting if necessary.

24. Ms Eva CHAN of the DLO said that Members could forward their opinions to staff in charge of various areas in the district.

VI. Any Other Business and Date of Next Meeting

25. There being no other business, the Chairman announced the meeting closed at 3:25 p.m. The next meeting would be held on 12 December 2024 (Thursday) at 2:30 p.m.

Tuen Mun District Council Secretariat

Date: December 2024

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