

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)772/13-14
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by the Administration)

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Panel on Environmental Affairs

Minutes of meeting
held on Monday, 25 November 2013, at 2:30 pm
in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex

Members present : Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan (Chairman)
Hon CHAN Hak-kan, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon Vincent FANG Kang, SBS, JP
Hon WONG Ting-kwong, SBS, JP
Hon CHAN Kin-por, BBS, JP
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon Claudia MO
Hon Steven HO Chun-yin
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming
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 Kenneth LEUNG
Hon Dennis KWOK
Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan
Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, JP
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, BBS, MH, JP
Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun, BBS, MH, JP
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen

Members attending : Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki

Member absent : Hon LEE Cheuk-yan

Public Officers attending : **For item IV**

Mr WONG Kam-sing
Secretary for the Environment

Mr Bernard Charnwut CHAN
Chairman
Council for Sustainable Development

Professor Nora TAM
Convenor
Support Group on Municipal Solid Waste Charging

Ir Kenny WONG
Programme Director on Municipal Solid Waste Charging

Mr Samson LAI
Assistant Director (Waste Management Policy)
Environmental Protection Department

Ms Michelle AU
Political Assistant to Secretary for the Environment

For item V

Mr WONG Kam-sing, JP
Secretary for the Environment

Mr Andrew LAI, JP
Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (3)
Environmental Protection Department

Dr Alain LAM
Principal Environmental Protection Officer
(Waste Management Policy)
Environmental Protection Department

Ms Michelle AU
Political Assistant to Secretary for the Environment

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

Staff in attendance : Miss Lilian MOK
Senior Council Secretary (1)1

Miss Mandy POON
Legislative Assistant (1)1

I. Confirmation of minutes

(LC Paper No. CB(1)213/13-14 — Minutes of the meeting held on
10 October 2013)

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2013 were confirmed.

II. Information papers issued since last meeting

2. Members noted that no information paper had been issued since last meeting.

III. Items for discussion at the next meeting

(LC Paper No. CB(1)314/13-14(01) — List of follow-up actions

LC Paper No. CB(1)314/13-14(02) — List of outstanding items for
discussion)

3. Members agreed to discuss the item on "Promotion of the recycling industry" at the next regular meeting scheduled for Monday, 16 December 2013, at 8:30 am.

IV. Public Engagement on "Municipal Solid Waste Charging"

(LC Paper No. CB(1)314/13-14(03) — Administration's paper on

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"Council for Sustainable Development's Public Engagement on Municipal Solid Waste Charging – 'Waste Reduction by Waste Charging · How to Implement?'"

LC Paper No. CB(1)314/13-14(04) — Updated background brief on "Municipal solid waste charging in Hong Kong" prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat)

4. The Secretary for the Environment ("SEN") briefed members that the Environment Bureau had issued in May 2013 the document "Hong Kong: Blueprint for Sustainable Use of Resources 2013-2022" ("the Action Blueprint"), which mapped out a waste management strategy, with targets, policies and action plans for the coming 10 years. To achieve the overall target in the Action Blueprint to reduce the per capita waste disposal level of municipal solid waste ("MSW") by 40% by 2022, joint efforts of the community to embrace an environmentally-sustainable culture in daily life were required. Since the public consultation on MSW charging conducted in 2012 had affirmed the direction of a quantity-based MSW charging system for Hong Kong, the Administration had invited the Council for Sustainable Development ("SDC") to launch a second-stage public engagement to gauge views on the implementation of the charging scheme.

5. Mr Bernard Charnwut CHAN, Chairman of SDC ("C/SDC"), stated that the second-stage public engagement adopted a bottom-up and stakeholder-led approach to solicit public views on how best to implement MSW charging in Hong Kong as well as to raise public awareness about the importance of behavioural changes to achieve waste reduction at source. The Invitation for Response document ("the IR document") entitled "'Waste Reduction by Waste Charging · How to Implement?" issued by SDC served as a discussion framework to impart information and initiate public dialogue. Four key considerations categorized under "Charging Mechanism", "Coverage of Charging Scheme", "Charging Level" and "Recycling" had been identified in the IR document for public views. The public engagement exercise would last for four months up to 24 January 2014. SDC would take into account the views and responses received when preparing the report for submission to the Administration tentatively in the third or fourth quarter of 2014.

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Promotion of recycling and source separation of waste

6. Dr Elizabeth QUAT was of the view that MSW charging was only one of the measures to reduce waste. There was a need for greater efforts to recycle waste, as otherwise waste charging would not serve any useful purpose. She opined that more assistance should be provided to the recycling industry and separate collection arrangement should be worked out for dry and wet waste. Mr Vincent FANG shared the view that the Administration should focus on maximizing waste recycling instead of implementing different charging schemes to deter waste generation. Mr CHAN Kin-por echoed that the Administration should invest in recycling operations and formulate a holistic development plan for the recycling industry. Dr KWOK Ka-ki commented that the Administration had not been providing sufficient support to the recycling industry. The improper locations of 3-coloured waste separation bins and inadequate funding provision for recycling activities were some examples indicating the Administration's lack of determination to promote waste recovery.

7. SEN responded that the waste recovery rate of Hong Kong in 2011 was 48%, which was not low when compared with that of other cities. While he agreed on the need to promote waste recovery on all fronts, he considered it unfair to compare the funding provision for infrastructure projects and recycling activities as they were two separate issues. SEN further advised that the Administration had adopted a multi-pronged approach to create a sustainable waste management system. Apart from introducing MSW charging, the Administration would also study viable measures to develop the recycling industry, and step up education and publicity to promote waste segregation and separation of dry and wet waste. For example, the Steering Committee to Promote the Sustainable Development of the Recycling Industry ("the Steering Committee") which was led by the Chief Secretary for Administration was set up in August 2013 to promote the healthy development of the recycling industry. The Administration aimed to implement MSW charging by 2016, and would roll out various measures to engage the community in waste reduction and source separation of waste progressively.

8. C/SDC advised that following the implementation of MSW charging, people would endeavour to reduce, separate and recycle waste proactively in order to save money. To handle the increased quantity of recyclable materials, a vibrant local recycling industry was required. While the Administration would work out measures to promote the recycling trade, success in waste recycling business depended on a number of factors, such as the availability of land and recycling facilities.

9. Mr WU Chi-wai expressed support for the direction of introducing a quantity-based MSW charging system as an economic means to reduce waste

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generation in Hong Kong. As there might be a higher tendency for fly-tipping following the implementation of MSW charging, a comprehensive monitoring system should be put in place to deter non-compliance with the charging scheme. Since waste charging would incentivize the community to recycle waste, Mr WU urged the Administration to give impetus to the market for recyclable materials, in particular those of relatively lower commercial value.

10. C/SDC responded that different recyclable materials had different commercial values which were mainly determined by market forces. If recyclable materials were of economic value and could be re-sold for profit, recyclers would be more interested to recover them. As MSW charging was by no means a revenue-generating initiative, the Administration might consider using the levy collected to support the recycling industry and other green industries in Hong Kong, thereby making the collection and recycling of non-marketable waste viable.

11. Mr Kenneth LEUNG expressed concern about the demand for recycled glass materials in Hong Kong. The Assistant Director of Environmental Protection (Waste Management Policy) responded that all waste glass bottles to be recovered under the proposed mandatory producer responsibility scheme ("PRS") on glass beverage bottles ("GBBs") could be reused in public works projects. The Administration would further broaden the demand for recycled glass materials through the promotion of "green procurement". The Chairman requested the Administration to provide information on the amount of waste GBBs generated in Hong Kong and the amount of recycled glass materials that could be consumed.

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(Post-meeting note: The Administration's response was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)591/13-14(01) on 19 December 2013.)

12. Mr Albert CHAN criticized that the high waste generation rate in Hong Kong was attributable to the Government's lack of resolve in implementing source separation of waste. The Administration should make reference to the successful source separation experience of Taipei City, where recyclables were collected at designated times and venues, and introduce legislation to mandate waste separation at source in Hong Kong. The Administration should also conduct studies on modern incineration technology which could substantially reduce the volume of MWS and recover energy from waste to generate electricity. While acknowledging that Hong Kong lagged behind other cities in waste management, SEN said that mandatory waste separation at source was not necessarily a prerequisite for MSW charging. C/SDC supplemented that MSW charging represented a first step in the right direction to drive behavioural change in waste reduction.

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Charging level

13. Mr Kenneth LEUNG enquired how the different levels of MSW charge in the IR document were determined. C/SDC responded that SDC had made reference to the levels of charge for commercial and industrial waste in Singapore and those for domestic waste in Taipei City respectively as set out in the IR document for illustration to facilitate deliberation by members of the public. The level of MSW charge for Hong Kong had not yet been decided.

14. Mr Tony TSE considered that MSW charging should aim at encouraging waste reduction, not cost recovery. The future MSW charge should therefore be set at levels sufficient to drive behavioural change towards waste reduction. C/SDC responded that SDC had made reference to the MSW charging systems of Taipei City and Seoul where residents were required to use pre-paid designated garbage bags for waste disposal. He expected that if a quantity-based charging system was adopted in Hong Kong, people would be induced to produce less waste to save money.

15. Mr CHAN Kin-por expressed support for the introduction of MSW charging in Hong Kong. Given the unique settings and city characteristics of Hong Kong, he opined that the Administration should consider adopting a "hybrid" charging system to suit the local context. He also considered that MSW charging should be implemented in different sectors by phases. In order not to create heavy financial burden on low-income groups, the MSW charge should not be more than \$300 for a four-person household per year. C/SDC reiterated that the level of MSW charge for Hong Kong had not yet been decided. He expected that the future charging level should be acceptable to the community while effective in inducing behavioural change towards reducing and recycling waste.

Charging mechanism

16. Mr Gary FAN said that members of the Neo Democrats were of the view that waste reduction should be given the top priority, to be followed by waste recycling and reuse, while waste disposal at landfills and incineration would be least preferred. If the Administration could enhance its efforts in waste recycling and recovery, the general public would be more willing to support MSW charging. He further opined that MSW charging based on the total weight or volume of garbage disposed of by a building/estate (i.e. the "by building" charging mechanism) might not provide adequate economic incentives to reduce waste by individual waste producers. In his views, MSW charging based on the volume of waste disposed of by individual households could create more direct incentive.

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17. Mr Michael TIEN pointed out that the New People's Party supported MSW charging while he shared similar concern that the "by building" mechanism might have the possible drawback of unfairness as all the households in a building/estate were required to share the MSW charge regardless of the actual amount of waste they disposed of. He also enquired about the concerns of building management on charging at household level.

18. C/SDC responded that the "by building" charging mechanism might not be effective in reducing waste as the MSW charge would be shared amongst all the households of a building/estate and individual households would therefore not be incentivized to produce less waste. However, some building management companies had expressed grave concerns about charging at household level as this might give rise to littering or fly-tipping. Although illegal dumping activities could be prevented by enhanced monitoring, issues of neighbourhood relations would emerge inevitably. Some building management companies were worried that they might be in conflict with residents when they performed intense surveillance against fly-tipping, and might have difficulties in tracing the source of waste and identifying which residents should be liable to pay the waste charge. Under these circumstances, authorization from owners' corporations might facilitate building management companies in implementing MSW charging in their buildings/estates and taking enforcement actions against non-compliance.

Request for offsetting MSW charging by a corresponding reduction in rates

19. Mr Gary FAN said that as charges for waste collection had already been included in government rates, consideration should be given to offsetting MSW charge by a corresponding reduction in rates to avoid double levy. Mr Dennis KWOK expressed support for reducing government rates to offset MSW charge. Dr Helena WONG echoed the concerns about double levy and proposed that the Government should provide individual households with a certain number of pre-paid garbage bags free of charge every month as individual households had already been charged for waste collection services through rates.

20. C/SDC noted the suggestions about downward adjustment of the rates should MSW charging be introduced. SDC would take into account the views to be received from the public engagement process before making recommendations to the Administration.

Development of waste incineration

21. In response to Mr CHAN Kin-por's enquiry about the progress made in

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developing incineration technology to turn waste into energy, SEN advised that the Administration had been actively pursuing the development of advanced thermal waste treatment facilities. Since the appeal against the Administration's proposal to build the energy-generating Integrated Waste Management Facilities on an artificial island near Shek Kwu Chau had been dismissed, the Administration would consult the Panel on the development of modern thermal waste treatment facilities as soon as possible.

Implementation of MSW charging

22. Mr Tony TSE expressed concern about the implementation of MSW charging in single-block buildings ("SBBs") without building management. C/SDC acknowledged the difficulties in implementing MSW charging in SBBs which did not have any building management company to co-ordinate waste collection activities. Monitoring and enforcement actions against non-compliance would need to be stepped up to prevent fly-tipping. Although most village houses and many SBBs did not have property management bodies, most of the households in Hong Kong lived in multi-storey buildings with building management companies which could play a co-ordinating role in organizing waste disposal activities.

23. Pointing out that New York City, which shared similar city characteristics as those of Hong Kong in terms of population density and prevalence of multi-storey buildings, had made a decision of not to implement MSW charging, Dr Helena WONG expressed concern whether MSW charging could be implemented in Hong Kong effectively. She proposed that the Administration should consider adopting a phased approach to put in place MSW charging in buildings/estates where implementation was more feasible to gain some experience before extending the charging scheme to cover the entire Hong Kong. Noting that in most multi-storey buildings (including public rental housing estates and private residential blocks), waste was often dropped down through refuse chutes, making it difficult to trace waste to its source, Dr WONG opined that there was a need to step up monitoring, for example, by installing CCTV at each refuse collection room to prevent fly-tipping by residents or disposal of non-designated garbage bags.

24. C/SDC responded that he considered that it might not be desirable to adopt a phased approach as it was difficult for the community to reach consensus on which sector the charging should be applied first. However, he agreed that consideration should be given to piloting MSW charging in some buildings/estates before launching the charging scheme in full scale.

25. Dr Helena WONG further enquired how relevant policy bureaux and government departments would collaborate to implement MSW charging.

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C/SDC agreed that smooth implementation of MSW charging required co-ordinated efforts by relevant government departments, such as the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department ("FEHD") and the Environmental Protection Department. There was a need for greater efforts to perform checks and surveillance on waste disposal and collection. The Administration was requested to provide relevant information for members' reference.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's response was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)591/13-14(01) on 19 December 2013.)

Relief measures for low-income groups

26. While expressing support for the introduction of a quantity-based MSW charging system, Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok expressed concern about the financial burden of MSW charging on low-income families. He opined that concessionary arrangements should be worked out to reduce the impact of MSW charging on the grassroots. For example, pre-paid garbage bags could be distributed to low-income households free of charge to ease their financial burden. Mr Gary FAN echoed that relief measures should be worked out to assist the grassroots when MSW charging was applied.

27. C/SDC responded that MSW charging would inevitably give rise to concerns over its impacts on low-income groups. The IR document therefore invited public views on whether a certain threshold should be set for waste disposal under which no charging would apply. The feasibility of different relief measures would be further examined.

Food waste management

28. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok said that as Hong Kong was a highly consumption-oriented society, the Administration should keep on stepping up its efforts to promote waste reduction and sustainable use of resources as well as to pursue regional co-operation in waste management. The current practice of disposing of food waste at landfills was not environmentally desirable as it depleted the limited landfill space and created odour nuisance to nearby residents. He asked whether the Administration would set up food waste treatment facilities to process food waste such that the odorous smell and size of food waste could be reduced before delivery to landfills. Mr Vincent FANG and Dr KWOK Ka-ki echoed similar concerns about the recovery of food waste. Mr WU Chi-wai proposed that the Administration should study how food waste could be recycled and converted into animal feed.

29. SEN responded that to tackle the food waste problems in Hong Kong, the Administration focused on food waste reduction. The Food Wise Hong Kong

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Campaign was launched in May 2013 to promote public awareness of food waste problems and mobilize different sectors of the community to reduce food waste. The Administration was also planning to build modern organic waste treatment facilities in phases to recycle organic waste (mostly food waste) and would draw up relevant proposals for the Panel's consideration in due course.

Environmental hygiene and public health problems

30. Dr Elizabeth QUAT expressed concern about aggravation of fly-tipping and the environmental hygiene and public health problems that would be caused by the reduced provision of public litter bins after the implementation of MSW charging. Mr Michael TIEN shared the view that the reduced provision of public litter bins would cause inconvenience to tourists and visitors.

31. C/SDC advised that after the implementation of MSW charging in Taipei City, most of the public litter bins on roadside had been withdrawn to combat littering and fly-tipping. However, taking into consideration that there was a large number of tourists coming to Hong Kong every year, he considered that public litter bins at tourist spots should be retained. The Administration should re-design public litter bins to deter illegal dumping.

Experience on waste charging in other jurisdictions

32. In response to Mr Dennis KWOK's enquiry about experience in other jurisdictions on waste charging, Professor Nora TAM, Convenor of the Support Group on Municipal Solid Waste Charging, advised that SDC had made reference to the charging models adopted by Taipei City and Seoul. From their experience, waste charging was a direct tool to change behaviour and incentivize people to produce less waste and separate recyclable materials from the waste stream. Upon the implementation of MSW charging, people of the two cities had become conscious about their disposal behaviour.

33. C/SDC said that community surveillance on fly-tipping was a major factor for the success of Taipei City and Seoul in implementing waste charging. Both cities had developed a monitoring system to combat fly-tipping and illegal dumping. For instance, successful reports of fly-tipping would be awarded a significant portion of the total fine. While such a monitoring system might not suit the local context, public education was an indispensable part of MSW charging to induce change in mindset, lifestyle and behaviour of the public.

Concluding remarks

34. The Chairman said that the Labour Party had requested the Administration to set aside a recurrent expenditure of \$2 billion per year to

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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. Besides, measures to encourage members of the public to practise source separate of waste at district level should be implemented. For example, more land should be made available in each district for setting up waste separation facilities to facilitate the separation process. In addition, a trial period should be provided to familiarize households with the charging scheme before the implementation of mandatory MSW charging.

35. Dr KWOK Ka-ki proposed to hold a meeting to receive deputations' views on the implementation of MSW charging. Members agreed.

(Post-meeting note: With the concurrence of the Chairman, the Panel would receive deputations' views on the implementation of MSW charging in Hong Kong at the next regular meeting scheduled for 16 December 2013.)

V. Report on Public Consultation on a Producer Responsibility Scheme on Glass Beverage Bottles

(LC Paper No. CB(1)314/13-14(05) — Administration's paper on "Public Consultation on a Producer Responsibility Scheme on Glass Beverage Bottles"

LC Paper No. CB(1)314/13-14(06) — Updated background brief on "Producer responsibility scheme on glass beverage bottles" prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat)

36. SEN briefed members on the progress of the introduction of a new mandatory PRS on GBBs. In gist, the Administration had launched a 3-month public consultation in February 2013 to consult the public on whether and how to pursue a mandatory PRS on GBBs. On the whole, the public was generally supportive of introducing a mandatory PRS on GBBs. Based on the consultation results, the Administration had made adjustments to the proposed PRS on GBBs. Firstly, the Administration proposed that more than one Glass Management Contractors ("GMCs") would be appointed by way of open tender to collect and treat waste glass bottles. Secondly, licensing control for glass recyclers, and importers and exporters of waste glass bottles would be explored so that they would be subject to permit control to ensure the meeting of comparable environmental standards if the recycling processes were undertaken

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outside Hong Kong. Lastly, in line with the "polluter pays" principle, a recycling fee would be imposed under the Product Eco-responsibility Ordinance (Cap. 603) on beverage suppliers who supplied GBBs for local consumption in Hong Kong.

Recycling of waste GBBs

37. Mr Albert CHAN expressed in-principle support for the proposed PRS on GBBs. Citing the difficulties encountered by a non-governmental organization ("NGO") operating glass recycling programmes on Lamma Island as an example, he said that more efforts should be made to support the recycling of waste glass. The Administration should also play a proactive role in waste management and implement mandatory source separation of waste in Hong Kong. Since the proposed PRS on GBBs did not cover other types of beverage containers, Mr CHAN expressed concern that some beverage suppliers might switch to aluminium cans or plastic bottles for their beverages, resulting in an increase in the disposal of other types of beverage containers.

38. Mr Christopher CHUNG shared the concern about the possible switching effect. He opined that the Administration should provide adequate incentives to beverage suppliers to encourage them to recover their own GBBs for future reuse, thereby minimizing the material loss arising from the process of turning waste glass into works materials. Consideration could also be given to collaborating with glass manufacturing plants on the Mainland to use waste glass bottles to produce glassware products.

39. SEN responded that the Administration had been working proactively on different fronts to enhance waste separation and recycling in Hong Kong. For example, a legislative proposal on a new PRS on waste electrical and electronic equipment was being prepared for the recycling of waste electronic products generated in Hong Kong. Three-coloured waste separation bins were provided at various public places in Hong Kong to collect recyclable materials. He also said that most of the glass-bottled beverages were alcoholic drinks which would unlikely be sold in aluminium cans or plastic bottles. As such, the proposed PRS on GBBs would unlikely increase the use of other types of beverage bottles significantly. To encourage local glass-bottled beverage manufacturers to continue with their own corporate reuse/recycling schemes, the Administration proposed to introduce an exemption mechanism such that these manufacturers would not be subject to the recycling fee. Since there was no glass manufacturing plant in Hong Kong and export of waste glass to other places might involve practical difficulties, the Administration considered it more cost-effective to explore and develop new recycling outlets for waste glass bottles locally. Together with other waste management initiatives, in particular the implementation of MSW charging, SEN hoped that all types of waste could

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be reduced at source.

40. In response to Mr Albert CHAN's further enquiry as to whether all waste glass bottles recovered could be consumed, the Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (3) ("DDEP(3)") advised that in 2012, some 3 600 tonnes of waste glass bottles were recovered for reuse in public works projects, mainly in the manufacturing of eco-pavers. Given that more waste glass bottles would be recovered under the proposed PRS on GBBs, the Administration would explore further broadening the demand for recycled glass from both the public and private sectors.

Financial implications of the recycling fee

41. Mr Vincent FANG welcomed the proposed mandatory PRS on GBBs, and supported the Administration to explore the potential reuse of waste glass in construction. Noting that a recycling fee would be imposed on beverage suppliers who supplied glass-bottled beverages for local consumption in Hong Kong, Mr FANG expressed concern about the financial implications of the recycling fee on the public as beverage suppliers might recover the recycling fee wholly or partially from consumers. Since the proposed PRS would only cover GBBs (including both alcoholic and non-alcoholic drink bottles), Mr FANG opined that the recycling fee collected should be ploughed back to acquire cleaning machines to clean food/sauce bottles so that the coverage of the proposed PRS could be extended to other waste glass bottles as well.

42. SEN responded that the Administration had put forward an indicative level of the recycling fee at around \$1 per litre of the beverage content. Since most of the GBBs disposed of at landfills were generated from alcoholic beverages and there were non-glass packing alternatives for non-alcoholic beverages, the proposed fee level was considered to be acceptable by the community. DDEP(3) added that based on the feedback from the public consultation, the proposed mandatory PRS would focus on GBBs at this stage. The Administration would consider extending the coverage to other glass bottles under a phased approach. As for those local glass-bottled beverage manufacturers who were operating their own corporate reuse/recycling schemes, they would not be subject to the recycling fee. In addition to eco-pavers, the Administration had been studying other potential applications of waste glass bottles.

Coverage of the proposed PRS on GBBs

43. Mr WU Chi-wai and Dr Kenneth CHAN shared the view that the proposed PRS should cover other waste glass bottles. Although the imposition of a recycling fee on all types of glass bottles might give rise to livelihood

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concerns, Mr WU expected that the community would be willing to pay the fee given the environmental benefits to Hong Kong. He also said that the Democratic Party would support the setting up of an environmental fund to assist the local recycling industry and develop recycling outlets for different recyclable materials, including waste glass. Pointing out the value of resources that could be recovered from waste, Mr WU urged the Administration to stimulate a market for different types of recyclable materials.

44. SEN responded that the Steering Committee would step up concerted efforts to promote the development of the recycling industry. DDEP(3) advised that the objectives of the proposed PRS on GBBs were to facilitate the collection of glass bottles and promote public awareness of turning waste into resources through recycling. To this end, the Administration had made considerable efforts in establishing a circular economy for glass bottles in Hong Kong. For instance, as at July 2013, some 450 collection points were established in public/private housing estates and other public places, and more collection points would be set up in future. The Administration would also enhance public education on "recycle clean" as the cleanliness of the recyclables would affect the after-use potential and recycling cost.

Appointment of GMCs and identification of outlets for waste glass materials

45. Mr Gary FAN and Dr Kenneth CHAN expressed concern that the appointment of GMCs to collect and treat waste glass bottles might deprive existing waste recyclers of their business and employment opportunities. To prevent monopolization of services, the Administration should ensure that there would be a level playing field for GMCs and other waste glass recyclers in the market. The Chairman and Mr FAN sought elaboration on the tender arrangements for GMCs. Mr FAN also opined that consideration might be given to placing FEHD under the Environment Bureau for the smooth implementation of the proposed PRS.

46. SEN responded that the Administration proposed to hire more than one GMCs to provide the collection and treatment services required under the proposed PRS on GBBs. The territory might be divided into three regions, each of which would be served by a GMC. DDEP(3) advised that during the public consultation, different stakeholders shared the concern that having only one GMC might undesirably create a "monopoly" situation. As such, the Administration had revised its original proposal and would appoint more than one GMC by way of open tender so that more service providers could participate in the collection of GBBs. The GMCs to be appointed would be required by contract to maintain a sufficient network of collection points such that waste producers could conveniently participate in waste glass bottle recycling. They would also be encouraged to collaborate with NGOs to collect

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waste glass bottles at the district level. The Administration would work out the tender arrangements for GMCs and report to the Panel in due course.

47. The Chairman opined that the Administration should take into account the local characteristics of different regions when working out the GMC contracts so as to ensure a fair distribution of business among the GMCs and to maintain the cost competitiveness of the contracts.

48. DDEP(3) further said that in order to meet the annual recovery target of having about 50 000 tonnes of waste glass bottles for the entire territory, some 800 potential collection points would be rolled out by phases so that waste glass bottles could be efficiently collected. Waste recyclers would be engaged in expanding the collection network. In addition, Community Green Stations would be established in each of the 18 districts to promote environmental education on the one hand and to support recycling at the community level on the other.

49. Mr Gary FAN said that if not all the waste glass bottles collected under the proposed PRS could be consumed in Hong Kong, the Administration should consider identifying outlets on the Mainland for recycled glass materials. SEN responded that all the waste glass bottles recovered under the proposed PRS would be reused in public works projects. The Administration would consider the suggestion of developing an export market on the Mainland for recycled glass materials as and when appropriate in future.

50. Mr Tony TSE said that recyclables of low values such as waste glass bottles would require assistance from the Government to make their collection and recycling viable. Hence, he supported the introduction of a PRS on GBBs in accordance with the "polluter pays" principle. Mr TSE also enquired about the effectiveness of the collection points in recycling waste glass bottles and the target recovery rate upon the full implementation of all the potential collections points by the end of 2014. The Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Waste Management Policy) ("PEPO(WMP)") responded that some collection points operated by NGOs were funded by the Environment and Conservation Fund and the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust. Since the operation of those collection points was in the initial phase, the Administration did not have relevant statistics on their implementation at this stage.

51. Noting that the Steering Committee had so far held two meetings with the recycling industry and stakeholders to listen to their views on the ways to promote the sustainable development of Hong Kong's recycling trade, Dr Kenneth CHAN enquired how the Administration could meet the target set out in the Action Blueprint that waste recycling in Hong Kong would account for 55% by 2022. SEN explained that while the Action Blueprint had set out a

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waste recycling target for Hong Kong, it primarily focused on reducing MSW by 40% in 10 years' time by promoting a "use less, waste less" culture in the community.

52. In response to Dr Kenneth CHAN's further enquiry about the potential reuse of waste glass in construction, DDEP(3) advised that the application of recycled glass materials as fill materials and blanket drainage layer was technically feasible. More new recycling outlets for local waste glass bottles would be developed. The Administration would further broaden the demand for waste glass materials through promoting "green procurement".

Publicity and public education on "recycle clean"

53. While agreeing on the need to promote the "recycle clean" concept such that recyclable waste materials would be properly cleansed before deposition into recycle bins, Mr Tony TSE pointed out that it might be difficult for some members of the public to have their recyclables properly cleansed before bringing them to the collection points. He asked whether the Administration would consider separating cleansed recyclable waste materials from those not yet properly cleansed in the collection points.

54. SEN responded that from overseas experience, the governments would collaborate with local stakeholders and NGOs in reinforcing environmental education, particularly on "recycle clean". As Hong Kong was of high development density and had a complicated mix of building use, recyclable waste materials which had not been properly cleansed might cause environmental nuisance in the local communities. As such, the Administration considered it more desirable for individual waste producers to rinse their recyclables before depositing them into recycle bins. PEPO(WMP) supplemented that GMCs would not reject the deposition of glass food/sauce bottles into recycle bins. Although these waste glass bottles were not properly cleansed, they could be used as the blanket drainage layer at landfills to facilitate the collection of leachate.

VI. Report of the Delegation of the Panel on Environmental Affairs on its duty visit to the Republic of Korea to study the experience on waste management

(LC Paper No. CB(1)377/13-14(01) — Report on the duty visit to the Republic of Korea to study its experience on waste management

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LC Paper No. CB(1)377/13-14(02) — Wording of the motion proposed to be moved at the Council meeting on 18 December 2013)

55. Members noted the Report of the Delegation of the Panel on its duty visit to the Republic of Korea to study the experience on waste management. The Chairman said that the Report would be submitted to the House Committee ("HC") at its meeting on 29 November 2013.

56. The Chairman said that the Delegation had recommended that the Panel should seek HC's agreement for priority allocation of a debate slot under Rule 14A(h) of the House Rules ("HR") to her, in the capacity of the Panel Chairman, for moving a motion for debate on the Report at the Council meeting of 18 December 2013. The wording of the motion had been set out in LC Paper No. CB(1)377/13-14(02). She invited members' views on the recommendation.

57. Members agreed to the Delegation's recommendation and the wording of the motion.

58. The Chairman further said that according to HR13(a), not more than two debates initiated by Members should be held at each regular Council meeting. She invited members' views on whether the Panel should suggest to HC that there should only be one other motion debate without legislative effect at the Council meeting of 18 December 2013. Members decided to suggest to HC that the motion debate on the Report of the Delegation be held in addition to the two other debates on Members' motions not intended to have legislative effect scheduled for that Council meeting.

59. The Chairman informed members that the Administration planned to visit Europe in early March 2014 to study the development and operation of thermal waste treatment facilities. The Administration would invite the Panel to consider conducting a similar visit during the same period of time, and more detailed information on the Administration's planned visit would be provided for members' reference in due course.

60. In response to Mr Gary FAN's enquiry, the Chairman said that an overseas duty visit might be jointly conducted by more than one Panel should the issues to be studied were of the Panels' mutual concern. An example was the duty visit to Guangdong by this Panel and the Panel on Economic Development, which was led by the President of the Legislative Council, conducted in May 2009 to study the economic development and environmental protection in the Pearl River Delta Region.

Action

VII. Any other business

61. There being no further business, the meeting ended at 4:45 pm.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
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