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**Paper for the meeting of the
Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene
on 9 July 2013**

Proposal for appointment of a Subcommittee on Hawker Policy

Purpose

This paper invites members of the Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene ("the Panel") to endorse a proposal for the appointment of a Subcommittee on Hawker Policy ("the Subcommittee") under the Panel.

Background

2. Issues relating to hawkers and hawking, especially the lack of a long-term hawker policy, are of grave concern to the Panel. Members are generally of the view that hawking activities could foster district economic development, and hawker areas are places where the grassroots could make their living and consumers could buy inexpensive merchandises. While in the past, the hawker policy might be mainly for the purposes of relocating hawkers, controlling environmental hygiene problems and reducing obstruction to pedestrians and traffic caused by on-street hawking activities, with the development of the society, members have stressed that the hawker policy should keep abreast of the times. They also consider it necessary for the Administration to conduct a comprehensive review on the hawker policy.

3. The Administration has re-issued a limited number of hawker licences subject to conditions subsequent to its review on the hawker licensing policy in 2008 and 2009. Following the two major fires broke

out at the hawker stalls at Fa Yuen Street in December 2010 and November 2011 respectively, the Administration has, on the one hand, strengthened enforcement against irregularities in the hawker areas and on the other hand, introduced a basket of measures to improve the management of the hawker areas in order to reduce the fire risk posed to nearby residents. The Administration has also recently launched a five-year assistance scheme to provide financial assistance to hawkers operating in the 43 fixed pitched hawker areas for stall reconstruction and relocation. Despite all these initiatives, members have expressed deep disappointment at the Administration's failure to map out a comprehensive and long-term hawker policy to improve the management and operating environment of hawker areas and revitalize the hawking trade. In this connection, members consider it high time to review the hawker policy. At its meeting on 21 June 2013, the Panel agreed that a subcommittee should be formed under the Panel to follow up on issues relating to hawkers and hawking.

Proposed terms of reference

4. The proposed terms of reference of the Subcommittee are as follows -

"To study and review the hawker policy with the objectives of facilitating the long-term development of the hawking trade and improvement of the management and operating environment of the hawker areas and make timely recommendations."

Proposed work plan

5. The proposed work plan of the Subcommittee is set out in the table below -

| Subject | Number of meeting(s) |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Setting the policy framework for the revitalization and long-term development of the hawking trade | 1-2 |
| Examining the need and arrangement for the issue of new hawker licences | 1-2 |

| Subject | Number of meeting(s) |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Improving the management and operating environment of hawker areas | 1-2 |
| Exploring the feasibility of establishing hawker bazaars on a district basis | 1-2 |
| Recommending initiatives for the further development of the hawking trade | 1-2 |

6. The number of meetings of each subject can be adjusted in the light of the progress of discussion. Where necessary, the Subcommittee will invite stakeholders and members of the public to give views on specific subjects.

Proposed time frame for completion of work

7. Under rule 26(c) of the House Rules, the Subcommittee is expected to complete its work within 12 months of its commencement and report to the Panel. Should the Subcommittee consider it necessary to work beyond 12 months, the Subcommittee would, after obtaining the endorsement of the Panel, report to the House Committee and give justifications for an extension of the 12-month period.

Advice sought

8. Members are invited to endorse the appointment of the Subcommittee with the proposed terms of reference, work plan and time frame as set out in paragraphs 4 to 7 above.