

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

Date: 4 September 2024 (Wednesday)
Time: 2:30 p.m. – 3:50 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, SBS, 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, MH	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
Ms. CHAN Ching-yin	Beginning of the meeting	End of the meeting
<u>Secretary</u>		
Mr. LEE Sung-hei, Marcus	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. NG Man-kam, Keith	Structural Engineer / C2-3 / Buildings Department (“BD”)
Mr. MA Ping-hing	Project Coordinator / Maintenance 1D / Civil Engineering and Development Department (“CEDD”)
Mr. NG Wing-hung	Senior Engineer / Tai Po / 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”)
Ms. WAN Yuk-chi	Chief Health Inspector (Tai Po)2 / FEHD
Miss FAN Wing-man	Senior Health Inspector (Cleansing & Pest Control) Tai Po 2 / FEHD
Mr. IP Kam-fung	Senior Health Inspector (Market Management) Tai Po / FEHD
Ms. CHAN Wing-kwan, Wendy	Operations Support Sub-Unit Commander / Tai Po Division / Hong Kong Police Force (“HKPF”)
Mr. LI Tsz-yau, Roy	District Engineer / Tai Po (1) (Doubling-sideways District Engineer / Tai Po (2)) / Highways Department (“HyD”)
Mr. TSUI Chun-sing	Administrative Assistant / Lands / District Lands Office, Tai Po (“TPDLO”) / Lands Department (“LandsD”)
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 and departmental representatives to the 5th meeting in 2024 of the Food, Environment and Hygiene Committee (“FEHC”) of TPDC, and announced the following:

- (i) Ms. CHAN Ching-yin was appointed as a co-opted member of FEHC and would attend future FEHC meetings.
- (ii) Mr. IP Kam-fung, Senior Health Inspector (Market Management) Tai Po of FEHD, was attending the meeting.

I. Confirmation of the minutes of the 4th meeting in 2024 of the FEHC on 3 July 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. Late-night noise problem at the unloading area of Tai Wo Plaza
(TPDC Paper No. FEH 33/2024)

3. A Member went through the captioned paper and added that a meeting on the captioned problem had been held in July with the Incorporated Owners and Management Office of Tai Wo Estate, EPD, HKPF, TPDO and Housing Department. He hoped that the government departments would come to grips with the problem, and suggested that the stakeholders improve the situation.

4. The representative of EPD responded as follows:

- (i) The department attended the said meeting in the second half of July and proposed improvement measures to the stakeholders, such as levelling the ground surface of the unloading area, laying rugs and rubber mats as well as providing an additional storeroom to reduce the noise level, and prohibiting shop tenants from loading and unloading goods at late night.
- (ii) The department conducted a follow-up inspection in August but found no improvement in the situation over time, and issued a letter to the management company again in the second half of August requesting follow up action.
- (iii) The department would continue to inspect the said location and take enforcement actions upon detection of breaches.

III. Measures against rodent infestation at the unloading area of Tai Wo Market and their subsequent effectiveness
(TPDC Paper No. FEH 34/2024)

5. A Member went through the captioned paper and pointed out that the anti-rodent work carried out there earlier was somewhat effective, but noted that rodent infestation had shown signs of a rebound. In addition, some residents of Tai Wo Estate had reflected that rodent infestation was more serious in buildings near the market and shopping centre. The Member said that he had visited the site with the representative of FEHD earlier, and the department had made improvement suggestions to the market contractor and estate management office. He hoped that

the department would continue to follow up on it.

6. A Member asked whether the department had determined the source of rodent infestation or rodent harbourage locations, and whether it would lend out thermal imaging cameras (“TICs”) for use by the market contractor.

7. The representative of FEHD responded as follows:

- (i) The department had been maintaining communication with the relevant departments and stakeholders, and hoped that all parties would work closely to tackle rodent and mosquito infestation.
- (ii) It was observed that rats were believed to be hiding within cardboard boxes or refuse at the carpark of the unloading area.
- (iii) The department visited Tai Wo Estate again on 28 August, 2 September and 3 September to communicate with the stakeholders, and learnt that the management company had increased the frequency of daily refuse removal, designated suitable areas for refuse collection, and arranged attendants to clear the refuse and keep the area clean.
- (iv) The department would continue to observe closely to traces of rats and provide anti-rodent advice to stakeholders during its inspections. It had no plan to lend out its TICs for the time being.

8. A Member said that he had received complaints from residents that there were three dead rats in the rear lane of Tung Sau Square, and suggested that the department step up inspections after placing poisonous baits and setting up rodent control devices.

IV. Drainage and structural problems of the footbridge connecting Tai Po Centre
(TPDC Paper No. FEH 35/2024)

9. A Member went through the captioned paper, and added that he had been notified by the HyD on 26 August that the department had completed the relevant inspection and maintenance works in areas under its purview. Regarding the problem of concrete spalling, as it took place in a private place, it had to be dealt with by Tai Po Centre/Tai Po Mega Mall.

10. The representative of HyD responded that apart from the said follow-up actions, the department would also conduct inspections on a regular basis. The department, together with the TPDO, had contacted Tai Po Centre/Tai Po Mega Mall and was now awaiting the party to follow up on areas under its purview.

11. A Member said that there was water leakage at the connection point between the captioned footbridge and Tai Po Tung Cheong Street Leisure Building during rainy days, and would follow up with the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (“LCSD”) and HyD after the meeting.

V. Food and Environmental Hygiene Department – Anti-mosquito Campaign 2024 (Phase III) in Tai Po District
(TPDC Paper No. FEH 36/2024)

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

13. Members’ comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) Some members of the public had reflected that puddles at the construction sites near Hoi Ying Road, Tai Tung Tsuen and Ma Kwu Lam Tsuen might aggravate mosquito infestation, and there was mosquito infestation near the bus stop at Sai Keng Tsuen. It was hoped that the relevant department would enhance anti-mosquito work at the said locations.
- (ii) It was hoped that the relevant department would step up its efforts in grass cutting so that anti-mosquito work could be rendered more effective.
- (iii) Some members of the public suggested enhancing anti-mosquito and anti-biting midge efforts at the area outside Sun Hing Garden which was adjacent to the market, and the area outside McDonald’s at On Chee Road.
- (iv) They asked about the meaning of the highlighted parts at Annex II to the captioned paper.
- (v) They asked about the progress of the two cases in item 9 “Number of cases referred to other government departments” at Annex I to the captioned paper.
- (vi) They asked how the department would evaluate the effectiveness of anti-mosquito operations.
- (vii) It was hoped that the department would provide at the next meeting the route and timetable of the department’s anti-mosquito work using aerosol pesticides in the district.
- (viii) They asked whether the department had communicated with the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (“AFCD”) on the disposal of wild pig carcasses.

14. The representative of FEHD responded as follows:

- (i) The department noted the locations proposed by Members where anti-mosquito efforts should be strengthened.
- (ii) He understood Members' views that grass cutting work would help control mosquitoes. If overgrown weeds were found at locations that fell within the department's routine grass-cutting programme, the spots in question would be referred to the relevant departments for follow-up grass cutting work.
- (iii) The highlighted parts at Annex II to the captioned paper was only for reference by departmental staff.
- (iv) The two cases in item 9 at Annex I were referred by construction sites.
- (v) Members were welcome to contact the department after the meeting to know more about its anti-mosquito efforts and other work.

VI. 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 37/2024)

15. The representatives of FEHD, EPD, CEDD and DSD went through the captioned paper one by one.

16. Members' comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) They asked whether the relevant departments would clean the river banks on both sides of Lam Tsuen River and Tai Po River by high pressure water jets on a regular basis.
- (ii) They asked the EPD about the frequency of monitoring the water quality of Lam Tsuen River and Tai Po River and the current water quality.
- (iii) They pointed out that the number of complaints about water pollution received by the EPD in Tai Po District had dropped from 24 cases in August 2023 to 8 cases in August 2024 (as at 15 August), and asked about the types of which the number of complaints had dropped and the types of the 8 complaints received this year.
- (iv) They asked whether the relevant departments had a timetable for clearing/repairing/maintaining the rivers to tie in with the activities to be held

thereat.

- (v) It was suggested that the department examine the feasibility of clearing sludge and increasing the water depth of Lam Tsuen River so that distinctive attractions could be created and distinctive events could be organised thereat.

17. The representative of DSD responded that the department had cleaned the river banks with high pressure water jets but the result was unsatisfactory. In addition, the department had carried out grass cutting work along the river, and cleared bulky waste on the ebb tide.

18. The representative of CEDD responded that the department had carried out a bathymetric survey on Lam Tsuen River (from Kwong Fuk Bridge to the outfall) in April 2024. The survey data indicated that the riverbed level of the above section had not reached the flood protection alert level. The department would continue to monitor the riverbed level of the river on a regular basis and carry out maintenance dredging works as necessary.

19. The representative of EPD responded as follows:

- (i) The EPD had set up nine water quality monitoring stations at Lam Tsuen River. The general sampling frequency was once a month and additional samples would be taken as and when necessary.
- (ii) The eight complaints received in August this year (as at 15 August) were mostly not related to Lam Tsuen River.
- (iii) The water quality data for the past one to two months were stable and similar to those in the past.

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 38/2024)

20. The representative of TPDO reported that inter-departmental operations had been conducted at Four Lanes in Tai Po Market, Heung Sze Wui Square, in the areas around Kwong Fuk Road near Four Lanes and Jade Plaza on 16 July, 18 July and 15 August respectively. The TPDO would continue to work closely with the relevant departments to monitor the situation of illegal extension of business by shops.

21. The representative of FEHD went through Appendix I to the captioned paper.

22. The representative of HKPF went through Appendix II to the captioned paper.
23. The representative of TPDLO went through Appendix III to the captioned paper.
24. The representative of HyD went through Appendix IV to the captioned paper.
25. The representative of BD went through Appendix V to the captioned paper.
26. The representative of EPD went through Appendix VI to the captioned paper.
27. Members' comments and questions were as follows:
 - (i) They hoped that the FEHD would pay attention to the problem of water dripping from air-conditioners near McDonald's at Kwong Fuk Road.
 - (ii) It was suggested that the EPD and FEHD enhance communication on how frontline staff should dispose of recyclables and refuse placed outside/next to recycling bins in rural areas.
 - (iii) It was suggested that the department step up its efforts in weeding in the areas of Tai Po Tau, Serenity Park and Hong Lok Yuen.
 - (iv) The noise problem in the vicinity of Jade Plaza was more serious between 6 p.m. and 7 p.m., and it was hoped that the relevant departments would follow up on it.
 - (v) A letter had been issued to Link Asset Management Limited regarding the water leakage problem at the staircase connecting Tai Yuen Market and Jade Plaza during rainy days. However, the matter had not been followed up so far, and it was hoped that the relevant departments would pay attention to it. In addition, banners had been placed on the footbridge at the said location for a long time, and it was hoped that the relevant departments would handle them as far as practicable.
28. The representative of FEHD said that the department would follow up on the problem of water dripping from air-conditioners near McDonald's at Kwong Fuk Road.
29. The representative of EPD responded as follows:
 - (i) He noted Members' concerns over the handling of recyclables and refuse placed outside recycling bins.
 - (ii) He noted the noise problem in the vicinity of Jade Plaza in the evening and the department would conduct inspections.

30. The Chairman suggested that the relevant departments should continue to maintain liaison with Members on weeding.

VIII. District Lands Office, Tai Po – Report on abandoned vehicles, illegal dumping of soil and inter-departmental bicycle clearance joint operations

(TPDC Paper No. FEH 39/2024)

31. The representative of TPDO reported on inter-departmental bicycle clearance joint operations, stating that four operations had been co-ordinated between June and July, during which a total of 1 440 notices were issued and 184 illegally parked bicycles were confiscated. In response to Members' views, the TPDO had also co-ordinated operations on 21, 22, 23, 28 and 29 August, and would co-ordinate operations on 5 and 6 September to deal with bicycles illegally parked on the railings.

(Post-meeting note: Due to typhoon, the operation on 6 September against bicycles illegally parked on the railings had been postponed to 9 September. A total of 1 075 notices were issued and 335 illegally parked bicycles were confiscated during the relevant operation against bicycles illegally parked on the railings.)

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

IX. Marine Department and Food and Environmental Hygiene Department – Reports on the quantity of refuse collected from Tolo Harbour between July and August 2024

(TPDC Paper Nos. FEH 40/2024 and FEH 41/2024)

33. The Chairman asked Members to take note of the captioned paper (No. FEH 40/2024).

34. The representative of FEHD went through the captioned paper (No. FEH 41/2024).

X. Any other business

35. A Member said that many rural residents were accustomed to placing second-hand furniture near refuse collection facilities for nearby residents to take them for own use. Whilst appreciating the above practice, he also understood that the FEHD had to take enforcement actions against illegal refuse dumping and hoped that the department could put up more clear notices at the relevant locations to remind the residents.

36. The representative of FEHD said that the department had been putting up notices at refuse

collection points and designated areas for the disposal of bulky waste at some locations. It would review the possibility of putting up additional notices.

37. A Member suggested that more prominent notices be put up to remind the residents.

38. A Member said that the ground surface of Tai Po Waterfront Park Pier was uneven, resulting in the accumulation of water. In addition, the Member asked about tree pruning there and suggested that a visit be conducted to the said location with the relevant departments.

(Post-meeting note: The representatives of TPDLO, LCSD and TPDO visited the site with some Members on 15 October 2024. Members would maintain communication with the relevant departments on the above problems.)

39. A Member added that he was aware that some rural residents would temporarily store their bulky waste in one place and then deliver them away in one go. It was hoped that the relevant departments would handle the matter in a humane manner.

40. A Member said that there was a certain demand for GREEN@COMMUNITY recycling facilities from residents of Pak Shek Kok, and he hoped to visit the site with the TPDLO to see if there were suitable locations for the provision of such facilities.

41. A Member expressed his concern over the problem of stall front extension by market stalls, and hoped that the FEHD would exercise discretion in handling the situation.

42. The Chairman said that he would visit the market together with the representative of FEHD and some Members.

43. A Member expressed his concern over the problem of feral pigeons in the areas around Fu Heng Estate and Fu Shin Estate. To his understanding, the Government had expanded the prohibition on feeding wild animals to cover feral pigeons. He asked whether the relevant departments could take enforcement actions within private areas.

(Post-meeting note: The AFCD had made a reply and the Secretariat had forwarded it to Members for information on 29 October.)

44. Noting that the cleansing frequency in rural areas by FEHD staff had decreased recently, a Member asked whether the department had reduced the number of service teams or manpower.

45. The representative of FEHD said that the AFCD had provided enforcement guidelines with regard to the Wild Animals Protection (Amendment) Ordinance 2024 so that the relevant law enforcement departments could enforce the law in accordance with a uniform standard. While

the AFCD was responsible for taking enforcement actions against illegal feeding of wild animals and feral birds/pigeons in private places, the FEHD was responsible for following up environmental hygiene cases related to the feeding of feral birds/pigeons in public places. In addition, regarding the cleansing frequency in rural areas, Members were welcome to contact the department to learn about the situation after the meeting.

46. The representative of TPDO gave a brief account of the “District-led Actions Scheme 2024/25”. Members were welcome to put forward their suggestions on target clean-up locations along the waterfront, target mosquito prevention and control locations, target locations for environmental hygiene improvement and target rodent prevention and control blackspots. The TPDO would consolidate the relevant information and pass it to the relevant government departments for follow-up.

XI. Date of next meeting

47. The next meeting was scheduled to be held at 2:30 p.m. on 6 November 2024 (Wednesday).

48. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

Tai Po District Council Secretariat
October 2024