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11 December 2019

Mr Anthony CHU
Clerk to Public Accounts Committee,
Legislative Council Complex,
1 Legislative Council Road,
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Mr Chu,

Public Accounts Committee

Consideration of Chapter 1 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 73

**Planning, provision and management of public toilets by
the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department**

I refer to your letter of 3 December 2019 requesting us to provide the information to facilitate the Public Accounts Committee's consideration of Chapter I of the Director of Audit's Report No. 73. The requested information is set out at Annex for reference.

Yours sincerely,

(Miss Maggie Chow)
for Commissioner for Tourism

c.c.	Secretary for Food and Health	(fax no. 2526 3753)
	Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene	(fax no. 2524 1977)
	Director of Architectural Services	(fax no. 2810 7341)
	Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury	(fax no. 2147 5239)
	Director of Audit	(fax no. 2583 9063)

**Legislative Council
Public Accounts Committee**

Consideration of Chapter 1 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 73

**Planning, provision and management of public toilets by
the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department**

Question

With reference to paragraph 2.32 of the Audit Report, has the Tourism Commission ("TC") provided views to the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department ("FEHD") for providing new public toilets or refurbishing existing public toilets at popular scenic areas/tourist spots in the past three years. If yes, details for the correspondence with TC and FEHD.

Reply

In the past three years, TC provided views to FEHD on its public toilets in the vicinity of tourist spots requiring improvement on the following occasions:

- (a) TC conveyed the views of the Peak Tower to FEHD on the renovation and cleanliness of the toilets at Peak Tower and Star Ferry Multi Storey Car-park in 2017;
- (b) TC conveyed concerns on the cleanliness of public toilets raised by a member of the public, including the public toilet at the Central Market, to FEHD in October 2017;
- (c) TC recommended FEHD to improve the cleanliness of the Yim Tin Tsai Public Toilet in January 2018;
- (d) TC recommended FEHD to improve the cleanliness and repair damaged facilities of Lai Chi Wo Public Toilet in February 2018; and
- (e) TC provided FEHD a list of public toilets which are in the vicinity of tourist spots and required improvement in May 2018 upon FEHD's request.

Correspondence between TC and FEHD in respect of the above cases are summarised in the table below.

Date of the Correspondence	Content of the Correspondence
(a) Peak Tower Public Toilet and Star Ferry Multi Storey Car-park Public Toilet	
12 January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● TC wrote to FEHD conveying the concerns and suggestions raised by the Peak Tower (“PT”) on the toilet renovation project regarding the design of the toilet, including adopting a design theme for the renovated toilet, increasing the number of toilet bowl, widening the toilet doors, signage for toilets, etc. PT also urged for enhancing the standard of cleaning services and maintenance for damaged facilities for the public toilets at Peak Tower and Star Ferry Multi Storey Car-park. ● TC invited FEHD to consider the concerns and suggestions raised by PT, and revisit the project brief for the renovation.
26 January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● FEHD replied that the concerns and suggestions raised by PT had been conveyed to the Architectural Services Department (“ArchSD”) and its consultant. The suggested items would be well addressed and the consultant would try to meet the requests made by PT. ● Regarding the condition of the two public toilets concerned, FEHD had conducted inspections and reminded cleaning contractors to upkeep the hygiene condition of the toilets.
2 February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● TC wrote to FEHD recapping the telephone discussion between the two parties – it was understood that ArchSD’s consultant would address some of the concerns and suggestions raised by PT; for those not addressed at that moment, technical feasibility would be explored. ● FEHD was requested to remind ArchSD’s consultant to maintain close contact with PT and share with them relevant information.
17 February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Upon the receipt of latest schematic design proposal from FEHD, TC wrote to FEHD seeking clarification on whether PT’s suggestion for a design theme and widening the toilet entrances could be adopted. ● TC requested FEHD, ArchSD and its consultant to explain the latest plan to PT and address any outstanding issues/concerns before approving the design. ● TC stressed that a toilet renovation plan and design which would enhance visitors’ experience and impression about Hong Kong would be desirable, and hoped that FEHD and ArchSD would refine the plan as far as resources permit.
17 February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● FEHD replied and reported the latest development on PT’s suggestion for a design theme and widening the toilet entrances. By copy of the reply, FEHD requested ArchSD to refine the toilet renovation plan as far as resources permit, and urged its consultant to continue to liaise with PT closely to address their concerns and

Date of the Correspondence	Content of the Correspondence
	resolve outstanding issues.
14 September 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● TC wrote to FEHD stating that PT could not get in touch with FEHD in the past few months on the progress of the toilet renovation project. TC relayed the comments of PT to FEHD again for reconsideration. ● TC reiterated that a toilet renovation plan commensurating with the Peak as a key tourism icon of Hong Kong would be welcome. FEHD was requested to favourably reconsider the issues raised by PT where resources permit.
29 September 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● FEHD replied that the proposed design of the toilet had been discussed at the meeting of the Working Group on Upgrading the Public Toilet (WG) on 21 Feb 2017. WG was informed and duly considered the points raised by PT. WG generally endorsed the design proposal, with some minor comments raised on the layout plan, colour scheme and ventilation system. ● FEHD added that WG requested the project consultant to liaise with PT in the past months to resolve the technical and interface issues as necessary. The project consultant would continue to keep in touch with PT regarding the site works schedule and interface with the renovation works of the common corridor.
5 December 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● TC wrote to FEHD conveying the comments raised by PT. Among various comments, PT suggested reviewing the provision of cubicles by better utilising the space available and the unique location of the toilet.
19 December 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● FEHD replied that the design proposal was sent to PT on 8 November 2017. The layout plans would be further revised to take into account PT's latest suggestions on the provision of toilet compartments.
(b) Northern Frontage of Central Market Public Toilet and Jubilee Street Public Toilet	
24 October 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In response to a public enquiry, TC wrote to FEHD requesting it to address the unpleasant conditions of public toilets in Hong Kong, especially the ones inside Central Market. TC requested FEHD to provide updates on efforts done to ensure the cleanliness of the public toilets and whether new initiatives would be implemented to further improve the situation to facilitate preparation of a reply to the member of the public.
6 November 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● FEHD supplemented that various measures had been carried out by FEHD to ensure the hygiene and cleanliness of the public toilets under their management. The measures include regular daily thorough cleansing, arrangement of stationed toilet attendant

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	<p>at frequently-used public toilets, regular and surprise inspections to check the cleansing contractors' performance, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● FEHD also replied that a working group has been set up with ArchSD to discuss on how to enhance FEHD's public toilets with a modern and harmonised design so as to improve public perception. ● As to the two public toilets at Central Market, namely Northern Frontage of Central Market Public Toilet and Jubilee Street Public Toilet, FEHD replied that while they have inspected the two toilets on its cleanliness, the toilets had been handed over to the Urban Renewal Authority for their management in October 2017.
(c) Yim Tin Tsai Public Toilet	
17 January 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● TC wrote to FEHD conveying the observations at Yim Tin Tsai Public Toilet during two site recces conducted in November 2017 and January 2018. Given the insanitary conditions at the public toilet, TC recommended FEHD to help improve the cleanliness of the public toilet by different measures including further strengthening the cleansing service, provision of a stationed toilet attendant and conducting regular inspections to ensure the cleanliness of the toilet is up to the standard.
25 January 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● FEHD replied that deep cleansing works had been conducted at the Yim Tin Tsai Public Toilet and the general hygienic condition of the Public Toilet was found satisfactory. On the other hand, while FEHD could not arrange stationed toilet attendant due to the low daily usage rate at the public toilet, FEHD had asked its frontline staff to step up inspection on its cleanliness. [Remarks: FEHD has completed the facelifting works of the said Public Toilet in October 2019 and its overall hygienic condition has significantly improved.]
(d) Lai Chi Wo Public Toilet	
5 February 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● TC wrote to FEHD conveying the observations at Lai Chi Wo Public Toilet during a site recce conducted in January 2018. Given the insanitary conditions at the public toilet, TC recommended FEHD to help improve the cleanliness of the public toilet by different measures including further strengthening the cleansing service, provision of a stationed toilet attendant, stepping up regular inspections, as well as arranging repair works for damaged facilities so as to ensure the cleanliness level of the toilet.
20 June 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● FEHD replied that deep cleansing and regular desludging works had been conducted at the Lai Chi Wo Public Toilet and the

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	<p>general hygienic condition of the Public Toilet was found satisfactory. FEHD had also requested ArchSD to limewash the ceiling of the toilet. Furthermore, FEHD would closely monitor the situation and frontline staff had been asked to step up inspection to ensure cleanliness of the public toilet.</p>
(e) List of public toilets requiring improvements	
16 April 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● FEHD sought TC's input on the list of public toilets at major tourist spots which required improvements.
11 May 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● TC provided a list of 24 public toilets¹ and related opinions to FEHD after consultation with HKTB, TIC and other stakeholders.
4 September 2018 and 12 September 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● FEHD updated TC on the tentative implementation schedule of the improvement works on the 23 public toilets².

¹ The list of 24 public toilets provided by TC to FEHD included San Ma Tau Street Public Toilet, Peak Tower Public Toilet, Man Yiu Street Public Toilet, Old Peak Road Public Toilet, Lok Ma Chau Control Point (North) Public Toilet, Lok Ma Chau Control Point (South) Public Toilet, Lok Ma Chau Public Transport Interchange Public Toilet, Lai Chi Wo Public Toilet, Ap Chau (I) Public Toilet, Yim Tin Tsai Public Toilet, Tsim Sha Tsui Ferry Concourse Public Toilet, Tsim Sha Tsui East Public Transport Interchange Public Toilet, Repulse Bay Public Toilet (near Life Saving Association), Stanley Municipal Services Building Public Toilet, Repulse Bay Beach Road Public Toilet, Stanley Waterfront Public Toilet, Repulse Bay Bus Terminus Public Toilet, Repulse Bay Public Toilet (near No.16 Repulse Bay Beach Road), Stanley Main Street Public Toilet, Apliu Street Public Toilet, Shek Tsai Po Street Public Toilet, Southorn Centre Public Toilet, Expo Drive East Public Toilet, as well as a public toilet at Central Harbourfront.

² As the public toilet at Central Harbourfront was under the management of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department ("LCSD"), FEHD referred the case to LCSD for follow-up in June 2018.