

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)981/18-19
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/EA

Panel on Environmental Affairs

Minutes of meeting
held on Monday, 25 February 2019, at 2:30 pm
in Conference Room 3 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
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP
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
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, SBS, MH, JP
Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan
Hon CHU Hoi-dick
Hon SHIU Ka-fai
Hon YUNG Hoi-yan
Hon Kenneth LAU Ip-keung, BBS, MH, JP
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS

Member attending : Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, GBS, JP

Members absent : Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS
Hon Tanya CHAN

Public Officers attending : **For item V**

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

Mr Terence TSANG
Assistant Director (Environmental Assessment)
Environmental Protection Department

Dr LAU Kwok-keung
Principal Environmental Protection Officer
(Assessment and Noise)
Environmental Protection Department

Mr Chris WONG Kin-por
Deputy Project Manager/Major Works (2)
Highways Department

Mr Stephen WONG Wai-kwong
Chief Engineer 3/Major Works
Highways Department

For item VI

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

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

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

Mrs Vicki KWOK, JP
Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (2)
Environmental Protection Department

Mr Kenneth CHAN
Assistant Director (Charging Preparation)
Environmental Protection Department

Dr Samuel CHUI
Assistant Director (Waste Infrastructure Planning)
Environmental Protection Department

Mr FONG Kin-wa
Assistant Director (Waste Reduction and
Recycling)
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 Bowie LAM
Council Secretary (1)1

Miss Mandy POON
Legislative Assistant (1)1

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I. Confirmation of minutes

(LC Paper No. CB(1)595/18-19 — Minutes of the meeting held
on 26 November 2018)

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2018 were confirmed.

II. Information papers issued since last meeting

2. Members noted that no information paper had been issued since last meeting.

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III. Items for discussion at the next meeting

(LC Paper No. CB(1)596/18-19(01) — List of follow-up actions

LC Paper No. CB(1)596/18-19(02) — List of outstanding items for discussion)

3. Members agreed to discuss the following items at the next regular meeting scheduled for Monday, 25 March 2019, at 2:30 pm:

- (a) review of Air Quality Objectives; and
- (b) upgrading of Cheung Chau sewage treatment and disposal facilities, provision of public sewerage systems for villages in Sai Kung, and upgrading of West Kowloon and Tsuen Wan sewerage.

IV. Matter arising from the meeting on 19 December 2018

Proposed duty visit to the Mainland to study the development of renewable energy

4. The Chairman said that as agreed at a previous meeting, the duty visit by the Panel on Environmental Affairs ("EA Panel") to the Mainland to study the development of renewable energy ("RE") was tentatively scheduled for 19 to 22 April 2019. Since four other Panels had decided to conduct a joint-Panel duty visit to major cities in the Yangtze River Delta Region from 21 to 24 April 2019, he suggested that EA Panel's duty visit be deferred to July 2019 to avoid clashing with the said joint-Panel duty visit. Members did not raise objection to the suggestion.

5. Dr Elizabeth QUAT suggested that the programme of the proposed duty visit by EA Panel should be relevant to the development of RE in Hong Kong. The Chairman remarked that as decided at the meeting on 19 December 2018, the main theme of the proposed duty visit would be solar energy, and hence the visit programme should be relevant to the Administration's recent initiatives in promoting the development of solar energy systems in Hong Kong. He added that the Environment Bureau had been requested to provide suggestions on the specific cities/facilities to be visited by EA Panel for the purpose of drawing up the tentative visit programme.

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V. Retrofitting of noise barriers on Long Tin Road

(LC Paper No. CB(1)596/18-19(03) — Administration's paper on "832TH – Retrofitting of Noise Barriers on Long Tin Road"

Briefing by the Administration

6. With the aid of a power-point presentation, the Chief Engineer 3/Major Works of Highways Department ("CE/HyD") briefed the Panel on the proposal for retrofitting noise barriers on the section of Long Tin Road between Parkside Villa and Park Royale at an estimated cost of \$304 million in money-of-the-day prices. Subject to funding approval of the Finance Committee, the Administration planned to commence the construction works in the third quarter of 2019 for completion in the second half of 2023.

(*Post-meeting note:* A set of the power-point presentation materials was circulated to members on 25 February 2019 vide LC Paper No. CB(1)633/18-19(01).)

Discussion

Implementation timetable of the proposed project

7. The Chairman questioned why the Administration estimated that it would take almost four years to complete the proposed project even though the noise barriers concerned would be just over 600 m in length. He expressed concerns about the impact of prolonged construction works on the residents nearby and the project cost, and asked whether it would be possible to shorten the project time frame.

8. Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok also considered that the Administration should expedite the implementation of the proposed project.

9. The Deputy Project Manager/Major Works (2) of Highways Department ("DPM/HyD") responded that:

- (a) Long Tin Road was heavily trafficked. To minimize traffic impact of the proposed project, the Administration would not implement any temporary traffic diversion arrangement at the carriageway of Long Tin Road during the peak hours. Under

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such constraints, the project timetable had already been compressed as far as possible;

- (b) the critical components in the critical path of the proposed project were the construction of the two sections of vertical noise barriers along the verge of the southbound carriageway of Long Tin Road and its slip road. Due to limited working space, difficulties in carrying out works on existing structures and traffic requirements, it was expected that those two sections of noise barriers could only be completed in phases in about three years;
- (c) six months had been allowed to complete the reinstatement works and landscaping works following the completion of the noise barriers;
- (d) in addition, possible extension of time for about five to six months had to be allowed to cater for inclement weather. Taking the above factors into account, the Administration expected that the proposed project would take about three and a half to four years to complete;
- (e) nonetheless, the two sections of cantilevered noise barriers along the southbound carriageway of Long Tin Road could be completed earlier to mitigate the traffic noise impact on the affected dwellings; and
- (f) the Administration would adopt parallel tendering with a view to commencing related works as early as possible.

10. Mr CHU Hoi-dick remarked that according to members of the Yuen Long District Council, the retrofitting works for noise barriers on Long Tin Road were first proposed in 2006. He enquired why it had taken over 10 years for the Administration to finalize the works proposal.

11. USEN explained that there were underground marble cavities along Long Tin Road and deep foundations would be required to support the noise barriers erected above them. Therefore, it had taken relatively more time for the Administration to conduct site investigation for and design the proposed works. It was also necessary to consult the affected residents on the project design.

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Further measures to mitigate traffic noise

12. Mr CHU Hoi-dick noted that after completion of the proposed project, the traffic noise at many affected dwellings would still exceed 70 dB(A). He asked about the feasibility of (a) erecting an additional layer of noise barriers along the central divider of Long Tin Road, and (b) implementing other noise mitigation measures in the area, in order to further reduce the traffic noise impact on the affected dwellings.

13. DPM/HyD explained that the central divider of Long Tin Road was about 1 m wide only and there was not sufficient space for accommodating the foundations of noise barriers. If noise barriers were to be constructed along the central divider, substantial excavation works would be required for about one to two years, which would seriously affect the traffic on Long Tin Road. Given the above limitations, the proposed project had already been designed in a way to maximize the effectiveness in traffic noise mitigation. USEN supplemented that the section of Long Tin Road between Parkside Villa and Park Royale had already been surfaced with low-noise materials.

14. Mr CHU Hoi-dick asked whether the trees to be planted under the proposed project could help reduce traffic noise. USEN responded that trees had limited effect in reducing traffic noise. According to the experiences in other jurisdictions, a 10-m wide woodland could only reduce traffic noise level by about 1 dB(A).

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15. At the request of Mr CHU Hoi-dick, the Administration would provide drawings to illustrate the locations of dwellings that would benefit from the proposed project and the expected levels of reduction in traffic noise, before submitting the relevant funding proposal to the Public Works Subcommittee.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's response was circulated to members on 24 April 2019 vide LC Paper No. CB(1)937/18-19(02).)

Materials of the noise barriers

16. Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok said that he supported the proposed project in principle. He commented that transparent or translucent materials should be used in new noise barriers as far as possible so as to minimize their visual impact.

17. DPM/HyD responded that opaque and absorptive materials would be used in the lower portion of the proposed noise barriers whereas translucent materials would be used in the upper portion. CE/HyD supplemented that

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polymethyl methacrylate (also known as acrylic) was commonly used for the construction of translucent-type noise barriers.

18. Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok requested the Administration to provide supplementary information as follows: whether it was feasible to replace the solid panels currently used in the noise barriers on Tolo Highway with clear panels to reduce the visual intrusion caused by the noise barriers; and if yes, the Administration's plan to carry out such improvement works. The Administration undertook to provide the requested information.

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(Post-meeting note: The Administration's response was circulated to members on 24 April 2019 vide LC Paper No. CB(1)937/18-19(02).)

Existing noise barriers on Long Tin Road

19. Mr CHU Hoi-dick pointed out that there were existing noise barriers on the small section of Long Tin Road near Tong Yan San Tsuen Interchange (i.e. to the southwest of Parkside Villa), and that section was mainly surrounded by warehouses on both sides. He enquired when the noise barriers there were installed and why the relevant construction works preceded the proposed project under discussion, even though the latter could bring more benefits to the residents nearby.

20. CE/HyD explained that the noise barriers mentioned by Mr CHU Hoi-dick were installed under the "Widening of Yuen Long Highway" project to mitigate traffic noise impact on Parkside Villa.

Conclusion

21. The Chairman concluded that members did not object to the Administration's submission of the relevant funding proposal to the Public Works Subcommittee.

(At 3:04 pm, the Chairman directed that the meeting be suspended pending the arrival of public officers for the next agenda item. The meeting subsequently resumed at 3:15 pm.)

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VI. Staffing proposal for taking forward municipal solid waste charging and complementary waste reduction and recycling initiatives

(LC Paper No. CB(1)596/18-19(04) — Administration's paper on "Staffing proposal to take forward Municipal Solid Waste Charging and complementary waste reduction and recycling initiatives"

LC Paper No. CB(1)596/18-19(05) — Updated background brief on "Municipal solid waste charging" prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat)

Briefing by the Administration

22. The Secretary for the Environment ("SEN") briefed members on the proposal to create/re-create three permanent directorate posts and six supernumerary directorate posts under the Environmental Protection Department ("EPD") to take forward tasks in four major areas, namely: (a) preparation for and implementation of municipal solid waste ("MSW") charging (which was subject to passage of the Bill on Waste Disposal (Charging for Municipal Solid Waste) (Amendment) Bill 2018 ("the Bill") currently under scrutiny by a bills committee of the Legislative Council); (b) free collection service of waste plastics from non-commercial and non-industrial ("non-C&I") sources, setting up of new outreaching teams and regularization of funding support for Community Recycling Centres; (c) Producer Responsibility Scheme ("PRS") on plastic beverage containers; and (d) implementation of the "Food Waste and Yard Waste Plan for Hong Kong 2014-2022" and phasing out of disposable plastic tableware. The nine directorate posts would be supported by about 290 non-directorate civil service posts and about 150 non-civil service posts.

Discussion

Duties of the proposed posts

23. The Chairman sought elaboration on the purposes of creating/re-creating the proposed directorate posts and the division of responsibilities between the posts.

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24. The Permanent Secretary for the Environment/Director of Environmental Protection ("PSEN/DEP") referred members to Annex B to the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(1)596/18-19(04)), which provided a summary of the staffing proposal. He advised that the Assistant Director of Environmental Protection (Municipal Solid Waste Charging) ("AD(MSWC)") and Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Municipal Solid Waste Charging) ("PEPO(MSWC)") would be mainly responsible for the preparation for and implementation of MSW charging. The Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (4) ("DDEP(4)") would oversee the work of AD(MSWC) and PEPO(MSWC) in respect of MSW charging, as well as some other initiatives handled by other teams in EPD, such as various PRSs, outreaching services and the pilot scheme on free collection service for waste plastics. The remaining six proposed directorate posts would be responsible for taking forward various waste reduction and recycling initiatives.

Timing for putting forward the staffing proposal and durations of the proposed posts

Three posts for initiatives related to municipal solid waste charging

25. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen pointed out that according to the job descriptions of the proposed posts of AD(MSWC) and PEPO(MSWC) in Annexes E and F respectively to the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(1)596/18-19(04)), most of the tasks to be undertaken by the two posts were related to the implementation arrangements of the MSW charging scheme. As the Bill was still under scrutiny by a bills committee, he queried the justifications for re-creating/creating the two said posts at this stage, including whether the Administration was confident about the timely passage of the Bill.

26. Mr Tommy CHEUNG and Mr SHIU Ka-fai considered that the Administration should not put forward the staffing proposal until the Bill had been passed. They said that the Liberal Party had reservations about the proposal at this stage.

27. The Chairman asked about the feasibility of re-creating/creating the AD(MSWC) and PEPO(MSWC) posts after the passage of the Bill.

28. SEN and PSEN/DEP responded that the previous public engagement exercise conducted by the Council for Sustainable Development and the results of some recent opinion polls conducted by other organizations showed that there were strong public support and aspirations for the early

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implementation of MSW charging in Hong Kong by the end of 2020. As the Administration planned to put in place a preparatory period of 12 to 18 months after the passage of the Bill and before the implementation of MSW charging, it was hoped that the Bill could be passed in 2019 to meet the timetable. The preparation for MSW charging involved a wide range of new and complex tasks, including the setting up of a manufacturing, inventory and distribution system for designated bags and designated labels, liaising with stakeholders from different sectors, raising public awareness on the implementation details, etc. It was expected that such preparatory work would take about two years to complete. In view of the above, the Administration considered it necessary to create/re-create the two proposed posts at this stage. If the staffing proposal was put forward after the passage of the Bill, the implementation of MSW charging might be delayed.

29. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen, Mr WU Chi-wai and Mr Martin LIAO questioned why the Administration proposed to create the PEPO(MSWC) post on a permanent basis, given that the proposed AD(MSWC) post (i.e. PEPO(MSWC)'s line manager) would be a four-year supernumerary post. Mr LIAO asked whether the Administration would consider revising the proposal and change the PEPO(MSWC) post to a four-year supernumerary post to align with the duration of the AD(MSWC) post.

30. PSEN/DEP responded that the Administration would consider members' suggestion and whether to revise the staffing proposal such that the PEPO(MSWC) post would be created on a supernumerary basis for four years.

Six posts for various waste reduction and recycling initiatives

31. The Deputy Chairman said that he supported the staffing proposal in principle. However, he questioned the justifications for creating the following supernumerary posts for five to six years instead of a shorter duration:

- (a) three posts under the new Outreaching and Recycling Division, namely (i) Assistant Director of Environmental Protection (Outreaching and Recycling), (ii) Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Outreaching Service), and (iii) Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Outreaching and Recycling) — this was because the scale of the pilot scheme on free collection service for waste plastics from non-C&I sources was limited, and the Administration's long-term commitment to providing outreaching services for waste reduction and recycling was questionable, given that the initiative was not mentioned in

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"The Hong Kong: Blueprint for Sustainable Use of Resources 2013-2022". The three posts might become redundant if the said pilot scheme and outreaching services were to be discontinued due to unsatisfactory outcomes; and

- (b) Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Food Waste Management) ("PEPO(FWM)") — this was because the introduction of regulatory control on the use of disposable plastic tableware would be subject to the outcome of a relevant consultancy study to be conducted. The Administration should propose the creation of this post after the completion of the study.

32. SEN and the Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (2) responded that:

- (a) the Administration was committed to providing free collection service for waste plastics from non-C&I sources. The pilot scheme to be carried out in three districts was intended to enable the Administration to gain experience and feedback on the service, which would facilitate consideration on whether and how to expand the service at a later stage. The Administration hoped that the service under the pilot scheme could be expanded progressively to all the 18 districts;
- (b) the Administration expected to conduct reviews of the free collection service for waste plastics from non-C&I sources and outreaching services within a time frame of five or six years. Accordingly, the three supernumerary directorate posts under the new Outreaching and Recycling Division were proposed to be created for five or six years; and
- (c) given the international trend towards reducing the use of disposable plastic tableware, the Administration would conduct a review on the need for, and if there was a need, the proposed framework of a regulatory regime for such products in Hong Kong. The Administration expected that it would take four to five years to carry out the review and come up with relevant proposals, and hence it proposed creating the PEPO(FWM) post for five years.

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Supplementary information on the duties of the nine proposed posts

- Admin 33. At the Chairman's request, PSEN/DEP undertook to provide in writing more details on the major duties to be undertaken by each of the proposed posts and the timetables of those duties, with a view to elaborating the justifications for creating/re-creating the said posts and their proposed durations.

(*Post-meeting note:* The Administration's response was circulated to members on 29 April vide LC Paper No. CB(1)974/18-19(02).)

Manpower resources of the Environmental Protection Department

34. Mr CHU Hoi-dick asked about the total number of non-directorate posts in EPD to be deployed to support the implementation of the MSW charging scheme and various waste reduction and recycling initiatives. He expressed concern that EPD currently employed much fewer frontline staff than the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department ("FEHD") for the provision of environmental/waste management services, which appeared to indicate that the Administration's policies on waste management were skewed towards waste disposal (which was mainly handled by FEHD) instead of resource recovery and recycling (which were mainly handled by EPD).

35. Mr WU Chi-wai considered that the Administration should provide more details on the work of the outreaching teams to be created, including their target deliverables.

36. PSEN/DEP responded that while the nine proposed directorate posts would be supported by about 440 staff, the MSW charging scheme and various waste reduction and recycling initiatives would also involve other existing teams in EPD. Unlike FEHD which directly and through its contractors provided waste collection and management services, the environmental management services managed by EPD were mostly provided through its contractors. Under such circumstances, EPD was mainly responsible for contract management and hence it required fewer in-house frontline staff compared to FEHD. In the past, public education on waste reduction and recycling was generally carried out through collaboration with green groups and non-governmental organizations ("NGOs"), and in some cases financial assistance was offered to those parties. In order to prepare the community for a transition to MSW charging, EPD would strengthen public education efforts through delivering outreaching services in all the 18 districts. The new outreaching teams to be set up for the purpose, which

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would consist of some 200 staff in total, would assist members of the public in practising waste separation and clean recycling, and in identifying proper outlets for recyclables. Their work would be complemented by the existing efforts of green groups and NGOs.

37. Mr Martin LIAO noted that PEPO(MSWC) would be tasked to administer publicity and public education programmes related to MSW charging and liaise with stakeholders. He asked whether work on these fronts would be supported by the existing staff of EPD.

38. PSEN/DEP explained that various new initiatives would be launched to complement MSW charging, such as the pilot schemes on free collection services for waste plastics from non-C&I sources and food waste mainly from commercial and industrial sectors. There would be a need to implement targeted publicity and public education programmes and provide on-site assistance to the community, so as to enhance their understanding of the new initiatives and help them put waste reduction, recycling and MSW charging into practice. Additional manpower would be required to undertake these new tasks.

39. Mr Tommy CHEUNG and Mr SHIU Ka-fai noted from paragraph 36 of the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(1)596/18-19(04)) that 118 non-directorate civil service posts would be created in the 2019-2020 financial year to support the proposed directorate posts. As it was uncertain whether the Bill would be passed within that financial year, these members did not find the arrangement appropriate. They raised the following questions and views:

- (a) of the aforementioned 440 non-directorate staff, how many would be assigned to tasks directly related to the preparation for and/or implementation of MSW charging;
- (b) whether more posts would be created in future for enforcement of the MSW charging scheme; and
- (c) the implementation of MSW charging might lead to serious fly-tipping problems, especially in old districts and "three-nil buildings", and the Administration might need to allocate a huge amount of resources to tackle the problems. It was therefore questionable whether the revenue generated from MSW charging would be able to cover the enforcement costs.

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40. Mr WU Chi-wai said that he was also worried about the manpower costs for enforcing MSW charging, and the social impact of the extensive use of surveillance camera systems for monitoring compliance.

41. PSEN/DEP advised that:

(a) some tens of the posts concerned would be for supporting the preparation for and/or implementation of MSW charging, while the remaining of them would be responsible for publicity and public education as well as various waste reduction and recycling initiatives. Such waste reduction and recycling initiatives would be taken forward regardless of whether MSW charging was implemented or not, and hence the efforts of the staff concerned would not be wasted even if the Bill was not passed;

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(b) to further illustrate the division of work among those staff, the Administration would provide supplementary information on the number of non-directorate civil service posts and non-civil service posts to be deployed/created to support each of the nine proposed directorate posts;

(c) the staffing proposal in question did not include the manpower resources required for enforcement of the MSW charging scheme, which the Administration would ascertain at a later stage having regard to a number of factors, including compliance situation, public response to the publicity and public education efforts, effectiveness of the waste reduction and recycling measures, etc.; and

(d) EPD had been exploring with other relevant government departments certain enhanced measures for deterring fly-tipping. The Administration would report the progress to members in due course.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's response was circulated to members on 29 April 2019 vide LC Paper No. CB(1)974/18-19(02).)

Interdepartmental cooperation

42. Mr WU Chi-wai said that he had reservations about EPD's approach to the introduction of MSW charging, as it appeared to him that there was a lack of interdepartmental cooperation in this respect. He requested EPD to

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explain whether and how it had cooperated with other government departments (the Housing Department and FEHD in particular) on MSW charging and various waste reduction and recycling initiatives.

43. SEN and PSEN/DEP explained that:

- (a) there had been close and ongoing cooperation between EPD and other relevant government departments at different levels in preparing for the introduction of MSW charging, and PSEN/DEP had conducted extensive discussions with the Director of Housing and Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene for the purpose. For example, when planning for the development of new refuse collection points ("RCPs"), EPD worked with FEHD on exploring the provision of spaces or facilities in the RCPs under planning/redevelopment to accommodate preliminary recycling activities or temporary storage of collected resources;
- (b) moreover, all waste reduction and recycling initiatives detailed in the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(1)596/18-19(04)) were proposed having regard to the outcomes of discussions between EPD and other relevant government departments;
- (c) regarding the division of responsibilities related to MSW charging, EPD would be responsible for publicity and public education and taking the lead in implementing complementary initiatives to promote recycling. EPD and FEHD would take enforcement actions against non-compliances at locations/premises under their respective purviews, and such details had been provided in the Administration's paper; and
- (d) the Administration would maintain close communications with unions of frontline cleaning staff and develop operational guidelines for them to facilitate the implementation of MSW charging.

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44. At the requests of Mr WU Chi-wai and the Chairman, the Administration would provide in writing more examples of cooperation between EPD and other government departments on the preparation for or implementation of MSW charging and various waste reduction and recycling initiatives.

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(*Post-meeting note:* The Administration's response was circulated to members on 29 April 2019 vide LC Paper No. CB(1)974/18-19(02).)

Conclusion

45. The Chairman sought members' views on whether the Panel should give in-principle support to the Administration's submission of the staffing proposal to the Establishment Subcommittee ("ESC"). Mr WU Chi-wai suggested EA Panel might consider further discussing the proposal and deciding on the question at the next regular meeting, after the Administration had provided the supplementary information requested.

46. PSEN/DEP advised that taking into account members' views and suggestions raised at the current meeting, the Administration would suitably revise the staffing proposal such that the PEPO(MSWC) post would be created on a supernumerary basis for four years. With this proposed change, the durations of all three proposed directorate posts that would take forward the preparation for and implementation of MSW charging (i.e. DDEP(4), AD(MSWC) and PEPO(MSWC)) would be aligned with one another. The above proposed revision would be suitably reflected in the paper to be submitted to ESC. Given that it would take time for ESC and the Finance Committee to deliberate the staffing proposal, and the Administration's indication to suitably revise the nature and duration of the proposed PEPO(MSWC) post as above, he appealed to EA Panel members for supporting the submission of the proposal to ESC. Mr WU Chi-wai said that while he maintained his reservations about the staffing proposal, he did not have a strong opinion about its submission to ESC.

47. The Chairman concluded that members did not object to the Administration's submission of the staffing proposal to ESC.

VII. Any other business

48. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:23 pm.