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Establishment Subcommittee of the Finance Committee

**Minutes of the 18th meeting
held in Conference Room 1 of Legislative Council Complex
on Wednesday, 5 June 2019, at 8:30 am**

Members present:

Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon Holden CHOW Ho-ding (Deputy Chairman)
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon WONG Ting-kwong, GBS, JP
Hon WONG Kwok-kin, SBS, JP
Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS
Hon WU Chi-wai, MH
Hon YIU Si-wing, BBS
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Hon KWOK Wai-keung, JP
Hon Christopher CHEUNG Wah-fung, SBS, JP
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Hon IP Kin-yuen
Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, BBS, JP
Hon Martin LIAO Cheung-kong, SBS, JP
Hon POON Siu-ping, BBS, MH
Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, SBS, JP
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, SBS, MH, JP
Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan
Hon Alvin YEUNG
Hon CHU Hoi-dick
Hon HO Kai-ming
Hon SHIU Ka-fai
Hon YUNG Hoi-yan
Dr Hon Pierre CHAN

Hon CHAN Chun-ying, JP
Hon Jeremy TAM Man-ho
Hon AU Nok-hin
Hon Vincent CHENG Wing-shun, MH
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS

Members attending:

Hon HUI Chi-fung
Mr KWONG Chun-yu

Member absent:

Hon SHIU Ka-chun

Public Officers attending:

Ms. Kinnie WONG Kit-ye	Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) 1 (Acting)
Mr Brian LO Sai-hung, JP	Deputy Secretary for the Civil Service 1
Mr WONG Kam-sing	Secretary for the Environment
Ms Maisie CHENG Mei-sze	Permanent Secretary for the Environment
Mr Donald NG Man-kit	Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (Special Tasks)
Mrs Vicki KWOK WONG Wing-ki	Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (2)
Mr Elvis AU Wai Kwong	Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (1)
Mr Kenneth CHAN Siu-yum	Assistant Director (Special Tasks) Environmental Protection Department

Clerk in attendance:

Ms Connie SZETO	Chief Council Secretary (1)4
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Staff in attendance:

Ms Judy YEE	Council Secretary (1)4
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Ms Alice CHEUNG
Miss Yannes HO
Ms Haley CHEUNG

Senior Legislative Assistant (1)1
Legislative Assistant (1)7
Legislative Assistant (1)10

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The Chairman drew members' attention to the information paper ECI(2019-20)4, which set out the latest changes in the directorate establishment approved since 2002 and the changes to the directorate establishment in relation to the four items on the agenda. She then reminded members that in accordance with Rule 83A of the Rules of Procedure ("RoP"), they should disclose the nature of any direct or indirect pecuniary interest relating to the item under discussion at the meeting before they spoke on the item. He also drew members' attention to RoP 84 on voting in case of direct pecuniary interest.

EC(2019-20)4

Proposed creation of nine directorate posts in the Environmental Protection Department with immediate effect upon approval of the Finance Committee, of three supernumerary posts of one Administrative Officer Staff Grade B (D3), one Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (D2) and one Principal Environmental Protection Officer (PEPO) (D1) for four years; two supernumerary posts of one Assistant Director of Environmental Protection (D2) and one PEPO (D1) for six years; two supernumerary posts of PEPO (D1) for five years; and two permanent posts of PEPO (D1) to prepare for municipal solid waste charging and take forward various waste reduction and recycling initiatives

2. The Chairman remarked that the staffing proposal was to create nine directorate posts in the Environmental Protection Department ("EPD") to prepare for municipal solid waste ("MSW") charging and take forward various waste reduction and recycling initiatives, namely: (a) three supernumerary posts, i.e., one Administrative Officer Staff Grade B post, one Administrative Officer Staff Grade C post and one PEPO post for four years; (b) two supernumerary posts, i.e., one Assistant Director of Environmental Protection post and one PEPO post for six years; (c) two supernumerary posts of PEPO for five years; and (d) two permanent posts of PEPO.

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3. The Chairman said that the Panel on Environmental Affairs had discussed the staffing proposal at its meeting on 25 February 2019 and the Panel had no objection to the submission of the proposal to the Establishment Subcommittee ("ESC"). Panel members had pointed out that some of the permanent directorate posts or supernumerary directorate posts proposed to be re-created or created were related to the preparations for and the implementation of MSW charging but the Waste Disposal (Charging for Municipal Solid Waste) (Amendment) Bill 2018 ("the Bill") was still under scrutiny. For this reason, they queried the justifications for creating/re-creating the posts before the passage of the Bill and the introduction of and implementation of the charging. Some Panel members were concerned about the suitability of creating some of the supernumerary posts for as long as five to six years and how EPD would step up its cooperation with other government departments in MSW charging and various waste reduction and recycling initiatives. After considering the views and suggestions of Panel members, the Administration said that it would revise the permanent post of Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Municipal Solid Waste Charging) proposed to be created such that it would be created on a supernumerary basis for four years.

4. The Chairman pointed out that the Panel had requested the Administration to provide supplementary information before submitting the staffing proposal to ESC on: (a) more details on the major duties to be undertaken by each of the nine directorate posts proposed to be created/re-created under EPD and the timetables for carrying out the duties; (b) the number of non-directorate civil service posts and non-civil service contract posts to be deployed to support each of the nine proposed directorate posts; and (c) examples of cooperation between EPD and other government departments (including the Housing Department and Food and Environmental Hygiene Department ("FEHD")) in the preparation for or implementation of the proposed MSW charging and various waste reduction and recycling initiatives. The supplementary information provided by the Administration was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)974/18-19(02).

Municipal solid waste charging

Implementation timetable and preliminary work

5. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen considered it appropriate to create three supernumerary posts (i.e., Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (4) ("DDEP(4)"), Assistant Director of Environmental Protection (Municipal Solid Waste Charging) and Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Municipal Solid Waste Charging)("PEPO(MSWC)")) in EPD to take

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forward MSW charging. He asked EDP when the Bill was expected to be passed and about the details of the preliminary work to be undertaken by the three supernumerary posts to take forward MSW charging prior to the passage of the Bill. Mr KWONG Chun-yu also asked about the timetable for the implementation of MSW charging.

6. Mr Tony TSE asked about the details of the duties and responsibilities of the supernumerary post of PEPO(MSWC) to be created.

7. The Secretary for the Environment ("SEN") advised that the Bills Committee responsible for scrutinizing the Bill had so far held eight meetings since November 2018 to discuss the Bill and other matters related to MSW charging. The Administration planned to put in place a period of 12 to 18 months after the passage of the Bill and before the implementation of MSW charging, for the Government, the public and the recycling industry to make preparations for MSW charging. If the Bill could be passed in the current Session, the Administration expected that MSW charging would be introduced by the end of 2020 at the earliest.

8. Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (Special Tasks) ("DDEP(ST)") remarked that EPD needed to take forward a massive amount of preliminary work in relation to the implementation of MSW charging, including the setting up of relevant complementary systems such as a manufacturing, inventory and distribution system for designated garbage bags and designated labels, upgrading the waste reception facilities at landfills as well as the service and operation of refuse transfer stations to implement the charging mode of "gate-fee" under MSW charging. EPD would launch a publicity and public education campaign together with various stakeholders before the implementation of MSW charging to foster better understanding of MSW charging in our community. The three supernumerary posts proposed to be created, in particular, that of PEPO(MSWC), would be responsible for undertaking the aforementioned preliminary work and providing support before the passage of the Bill.

9. Ms YUNG Hoi-yan expressed her support for this staffing proposal and suggested that EPD should step up publicity and public education, so that the public could understand the benefits and operational details of the measure before the introduction of MSW charging.

10. Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (2) ("DDEP(2)") responded that EPD had all along attached importance to and made various environmental education and publicity efforts, for example, the provision of 3-coloured waste separation bins ("3-coloured bins") in public places to enhance public understanding of waste separation and recycling and strengthen waste reduction at source; and the regularization of funding

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support from the Environment and Conservation Fund ("ECF") for Community Recycling Centres to enhance service provision and cater closely to the needs of local residents. In addition, with a view to enabling the public to make preparations for MSW charging, EPD had set up outreaching teams for three pilot districts (Sha Tin, Eastern and Kwun Tong) and would implement the Pilot Scheme on Free Collection Service for Non-commercial and Non-industrial Waste Plastics in pilot districts to strengthen public education in waste reduction at source and help the public practise waste separation at source and clean recycling and identify suitable outlets for recycled materials.

Waste reduction at source

11. Ms YUNG Hoi-yan and Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan urged the Environmental Bureau to step up waste separation at source when implementing MSW charging so as to enhance the effectiveness of waste reduction. They suggested that the Administration should provide garbage bags of different colours to the public according to the types of waste so as to facilitate the separation of different types of waste at source.

12. SEN responded that the Council for Sustainable Development had had discussions on the ancillary facilities and related services for waste recovery earlier on. Bearing in mind the fact that the public had been accustomed to using 3-coloured bins for waste separation and recovery, public concerns that the plastic bags provided by the Authorities for waste separation may lead to an increase in the quantity of plastic bags used and the views of the Council for Sustainable Development, the Government considered it preferable to continue to use 3-coloured bins as one of the ancillary facilities for waste separation and recovery. He further pointed out that since MSW charging was quantity-based, if members of the public carried out waste separation at source on their own, domestic waste disposal could be reduced and the charges payable would be reduced. For this reason, the Administration encouraged the public to separate domestic waste at source on their own and put them in 3-coloured bins for recovery.

13. Mr WU Chi-wai asked about the details of the implementation of the Pilot Scheme on Free Collection Service for Food Waste being implemented by EPD and the Hong Kong Housing Authority ("HA") in public housing estates, including the present collection quantity under the scheme and how the experience derived from the scheme could be useful in the future implementation of MSW charging.

14. In a consolidated response, SEN and DDEP(2) said that EPD would accord priority to public housing estates that had received funding support from ECF to practise source separation and recycling of food waste by

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inviting them to join the Pilot Scheme on Free Collection Service for Food Waste. In addition, EPD would liaise with HA and the Hong Kong Housing Society to invite public housing estates with experience in waste separation and/or handling food waste separation and recycling to join the pilot scheme. During the implementation of the pilot scheme, EPD would carry out tests on different modes of food waste collection in stages, including making use of enclosed or automatic equipment operated by smart card to collect food waste and examine how to avoid nuisance during food waste collection and delivery. EPD would liaise with HA later to provide incentives to households that participated in the pilot scheme to encourage them to take part in the Pilot Scheme and accumulate experience in waste reduction. In addition, the Administration also planned to launch a pilot scheme to provide free food waste collection service to the commercial and industrial sector.

New outreaching teams

15. Mr YIU Si-wing supported the implementation of MSW charging. He noted that EPD would set up outreach teams with around 200 staff to strengthen on-site support to recycling. He asked EPD of the performance indicators set for the work of the outreaching teams.

16. Mr KWONG Chun-yu said that a number of green groups had expressed concerns about the outreaching teams to be set up by EPD, as they considered the teams with around 200 staff could not cope with the work for implementing MSW charging. He asked about the Administration's response to the proposal of setting up an office on waste reduction by EPD in assisting the outreaching teams to implement MSW charging and relevant education and promotion work.

17. DDEP(2) responded that, EPD planned to set up an Outreaching and Recycling Division in this financial year. The duties of three of the supernumerary posts to be created, namely the Assistant Director (Outreaching and Recycling), Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Outreaching Service) ("PEPO(OS)") and Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Outreaching and Recycling) ("PEPO(OR)") would include the setting up of the new outreaching teams. The outreaching teams to be set up would have about 200 staff members (including 142 non-civil service contract posts), aiming to prepare for the implementation of MSW charging and strengthen on-site support for recycling. EPD had set the targets for the outreaching teams, so that when the outreaching teams were in full strength, they would make around 50 000 on-site visits throughout the territory every year, as well as examining the recycling system and recycling work in districts to identify possible room for improvement. She further pointed out that the outreaching teams had

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started implementing pilot schemes in Shatin, Eastern District and Kwun Tong in the end of 2018. EPD projected that by the end of 2020, districts to be served by the outreaching teams would be expanded in phases to all housing estates throughout the territory and start extending to all schools and commercial organizations.

18. In response to green groups' proposal on the setting up of the outreaching teams by EPD, DDEP(ST) advised that, upon the passage of the Bill, EPD would set up a Municipal Solid Waste Reduction Office to take forward measures relating to waste reduction and MSW charging. Among which, around 300 to 400 staff members would be responsible for waste reduction and charging work; their duties, however, would not include law enforcement work involving MSW charging.

Reduction of waste plastics

19. Mr CHAN Chun-ying pointed out that the collection and recycling costs of waste plastics were high whereas the economic value was on the low side. Meanwhile, a number of waste plastics reduction measures would be introduced by the Administration, including provision of free collection service for waste plastics, setting up new outreaching teams to provide assistance and introduction of the producer responsibility scheme ("PRS") on plastic beverage containers, which would incur as much as \$25-odd million. Mr CHAN asked whether the Administration had set any performance indicators for waste plastics reduction measures to facilitate the review of the effectiveness of such measures, and about the methods to be adopted to raise the recycling value and expand recycling channels.

20. DDEP(2) responded that though many markets around the world had banned the import of waste plastics, if waste plastics could be processed to produce recycled raw materials or recycling products, they would become commercial products and would definitely have markets for export. Hence, the Administration would encourage the recycling industry to collect waste plastics to recycle into recycled raw materials for export.

21. DDEP(ST) replied that, with reference to the experience of other places, the overall disposal rate of MSW might be reduced by around 30% upon the implementation of MSW charging. The Administration would continue taking forward MSW charging and various waste reduction and recycling measures in this direction and making regular announcements of the relevant figures on volume of waste disposal for reference of the public.

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22. Mr Tony TSE said that PRS on plastic beverage containers and the phasing out of disposable plastic tableware were measures targeted at waste reduction. He asked EPD of the reasons for creating different posts, namely the permanent posts of Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Waste Management Policy)² ("PEPO(WM)²") and Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Food Waste Recycling) ("PEPO(FWR)") and the supernumerary post of Principal Environmental Officer (Food Waste Management) ("PEPO(FWM)"), to implement the two measures of similar nature.

23. DDEP(ST) explained that the Administration would introduce PRS on plastic containers in stages and would first deal with plastic beverage containers which accounted for 60% of the overall waste plastics in Hong Kong. The post of PEPO(WM)² to be created would oversee the formulation and implementation of the new PRS on plastic beverage. Later on, that post would also be tasked with following through the consultancy study on the PRS on plastic containers carrying personal care products and the follow-up afterwards.

24. DDEP(ST) added that EPD intended to set up another special post to be tasked with policy formulation and supervision of measures to be implemented in stages for the phasing out of disposable plastic tableware.

25. Dr KWOK Ka-ki criticized the limited effectiveness of PRSs (including the PRS on plastic beverage containers to be implemented) in waste reduction and that the relevant costs might ultimately be transferred to consumers. Hence, he had reservations about the creation of the post PEPO(WM)² for the implementation of the PRS on plastic beverage containers. He pointed out that certain countries had already laid down long-term targets and implementation timetables for waste plastics, citing the example that the European Union ("EU") had already set for the complete ban of single-use plastic products in 2021. In his view, given that Hong Kong was a relatively small society, it would be easier to implement measures to replace plastic products, yet due to the absence of targets and implementation timetable in most instances, the effect of the Administration's waste plastics reduction measures was limited. Dr KWOK also asked whether the Environment Bureau ("EB") would set a target timeframe for waste reduction measures, particularly on waste plastics reduction.

26. SEN replied that the regulation of single-use plastic products imposed by EU, which included the substitution of single-use plastic tableware by other products, was not a blanket ban. He stressed that governments of different places must give consideration to the lifestyle of local citizens in formulating waste reduction measures. EB had drawn

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reference from EU's measures on single-use plastic products and commenced a study based on the urban environment in and the eating habits of Hong Kong citizens, where the study on regulating measures for waste plastics was expected to complete next year and a road map of implementing waste reduction measures would be formulated. Moreover, the Government of the previous term had formulated the *Hong Kong Blueprint for Sustainable Use of Resources 2013–2022* ("Action Blueprint") as a 10-year blueprint for waste management, and the Administration had all along done their best to implement various waste reduction measures.

27. SEN added that priority would be given by the Administration to the development of terminal treatment systems for recovered waste plastics, which included processing waste plastics to produce recycled raw materials or recycled products and enhancing waste plastics treatment through the implementation of PRSs. He pointed out that PRSs, including that on plastic beverage containers, were generally supported by academics and green groups, as well as EU. For the time being, the study on PRS on plastic beverage containers was close to completion and the next step would be conducting public consultation and legislative work.

28. Dr Elizabeth QUAT noted that the two PEPO posts proposed to be created would be responsible for the implementation of PRS on plastic beverage containers, as well as measures on Food Waste Plan and the phasing out of disposable plastic tableware, and so on, respectively. She asked about the timetable for the implementation of waste plastics reduction measures, and whether the Administration would lay down performance indicators for the examination of the performance of the two posts responsible for waste plastic reduction schemes. Dr QUAT also asked whether the two posts would further take up other implementation work on waste plastics reduction.

29. DDEP(ST) advised that PEPO(WM)2 would be responsible for the implementation of the PRS on plastic beverage containers, which included exploring opportunities for recovered plastic containers. He pointed out that the study of the scheme was close to completion now, and the Administration planned to consult the industry and the public on the implementation details later, which would be followed by legislative work. The Administration planned to introduce reverse vending machines for plastic containers within this year and would explore the feasibility of reverse vending machine operation in Hong Kong in the long run.

30. DDEP(2) said that the Administration was now conducting a study on the regulation of single-use plastic tableware with reference to overseas practices and would decide whether those measures would be applicable to

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Hong Kong. The study would consider the lifestyle of citizens, the operation of food establishments in Hong Kong, and the availability of substitutes. The study was scheduled to be completed by 2020. At present, the Government had stopped using plastic straws and polyfoam food containers in canteens locating in government premises. In the tendering exercises of canteens in government premises, the Administration would take the lead by including terms on regulating the use of disposable plastic tableware. Moreover, the Administration would continue to work together with the industry to further encourage the public to use reusable tableware in buying takeaways.

Initiatives in response to restriction of waste import of other countries

31. Mr YIU Si-wing noted that the Mainland and certain South East Asian countries had adopted a policy of waste import restriction in recent years; some countries even banned the import of waste altogether. He was concerned about whether the effectiveness of the waste reduction initiatives would be affected, given the potential difficulties in exporting waste paper and waste plastics collected under MSW charging. Furthermore, he asked about the plan in place in response to the policy adopted by overseas countries on waste import restriction.

32. Mr CHU Hoi-dick also pointed out that the Philippines had imposed a ban on the import of waste earlier on. He asked if the Administration would intervene if the role of Hong Kong as a city for transshipment of waste was affected as a result of the policy changes of other countries.

33. SEN replied that the Administration would be closely monitoring any changes in the waste import policy of other countries, in particular those of the Mainland. Meanwhile, efforts would be made to improving the quality of the recyclables; e.g., the Producer Responsibility Scheme on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment ("PRS on WPRS") covering the regulated electrical equipment (i.e. air-conditioners, refrigerators, washing machines, televisions, computers, printers, scanners and monitors) had been introduced to step up regulation on the disposal of waste electrical equipment and reduce the environmental pollution brought about by electronic waste. Furthermore, in response to the more stringent criteria adopted by other countries for waste import, additional provisions had been included in the tender documents for plastic recovery, including an requirement for recyclers to set out the recovery or recycling programme under which the plastic waste collected would be treated, and the need for recovery of quality plastic waste for production of recycled raw materials for export purposes. As regards waste paper, in response to the more stringent criteria for the import of waste paper adopted by the Mainland authorities, waste paper could not be exported unless they reached a certain

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level of cleanliness. EPD had awarded sites in the EcoPark in Tuen Mun, and tendering exercises would be conducted for the development of local waste paper recycling facilities.

34. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok remarked that the Business and Professionals Alliance for Hong Kong, which he was affiliated to, supported this staffing proposal. He pointed out that environmental protection was a key area of development in the Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area ("Greater Bay Area"). Given the absence of waste plastics and waste paper recovery or recycling industry in Hong Kong, he asked if EB had any plans to join hand with the Greater Bay Area to pass on waste plastic and waste paper collected in Hong Kong for treatment in the Greater Bay Area.

35. SEN remarked that the Greater Bay Area had brought about opportunities for cooperation and economic development in the region. The Administration had taken note that waste reduction and recycling was an integral part in the development of the Greater Bay Area. EB would consult members of the trade in Hong Kong on prospective opportunities for cooperation and priority would be given to collaboration on waste plastic and waste paper recycling.

Effectiveness of the existing waste reduction initiatives in Hong Kong

Producer Responsibility Scheme on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment

36. Mr KWONG Chun-yu remarked that there were complaints from some members of the public about insufficient number of recyclers for recovery of waste electrical and electronic equipment under PRS on WPRS, which had indirectly attributed to disposal of waste electrical and electronic equipment in public place. On the other hand, some privately-run recyclers had indicated that since the implementation of WPRS, the market of waste electrical and electronic equipment had been monopolized by the recycling service operator appointed by the Government. Mr KWONG asked how EB would address this problem.

37. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan expressed concern on whether there was only one single government-appointed service operator for recycling of waste electrical and electronic equipment under PRS on WPRS and whether EB had any plan to issue additional licences for government-appointed recycling service operator in order to address the problem of insufficient number of recyclers.

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38. SEN advised that the targeted amount of waste electrical and electronic equipment being recovered since the implementation of PRS on WPRS in 2018 had largely been reached. The authorities would step up publicity and public education to enhance public awareness on the consumer rights and the responsibilities of sellers under PRS on WPRS. An enquiry hotline had been set up to help consumers dispose of their waste electrical and electronic equipment.

39. In a consolidated response, SEN and DDEP(ST) remarked that under PRS on WPRS, sellers were free to choose any collectors or government licensed recyclers. At present, most sellers would commission the recycling service operator appointed by the Government to handle recovery of waste electrical and electronic equipment. EPD would monitor closely the development of the market and take into account other relevant factors to encourage local recyclers to take part in the recycling of regulated electrical equipment; for example, EPD had conducted an open tendering exercise this April for service contracts for treatment and recycling of washing machines collected outside the statutory removal services.

40. Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (1) added that the Administration had issued 10 licences for disposal of waste electrical and electronic equipment as at March 2019, and another 10 licence applications were being processed.

Community Green Stations Waste Reduction Initiative

41. Mr YIU Si-wing noted the Community Green Stations ("CGSs") Waste Reduction Initiative under which recycling programmes were operated by non-profit-making organizations with funding from the Administration and mobile collection points were set up in the community to establish an extensive service network. He asked if the Administration had laid down any performance indicators for CGSs.

42. Mr AU Nok-hin noted the task of the supernumerary post of DDEP(4) would be overseeing the development and operation of the network of CGSs. He was of the view that the effectiveness of the initiative hinged on the communications between EPD and other government departments. He cited an example where local residents had shown dissatisfaction on misuse of land in the community arising from insufficient communications among government departments as a site in Southern District originally earmarked for the use of CGSs had subsequently been used for residential development.

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43. SEN advised that EPD had laid down a number of performance indicators with CGSs operating organizations covering recovery volume and education and publicity; and that the performance targets for certain areas of work had been achieved. The operating organizations were required to publish the extent to which the performance targets had been reached on a regular basis. He noted the views of Mr AU Nok-hin regarding the implementation of CGSs.

Improving the design of three-coloured bins

44. Ms YUNG Hoi-yan pointed out that the three-coloured bins had limited capacity and the opening for disposal of refuse was too small. She suggested that the Administration should improve the design of the three-coloured bins and, for the purpose of increasing the capacity of the recovery bins, provide additional recovery bins with refuse compression function at public space.

45. SEN remarked that the Steering Group on the Modification of Recycling and Refuse Collection Facilities in Public Places would review the design and the three-coloured bins with a view to making it more convenient for public use. He said that additional three-coloured bins had been provided in certain housing estates where there demand for such bins was high.

Integrated Waste Management Facilities

46. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok noted that the per capita MSW disposal rate at landfills were 1.45 kg per person per day in 2017, representing an increase of 3% compared to 2016, which had demonstrated the ineffectiveness of the waste reduction initiatives put forward by the Administration. He asked about the timeframe for the commissioning of the Integrated Waste Management Facilities at Shek Kwu Chau (including the Shek Kwu Chau incineration plant).

47. SEN pointed out that the Integrated Waste Management Facilities at Shek Kwu Chau, including the incineration plant, were under construction and completion and commissioning were expected in 2024. They would be able to process approximately 3 000 tonnes solid waste per day, which was equivalent to two third of the MSW being processed now per day.

Facilities for handling food waste

48. In response to Dr KWOK Ka-ki's enquiry regarding the initiatives for handling food waste as set out in the Action Blueprint, SEN pointed out that efforts were being made to take forward the waste reduction initiatives

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(including the development of Organic Resources Recovery Centre ("ORRC")) in line with the timetable as set out in the Action Blueprint. He agreed that the development of ORRC was slower than expected. Phase I of ORRC at Northern Lantau was in operation with a designed capacity to treat 200 tonnes of food waste per day. Pending the commissioning of Phase II with an ability to treat approximately 300 tonnes of food waste per day, the two phases of ORRC would be able to treat 500 tonnes of food waste per day and reduce the amount of MSW.

Other waste reduction initiatives

49. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan expressed concern about matters relating to global warming, and asked if the Environment Bureau had put in place any specific policy and laid down any targets to reduce carbon emission.

50. SEN responded that Hong Kong's Climate Action Plan 2030+ promulgated by the Administration in 2017 had set out Hong Kong's carbon emissions reduction target for 2030, which was in line with the target and progress for reduction of greenhouse gas as set out in the Paris Agreement. The Council for Sustainable Development, in addition to having further discussion on the targets and policy for carbon reduction, had also carried out a public engagement exercise on this subject. He added that the Council would carry out discussions within this month on Hong Kong's carbon reduction targets for 2050, covering such topics as energy supply, energy saving, green transport and actions for waste reduction etc.

51. Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan expressed concern about the increasing volume on disposal of used clothes and textile. He pointed out that as at 2015, an average disposal of 110 000 tonnes of used clothes or waste textile was recorded annually in Hong Kong, and the volume was greater than other developed economic entities. The used clothes or waste textile disposal were putting pressure on the landfills as the majority of them were disposed of therein. He criticized EB for failing to address issues relating to used clothes or waste textile in a proactive manner, whereas none of the nine proposed posts to be created under this staffing proposal was tasked to handle used clothes recovery. Mr CHUNG pointed out that the used clothes recycling banks installed in the communities were of limited effectiveness, and asked if EB had put in place any measures for used clothes recovery and the implementation timetable.

52. SEN advised that priority was given under the current overall waste reduction policy to treating three types of wastes which constituted as much as 80% of the volume of waste at landfills, namely food waste, waste paper and waste plastic. A Community Used Clothes Recycling Bank Scheme was launched by the Home Affairs Department since 2006 under which

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used clothes recycling banks were provided at different locations to facilitate the recovery of used clothes. An increasing amount of used clothes had been recovered in recent years. Furthermore, used clothes trading services were available under CGSs to reduce the amount of discarded used clothes.

Division of work among the Administration for taking forward environmental policy and measures

53. Mr CHU Hoi-dick pointed out that the efforts of the Administration in waste reduction had failed to meet the specific waste reduction targets set out in the Action Blueprint, namely a per capita MSW disposal rate of 1 kg or below per person per day by 2017. He asked whether EB had reviewed the reasons for failing to meet the targets.

54. SEN explained that cooperation of the community at large was required for the waste reduction initiatives (including MSW charging scheme under planning and to be taken forward) to be effective. He pointed out that food waste and related wastes were the major source of waste for landfills. EB took forward a Food Wise Hong Kong Campaign in 2013 to promote public concerns on management of food waste with a view to reducing the amount of food waste disposal at the landfills. In recent years, while the amount of domestic food waste had reduced and its rate of increase slowed down, the amount of commercial food waste had increased. On the other hand, while the Action Blueprint had set up a target for having an ORRC for processing food waste, the time to build the recovery centre was longer than expected. As other countries and regions tightened their policy on the import of overseas waste paper, Hong Kong's recovery and export of waste papers had been subject to challenges.

55. Mr CHU Hoi-dick was concerned about the resources for waste reduction being fragmented as under the current arrangement, waste reduction initiatives were a shared responsibility between EPD and FEHD, also waste reduction initiatives became ineffective because of inadequate communication between the two departments. He cited the provision of three-coloured bins in the communities as an example, where the tendering exercises for the operation of the three-coloured bins were carried out by FEHD, irrespective of the fact that the initiative was a waste reduction measure. Mr CHU asked, given the increase in the number of waste reduction measures introduced by EPD, such as free collection services for waste plastics from non-commercial and industrial sources, whether the Administration would consider reducing the role of FEHD in this area and letting EPD focus on taking forward such initiatives.

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56. SEN replied that the division of role and labour between EPD and FEHD in the area of waste reduction had been in place for many years, and the Waste Reduction Office, upon its commissioning, would coordinate the waste reduction initiatives of different departments. Furthermore, consideration was given by EPD to taking over the three-coloured bins initiative, including the arrangement in relation to the contract for operating the three-coloured bins. He said that to enhance the effectiveness in the recovery of waste plastics, the Administration would provide free recovery service for waste plastics at housing estates.

57. DDEP(2) added that the free collection services for waste plastics from non-commercial and industrial sources was an initiative introduced by EPD in conjunction with other MSW initiatives and it would be piloted in Eastern District, Shatin and Kwun Tong. EPD was currently conducting a tendering exercise for a free collection service for waste plastics from non-commercial and industrial sources in Eastern District, and it was expected that the tendering exercise for the pilot scheme in the remaining two districts would be carried out in the latter half of the year.

Voting on the item

58. The Chairman put the item EC(2019-20)4 to vote. At the request of members, the Chairman ordered a division, and the division bell rang for five minutes. Twenty-five members voted for this item, two against it, and one abstained from voting. The Chairman declared that the Subcommittee agreed to recommend the item to FC for approval. The votes of individual members were as follows:

For

Mr WONG Ting-kwong	Mr WONG Kwok-kin
Mr YIU Si-wing	Dr KWOK Ka-ki
Mr KWOK Wai-keung	Mr Christopher CHEUNG
Dr Fernando CHEUNG	Mr IP Kin-yuen
Dr Elizabeth QUAT	Mr Martin LIAO
Mr POON Siu-ping	Dr CHIANG Lai-wan
Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok	Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan
Mr Alvin YEUNG	Mr CHU Hoi-dick
Mr HO Kai-ming	Mr Holden CHOW
Mr SHIU Ka-fai	Ms YUNG Hoi-yan
Dr Pierre CHAN	Mr CHAN Chun-ying
Mr Jeremy TAM	Mr AU Nok-hin
Mr Tony TSE	
(25 members)	

Action

Against

Mr James TO
(2 members)

Mr WU Chi-wai

Abstain

Mr CHAN Chi-chuen
(1 member)

59. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen requested that the item be voted on separately at the relevant FC meeting.

60. The meeting ended at 10:30 am.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
26 August 2019