

For information

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
PANEL ON ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**

**Complementary Measures in Relation to
Municipal Solid Waste Charging**

In response to the matters raised by the Panel on Environmental Affairs (Panel) at its meeting held on 26 November 2018, this information note provides supplementary information on the additional manpower resources that will be required for the implementation of municipal solid waste charging (MSW charging) and related complementary measures, as well as the estimation of related financial implications.

Non-enforcement manpower required for implementing the MSW charging

2. According to the Legislative Council Brief (File Ref: EP CR/9/65/3) issued by the Environment Bureau and the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) on 31 October 2018 regarding the Waste Disposal (Charging for Municipal Solid Waste) (Amendment) Bill 2018, it is estimated that the creation of around 60 civil service posts in EPD and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) is necessitated. These posts are non-enforcement staff. Being the administration authority of the MSW charging, the EPD will require substantial manpower to undertake a whole range of new and heavy responsibilities. These include developing the charging infrastructure required for the MSW charging, as well as mapping out and administering the charging arrangements such as engaging contractors for the manufacturing, inventory and distribution of designated garbage bags/labels at 4 000 odd authorised sales outlets and to manage such contracts; developing registration and billing systems for charging private waste collectors by way of “gate-fee” at refuse transfer stations and landfills; and launching a major publicity and public education campaign to prepare the community for the introduction of MSW charging. The estimated annual expenditure for the manpower mentioned above is around \$46 million.

Enforcement manpower required for implementing the MSW charging

3. As regards the use of pre-paid designated garbage bags/labels, which is required under MSW charging, having regard to some 22 000 waste reception points, over 45 000 buildings and considerable waste reception points across the territory, we plan to adopt a risk-based approach targeting

at the list of black spots based on complaints and intelligence. EPD and FEHD may, according to preliminary estimation, require a few hundred enforcement staff.

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

Manpower required for implementing related complementary measures

5. To complement the implementation of MSW charging, the Government has announced in the Policy Address in last October the allocation of additional recurrent resources to strengthen our complementary and education work on promotion of waste reduction and recycling. The Government will provide an additional provision of around \$300 to \$400 million for the financial year (FY) 2019/20 to start with, which will be further increased to no less than \$800 to \$1,000 million from the FY when MSW charging is to be implemented. The amount of this annual provision will be commensurate with the estimated gross revenue to be generated from MSW charging so as to achieve the effect of "dedicated-fund-for-dedicated-use", i.e. the revenue generated from MSW charging will be used for enhancing waste reduction and recycling as well as related measures and work.

6. Relevant waste reduction and recycling work under planning include regularisation of funding support for Community Recycling Centres (CRCs) with a view to encouraging these non-government organisations-operated centres to enhance their local waste reduction and recycling support, in close collaboration with the outreaching teams; the expansion of free territory-wide collection service in the longer run subject to the experience gained from the pilot schemes to collect waste plastics from non-commercial and non-industrial sources and food waste mainly from C&I sources, as well as the progress of developing food waste recycling facilities in Hong Kong; and implementation of a pilot scheme to assess the effectiveness of applying reverse vending machines (RVMs) in promoting the recycling of waste plastic beverage containers.

Outreaching Teams

7. To further enhance on-site support for recycling, we will set up new outreaching teams directly under EPD. Building on the existing waste reduction and recycling network, the outreaching teams will collaborate closely with the community green stations (CGSs) and other community partners to educate the public on the importance of waste reduction at source and assist them in practising waste separation and clean recycling, as well as in identifying proper outlets for recyclables. At the same time, the outreaching teams will also promote at the district level the various waste reduction and recycling initiatives launched by the EPD, including the producer responsibility scheme (PRS) on glass beverage containers and MSW charging etc., so as to raise public awareness and enhance stakeholders' understanding on the implementation details. We will kick-start pilot outreaching services in the Eastern, Kwun Tong and Sha Tin districts. After gaining actual experience, we will gradually expand the outreaching services to all districts in Hong Kong. We expect that about 200 additional staff will be needed starting from the 2019/20 FY to progressively set up 30 to 35 outreaching teams (each comprising 5 to 6 staff). The estimated expenditure for the 2019/20 FY is about \$130 million.

Pilot schemes for collection service in respect of waste plastics from non-commercial and non-industrial sources

8. To raise the quantity of waste plastics recovered from households and enhance public confidence in the waste separation and recycling system, EPD plans to roll out a two-year pilot scheme in the Eastern, Kwun Tong and Sha Tin districts to provide free collection service for waste plastics from non-commercial and non-industrial sources. Service contractors engaged by EPD will directly collect waste plastics from non-commercial and non-industrial premises in the community such as public and private housing estates, schools, public organisations and EPD's CRCs and CGSs etc., for onward processing including sorting, shredding, cleaning and melting to produce recycled raw materials or products which will then be supplied to the local market or exported. Apart from ensuring proper handling of the collected waste plastics, this would also facilitate the development of the downstream recycling industry. Having regard to the data collected and experience gained in the pilot scheme and the development of the PRS on plastic beverage containers, we will consider expanding the free collection service for non-commercial and non-industrial

waste plastics to cover the whole territory. The estimated expenditure for the 2019/20 FY is around \$70 million.

Pilot schemes for collection service in respect of food waste

9. We will continue to promote food waste source separation in C&I sectors, and plan to make use of the Organic Resources Recovery Centre Phase 1 as well as the food waste/sewage sludge co-digesting facilities in Tai Po to conduct a two-year pilot scheme for free collection of food waste mainly from C&I sources, with a view to exploring the feasibility of extending the food waste collection service (which covers transportation and treatment free of charge) to cover all sectors in Hong Kong. The estimated expenditure for the 2019/20 FY is approximately \$60 million.

Pilot scheme on RVMs

10. The Government is preparing to introduce a pilot scheme on RVMs in 2019 by placing them at various locations to assess their performance and effectiveness in recycling waste plastic beverage containers. The estimated expenditure for the 2019/20 FY is some \$4 million.

11. As regards the additional civil service staff required for the above waste reduction and recycling measures, we are compiling the relevant information and will brief the Panel in due course. The Panel will also be consulted on the proposed creation of the directorate posts concerned.

**Environment Bureau/Environmental Protection Department
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