

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)1365/17-18
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/EA

Panel on Environmental Affairs

Minutes of meeting
held on Monday, 25 June 2018, at 2:30 pm
in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex

Members present : Hon Tanya CHAN (Chairman)
Dr Hon Junius HO Kwan-yiu, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon CHAN Hak-kan, BBS, JP
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP
Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, SBS, JP
Hon WU Chi-wai, MH
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen
Hon Kenneth LEUNG
Hon KWOK Wai-keung, JP
Hon Dennis KWOK Wing-hang
Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, BBS, JP
Hon Martin LIAO Cheung-kong, SBS, JP
Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan
Hon CHU Hoi-dick
Hon SHIU Ka-fai
Hon HUI Chi-fung
Hon Kenneth LAU Ip-keung, BBS, MH, JP
Hon Gary FAN Kwok-wai
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS

Members absent : Hon WONG Ting-kwong, GBS, JP
Hon CHAN Han-pan, JP
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, SBS, MH, JP

Public Officers attending : **For item IV**

Mr TSE Chin-wan, BBS, JP
Under Secretary for the Environment

Mrs Alice CHEUNG, JP
Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (3)
Environmental Protection Department

Mr Francis CHENG
Assistant Director (Cross-Boundary and International)
Environmental Protection Department

Mr Raymond FONG
General Manager (Environmental Management Division)
Hong Kong Productivity Council

For item V

Mr TSE Chin-wan, BBS, JP
Under Secretary for the Environment

Mrs Alice CHEUNG, JP
Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (3)
Environmental Protection Department

Mr Dave HO
Assistant Director (Air Policy)
Environmental Protection Department

Mr Brian LAU
Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Air Policy)
Environmental Protection Department

Clerk in attendance : Ms Angel SHEK
Chief Council Secretary (1)1

Staff in attendance : Mr Jason KONG
Senior Council Secretary (1)1

Miss Judy YEE
Council Secretary (1)1

Miss Mandy POON
Legislative Assistant (1)1

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I. Confirmation of minutes

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1110/17-18 — Minutes of the meeting held on 23 April 2018)

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 April 2018 were confirmed.

II. Information papers issued since last meeting

2. Members noted that the following papers had been issued since the last meeting:

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1023/17-18(01) — Letter dated 25 May 2018 from Hon Kenneth LEUNG on the restored landfills management policy (Chinese version only)

LC Paper No. CB(1)1058/17-18(01) — Letter dated 28 May 2018 from Hon HUI Chi-fung on the proposal to conduct an overseas duty visit to study recycling facilities and operations (Chinese version only)

LC Paper No. CB(1)1084/17-18(01) — Letter dated 6 June 2018 from Hon HUI Chi-fung on the regulation of single-use plastic products (Chinese version only)

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LC Paper No. CB(1)1105/17-18(01) — Letter dated 8 June 2018 from Hon CHAN Hak-kan on the review of the operation and effectiveness of the Recycling Fund (Chinese version only)

LC Paper No. CB(1)1151/17-18(01) — Referral memorandum from the Public Complaints Office of the Legislative Council Secretariat on emission control for non-road mobile machinery (Chinese version only) (Restricted to Members))

3. The Chairman remarked that as proposed by Mr Kenneth LEUNG, Mr HUI Chi-fung and Mr CHAN Hak-kan, issues related to the management of restored landfills, regulation of single-use plastic products and review of the Recycling Fund had been included in the list of outstanding items for discussion. She invited Mr HUI to explain his proposal to conduct an overseas duty visit (vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1058/17-18(01)) and sought members' views on the proposal.

4. Mr HUI Chi-fung explained that the Mainland had tightened the requirements for import recyclables and there was a lack of recycling facilities in Hong Kong. As such, there were insufficient outlets for locally-generated recyclables that were of low economic value, especially waste plastics. As large-scale recycling facilities had been developed in some overseas places, he suggested the Panel conduct a duty visit to those places to study their experiences in the development of the recycling facilities and the recycling industry, including collaboration between the governments and recyclers in raising the recycling rates.

5. In addition to the above, Mr HUI Chi-fung and the Chairman suggested the visit programme include a study on the development of renewable energy that had a higher potential to be developed in Hong Kong (such as solar power), and overseas experiences in implementing feed-in tariff schemes. Mr Kenneth LEUNG suggested studying the practices of the selected places in the development and management of restored landfills.

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6. The Chairman advised that the proposed duty visit might be conducted in the next legislative session. Members agreed that the Research Office of the Legislative Council Secretariat be requested to prepare information notes on the matters raised by members in paragraphs 4 and 5 above for the Panel's further consideration of the proposed duty visit.

III. Items for discussion at the next meeting

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1129/17-18(01) — List of follow-up actions

LC Paper No. CB(1)1129/17-18(02) — List of outstanding items
for discussion)

7. Members agreed to discuss the following items at the next regular meeting scheduled for Thursday, 19 July 2018, at 8:30 am:

- (a) update on the progress of preparation for implementing the Producer Responsibility Scheme on glass beverage containers; and
- (b) implementation of Organic Resources Recovery Centre Phase 2.

8. At the suggestion of Mr HUI Chi-fung, the Administration was requested to consider including one of the following items in the agenda of the next regular meeting:

- (a) protection of endangered shark species; and
- (b) management of waste plastics, including regulation of single-use plastic products.

9. The Under Secretary for the Environment ("USEN") advised that the Administration would consider the above suggested items and discuss the arrangements with the Secretariat after the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration subsequently suggested that the item on protection of endangered shark species be included in the agenda of the said meeting. The notice and agenda of the meeting were issued on 27 June 2018, vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1177/17-18.)

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IV. Latest progress of the Cleaner Production Partnership Programme

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1129/17-18(03) — Administration's paper on "Latest progress of the Cleaner Production Partnership Programme"

LC Paper No. CB(1)1129/17-18(04) — Updated background brief on "Cleaner Production Partnership Programme" prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat)

Briefing by the Administration

10. With the aid of a power-point presentation, the General Manager (Environmental Management Division) of Hong Kong Productivity Council ("GM/HKPC") briefed members on the examples of the key initiatives of the Cleaner Production Partnership Programme ("CPPP"), which included (a) on-site improvement assessment for participating factories; (b) demonstration projects on cleaner production ("CP") technologies and practices; and (c) Organization Support Initiative ("OSI"), which supported trade and industry associations in carrying out trade-specific promotion and publicity activities.

(Post-meeting note: The set of power-point presentation materials was circulated to members on 25 June 2018 vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1171/17-18(01).)

Discussion

Tackling pollution problems in the Pearl River Delta region

11. The Deputy Chairman and Mr KWOK Wai-keung supported the implementation of CPPP as they considered that Hong Kong had a duty to contribute to the reduction of pollution in the Pearl River Delta ("PRD") region. While the current phase of CPPP would end in March 2020, Mr KWOK called on the Administration to consult the Panel on the proposed way forward as early as possible.

12. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung and Mr CHU Hoi-dick considered that the relevant Mainland authorities, rather than the Hong Kong Government, should bear the responsibility of promoting the adoption of CP by factories in Guangdong and the cost involved, and hence it was questionable whether

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funding should be provided through CPPP to those Mainland factories for carrying out CP-related projects. Mr LEUNG and the Chairman enquired whether the Mainland authorities concerned had implemented similar initiatives to promote CP.

13. USEN responded that Hong Kong and Guangdong shared the responsibility of tackling the pollution problems in the PRD region, and both places could benefit from the improved regional environment. Against this background, CPPP targeted at Hong Kong-owned factories in the industry sectors that involved production processes resulting in pollutant emissions which might affect Hong Kong. Parallel to CPPP, the relevant Guangdong authorities had been implementing other measures to promote the adoption of CP by factories in the province.

14. USEN clarified that the objective of CPPP was not to subsidize the upgrading of the production processes of a participating factory or directly combat pollution in the PRD region, but to promote the adoption of CP technologies and practices which could bring about environmental benefits. The demonstration projects sponsored by CPPP could showcase the effectiveness of CP technologies, thus encouraging other factories to adopt the same.

15. Mr CHU Hoi-dick opined that the Administration should adopt a carrot-and-stick approach in enhancing the environmental performance of Hong Kong-owned factories, including those in Guangdong. In this connection, he suggested that factories participating in CPPP should be required to meet Hong Kong's statutory environmental standards. In this connection, he sought information on the comparison between Hong Kong's environmental standards and those of the Mainland. GM/HKPC responded that the environmental laws and regulations in Hong Kong were in general a good reference for the Mainland, and were sometimes used as benchmarks by the Mainland authorities in updating their laws and regulations concerned.

Operation of the Cleaner Production Partnership Programme

Eligibility criteria

16. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen sought clarification on the definition of "Hong Kong-owned factories" under CPPP. Given that large enterprises and their subsidiaries should have ample resources to upgrade their production processes to achieve CP, he questioned the appropriateness of sponsoring the CP projects of those enterprises through CPPP, and enquired whether the eligibility criteria for funding support included the financial strength of the enterprises. The Deputy Chairman sought details on the CPPP funding ceilings.

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17. USEN advised that sponsorship under CPPP was provided in the form of a matching grant. In respect of demonstration projects, the Government sponsored up to 50% of the project cost, subject to a ceiling of \$330,000 per project, regardless of the financial strength of the participating factory. Such funding support from CPPP in many cases only accounted for a small percentage of the total cost of a large-scale demonstration project. To be eligible for on-site improvement assessments or demonstration projects, the applicant must be a business registered in Hong Kong under the Business Registration Ordinance (Cap. 310), which owned and operated the factory concerned in Hong Kong or Guangdong. In case of a factory in Guangdong, certain other specified arrangements were recognized, e.g. the applicant owned a factory through joint venture agreements or the factory was owned by a Hong Kong resident who possessed a specified percentage of shareholding or equity interest in a Mainland enterprise which owned the factory.

Programme effectiveness and cost-efficiency

18. Mr KWOK Wai-keung and the Deputy Chairman asked about the average amount of sponsorship granted for demonstration projects, and the total amount of financial commitments of participating factories in respect of their demonstration projects approved since the introduction of CPPP.

19. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen and Mr CHU Hoi-dick enquired how the Administration evaluated the effectiveness of CPPP in promoting investments in CP technologies and practices, and whether there were cases where a demonstration project had successfully encouraged the participating factory to make follow-up investments in CP or inspired other factories to adopt the same technology/practice.

20. USEN and GM/HKPC advised that on average, each demonstration project was sponsored about \$306,000 through CPPP, and for every dollar of the sponsorship, the participating factory had made a matching investment of about \$2.7 towards the project. After completion of the demonstration projects, some participating factories had made further investments to apply the relevant CP technologies/practices to other production processes/lines. In addition, according to the results of a survey conducted with the registered environmental technology service providers under CPPP, their business of providing CP solutions had grown by about 60% to 70% on average since they had become CPPP partners. This was indicative that CPPP had been effective in promoting the industry's investments in CP technologies and practices.

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21. USEN supplemented that the demonstration of successful CP projects was an effective means to inspire other factories to follow suit, and the promotion and publicity activities sponsored by CPPP could facilitate dissemination of CP information among industry practitioners. It was therefore envisaged that CPPP could in the long run contribute to a wider adoption of CP technologies and practices in Guangdong and Hong Kong, thereby helping to reduce pollution in the PRD region.

22. To assess whether CPPP was cost-efficient, the Deputy Chairman sought information on the estimated number of factories that might benefit from the Programme, and the environmental benefits brought by the approved/completed demonstration projects. Mr KWOK Wai-keung asked whether a factory could apply for CPPP funding support for more than one project.

23. USEN responded that in 2015, there were about 32 000 Hong Kong-owned factories in Guangdong. However, not all of those factories might be eligible for funding support, and one of the reasons was that CPPP would only sponsor up to five demonstration projects for each CP technology. In general, each factory might be granted funding support for up to three demonstration projects. The environmental benefits of the 41 demonstration projects completed in the current phase of CPPP had been set out in paragraph 8 of the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(1)1129/17018(03)). The remaining 107 demonstration projects were still in progress, and details on their environmental benefits would not be available until after their completion.

24. Mr HUI Chi-fung expressed concern on water pollution arising from industrial activities in the PRD region and its impact on marine ecology. He enquired about the number of demonstration projects related to effluent reduction and control, and whether the participating factories were able to comply with the Mainland's regulatory requirements on effluent discharge after completion of the projects.

25. USEN clarified that the objective of CPPP was to promote the adoption of CP technologies and practices by Hong Kong-owned factories in Guangdong and Hong Kong, which should also be compliant with the relevant Mainland environmental regulatory requirements. USEN further advised that among the 41 demonstration projects completed in the current phase of CPPP, five of them were related to effluent reduction and control.

Project administration and monitoring

26. Mr HUI Chi-fung sought details on the project administration and monitoring mechanism under CPPP. GM/HKPC advised that applications

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for funding support for demonstration projects would be considered based on a set of vetting criteria. If a project was approved, the applicant would be required to update HKPC, which served as the CPPP secretariat, on the progress of the project at a specified time. HKPC might visit the factory to confirm the project progress. Upon completion of the project, the applicant would need to submit a project report to HKPC with an evaluation of the actual performance of the demonstrated technology. HKPC would then conduct independent evaluation on the effectiveness of the demonstrated technology and compare the results with those claimed in the applicant's report. Disbursement of funds would be made to the applicant if HKPC was satisfied that the applicant had fulfilled the conditions for fund disbursement.

Further promoting participation in the Programme

27. Mr HUI Chi-fung enquired about the reason for no participation from four industry sectors (namely food and beverage, paper and paper products, non-metallic products, and furniture) in OSI projects, and whether the Administration would implement new measures to entice those industry sectors to apply for funding under the OSI initiative in future.

28. USEN acknowledged the low degree of participation in demonstration projects in the four industry sectors mentioned. The Administration would step up promotional efforts focusing on the industry sectors and cities with lower participation rates, with a view to encouraging greater participation by factories in those sectors and cities.

V. Proposed update of Indoor Air Quality Objectives under the "Indoor Air Quality Certification Scheme for Offices and Public Places"

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1129/17-18(05) — Administration's paper on "Proposal to Update the Indoor Air Quality Objectives under the "Indoor Air Quality Certification Scheme for Offices and Public Places"

LC Paper No. CB(1)1129/17-18(06) — Background brief on "Indoor Air Quality Management Programme" prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat)

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Briefing by the Administration

29. At the invitation of the Chairman, USEN briefed members on the proposal to update the Indoor Air Quality ("IAQ") objectives under the Indoor Air Quality Certification Scheme for Offices and Public Places ("the Scheme"). He advised that the Scheme was launched in September 2003 with the aim of recognizing good IAQ management practices and encouraging owners of premises/buildings or property management companies to pursue the best level of IAQ. In the light of the IAQ guidelines published by the World Health Organization ("WHO") in 2009 and 2010 (which were related to dampness and mould, and nine selected pollutants respectively), the Environmental Protection Department ("EPD") conducted a review and proposed updating the IAQ objectives. It was also proposed that the revised IAQ objectives be launched on 1 July 2019, and the premises that had joined the Scheme before that date might continue to carry out the re-certification of IAQ parameters under the prevailing IAQ objectives in the five-year transitional period until June 2024.

Discussion

Proposals to update the Indoor Air Quality objectives

30. Mr KWOK Wai-keung expressed support for the proposals to tighten the IAQ objectives for certain pollutants under the Scheme. However, he objected to the proposed removal of the parameters of room temperature, relative humidity and air movement (collectively referred to as "the three physical parameters"), which were related to the comfort of users of premises, from the IAQ objectives. He sought explanation on the rationale of this proposal.

31. USEN explained that WHO did not issue any specific guideline on the three physical parameters. As those physical parameters were usually included in the design parameters of mechanical ventilation and air conditioning ("MVAC") systems, it was expected that removing them from the IAQ objectives would not adversely affect assessment of the comfortableness of the premises participating in the Scheme.

32. Mr KWOK Wai-keung asked whether the Administration would issue guidelines on mould prevention and control after incorporating a parameter of mould into the IAQ objectives. USEN advised that the IAQ guidelines published by WHO in 2009 recommended thorough inspection to assess the dampness and mould problems in the indoor environment, and prompt removal of mould in contaminated areas. Apart from adding the new IAQ parameter of mould, EPD had developed technical guidelines on mould assessment as well as prescriptive checklist and guidance notes for

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prevention and control of indoor mould for public reference.

33. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen asked why some species of volatile organic compounds ("VOCs") under the alternative compliance arrangement for the "total VOC" parameter in the IAQ objectives would be removed. The Assistant Director (Air Policy) ("AD(AP)") responded that WHO had not yet published any IAQ guideline related to VOCs when the Scheme was launched in 2003. When considering the IAQ objectives to be established for VOCs at that time, the Administration made reference to the standards adopted by some overseas jurisdictions and occupational health standards on workplace IAQ. As some VOC species under the existing alternative compliance arrangement were normally found in industrial workplaces only but not in indoor public places and offices, the Administration now proposed adopting the five VOC species in WHO's IAQ guidelines to replace the current species.

34. The Chairman enquired about the reasons for not including a parameter of fine suspended particulates ("PM2.5") in the existing and revised IAQ objectives. USEN explained that PM2.5 was a component of respirable suspended particulates ("PM10"), which had already been included in the IAQ objectives. If the IAQ objectives for PM10 were met, it was likely that the concentration of PM2.5 was also at an acceptable level in the premises concerned. Having considered relevant factors, the Administration had decided not to include the PM2.5 parameter in the IAQ objectives lest it would render the assessment of IAQ unduly complex.

Management of indoor air quality

35. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung enquired whether guidelines on improving IAQ in offices, including those related to the cleaning of MVAC systems and other air conditioning systems, had been issued for public reference; and whether subsidies would be provided to employers for the adoption of good IAQ management practices in their offices and/or joining the Scheme.

36. USEN advised that the Administration had commissioned HKPC to set up the IAQ Information Centre ("the Centre"). The Centre provided information on management of IAQ, including guidance notes for testing IAQ parameters. Employers who were interested in improving IAQ of their offices were encouraged to contact the Centre and participate in the Scheme for assessment of the IAQ parameters of their offices, through which they could identify areas of non-compliance and take remedial actions accordingly.

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Further measures to improve indoor air quality and promote the Scheme

37. Given that only 1 562 premises had been awarded certificates under the Scheme and over 600 of them were government agencies, Mr KWOK Wai-keung and Mr HUI Chi-fung expressed disappointment that the Scheme was grossly ineffective in promoting good IAQ management in Hong Kong. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen and the Chairman asked about the highest number of participating premises since the launch of the Scheme in 2003, and whether the Administration had evaluated the reasons for the low participation rate.

38. The Deputy Chairman, Mr Tony TSE and the Chairman considered that the Administration should step up its publicity efforts to enhance public awareness of the Scheme and the IAQ objectives, as well as public recognition of the IAQ certification. The Chairman also enquired if the Administration would establish a participation rate target for the Scheme after the update of the IAQ objectives.

39. USEN and the Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (3) ("DDEP(3)") responded that:

- (a) the two classes of IAQ under the Scheme could serve as benchmarks for practitioners of building design and management to pursue good IAQ management practices in their buildings/premises;
- (b) the total number of certificates as at 2017 (i.e. 1 562) represented the highest number of valid certificates at any time since the launch of the Scheme;
- (c) the Administration concurred that the Scheme had not been met with enthusiasm from the private sector, and had only limited success in promoting good IAQ management due to the low participation rate;
- (d) in view of the above, the Administration would conduct a study to assess the general compliance situation of buildings/premises in Hong Kong with the revised IAQ objectives, and would thereafter review the measures for improving IAQ in Hong Kong. The review would include an analysis of the applicability of WHO's recommendations on improving IAQ through establishing regulatory standards on furniture and household products, building designs, and building ventilation systems; and
- (e) meanwhile, to improve the participation rate of the Scheme, EPD had plans to promote the Scheme more widely through

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different channels, and enhance the promotion targeting particular prospective premises, such as shopping malls and clubhouses. EPD would continue to explore other methods to enhance public education related to IAQ and the Scheme, with a view to improving public recognition of the Excellent Class and Good Class IAQ certification under the Scheme. Given that the effectiveness of the Scheme would be examined in the aforementioned review of IAQ-related measures, the Administration did not consider it necessary to set a specific target for the participation rate of the Scheme at this stage.

40. USEN supplemented that ambient air quality was one of the major factors affecting IAQ. It was expected that the Administration's efforts to reduce ambient air pollution in recent years had contributed to the improvement of IAQ in general.

41. As premises owners/management should bear the responsibility of maintaining a comfortable and hygienic indoor environment for the occupants, Mr KWOK Wai-keung and the Deputy Chairman suggested that the Administration should make it a compulsory requirement for all premises to meet a basic set of IAQ standards through legislative means, conduct random inspections for detecting and rectifying non-compliances, and require routine cleaning of MVAC systems by the relevant premises owners/management.

42. USEN responded that most overseas jurisdictions had regulations to control ambient air pollution but not indoor air pollution. For the few jurisdictions that had put in place regulations on IAQ, there were difficulties in enforcing relevant legal requirements. Moreover, WHO did not recommend controlling indoor air pollution through legislation. He reiterated that the Administration would review how best to improve IAQ in Hong Kong's premises/buildings.

43. Mr HUI Chi-fung enquired whether more stringent IAQ objectives would be developed for premises occupied by people who were more sensitive to air pollution, such as kindergartens, residential care homes for the elderly and hospitals.

44. USEN and DDEP(3) responded that only premises served by MVAC systems were eligible to join the Scheme. As most schools and residential care homes did not have MVAC systems, the IAQ objectives under the Scheme were less relevant to those premises. Nevertheless, the Administration was preparing a separate set of guidance notes for good IAQ management in schools and elderly homes not served by MVAC systems, which would be made available to the public for reference. As hospitals were

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built for special purposes and should comply with relevant building standards, the Administration did not consider it necessary to develop a unique set of IAQ objectives for hospitals under the Scheme. AD(AP) supplemented that the basic principles of good IAQ management practices for all kinds of premises included good ventilation, reducing indoor pollution sources (such as using furniture and products with low emissions of air pollutants), and regular cleaning of the indoor environment and ventilation systems (if any).

VI. Any other business

45. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:25 pm.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
4 September 2018