

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)276/18-19
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/EA

Panel on Environmental Affairs

Minutes of policy briefing
held on Monday, 22 October 2018, at 2:30 pm
in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex

- Members present** : Dr Hon Junius HO Kwan-yiu, JP (Chairman)
Hon HUI Chi-fung (Deputy Chairman)
Hon CHAN Hak-kan, BBS, JP
Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, SBS, JP
Hon WU Chi-wai, MH
Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP
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
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, SBS, MH, JP
Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan
Hon CHU Hoi-dick
Hon SHIU Ka-fai
Hon Kenneth LAU Ip-keung, BBS, MH, JP
- Members absent** : Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP
Hon YUNG Hoi-yan
Hon Tanya CHAN
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS

Action

**Public Officers
attending**

: For item III

Mr WONG Kam-sing, GBS, JP
Secretary for the Environment

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

Mr Donald TONG, JP
Permanent Secretary for the Environment / Director of
Environmental Protection

Mr Francis CHENG
Acting Deputy Secretary for the Environment

Mr Elvis AU, JP
Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (1)
Environmental Protection Department

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

Mr Donald NG, JP
Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (4)
Environmental Protection Department

Dr Samuel CHUI
Acting Deputy Director of Environmental
Protection (2) / Assistant Director (Nature
Conservation & Infrastructure Planning)
Environmental Protection Department

Mr FONG Kin-wa
Acting Deputy Director of Environmental
Protection (2) / Assistant Director (Waste
Reduction & Recycling)
Environmental Protection Department

Ms Queenie LEE
Principal Assistant Secretary for the Environment
(Electricity Reviews)

Action

Mr Paul WONG
Principal Assistant Secretary for the Environment
(Energy)

Dr HUI Ming-fong
Assistant Director/Existing Buildings 1
Buildings Department

Mr Raymond POON
Assistant Director/Electricity & Energy Efficiency
Electrical and Mechanical Services Department

Dr SO Ping-man, JP
Deputy Director
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Clerk in attendance : Ms Anita SIT
Assistant Secretary General 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

Action

I. Information papers issued since the meeting on 19 July 2018

Members noted that the following papers had been issued since the meeting on 19 July 2018:

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1291/17-18(01) — Referral memorandum dated 17 July 2018 from the Public Complaints Office of the Legislative Council Secretariat on emission control for non-road mobile machinery (Chinese version

Action

- only) (Restricted to Members)
- LC Paper No. CB(1)1298/17-18(01) — Information paper on "Measures to Tackle Environmental Pollution Issues Arising from Garages in Urban Areas" provided by the Administration
- LC Paper No. CB(1)1393/17-18(01) — Referral memorandum dated 11 September 2018 from the Public Complaints Office of the Legislative Council Secretariat on emission control for non-road mobile machinery (Chinese version only) (Restricted to Members)
- LC Paper No. CB(1)9/18-19(01) — Information paper on "Development of an artificial bathing beach at Lung Mei in Tai Po" provided by the Administration
- LC Paper No. CB(1)42/18-19(01) — Information paper on "Guidance Notes for Solar Photovoltaic System Installation" provided by the Administration)

II. Items for discussion at the next meeting

- (LC Paper No. CB(1)20/18-19(01) — List of follow-up actions
- LC Paper No. CB(1)20/18-19(02) — List of outstanding items for discussion)

Action

2. Members agreed to discuss the following items at the next regular meeting scheduled for Monday, 26 November 2018, at 2:30 pm:

- (a) proposed making permanent a supernumerary directorate post in the Environment Bureau to take forward tasks in relation to the promotion of renewable energy and long-term development of the electricity market; and
- (b) Three Dimensional Air Pollution Monitoring System.

(Post-meeting note: As proposed by the Administration after the meeting and with the concurrence of the Chairman, the Panel would discuss complementary measures in relation to municipal solid waste charging at the regular meeting on 26 November 2018, and discussion on Three Dimensional Air Pollution Monitoring System had been deferred to a future meeting.

III. Briefing by the Secretary for the Environment on the Chief Executive's 2018 Policy Address

(LC Paper No. CB(1)10/18-19(01) — Administration's paper on "2018 Policy Address - Policy initiatives of Environment Bureau: Environmental protection"

LC Paper No. CB(1)60/18-19(01) — Submission from Hong Kong Vehicle and Transport Concern Group (Chinese version only)

Relevant papers

The Chief Executive's 2018 Policy Address (*issued on 10 October 2018*)

The 2018 Policy Agenda booklet (*issued on 10 October 2018*)

Action

Briefing by the Administration

3. With the aid of a power-point presentation, the Secretary for the Environment ("SEN"), Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (3) ("DDEP(3)"), Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (4) ("DDEP(4)"), Permanent Secretary for the Environment / Director of Environmental Protection ("PSE") and Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (1) ("DDEP(1)") briefed members on the key environmental initiatives in the Chief Executive's 2018 Policy Address.

(Post-meeting note: A set of the power-point presentation materials was circulated to members on 22 October 2018 vide LC Paper No. CB(1)70/18-19(01).)

(Post-meeting note: A submission from a deputation received after the meeting was issued to members on 1 November 2018, vide LC Paper No. CB(1)91/18-19(01).)

(At 3:09 pm, the Chairman left the meeting and the Deputy Chairman took the chair.)

Discussion

Improving roadside air quality

4. Mr Kenneth LEUNG welcomed the proposal of ceasing the first registration of diesel private cars and urged the Administration to set a clear timetable in this regard with reference to the practices of other jurisdictions (such as the United Kingdom and Germany) before it consulted the relevant trades lest the implementation of the proposal be postponed. Mr CHAN Hak-kan expressed a similar view.

5. DDEP(3) responded that as all diesel private cars in Hong Kong were imported, the timing for phasing out those vehicles would be subject to the technological development and supply of new energy vehicles. Consideration must also be given to the impact of the regulatory measure on the relevant trades in Hong Kong. Due to the above, the Administration was not yet in a position to set a timetable for phasing out diesel private cars. Noting that some places had set timetables or targets for banning the use of diesel private cars, the Administration was collating relevant information and would take it into account when exploring the way forward. SEN supplemented that Hong Kong's plan to cease the first registration of diesel private cars was in fact more advanced compared to the practices of other places in Asia as they continued to

Action

allow the use of such vehicles for the time being.

6. Mr Steven HO opined that since the reduction of the first registration tax concession for electric private cars ("e-PCs") in 2017, there had been an absence of a strong incentive for private car owners to switch to e-PCs. He and Mr CHAN Hak-kan sought elaboration on the policies on promoting the adoption of EVs and other new energy vehicles, including the policies on the development of ancillary facilities such as EV chargers.

7. SEN responded that the Environment Bureau ("ENB") was conducting a review of EV-related policies and measures in collaboration with other relevant bureaux/departments ("B/Ds"). The review covered, among other things, measures to facilitate the installation of EV charging facilities. The results of the review and any new measures to promote the adoption of EVs would be available in due course. Promotion of EVs in general was also considered by the Steering Committee on the Promotion of Electric Vehicles, which was chaired by the Financial Secretary.

8. Mr CHU Hoi-dick opined that, to give greater impetus to the policies on controlling private car growth and promoting walking as a transport mode for the sake of improving roadside air quality, these policies should be coordinated by ENB instead of the Transport and Housing Bureau.

Review of Air Quality Objectives

9. Mr Kenneth LEUNG pointed out that there had been criticism that the Administration had adopted a conservative approach in the review of the Air Quality Objectives ("AQOs") which could only bring about a modest improvement in air quality. He enquired if the Administration would consider setting more ambitious targets with a view to achieving an air quality that would be best for public health.

10. The Under Secretary for the Environment ("USEN") responded that AQOs were reviewed at least once in every five years as required by the relevant law, and the Administration would consider tightening AQOs after the completion of the current review. There were different opinions regarding the approach to the tightening of AQOs. While some stakeholders considered that the effect of air pollution on public health should have priority over other factors, others considered that the Administration should pay heed to the feasibility of achieving the tightened AQOs. The Administration had taken into account both views and adopted a balanced approach. While the ultimate goal was to meet World Health Organization ("WHO")'s Air Quality Guidelines for the purpose of protecting public health, short and medium-term measures would be implemented with a view to meeting the WHO interim targets. USEN also

Action

pointed out that AQOs were connected with certain statutory requirements. For instance, according to the Environmental Impact Assessment ("EIA") Ordinance (Cap. 499), the EIA report of a designated project would be approved only if the project could meet AQOs. Therefore, it was important to ensure that AQOs were in fact achievable by practical means.

Municipal solid waste charging

11. Mr CHAN Hak-kan expressed appreciation for the Administration's commitment on providing additional recurrent resources starting from the 2019-2020 financial year for strengthening work on waste reduction and recycling to complement the implementation of municipal solid waste ("MSW") charging. He sought details on the uses of the additional provision. As the implementation of the producer responsibility scheme ("PRS") on waste electrical and electronic equipment had exacerbated fly-tipping of electronic waste, he enquired how the Administration would prevent similar problems when implementing MSW charging.

12. Mr CHU Hoi-dick enquired whether the additional provision would be utilized for revamping the waste collection and recycling systems in old districts with a view to facilitating a smooth transition to MSW charging in those districts.

13. DDEP(4) and SEN advised that the waste reduction and recycling work to be supported by the additional recurrent resources would include:

- (a) setting up outreaching teams across the territory to provide on-site assistance to the community, and in particular residents in old districts with a large number of single-block buildings, thereby putting waste reduction and recycling and MSW charging into practice;
- (b) providing free collection services in respect of waste plastics from non-commercial and industrial ("C&I") sources and food waste from all sectors subject to the outcome of the pilot schemes to be implemented; and
- (c) implementing a pilot scheme to assess the effectiveness of applying reverse vending machines in promoting the recovery of plastic beverage containers.

14. The Deputy Chairman sought explanation on the delayed introduction of the amendment bill to give effect to MSW charging. As MSW charging was controversial, he called on the Administration to submit the amendment bill to

Action

the Legislative Council ("LegCo") not later than end 2018 to allow sufficient time for Members to scrutinize it, as well as to demonstrate the Administration's commitment to implementing MSW charging. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen also enquired if the Administration could undertake to introduce the amendment bill by end 2018.

15. SEN and PSE responded that the introduction of MSW charging was a challenging task. The Administration had been taking a step-by-step approach in the relevant preparatory work, with a view to optimizing the implementation arrangements to be provided for in the legislative proposals before their formal introduction. Moreover, as there were widespread calls for the implementation of more measures to complement MSW charging, the Administration also needed more time to formulate such measures, including the aforementioned additional provision to support waste reduction and recycling. SEN assured members that the Administration would introduce the relevant amendment bill as early as possible, and he looked forward to the timely passage of the bill by LegCo.

16. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen and Mr WU Chi-wai asked whether and when the Administration would study the formulation of policies on mandatory source separation of waste, which they considered a necessary complementary measure to MSW charging.

17. In response, SEN remarked that there had been discussions on related issues in past years. As the local outlets and treatment capacity for recyclables were limited, it was questionable whether Hong Kong was in readiness for mandatory source separation of waste and recyclables. He emphasized that according to the experience of other places such as Taipei City and Seoul, mandatory source separation was not a precondition for the introduction of MSW charging. Taking into account the actual circumstances in Hong Kong, the Administration would gradually put in place measures to promote waste reduction and recycling. The implementation of MSW charging would create an important incentive for reducing waste at source.

Food waste recycling

18. As food waste was a major constituent of MSW but a territory-wide system for the collection and treatment of domestic food waste had yet to be developed, Mr WU Chi-wai expressed concern that the implementation of MSW charging at this stage would be ineffective in reducing domestic waste and might lead to charge evasion. He asked about the strategies for promoting the separation and recycling of domestic food waste, including whether the Administration would consider providing more support for housing estates in the installation of on-site compaction or treatment facilities for food waste.

Action

Given that a number of Organic Resources Recovery Centres ("ORRCs") were being developed for the recycling of food waste, he was unconvinced that there would not be enough end-of-pipe treatment facilities for source-separated food waste to support the implementation of mandatory source separation of waste.

19. SEN reiterated that as announced in the Policy Address, given that waste plastics and food waste were major constituents of landfilled MSW, free collection services in respect of waste plastics from non-C&I sources and food waste from C&I sources would be provided to promote recycling. The Administration would also experiment the collection of domestic food waste through a pilot scheme, and would consider expanding the scale of the collection service if the pilot scheme was successful. ORRC Phases 1 and 2 would only recycle food waste from C&I sources according to the current plan. Starting with ORRC Phase 3, which would be constructed in Yuen Long, the Administration would recycle domestic food waste in addition to C&I food waste.

20. PSE supplemented that funding support for food waste recycling projects in housing estates had been provided through the Environment and Conservation Fund ("ECF"). The Administration had also been supporting schools in practising on-site treatment of food waste. A Pilot Programme on Provision of Small Food Waste Composters at Schools would be launched in 2018 and the participation from 90 schools had been confirmed. Despite the above initiatives, there was a need to treat or recycle food waste in large-scale facilities away from residential areas, because the capacities of on-site facilities were limited and decomposing food waste might cause environmental concerns related to odour and waste water. Apart from developing ORRCs, the Administration would launch a trial scheme on food waste/sewage sludge anaerobic co-digestion at the Tai Po Sewage Treatment Works to explore the utilization of residual capacities of sewage treatment works for the treatment of food waste. In addition, if the pilot scheme on free collection of C&I food waste was successful, there would be even more compelling needs for the Administration to expedite the construction of the ORRC network and expanding the scope of the free collection service to domestic food waste and its geographical coverage to the whole territory.

Reducing waste plastics

21. Mr CHAN Hak-kan observed that most measures announced in the Policy Address on reducing waste plastics were voluntary in nature, and enquired if the Administration had plans to implement PRSs on plastic containers and disposable plastic tableware. He also expressed concern about whether there would be sufficient local outlets for plastic recyclables.

Action

22. SEN responded that the Administration had commissioned a consultancy study on how to implement a PRS on plastic beverage and personal care product containers. The priority was given to plastic beverage containers and it was envisaged that specific proposals on the way forward could be formulated in 2019.

23. Mr Dennis KWOK asked about the timetable for implementing the measures to reduce waste plastics and legislating for banning the use of disposable plastic tableware.

24. The Deputy Chairman urged the Administration to introduce legislation to phase out disposable plastic tableware, and expressed disappointment that Hong Kong lagged behind some other places in Asia (such as Taiwan) in setting a clear target and timetable in this regard, even though there was public support for banning the use of disposable plastic tableware according to some studies.

25. SEN and the Acting Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (2) / Assistant Director (Nature Conservation & Infrastructure Planning) advised that the Administration had adopted a multi-pronged approach in reducing the use of disposable plastic tableware. It would take the lead in avoiding the use of such products at government venues, and would work with the food and beverage industry to promote reducing the use of disposable plastic tableware. In the summer of 2018, a "Plastic Free Beach, Tableware First" campaign was launched to encourage food premises on public beaches to avoid distributing plastic straws and disposable plastic tableware as far as possible. Meanwhile, there were plans to commence in 2018-2019 a study on the feasibility, scope and mechanism of controlling or banning disposable plastic tableware in the long run. It was expected that the study would be completed in 2020.

26. SEN stressed that the proposal of banning the use of disposable plastic tableware must be considered carefully taking into account factors such as the availability of alternatives, people's habits, and social impact of the measure. He also pointed out that Hong Kong was in fact ahead of some places (including Taipei) in respect of certain environmental initiatives, such as the introduction of a levy scheme on plastic bags (which were the major constituent of landfilled waste plastics before the introduction of the scheme).

27. Mr Kenneth LEUNG remarked that, in response to a question he raised at a Council meeting in November 2017, SEN had advised that the Administration would commence a consultancy study relating to microplastics. He enquired about the progress of the consultancy study.

28. DDEP(1) responded that the Administration had appointed a consultant in April 2018 to conduct the study, which would last for about a year. The

Action

scope of the study included (a) the potential impact of microplastics on Hong Kong's environment, (b) the approaches taken in the international arena to control products containing microplastics and the implementation details, and (c) local stakeholders' views on the proposal to regulate products containing microplastics. The consultant was in the process of collating information on (b) above, and preparing for the launch of a market research to gauge stakeholders' views.

29. Mr WU Chi-wai questioned whether the proposed installation of more water dispensers at government venues to reduce the consumption of plastic bottled water was in strict observance of the environmental protection principle, given that tap water was generally potable in Hong Kong and the replacement of filter cartridges in water dispensers would generate waste. He enquired about the estimated amount of waste filter cartridges arising from the initiative, and suggested that ENB should promote the habit of drinking water directly from the tap instead of providing water dispensers at public places.

30. SEN took note of Mr WU's suggestion and advised that the provision of water dispensers/filling stations at public spaces was in line with international practice. The Acting Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (2) / Assistant Director (Waste Reduction & Recycling) explained that as there had been public concerns about drinking water safety, the provision of new water dispensers/filling stations could help develop public confidence in direct consumption of drinking water supplied at government venues, thereby encouraging venue users to bring their own bottles instead of buying plastic bottled water. The initial target was to install about 500 water dispensers/filling stations (most of them being non-fountain type) for public use. While the designs of water dispensers/filling stations varied, they were generally equipped with ultraviolet sterilizers and filter cartridges, and the filter cartridges would be replaced regularly according to the manufacturers' instructions.

Tackling marine refuse

31. Noting that huge amounts of marine refuse had been washed ashore by the storm surges accompanying super typhoons Hato and Mangkhut, Mr KWOK Wai-keung enquired whether the Administration had traced the sources of those marine refuse, and how it would reduce the amount of refuse entering the marine environment.

32. Mr Kenneth LEUNG enquired whether the Administration had studied the use of new technologies and equipment to remove marine refuse. In this connection, he remarked that an overseas organization named The Ocean Cleanup had recently deployed advanced systems to capture and extract marine refuse on the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, and it might be possible that

Action

miniaturized systems using similar technologies could be deployed in Hong Kong waters.

33. DDEP(1) advised that:

- (a) according to the findings of the consultancy study on marine refuse in Hong Kong completed in 2015, the vast majority of floating refuse originated from land-based sources. To intercept land-based refuse at source, for instance, the Drainage Services Department ("DSD") had installed floating booms at certain locations of the drainage channels under a trial scheme. The measure was effective in preventing land-based refuse from entering the marine environment through the drainage channels at certain locations. In addition, EPD would continue to work with the Marine Department ("MD") in exploring new equipment for capturing floating refuse;
- (b) in January 2018, the Inter-departmental Working Group on Clean Shorelines was revamped and renamed as Inter-departmental Working Group on Marine Environmental Management in order to strengthen interdepartmental cooperation for handling marine refuse and marine environmental incidents. Moreover, a Clean Shoreline Liaison Platform would be established to engage non-government organizations ("NGOs") and volunteers in protecting the marine environment;
- (c) the Administration would continue to collaborate with the Guangdong authorities through the platform of Hong Kong-Guangdong Marine Environmental Management Special Panel in enhancing the alert and notification mechanism for floating refuse and jointly monitoring the regional marine environment; and
- (d) as regards the washed-ashore refuse caused by super typhoon Mangkhut, MD had finished the clean-ups in collaboration with other relevant government departments.

34. Mr Dennis KWOK sought more details on the enhanced efforts to tackle marine refuse, including the amount of additional resources/manpower allocated to various departments for the purpose. DDEP(1) responded that since 2016, about \$100 million of additional provision had been allocated to enhance the clean-up services and education, strengthen the manpower, and upgrade the equipment in relevant government departments for tackling marine refuse. The frequency of patrols conducted by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department ("FEHD") and the patrol coverage by MD had increased by about 60% and 20% respectively in the past two years, and the fleet of MD's marine

Action

cleaning services contractor had been expanded from 70 to 80 vessels during the same period. In addition, \$10 million each year had been reserved under ECF to support clean shorelines projects carried out by NGOs.

35. Mr Dennis KWOK sought justifications for reserving funds to support NGOs' projects, instead of using the same amount of additional resources to directly enhance the Administration's work. SEN explained that NGOs' projects could serve the purpose of public education.

Combating climate change

36. Mr CHU Hoi-dick criticized that there was a lack of prompt action on the part of the Administration to tackle the imminent threat of climate change, and public education in this regard was inadequate. Given that the Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C recently published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change had called for rapid actions by governments to reduce carbon emissions, he considered that the Administration should give priority to emission reduction and coordinate relevant policies accordingly.

37. SEN responded that the Administration attached great importance to combating climate change. One of the objectives of the Steering Committee on Climate Change ("SCCC"), which was chaired by the Chief Secretary for Administration and comprised all 13 Policy Secretaries, was to enhance public awareness and understanding of climate change, and SCCC would coordinate the efforts of relevant B/Ds in carrying out the relevant policies. It was expected that the public engagement exercise on Hong Kong's decarbonization strategies to be conducted by the Council for Sustainable Development could also help arouse public awareness of the impact of carbon emissions.

38. Mr KWOK Wai-keung sought information on the role of ENB with regard to extreme weather events. SEN advised that the Administration's efforts in combating climate change focused on three major aspects, namely, mitigation, adaptation and resilience. ENB was mainly responsible for mitigation measures, which focused on decarbonization; while a working group led by the Civil Engineering and Development Department ("CEDD") was responsible for strengthening adaptation measures for protection of infrastructure under extreme weather conditions caused by climate change. Resilience measures were coordinated by SCCC.

39. As super typhoon Mangkhut had exposed the weaknesses in the wind-resistant designs of some infrastructures, Mr Steven HO considered that ENB should review and improve the relevant designs of new infrastructures within its purview, including sewage treatment facilities and landfills, and

Action

report the results of the review to LegCo.

40. DDEP(1) responded that DSD commissioned in 2015 a Climate Change Impact Study on Sewerage Facilities in Hong Kong to assess the impacts of climate change on Hong Kong's sewerage facilities and propose corresponding mitigation and adaptation measures in respect of their planning, design, construction, operation and maintenance. It was expected that the study would be completed in end 2019. After Hong Kong was hit by super typhoon Mangkhut, DSD was currently conducting a review of the designs of sewage treatment works including their seawalls. Meanwhile, modifications works would be carried out on the seawall at the Sai Kung Sewage Treatment Works in accordance to the latest guide to design of seawalls issued by CEDD.

Nature conservation

41. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen asked what ENB would do to strengthen nature conservation in South Lantau, and mitigate the marine ecological impact arising from the reclamation works in the central waters between Hong Kong Island and Lantau if the proposed project of constructing artificial islands there was approved.

42. Mr Steven HO expressed similar concern and asked whether ENB would implement measures to protect the marine environment during reclamation works, in addition to the mitigation measures to be carried out by project proponents as required by the relevant EIA reports/Environmental Permits.

43. SEN responded that, as mentioned in the Policy Address, infrastructure and development projects on Lantau would be carried out along the direction of "conservation to precede developments". The Administration would allocate additional resources and manpower for conserving rural Lantau (especially South Lantau), and actively explore the incorporation of more country park enclaves into country parks. PSE supplemented that different aspects of the environmental impact of designated projects would be assessed under the statutory EIA process. The process was open and transparent and involved public engagement.

Wild pig management

44. Mr Steven HO expressed concerns about the growing number of wild pigs and the nuisance and public safety problems they caused, including damage to crops, attacks on humans and potential transmission of swine diseases (such as African swine fever) to local farmed pigs. He enquired if the Administration had assessed the population and reproduction rate of wild pigs in the territory.

Action

Although the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department ("AFCD") had launched a scheme for the contraception of wild pigs, he considered that the effectiveness of the scheme was limited in containing the wild pig population, because only a small number of wild pigs were administered with contraceptive vaccine. He called on the Administration to give priority to tackling the wild pig problem and implement new measures for the purpose expeditiously.

45. The Deputy Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department and SEN responded that:

- (a) the Administration currently did not have the statistics on the number of wild pigs across the territory because wild pigs were very widely distributed in the countryside; but it would continue to explore the use of different scientific methods to estimate the wild pig population based on existing records. It was expected that the reproduction rate of wild pigs was fairly high but lower than that of farmed pigs;
- (b) there was no indication of a surge in the number of wild pigs in Hong Kong. However, the number of complaints related to wild pigs received by AFCD had increased from around 200 in 2011 to over 700 in 2017. Most of the complaints were about the appearance of wild pigs in urban/residential areas;
- (c) wild pigs entering urban/residential areas were mainly attracted by food sources, and hence the most effective ways to reduce their appearance in urban/residential areas were to stop feeding them and prevent them from getting food from refuse collection facilities;
- (d) in view of the above, AFCD had been conducting publicity and public education programmes, including the erection of large banners at black spots to remind members of the public not to feed wild pigs; as well as taking enforcement actions against littering in collaboration with FEHD;
- (e) AFCD had also been working with FEHD on improving the designs of refuse collection facilities that were prone to raids by wild pigs. An example of the improvement works carried out was the erection of bollards or parapets at bin sites to prevent the knocking down of refuse bins by wild pigs;
- (f) African swine fever was not transmissible to humans. Noting that there were outbreaks of African swine fever in several provinces in

Action

the Mainland, the Administration would maintain vigilance in monitoring the situation. So far, AFCD had not observed any incident of massive unusual mortality of wild pigs in Hong Kong; and

- (g) the Administration was currently reviewing the overall wild pig management strategies, and would brief the Panel on this issue in due course.

Water quality

46. Mr Kenneth LEUNG commended the Administration for its successful efforts in improving the water quality of Victoria Harbour.

47. Mr Steven HO sought information on the enhanced measures to prevent the discharge of polluted urban run-off into the sea. In addition, he pointed out that during the rehabilitation/upgrading of old sewerage facilities, untreated sewage might be directly discharged into the sea temporarily. He suggested that the Administration should improve the designs of new sewerage facilities to obviate the need for sewage bypass during upgrading works in future.

48. DDEP(1) took note of Mr HO's suggestion and advised that EPD/DSD had been constructing more sewers, rehabilitating older sewers and installing more dry weather flow interceptors (which intercepted and diverted polluted dry weather flow from stormwater drains into the sewerage system for treatment) in various districts with a view to improving water quality. The Administration had also been implementing measures to reduce polluted urban run-off at source.

Controlling excessive external lighting

49. Considering that the mode of operation of the Charter on External Lighting was ineffective in controlling excessive external lighting, Mr KWOK Wai-keung and the Deputy Chairman urged the Administration to introduce legislation on light pollution expeditiously. Mr KWOK asked when the review on the effectiveness of the Charter would be completed. PSE responded that the Administration planned to complete the review in 2020 and would then revert to LegCo on the way forward.

Action

IV. Any other business

50. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:17 pm.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
5 December 2018