

**Bills Committee on Waste Disposal
(Charging for Municipal Solid Waste) (Amendment) Bill 2018**

**List of follow-up actions arising from the discussion
at the meeting on 30 April 2019**

This note sets out our response to the follow-up actions arising from the discussion at the meeting of the Bills Committee held on 30 April 2019.

(a) whether the Administration will consider introducing an amendment to the Waste Disposal (Charging for Municipal Solid Waste) (Amendment) Bill 2018 to the effect that people who take part in voluntary waste removal activities (such as voluntary clean-up activities following a natural disaster) would be granted an exemption from using the proposed designated bags/labels for depositing the relevant municipal solid waste ("MSW") or delivering it to the relevant parties;

At present, for clean-up activities organised or participated by Government departments or held at venues managed by Government departments, the relevant departments generally provide the required equipment, including garbage bags, for volunteers taking part in such activities. Under the Bill, the Director for Environmental Protection (DEP) may supply designated bags (DBs) or designated labels (DLs) for free. Having regard to the nature of the events, the importance to upkeep the “polluters-pay” principle, and other relevant factors, the DEP may make arrangements to supply DBs or DLs for free to any person or organisation as necessary for volunteers of self-organised clean-up activities to help collect waste in future after the implementation of municipal solid waste (MSW) charging.

(b) the estimated maximum number of staff required for carrying out enforcement duties related to the proposed charging scheme for the disposal of MSW ("the proposed charging scheme") under the worst-case scenario;

As for enforcement manpower regarding the use of pre-paid DBs/DLs which would be required under MSW charging, having regard to some 22 000 waste reception points and considerable waste reception points located at individual floors of over 45 000 buildings across the territory, we plan to adopt a risk-based approach targeting at the list of black spots based on complaints and intelligence. The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) may, according to preliminary estimation, require a few hundred enforcement staff. In light of the possible circumstances which may arise during the

initial implementation of MSW charging, we would consider recruiting post-retirement civil servants with enforcement experience to facilitate flexible manpower deployment.

We will further review and ascertain the actual manpower requirements having regard to the public response to public education and publicity work; the effectiveness of various waste reduction and recycling initiatives (including the establishment of new outreaching teams to provide on-site assistance and the pilot schemes for the provision of free collection service in respect of waste plastics from non-commercial and non-industrial sources as well as food waste mainly from commercial and industrial (C&I) sources); and the effectiveness of FEHD's stepped-up efforts to deal with littering and fly-tipping problems (such as the effectiveness of applying innovation and technology initiatives to facilitate compliance).

(c) the types of waste separation bins that the Government provides without any charge or subsidizes the cost of setting them up in residential premises (including housing estates, individual buildings and villages) to facilitate waste separation at source and resource recovery;

The Government has been attaching great importance to promoting the "Use Less, Waste Less" culture and actively promoting waste reduction at source and clean recycling at different levels of the community. We have been encouraging the public to practise waste separation by providing free recycling bins to collect different types of recyclables through various waste reduction and recycling programmes as listed below:

- (i) under the Source Separation of Waste Programme, recycling bins for collection of waste paper, metals and plastics are provided to housing estates and buildings, as well as C&I buildings which have participated in the programme to encourage the public to participate in waste separation and recycling. The Environmental Campaign Committee (ECC) distributes recycling bins to participating private housing estates/buildings and C&I buildings for free, while the Housing Department (HD) and Hong Kong Housing Society put in place recycling bins in public rental housing (PRH) estates;
- (ii) Producer Responsibility Scheme on Glass Beverage Containers provides free recycling bins and collection service for glass beverage containers to C&I sectors such as pubs and food premises, as well as residential buildings and estates through the Glass Management Contractors appointed by the Government;

- (iii) under the Fluorescent Lamp Recycling Programme, EPD provides free collection bins to residential estates, shopping malls and retail outlets which have participated in the programme for collection of used mercury-containing lamps, including compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs), fluorescent tubes and high intensity discharge lamps;
- (iv) under the Recycling of Rechargeable Battery Programme, EPD provides free recycling bins to most of the MTR stations, and electronic equipment shops, convenience stores, housing estates and schools which have participated in the programme to collect and recover three common types of rechargeable batteries, namely Li-ion, Ni-MH and Ni-Cd batteries; and
- (v) under the Community Used Clothes Recycling Bank Scheme, the Scheme Managers appointed by the Government, namely Friends of the Earth (Hong Kong), Christian Action, Salvation Army and Conservancy Association, set up recycling bins for collection of used clothes across the territory to facilitate the public to donate used clothes in support of environmental protection and for charitable purposes.

Apart from the above programmes, ECC, FEHD, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, and the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department have placed recycling bins at schools, public places, Government leisure and cultural premises and country parks to facilitate the public to participate in source separation of waste and recycling.

(d) the number of meeting(s) conducted by the Administration with private waste collectors and recyclers in March and April 2019 to discuss the implementation arrangements of the proposed charging scheme; and

Private waste collectors (PWCs) (including collectors for recyclables) and cleansing contractors are important stakeholders of MSW charging. Hence, the Government has been liaising with them closely over the implementation details of MSW charging. Apart from routine communication, the Government has held 10 meetings with representatives of PWCs and cleansing contractor trades to listen to their views and solicit their support since the announcement of the implementation details of MSW charging in March 2017. Moreover, the Government and PWC trade jointly organised a trial on the use of dummy DBs from July to August 2017. Based on the outcome of the trial, we have accepted PWC trade's views, and have expanded the scope of application of DBs to MSW collected through PWCs' refuse collection vehicles with rear compactors in October 2017. We invited 19 partnership organisations, including PWC and cleansing

contractors associations, to jointly organise MSW charging trial projects in four sectors (shopping malls, catering trade, PRH estates and rural areas) in end 2018 which allowed the trades and other stakeholders to experience quantity-based waste charging. We will continue our close liaison with the concerned trades on the implementation arrangements of MSW charging.

(e) details of the pilot scheme(s), if any, conducted in housing estates owned/managed by the Hong Kong Housing Authority on the implementation arrangements of the proposed charging scheme.

EPD has launched different pilot schemes and involvement projects to facilitate different stakeholders to try out MSW charging in actual settings. We launched a six-month pilot scheme in some PRH estates and private housing estates in 2014 to try out the effectiveness of different modes of quantity-based charging. The Environment and Conservation Fund has been funding non-profit-making organisations and bodies since 2015 to carry out Community Involvement Projects (CIPs) in different types of premises to try out MSW charging and prepare for its implementation. As at today, more than 80 MSW charging CIPs have been sponsored, of which three of them are PRH estates.

In addition, to enable more stakeholders in PRH estates to try out MSW charging in actual settings in advance and help PRH residents to get prepared for the implementation of MSW charging, EPD and HD have jointly commenced Trial Projects in ten PRH estates for a period of approximately six months each by batches in end 2018. EPD provides free dummy DBs to PRH residents for on-site trial and simulating MSW charging arrangements during the trial period. EPD also organises various publicity and public education activities to enrich participants' understanding of MSW charging, source separation of waste and clean recycling.