

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(1)1464/13-14  
(These minutes have been seen  
by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/EA/1

**Panel on Environmental Affairs**

**Minutes of meeting**  
**held on Monday, 24 February 2014, 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 LEE Cheuk-yan  
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 Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP  
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP  
Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen, JP  
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki  
Hon KWOK Wai-keung

**Public Officers attending : For item III**

Ms Christine LOH, JP  
Under Secretary for the Environment

Mr TSE Chin-wan, JP  
Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (1)  
Environmental Protection Department

Mr Howard CHAN, JP  
Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (2)  
Environmental Protection Department

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

Mr David WONG  
Assistant Director (Environmental Compliance)  
Environmental Protection Department

**For item IV**

Mr WONG Kam-sing, JP  
Secretary for the Environment

Ms Christine LOH, JP  
Under Secretary for the Environment

Ms Michelle AU  
Political Assistant to Secretary for the Environment

Mr Howard CHAN, JP  
Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (2)  
Environmental Protection Department

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

Mr Lawrence LAU  
Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Waste Facilities)  
Environmental Protection Department

Mr Elvis AU, JP  
Assistant Director  
(Nature Conservation & Infrastructure Planning)  
Environmental Protection Department

Mr LUI Ping-hon  
Principal Environmental Protection Officer  
(Infrastructure Planning)  
Environmental Protection Department

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

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

Ms Mandy LI  
Council Secretary (1)1

Miss Mandy POON  
Legislative Assistant (1)1

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**I. Information papers issued since last meeting**

1 Members noted that the following papers had been issued since the last meeting –

(LC Paper No. CB(1)909/13-14(01) — Referral arising from the meeting between Legislative Council members and Wan Chai District Council members on

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9 January 2014 regarding the introduction of legislation on the control of light pollution (Chinese version only) (Restricted to Members)

LC Paper No. CB(1)930/13-14(01) — Referral from the Public Accounts Committee on issues relating to "Implementation of air-quality improvement measures" (the referral memo and an extract of the relevant report)

LC Paper No. CB(1)956/13-14(01) — "A Food Waste and Yard Waste Plan for Hong Kong 2014-2022" provided by the Administration)

**II. Items for discussion at the next meeting**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)951/13-14(01) — List of follow-up actions

LC Paper No. CB(1)951/13-14(02) — List of outstanding items for discussion)

2. Members agreed to discuss the following items at the next regular meeting scheduled for Monday, 24 March 2014, at 2:30 pm –

(a) Matters on Hong Kong's municipal solid waste recovery rate and handling of imported waste; and

(b) Pilot Green Transport Fund.

**III. Incident of leachate from the North East New Territories Landfill**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)797/13-14(01) — "Progress report on the incident of leachate from the North East New Territories Landfill" provided by the Administration

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LC Paper No. CB(1)916/13-14(01) — Background brief on "Incident of leachate from the North East New Territories Landfill" prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat)

3. The Under Secretary for the Environment ("USEN") briefed members on the progress of the improvement works and associated measures undertaken by the Administration in response to the incident of leachate leakage from the North East New Territories ("NENT") Landfill in July 2013.

Causes of leachate leakage

4. The Deputy Chairman expressed concern about the possible occurrence of similar leachate leakage incidents in other landfills if there was continuous heavy rain in future. He also noted with concern the high concentration of ammonia-nitrogen in the water of the Kong Yiu Channel, which exceeded the legal standard of 5 mg/L, according to the summary of water quality testing results at the Kong Yiu Channel as set out in Annex A of the Administration's paper.

5. The Assistant Director of Environmental Protection (Environmental Infrastructure) ("ADEP(EI)") responded that after detailed examination and assessment, the Administration was of the view that the leakage incident was triggered by a hole punctured through the impermeable liner of a temporary leachate storage lagoon during the course of filling leachate into that lagoon. The punctured hole was believed to be caused by liner material failure which might be due to the movement of the side slope wall caused by continuous heavy rain a few days before the incident. It was unlikely that the hole was caused by material defects of the impermeable liner. To safeguard the performance of the temporary leachate storage lagoons in the NENT Landfill, the contractor would provide double impermeable liners with a layer of bentonite in between for all temporary leachate storage lagoons in future. In addition, all the side walls of lagoons would be covered with impermeable liners to prevent any surface erosion due to rainstorm which would undermine the lagoon stability.

6. ADEP(EI) assured members that the Environmental Protection Department ("EPD") had stepped up monitoring the performance of the contractor to ensure that the temporary leachate lagoons had sufficient capacity to contain leachate generated from the NENT Landfill and to cope with different weather conditions with a view to preventing rainwater from mixing with leachate and discharging into the Kong Yiu Channel.

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7. The Chairman enquired whether EPD could identify the source of contamination if polluting discharges were detected in the surface and storm drains near the boundary of landfills. The Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (1) ("DDEP(1)") responded that if a high concentration of ammonia-nitrogen was detected in the water samples collected in the surface or storm drains in the vicinity of landfills, it was highly likely that the water had been contaminated by leachate discharged. He advised that landfill contractors were required to design and provide a groundwater management system to closely monitor the groundwater along the boundary of landfills and a purposely built impermeable liner at the base of landfills, thereby ensuring that there would be no percolation of leachate into the groundwater. He further said that while the leakage incident was triggered by a hole punctured through the impermeable membrane of a temporary leachate storage lagoon at the NENT Landfill, the integrity of the impermeable liner at the base of landfills remained robust. The quality of groundwater had not been affected.

Monitoring and notification mechanisms of leachate leakage

8. Mr Frankie YICK enquired about the monitoring mechanism adopted by the Administration to prevent the recurrence of similar leachate leakage incidents in future. ADEP(EI) advised that landfill contractors had to abide by the conditions contained in their contracts in monitoring the operation of landfills and relevant facilities, such as leachate storage lagoons. Following the leakage incident, random site inspections were carried out by the enforcement staff of EPD every week and water samples were collected from the storm drains near the boundary of the NENT Landfill when contaminated discharge was suspected. In addition, EPD's contract management team carried out on-site monitoring, although no sample could be collected during the dry season due to the extremely low water level in the Kong Yiu Channel.

9. Mr Kenneth LEUNG asked whether the Administration would put in place a prompt detection mechanism so that EPD and landfill contractors would be notified rapidly once contaminated discharge was suspected. ADEP(EI) responded that there were water marks on the side slope wall of each temporary leachate storage lagoon. The site staff of EPD could judge whether there was any discharge of leachate from the lagoons on the basis of visual inspections if the water levels dropped. ADEP(EI) reiterated that the leakage incident was triggered by a hole punctured through the impermeable membrane of a temporary leachate storage lagoon at the NENT Landfill. The integrity of the impermeable liner at the base of landfills remained robust. There was not any leachate leak through the base and the quality of groundwater had not been affected. She stressed that the Administration attached great importance to leachate management and had been closely monitoring the operation of landfills,

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in particular the quality of groundwater, to ensure that stringent safety requirements were met.

10. In reply to Mr Kenneth LEUNG's further enquiry about the notification mechanism, ADEP(EI) advised that the Administration had reviewed the existing emergency response plan for all waste facilities in Hong Kong, including landfills and the corresponding notification mechanism. To ensure prompt response in case of any similar incidents in future, the stakeholders concerned, including related Government bureaux/departments, would be speedily notified so that they could take urgent actions to help alleviate the situation. USEN supplemented that after the leachate leakage incident, EPD had been closely monitoring the water quality of the Kong Yiu Channel and would release relevant information on the water quality testing results on its website weekly to enhance transparency and allay public concerns about the possible impact of the incident on water quality. District liaison groups would also be set up in the districts concerned to enhance EPD's communication with the relevant District Councils, local community and stakeholders on the waste management facilities in the districts as well as other related issues. Improvement of the notification mechanism would be made as and when necessary.

11. Mr Tony TSE sought details on the emergency response plan for the operation of landfills. Taking the leakage incident as an example, ADEP(EI) explained that once the leak was detected, the contractor had taken a series of immediate measures to rectify the problem, including the provision of temporary soil bunds for interception and containment of leaked leachate and the pumping of the leaked leachate back to the waste mass within the NENT Landfill. The Administration would take appropriate actions depending on individual circumstances.

Improvement measures

12. Pointing out that heavy rainstorms had become more frequent due to climate change, Dr Elizabeth QUAT doubted whether the provision of double impermeable liners with a layer of bentonite in between for all future temporary leachate storage lagoons could effectively prevent similar incidents in future. USEN reiterated that the leakage incident was triggered by a hole punctured through the impermeable membrane of a temporary leachate storage lagoon at the NENT Landfill, and the hole was believed to be caused by liner material failure which was due to the movement of the side slope wall caused by continuous heavy rain a few days before the incident. She stressed that the case was an isolated incident arising from a number of uncommon factors.

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13. USEN further advised that apart from providing double impermeable liners with a layer of bentonite in between for all future temporary leachate storage lagoons, EPD had been checking the stability and serviceability of the existing temporary leachate lagoons to ensure that they had sufficient capacity to contain leachate generated from the NENT Landfill and cope with different weather conditions, thereby preventing rainwater from mixing with leachate and discharging into the Kong Yiu Channel.

14. In response to Mr Tony TSE's enquiry about the retrofitting of floating covers to the existing temporary leachate storage lagoons in the NENT Landfill, ADEP(EI) explained that to prevent rainfall from entering the existing temporary lagoons, which would increase the amount of stored leachate, the contractor had taken active actions to retrofit floating covers to the lagoons wherever practicable and engineering consideration allowed. Under the future contract for the proposed NENT Landfill extension, floating covers would be provided for all leachate lagoons, including both temporary and permanent lagoons.

Enforcement action against the contractor of the NENT Landfill

15. Mr Tony TSE sought elaboration on the prosecution initiated by the Administration against the contractor of the NENT Landfill. DDEP(1) advised that following the leakage incident, the enforcement staff of EPD collected water samples from the storm drains near the boundary of the NENT Landfill when discharge of polluting matter or substandard discharge was suspected. The analysis results of the legal samples on wastewater collected in August and September 2013 indicated that there were a number of occasions where discharges from the NENT Landfill were found contaminated. After consulting the Department of Justice ("DoJ"), prosecution against the contractor was initiated on 21 January 2014. As there were other legal samples indicating polluting discharges from the NENT Landfill, EPD was consulting DoJ on taking further prosecutions against the contractor. DDEP(1) also said that EPD was taking contractual actions against the contractor for non-compliance of operational and environmental performance as stipulated under the contract in relation to the incident in July 2013.

16. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan criticized the Administration for denying that there was leakage of leachate from the temporary leachate storage lagoons of the NENT Landfill when contaminated discharge was suspected in July 2013. It was not until later that water samples collected in August and September 2013 indicated that there had been discharge of leaked leachate to the Kong Yiu Channel on a number of occasions. USEN clarified that the Administration did not have any preconceived position that there was no leachate leakage or that the contractor of the NENT Landfill held no responsibility for the incident.



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17. DDEP(1) advised that there were complaints from time to time against wastewater discharge from landfills and the public might easily have the impression that there was leachate leakage. For example, in June 2013, Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG relayed a complaint to EPD that the Ping Yuen River had been polluted by wastewater discharged from the NENT Landfill. EPD then conducted an investigation and a site visit. Based on the water samples collected, however, there was no sign of wastewater from the NENT Landfill. EPD also explained that given the topography and the catchments in the area, the surface water of the NENT Landfill would flow into the Kong Yiu Channel instead of the Ping Yuen River.

18. Dr Kenneth CHAN expressed concern as to whether the Administration was pursuing prosecutions against the contractor of the NENT Landfill under the Water Pollution Control Ordinance (Cap. 358) ("the WPCO"), and whether there were disclaimer clauses in the WPCO allowing the contractor to disclaim liability for leachate leakage caused by natural disasters such as severe storms and floods. DDEP(1) responded that after consulting DoJ, EPD considered that there was adequate evidence to take enforcement action against the contractor under the WPCO. The operation of the NENT Landfill was subject to all prevailing environmental legislation and the contractor was licensed by EPD under the WPCO. The contractor had to abide by the conditions contained in the WPCO licence, including the proper handling of contaminated discharges. In pursuing the prosecution, the Administration had also taken into consideration whether the contractor had implemented immediate mitigation measures once the leak had been detected.

#### **IV. Environmental infrastructure projects**

- (a) 5163DR: Northeast New Territories landfill extension**
- (b) 5164DR: Southeast New Territories landfill extension**
- (c) 5165DR: West New Territories landfill extension**
- (d) 5177DR: Integrated Waste Management Facilities Phase 1**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)931/13-14(01) — Administration's paper on "Environmental infrastructure projects"

LC Paper No. CB(1)951/13-14(03) — Updated background brief on "Extension of landfills" prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat

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- IN06/13-14 — Information note on "Integrated waste management facilities in Hong Kong" prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat)
- LC Paper No. CB(1)957/13-14(01) — Letter dated 20 February 2014 from Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok (Chinese version only)
- LC Paper No. CB(1)957/13-14(02) — Submission from Range Educational Centre Environment Concern Group (Chinese version only)
- LC Paper No. CB(1)961/13-14(01) — Submission from Submission from 長洲鄉事委員會 (Chinese version only)

Relevant paper

- LC Paper No. CB(1)845/13-14(01) — Referral arising from the meeting between Legislative Council members and Tuen Mun District Council members on 5 December 2013 regarding the operation and extension of the West New Territories landfill (Chinese version only) (Restricted to Members))

19. With the aid of a power-point presentation, the Secretary for the Environment ("SEN") briefed members on the environmental infrastructure projects for sustainable waste management. He stressed that the Administration adopted a multi-pronged and practical approach with waste reduction as the top priority to tackle the imminent waste problem in Hong Kong. However, as was the case in other advanced cities, environmental infrastructures were an indispensable part in the end-of-pipe waste treatment of Hong Kong.

*(Post-meeting note: A set of the power-point presentation materials was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)995/13-14(01) on 25 February 2014.)*

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Integrated Waste Management Facilities ("IWMF") Phase 1

*Design-Build-and-Operate ("DBO") contract*

20. Noting that the Administration planned to implement the proposed works and follow-on operation of IWMF Phase 1 under a DBO contract, the Deputy Chairman enquired whether the Administration would consider splitting the contract for the reclamation and construction works so that the cost of each contract would be lowered. He also pointed out that the growing amount of waste generated was challenging to Hong Kong and each district in the territory should fairly share the burden of waste disposal. Betterment measures, such as reduction in electricity tariff and waste charges, should be provided as compensation for residents living in the vicinity of waste treatment and disposal infrastructures. Mr CHAN Han-pan shared the views that the Administration should provide some form of compensation to Cheung Chau residents, who were worried about the impacts of IWMF Phase 1 on public health and air quality, to make it easier for them to accept the project.

21. SEN responded that IWMF Phase 1 was a large-scale infrastructure project which had to be completed under a tight schedule. Implementing the design, construction and operation of the project under one single DBO contract could achieve synergy and be more efficient. As regards the provision of betterment measures to affected residents, SEN advised that although reduction in electricity tariff was provided for residents living within 300 meters of an incineration facility in Seoul, it was not the prevalent practice of other overseas countries to provide financial subsidies to affected residents. From overseas experience, many waste treatment facilities incorporated social, recreational and educational facilities that were well received by the public. Moreover, the design of these facilities matched in harmony with different environments and blended with other local community amenities. The Administration would explore how the architectural and landscape design of IWMF Phase 1 could blend into the surrounding green and natural environment of Shek Kwu Chau to make it a welcome facility to the public.

*Potential impacts of IWMF Phase 1 on the fisheries industry*

22. Mr Steven HO expressed concern about the potential impacts of the reclamation works of IWMF Phase 1 on fisheries resources and the fisheries industry as the waters in the vicinity of the project site were a fishing ground for Cheung Chau fishermen. He commented that the operating environment of the fisheries industry continued to deteriorate but the Administration had all along failed to provide sufficient support to fishermen over the years, rendering it difficult for them to survive and sustain the development of the fisheries industry.

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23. The Assistant Director of Environmental Protection (Nature Conservation & Infrastructure Planning) ("ADEP(NC&IP)") responded that detailed environmental impact assessment ("EIA") studies had been conducted for IWMF Phase 1 to ascertain the environmental impacts arising from the project. Although there would be a permanent loss of 31 hectares of fishing area on the southern waters of Hong Kong subsequent to the construction of the artificial island for IWMF Phase 1, the area supported low to moderate fisheries production and accounted for only a very small part of Hong Kong's fishing area. The proposed reclamation works would adopt advanced environmentally friendly technology and measures. The dredging works for submarine cables would last for less than one month to minimize the potential impacts on marine water quality, ecology and fisheries. As such, the EIA report concluded that the project would not cause significant impact to fisheries.

24. ADEP(NC&IP) further advised that based on the revised ex-gratia allowance ("EGA") package as approved by the Finance Committee in April 2012, the estimated amount of EGA payable to fishermen would be about \$6.28 million. Marine ecological enhancement measures including the deployment of artificial reef and release of fish fry to enhance the fisheries resources in the surrounding areas of a proposed marine park near Shek Kwu Chau would also be implemented. As requested by Mr Steven HO, the Environment Bureau ("ENB") would check with the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department and provide information on the respective numbers of fishermen and inshore fishing vessels that would possibly be affected by the reclamation works in connection with IWMF Phase 1.

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*(Post-meeting note: The Administration's response was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1134/13-14(01) on 21 March 2014.)*

*Handling of incineration residues*

25. Mr Kenneth LEUNG commented that the Administration's paper did not provide adequate and comprehensive information about IWMF Phase 1 and the incineration plant to be built to facilitate members to have an in-depth discussion on the project. Noting that the Administration would adopt the standards of the European Union ("EU"), which were the most stringent international standards currently, to regulate the emissions from IWMF Phase 1, Mr LEUNG enquired how bottom ash generated from incineration would be handled and whether it could be reused as construction material instead of being disposed of at landfills.

26. ADEP(NC&IP) responded that details of the entire IWMF Phase 1 project including the executive summary of the EIA Studies had been uploaded

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onto EPD's webpage for public information. In handling incineration residues, bottom ash and fly ash produced from the incineration process would be collected and then disposed of at landfills if they met the disposal requirements. Since bottom ash could be reused as construction material according to overseas experience, the Administration would explore whether bottom ash could be reused for making construction materials.

*Technology selection*

27. Mr CHAN Han-pan expressed concern about the technology selection for IWMF Phase 1. SEN advised that the Administration had been keeping track of the latest development of different thermal waste treatment technologies and conducting reviews on appropriate technologies for IWMF Phase 1. Both the reviews and the most updated information consistently indicated that the moving grate incineration technology remained the mainstream municipal solid waste ("MSW") treatment technology with substantial proven track record and performance.

28. Mr Dennis KWOK urged the Administration to adopt an open attitude in the selection of technology for IWMF Phase 1. SEN assured members that the Administration would maintain an open mind towards technology selection. Since IWMF Phase 1 would be Hong Kong's significant back-bone infrastructure for MSW treatment, it was imperative that this facility should adopt the most well proven technology so that it could operate reliably and was able to handle a sizeable volume of MSW throughout the year. SEN further advised that if other thermal waste treatment technologies instead of the moving grate incineration technology were adopted for IWMF Phase 1, a new EIA would be required and it might take a few more years to complete the EIA process before construction could commence.

29. Mr Frankie YICK said that while the Liberal Party supported in principle the IWMF project, he was concerned whether the moving grate incineration technology had become outdated and new technologies should be adopted. SEN responded that while the moving grate incineration technology was widely adopted by most waste-to-energy facilities, it should not be considered as old-fashioned and outdated. ADEP(NC&IP) supplemented that the moving grate incineration technology was currently the mainstream advanced technology for MSW treatment and most waste-to-energy facilities constructed after 2009 adopted this technology. IWMF Phase 1 would adopt the modern 3T moving grate incineration technology (i.e. operating at a high temperature of over 850°C, with high turbulence and allowing residence time of at least two seconds for flue gas). He assured members that the Administration attached great importance to the effects of waste-to-energy facilities on public health. The emissions from IWMF would not only comply with EU standards, the predicted

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impact of the IWMF's emissions on the air quality of Cheung Chau and South Lantau would also fully comply with the air quality objectives.

30. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok expressed concern that Hong Kong was currently facing a very serious problem of waste management as the three strategic landfills would be saturated in two to six years' time. Although the discussion of construction of incinerators had been going on for more than 10 years, there was not yet any waste-to-energy facility in Hong Kong. If discussions dragged on and decisions were not made, Hong Kong would not have a waste-to-energy facility to substantially reduce the volume of waste to the landfills and to recover energy in the near future. Having been involved in the development of IWMF Phase 1 when he was a member of the Advisory Council on the Environment, the Council for Sustainable Development and the Town Planning Board, Ir Dr LO agreed that the moving grate incineration technology remained the mainstream MSW treatment technology which was safe and reliable. He hoped that members could obtain first-hand information on overseas experience in the development and operation of thermal waste treatment facilities during the Panel's overseas duty visit to the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Denmark and Sweden in early March 2014 ("the duty visit").

Landfill extension projects

*Environmental impacts of landfills*

31. Dr Elizabeth QUAT enquired about the timeframe for the implementation of the Waste Diversion Plan ("WDP") and the retrofitting of refuse collection vehicles ("RCVs") with metal tailgate covers to make them fully enclosed, so as to address the concerns of the local communities on air quality, odour and dust arising from the Southeast New Territories ("SENT") Landfill. SEN said that the legislative amendments to relevant regulations had been approved by the Legislative Council ("LegCo"). The Administration would separately appoint the commencement dates for individual components of WDP by notice in the Gazette, taking into account their progress.

32. Miss Alice MAK urged the Administration to take on board as early as possible different improvement measures to address the environmental nuisances caused by the SENT Landfill which had been affecting Tseung Kwan O ("TKO") residents for a long time. She opined that the way forward for waste management should be increasing waste recycling and recovery instead of landfill extensions and development of waste infrastructures. Dr Helena WONG also expressed concern as to how the Administration could allay public concerns about the environmental nuisances arising from the operation of landfills and gain support from residents on landfill extension.

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33. SEN assured members that the Administration had been actively responding to the views expressed by residents living in the vicinity of landfills. District liaison groups would be set up in some districts to monitor the management and operation of waste management facilities (including landfills) in the districts and different improvement measures would be rolled out to resolve the environmental nuisances caused by the SENT Landfill. Despite such measures, the document "Hong Kong: Blueprint for Sustainable Use of Resources 2013-2022" ("the Action Blueprint") issued by ENB in May 2013 recognized that even with very good waste reduction and recovery efforts, there remained a vast amount of unavoidable waste requiring disposal. While IWMF Phase 1 was planned for mixed MSW treatment, landfills were still an indispensable part in the end-of-pipe waste treatment in Hong Kong.

34. The Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (2) ("DDEP(2)") supplemented that the SENT Landfill would only receive odourless construction waste when WDP was implemented after the funding for its extension was approved. Waste collectors would have to make their own plan to divert MSW to the other two landfills. It was estimated that the number of waste collection vehicles travelling to the SENT Landfill each day would be reduced from the current 1 000 to 500, which would be a significant improvement. The Administration would continue to maintain close communication with the waste collection trade to ensure the smooth implementation of WDP and increase waste transport by sea to reduce the traffic nuisance caused by waste collection vehicles moving on roads. In addition, the Administration had rolled out a subsidy scheme to assist the waste collection trade to retrofit their RCVs such that the vehicles would be fully enclosed to reduce odour emission. At present, more than 60 RCVs had been approved under the subsidy scheme to carry out retrofitting works. On the enforcement front, EPD would conduct joint enforcement operations with the Police and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department against RCVs dripping leachate or dropping waste during their trips to landfills. Closed-circuit television (commonly referred to as "CCTV") system had also been installed at black spots to monitor fly-tipping.

35. Dr KWOK Ka-ki commented that the Administration had not taken heed of residents' concerns about the adverse impacts of the operation of landfills. He also criticized the Administration for putting forward the funding proposals for landfill extension and IWMF Phase I before the duty visit and the entire judicial review process were completed.

36. SEN responded that the Administration had been communicating with the concerned local communities closely, in particular the three districts which were most affected by the proposed landfill extension, to address local residents' worries about air quality, odour and dust arising from landfills. According to his understanding, a majority of people supported the use of modern

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incineration as end-of-pipe waste treatment so that waste would not only be treated effectively, but would also be turned into energy. As regards the duty visit, the major objective would be to study the latest development of different thermal waste treatment technologies and gain insight from overseas experience for the planning of Hong Kong's waste management beyond 2022. The Chairman added that during the visit, members could obtain first-hand information on overseas experience in waste management as well as the development and operation of thermal waste treatment facilities.

*Implementation of other waste management measures*

37. While agreeing on the need to have proper waste management, Dr Elizabeth QUAT pointed out that members of the public were concerned that the Administration might not proactively reduce waste and maximize waste recycling if the funding proposals for the extension of the three strategic landfills and IWMF Phase 1 were approved by LegCo. Mr Gary FAN shared the view that waste reduction measures might not be rolled out expeditiously if IWMF Phase 1 was approved to be constructed. He pointed out that due to poor urban planning, newly erected residential buildings had become increasingly close to the SENT Landfill and TKO residents had been affected by the environmental problems caused by landfill operation over the years. He considered it unfair for TKO residents to continue to bear the consequences of the unsatisfactory progress in the implementation of the waste management strategy as set out in the Policy Framework for the Management of Municipal Solid Waste (2005-2014). He said that he would not support the funding proposals for landfill extension and IWMF Phase 1 unless waste reduction and recycling measures had been carried out effectively.

38. SEN explained that the Administration was not only advocating the development of waste infrastructure projects to handle waste. Rather, it had adopted a multi-pronged approach to tackle the waste problem in Hong Kong. The Action Blueprint had provided a broad picture of the Administration's plan to deal with waste. It was expected that with the implementation of MSW charging (which would be a forceful tool in waste reduction) in 2016 and other effective waste management initiatives to reduce waste at source, the target of reducing the per capita waste disposal level of MSW by 40% by 2022 would be achieved.

39. On food waste management, SEN advised that ENB had published "A Food Waste and Yard Waste Plan for Hong Kong 2014-2022" to articulate specific strategies for tackling organic waste. Based on the experience of South Korea and Taipei, the commercial and industrial ("C&I") sector would be the first to use the Organic Waste Treatment Facility located in Siu Ho Wan in North Lantau as C&I food waste was relatively easier to be separated than



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household food waste. SEN stressed that the Administration was determined to reduce waste and had been promoting waste recovery on all fronts. Different improvement measures to address the environmental nuisances caused by the SENT Landfill had also been implemented.

40. Dr Kenneth CHAN was of the view that the proposals for extending the three strategic landfills and developing IWMF Phase 1 were highly controversial issues that required extensive public consultation and more time for balancing the demands of various stakeholders. He requested the Panel to hold a public hearing to receive public views on the infrastructure projects. He further said that the Chief Executive ("CE") had indicated in his election manifesto that priority should be given to waste reduction and recycling without resorting to waste incineration and landfill extension. USEN reiterated that apart from the development of waste infrastructure projects, the Administration had been taking measures to reduce waste and improve the recycling network as delineated in CE's election manifesto.

41. Mr Frederick FUNG doubted whether the Administration could achieve the target of reducing the per capita waste disposal level of MSW by 40% by 2022 through the implementation of the five-pronged approach in the Action Blueprint, including waste reduction at source, food waste management, clean recycling, waste-to-energy and landfilling. He commented that the Administration had not provided adequate support and assistance to the recycling industry and had not created a favourable business environment for different recycling operations. Consideration should be given to providing direct subsidies to the recycling sector on the basis of the quantity of waste recycled. Noting that the landfilling rate in 2022 would still be 22% when other places like South Korea had a much lower rate, Mr FUNG urged the Administration to further lower the landfilling rate to below 22% by 2022. He also said that he would not support IWMF Phase 1 before the outcome of the judicial review appeal was known.

42. Dr Helena WONG pointed out that even with best efforts to achieve waste reduction and recycling, it was estimated that by 2017, there would still be about 10 000 tonnes of waste requiring disposal every day. She was concerned that even if IWMF Phase 1 was commissioned, it could only handle 3 000 tonnes of MSW each day and there would still be close to 7 000 tonnes of waste that required treatment and disposal each day. She urged the Administration to consider introducing legislation for source separation of waste so that recyclables could be segregated from the waste stream for proper treatment and become reusable materials, thereby reducing the volume of waste to be disposed of. Consideration should also be given to prohibiting recyclable waste materials from being landfilled by legislation.

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43. SEN agreed on the need to expeditiously handle the waste challenges that Hong Kong was facing. He stressed that while the Administration was planning to develop modern waste infrastructures, waste reduction remained the top priority of Hong Kong's waste management policy and various measures had already been put in place to promote waste reduction in the community. However, no modern city in the world could resolve its waste problem solely through waste reduction and recovery. Building waste-to-energy facilities was in line with the experience of many other cities in pursuing sustainable waste management.

44. Mr WU Chi-wai enquired how the Administration would implement the "recycle clean" concept so that recyclable waste materials would be properly cleansed before deposition into recycle bins. SEN explained that the recycling operations of different types of recyclables varied greatly. The Steering Committee to Promote the Sustainable Development of the Recycling Industry, which was led by the Chief Secretary for Administration, would examine in depth the recycling operations of different types of recyclables with a view to formulating tailored support programmes and measures for individual recyclable types.

45. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan was of the view that there was a need for a long term and comprehensive waste management policy instead of relying on the three strategic landfills or other waste treatment facilities. He opined that each district in the territory should fairly share out waste management responsibilities.

Motion

46. The Chairman referred members to the following motion moved by Mr Gary FAN –

"本委員會反對新界東南堆填區擴建計劃。"

(Translation)

"That this Panel objects to the Southeast New Territories landfill extension project."

47. The Chairman invited members to consider whether the motion should be dealt with. The Deputy Chairman said that as the Panel would be holding a meeting to receive public views on the funding proposals for the landfill extension projects and IWMF Phase 1, the motion should be dealt with after public views had been heard. As requested by members, the Chairman invited members to indicate by voting whether the motion should be dealt with now or after receiving public views. All members except Mr Gary FAN voted to deal

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with the motion after the Panel had received public views on the funding proposals. The Chairman then declared that the motion would be dealt with after the Panel had received public views on the projects.

*(Post-meeting note: The Panel received deputations' views on the funding proposals for the landfill extension projects and IW MF Phase 1 on 22 and 28 March 2014.)*

**V. Any other business**

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

Council Business Division 1  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
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