

Minutes of the 3rd Meeting in 2024
of the Food, Environment and Hygiene Committee
of Tai Po District Council

Date: 8 May 2024 (Wednesday)
Time: 2:30 p.m. – 4:31 p.m.
Venue: Conference Room, Tai Po District Council (“TPDC”)

<u>Present</u>	<u>Time of Arrival</u>	<u>Time of Withdrawal</u>
<u>Chairman</u>		
Mr. CHAN Siu-kuen, MH, JP	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
<u>Vice-chairman</u>		
Mr. YU Chi-wing, MH	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
<u>Members</u>		
Mr. LEE Man-kit	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Ms. LEE Sai-yin, Jeanne, BBS, JP	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. LI Wah-kwong, Rex, MH	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. LI Yiu-ban, BBS, MH, JP	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. LAM Yick-kuen, MH	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. WU Cheuk-him	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. MUI Siu-fung	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. MUI Ching-hung	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Ms. CHAN Kin-kwan	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. CHAN Pok-chi, JP	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. MAK Shing-ho, Gary	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. WAN Koon-kau	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. WONG Wai-tung	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Ms. WONG Pik-kiu, BBS, MH, JP	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Ms. LOK Siu-luen	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Mr. LO Hiu-fung	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
<u>Secretary</u>		
Miss NG Ka-yue, Yui	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Executive Officer (District Council) 2 / Tai Po District Office (“TPDO”) / Home Affairs Department (“HAD”)		

In Attendance

Mr. LUI Kwok-man	Structural Engineer/C2-1 / Buildings Department (“BD”)
Mr. MA Ping-hing	Project Coordinator/Maintenance 1D / Civil Engineering and Development Department (“CEDD”)
Mr. CHAN Yu-kwan	Engineer/Tai Po 3 / Drainage Services Department (“DSD”)
Mr. WONG Pak-ki	Senior Environmental Protection Officer (Regional North)1 / Environmental Protection Department (“EPD”)
Mr. LAU Wai-cheung	Chief Health Inspector (Tai Po)1 / Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (“FEHD”)
Miss LAI Hiu-wing	Senior Health Inspector (Hawker) Tai Po / FEHD
Miss FAN Wing-man	Senior Health Inspector (Cleansing & Pest Control) Tai Po 2 / FEHD
Ms. CHAN Wing-kwan, Wendy	Operations Support Sub-Unit Commander / Tai Po Division / Hong Kong Police Force (“HKPF”)
Mr. HO Wai-keung	Operations Support Sub-Unit Deputy Commander / Tai Po Division / HKPF
Mr. LI Tsz-yau, Roy	Assistant District Engineer/Tai Po (1) / Highways Department (“HyD”)
Mr. TSUI Chun-sing	Administrative Assistant/Lands / District Lands Office, Tai Po (“TPDLO”) / Lands Department
Miss CHAN Sui-king, Madeline	Senior Executive Officer (District Management) / TPDO / HAD
Ms. SING Hoi-shan, Wendy	Senior Executive Officer (District Council) / TPDO / HAD

Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed Members to the 3rd meeting in 2024 of the Food, Environment and Hygiene Committee (“FEHC”) of TPDC, and announced the following:

- (i) Miss FAN Wing-man, Senior Health Inspector (Cleansing & Pest Control) Tai Po 2 of FEHD, was welcomed to attend future FEHC meetings in place of Mr. TSANG Chin Kan.
- (ii) Mr. LUI Kwok-man, Structural Engineer/C2-1 of BD, was attending the meeting in place of Mr. NG Man-kam, Keith.
- (iii) Mr. CHAN Yu-kwan, Engineer / Tai Po 3 of DSD, was attending the meeting in place of Mr. NG Wing-hung.

I. Confirmation of the minutes of the 2nd meeting in 2024 of the FEHC on 6 March 2024

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. Proposal on collection routes for domestic food waste recycling
(TPDC Paper No. FEH 18/2024)

3. A Member went through the captioned paper.

4. The representative of FEHD responded that the department had installed food waste recycling facilities in Tai Po Hui Market since March, and the programme was expected to be reviewed again in 2026.

5. Members' comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) Apart from public housing estates ("PHEs") and markets, there were currently quite a number of private housing estates which were ready to support food waste recycling, and it was hoped that assistance could be provided to these housing estates in setting up food waste recycling machines ("FWRMs"). However, there were not a few housing estates which might have doubts about how the recovered food waste should be disposed of. As such, they asked whether the department had any plans to enhance the supporting facilities for food waste recycling.
- (ii) The Government had indicated earlier that FWRMs would be installed in PHEs. It was hoped that the department would consolidate the locations of FWRMs so as to enable Members to have an understanding of the matter.
- (iii) As the hygiene conditions of the large-size waste containers placed next to the FWRMs in some PHEs were unsatisfactory, it was hoped that the department would strengthen its management and cleansing efforts.
- (iv) Not a few residents had reflected that the department had not followed up properly the environmental hygiene problems arising from the FWRMs. At present, the frequency of refuse collection by grab lorries was not adequate. It was hoped that the department could enhance the relevant measures.
- (v) They asked about the department responsible for food waste recycling work, and suggested that the department label the name and contact details of the contractor on the FWRMs. The department should also support the complementary initiatives for the FWRMs introduced at different stages, such as the provision of additional food waste recycling bins to facilitate recycling by residents.

- (vi) To support point-to-point food waste collection service, it was suggested that the EPD organise workshops in the district and invite property management companies already equipped with FWRMs to take part in the study and discussion.
- (vii) It was hoped that when installing FWRMs in rural areas, the department would consider selecting machines that could convert food waste into organic waste so as to convert food waste into organic fertilisers and reduce the amount of waste, thereby solving the problem brought about by FWRMs.
- (viii) It was hoped that the department would set up a GREEN@COMMUNITY recycling point at Pak Shek Kok.

6. The representative of FEHD responded that the main thrust of providing additional food waste recycling facilities in Tai Po Hui Market by the department at present was to tie in with the policy of EPD.

7. The representative of EPD responded as follows:

- (i) The department was actively implementing various food waste collection initiatives, including providing support on the collection of food waste from commercial and industrial sources and households, thereby encouraging all sectors of the community and the general public to participate in recycling. The department launched the Pilot Scheme on Food Waste Collection (“Pilot Scheme”) in 2021, providing point-to-point collection services for premises which generated larger quantities of food waste. The Pilot Scheme had been extended to Tai Po District in 2023. Currently, there were a total of 97 food waste collection points in the district, including food factories, public markets, cooked food centres, hospitals, government facilities, tertiary institutions, shopping malls, PHEs and private residential buildings, with an average of about 25 tonnes of food waste collected daily. Should Members have any queries as to the locations of the collection points, he could make enquiries with the relevant sections after the meeting and give supplementary information.
- (ii) The installation of food waste smart recycling bins (“FWSRBs”) in PHEs over the territory was expected to be completed in August. The department would also promote food waste recycling in private housing through various projects. The department had allocated funds to subsidise the installation of FWSRBs in private housing estates through the Environment and Conservation Fund (“ECF”) in 2023, and was now processing one application from Tai Po District. To expedite the installation of FWSRBs in private housing estates, the Environmental Campaign Committee (“ECC”) rolled out the Pilot Scheme on FWSRBs in Private Housing Estates in October last year and accepted applications from housing estates with over 1 000 households for the installation of FWSRBs. As at 30 April 2024, the

ECC had received a total of six applications from housing estates in Tai Po District, two of which had been approved and were at the preparatory stage, while the remaining applications were under vetting. The result was expected to be available in a few months' time.

- (iii) One housing estate in Tai Po District had already installed conventional covered food waste recycling bins through the Pilot Scheme. If other housing estates were interested in taking part in food waste recycling, they might apply to the department upon reaching a consensus with the stakeholders. If Members would like to have the relevant information, he could provide them with it after the meeting.
- (iv) The department would subsidise the installation of FWSRBs in villages through the ECF, and had briefed the Heung Yee Kuk New Territories on the scheme in November 2023. The department noted Members' suggestions and would study them further.
- (v) In response to the installation of FWSRBs in PHEs, the department had provided additional resources to the Housing Department ("HD") for the engagement of additional manpower to enhance cleansing services, including keeping the FWSRBs and their surrounding environment clean, replacing inner bins fully loaded with food waste and properly placing them at designated locations for temporary storage to facilitate collection by the contractors. At present, the cleansing staff would replace the inner bins of FWSRBs twice to thrice a day, and clean the body and exterior of FWSRBs twice to thrice a day. The frequency would be increased if necessary. Should Members spot any other problems, he could reflect them to the relevant section.
- (vi) He noted Members' suggestion of supporting the introduction of food waste recycling bins at different stages and labelling information of the contractor on FWRMs, as well as their comments of setting up GREEN@COMMUNITY at Pak Shek Kok. He would convey the above comments to the relevant section after the meeting.

8. A Member said that the main reason for the public to have doubts about the municipal solid waste charging was insufficient supporting facilities for recycling. As only a few housing estates in the district were applying for the installation of FWSRBs, he would like to know the reasons for the remaining housing estates not applying. He also hoped that the department would provide details of such applications, and it would take the initiative to help expedite the progress of the applications.

9. The Chairman said that the FEHC supported the suggestions mentioned in the paper, and hoped that the department could provide relevant supplementary information at the next meeting.

10. The representative of EPD responded that he could supplement the relevant information

after the meeting. Apart from the FWSRBs, the department had another scheme for the installation of conventional covered food waste recycling bins. Members could make enquiries with him if they were interested in the scheme. He would convey the views to the relevant section.

11. The Chairman said that Members could garner views from stakeholders and then reflect them to the department.

III. Food and Environmental Hygiene Department – Anti-mosquito Campaign 2024 (Phase II) in Tai Po District

(TPDC Paper No. FEH 19/2024)

12. The representative of FEHD went through the captioned paper.

13. The Chairman thanked the department for following up the issues of concern expeditiously. Members could reflect to the department after the meeting if they identified any areas of concern in the district which required follow-up actions.

14. Members' comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) They asked about the arrangements to be made in case it was raining on the day of the anti-mosquito work, and whether the action plan of the department for April to May had been affected by inclement weather.
- (ii) They opined that the action plan of the department did not cover the outskirts of some PHEs and housing estates (such as Tai Yuen Estate, Ting Nga Court, Fu Heng Estate and Chung Nga Court), and also considered that mosquito control was necessary to be carried out in the vicinity of Wong Yue Tan Transitional Housing Project.
- (iii) They asked the department whether grass cutting would be carried out in conjunction with the removal of stagnant water.

15. The representative of FEHD responded as follows:

- (i) The locations mentioned in Annex II to the captioned paper were the target areas of the Anti-mosquito Campaign (Phase I). The department had been carrying out routine anti-mosquito work in various places in the district and, due to the limitation of space, not all of the locations had been listed in the Annex. The department had carried out anti-mosquito work in the outskirts of Fu Heng Estate. She could revert to Members after the meeting.

- (ii) The department would study the changes in the number of residents in Tai Po District so as to adjust the locations of the action plan accordingly.
- (iii) Generally speaking, grass cutting on most slopes was carried out by the departments concerned.
- (iv) In case of inclement weather, the department would carry out anti-mosquito work at the locations concerned during routine working hours. Members might make enquiries after the meeting should they have doubts about the anti-mosquito work at specific locations.

16. Members' comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) They suggested that the frequency of anti-mosquito work at Mui Shue Hang Playground should be increased.
- (ii) In view of the serious biting midge infestation in the district, they asked whether the department had applied new methods to deal with biting midge infestation.

17. The representative of FEHD responded as follows:

- (i) Mui Shue Hang Playground was under the purview of LCSD and it would be referred to the LCSD for follow-up after the meeting.
- (ii) Biting midges were not one of the disease vectors in Hong Kong, and they bred in moist soil mainly. In the prevention and control of biting midges, the department mainly reminded the public to clean up the standing water in plant pot saucers so as to reduce the moisture content of soil, thereby minimising the breeding grounds for biting midges.

18. Members' comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) They asked whether mosquitoes were currently eliminated by mosquito sprays, and whether the equipment of the staff had been upgraded, as well as the number of anti-mosquito teams under the departmental Pest Control Section and outsourced service contractors.
- (ii) It was hoped that the department would assist old PHEs in carrying out anti-mosquito and anti-rodent work, in particular the pest situation in Fu Shin Estate.

19. The representative of FEHD responded as follows:

- (i) Knapsack sprayers were used by departmental staff in the past to carry out fogging operations to kill mosquitoes. Currently, consideration would be given to use new types of equipment when necessary, and the equipment would be transported to the

locations concerned for fogging prior to the anti-mosquito work.

- (ii) There were a total of 13 outsourced teams and three teams of departmental staff for prevention and control of mosquitoes in Tai Po District.
- (iii) The department would, in association with staff of the HD, strengthen publicity and promotion of environmental hygiene in PHEs, and would also provide technical advice to the HD to assist in taking anti-mosquito measures.

20. A Member said that there were a lot of cockroaches and construction waste in the refuse room adjacent to his ward office. Moreover, he would like to know the routes of the departmental staff in using the equipment for fogging.

21. The representative of FEHD responded that the pest control work at refuse collection points (“RCPs”) of FEHD would be strengthened. The department would follow up on the dumping of construction waste at RCPs and step up the clearance of oversized domestic waste.

22. The Chairman suggested that the department install closed-circuited televisions at RCPs in rural areas to monitor fly-tipping. Estate offices could contact Owners’ Corporations to follow up. Members could join to attend a site visit after the meeting.

IV. Marine Department and Food and Environmental Hygiene Department – Reports on the quantity of refuse collected from Tolo Harbour between March and April 2024
(TPDC Paper Nos. FEH 20/2024 and FEH 21/2024)

23. The Chairman asked Members to take note of the captioned paper (No. FEH 20/2024).

24. The representative of FEHD went through the captioned paper (No. FEH 21/2024).

25. Members did not raise any comments or questions.

V. Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, Environmental Protection Department, Civil Engineering and Development Department and Drainage Services Department – Reports on the clearing of rubbish and sludge in Lam Tsuen River and Tai Po River in Tai Po
(TPDC Paper No. FEH 22/2024)

26. 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 the captioned paper (No. FEH 22/2024) for details).

27. Members' comments were as follows:

- (i) Some residents had reflected that the management company had not cleared the rocks and debris in the section of river near Fung Yuen. It was hoped that the department would follow up on it.
- (ii) They hoped that the department would carry out dredging work at the stream course near Ha Hang, and clearance of vegetation along stream course before the onset of the rainy season.
- (iii) They hoped that clearance of rubbles and sand would be carried out on the river bed near Shek Lin Road and that of near Classical Gardens Phase 4.

28. The Chairman said that Members could provide specific locations to departmental representatives after the meeting.

29. A Member expressed the hope that the relevant departments would follow up on the stinky odours emanating from the channels in the vicinity of On Chee Road in Tai Po Centre.

30. The Chairman said that follow-up actions could be taken with the departments concerned on site after the meeting.

31. A Member remarked that the large-size waste containers placed at the junction of Tsing Yuen Street and On Fu Road were obstructing pedestrians and traffic. He asked whether it was necessary to place them there.

32. The Chairman said that some residents had requested for placing large-size waste containers there and hoped that the FEHD would pay more attention to it.

VI. District Lands Office, Tai Po – Report on abandoned vehicles, illegal dumping of soil and inter-departmental bicycle clearance joint operations
(TPDC Paper No. FEH 23/2024)

33. The representative of TPDLO went through the captioned paper.

34. The Chairman suggested that the department might simply clean up the dilapidated bicycles.

VII. Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, Hong Kong Police Force, District Lands Office, Tai Po, Highways Department, Buildings Department and Environmental Protection Department – Departmental reports on the environmental hygiene issues in Tai Po District (TPDC Paper No. FEH 24/2024)

35. The Chairman welcomed all departmental representatives to attend the meeting for this agenda item.
36. The representative of FEHD went through Appendix I to the captioned paper.
37. The representative of HKPF went through Appendix II to the captioned paper.
38. The representative of TPDLO went through Appendix III to the captioned paper.
39. The representative of HyD went through Appendix IV to the captioned paper.
40. The representative of BD went through Appendix V to the captioned paper.
41. The representative of EPD went through Appendix VI to the captioned paper.
42. Members' comments were as follows:
- (i) There were a large number of Red Kapok Trees planted in Luk Heung Lane, Tai Po Market, and the fluffy cotton of Red Kapok Trees would affect the residents. It had been suggested in the past that the fruits be removed before ripening, and it was hoped that the departments concerned could inject more resources to address the issue.
 - (ii) Some residents hoped that the EPD would make public the procurement details of designated bags.
43. The representative of EPD responded that information on the procurement of designated bags had been provided in the past. He was aware of Members' comments and would reflect them to the sections concerned after the meeting.
44. The Chairman asked which department could handle the fluffy cotton of Red Kapok Trees.
45. Members' comments were as follows:
- (i) Many suggestions on the fluffy cotton of Red Kapok Trees had been raised in the past. The contractors of LCSD had removed the fruits of Red Kapok Trees. Since the Red Kapok Trees at the location concerned affected the entire Tai Po

Market, it was hoped that the department concerned would handle the issue properly.

- (ii) Since many of the issues reflected at the meeting were related to the management of LCSD, it was suggested that the department be invited to attend the next meeting.

46. The Chairman said that the LCSD was responsible for the management of Red Kapok Trees. It was hoped that the Secretariat could convey the relevant suggestions to the LCSD, and Members could communicate with the department again if necessary.

(Post-meeting note: The LCSD had taken note of Members' comments and conducted a site visit with Members. Besides, for the latest news and frequently asked questions on the municipal solid waste charging scheme, please visit the EPD website at: <https://www.mswcharging.gov.hk/en/>)

VIII. Any other business

47. Members' comments were as follows:

- (i) They had inspected the planters at Po Heung Street with the representative of HyD after the last meeting. He noticed that there were miscellaneous articles in the planters and hoped that the relevant departments would deal with it.
- (ii) It was hoped that the department would follow up on the abandoned bicycles on the section of pavement from 106 to 116 of Po Heung Street, which were carrying the materials of HyD contractor. It was hoped that the department would follow up on them.
- (iii) It was hoped that the HyD would follow up on the damage to the surfaces of carriageways in the district due to heavy rainstorms, such as Po Heung Street, the intersection of Tai Po Centre near Fortune Plaza, and Ting Kok Road.
- (iv) The BD had issued repair orders to the HD for concrete spalling off the external walls of old buildings. Some residents had reflected that they had received a letter from the HD on the removal works, but it was not mentioned in the letter about the reinstatement work. As such, it was hoped that the department would follow up on the case.
- (v) The tenants of Tai Po Complex hoped that the FEHD could adjust the rent appropriately.
- (vi) They would like to follow up on the Kau Lung Hang Village Public Toilet. Villagers of Ting Kok Tsuen, Fung Yuen Village and San Tau Kok Tsuen had been

striving for the construction of public toilets for years. It was hoped that the matters could be followed up with the Rural Committee, village representatives and the FEHD after the meeting.

48. The Chairman said that he hoped the relevant departments would follow up on the above matters.

49. A Member expressed his hope that the department concerned would pay attention to the situation of public toilets in rural areas in the district. The Sai Wan Public Toilet in Sai Kung North was enclosed and the hygiene conditions were unsatisfactory. He hoped that the department would come to grips with the problem.

50. A Member remarked that the said area fell under the jurisdiction of Sai Kung District or the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department.

51. The representative of FEHD responded that there were different ways to dispose of excretal matter for different public toilets. The department would keep in view and follow up on public toilets which needed enhanced cleansing.

52. The representative of HyD responded as follows:

- (i) The department would conduct regular inspections on the condition of the asphalt surfaces of carriageways before and after rainstorms. Should Members spot any locations on road surface that needed to be dealt with, they might reflect the situation to the department for immediate action.
- (ii) The department had immediately contacted the relevant departments to follow up on the condition of plants in the planters after the inspection at the last meeting.
- (iii) If there were abandoned bicycles on pedestrian railings, they would have to be dealt with through inter-departmental bicycle clearance joint operations. He would, after the meeting, check with Members on the materials left behind by the contractor before proceeding further.

53. A Member suggested that Po Heung Street be included in a list of locations requiring inter-departmental follow-up action, so as to deal with the issues of environmental hygiene, abandoned bicycles and illegal parking.

54. The Chairman hoped to follow up on plants in the planters with the LCSD. For illegal parking, it could be further examined in the Traffic and Transport Committee.

IX. Date of next meeting

55. The next meeting was scheduled to be held at 2:30 p.m. on 3 July 2024 (Wednesday).

56. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:31 p.m.

Tai Po District Council Secretariat
June 2024