

(Translation)

Minutes of the 5th Meeting of
Food, Environment and Hygiene Committee (4/24-25)

Date: 24 October 2024

Time: 2:30 p.m.

Venue: Main Conference Room, Tsuen Wan District Office

Present:

Mr KOT Siu-yuen, MH (Chairman)

Mr TSANG Tai (Vice Chairman)

Mr KOO Yeung-pong, MH

Mr NG Chun-yu

Ms LAM Yuen-pun

Mr CHOW Sum-ming

Mr YAU Kam-ping, BBS, MH

Mr CHAN Chun-chung

Mr CHAN Sung-ip, BBS, MH

Mr MOK Yuen-kwan

Mr FUNG Cheuk-sum

Mr WONG Wai-kit, MH

Mr WONG Kai-chun

Mr CHENG Chit-pun

Mr LAU Chung-kong

Ms HA Wing-ka

Government Representatives

Mr KWAN Chun-kit, Eric

Assistant District Officer (Tsuen Wan),
Tsuen Wan District Office

Mr SO Yeung-fung

Chief Health Inspector (Tsuen Wan)1,
Food and Environmental Hygiene
Department

Ms WONG Fong, Fanny

Senior Environmental Protection
Officer (Regional West)2,
Environmental Protection Department

Tsuen Wan District Council Secretariat Representatives

Mr LIM Kuen	Senior Executive Officer (District Council), Tsuen Wan District Office
Miss LEUNG Wai-ching, Clementine (Secretary)	Executive Officer (District Council)1, Tsuen Wan District Office
Mr LI Hongfeng, Ken	Assistant Executive Manager (District Council)2, Tsuen Wan District Office

Attendance by Invitation:

For discussion of item 4

Mr LO Sai-cheong	Senior Engineer/Mainland South 2, Drainage Services Department
Mr LAI Chun-ming, Thomas	Engineer/14 (Harbour Area Treatment Scheme), Drainage Services Department

I Opening Remarks and Introduction

The Chairman welcomed Members and representatives from government departments to the 5th meeting of the Food, Environment and Hygiene Committee (FEHC).

2. The Chairman stated that no application for absence had been received from any Member before the meeting.

3. The Chairman stated that according to the requirements stipulated in the Tsuen Wan District Council Standing Orders, if a District Council (DC) Member found that he/she had any direct personal or pecuniary interests in a discussion item or relevant matters when attending a meeting of the Council or dealing with matters related to the Council, the DC Member should declare the interests. The Secretariat had not received any declaration of interests prior to this meeting. The Chairman enquired whether any Members had to make declarations of interests immediately. No Member made a declaration of interests immediately.

II Item 1: Confirmation of Minutes of the 4th Meeting held on 22.8.2024

4. The Chairman stated that the Secretariat had not received any proposed amendment prior to this meeting. The Chairman enquired whether Members had to put forth proposed amendments immediately. No Member put forth a proposed amendment immediately. Members unanimously endorsed the captioned minutes.

III Item 2: Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

5. The Chairman stated that there were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

IV Item 3: Concern about the Hygiene Issues and Rodent Infestation in Rear Lanes and Single-block Tenement Buildings in the Town Centre

(TWDC FEHC Paper No. 13/24-25)

6. The Chairman stated that Ms HA Wing-ka submitted the paper. The representative from the department responsible for giving response was Mr SO Yeung-fung, Chief Health Inspector (Tsuen Wan)¹ (CHI(TW)¹), Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD).

7. Ms HA Wing-ka introduced the paper.

8. CHI(TW)¹ of the FEHD responded as follows:

- (1) the Government had launched the “Cross-sectoral Territory-wide Anti-rodent Action” since the end of 2022 to carry out rodent prevention and control work on various fronts, including surveillance, operations and education. Hau Tei Square, Chuen Lung Street and Ho Pui Street were considered as the old areas of Tsuen Wan town centre. The FEHD had always been concerned about the environmental hygiene of these locations and had placed emphasis on its anti-rodent work;
- (2) the FEHD had already conducted a new Rodent Activity Survey (RAS) at its 19 districts across the territory in the first half of 2024. Thermal imaging cameras with artificial intelligence technology had been installed for surveillance of rodent activities and the new statistics would replace the conventional Rodent Infestation Rate (which was compiled in accordance with the ratio of sweet potato baits gnawed by rodents). The FEHD had installed thermal imaging cameras at about 100 locations in Tsuen Wan district in the first half of 2024 for conducting the RAS. During each survey, the thermal imaging cameras would operate for three consecutive days. The daily operating hours of the cameras would be from 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. of the following day, during which a thermal image would be captured at a two-minute interval. Artificial intelligence technology would then be used to analyse whether rodents were present in the thermal images for calculation of the “Rodent Absence Rate” (RAR). The RAR of Tsuen Wan district in the first half of 2024 was 96.9% and the black spots of rodent infestation (such as Hau Tei Square, Chuen Lung Street and Ho Pui Street) had been covered in the survey area. The survey results would help the FEHD allocate resources more appropriately and formulate targeted strategies of rodent control when carrying out the rodent prevention work, so that it could work concertedly with other departments, shop

operators and residents in the vicinity to step up relevant education for the implementation of rodent prevention and control measures;

- (3) apart from providing regular street cleaning services, the FEHD had also stepped up cleaning in the surrounding area of “three-nil” buildings and strengthened enforcement against illegal acts, such as placing of miscellaneous articles, indiscriminate disposal of waste and washing of utensils belonging to food premises at rear lanes in such areas. Over the past three months, the FEHD had issued a total of 258 fixed penalty notices to offenders contravening cleaning legislation, among which 117 were issued against illegal disposal of waste in a larger size (such as bagged refuse and cardboard boxes) to prevent such waste from being placed at the roadside until late night, thereby depriving rodents of their food sources. The FEHD had all along been working closely with the Tsuen Wan District Office (TWDO), and had given professional advice as well as technical support to the TWDO for its provision of one-off cleaning services to “three-nil” buildings while ensuring that rodent control measures were included in such services. The FEHD and TWDO had jointly conducted a publicity campaign on environmental hygiene and pest control at the “three-nil” buildings in the district on 16 October 2024, aiming to enhance residents’ knowledge on rodent prevention measures and to raise their awareness of maintaining environmental hygiene;
- (4) the FEHD would convene meetings of the Market Management Consultative Committees (MMCCs) on a quarterly basis. DC Members who were serving as members of the MMCCs and representatives from stall operators would attend the aforesaid meetings. The FEHD would strengthen its efforts in promoting anti-rodent messages among stall operators and discuss rodent control strategies with them at the meetings. The FEHD welcomed Members to participate in meetings of the MMCCs to reflect district-level views. Besides, the FEHD had started providing pest control services at public markets in Tsuen Wan district at night since July 2024, including placing of additional cage traps, poisonous baits and glue traps, etc.;
- (5) the FEHD’s overnight rodent control roving teams had carried out their work in Tsuen Wan district. As they had taken actions against the rodents’ habit of foraging at night, the effectiveness of the anti-rodent work had been notable;
- (6) the Code of Practice for Rodent Management published by the FEHD had been uploaded onto the website and would be distributed to property management companies through seminars and publicity activities. It had set out simple rodent prevention measures and ways to identify rodent activities for reference by the public;
- (7) the FEHD had placed additional Ekomile, glue traps and T-shaped bait boxes in public markets under its purview. With the T-shaped bait boxes having the capacity

- for holding more baits, the effectiveness of rodent control could be enhanced;
- (8) the FEHD and Housing Department (HD) jointly implemented the “Anti-Rodent Action in Estates” in public rental housing (PRH) estates. Relevant operations had been commenced in Shek Wai Kok Estate and Lei Muk Shue Estate. The FEHD would make complementary efforts in assisting the HD to gradually take forward the operations to other PRH estates in the district; and
 - (9) during the period from January to September 2024, the FEHD had organised a total of 48 publicity activities and exhibitions as well as 11 seminars on the promotion of anti-rodent messages. The key to rodent prevention and control was to maintain a hygienic environment and eliminate the three fundamental survival conditions of rodents, namely food, harbourage and passages. It included the elimination of food sources as well as hiding places of rodents and blockage of their dispersal routes. In addition to the efforts of the Government, anti-rodent work relied heavily on the participation of shop operators, property management companies and the public. Such work could only be effective and sustainable if all parties maintained environmental hygiene and properly disposed of waste at all times.

9. Assistant District Officer (Tsuen Wan) of the TWDO responded that the TWDO had always been concerned about the hygiene conditions of “three-nil” buildings. Under the District-led Actions Scheme (DAS) for Tsuen Wan district, one of the key areas of work was to strengthen the support for the cleaning of “three-nil” buildings. On 16 October 2024, the TWDO had arranged members of the Area Committee (Tsuen Wan South) to inspect the cleaning operation carried out at “three-nil” buildings, including the installation of anti-rodent devices. The TWDO would continue to carry out cleaning operations for “three-nil” buildings through the DAS.

10. The views and enquiries of Members were summarised as follows:

- (1) a Member opined that the difficulty in cleaning “three-nil” buildings lay in differentiating public areas from private areas. The Member commended the TWDO for handling various problems in the district through the DAS, and pointed out that cleansing efforts at some locations in “three-nil” buildings (such as stairways and rooftops) should be stepped up;
- (2) a Member pointed out that as the Tsuen Wan Market Street Refuse Collection Point was undergoing maintenance recently, the FEHD had provided large refuse bins in the vicinity for the public to dispose of refuse. The Member enquired whether the large refuse bins in such arrangement would become permanent refuse collection facilities like those provided at Yi Pei Square;
- (3) a Member reflected the views of stall operators of Yeung Uk Road Market, and

pointed out that the problem of rodent infestation had been improved. The Member hoped that the FEHD would continue to enhance the cleansing work in markets and at the pavements in its vicinity;

- (4) a Member was concerned about the possibility of violating the legislation on the prevention of cruelty to animals by using glue traps or other more cruel methods for catching rodents;
- (5) a Member opined that the FEHD should cooperate with local universities in scientific research to develop innovative methods of rodent control, since the effectiveness of conventional anti-rodent approaches had been unsatisfactory;
- (6) a Member pointed out that as many ground floor shops of single-block buildings and tenement buildings were food premises, the refuse from these food premises would easily attract rodents and thereby adversely affect the residents living in the residential units upstairs. The Member therefore considered that it was critical to educate restaurant operators to maintain environmental hygiene. The Member mentioned that there were many food premises in Tsuen Wan district, and proposed to fully implement the trial scheme of placing large refuse bins at rear lanes across the district to improve the rodent problem; and
- (7) a Member enquired about the 100 locations where thermal imaging cameras had been installed, and requested the FEHD to provide the FEHC with the RAR after conducting the RAS in the second half of 2024.

11. The Chairman suggested encouraging food premises to use covered refuse bins so that the food sources of rodents could be eliminated at root. He commended the FEHD's overnight rodent control roving teams for their performance, and enquired about the number of staff responsible for rodent control in Tsuen Wan district in these teams. In addition, he suggested that the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) should increase the frequency of emptying the conventional food waste bins in purple colour.

12. CHI(TW)1 of the FEHD responded as follows:

- (1) the Tsuen Wan Market Street Refuse Collection Point was undergoing refurbishment. The FEHD would place large refuse bins outside the refuse collection point concerned during the works period, and would deploy staff to collect refuse of such refuse bins in the morning and evening regularly;
- (2) being concerned that placing glue traps in public streets and rear lanes might affect other non-target animals, the FEHD mainly placed glue traps within the indoor area of the markets. At present, the use of glue traps at indoor area of the markets had received satisfactory results in rodent control;
- (3) the FEHD had all along been endeavoured to combat the disposal of domestic waste

in public streets, and would remind the persons concerned of the correct locations for proper waste disposal. Besides, if illegal acts of food premises adversely affecting environmental hygiene were identified, the FEHD would educate the operators concerned and instigate prosecution against them;

- (4) the FEHD would remind private contractors providing refuse collection services to manage their refuse bins properly. It would also carry out education and publicity among shop and stall operators who used such services to remind them that they should have communication with the respective contractors to increase the frequency of refuse collection if the refuse bins were used frequently;
- (5) the overnight rodent control roving teams had carried out anti-rodent operations at Yeung Uk Road Market, Tsuen Wan Market, Heung Che Street Market, Sham Tseng Temporary Market and Chai Wan Kok Cooked Food Market one after another in the past three months. 187 live rodents had been caught and 31 dead rodents had been collected in total;
- (6) the FEHD was implementing the trial scheme of placing large refuse bins at rear lanes of food premises in Lo Tak Court, and had been in close liaison with the operators concerned to monitor the situation of refuse bins and refuse collection; and
- (7) the FEHD would consider the locations for installing thermal imaging cameras in the second half of 2024 having regard to a number of factors such as the geographical environment of various locations, data on complaints about rodent infestation, data on rodents caught and opinions of local communities. Upon completion of the RAS in the second half of 2024, the FEHD would report the RAR of Tsuen Wan district to the FEHC again.

13. Senior Environmental Protection Officer (Regional West)² (SEPO(RW)²) of the EPD responded that the EPD had gradually installed food waste smart recycling bins in Tsuen Wan district. Such recycling bins had adopted an enclosed design and were equipped with a built-in disinfection function, which would be conducive to maintaining environmental hygiene. Refuse collection and the emptying of conventional food waste bins in purple colour placed at various locations in the district were undertaken by contractors engaged by the EPD. The EPD would ensure that the food waste bins were in normal operation, and would promptly arrange for the contractors to inspect and replace damaged recycling bins once identified.

V Item 4: Concern about the Progress of the Village Sewerage Programme in Tsuen Wan District

(TWDC FEHC Paper No. 14/24-25)

14. The Chairman stated that Ms LAM Yuen-pun, Mr WONG Kai-chun and Mr CHENG Chit-pun submitted the paper. The representatives from the department responsible for giving

responses were:

- (1) Mr LO Sai-cheong, Senior Engineer/Mainland South 2 (SE/MS2), Drainage Services Department (DSD); and
- (2) Mr LAI Chun-ming, Thomas, Engineer/14 (Harbour Area Treatment Scheme), DSD.

15. Ms LAM Yuen-pun, Mr WONG Kai-chun and Mr CHENG Chit-pun introduced the paper.

16. SE/MS2 of the DSD responded as follows:

- (1) the Government strived for implementing the Village Sewerage Programme (the “Programme”), which would progressively provide public sewerage facilities in rural areas with a view to improving the rural environment and enhancing the water quality of rivers and coastal waters;
- (2) under the Programme, public sewerage system works for 12 villages in Tsuen Wan had been completed, including Pai Min Kok Village, Sham Tseng Commercial New Village, Sham Tseng Kau Tsuen, Sham Tseng San Tsuen, Sham Tseng East Village, Sham Tseng Village, Sham Tseng West Village, Shu On Terrace, Ting Kau Village, Tsing Fai Tong New Village, Yuen Tun Village, Tsing Lung Tau Tsuen (including Tsing Lung Tau New Village);
- (3) besides, the Government had also constructed dry weather flow interceptors at five unsewered rural areas (including Sam Tung Uk, Kwong Pan Tin Tsuen, San Tsuen (Northeast), Fu Yung Shan and Fat Yip Lane, Hon Man Village), preventing pollutants from discharging into the bays of Tsuen Wan via stormwater drains. The works concerned had been completed at the end of 2023;
- (4) the Government was implementing and planning public sewerage works for five unsewered rural areas in Tsuen Wan district (including Chuen Lung, Lo Wai, San Tsuen, Wo Yi Hop and Sheung Kwai Chung) at present. Among them, the village sewerage works in Chuen Lung and Lo Wai had commenced in 2022 and were anticipated to be completed by the end of 2025. The village sewerage works in the remaining three rural areas could be launched only after the completion of the land resumption procedure and the receipt of approval for the funding applications from the Legislative Council. It was expected to take three to five years to complete these projects; and
- (5) the Government would plan for public sewerage works for unsewered areas in a timely manner, having regard to factors such as the extent of improvement in environmental conditions, population density in village, residents’ aspirations, technical feasibility, cost-effectiveness and resource availability. As regards areas not yet covered by the Programme (such as remote areas, sparsely populated areas or areas having serious technical difficulties for the works), the residents concerned

could continue to use septic tanks and soakaway systems for sewage treatment.

17. SEPO(RW)2 of the EPD responded that the EPD was responsible for the planning of village sewerage works, and the foundation works of public sewerage systems were undertaken by the DSD. As for the 12 villages in Tsuen Wan district with the public sewerage system works completed, the overall sewer connection rate was 98%. There were a total of 227 village houses suitable for sewer connection, among which 223 had already been connected to public sewers and the remaining four were more complicated cases. The EPD would continue to advise the villagers concerned to connect their houses to the sewers. Besides, it was anticipated that the public sewerage works in Chuen Lung and Lo Wai would be completed by the end of 2025. After the completion of these works, the EPD would hold a briefing session to explain to villagers and village representatives about the legal and technical requirements for connection to public sewers. In case villagers encountered technical constraints, the EPD would also provide them with assistance. Under the Water Pollution Control Ordinance, villagers were required to carry out proper connection of pipes within a prescribed period. If villagers failed to complete such requirement, the EPD might issue a notice to them in accordance with the law. Regarding the current situation of Tsuen Wan district, the EPD had not issued any notices since all villagers had complied with the aforementioned requirement.

18. A Member expressed appreciation for the Programme. The Member understood that the departments concerned might encounter certain difficulties in implementing the Programme at villages which had not been resited. For example, it would take time to complete the land resumption procedure. The Member hoped that the DSD would avoid reducing the availability of the existing usable land as far as possible when it considered the locations for pipe laying.

VI Item 5: Information Paper

Work Report on Environmental Pollution Control in Tsuen Wan District (1 July 2024 to 30 September 2024)

(TWDC FEHC Paper No. 15/24-25)

19. Members noted the content of the captioned paper.

VII Item 6: Information Paper

Work Report on Environmental Hygiene in Tsuen Wan District

(TWDC FEHC Paper No. 16/24-25)

20. A Member pointed out that improvement had been seen in the Area Gravidtrap Indices for *Aedes albopictus* (AGI) in Tsuen Wan district, and enquired whether the FEHD had taken any effective measures to achieve such result. Besides, the Member enquired how the FEHD

determined the frequency of cleaning septic tanks/aqua privies. The Member also enquired why there was an increase in the number of complaints about the problem of water dripping from air-conditioners being handled.

21. CHI(TW)1 of the FEHD responded that the AGI would be affected by various factors including the weather (such as the rainfall during the rainy season) and the number of gravidtraps used in the surveys. Moreover, there were no fewer than six public toilets using septic tanks in Tsuen Wan district. The FEHD would arrange for cleaning on a regular basis having regard to the utilisation rate of these public toilets. As the frequency of cleaning the septic tanks in each public toilet was different, it would affect the figures in the report of that month. Furthermore, the number of complaint cases about water dripping from air-conditioners being handled had increased because it took time to handle such complaint cases, including that the FEHD would issue Notices of Intended Entry and Nuisance Notices in cases where water dripping from air-conditioners were detected, and would arrange for subsequent enforcement and follow-up actions if the persons concerned failed to comply with the Nuisance Notices.

VIII Adjournment of Meeting

22. The Chairman reminded Members that the next meeting was scheduled for 19 December 2024 (Thursday) and the deadline for submission of papers was 4 December 2024 (Wednesday).

Tsuen Wan District Council Secretariat

5 November 2024