

Panel on Environmental Affairs
Subcommittee on Refuse Collection and Resource Recovery

Supplementary Information

At the Subcommittee meeting on 5 June 2017, Members asked for supplementary information on several issues. It is set out below for Members' reference:

Management of yard waste

(a) *the quantities of yard waste (i) collected and (ii) disposed of at landfills by individual government departments in each of the past three years;*

2. The quantities of yard waste (i) collected and (ii) disposed of at landfills by various government departments in the past three years are set out in **Annex**.

Provision of price subsidies in respect of recyclables

(b) *the operating costs incurred by the Government for each tonne of waste collected and disposed of at landfills;*

3. A breakdown of the 2015-16 total costs for collection, delivery, transfer and disposal of waste at landfills is provided below:

	(\$/tonne)
Collection and delivery of waste*	237
Transfer of waste	193
Disposal of waste at landfills	184
Total cost per tonne	614

* Household waste collection and delivery service is mainly provided by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department ("FEHD").

(c) *whether the Administration would consider making reference to Taiwan to provide price subsidies in respect of recyclables, with a view to minimising the impact on the recycling trade arising from fluctuations in the market prices of recyclables and enhancing recovery of recyclables, and taking into account the public expenditures that will otherwise be incurred if the recyclables are*

not recovered/recycled but disposed of at landfills;

4. The “Hong Kong Blueprint for Sustainable Use of Resources 2013-2022” (“the Blueprint”) published in May 2013 has laid out a clear strategy for taking multiple and concurrent actions to encourage waste reduction at source, enhance reuse and recovery of resources as well as promote clean recycling. We are committed to implementing various initiatives in the Blueprint to facilitate the long-term sustainable development of the recycling industry. Amongst other things, we will continue to support the recycling businesses to upgrade their operational efficiency through the Recycling Fund, so that the industry as a whole would become more resilient to market fluctuations. We have no plans to provide direct price subsidies on individual recyclables.

Resource recovery and recycling

(d) the roles to be played by the Community Green Stations ("CGSs"), Community Recycling Centres and community recycling projects operated by non-profit organisations/non-government organisations ("community recycling projects") in the long run under the Government's planning, including whether and how the said facilities/projects will complement each other, and whether a dedicated fund will be set up to enhance support to community recycling projects on a long-term basis;

5. The Government established the Environment and Conservation Fund (“ECF”) pursuant to the provisions of the Environment and Conservation Fund Ordinance (Cap. 450) in August 1994 for funding educational and research projects in relation to environmental and conservation matters. Over the past years, the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council (“LegCo”) approved capital injections to the ECF on seven occasions with a total provision of \$6.735 billion. The ECF has been providing funding support to community recycling projects including Community Recycling Centres¹ (“CRCs”) and other community recycling projects operated by eligible organisations.

¹ The ECF has been providing funding support since 2008 for non-profit-making organisations to set up recycling centres in older districts with many single-block multi-storey residential buildings without proper property management bodies. Apart from recovery of recyclable materials of relatively low economic value which are mainly waste plastics, the project organisations also promote source separation of waste amongst residents in their respective service areas. There are currently 18 such projects in 14 districts in Hong Kong.

6. In the 2013 Policy Address, the Government further announced the plan to progressively develop one Community Green Station (“CGS”) in each of the 18 districts and provide funding for their operation. Operated by non-profit-making organisations, CGSs will enhance environmental education and help collect different types of recyclables, especially those of low economic value including electrical appliances, computers, glass beverage bottles, compact fluorescent lamps and tubes, rechargeable batteries, etc., in the local community, with a view to promoting green living at the community level.

7. CGSs and other ECF-funded programmes will complement one another. CGS operators are required to set out in their operation plans the specific arrangements to complement services provided by other local recyclers, local recycling shops, and other recycling programmes sponsored by both the private sector and the Government in delivering their services, including in particular educational services and recyclables collection services. The operation plans will have to be approved by the Environmental Protection Department (“EPD”), and EPD will monitor their implementation.

8. On the other hand, to facilitate waste source separation by residents of single-block buildings particularly those in older districts, 18 CRCs funded by the ECF have been set up covering various districts in the territory. The CRCs have established close community networks, which are conducive to the provision of on-the-spot promotion and education on waste reduction, clean recycling as well as source separation and recycling of waste plastics bottles and other low value recyclables. With funding support from the ECF, the CRCs also deliver the waste plastic bottles received to suitable recycling outlets. While the ECF will continue to consider, on the merits of individual projects, granting support to eligible non-governmental organisations to carry out various community waste reduction and recycling projects, the Government will also explore additional roles for the CRCs taking into account relevant waste management initiatives.

(e) whether the Administration would consider incorporating relevant requirements in the contracts of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department's street cleansing services to undertake resource recovery; and

9. Based on the current mode of operation of waste recycling and street cleansing services, FEHD considers it not appropriate and operationally challenging for the staff of the FEHD's street cleansing

services contractors (“contractors”) to conduct waste sorting and recycling activities while cleaning the streets. The contractor’s street sweepers are responsible for daily street sweeping and washing, waste collection, clearing of rubbish bins / dog excreta collection bins, and removal of unauthorised bills and posters. Conducting waste sorting on the streets will cause environmental hygiene nuisance to the public, obstruct the passage, and affect the image of the city. Indeed, FEHD does not allow staff of the contractors to pick recyclables from refuse in conducting street cleansing services. According to the past operating experience, most of the recyclables mixed with refuse are contaminated with low recycling value. Currently, the working area of the street sweepers is very broad, including pedestrian walkway, alley, open area and grass field, etc. Requiring them to collect and transport recyclables will lengthen the working process of street sweeping and lower the efficiency. As the quantity of recyclables is low and they are highly contaminated, it will not be economical to require the street sweepers to undertake sorting of recyclables concurrently.

Other issues

(f) updates on the following subjects (which are currently on the Subcommittee's list of outstanding items for discussion), including the planned timing, if any, for briefing the Panel on Environmental Affairs on related matters:

(i) support for local community on recycling – Community Recycling Network and CGSs;

10. EPD has been progressively developing the CGSs in the 18 districts to reinforce environmental education at the community level and enhance assistance to local communities in the collection of recyclables. The first two CGSs in Sha Tin and Eastern District which commenced operation in 2015 have established an extensive service network, with a coverage rate of up to 90% of the population in their respective districts, providing support to the collection of low-value recyclables in the community. CGSs in Kwun Tong and Yuen Long commenced operation in January 2017, and the CGS in Sham Shui Po is expected to come into operation later this year. Construction works of four other CGSs are underway and the sites of four other CGSs have been confirmed with planning and design work in progress. For the remaining five districts, we will continue with the site search and the

associated preparation work having regard to the actual operation of the other projects.

11. As for the Community Recycling Network which has been supporting the collection and recycling of low-value recyclables generated from residential buildings without proper building management, we will explore ways to strengthen the support for collection and recycling of waste plastic bottles that have been properly separated at source. Our current plan is to, by early 2018, expand the scope of service of the CRCs to receive also waste plastic bottles delivered from other private housing estates and residential buildings (i.e. buildings with some form of property management) on a need basis. The CRCs will continue to receive subsidies from the ECF to transport the waste plastic bottles collected to suitable recycling outlets. In the longer term, to achieve better operational efficiency and cost effectiveness, we are examining the possibility for introducing a service to centrally collect the waste plastic bottles received by the CRCs across the territory for delivery to competent recyclers for onward processing, having regard to the prevailing circumstances including the volume of waste plastic bottles to be received from various residential buildings.

(ii) progress and effectiveness of producer responsibility schemes; and

12. We updated the LegCo Panel on Environmental Affairs (“EAP”) in January 2017 on the progress of preparation for implementing the Producer Responsibility Scheme (“PRS”) on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (“WPRS”). Subsequently, we introduced the relevant subsidiary legislation for LegCo’s scrutiny in April 2017. Subject to the progress of preparatory work, we plan to implement the WPRS in phases in this and the next year. As regards the PRS on glass beverage containers, we are evaluating the tender submissions for glass management contracts and plan to update the EAP in early 2018 on the latest developments. Furthermore, as announced in 2017 Policy Address, we will look into the feasibility of implementing a PRS targeting at suitable plastic containers. We expect that the tendering exercise for the consultancy study will commence in the third quarter of 2017.

(iii) management of construction waste

13. Pursuant to the Waste Disposal (Charges for Disposal of Construction Waste) Regulation (Amendment of Schedules) Notice 2016,

the new charges under the Construction Waste Disposal Charging Scheme have taken effect since 7 April 2017. We will conduct further reviews of the construction waste disposal charges on an annual basis. Meanwhile, as announced in the 2017 Policy Address, the Government is also preparing the legislation required to mandate the use of a Global Positioning System on construction waste collection vehicles to combat illegal depositing of construction waste. We plan to consult the EAP on the proposed regulatory framework in end 2017.

Environmental Protection Department
July 2017

Annex

Quantities of yard waste collected and disposed of at landfills by various government departments in the past three years

Department ¹	Weight of yard waste collected (tonnes)			Weight of yard waste disposed of at landfills (tonnes)		
	2016	2015	2014	2016	2015	2014
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department	72	80	80	40	0	0
Architectural Services Department	1757	— ²	— ²	1689	— ²	— ²
Civil Engineering and Development Department	2100	— ²	— ²	2100	— ²	— ²
Drainage Services Department	450	480	460	430	460	440
Highways Department	2800	4770	2370	2730	4710	2370
Leisure and Cultural Services Department	3600	3600	3600	3440	3453	3439
Water Supplies Department	4	3	10	2	1	4
Total	10783	8933	6520	10431	8624	6253

Note: 1 : Government Departments with relevant records of yard waste.
 2 : Relevant data has not been recorded.