

立法會
Legislative Council

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Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene

**Subcommittee on
Issues Relating to Animal Welfare and Cruelty to Animals**

**Minutes of 4th meeting
held on Monday, 9 May 2016, at 10:45 am
in Conference Room 2 of the Legislative Council Complex**

Members present : Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, GBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon Claudia MO (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan, JP
Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen
Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen, BBS, JP
Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan
Hon Alvin YEUNG Ngok-kiu

Members absent : Hon CHAN Hak-kan, JP
Hon CHAN Han-pan, JP

Public Officers attending : Item II

Ms Hinny LAM Shuk-yee
Principal Assistant Secretary for Food and Health (Food) 3

Miss Swing YAU Sze-wing
Assistant Secretary for Food and Health (Food) 5

Dr Henry CHEUNG Siu-ming
Principal Veterinary Officer
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Dr Mary CHOW Ka-wai
Senior Veterinary Officer (Animal Management) Development
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Dr Esther TO Man-wai
Senior Veterinary Officer (Animal Management) Operations
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Dr Michelle YEUNG Lee
Senior Veterinary Officer (Technical Services)
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Clerk in attendance : Miss Josephine SO
Chief Council Secretary (2) 2

Staff in attendance : Ms Wendy LO
Senior Council Secretary (2) 2

Ms Camy YOONG
Clerical Assistant (2) 2

Action

I. Matters arising from previous meetings

The Subcommittee deliberated (index of proceedings attached at **Annex A**).

2. Members raised no query on the Administration's responses respectively to the views and concerns expressed by deputations at the meeting on 22 March 2016 (LC Paper No. CB(2)1425/15-16(02)) and to issues raised by members at the meeting on 25 April 2016 (LC Paper No. CB(2)1425/15-16(04)).

II. Government's efforts in management of stray animals

3. At the invitation of the Chairman, Principal Veterinary Officer of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department briefed members on the policy and measures adopted by the Government on the management of stray animals, details of which were set out in the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(2)1425/15-16(05)).

Action

Follow-up actions required of the Administration

Admin

4. The Administration was requested to provide written response to issues raised by members as set out in **Annex B**.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's response was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(2)1566/15-16(01) on 24 May 2016).

III. Any other business

5. The Subcommittee completed its study on issues within its ambit and agreed that the next meeting originally scheduled for Tuesday, 7 June 2016, from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon be cancelled.

6. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:32 pm.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
9 August 2016

**Proceedings of the meeting of the
Subcommittee on Issues Relating to Animal Welfare and Cruelty to Animals
on Monday, 9 May 2016, at 10:45 am
in Conference Room 2 of the Legislative Council Complex**

Time marker	Speaker	Subject(s)/Discussion	Action Required
000430 - 000438	Chairman	The Chairman's opening remarks.	
<i>Item I - Matters arising from previous meetings</i>			
000439 - 000629	Chairman	Members raised no query on LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1425/15-16(02) and (04) provided by the Administration.	
<i>Item II - Government's efforts in management of stray animals</i>			
000630 - 001603	Chairman Admin	Briefing by the Administration on the Government's efforts in the management of stray animals (LC Paper No. CB(2)1425/15-16(05)).	
001604 - 002704	Chairman Deputy Chairman Admin	<p>In response to the Deputy Chairman's enquiry, the Administration advised that its policy objective was to ensure that animals and people co-existed in Hong Kong in a harmonious way. In achieving this, there was a need to strike a balance between the well-being of people in Hong Kong on the one hand and the welfare of animals on the other.</p> <p>Enquiry on the Administration's consultation with stakeholders on the proposed amendments to the Public Health (Animals and Birds) (Animal Traders) Regulations (Cap. 139B) ("the Regulations").</p>	
002705 - 003712	Chairman Mr Steven HO Admin	<p>Noting that the number of stray dogs caught due to complaints had decreased from 5 800 in 2011 to 2 412 in 2015, Mr Steven HO sought details of the measures taken by the Administration to reduce stray dogs. He asked whether the total number of stray animals in the community had also dropped as a result of the measures taken.</p> <p>The Administration's response that :</p> <p>(a) the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department ("AFCD") had put in place a series of measures to manage stray animals, such as adopting a catch and removal approach aimed at reducing the nuisances at source and controlling the number of stray animals, strengthening public education on</p>	

Time marker	Speaker	Subject(s)/Discussion	Action Required
		<p>responsible pet ownership and promoting adoption of stray animals. The measures were bearing fruit in controlling the stray animal population;</p> <p>(b) under the current legislation, dogs aged over five months should be licensed, microchipped and vaccinated against rabies. AFCD would continue to educate dog owners on the legislative requirements through different means, so as to prevent and control the spread of rabies;</p> <p>(c) AFCD had made reference to overseas experience in formulating measures to control stray animals. For instance, AFCD was assisting the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the Society for Abandoned Animals in implementing a three-year Trap-Neuter-Return ("TNR") trial programme for stray dogs in designated zones, with a view to assessing the effectiveness of TNR as a means to reduce the stray dog population and associated nuisances; and</p> <p>(d) on the management of stray cattle, AFCD had implemented since late 2011 the "Capture-Sterilization-Relocation" ("CSR") programme in Sai Kung and Lantau Island, in a bid to minimize the nuisances caused by stray cattle while safeguarding their welfare.</p>	
003713 - 004425	Chairman Mr CHAN Chi-chuen Admin	<p>Referring to a recently reported case of animal cruelty, Mr CHAN Chi-chuen called on the Administration to explore the extension of the microchipping and licensing schemes to cats, so as to help owners reclaim their missing cats. The Administration advised that it would continue to strengthen promotion of responsible pet ownership to reduce the number of stray animals.</p> <p>Noting that in general, microchip-implanted animals would stay in the Animal Management Centres ("AMCs") temporarily for 10 to 20 days and those without a microchip would stay for at least four days to allow time for their owners to reclaim them, Mr CHAN expressed concern as to whether unclaimed animals which were assessed to be suitable for adoption would be euthanized in the end when there were</p>	

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		<p>insufficient animal keeping facilities at AMCs for housing them.</p> <p>The Administration advised that unclaimed animals that were in good health and assessed by a veterinary surgeon as having a gentle temperament and suitable for adoption would be transferred to animal welfare organizations ("AWOs") for adoption by members of the public. While the utilization of the animal keeping facilities at AMCs was constantly at a high level, animals which were assessed to be suitable for adoption would be detained for a long period until they were transferred to AWOs for adoption.</p>	
004426 - 005717	Chairman Ms Cyd HO Admin	<p>In response to Ms Cyd HO's enquiry, the Administration gave an account of its past consultations with District Councils ("DCs") on the implementation of the TNR trial programme.</p> <p>Ms Cyd HO called on the Administration to solicit support from DCs to extend the trial programme to other districts.</p>	
005718 - 010642	Chairman Mr Alvin YEUNG Admin	<p>Mr Alvin YEUNG's enquiry and the Administration's response concerning AFCD's assessment of the suitability of stray animals for adoption. The Administration advised that AFCD did not keep statistics on the detention periods of stray animals at AMCs.</p> <p>Mr YEUNG was of the view that the Administration should consider setting up more AMCs for sheltering stray animals and extending the minimum detention periods of stray animals in AMCs, so as to allow more time for pet owners to reclaim their missing pets.</p> <p>The Administration's advice that AFCD had four AMCs across the territory. These centres were set up for the purpose of providing services to the public, such as vaccination and licensing of dogs, as well as temporarily housing animals under rabies quarantine, stray animals caught or animals surrendered by owners which were pending adoption. These AMCs were not designated to keep stray animals or animals surrendered by owners on a long-term basis. This notwithstanding, AFCD</p>	

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		<p>would keep in view the utilization of the animal keeping facilities at AMCs and the need for expanding their capacities.</p> <p>Responding to Mr YEUNG's enquiry on whether AFCD would make an interim assessment on the effectiveness of the TNR trial programme, the Administration advised that AFCD had commissioned an independent consultant for the timely assessment of the programme. AFCD would review the situation regularly during the three-year trial period and consider the way forward taking into account the outcome of the trial programme.</p>	
010643 - 012237	Chairman Dr Helena WONG Admin	<p>Dr Helena WONG expressed concern on whether stray cattle, particularly those on Lantau Island, would become extinct as a result of the implementation of the CSR programme.</p> <p>The Administration explained that while AFCD would capture, sterilize and relocate stray cattle to remote locations under the CSR programme in a bid to control the number of stray cattle and minimize the nuisances caused by them, AFCD did not have the slightest intention of exterminating stray cattle and it would not set a target on the number of stray cattle to be sterilized. As there were practical difficulties in capturing stray cattle in the rural areas for conducting surgical operation and the use of a contraceptive drug named Gonacon yielded a success rate of about 70% in sterilizing cattle, sterilization alone would only reduce the population of stray cattle.</p> <p>In response to Dr WONG, the Administration advised that AFCD had sterilized about 300 stray cattle since the implementation of the CSR programme. At the request of Dr WONG, the Administration undertook to provide a breakdown of the number of stray cattle sterilized by AFCD since the implementation of the CSR programme in late 2011, by their distribution in different districts/rural areas of Hong Kong.</p> <p>Dr WONG considered that the Administration should explore other measures for managing stray cattle, such as providing support to AWOs for identifying suitable sites in the rural areas for developing open cowsheds as feeding and</p>	<p>Admin (item (c) of Annex B refers)</p> <p>Admin (item (d) of Annex B refers)</p>

Time marker	Speaker	Subject(s)/Discussion	Action Required
		<p>resting places for stray cattle, so as to enable the cattle to live in a safe and natural environment without having to wander around any more, and to mitigate the nuisances caused by stray cattle to the local community.</p> <p>The Administration advised that it had received proposals in recent years from various AWOs for constructing cattle shelters for stray cattle with the provision of fodder and water in a few locations on the Lantau Island. Most of the proposed sites, however, were close to traffic and residential areas. It was therefore difficult for the Administration to lend support to these proposals. Nevertheless, the Administration would consider the feasibility of any such further proposals on the merits of each case, taking into account factors including the location of the site proposed, the land use status of the site identified, and how AWOs intended to go about taking care of the stray cattle.</p> <p>The Chairman's enquiry and the Administration's response concerning the testing and effectiveness of the contraceptive drug for stray cattle.</p>	
012238 - 012751	Chairman Deputy Chairman Admin	<p>The Deputy Chairman's further enquiry on the Administration's consultation with stakeholders on the proposed amendments to the Regulations.</p> <p>The Deputy Chairman's view that the Administration should control the number of wild pigs by sterilization. She called on the Administration to consider disbanding the two wild pig hunting teams to stop hunting operations. The Administration's response on strategies adopted by AFCD in controlling wild pig population.</p>	
012752 - 013149	Chairman Mr Steven HO Admin	<p>Mr Steven HO expressed support for the implementation of the CSR programme for managing stray cattle. He requested the Administration to provide the following information:</p> <p>(a) among the 2 412 stray dogs caught by AFCD in 2015, the number of stray dogs with microchip implanted; and</p> <p>(b) the number of convicted cases and the</p>	Admin (items (a) and (b) of Annex B refer)

Time marker	Speaker	Subject(s)/Discussion	Action Required
		penalty imposed, including the heaviest penalty, by the court in the past five years on persons convicted of the offence of "abandonment of animals" and "improper control of dogs" under the Rabies Ordinance (Cap. 421); and whether the Administration would consider reviewing the maximum penalty levels for such offences to enhance the deterrent effect.	
013150 - 014035	Chairman Mr CHAN Chi-chuen Admin	<p>Regarding Mr CHAN Chi-chuen's suggestion of extending the microchipping and licensing schemes to cats, the Administration explained that as cats contracted with rabies were more prone to go into hiding, the risk of infected cats spreading rabies was relatively lower than in the case of infected dogs. Having regard to the risk posed to public health, the habits and the welfare of the animals in question, the requirement of getting vaccinated, microchipped and licensed under the Rabies Regulation was only applicable to dogs.</p> <p>Mr CHAN enquired about the criteria and performance indicators for evaluating the effectiveness of the TNR trial programme and whether the Administration had monitored and assessed other voluntary TNR programmes operated by AWOs.</p> <p>The Administration advised that the extent of decrease in the population of stray dogs in the designated trial zones and the associated nuisance were important indicators, among others, for assessing the effectiveness of the programmes.</p>	Admin (item (e) of Annex B refers)
014036 - 014835	Chairman Admin Deputy Chairman Mr Steven HO Clerk	Cancellation of the meeting originally scheduled for 7 June 2016. Conclusion of work of the Subcommittee and preparation of report.	

Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene

Subcommittee on Issues Relating to Animal Welfare and Cruelty to Animals

List of follow-up actions

Date of meeting	Follow-up action required	Administration's response
9 May 2016	<p>In the context of discussing the item "Government's efforts in management of stray animals", the Administration was requested to provide the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) among the 2 412 stray dogs caught by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department ("AFCD") in 2015, the number of stray dogs with microchip implanted; (b) the number of convicted cases and the penalty imposed, including the heaviest penalty, by the court in the past five years on persons convicted of the offence of "abandonment of animals" and "improper control of dogs" under the Rabies Ordinance (Cap. 421); and whether the Administration would consider reviewing the maximum penalty levels for such offences to enhance the deterrent effect; (c) a breakdown of the number of stray cattle sterilized by AFCD since the implementation of the "Capture-Sterilization-Relocation" programme in late 2011, by their distribution in different districts/rural areas of Hong Kong; 	Response from the Administration awaited.

Date of meeting	Follow-up action required	Administration's response
	<p>(d) whether the Administration would offer support to the animal welfare groups for identifying suitable sites in the rural areas of Hong Kong for developing open cowsheds (牛棚) as feeding and resting places for stray cattle, so as to mitigate the nuisances caused by stray cattle to the local community; and</p> <p>(e) the criteria and performance indicators for evaluating the effectiveness of the three-year "Trap-Neuter-Return" trial programme for stray dogs launched by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the Society for Abandoned Animals in designated zones.</p>	