

Mr. CHAN Yu-kwan	Engineer / Tai Po 3 / Drainage Services Department (“DSD”)
Ms. CHAU Yu-man, Queenie	Senior Environmental Protection Officer (Regional North) 1 (Atg.) / Environmental Protection Department (“EPD”)
Mr. YEUNG Wing-chi, Gavin	Chief Health Inspector (Tai Po) 1 / Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (“FEHD”)
Miss LAI Hiu-wing	Senior Health Inspector (Hawker) Tai Po / FEHD
Mr. TSANG Chin-kan	Senior Health Inspector (Cleansing and Pest Control) Tai Po 2 / FEHD
Ms. LAI YEE-wing, Jannet	Operations Support Sub-Unit Commander / Tai Po Division / Hong Kong Police Force (“HKPF”)
Ms. PONG Kei	Senior District Engineer / North East / Highways Department (“HyD”)
Mr. MOK Ka-hong	Chief Technical Officer / Tai Po / HyD
Mr. CHONG Chi-yan	Maintenance Inspector of Works / Tai Po / HyD
Miss CHAN Sui-king, Madeline	Senior Executive Officer (District Management) / TPDO / HAD
Ms. WONG Sze-man, Queenie	Senior Liaison Officer (2) / TPDO / HAD
Mr. WU Chi-hung, Derek	Senior Executive Officer (District Council) / TPDO / HAD
Miss FOK Wai-yin, Christie	Assistant Executive Manager (District-led Actions Scheme) / TPDO / HAD

Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed participants to the 3rd meeting in 2023 of the Environmental Protection, Fisheries, Agriculture, Industries, Commerce, Food and Health Committee (“EFAC”), and announced as follows:

- (i) He welcomed Mr. TANG Wing-kai, Ricky, Marine Parks Officer (Sea Enforcement) of AFCD to attend this meeting.
- (ii) Ms. PONG Kei, Senior District Engineer / North East of HyD, Ms. CHAU Yu-man, Queenie, Senior Environmental Protection Officer (Regional North) 1 (Atg.) of EPD and Mr. CHAN Yu-kwan, Engineer / Tai Po 3 of DSD attended this meeting in place of Messrs SIU Wai-kwan, WONG Pak-ki and NG Wing-hung respectively.
- (iii) Mr. TSUI Chun-sing, Administrative Assistant / Lands (Atg.) of District Lands Office, Tai Po (“TPDLO”) and Mr. MA Chi-ping, Senior Assistant Shipping Master / Pollution Control Unit (2) of Marine Department (“MD”) were unable to attend the meeting due to sickness.

I. **Confirmation of the minutes of the 2nd meeting in 2023 of the EFAC on 15 March 2023**
(TPDC Paper No. EFA 25/2023)

2. The Chairman reported that as the Secretariat did not receive any proposed amendments prior to the meeting and no Members on the floor had put forward any amendments, the captioned minutes therefore were confirmed.

II. **Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department – Report on the assistance provided for the agricultural industry in Tai Po District and matters concerning the mariculture industry in Tai Po District between March and April 2023**
(TPDC Paper No. EFA 28/2023)

(1) **Assistance provided for the agricultural industry in Tai Po District by the AFCD**

3. Dr. LING Ka-ho, Joe, reported as follows:

- (i) Between March and April 2023, the AFCD provided farmers with free farm machinery lending services, which included the lending of cultivator tillers 40 times, weed burners and brush cutters 31 times, and other farm machineries 32 times.
- (ii) The department had held one and two technical seminars at Tai Lung Farm and agriculture areas respectively during the afore-mentioned period.

4. Members did not have any comments or questions about the report on the agricultural industry.

(2) **Matters affecting the mariculture industry and other fisheries in Tai Po District**

5. Mr. TANG Wing-kai, Ricky, reported as follows:

- (i) Between March and April 2023, the AFCD had inspected a total of 21 mariculture farms, of which eight were located in Tai Po District, including four in Yim Tin Tsai, two in Yim Tin Tsai East, one in Tap Mun and one in Sham Wan.
- (ii) The department did not receive any reports of fish disease outbreak at the mariculture farms in Tai Po District during the afore-mentioned period.
- (iii) The department received four red tide reports in Tai Po waters during the afore-mentioned period, including the discovery of *Gonyaulax polygramma* in Sham

Wan Fish Culture Zone (“FCZ”), Tolo Harbour (near Wu Kai Sha) and Three Fathoms Cove (including Yung Shue Au FCZ) in March, and the discovery of *Noctiluca scintillans* in Tolo Channel (including Lo Fu Wat FCZ) in April 2023. Both red tide species were common and non-toxic algae.

- (iv) At present, there were a total of 161 accredited fish farms in Hong Kong, including 78 freshwater fish farms and 83 mariculture farms. 34 of them were located in Tai Po District, including seven in Yim Tin Tsai, 13 in Yim Tin Tsai East, nine in Yung Shue Au, three in Tap Mun and two in Sham Wan. In March 2023, the total volume of accredited fish products sold by the Fish Marketing Organisation (“FMO”) was around 1 460 kilogrammes (“kg”).
- (v) Between March and April 2023, the department received two reports of suspected illegal fishing in Tai Po waters. The department had stepped up patrols in the waters concerned and conducted joint operations with the Marine Police based on the intelligence provided by fishermen and members of the public. There were two prosecutions against illegal fishing in Tai Po waters during the above period. One of the cases took place in the waters off Shek Ngau Chau and the two Mainlanders involved were sentenced to two weeks’ imprisonment (suspended for 24 months). The other case took place in Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park and the two Mainland fishermen deckhands involved were each sentenced to a fine of \$1,000.

6. Mr. LAU Yung-wai said that he had asked the FMO about the progress of setting up points of sale for accredited fish products in Tai Po District at the last meeting, and asked whether the department could provide any relevant information.

7. The Chairman thanked the AFCD for its efforts in combating illegal fishing.

8. Mr. Ricky TANG responded that at present, accredited fish products were mainly sold at the department’s “Local Fresh” online store. The department and FMO would continue to review the effectiveness of the “Local Fresh” physical store, and set up additional points of sale as necessary.

9. Mr. LAU Yung-wai hoped that fish products caught in the district, after being transported to the FMO, could be sold at the physical stores in local market, and asked whether the department could provide other information.

10. Mr. Ricky TANG responded that the FMO mainly sold the products through its online store at present. Regarding the proposal in paragraph 9 above, the department needed to observe the situation and needs before considering whether additional physical points of sale would be set up in Tai Po District, and he had no further information for the time being.

11. Mr. LAU Yung-wai asked how the department would make the assessment.
12. Mr. Ricky TANG responded that the relevant information was not available at present. If Members wished to obtain specific information, he could convey Members' views to the section concerned after the meeting. If necessary, he could report at the next meeting or the responsible section could contact Members to follow up after the meeting.
13. Mr. LAU Yung-wai said that the department had made a similar response at the last meeting, which was not satisfactory, and hoped that the department could be well prepared before the next meeting.
14. The Chairman said that he had noticed that the representatives attending this meeting differed from those attended the previous meeting, and asked whether there was any internal communication within the department on this matter. He said that the number of meetings remaining in this District Council ("DC") term was limited, and hoped that he could obtain the relevant information as soon as possible.
15. Mr. Ricky TANG responded that the department had checked with the section concerned after the meeting and learnt that the sales were mainly made at the online store at present, but details of the examination were not available yet. If Members would like to have more information, he could inform officers of the section concerned to contact Members after the meeting. He would also convey Members' requests and provide the information at the next meeting if possible.

(Post-meeting note: The AFCD stated that at present, local fishing vessels unloaded fish catches for wholesale marketing at Tai Po Wholesale Marine Fish Market ("TPFM") regularly, and the annual throughput exceeded 200 tonnes. According to the FMO, in addition to the wholesale marketing of catches to retail outlets near Tai Po District, wholesalers of TPFM had also set up fish stalls in Tai Po Hui Market and Tai Yuen Market for retail business.)

III. Request to incorporate Tap Mun into country parks

(TPDC Paper Nos. EFA 26/2023, EFA 26a/2023 and EFA 26b/2023)

16. The Chairman welcomed Ms. CHAN Sze-man, Cynthia, Senior Country Parks Officer (Planning & Regulations) and Ms. NG Pui-lam, Country Parks Officer (Special Duties) (Atg.) of AFCD to attend the meeting for this agenda item.
17. Mr. MO Ka-chun, Patrick, went through Paper No. EFA 26/2023.

18. Ms. CHAN Sze-man, Cynthia, went through Paper No. EFA 26a/2023, and added as follows:

- (i) At present, there were 24 country parks and 22 special areas in Hong Kong (excluding Robin's Nest Country Park which was under preparation), accounting for about 40% of the total land area in the territory. To conserve nature while ensuring the judicious use of land, manpower and financial resources, the AFCD had all along been adopting established principles and criteria, which included such considerations as the conservation value, landscape and aesthetic value, recreation potential, size, proximity to existing country parks, land status and land use compatibility, to assess whether a site was suitable to be designated as a country park.
- (ii) Upon receipt of Members' proposals, the department had conducted a preliminary study and assessment on whether Tap Mun was suitable to be designated as a country park. The assessment results showed that the habitat and biodiversity of Tap Mun were not high and the conservation value was relatively low. Also, the department had not found any rare species on the island.
- (iii) There were five permitted burial ground sites and a number of artificial structures on the island (especially in the southern part of Tap Mun). These artificial landscapes had detracted from the overall quality of the natural scenery in Tap Mun.
- (iv) Recreational facilities, including playground and sitting-out facilities, were already available on the island. They were largely concentrated in the central and south-central parts of the island, which were under the management of the relevant government departments. On top of that, some of the land was under private ownership and the northern part of the island was covered by thicket of shrubs. As such, the potential for recreational development was not high.
- (v) In conclusion, the department opined that Tap Mun did not have high conservation value, landscape value and recreation development potential. There were villages as well as frequent recreational and commercial activities on the island itself. As such, the department did not have any plans to designate Tap Mun as a country park at present.

19. The Chairman said that before the meeting, the Secretariat had invited the Transport Department ("TD") to attend the meeting. The department indicated that it could not send officers to the meeting, but had submitted a written reply. Members could refer to TPDC Paper No. EFA 26b/2023. In addition, the Secretariat had received Mr. LI Yiu-ban's comments and response on this agenda item before the meeting. Members could refer to the tabled paper (see Annex I).

20. Mr. LAM Yick-kuen's comments were as follows:

- (i) He knew that a number of Tai Po residents were living in Tap Mun and opined that it would be rather difficult to reduce the frequency of kaito ferry service.
- (ii) As Tap Mun had a large resident population and there were a number of houses as well as designated burial ground sites on the island, he did not recommend incorporating Tap Mun into country parks.
- (iii) He had visited Tap Mun with Mr. LI Yiu-ban and noticed that campers often left food and refuse on the ground, which led to wrong intake by cattle and affecting their health.
- (iv) As the presence of too many visitors and cattle in Tap Mun had seriously affected the growth of grass fields, he suggested hanging banners or displaying posters to remind visitors not to destroy the natural environment.

21. Mr. Patrick MO's comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) He opined that the department could make reference to the designation of country parks by designating parts of the island as "enclaves" to be excluded from the country park area.
- (ii) He asked whether the department had any long-term planning or management of trees on the island if Tap Mun was not included in the country park area. Regarding the failure of grass field recovery, he asked whether some areas (such as those along the waterfront) would be designated as designated campsites.

22. The Chairman's comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) He did not support incorporating the entire Tap Mun into the country park area, but opined that reference could be made to the Nai Chung Barbecue Site to incorporate some areas into the country park area to improve the condition of grass fields.
- (ii) From his personal experience, he had encountered many difficulties in grass planting on the island, which required a lot of resources as well. He opined that by incorporating Tap Mun into the country park area, the island would be provided with more resources, which helped to restore the grass fields.
- (iii) He believed that the grass fields on Tap Mun fulfilled the criteria of conservation value, landscape and aesthetic value and recreational potential. In addition, Tap Mun was in close proximity to an existing country park. As such, he hoped that

there would be a department responsible to manage the grass fields. He said that the grass fields were currently managed by the TPDLO but its power was limited. He also opined that the environment could be protected if there was a department responsible for its management.

- (iv) He opined that the reason for the withering of grass fields was not due to the profuse breeding of cattle but the illegal camping of visitors on the island.
- (v) He opined that reducing the frequency of kaito ferry service was not only unfeasible, but it would also affect the daily lives of the residents.

23. Ms. Cynthia CHAN responded as follows:

- (i) The AFCDD had adopted established principles and criteria to assess whether the grass fields concerned and other areas on the island were suitable to be incorporated into the country park area.
- (ii) The south-western coast of Tap Mun was a fishing village with mainly village houses, stores and eateries. The habitats outside the village were mainly scrubs and grass fields with no species or habitats of special value. The biodiversity of the island was not high, and thus the conservation value was not high.
- (iii) When assessing whether a site was suitable for incorporation into the country park area, the department would consider its current conditions. The designation of country parks and the subsequent management required a vast amount of resources and it was a long-term endeavour. As such, careful consideration was required.
- (iv) The department assessed the landscape and aesthetic value from a human perspective. There were a lot of village houses and existing structures in the southern part of the island, which impaired the overall landscape and aesthetic value. The northern part was mainly dominated by scrubs and there were mud tracks leading to permitted burial ground sites. The height of the scrubs along the tracks was similar to that of an adult. As such, there were not much natural landscape for enjoyment.
- (v) There were existing structures and facilities on the island. In assessing the potential for recreational development, the department would consider the need and feasibility of introducing recreational facilities to the island. At present, there were already trails or hiking trails, viewing platforms, pavilions, playgrounds and sitting-out areas managed by the relevant departments on the island. There were also benches along the shoreline, and a number of toilets for use by the public on the island. The potential for recreational development on the island was not high as the possibility of providing new facilities without vegetation clearance was limited.

- (vi) Based on the actual circumstances and the above assessment results, the department did not have any plans to designate Tap Mun as a country park at present. The department understood that Members hoped that a department would be centrally responsible for managing the grass fields, and agreed that consideration could be given to having the department responsible for managing the existing facilities on the island to continue the study on the management of grass fields.

24. Mr. HO Wai-lam's comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) He recognised the need to have a department responsible for monitoring the grass fields, and asked whether there would be a department taking up the relevant work. He had visited Tap Mun and found that some parts of the grassland were enclosed for maintenance. He therefore asked about the effectiveness of the effort.
- (ii) To his understanding, most of the cattle on the island had been sterilised by contraceptive injections instead of surgical sterilisation. He therefore doubted the effectiveness of the sterilisation.
- (iii) He opined that the grass fields were mainly affected by human factors, and asked whether the department would propose alternative ways of managing the grass fields.
- (iv) As there were quite a lot of residents on the island and Tai Po residents had to travel to and from Tap Mun frequently, he did not agree with the proposal that the ferries should not berth at Tap Mun, nor did he agree with the designation of Tap Mun as a campsite as he opined that the grass fields would not be restored then.

25. Mr. Patrick MO opined that if some areas in Tap Mun were designated as campsites, the AFCD would have the power to monitor and control the activities there. He also wanted to ascertain whether the department had built or managed any facilities on the island.

26. The Chairman said that the issues of sterilisation of cattle and designation of campsites had been discussed at previous meetings. To his understanding, cattle were mainly sterilised by contraceptive injections, but the relevant information could be sought from the veterinarian after the meeting. He pointed out that there were divergent views among different stakeholders in the discussion on whether the movements of cattle should be restricted. He personally opined that the chance of cattle coming into contact with visitors should be minimised.

27. Ms. Cynthia CHAN responded as follows:

- (i) The department had neither provided recreational facilities nor conducted sod installation or grass field maintenance works on the island.
- (ii) In considering the setup of new campsites, the department would generally choose suitable sites within areas of designated country parks.
- (iii) Regarding the issue of sterilisation of cattle, she could relay it to the relevant section for response after the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The AFCD stated that the use of the relevant “contraceptive injections” had been discontinued for many years. The Cattle Management Team of the department had sterilised some of the stray cattle in Tap Mun and all of the sterilisation were performed surgically.)

28. Mr. HO Wai-lam thanked the Chairman for carrying out conservation work with volunteers in different ways on multiple occasions over the past few years. He asked whether the netting was laid by volunteers themselves. He had noticed that visitors would not step into that area, and therefore asked whether the department could follow suit and exhibit notices of “keep off the grass”.

29. Mr. Patrick MO’s questions and comments were as follows:

- (i) He asked whether the TPDLO could look into the provision of facilities to separate visitors from the grass fields if there was no responsible department. He also asked whether the TPDLO could prohibit visitors from entering the grass fields, but he understood that this might give rise to disputes.
- (ii) The Government had set up the Environment and Conservation Fund (“ECF”) aimed at subsidising organisations to carry out environmental protection projects, which included the Nature Conservation Project under the Public Private Partnership Scheme. He opined that organisations could be invited to apply for the ECF to restore grass fields at some parts of Tap Mun. He said that non-governmental efforts alone would not be sufficient to conserve the grass fields, and government departments’ participation was also required.

30. The Chairman’s comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) The work on the enclosure of grass fields was carried out by volunteers on their own initiative in 2022 in the hope that visitors would stop trampling on such area again so that the grassland could be restored on its own. However, the work was not legally bound.

- (ii) The problem of desertification of grass fields on the island had been discussed many times in this DC term. He opined that if no department was responsible for the problem, he hoped that the TPDO could take up the co-ordination role. For the existing facilities on the island mentioned by the AFCD just now, to his understanding, apart from the pavilion managed by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (“LCSD”), other facilities (such as fences or hiking trails) should be the responsibility of the TPDO. As such, he would like to know whether the scope of management of TPDO could be extended to cover the grass fields.
 - (iii) To his understanding, Tai Po Environmental Association (“TPEA”) had applied for the ECF to carry out conservation work in Tap Mun.
31. Mr. LAM Yick-kuen said that he could communicate with TPEA to see if it could assist in conservation.
32. Ms. Cynthia CHAN responded that she understood Members’ wish to have a department to take care of the turf in Tap Mun, and reiterated that the department did not have any plans to incorporate the relevant area into country parks or maintain the turf at the relevant location. Regarding the Chairman’s proposal that the relevant department should be responsible for looking into the maintenance of grass fields, the department did not have any comments.
33. Ms. WONG Sze-man, Queenie, had noted Members’ comments. The TPDO would check with the relevant department and follow up in a timely manner.
34. Mr. HO Wai-lam said that he hoped that the department could keep Members informed of any new directions.
35. Mr. Patrick MO’s comments were as follows:
- (i) He suggested that the TPDLO should list the site concerned as land for use through temporary government land allocation or short-term tenancy and include elements such as conservation in the terms and conditions.
 - (ii) He opined that there would be certain constraints if an organisation intended to apply for the ECF to carry out conservation work but lacked the co-operation of government departments. He hoped that the TPDO and TPDLO could work in collaboration with each other.
36. Mr. HO Wai-lam said that he understood Members’ wish to have a government department

to follow up and monitor the grass fields in Tap Mun, but he objected to the proposal of reducing the frequency of kaito ferry service and opined that Members should first communicate with the DC Member of the constituency concerned.

37. The Chairman said that as the representative of TPDLO did not attend the meeting, he asked the Secretariat to relay the proposal in paragraph 35(i) above to the TPDLO. He hoped that the TPDO could study the feasibility of the proposal. In addition, the EFAC had written to the Environment and Ecology Bureau regarding the grass fields in Tap Mun in the past. As such, he hoped that there would be more communication within the department.

38. Mr. Patrick MO asked whether the EPD could provide similar examples of ECF.

39. Ms. CHAU Yu-man, Queenie, responded that she did not have the relevant information on the ECF for the time being. She could revert to Members after the meeting if necessary.

(Post-meeting note: The EPD stated that it had replied to Mr. Patrick MO on 25 May regarding the information on ECF.)

40. The Chairman said that the EFAC had discussed the relevant matters many times, and hoped that the departments had taken note of Members' comments.

IV. Inviting the Environmental Protection Department and the three operators of recycling stores under GREEN@COMMUNITY in Tai Po District to introduce their work
(TPDC Paper Nos. EFA 27/2023 and EFA 27a/2023)

41. Mr. Patrick MO went through TPDC Paper No. EFA 27/2023.

42. Ms. Queenie CHAU went through TPDC Paper No. EFA 27a/2023.

43. Mr. Patrick MO's questions were as follows:

- (i) He asked when would the contracts end and whether they would be re-tendered upon expiry.
- (ii) He asked whether there was any difference in the scale of the Recycling Stations or Recycling Spots, whether the department would impose any manpower requirement and whether the resources required would be reimbursed on an accountable basis.

- (iii) He asked whether there was no plan to introduce additional Recycling Stations at present.

44. Mr. LAU Yung-wai's questions were as follows:

- (i) He asked why the contract period of the three operators were different.
- (ii) He asked how was the "estimated operational value of the current contract" derived.
- (iii) He would like to obtain the specific data on the standards required in the contracts, such as the annual recycling volume. He also asked about what the average monthly recycling volume referred to.

45. The Chairman's comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) Among the three community recycling facilities, the estimated operational value of "GREEN@TAI WO" was the highest, yet its average monthly recycling volume was the lowest. He asked why the department had allocated the most resources to that station.
- (ii) He had co-operated with the Hong Chi Association ("Hong Chi"), the operator of "GREEN@TAI PO", And noted that Hong Chi was responsible for providing outreaching collection service in rural areas and the association had reflected to him that there was a shortage of manpower. In addition, the rental of the Recycling Stations had also been criticised as being too high at previous EFAC meetings. As such, he opined that outreaching service was more appropriate, and suggested that the department consider allocating more resources for outreaching collection service.

46. Ms. Queenie CHAU responded as follows:

- (i) She did not have information on the details of the drawing up of the operators' contracts at the moment and had to reply separately.
- (ii) The "estimated operational value of the current contract" referred to the contract value concluded at the time when the department engaged an operator by way of open tender. The actual operational value would be adjusted according to the needs of the successful tenderer in the course of operation. In general, the overall operating costs of individual "GREEN@COMMUNITY" would be reflected in the estimated operational value of the contract.
- (iii) "GREEN@TAI PO MARKET" was of the first batch of Recycling Stores, and its

operational mode was different from that of the Recycling Station “GREEN@TAI PO”. “GREEN@TAI WO” commenced operation in March 2022 and was in the second batch of Recycling Stores. As the tendering situation differed among each batch of Recycling Stores, it was not possible to make a direct comparison of their contracts.

- (iv) In considering the provision of additional Recycling Stores, the department would first consider districts with relatively low coverage of the community recycling network at present, old areas with a high density of single block buildings or “three-nil” buildings, as well as extensive rural areas.
- (v) The department would work with the Housing Department to strengthen the community recycling support in the public rental housing estates (“PRHs”) and plan to develop a network of small-scale Recycling Stores in PRHs (“recycling network in PRHs”). The department was preparing to launch a pilot scheme in Kwai Tsing District and would extend progressively the scheme to around 50 PRHs, including Tai Po District. The department would announce the timetable for implementation and details in due course.

47. Mr. HO Wai-lam said that as he had submitted the proposal of “GREEN@Housing Estate”, he was glad to learn about the recycling network in PRHs scheme, and asked about its operational mode.

48. Mr. LAU Yung-wai’s questions and comments were as follows:

- (i) He asked why comparison could not be made to the contracts of the three operators and the reasons why their contract periods were different.
- (ii) The department had not responded to the criteria for the annual recycling volume stipulated in contracts. “GREEN@TAI PO” was a Recycling Station and its scale should be bigger than that of a Recycling Store. However, the estimated operational value of the current contract of a Recycling Store was higher than that of a Recycling Station. As such, he asked about the average operational value of the Recycling Station and the Recycling Store. At present, it costed about \$600,000 per month for “GREEN@TAI WO” to operate and he opined that the effectiveness was not in proportion to the operational value.
- (iii) “GREEN@TAI WO” affected the environmental hygiene of streets during its operation. He asked how did the department monitor the operators.

49. Mr. Patrick MO’s questions were as follows:

- (i) He asked whether the estimated operational value of the contract had included the total costs (such as rent, staff salaries, delivery) during the contract period, and how would the department deal with the situation where the actual operating capital was higher than the estimated operational value of the contract.
- (ii) He hoped that the department could introduce more on the operational mode, such as the delivery arrangements for recyclables. Besides, he asked whether the gift items redeemed under the participation incentive scheme of “GREEN@COMMUNITY” were provided by the department.
- (iii) He asked whether the contractual requirements for the three operators were the same.
- (iv) He would like to know more about the operational mode of the recycling network in PRHs.

50. The Chairman agreed that the department should take into account the operating costs of the Recycling Stations and Recycling Stores.

51. Ms. Queenie CHAU responded as follows:

- (i) The department had relayed Members’ concerns over street obstruction arising from the operation of “GREEN@TAI WO” to the relevant section and taken follow-up actions. The department would conduct surprise inspections at various “GREEN@COMMUNITY” facilities, including “GREEN@TAI WO”, and would remind the operators that their recyclables and recycling equipment should not cause environmental nuisance. The department noted that the operator of “GREEN@TAI WO” had paid special attention to the storage and hygiene conditions of the recycling equipment and would continue to arrange inspections and follow-up actions.
- (ii) Operators of Recycling Stations and Recycling Stores should deliver the collected recyclables to the downstream recyclers approved by the EPD for proper treatment and turning waste into resources.
- (iii) Operators should regularly upload quarterly report to their social media pages, explaining the total amount of various types of recyclables collected and the arrangements for downstream treatment for public inspection.
- (iv) Details of the recycling network in PRHs scheme would be announced by the relevant section.
- (v) Regarding enquiries on the specific contract details of the three operators, she would respond after the meeting.

52. Mr. Patrick MO said that he hoped that the department could supplement on whether the estimated operational value of the contract had included the total costs during the contract period. Besides, some operators had not released their quarterly reports on time and he hoped that the department would pay attention to it.

53. Mr. LAU Yung-wai's comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) As Green Tai Po had not released the reports on its social media platforms, he opined that the organisation had failed to meet the standard. He asked whether the department could provide specific information on the relevant operators, and hoped that the department could provide further information at the next meeting.
- (ii) He hoped that the department would respond to the criteria of the annual recycling volume and provide the relevant data.
- (iii) He suggested inviting the relevant operators to give a presentation at the next meeting

54. Mr. HO Wai-lam said that he hoped that the department could provide the operational mode of the recycling network in PRHs scheme at the next meeting.

55. Mr. Patrick MO's comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) As "GREEN@TAI PO" had attended the meeting to brief Members on its work, he hoped that "GREEN@TAI PO MARKET" and "GREEN@TAI WO" could attend the meeting to give a brief presentation.
- (ii) In addition to recycling work, the operators were also required to organise activities to promote environmental protection. Apart from Hong Chi, the other two operators seldom carried out such work. He hoped that the department would take note of the situation and remind the two operators.

56. The Chairman said that some members of the public had reflected that it was a pity for GREEN@COMMUNITY to cancel the past practice of plastic separation where different types of plastics would no longer be further sorted now.

57. Ms. Queenie CHAU responded that enquiries relating to contract details could only be answered after the meeting. She had noted Members' wish to know more about the specific operational mode of the recycling network in PRHs scheme and would liaise with the relevant section before providing a reply. She would also relay Members' comments and hoped that the

relevant information could be provided after the meeting or that officers of the section concerned or the operators would attend the meeting to explain the details.

(Post-meeting note: For the information mentioned above, the EPD had submitted the supplementary paper (see Annex II).)

58. The Chairman asked whether it was necessary to keep this agenda item on matters arising for discussion, so as to invite the operators to attend the meeting.

59. Mr. Patrick MO agreed with the proposal.

60. Mr. LAU Yung-wai said that he hoped that the department could provide the relevant information, especially the criteria for the annual recycling volume, at the next meeting.

61. The Chairman hoped that the relevant operators could be invited again to attend the next meeting.

62. The Secretary noted Members' wish to invite the operators to attend the meeting, and would study and make arrangements with the EPD after the meeting.

V. Matters arising from the last meeting – Follow-up on the illegal extension of business on Fu Shin Street

63. The Chairman welcomed Mr. MOK Ka-hong, Chief Technical Officer / Tai Po and Mr. CHONG Chi-yan, Maintenance Inspector of Works / Tai Po of HyD to attend the meeting for this agenda item. He said that the captioned matter had been discussed at the meetings of EFAC and District Facilities Management and Culture, Recreation and Sports Committee in March respectively, and Members agreed to continue the discussion at this EFAC meeting. He first asked the HyD to respond to Members' comments on the resurfacing of Fu Shin Street.

64. Ms. PONG Kei responded that the HyD was willing to assist the relevant law enforcement agencies in dealing with the problem of illegal extension of business by shop operators at Fu Shin Street, including the installation of stainless steel sheets at the boundaries between private and government land to solve the problem of unclear land boundaries. The recent inspections of the department revealed that most of the areas at the boundaries were currently being covered by illegal platforms and racks. As such, if there was a need to install stainless steel sheets, collaboration between departments was first required in order to remove the obstructions covering the boundaries.

65. Mr. Patrick MO said that as he understood that the relevant works were complicated, he hoped that the TPDO could assist in exploring the feasibility of commencing the works. He believed that other departments would be willing to co-operate, but opined that there had to be a department to take up the co-ordination work.

66. Mr. LAU Yung-wai asked whether markings had already been made on the road surface of Fu Shin Street for lot boundary identification.

67. The Chairman said that the installation of stainless steel sheets on road surface was intended to assist the FEHD in enforcing the law against illegal extension of business. As such, he would like to know more about the comments of the department. He also supported the installation of stainless steel sheets and believed that it could facilitate the handling of street obstruction complaints in a fair manner.

68. Miss LAI Hiu-wing responded that recently, the FEHD had sought the latest land status plan from the TPDLO. As the building lines on both sides of Fu Shin Street were inconsistent and most of the lots had been redeveloped or repaired, it was difficult to calculate at the scene the actual distance between the lot boundaries as shown on the map and the buildings, and to determine whether the goods of shop operators were placed on private lots or government lots. The department welcomed the HyD's consideration of installing stainless steel sheets on road surface.

69. The Chairman believed that it would be rather difficult to resurface the whole street, and if only concrete could be used as the material, the streetscapes would be the same after resurfacing. He opined that the characteristics of the street could be shown by other ways such as decorations.

70. Mr. LAU Yung-wai asked whether only concrete could be used for resurfacing the emergency vehicular access ("EVA"). He agreed that stainless steel sheets could be installed for enforcement by the FEHD first and the road resurfacing could be discussed again separately. He also enlisted Mr. LAM Yick-kuen's assistance in communicating with shop operators. He opined that Fu Shin Street was not an ordinary street and road resurfacing could bring countless benefits but no harm to shop operators in the long run.

71. Mr. Patrick MO said that it would be feasible to install stainless steel sheets first. He asked whether there would be a time limit for each works if road resurfacing was preferred. He also asked how the department would deal with streets in other districts (such as Temple Street). He said that Fu Shin Street was uneven and slippery, and hoped that the department could re-examine the usable materials.

72. Mr. LAM Yick-kuen said that shop operators could be consulted on the proposal of installing stainless steel sheets. He opined that the proposal of road resurfacing was not bad, but it was difficult to commence the works within a short period of time. He was responsible for following up on the resurfacing works carried out in the Chinatown in London, Britain, where stones were used instead of bricks. However, the entire works had taken almost two years to complete. Despite the nuisance caused to shop operators during the works, the result turned out to be very good and the environmental hygiene of the streets had been improved. He agreed that the road surface would become dilapidated and a timetable for resurfacing was required.

73. Ms. PONG Kei responded as follows:

- (i) The department had carried out minor repairs at different locations of Fu Shin Street in 2020 and 2021. The works were mainly carried out between 8 p.m. and 11 p.m., with an area of less than two metres by two metres processed each time so as to reduce the nuisance caused to residents. Moreover, the department had maintained adequate communication with shop operators and residents before commencement of each works. After two years of repair works, the current situation was acceptable. As for the wear and tear and cracks at individual locations, the department would progressively arrange for repairs.
- (ii) From an engineering perspective, road resurfacing was not only disturbing to the public, but also inefficient. Fu Shin Street was a very busy street and due to the surrounding wet goods stores, the road surface was often in a wet condition. On top of that, as Fu Shin Street was also an EVA, concrete would be the most suitable material that met the relevant conditions of use. The road resurfacing works were time-consuming as concrete had to be broken up and removed before new concrete could be laid. Due to the busy nature of the street, only about 60 square metres of road surface could be processed at a time and it would take ten working days (in terms of quick-drying materials). Fu Shin Street had an area of over 2 000 square metres and it was believed that it would take at least 340 days to complete the entire resurfacing works.
- (iii) As such, the most advisable option was to follow the normal practice of boundary identification first, which was the installation of stainless steel sheets at the boundaries between private and government land. She agreed that if there was a department to take the lead and co-ordinate the removal of obstructions covering the boundaries first, it would be beneficial to the commencement of the works.
- (iv) Noting the comments in paragraph 72 above, she opined that it would take time to reconsider whether the option of resurfacing Fu Shin Street would best suit the needs of residents and shop operators in the district in the long run, as well as the Government's study on the works cost and its feasibility.

74. The Chairman asked about the timetable for the works.

75. Ms. PONG Kei responded that she hoped that the TPDO could take the lead and carry out district co-ordination work by clarifying the division of duties among various departments before communicating with shop operators and residents. The works could be carried out flexibly by phases. The department would actively cooperate with the joint operations of the TPDO and relevant departments to remove the obstacles covering the boundary lines first, so that the works of installation of stainless steel sheets could commence as soon as possible.

76. The Chairman asked whether the TPDO would set up a working group (“WG”) in this regard to invite Members and relevant departments to study the work.

77. Ms. Queenie WONG responded as follows:

- (i) If the relevant departments (such as the HyD, TPDLO and FEHD) found it necessary to carry out road resurfacing, they could make a request to the TPDO to conduct a district consultation and the TPDO would be more than willing to co-operate and render assistance.
- (ii) The TPDO had been conducting joint operations against illegal extension of business with the relevant departments, and was aware of the illegal extension of business by shops at Fu Shin Street and would follow up in a timely manner. The TPDO believed that the relevant departments would continue to follow up on the problem of shopfront extension leading to street obstructions in accordance with the powers conferred on them. The TPDO would also continue to keep a close eye on the situation at the scene and follow up with relevant departments in a timely manner if necessary.
- (iii) Noting the proposal in paragraph 76 above, she said that she did not have such information to provide a reply at the moment.

78. Mr. LAU Yung-wai's comments were as follows:

- (i) He suggested that the EFAC should set up a WG on the captioned matter and invite relevant departments to look into it.
- (ii) If a non-standing WG was set up, the term of office would be about seven months and the Chairman of the Committee might also be the Convenor of the WG.

79. The Chairman agreed with the suggestion and sought the views of the Secretariat.

80. Mr. WU Chi-hung, Derek, responded that the current term of DC would expire in December this year. With reference to past experience, the last meeting in the final year of the current DC session would end in September and the DC would cease operation from September to October in preparation for the DC Ordinary Election. He opined that it might not be feasible to set up a non-standing WG as its term would also end in September. He believed that there might be other more effective ways to follow up the matter.

81. Mr. LAU Yung-wai said that he understood that the current term of DC would be adjourned from October onwards. He pointed out that if Members did not have strong views on the works, the term of WG would already expire upon commencement of the works (presumably around August). He opined that it was difficult for the FEHD to enforce the law at Fu Shin Street at present, and hoped that this could be solved by the non-standing WG directly.

82. The Chairman agreed to set up a non-standing WG and convene a meeting for further discussion. He could look into the matter with the Secretariat after the meeting.

83. Mr. LAU Yung-wai said that there could be a brief discussion on the terms of reference of the WG.

84. The Chairman suggested that the terms of reference should be the installation of stainless steel sheets at Fu Shin Street and the co-ordination of departmental discussion on the works details.

85. Mr. LAU Yung-wai suggested that the terms of reference should cover the management of environmental hygiene problems at Fu Shin Street, and should not be confined to the works of installation of stainless steel sheets. He also suggested that the term of office expiring on 31 August 2023 should be clearly indicated.

86. The Chairman said that pursuant to Orders 39 of the TPDC Standing Orders, the Committee might appoint a WG to assist in the implementation of the designated tasks under its terms of reference. The EFAC had to decide on the name, membership, terms of reference and term of office of the WG now. The term of the non-standing WG should not exceed eight months. He asked whether the EFAC would discuss the relevant matters now.

87. Mr. LAU Yung-wai suggested that the term of the non-standing WG should expire on 31 August 2023.

88. The Chairman asked Members about the details of the WG and announced to take a five-minute recess.

89. The meeting resumed thereafter.

90. The Chairman said that there were quite a lot of platforms of varying heights on site and it was necessary to solve this problem before commencement of works. As such, he suggested that an informal meeting be held after the meeting to invite relevant departments to site visits before discussing ways of handling the problem.

91. Mr. LAU Yung-wai indicated that while he respected the Chairman's decision, he opined that it might not be possible to deal with the matter by way of an informal meeting.

92. The Chairman said that if a non-standing WG was intended to be set up, it would be more ideal to present the relevant information before the meeting rather than proposing an impromptu discussion.

93. Mr. LAU Yung-wai said that while he disagreed with the Chairman's views and opined that the Chairman had the authority to decide to call for an immediate discussion, he considered that the final decision rested with the Chairman.

94. The Chairman said that as there was only a difference in formality between both of them, he decided to handle the matter by way of an informal meeting. He would look into the matter with the Secretariat again and invite the HyD, FEHD, TPDLO, TPDO and relevant Members to discuss further on the implementation details.

95. Members did not have further discussion. The Chairman declared that this matter arising would be deleted and it could be discussed again in future if necessary.

VI. Marine Department and Food and Environmental Hygiene Department – Report on the quantity of refuse collected from Tolo Harbour between March and April 2023
(TPDC Paper Nos. EFA 29/2023 and EFA 30/2023)

96. The Secretary said that the quantity of marine refuse collected in Hong Kong waters by MD contractors between March and April 2023 was set out in TPDC Paper No. EFA 29/2023 for Members' reference.

97. Mr. YEUNG Wing-chi, Gavin, reported that the FEHD had collected 12.21 and 11.26 tonnes of coastal refuse at Tolo Harbour between March and April 2023 respectively. Upon analysis, the refuse removed consisted of mainly plastic bags, wooden boards and styrofoams.

98. Members did not have any comments or questions.

VII. Food and Environmental Hygiene Department – Strategies and Efforts to Improve Environmental Hygiene in Hong Kong

(TPDC Paper No. EFA 31/2023)

99. Mr. Gavin YEUNG went through TPDC Paper No. EFA 31/2023.

100. Mr. LAU Yung-wai said that he hoped that the department could respond to the press reports on rodent infestation.

101. Mr. TSANG Chin-kan responded that the Rodent Infestation Rate (“RIR”) mentioned in the press reports was provided for reference only, and an index of 0.0% indicated that rodent infestation in the district was at Level 1, i.e., rodent infestation was not extensive during the survey period, but it did not mean that there was no rodent infestation in the district. The RIR was mainly used for reflecting whether rodent infestation was extensive in the district and it should be compared with that of other districts in the territory, so as to reflect the relative extent of rodent infestation in the district. The department would continue to conduct rodent prevention and control work.

102. Mr. LAU Yung-wai opined that the recording of an index of 0.0% was unreasonable, and asked how the department arrived at the relevant figure. He said that it was not the first time that the RIR for Tai Po District was recorded at 0.0%. Among the RIRs recorded at the survey locations in the second half of 2022, the RIR for Kwong Fuk Road was also recorded at 0.0%, while that for On Po Road was 3.6%, and the RIRs for most of the districts in the New Territories East were also above 0.0% in the same period. He opined that the current rodent infestation at Kwong Fuk Road was not a simple one, and Mr. AU Chun-ho had also relayed that several rodents were found near the gullies of the parking space of Heung Sze Wui Square a few days ago.

103. The Chairman’s comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) It was mentioned in the paper that the department would install Internet Protocol (“IP”) cameras at illegal refuse dumping blackspots, some of which were located in Shap Sze Heung. As illegal refuse dumping was serious in Tai Po District and he had reflected the problem in the district to the department on multiple occasions, he asked about the effectiveness of the installation of IP cameras. He had witnessed the delivery of bulky waste to rural areas for disposal and the waste was eventually removed by the department. He asked whether the department had any plans to monitor such activities and whether it had discussed with developers on how to handle bulky waste.
- (ii) He asked whether the department would plan to introduce food waste separation,

collection and management at refuse collection points (“RCPs”) in rural areas. He suggested that the department designate a site at RCPs in rural areas for the collection of food waste so as to minimise the nuisance caused by wild pigs.

104. Mr. Gavin YEUNG responded as follows:

- (i) He recognised the inadequacies of the RIR. The department was working with a local university to develop a Composite RIR, with the inclusion of complaint figures, the numbers of live rodents trapped and dead rodents collected, etc. As such, the Composite RIR could be more reflective of the actual situation in future.
- (ii) The RIR for Tai Po District was derived from the Rodent Infestation Survey regularly conducted by the department with baits setting in designated survey locations to monitor rodent infestation. At present, the department would conduct the survey in each survey location, which lasted for three days. During the survey period, the department would place census baits (uncooked sweet potatoes) within each survey location to count the number of baits gnawed by rodents. The results of the survey might be affected by the failure of the baits to attract rodents to gnaw.
- (iii) There were improvements in issues relating to the unlawful depositing of bulky waste upon the installation of IP cameras.
- (iv) Recently, the department learnt that the EPD intended to introduce food waste recycling bins in RCPs, which would be extended to all districts in the territory. The scheme was at a preliminary stage and details were not available yet. The department would revert to Members if there was further information.

105. Mr. LAU Yung-wai asked when the department would implement the Composite RIR, and how many survey locations were set up at Kwong Fuk Road in total by the department.

106. The Chairman said that he hoped that the FEHD and EPD would enhance co-operation to introduce food waste recycling bins in RCPs, especially at locations with wild pig sightings such as rural areas.

107. Mr. TSANG Chin-kan responded as follows:

- (i) Under normal circumstances, the department would place about 50 baits (uncooked sweet potatoes) at each survey location. As the average activity range of a rodent was about 50 metres, baits were set at a distance of about 50 metres apart to avoid the same rodent from gnawing on two different baits.
- (ii) The department planned to implement the new Composite RIR within this year, but specific schedule was not available yet. The rate concerned would make

reference to complaint figures, the numbers of live rodents trapped and dead rodents collected, etc., so as to reflect the situation of rodent infestation at survey locations.

108. Mr. LAU Yung-wai asked whether the department had placed baits at 50 locations at Kwong Fuk Road during the three-day survey period, and no rodent had gnawed the baits during the survey.

109. Mr. TSANG Chin-kan said that Mr. LAU Yung-wai's understanding was correct.

110. Mr. LAU Yung-wai said that some refuse containers in Tai Po Tau were often damaged and no repair had been arranged. As some residents had reflected earlier that there were wild pigs in the vicinity of Tai Po Tau Tsuen (near San Wa On Lane), he hoped that the department would follow up on it.

111. Mr. Gavin YEUNG responded that the department would keep an eye on the situation and request the contractor to carry out repair.

112. Mr. HO Wai-lam's comments were as follows:

- (i) The rodent infestation around the several banyan trees at the crossroads of Fu Heng Estate and Tai Yuen Estate had been improved. He thanked the department for its work, and hoped that the department would continue to follow up regularly.
- (ii) It was mentioned at the last meeting that the refuse containers at Nam Hang Village RCP should be replaced by covered ones, but the replacement had not yet been made. He hoped that the department would pay attention to it.

113. Mr. Gavin YEUNG responded that the department would deploy the enforcement team to step up inspections at the junction of Fu Heng Estate and Tai Yuen Estate in the hope of achieving a deterrent effect. The department would also instruct officers concerned to arrange for immediate replacement of refuse containers at Nam Hang Village.

VIII. Food and Environmental Hygiene Department – Anti-mosquito Campaign 2023 (Phase II) in Tai Po District

(TPDC Paper No. EFA 32/2023)

114. Mr. TSANG Chin-kan went through TPDC Paper No. EFA 32/2023.

115. Mr. LAU Yung-wai said that there was serious mosquito problem in the periphery of Tai Po Tau Playground, and asked whether the department had carried out anti-mosquito work there.

116. Mr. HO Wai-lam said that there was serious mosquito problem at the section of Chung Nga Road from Sacred Heart of Mary Catholic Primary School to Nam Hang Tsuen, and hoped that the department would continue to follow up on it. In addition, there was a similar situation at Law Ting Pong Secondary School near Classical Gardens, and he hoped that the department would follow up on it.

117. Mr. TSANG Chin-kan responded that he had noted the trouble spots raised by Members. The department would strengthen anti-mosquito work against these spots.

IX. The departments concerned – Reports on the clearing of rubbish and sludge in Lam Tsuen River and Tai Po River in Tai Po
(TPDC Paper No. EFA 33/2023)

118. The representatives of FEHD, EPD, CEDD and DSD went through the work on the clearing of rubbish and sludge in Lam Tsuen River and Tai Po River one by one at the meeting (see TPDC Paper No. EFA 33/2023).

119. Mr. LAU Yung-wai asked about the types of cases set out in the EPD's paper.

120. The Chairman said that there had been the incident of Lam Tsuen River "turning blue" and he asked whether the relevant prosecution had been completed. Recently, a similar situation occurred in the river in Shap Sze Heung near the junction of Ma Kwu Lam Tsuen and Tai Tung Tsuen. He asked about the prosecution work against water pollution taken by the department, and hoped that the department would follow up on the situation.

121. Ms. Queenie CHAU responded as follows:

- (i) Apart from the number of water pollution complaints received by the department, the paper also covered seven prosecution cases instituted by the department since 2018 against suspected violation of the Water Pollution Control Ordinance ("the Ordinance"). Some other cases were not listed in the paper as there was insufficient evidence or it was considered not appropriate to pursue the prosecution after considering legal advice.
- (ii) Regarding the incident of Lam Tsuen River "turning blue", the departmental staff had collected evidence at the scene and conducted a series of investigations. Having regard to the circumstances of the case, the department considered that

there was insufficient evidence and eventually withdrew the prosecution. As the content and legal advice were subject to legal professional privilege, the department was not in a position to furnish Members with further information.

- (iii) Regarding the incident of Ma Kwu Lam Tsuen River “turning white”, the department had contacted the Member’s personal assistant and the complainant upon receipt of complaints, and deployed its staff for site inspection. There was no abnormality in the water quality objectives (such as pH Value and dissolved oxygen level) and no dead fish was found at the scene during the period. The department would provide a further reply on the findings of the investigation.

122. Mr. LAU Yung-wai asked whether the seven cases mentioned in paragraph 121(i) above had been successfully prosecuted.

123. The Chairman expressed his regret that no prosecution had been made in the incident of Lam Tsuen River, and opined that the deterrent effect could be achieved if the persons concerned had been successfully prosecuted. He hoped that the department would respond to the incident of Ma Kwu Lam Tsuen River and give an account to the public. He had visited the scene and found that the river water was whitish and very turbid, and some members of the public had captured that the coloured water had been flowing from a certain hole. He opined that the department might have the technology to find out about the situation inside the hole.

124. Ms. Queenie CHAU responded as follows:

- (i) Regarding the cases with prosecution instituted as set out in the paper, some of them might still be in progress. She would check the prosecution progress and results of the cases before providing further information.
- (ii) The department would continue to arrange for inspections in relation to the incident of Ma Kwu Lam Tsuen. However, the tracking of the discharge traces in the upstream and downstream of the site concerned had been affected by the heavy downpours after the incident. The department had warned potential sources of discharge near the scene and would apply new technologies (such as drones) in a timely manner to assist in the investigation.

125. Mr. LAU Yung-wai asked the department about the numbers of prosecutions instituted and successful prosecutions. He opined that the existing threshold for prosecution, evidence collection or presentation was rather high but the penalties were too low, which was a legal loophole, making it difficult to point out the case suspects. As such, he appreciated the reasons for the failure of the department to institute prosecution.

126. Ms. Queenie CHAU responded as follows:

- (i) The prosecution results of the seven cases would be supplemented after checking. There had been successful prosecutions instituted by the department in the past two years.
- (ii) Evidence collection and prosecution related to the incident of Lam Tsuen River “turning blue” were parts of the duties of the department. In addition, the department had carried out a series of follow-up actions after the incident, including writing to the management companies and incorporated owners of the housing estates near the suspected source of sewage discharge to remind residents and contractors of renovation works to avoid the inadvertent discharge of sewage into the rivers. The department had also issued letters to food premises, shopping centres and village representatives in the area for publicity and education on its behalf, in the hope that, apart from prosecution, the occurrence of similar cases in future could be minimised by other means. The department had completed the work such as issuing letters and displaying leaflets.
- (iii) The department had installed surveillance cameras at some locations along the rivers in the hope that this could facilitate analysing the pattern and conducting surprise inspections in future.

(Post-meeting note: Before the end of the meeting, Ms. Queenie CHAU added that in response to the enquiries in paragraph 125 above, of the seven cases, one of the cases in 2018 had been withdrawn from prosecution upon appeal, and the other case in 2022 was still being listed for trial. The EPD had successfully instituted prosecutions against the remaining five cases.)

127. Mr. HO Wai-lam asked whether the department had successfully instituted prosecutions in the past two years.

128. Ms. Queenie CHAU responded that the department had successfully instituted prosecutions under the Ordinance in the past two years.

129. Mr. Patrick MO asked about the latest progress of the desilting work, and hoped that the DSD could introduce the greening works in Lam Tsuen River near Mui Shue Hang.

130. Mr. CHAN Yu-kwan responded that the DSD had arranged for the contractor to close the road at Lam Tsuen River (from Kwong Fuk Bridge to Tai Wo Bridge) from mid-May onwards for the desilting work. In addition, the department had provided vegetation on the slope along a section of Lam Tsuen River on Mui Shue Hang Road near Tai Po Garden to beautify the river channel.

131. Mr. Patrick MO asked about the exact date of the desilting work at Lam Tsuen River.

132. Mr. CHAN Yu-kwan responded that the contractor was prepared to close the road on 11 May so as to arrange for the preparation of the desilting work. The work was expected to be commence from mid to end of May.

133. Mr. Patrick MO asked whether the preparation work was smooth.

134. Mr. CHAN Yu-kwan responded that the department had obtained the applications required for the work and the contractor was preparing for the necessary machine.

135. Mr. Patrick MO asked whether the vegetation along the section of Mui Shue Hang at Lam Tsuen River was still in the preparation stage.

136. Mr. CHAN Yu-kwan responded that the department had provided vegetation at the crest of a slope of about 80 metres along a section of the river channel in Mui Shue Hang.

137. Mr. CHU Chung, Boffin, responded that CEDD was responsible for Lam Tsuen River (from Kwong Fuk Bridge to the outfall) and Tai Po River (from railway bridge to Lam Tsuen River). As shown from the latest survey data, there was no need to undertake dredging work at the relevant rivers. The department had completed dredging work at Tai Po River (from railway bridge to Tai Po Road - Yuen Chau Tsai) in May last year and would measure the depth of the river concerned in the fourth quarter of this year to take forward dredging work as necessary.

138. Mr. LAU Yung-wai asked whether the species of the vegetation provided in Mui Shue Hang were native.

139. Mr. CHAN Yu-kwan responded that he would furnish Members with the information on the plant species at a later time.

140. Mr. LAU Yung-wai asked whether the vegetation was only provided at the crest of the slope, and whether such location would affect the flood prevention or drainage capacity of the river.

141. Mr. CHAN Yu-kwan responded that as the vegetation was only provided at the crest of the slope, the drainage capacity of the river would not be affected.

142. Mr. LAU Yung-wai asked whether the vegetation was provided within 40 metres on both sides of Lam Tsuen River.

143. Mr. CHAN Yu-kwan responded that about 80 metres long vegetation would be provided at the top of the north bank of Lam Tsuen River near Mui Shue Hang.

144. Mr. LAU Yung-wai would like to learn about the species of the plant.

145. Mr. HO Wai-lam said that he wished to inspect the desilting work on site, and hoped that the department would inform him and Members when the work commenced.

146. Mr. CHAN Yu-kwan responded that he thanked Members for their concerns about the department's desilting work and they were welcome to visit the site. He would invite Members to visit the site in due course and brief Members on the works of the department.

147. The Chairman said that the department was welcome to contact him on the arrangements of the inspection.

X. District Lands Office, Tai Po and Tai Po District Office – Reports on abandoned vehicles, illegal dumping of soil and inter-departmental bicycle clearance joint operations
(TPDC Paper Nos. EFA 34/2023 and EFA 35/2023)

148. The Secretary said that the reports on abandoned vehicles and illegal dumping of soil between March and April 2023 by the TPDLO were set out in TPDC Paper No. EFA 34/2023 for Members' reference.

149. Miss FOK Wai-yin, Christie, went through TPDC Paper No. EFA 35/2023.

150. Members did not have any comments or questions.

XI. The departments concerned – Reports on the environmental hygiene issues in Tai Po District
(TPDC Paper No. EFA 36/2023)

151. The Chairman welcomed all departmental representatives to attend the meeting for this agenda item.

152. Miss Christie FOK went through Appendix I to TPDC Paper No. EFA 36/2023.

153. Mr. Gavin YEUNG went through Appendix II to TPDC Paper No. EFA 36/2023.

154. Apart from the regular reports by the TPDO and FEHD, the Chairman also asked the

departments concerned to make their reports.

155. The reports of government departments were outlined as follows:

- (i) The HKPF briefed on the operation details set out in Appendix III to the captioned paper.
- (ii) During the inter-departmental joint operations co-ordinated by the TPDO in March and April 2023, the TPDLO found that two concrete platforms were built on government land at Four Lanes in Tai Po, and posted notices requiring the occupants to remove them by the deadline. After expiry of the deadline, the TPDLO found that one of the concrete platforms had already been removed and the remaining one would be followed up during the subsequent joint operations.
- (iii) The HyD participated in the inter-departmental joint operations in March and April, during which no damaged road surface problem was found.
- (iv) The BD participated in the inter-departmental joint operations co-ordinated by the TPDO at Four Lanes in Tai Po and in the area of Jade Plaza in March and April. No retractable canopies that needed to be dealt with immediately were found during the operations.
- (v) The EPD participated in the inter-departmental joint operations co-ordinated by the TPDO on 29 April to deal with the hawking noises from shops at Four Lanes in Tai Po. No violations were found during the operations.

156. Mr. Patrick MO asked about the latest position of FEHD's stringent combating actions. He said that the FEHD mainly issued verbal warnings and notices to remove obstruction in the past, while now it mainly issued fixed penalty notices (FPNs). As such, he asked whether the department would no longer issue verbal warnings and warning letters, and hoped to know more about the current enforcement work of the department.

157. Mr. Gavin YEUNG responded that at present, the department would institute prosecutions forthwith if irregularities committed by shops were found during the joint operations. As such, the department would arrange for the enforcement teams to participate in the actions. The department would also issue FPNs to offenders forthwith if illegal disposal of waste was found during the joint operations.

158. Mr. AU Chun-ho, the Vice-Chairman, asked about the location of the two survey locations with a RIR of 0.0% in the district.

159. Mr. Gavin YEUNG responded as follows:

- (i) The two survey locations were located on Kwong Fuk Road and On Fu Road respectively (see Annex III for detailed locations).
- (ii) The department would place around 50 baits (uncooked sweet potatoes) at each survey location and baits were set at a distance of about 50 metres apart during the survey period, which lasted for three days. The department would record the percentage of baits consumed by rodents during the survey period. An index of 0.0% indicated that no baits had been gnawed by rodents, which meant that rodent infestation was not extensive.
- (iii) The department was looking into the use of the new Composite RIR, which included the number of dead rodents collected, complaint figures etc., to reflect the rodent situation, and believed that the Composite RIR would be more reflective of the local rodent infestation situation in future.

160. Mr. AU Chun-ho, the Vice-Chairman, asked whether fake data would be involved, and whether the survey location on Kwong Fuk Road included the area around Four Lanes, Heung Sze Wui Street and Wan Tau Street. He said that rodent infestation outside Wan Tau Street RCP had been very serious, and opined that the index concerned should not be 0.0%.

161. Mr. Gavin YEUNG responded as follows:

- (i) The survey conducted by the department lasted for three days. The index reflected that no baits had been gnawed by rodents during the three-day survey period and there was no falsification of data involved. The RIR was categorised into three levels. An RIR ranged from 0% to less than 10% indicated that rodent infestation was not extensive during the survey period, but it did not mean that there were no rodents.
- (ii) The department had received feedback from Members on rodent infestation at Kwong Fuk Square RCP and had introduced the use of Ekomille last month (see Annex IV).

162. The Chairman opined that the current survey methodology could not reflect the actual situation, and asked whether the department had other survey methodologies.

163. Mr. AU Chun-ho, the Vice-Chairman, asked about the location of baiting points laid by the department.

164. Mr. Gavin YEUNG responded that baits were laid within the red-circled areas in Annex III.

165. Mr. AU Chun-ho, the Vice-Chairman's comments were as follows:

- (i) The red-circled areas included Four Lanes where zero rodent infestation was less likely to occur. He was doubtful about the relevant data, and hoped that the department could review the location of baiting points or the survey methodology.
- (ii) At present, a new model of rodent trap was being used in Tai Yuen Estate and it was found to be quite effective. As such, he suggested that the department should place rodent traps of the same model on a wider scale as far as practicable.

166. Mr. Gavin YEUNG responded as follows:

- (i) He understood that the RIR might not be able to reflect faithfully the actual situation. The department was currently looking into the formulation of a Composite RIR and would report to Members upon completion of the study.
- (ii) At present, the department mainly placed Ekomille inside RCPs and markets. In the past, the department had placed the traps in Kwong Fuk Square and more than 20 rodents were successfully caught a week later. The department mainly used melon seeds and dog food as baits to lure rodents into the traps and then drowned them to death in alcohol. The department would continue to review the effectiveness and extend the use of Ekomille to other locations in the district.

167. Mr. Patrick MO's questions were as follows:

- (i) He hoped that the Police and EPD would take note of the excessively loud hawking noises generated by vegetable shops opposite Tai Po Hui Market in the evenings, and give advice to the operators in a timely manner.
- (ii) The DC Member of the constituency concerned had reflected in the past that the recycling shop at Chui Yi Street often occupied part of the carriageway with a goods vehicle or cages for loading and unloading goods. However, as the goods vehicle or cages were mobile items, the problem could not be solved and he asked whether the Police and FEHD would take targeted follow up actions. In addition, as the shop had been loading and unloading goods there for a long time causing damage to some of the planter kerbs (see Annex V), he hoped that the HyD or LCSD would follow up on it.

168. Mr. LAU Yung-wai's questions were as follows:

- (i) He hoped that the relevant departments would pay more attention to the problem of prolonged and excessively loud hawking noises from shops at Greenery Plaza.

- (ii) The situation at Four Lanes had improved but a certain shop was still occupying some areas in the park for placing goods. He hoped that the department would enforce the law impartially.
- (iii) The problem of recycling vehicle at Chui Yi Street had existed for as long as six to seven years. In the past, as the department said that sale of goods was not involved in the operation of the recycling business, it was difficult to enforce the law. At present, the tenant concerned had rented the shop but the recycling vehicle involved was still parking at Chui Yi Street for a long time or even blocking the entrance/exit of the car park of Greenery Plaza. As such, he did not understand why the Police had not issued any FPNs for illegal parking. If the tenant was still placing miscellaneous items such as recycling cages on carriageway, he believed that this fell into the scope of illegal extension of business. As such, he hoped that various departments would follow up on it.

169. Mr. Gavin YEUNG responded as follows:

- (i) The department had conducted joint operations with the Police at Chui Yi Street from time to time (including on the day of the meeting). The department would continue to keep an eye on the actual situation and deploy the enforcement team to attend the scene for prosecution.
- (ii) He thanked Members for recognising the department's enforcement efforts in the vicinity of Four Lanes and the Police for participating in the joint operations. The department would continue to monitor the situation, with particular attention to a certain recalcitrant shop.

170. Ms. LAI YEE-wing, Jannet, responded as follows:

- (i) She had noted the excessively loud hawking noises from shops in Four Lanes, and would strengthen communication with the EPD to deal with the relevant issue.
- (ii) The Police would step up patrols against the recycling vehicle at Chui Yi Street. Prosecution would be instituted forthwith if the vehicle in question was found parking there. The Police and FEHD would also conduct joint operations and institute prosecutions against the illegal placing of goods on carriageways.

171. Mr. LAU Yung-wai's comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) He hoped that the Police would send officers to patrol Chui Yi Street where the recycling vehicle was found parking around the clock.
- (ii) He was particularly concerned about the illegal parking problem near Greenery

Plaza bus stop and Ping On Lane bus stop in Tai Po Old Market, and hoped that the Police would follow up on it.

172. Mr. Patrick MO's comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) The goods vehicle was often parked at the junction of Chui Yi Street between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m., making it necessary for vehicles to cut into another lane. He hoped that the Police would step up patrols in the evenings.
- (ii) He asked whether the HyD or LCSD was responsible for following up on the damaged planter kerbs.

173. Ms. PONG Kei responded that the department would send officers to inspect Chui Yi Street. If the planter kerbs were found damaged, the department would arrange for repairs.

174. Mr. Gavin YEUNG responded that the department would continue to monitor the situation at the scene.

175. Ms. Jannet LAI responded that she was aware of the situation at Chui Yi Street at dusk, late evening and early morning, and would pay more attention to the situation of the recycling vehicle for prosecution. She would also inform traffic officers to strengthen enforcement against illegal parking at bus stops.

176. Mr. AU Chun-ho, the Vice-Chairman, said that the food premises on On Pong Road and On Tai Road near Tai Po Plaza often left refuse and food waste lying around, causing environmental hygiene and rodent infestation problems. He hoped that the department would tackle the problem.

177. Mr. Gavin YEUNG responded that the department had instructed the relevant officers in this regard. At present, the department would perform anti-rodent work at the locations concerned at least thrice a week and institute prosecutions against offenders. During the inspections conducted in April, the department had instituted prosecutions forthwith against food premises in which irregularities were found. The department would continue to monitor the situation.

178. Mr. LAU Yung-wai said that an abandoned motorcycle had been placed on Ping On Lane for a long period of time, and hoped that the department would follow up on it.

XII. Any other business

179. The Chairman said that the visit to the EPD's styrofoam recycling compressor had been mentioned at the previous meetings. But due to the industrial accident occurred at Stonecutters Island, Lai Chi Kok, which involved the same model of compressor, the visit originally scheduled for 21 April was cancelled. He would inform Members of the latest arrangements, if any.

XIII. Date of next meeting

180. The next meeting was scheduled to be held at 9:30 a.m. on 12 July 2023 (Wednesday).

181. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:26 p.m.

Tai Po District Council Secretariat
June 2023