

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)1807/12-13
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Panel on Environmental Affairs

Minutes of meeting
held on Monday, 24 June 2013, at 2:45 pm
in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex

Members present : Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan (Chairman)
Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun,
BBS, MH, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Vincent FANG Kang, SBS, JP
Hon CHAN Hak-kan, JP
Hon CHAN Kin-por, BBS, JP
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon Claudia MO
Hon Steven HO Chun-yin
Hon WU Chi-wai, MH
Hon Gary FAN Kwok-wai
Hon Charles Peter MOK
Hon CHAN Han-pan
Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok
Hon KWOK Wai-keung
Hon Dennis KWOK
Hon SIN Chung-kai, SBS, JP
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, BBS, MH, JP
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen

Members attending : Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming
Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, JP

Members absent : Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan
Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, JP
Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan

Public Officers attending : **For item IV**

Mr WONG Kam-sing, JP
Secretary for the Environment

Miss Vivian LAU, JP
Deputy Secretary for the Environment

Mrs Dorothy MA
Principal Assistant Secretary for the Environment (Energy)²

Professor LAM Kin-che
Chairman of the Task Force on External Lighting

For item V

Mr WONG Kam-sing, JP
Secretary for the Environment

Ms Michelle AU
Political Assistant to Secretary for the Environment

Dr Ellen CHAN, JP
Assistant Director (Environmental Infrastructure)
Environmental Protection Department

Mr SIN Kwok-hau, JP
Assistant Director (Operations)³
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Clerk in attendance : Ms Miranda HON
Chief Council Secretary (1)¹

Staff in attendance : Mrs Mary TANG
Senior Council Secretary (1)¹

Miss Mandy POON
Legislative Assistant (1)¹

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I. Confirmation of minutes

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1331/12-13 — Minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2013)

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2013 were confirmed.

II. Information paper issued since last meeting

2. Members noted that the following paper had been issued since the last meeting -

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1278/12-13(01) — Referral memorandum from the Public Complaints Office on the views given by a member of the public regarding the policy on waste management (Chinese version only) (Restricted to Members))

III. Items for discussion at the next meeting

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1339/12-13(01) — List of follow-up actions

LC Paper No. CB(1)1332/12-13(02) — List of outstanding items for discussion

LC Paper No. CB(1)1274/12-13(01) — Letter dated 6 June 2013 from Hon KWOK Wai-keung and Hon TANG Ka-piu proposing to discuss the control over the noise of street arts performances (Chinese version only)

LC Paper No. CB(1)1358/12-13(01) — Letter dated 20 June 2013 from Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN proposing to discuss issues relating to the conservation of Chinese White Dolphins (Chinese version only)

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3. Members agreed to include the following in the list of outstanding items for discussion by the Panel –

- (a) Exercising control over the noise of street arts performances - raised by Mr KWOK Wai-keung and Mr TANG Ka-piu in their letter dated 6 June 2013 issued under LC Paper No. CB(1)1274/12-13(01) (members of the Panel on Home Affairs to be invited to attend for discussion); and
- (b) Issues relating to the conservation of Chinese White Dolphins - raised by Dr Kenneth CHAN in his letter dated 20 June 2013 issued under LC Paper No. CB(1)1358/12-13(01) (to be discussed under the subject of "Protection of endangered species from the impact of construction works", i.e. item 8 on the list of outstanding items, and members of the Panel on Economic Services were to be invited to attend for discussion as the construction of the third runway would affect the Chinese White Dolphins).

4. Members also agreed to discuss the following items at the next regular meeting scheduled for Monday, 22 July 2013, at 2:30 pm -

- (a) Mandatory fuel switch at berth for ocean going vessels in Hong Kong waters; and
- (b) Upgrading the diesel standard for local vessels.

It was agreed that the public would be invited to give views on item (b) above.

IV. External lighting in Hong Kong

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1332/12-13(03) — Administration's paper on "External lighting in Hong Kong"

LC Paper No. CB(1)1332/12-13(04) — Background brief on "External lighting in Hong Kong" prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat)

5. Professor LAM Kin-che, Chairman of the Task Force on External Lighting ("C/TFEL") briefed members on the progress of work of the Task

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Force on External Lighting ("the Task Force") by highlighting the salient points of the discussion paper.

6. Mr WONG Kwok-hing said that the Government should have the needed determination to regulate external lighting to protect the public from light nuisance. As an elected Member of the Hong Kong Island, he had received many complaints from residents of Wan Chai, Causeway Bay and North Point on excessive external lighting. They supported the regulation of external lighting, particularly from flashing signs and video walls which affected the quality of their sleep. With reference to the two options for regulating external lighting, i.e. the voluntary charter scheme whereby owners and management pledged to switch off their lighting installations at a preset time and the introduction of legislation to mandate the switch-off requirement, he would support the legislative approach as this would be more effective than the charter scheme given enterprises' reluctance to comply for business reasons. The legislative control on external lighting, if implemented, should be similar to noise control. He also supported that a voluntary approach be adopted pending the introduction of legislation which would take time. He hoped that business enterprises could discharge their corporate responsibility by complying with the switch-off requirement for the protection of the community.

7. The Secretary for the Environment ("SEN") responded that he had visited busy commercial districts at night to understand the nuisance caused by excessive external lighting and its impact on the community. He considered that there was a need to regulate excessive external lighting which had been affecting the community. C/TFEL noted Mr WONG's suggestions and said that he and members of the Task Force had conducted three site visits to experience the nuisances associated with excessive external lighting.

8. Mr CHAN Hak-kan was of the view that, given the density of development in Hong Kong, the proposed switch-off requirement by the Task Force was a practical solution. He sought details of the proposed implementation, such as the preset time, the scope of switch-off requirement and the timing for public consultation. With reference to the breakdown of complaints against external lighting by districts as set out in Annex B to the discussion paper, he noted with concern that following the introduction of the Guidelines on Industry Best Practices for External Lighting Installations ("the Guidelines") in 2012, the number of complaints had not dropped. In fact, the number of complaints in Yuen Long had increased from 11 in 2011 to 18 in 2012. The only district which had a significant decrease in the number of complaints was Tsuen Wan, which dropped from 13 in 2011 to 2 in 2012. He said that the successful experience gained in Tsuen Wan should be applied to other districts.

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9. C/TFEL said that the Task Force would conduct an engagement exercise in the next two months to consult stakeholders and the public on the appropriate preset time (i.e. whether 11 pm to 7 am or midnight to 7 am); the scope of the switch-off requirement and exemptions to be granted; and the implementation approach. The Deputy Secretary for the Environment ("DS/Env") said that following the promotional efforts on the Guidelines upon their introduction in 2012, owners of external lighting installations were willing to comply with the Guidelines by reducing the intensity of the lighting and stopping the flashing of lights after certain hours. Some of the owners had advanced the switch-off time of their lighting installations. In general, they were willing to cooperate upon receipt of complaints about excessive external lighting. In view of the value of the Guidelines, it would be useful to further step up promotional efforts on the Guidelines.

10. Mr KWOK Wai-keung said that members of the community would support introducing control on excessive external lighting which had been affecting their quality of sleep. As the number of complaints against excessive external lighting had not dropped, he enquired about the actual improvements that had been made following the complaints. He also enquired if the increase in the number of complaints was attributable to the increase in advertisement signs and decorative lighting. He supported that as a start, the switch-off requirement should be set from midnight to 7 am, to be gradually tightened at a later stage if necessary. The exemptions to be granted for security, safety or operational reasons would need to be carefully examined lest business operators might circumvent the requirement by claiming that the lighting was needed for safety or security reasons. He was aware that Shenzhen residents had been complaining about the excessive external lighting from the Hong Kong side.

11. SEN responded that the Task Force would be consulting the public on the appropriate preset time, the scope of the switch-off requirement and exemptions to be granted. Regarding the complaint from Shenzhen residents on the excessive external lighting from the Hong Kong side, DS/Env said that the Hong Kong Police Force had responded to the complaint and had explained that there was a need for sufficient lighting at the border for security reasons. She added that while the total number of complaints against external lighting had remained largely the same in recent years, the number of complaints in relation to building facades and features had reduced significantly from 58 in 2011 to 5 in 2012. As regards the increase in complaints about essential external lighting installations such as those installed at swimming pools, car parks, cargo handling areas etc., the Administration would continue to follow up the complaints to address the concerns raised by the complainants. On the exemptions to be granted, C/TFEL said that the lighting necessary for security

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and safety would be exempted from the switch-off requirement, and the Task Force would welcome views from stakeholders and the community-at-large on exemptions to be granted. Members' concerns about any possible circumvention of the switch-off requirement by business operators would be conveyed to the Task Force.

12. Mr CHAN Kin-por shared the concern that the number of complaints had not dropped despite the introduction of the Guidelines. He enquired about the follow-up actions to be taken upon receipt of complaints and the number of complaints which had subsequently been resolved. As business operators would wish to have their external lighting switched on late into the night for promotional and advertising purposes, the switch-off requirement would unlikely be welcomed. There would thus be a need for extensive consultation with stakeholders, who might have invested heavily on their external lighting installations. C/TFEL said that wide public consultation would be held with stakeholders and the community-at-large on the switch-off requirement. DS/Env said that the number of complaints against building facades and features had decreased in 2012 following the introduction of the Guidelines. While there were complaints about the intensity of external lighting from facilities such as container terminals and sports grounds, such lighting was necessary for security and operational reasons.

13. Mr Christopher CHUNG stated that he would support the implementation of a voluntary charter scheme first before giving consideration to introducing legislation to mandate the switch-off requirement. With the signing of the voluntary charter scheme by the trades, the Task Force would be in a better position to assess their reaction to the control on external lighting. This would also facilitate the preparation of legislation to mandate the switch-off requirement which might take a long time to complete. He added that the community was not only concerned with the intensity of lighting, but also the light nuisance caused by flashing signs and video walls. He enquired if studies had been conducted on the impact of such nuisance on public health and whether any control could be exercised, similar to that for noise nuisance. C/TFEL responded that the consultancy study undertaken before setting up of the Task Force also looked at the light nuisance associated with non-static lighting such as flashing signs and video walls, but its impact on public health had not been studied in detail. He was aware of members' concern on the health impact caused by light nuisance and he agreed that the Task Force should follow up on the issue. Mr CHUNG considered it necessary that more studies on the health impact of non-static lighting be conducted and reference should be made to overseas experience.

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14. Mr Dennis KWOK enquired about the light pollution control on designated projects under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (Cap. 499) ("EIAO") and whether this had been looked into by the Task Force. As the Technical Memorandum of EIAO had provided for light pollution control under the visual impact assessment, he enquired if it was possible to enhance those provisions to enable enhanced control on light pollution. C/TFEL replied that the Task Force had not closely examined the means of control on light pollution under EIAO. As only designated projects were subject to control under EIAO, the light pollution arising from lighting installations would not fall under the remit of EIAO. DS/Env said that unlike noise levels which could be measured in terms of decibels, there were no widely-accepted numeric or quantitative standards for measuring light nuisance. Overseas legislation on lighting control had exempted the lighting necessary for safety, security and operational need.

15. Mr Tony TSE pointed out that it would be difficult to regulate excessive external lighting in the absence of standards on lighting control. Light nuisance could be caused by the reflected glare from sunlight which was common in buildings with glass curtain walls. It could also be caused by excessive lighting from advertisement signs as well as sky glow which resulted from the brightening of the night sky caused by artificial lighting and natural atmospheric and celestial factors. To avoid these light nuisances, there was a need to design buildings to prevent reflected glare and to regulate artificial lighting. In addition to ensuring compliance with building safety requirements, the Buildings Department could be asked to impose control on external lighting of buildings by regulating the lighting intensity and specifying the operating hours of lighting installations. This would provide for more effective and timely control on external lighting of buildings. Noting the significant reduction in the number of complaints in Tsuen Wan, he shared the view that the successful experience gained should be applied to other districts. C/TFEL said that members' suggestions and views would be conveyed to the Task Force. In response to members, the Administration would explain the reasons for the significant reduction in the number of complaints against external lighting in Tsuen Wan so that the successful experience gained could be applied to other districts.

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16. Mr Vincent FANG opined that advertisement lighting was vital to the retail business in Hong Kong, being a cosmopolitan city and the Pearl of the Orient. He acknowledged the concerns about the disturbance caused by excessive external lighting from over-sized advertisement signboards, particularly in commercial-cum-residential districts. There would be a need to reduce the intensity of lighting from advertisement signboards which were overly bright and to regulate the operating hours of non-static lighting.

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However, with the switch-off requirement in place, street lighting would have to be correspondingly increased for security and safety reasons. There should be a balance between the different forms of lighting. He also enquired whether internal lighting, i.e. the lighting of shop windows, would need to comply with the switch-off requirement. SEN said that there had been requests for the control of excessive external lighting which had been affecting the community. Following the introduction of the Guidelines, many shop operators had switched off their advertisement signboards after midnight. The Administration would try to balance the needs of the trades and the community in the regulation of external lighting.

17. Mr Albert CHAN supported the need for both policy and legislative control on excessive external lighting. Standards should be set such that external lighting should not exceed certain intensities. A switch-off requirement at a preset time should be applied to decorative and promotional lighting. He considered it necessary to regulate the excessive street lighting in districts like Tung Chung where the pedestrian footbridges at Yat Tung Estate were installed with street lamps every one and a half feet. Such degree of illumination would be excessive and would constitute energy wastage.

18. Mr WONG Kwok-hing further urged for the implementation of legislative control on excessive external lighting which should be the way forward in achieving the right balance among different forms of lighting. He hoped that the legislative approach would be included in the 2014 Policy Address and requested the Administration to convey his view to the Chief Executive. He also enquired about the means to resolve the complaints on excessive external lighting given that there was no control at present. SEN noted Mr WONG's request. DS/Env explained that the complaints about light nuisances were lodged at the branch offices of the Environmental Protection Department ("EPD"). Upon receipt of complaints, EPD staff would approach the owners of the lighting installations requesting them to mitigate the light nuisances.

19. Noting that the Task Force would be conducting an engagement exercise in the next two months to consult stakeholders and the public on the switch-off requirement, the Chairman enquired about the stakeholders to be consulted, the scope and duration of consultation, and the timing for the introduction of legislative control. As the academics who had been invited to attend the meetings of the Subcommittee on Air, Noise and Light Pollution had indicated that prolonged exposure to excessive external lighting could suppress secretion of melatonin and adversely affect biological rhythms in humans, there was a need to legislate on the control of excessive external lighting. While it might be difficult to quantify lighting intensity, it would be easier to implement a switch-

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off requirement at a preset time. As lighting necessary for safety, security and operational reasons would be exempted from the switch-off requirement, she was concerned that some shop operators might try to circumvent control by claiming that their lighting installations had to be switched on after the preset time for security reasons. She also hoped that there would be coordination between the Environment Bureau ("ENB") and the Development Bureau on the control of lighting intensity and size of advertisement signboards with a view to reducing their adverse impact on the community.

20. C/TFEL replied that the stakeholders to be consulted would include property owners, tourist trades, district representatives and any other interested parties. SEN added that the Task Force would be submitting a report to the Administration after collating the views received from the consultation exercise to be conducted in July and August 2013, after which the recommendations would be put forward to the Panel for consideration.

21. The Chairman thanked C/TFEL for attending the meeting and she hoped that the legislative process would start in the next legislative session.

V. Monitoring the outsourcing of the collection of recyclable materials and promotion of the recycling trade

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1332/12-13(05) — Administration's paper on "Monitoring the outsourcing of the collection of recyclable materials and promotion of the recycling trade")

22. SEN briefly introduced the strategy, targets, policies and action plans for waste management as set out in the "Hong Kong: Blueprint for Sustainable Use of Resources 2013-2022" ("the Blueprint") released in May 2013. The Assistant Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Operations)³ ("AD/FEH(O)3") explained the monitoring of the contract for recyclables collection in public places.

Promotion of the recycling trade

23. Mr SIN Chung-kai enquired if measures could be put in place to incentivize the recycling of plastic bottles and create a market for the purpose, similar to the recycling of waste glass beverage bottles. Given that plastics were non-biodegradable, the recycling of plastics would minimize their disposal at landfills. The Assistant Director of Environmental Protection (Environmental Infrastructure) ("ADEP(EI)") said that assistance had been provided to non-

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government organizations such as the Yan Oi Tong in the recycling of plastics at the EcoPark. As the Mainland authorities had tightened the control on the import of waste plastics, recyclers had been informed of the more stringent import requirements, i.e. the recycled plastics would have to be cleaned and free from contamination and shredded for export to the Mainland. SEN said that the Blueprint had set out the timeframe for implementing the various Producer Responsibility Schemes ("PRS") for different kinds of recyclable materials. A PRS on plastic beverage bottles would be studied in future.

24. Mr WU Chi-wai was concerned about the lack of efforts in creating outlets for recyclable materials. As recyclable materials which were contaminated could not be recycled for use, they would have to be disposed at landfills. This explained why the recyclable materials collected by waste separation bins had been disposed of at landfills. There was a need to work out a practical policy on waste recycling by adding value to the recyclable materials. The Government would also need to invest in recycling operations and identify outlets for recyclable materials. He also enquired about the whereabouts of waste plastics which could not be exported to the Mainland. SEN responded that waste plastics which could not be exported had been closely monitored to ensure that they would not be disposed of at landfills. The Administration had also been stepping up efforts in the recycling of recyclable materials such as waste glass beverage bottles and waste electrical and electronic equipments ("WEEE") etc. The implementation of the waste charging scheme would assist in the reduction and recycling of waste. Sites in the EcoPark had been leased out to recyclers engaged in the recycling of different kinds of waste, including waste wood and plastics.

25. Mr KWOK Wai-keung opined that more needed to be done by the Government in the recycling of waste, including the provision of supporting recycling facilities. For instance, the Government should help to build plants in the EcoPark. The recyclable materials should be recycled as far as possible, even if they were not of economic value, so as to reduce the pressure on landfills. SEN said that ENB would implement the various waste recycling initiatives in the Blueprint. As different recycling operations had different operating requirements, it might not be desirable for the Government to provide the recycling facilities for use by recyclers. ADEP(EI) added that EPD had been assisting EcoPark tenants in the submission of building plans to the Buildings Department. It had also been assisting tenants to source recyclable materials, for example, by requesting restaurants to supply waste oil to the waste cooking oil recycler at the EcoPark. The green procurement policy advocated by the Government had also assisted in providing a market for products made from recyclable materials.

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26. Mr YICK Chi-ming was concerned that as waste recyclers were operating on land granted on short-term tenancies, they would not make long-term capital commitments in their waste recycling operations. There was thus a need for the Government to provide land and funding support to assist recyclers in the recycling of waste. It should also consider engaging waste recyclers in the recycling of waste. ADEP(EI) agreed on the need for the provision of land with longer term lease to waste recyclers to enable them to establish waste recycling operations on a longer term basis. In general, recyclables of higher values such as scrap metals and waste papers were collected and processed by recyclers under open market forces and direct government assistance was not essential. However, recyclables of low values, including waste plastics, glass bottles, WEEE and wood, would require some assistance to make their collection and recycling viable. While management contractors would be appointed for implementing the PRS on waste glass beverage bottles and WEEE, further thoughts would be given to the need for engagement of management contractors for other forms of recyclables.

27. As recyclables of low values including waste plastics, glass bottles, WEEE and wood would require assistance to make their collection and recycling viable, the Chairman said that members of the Labour Party had requested the Government to set aside a recurrent expenditure of \$2 billion per year to assist recyclers in the recycling of waste and to conduct technological research to improve product designs, with a view to creating 10 000 job opportunities. SEN responded that assistance would be given to the collection and recycling of recyclables of low commercial values in the development of a circular economy. The PRS on waste glass beverage bottles and the waste charging scheme would provide the needed incentive to encourage waste recycling.

28. The Chairman further said that as food waste constituted 44% of the total waste generated in Hong Kong, there was a need to expand the planned capacities of the two Organic Waste Treatment Facilities ("OWTFs") which together would be capable of handling only 500 tonnes of food waste per day, as against the generation of over 3 000 tonnes of food waste per day. She also supported the provision of food waste recycling facilities in every district. SEN explained that while there were plans to expand the OWTFs, there would be constraints in doing so. He advised that the two OWTFs, together with the organic treatment facilities at the EcoPark, would be able to treat about one-sixth of the food waste generated per day. At the Chairman's request, the Administration would advise whether it was feasible to expand the food waste treatment capacities of the two planned OWTFs, and if it was not, the reasons for that.

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29. Mr WU Chi-wai enquired whether the Administration was aware that a local manufacturer of plastic mats had been relying on imported waste plastics rather than those generated locally. He considered it necessary that use should be made of locally generated waste plastics so that they would not be disposed of at landfills and that a survey should be conducted on the recyclables in Hong Kong. He would support that more assistance be provided to waste recyclers in the recycling of recyclables with low commercial values. SEN said that efforts would be made to encourage the use of locally generated recyclables in the manufacture of products.

30. Mr KWOK Wai-keung said that members of the Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions would support the setting up of an environment fund to assist in the development of environmental industries. The environment levy collected from PRS as well as the savings generated from the implementation of environmental initiatives should be ploughed back to the environment fund. As he noticed that the three-colour waste separation bins located in many parts of Hong Kong had not been properly utilized, he supported that there should be more publicity to promote their proper use. There was also a need to increase the proportion of the three-colour waste separation bins as against the provision of litter bins which was at present in the ratio of 1:7. SEN said that there was a need to promote waste avoidance, and hence the use of plastic water bottles and disposable products should be avoided as far as possible. Meanwhile, promotional efforts on waste segregation and clean recycling would be stepped up to facilitate the recycling process. The Chairman concurred on the need to avoid the supply and use of disposable cutlery and chopsticks.

Monitoring arrangement for recyclables collection

31. Mr Albert CHAN stated that he failed to see why the Government had outsourced the collection of recyclables when it should be providing the service on its own. As it turned out, the contractor had not been performing to a satisfactory standard. Given that the waste generation per capita in Hong Kong was much more than that of South Korea and Taiwan, there had been dereliction of duty on the part of the Government in waste reduction and recycling. He considered that large plastic bags should not be used for collecting waste as this would generate more non-recyclable waste. He also said that the recycling of waste glass and food waste should be proceeded with in parallel with other PRS, so as to relieve the pressure on landfills. More land should be allocated in each district for the provision of recyclables collection points.

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32. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok questioned the accuracy of the 48% recovery rate in Hong Kong as he was aware that some of the recyclables collected by the three-colour waste separation bins were disposed of at landfills. He sought a

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breakdown on the amount of recyclables such as waste plastics, wood and papers which were generated, recycled, exported and disposed of at landfills. The breakdown would provide useful reference on the means to improve waste reduction and recycling. He also noted with concern that while three million tonnes of recyclable materials were generated in Hong Kong each year, the EcoPark was only able to deal with 50 000 tonnes of such materials each year. He further enquired about the progress of PRS on WEEE. ADEP(EI) said that the management contractor for the WEEE treatment plant would be appointed by open tender in July/August 2013.

33. Mr YICK Chi-ming pointed out that he had received complaints from the public that the contractor appointed to provide recyclables collection service did not perform well and was found to have disposed of the recyclables collected from separation bins at landfills, instead of delivering them to recyclers in accordance with the contract. The Government should closely monitor the contractor's performance to ensure its compliance with the service requirements. AD/FEH(O)3 explained that while the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department ("FEHD") was responsible for engaging the contractor for the collection of recyclables from three-colour waste separation bins at schools and public places, it was not responsible for the collection service in MTR stations and private developments. SEN said that efforts would be made to enhance the collection service in both public and private places.

34. Dr Kenneth CHAN said that as several government departments were involved in the collection of recyclables from waste separation bins, he enquired if there were any difficulties in coordinating the collection of recyclables. In view of the increased occurrence of irregularities and unsatisfactory performance of the contractor for recyclables collection, he saw the need for closer monitoring of the collection service. It might also be necessary to have a department taking the lead in the overall supervision of the collection service.

35. SEN responded that lessons had been learnt from the outsourcing of the recyclables collection service. There would be cross-departmental cooperation to improve the service. AD/FEH(O)3 said that as the performance of the contractor for the collection of recyclables from waste separation bins was not satisfactory, FEHD had increased the frequency of regular inspections and strengthened the surprise checks through inspection in plain clothes. It had also taken stringent enforcement actions under the provisions of the contract, including the issuance of verbal warnings, written warnings, and notices of default to the contractor. Improvement had been seen after the stepping up of supervision. FEHD had held regular meetings with EPD and other relevant departments on the means to improve the collection service, including adjustments in the location of three-colour waste separation bins.

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36. Ms Claudia MO was of the view that the appointment of only one contractor for the collection service would likely lead to monopolization. She suggested that in future, the collection service should be contracted out to at least three contractors with one each in Hong Kong, Kowloon and the New Territories. She said that she had been in receipt of numerous complaints from the public on the improper treatment of segregated waste collected from the three-colour waste separation bins. There was also a need to promote public awareness on clean recycling by avoiding the contamination of recyclables to be placed in the separation bins. The Political Assistant to Secretary for the Environment agreed on the need to promote public awareness on clean recycling so that the recyclables to be placed in the waste separation bins would be cleansed and free from contamination. For example, waste plastic bottles should be cleansed and their caps and paper labels should be removed before being put into the separation bins.

VI. Any other business

37. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:45 pm.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
17 September 2013