

Minutes of the 6th Meeting in 2024
of the Food, Environment and Hygiene Committee
of Tai Po District Council

Date: 6 November 2024 (Wednesday)
Time: 2:30 p.m. – 5:02 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. 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. NG Wing-hung	Senior Engineer / Tai Po / Drainage Services Department (“DSD”)
Mr. CHEUNG Ming-kit, Keith	Senior Environmental Protection Officer (Regional North)1 (Atg.) / Environmental Protection Department (“EPD”)
Ms. FAN Ying-shan, Fanny	Environmental Protection Officer (Regional North)11 / 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. HO Wai-keung	Operations Support Sub-Unit Deputy 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
Miss MAN Fung-yee, Stella	Liaison Officer (7) / TPDO / HAD
Ms. CHOW Hoi-tung, Highton	Assistant Executive Manager (District-led Actions Scheme) / TPDO / HAD

Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed Members and departmental representatives to the 6th meeting in 2024 of the Food, Environment and Hygiene Committee (“FEHC”) of TPDC, and announced the following:

- (i) Mr. CHEUNG Ming-kit, Keith, and Ms. FAN Ying-shan, Fanny, Senior Environmental Protection Officer (Regional North)1 (Atg.) and Environmental Protection Officer (Regional North)11 of EPD respectively, were attending the meeting.
- (ii) Mr. LUI Kwok-man, Structural Engineer / C2-1 of BD, was attending the meeting in place of Mr. NG Man-kam, Keith.
- (iii) Miss MAN Fung-yee, Stella, Liaison Officer (7) of TPDO was attending the meeting.

I. Confirmation of the minutes of the 5th meeting in 2024 of the FEHC on 4 September 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. Current position of grass cutting work in Tai Po District by government departments
(TPDC Paper No. FEH 42/2024)

3. A Member went through the captioned paper.

4. The representative of TPDO said that the TPDO was responsible for grass cutting work on village roads constructed or maintained by the TPDO within the village environs. The TPDO would arrange for grass cutting work in response to actual circumstances such as weather, needs of villagers and internal resource allocation. The TPDO noticed that more villagers had reflected the overgrowing of weeds recently, and would continue to maintain liaison with District Council Members and the local community as well as arrange contractors to carry out grass cutting work.

5. Members' comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) As members of the public might not necessarily understand the purview of different departments, it was suggested that coordination among departments be strengthened.
- (ii) It was asked whether inter-departmental grass cutting operations could be conducted.
- (iii) Some members of the public had suggested stepping up grass cutting work on roads near Hong Lok Yuen.
- (iv) It was asked whether grass cutting work was routinely carried out and its frequency.
- (v) It was asked whether there was a mechanism to penalise contractors who failed to carry out grass cutting work according to service requirement.

6. The representative of TPDLO said that the Government adopted an "integrated approach" for tree management, i.e. it was the responsibility of a number of departments. The LandsD was responsible for providing non-routine tree maintenance on unallocated or unleased government land that was not maintained by any designated government departments. In view of the large number of land mentioned above, the department would arrange the essential clearing and maintenance work for seldom visited areas and prioritise work based on actual circumstances in

terms of hygiene, safety and departmental resources, etc. Upon receipt of complaints or referrals, the department would assign contractors to carry out on-site inspections and take follow-up actions, including tree pruning and removal, weeding and replying to the complainants, after confirming that the cases were within its purview.

7. The representative of HyD said that the department was responsible for the maintenance of public roads and associated facilities, such as expressways, slopes, weeds and fallen trees affecting road safety, etc., under its purview to protect the safety of road users. The department would not only arrange for the contractor to conduct a monthly inspection in Tai Po and issue notices requesting action of the contractor upon receipt of cases, but also handle the case forthwith upon receipt of any comments. If the case involved other departments, the department would invite the departments concerned to join force in handling so as to deal with the weed problem in a consistent manner.

8. Members' comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) It was suggested that coordination among departments be addressed.
- (ii) It was pointed out that some members of the public had reflected that the number of grass cutting work carried out this year was less than before.
- (iii) It was pointed out that overgrown weeds might affect motorists.
- (iv) They requested the departments concerned to respond in respect of the captioned paper.

(Post-meeting note: The Secretariat reported on the replies of departments to Members via email on 31 December 2024.)

III. 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 43/2024)

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

10. Members' comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) Noting that the riverbed of natural rivers in Plover Cove had been rising in recent years and the department did not carry out dredging of sludge to clear the natural

rivers during the clearance operations, they asked the EPD whether there was any legislation that imposed restrictions on the clearance operations.

- (ii) It was pointed out that the location of a river near Serenity Villa had changed due to heavy rains, resulting in river water flowing back into residences. It was asked how the department would deal with the situation.
- (iii) It was suggested that grass cutting work be arranged if the situation so warranted to prevent and control mosquitoes and snakes.

11. The representative of EPD said that Schedule 2 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (Cap. 499) set out the “designated projects requiring environmental permits”. In general, other departments would also contact the EPD when planning the relevant works, and the department would follow up accordingly.

12. The representative of DSD said that the clean-up responsibility for works at natural rivers was subject to the location of rivers. In addition, the department had inspected the vicinity of Serenity Villa and would contact Members after the meeting.

IV. 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 44/2024)

13. The representative of TPDO reported that inter-departmental joint operations had been conducted at Four Lanes in Tai Po Market, Heung Sze Wui Square and in the areas around Jade Plaza on 24 September, 25 September, 15 October and 24 October respectively. The TPDO would continue to work closely with relevant departments to monitor the situation of illegal extension of business by shops.

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

15. The representative of HKPF went through Appendix II to the captioned paper.

16. The representative of TPDLO went through Appendix III to the captioned paper.

17. The representative of HyD went through Appendix IV to the captioned paper.

18. The representative of BD went through Appendix V to the captioned paper.

19. The representative of EPD went through Appendix VI to the captioned paper.

20. Members' comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) They pointed out that there was loud hawking noise from a newly opened meat stall in Jade Plaza, and asked the EPD whether there were standards on noise measurement and how to measure the level of noise nuisance to the public.
- (ii) It was suggested that the Leisure and Cultural Services Department ("LCSD") be invited to the meeting.
- (iii) They said that there was accumulation of miscellaneous items, including decoration items and furniture, in the rear lanes of Tai Po Hui, and hoped that the department would step up inspection.
- (iv) They asked the FEHD why there was a huge discrepancy between the number of water seepage complaints received and that of the Nuisance Notices ("NNs") issued, and hoped that the department would consider increasing resources to handle complaints.

21. The representative of EPD said that the department had concerns about the hawking noise by shops in Jade Plaza. Staff would be sent to conduct on-site investigation regarding the hawking noise from the newly opened meat stall as mentioned by Members. Generally speaking, the noise arising from everyday life in public places such as bazaars was affected by various factors, and departmental staff would conduct on-site assessment. If the noise generated caused nuisance to others (e.g. hampering communication), the department would take enforcement actions depending on the circumstances. The department would further find out the situation of Jade Plaza from Members after the meeting if necessary.

22. The Chairman said that the LCSD was welcome to attend the meeting on relevant agenda items.

23. The representative of FEHD responded as follows:

- (i) To combat illegal acts of illegal dumping of refuse and bulky furniture, the department would arrange dedicated enforcement teams in plain clothes to take enforcement actions as well as arrangements would be made to remove abandoned articles, whereas construction waste would be followed up by other departments concerned. In addition, the department would place additional large-size waste containers at places where refuse was often discarded (e.g. near "three nil" buildings) for refuse collection so as to improve environmental hygiene.
- (ii) The handling of water seepage complaints involved the FEHD, BD and Water Supplies Department ("WSD"). The FEHD was mainly responsible for dealing with public health nuisance caused by leakage from defective sanitary fittings or

drainage pipes. The WSD was responsible for handling defective water pipes. The BD was responsible for dealing with the risk posed to the structural safety of buildings due to structural problems of buildings.

- (iii) Upon receipt of reports of water seepage, the cases would be referred to the Joint Office (“JO”) set up by FEHD and BD. Staff of the JO would be sent to the premises concerned for conducting inspection and investigation. If the source of water seepage identified fell into the nuisances (such as sewage seepage) stipulated in section 12 of the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap. 132) (“PHMSO”), the JO would issue a NN to the owners of the premises causing the seepage problem. Other cases not involving the nuisances under the PHMSO (including seepage of rainwater due to such structural defects of roofs, external walls or windows, or leakage from dilapidated fresh water mains, etc.) would be referred to relevant departments for follow-up actions by the JO, if necessary. If the relevant problem had been resolved in the course of the investigation and the seepage was stopped, the JO would not be required to issue a NN. The department had noted Members’ wish that the department would consider increasing resources to handle complaints, and it would relay the comments to the relevant staff.

24. Members’ comments were as follows:

- (i) It was understood that environmental hygiene matters were under the purview of different departments, but members of the public might not necessarily understand. It was suggested to enhance communication and coordination among departments.
- (ii) It was suggested that the department, having regard to the proper use of public funds, review whether manpower allocation of the contractors was appropriate.

25. The Chairman said that Members could also contact the relevant departments directly after the meeting on district matters such as environmental hygiene.

V. District Lands Office, Tai Po – Report on abandoned vehicles, illegal dumping of soil and inter-departmental bicycle clearance joint operations
(TPDC Paper No. FEH 45/2024)

26. The representative of TPDO reported on inter-departmental bicycle clearance joint operations, stating that operations had been conducted on 20 September, 27 September, 18 October and 31 October, during which a total of 1 286 notices were issued and 99 illegally parked bicycles were confiscated. In response to the illegal parking of bicycles at the pedestrian subway near MTR Tai Po Market Station (“TPM Station”), the TPDO had conducted ten

operations in the past ten months, issuing a total of 193 notices and confiscating 12 illegally parked bicycles. The TPDO noted that illegal parking of bicycles at the above location had persisted, causing obstruction to road users. In this connection, the TPDO had contacted the Transport Department (“TD”) to explore the feasibility of conducting clearance operations against illegally parked bicycles by invoking the Summary Offences Ordinance (Cap. 228) (“SOO”). Under such framework, the TD had to first define whether such illegally parked bicycles had caused obstruction to the public, and the Police would then request the TD to clear the bicycles under the SOO. The TPDO would post notices three hours prior to the clearance operations to remind the offenders to remove their illegally parked bicycles within the specified time period, otherwise, the bicycles would be confiscated in the clearance operations. The TD was studying the above practice. If the TD confirmed that operations could be conducted at the above location by invoking the SOO, the TPDO would further follow up by first displaying warning banners at conspicuous spots and then co-ordinating the operations.

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

28. Members’ comments and questions were as follows:

- (i) It was hoped that departments would pay attention to the problem of illegal parking of bicycles at Fu Shin Estate and private places.
- (ii) They asked about the timetable for the joint operations.
- (iii) They asked whether illegally parked shared bicycles would be dealt with as well in the joint operations.
- (iv) They expressed that sufficient bicycle parking facilities should be provided and the problem of illegal parking should also be addressed in terms of publicity, education and enforcement. They opined that consideration should be given to inviting the Care Teams to assist in publicity when necessary.
- (v) Noting that quite many bicycles were parked outside McDonald’s at Kwong Fuk Road, they asked whether action could be taken forthwith against such illegally parked bicycles.

29. The representative of TPDO said that bicycle clearance joint operations were conducted twice a month at present, and Members would be notified of the operation details by the Secretariat via email before each operation. The TPDO was aware of the suggestion to step up publicity and education as well as the situation at Kwong Fuk Road. It would review publicity and education work as well as strengthen the clearance operations at the said location.

30. The representative of TPDLO said that the joint operations would deal with the illegally parked shared bicycles found at the operation locations pursuant to the Land (Miscellaneous Provisions) Ordinance (Cap. 28) (“LMPO”), which was in the same way as other bicycles. The

TPDLO would post notices pursuant to section 6 of the LMPO requiring the occupiers to cease unlawful occupation on government land within the specified time period, otherwise, the TPDLO would take further action to take possession of and clear the bicycles in question. However, the TPDLO could take possession of the bicycles only when they had not been removed from the scene within the specified time period. Due to the high mobility of shared bicycles, the use of the LMPO to deal with the temporary illegal parking of shared bicycles would be of limited effectiveness.

31. A Member asked whether clearance operations against illegally parked bicycles could be conducted at the pedestrian subway near TPM Station by invoking the SOO next time.

32. The representative of TPDO said that the TPDO had reflected the situation to the TD. An assessment had to be conducted by the TD first. The TPDO would maintain liaison with the TD and report on the updates at the meeting in due course.

33. A Member asked whether it meant the TD would be involved in the joint operations.

34. The representative of TPDO said that a reply of TD was pending. If the TD confirmed that it was appropriate to carry out clearance operations against bicycles illegally parked at the location in question pursuant to the SOO, the TPDO would deal with it as expeditiously as possible.

VI. Marine Department and Food and Environmental Hygiene Department – Reports on the quantity of refuse collected from Tolo Harbour between September and October 2024
(TPDC Paper Nos. FEH 46/2024 and FEH 47/2024)

35. The Chairman asked Members to take note of the paper (No. FEH 46/2024).

36. The representative of FEHD went through the paper (No. FEH 47/2024).

VII. Tai Po District Office – Target operation locations for improvement of environmental hygiene in Tai Po District
(TPDC Paper No. FEH 48/2024)

37. The representative of TPDO went through the captioned paper.

38. The representative of TPDO added that the list of “target operation locations” (“TPLs”) should enumerate locations that required targeted actions and special attention by the departments concerned. If a location had been included in the regular follow-up locations of the department, there was no need to incorporate it in the list of TPLs. If the environmental hygiene condition of a location on the list had improved, it was suggested that the location in question be removed

from the list. In case a new TPL was suggested to be included in the list, the specific location, photos and reasons should be provided for follow-up action by the TPDO. The TPDO would conduct a review about once every four months.

39. A Member suggested that criteria for removing locations from the list be set out.

40. The Chairman asked Members if there had been improvement in the environmental hygiene condition of the locations on the list and they agreed to delete them from the existing list.

41. The Chairman confirmed that there was no objection from Members and thus agreed to delete the locations from the existing list.

VIII. Any other business

42. The representative of TPDO briefed on the coastal cleanup, stating that improving coastal environmental hygiene was one of the priorities of the District-led Actions Scheme for this year. To promote and increase the awareness of coastal environment protection, the TPDO would carry out coastal cleanup at the Shingle Beach in Nai Chung together with Tai Po District Youth Network, FEHD and EPD on the morning of 7 December. The TPDO would disseminate details via the Secretariat and Members were welcome to participate.

43. The Chairman said that regarding the problem of bird droppings at Wan Tau Kok Lane, during the inspection on 16 August, the LCSD and Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department said that they would hold an inter-departmental meeting with the LandsD and HyD in the fourth quarter of this year to remove the climbing plants after the breeding season of egrets, and the departments were requested to report on the progress in due course.

(Post-meeting note: The Secretariat had emailed Members on 19 December 2024 to report on the progress.)

44. The representative of TPDLO said that the problem of bird droppings at Wan Tau Kok Lane would be referred to the Section concerned for follow-up.

45. A Member suggested that the item of “matters arising” be added to the agenda of the meeting.

46. The Chairman concurred that some of the discussion items had to be followed up after the meeting.

47. A Member said that papers could be submitted by the deadline of the next meeting for further discussion pursuant to the District Council Standing Orders (“Standing Orders”).

48. The representative of the Secretariat said that discussion papers could be submitted by the deadline of the next meeting for further discussion if Members considered it necessary.

49. A Member added that pursuant to Order 57(1) of the Standing Orders, where a meeting had made a conclusion on a subject matter, no further discussion on the matter should be proposed within six months unless with the consent of the chairman of the meeting.

50. The Chairman said that Members were welcome to discuss the agenda items and follow-up items. Under normal circumstances, he would not disagree with the agenda items raised by Members.

51. A Member asked whether the FEHD could provide information on Year-end Clean-up Campaign.

52. The representative of the FEHD said that he had no relevant information at the moment and would provide it to Members as soon as possible once received.

(Post-meeting note: The FEHD would carry out Tai Po District 2025 Year-end Clean-up (“Clean-up”) from 6 January to 26 January 2025. The FEHD had furnished Members with the relevant papers by email via the Secretariat on 11 December 2024 and would report at the next meeting (8 January 2025).)

53. A Member suggested convening an informal meeting to discuss the arrangements for the Clean-up if necessary.

54. The Chairman said that arrangements could be made in a timely manner as required.

IX. Date of next meeting

55. The next meeting was scheduled to be held at 2:30 p.m. on 8 January 2025 (Wednesday).

56. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:02 p.m.