

**Responses to List of Follow-up Actions Arising from
the Meeting of Panel on Environmental Affairs
Held on 25 February 2019**

This note sets out the Environmental Protection Department (EPD)'s responses to the list of follow-up actions regarding the staffing proposal to create nine directorate posts arising from the meeting of the Panel on Environmental Affairs held on 25 February 2019.

- a) the major duties to be undertaken by each of the nine directorate posts proposed to be created/re-created under the EPD and the timetables of those duties, with a view to elaborating the justifications for creating/re-creating the said posts and their proposed durations;*

Among the nine directorate posts proposed to be created/re-created, three are responsible for the preparation for and implementation of municipal solid waste (MSW) charging (including one Administrative Officer Staff Grade B (AOSGB) post which also oversees other waste management work), whereas the remaining six are responsible for taking forward various waste reduction and recycling initiatives, with a view to facilitating the public to practise waste reduction and recycling more proactively, thereby contributing to the implementation of MSW charging at a later stage. As the proposed posts are responsible for work of different nature, processes and timeframes, their proposed terms of office vary. This reflects our pragmatic considerations on the specific needs of the various posts in formulating the staffing proposal.

MSW Charging

In terms of work related to MSW charging, the three proposed directorates are supernumerary posts of four years, including an AOSGB designated as Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (4), an Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (AOSGC) designated as Assistant Director of Environmental Protection (Municipal Solid Waste Charging) and a Principal Environmental Protection Officer (PEPO) designated as PEPO (Municipal Solid Waste Charging). We introduced the Waste Disposal (Charging for Municipal Solid Waste) (Amendment) Bill 2018 (Amendment Bill) into the Legislative Council (LegCo) on 14 November 2018. Subject to passage of the

Amendment Bill, we expect that MSW charging will be implemented in late 2020 at the earliest. To take forward this initiative as soon as possible, we have to kick off the necessary preparation work in tandem with the scrutiny of the Amendment Bill. Such efforts include devising the infrastructure and arrangements for MSW charging, e.g. drafting the contracts required for the manufacturing, inventory, distribution and management of designated garbage bags/labels; developing the registration and billing systems for charging private waste collectors by way of ‘gate-fee’ at refuse transfer stations and landfills; and taking forward an extensive public education, publicity and engagement campaign to foster better understanding of and identification with MSW charging in our community. If we wait till the passage of the Amendment Bill to create the posts concerned, it will inevitably delay the implementation of MSW charging.

Apart from the work related to MSW charging, the aforementioned Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (4) will also be responsible for overseeing the work of the Waste Management Policy Division, which is headed by another permanent AOSGC post, and has been spearheading and implementing various waste management initiatives relating to the development and implementation of mandatory and voluntary producer responsibility schemes (PRs); development of the Community Green Stations to enhance environmental education and help collect different types of recyclables in the local community; and management of construction waste, etc. The post will also oversee the work of the outreaching teams, which will be headed by the proposed Assistant Director of Environmental Protection (Outreaching and Recycling).

We estimate that MSW charging could be implemented by end-2020 at the earliest. During the four-year terms, these proposed posts will take forward relevant preparatory work, and review the effectiveness of MSW charging after it is implemented, and carry out required follow-up actions. Subject to the progress of the implementation of MSW charging and relevant work, we will further review whether the posts should be extended.

Various Waste Reduction and Recycling Initiatives

For the various waste reduction and recycling initiatives, we propose to create/re-create six directorate posts, including two permanent posts and four

supernumerary posts. In brief, we recommend (i) creating three supernumerary post to provide free collection service of waste plastics from non-commercial and non-industrial (non-C&I) sources and set up new outreaching teams; (ii) creating one permanent post for the PRS on plastic beverage containers; and (iii) making permanent an existing supernumerary post and creating another supernumerary post to take forward the "Food Waste and Yard Waste Plan for Hong Kong 2014-2022" (Food Waste Plan) and phase out disposable plastic tableware.

Setting up Outreaching Teams

To strengthen on-site recycling support in the community, we consider it necessary, through outreaching service, to publicise various waste reduction and recycling initiatives and educate the public on the importance of waste reduction at source on a long-term and continuous basis. Having regard to public responses to the outreaching service, we will enhance the service and gradually expand its scope to cover the whole territory. Therefore, we need to create the supernumerary posts of Assistant Director of Environmental Protection (Outreaching and Recycling) and PEPO (Outreaching Service) for six years and will review, about a year before the lapse of the two posts, whether they should be extended subject to the implementation progress of the outreaching service.

Pilot Scheme on Collection of Waste Plastics from Non-C&I Sources

We commenced tendering in February 2019 and will start the two-year pilot scheme progressively from the latter half of 2019. We will conduct an interim review and, having regard to the progress of the PRS for plastic beverage containers, consider progressively extending the service across the territory. As such, we need to create the supernumerary post of PEPO (Outreaching and Recycling) for five years and will review, about a year before the lapse of the post, the resources available then and the effectiveness of the service, so that we can map out the way forward for the free collection service of waste plastics and estimate the resources required, including whether the post should be extended.

PRS on Plastic Beverage Containers

We will need to carefully map out and prepare the implementation details, and roll out the implementation plan step by step. Key work will include devising the rebate arrangement; establishing a network of automatic and manual redemption centres to facilitate the return of waste containers and redemption of rebate; defining technical specifications for the reverse vending machines, related system requirements as well as information and technology platforms; and engaging rebate system administrators and network operators. In parallel, we will need to make preparation for a public consultation exercise and thereafter finalise the implementation details taking into account the feedback received. We will also have to review the relevant law and prepare for necessary amendments to provide statutory backing for the proposed PRS and related matters. Staff responsible for these tasks should possess professional and technical expertise and be capable of close liaison with stakeholders in the beverage industry and the recycling industry. The PEPO (Waste Management Policy)² post proposed to be created will be responsible for overseeing the formulation and implementation of the PRS on plastic beverage containers, continuing to follow through the consultancy study on the proposed PRS on plastic containers carrying personal care products, and overseeing the formulation and implementation of such a PRS if decided to be taken forward. Meanwhile, the proposed post will take over from the existing PEPO (Waste Management), the duty of implementing the PRS on glass beverage containers. As there is a sustained and long-term need for the duties above, the post is proposed to be permanent.

Food Waste Plan and Phasing Out of Disposable Plastic Tableware

To undertake the huge workload arising from existing and new initiatives, the former Food Waste Management Group (FWMG) has been split into two groups, with one named as the Food Waste Recycling Group (FWRG) and the other still named as the FWMG. The new FWRG was led by a supernumerary PEPO post, designated as PEPO (Food Waste Recycling), which was approved by the FC for creation on 11 February 2017 and lapsed on 1 April 2019. PEPO (Food Waste Recycling) was tasked to undertake existing development programmes of the Organic Resources Recovery Centre (ORRC) Phases 1 and 2, manage T•PARK for handling sewage

sludge, manage the Chemical Waste Treatment Centre, develop the free food waste collection systems, and explore the feasibility of mandatory food waste source separation. As these duties involve permanent initiatives, and the workload and responsibilities of which will not reduce over time, it is considered necessary to make permanent the supernumerary PEPO (Food Waste Recycling) post.

Besides, with a view to sustaining the Food Wise Hong Kong Campaign, developing the remaining phases of the ORRC network, developing food waste pre-treatment facilities for food waste/sewage sludge anaerobic co-digestion, formulating yard waste management initiatives as well as both short- and long-term initiatives on reducing the use of disposable plastic tableware, we propose that a supernumerary PEPO post, designated as PEPO (Food Waste Management), be created for five years to implement and oversee the work concerned. Among others, the food waste/sewage sludge anaerobic co-digestion trial schemes (Trial Schemes) at the Tai Po and Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works (STWs) will commence in the first half of 2019 and 2022 respectively. Subject to the outcomes of the Trial Schemes after their operation for a certain period of time, and the progress of policy formulation on yard waste and disposable plastic tableware, we will review relevant work and way forward in about four years' time, including whether the supernumerary post should be extended and its scope of work.

A summary of the staffing proposal can be found at **Enclosure 2** of the paper for the meeting of the LegCo Establishment Subcommittee on 7 May 2019 (EC(2019-20)). The detailed job duties of the proposed directorate posts are at **Enclosures 4 to 12** of the same document.

(b) the number of non-directorate civil service posts and non-civil service contract (Non-CS) posts to be deployed to support each of the nine proposed directorate posts; and

The number of non-directorate civil service (ND) posts and non-civil service (Non-CS) posts to support the nine proposed directorate posts under the staffing proposal are tabulated below:

Initiatives	Proposed Posts		Post Titles	ND Posts	Non-CS Posts [^]
MSW Charging	AOSGB (Supernumerary Post)		Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (4)	47	4
	AOSGC (Supernumerary Post)		Assistant Director of Environmental Protection (Municipal Solid Waste Charging)		
	PEPO (Supernumerary Post)		PEPO (Municipal Solid Waste Charging)		
Outreaching and Recycling	Assistant Director of Environmental Protection (Supernumerary Post)	PEPO (Supernumerary Post)	PEPO (Outreaching Service)	68	142
	Post Title: Assistant Director of Environmental Protection (Outreaching and Recycling)	PEPO (Supernumerary Post)	PEPO (Outreaching and Recycling)	52	

Initiatives	Proposed Posts	Post Titles	ND Posts	Non-CS Posts ^
PRS on Plastic Beverage Containers	PEPO (Permanent Post)	PEPO (Waste Management Policy) 2	27	0
Food Waste Plan and Phasing Out of Disposable Plastic Tableware	PEPO (Permanent Post)	PEPO (Food Waste Recycling)	66	23
	PEPO (Supernumerary Post)	PEPO (Food Waste Management)	28	
Total			288	169
			457	

^ Including non-civil service contract and post-retirement service contract posts.

- (c) *examples of co-operation between the EPD and other government departments (the Housing Department (HD) and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) in particular) on the preparation for or implementation of the proposed municipal solid waste charging and complementary waste reduction and recycling initiatives.*

Examples of co-operation between the EPD and other departments / organisations on taking forward MSW charging as well as various waste reduction and recycling initiatives are as follows:

Departments / Organisations*	Examples of Co-operation
1. MSW Charging	
FEHD	The EPD and FEHD have all along worked together on upgrading refuse collection points (RCPs) at urban and rural areas, including the provision of additional recycling facilities at RCPs to help members of the public practise waste reduction and recycling. Complementary facilities for refuse collection will also be enhanced to facilitate the implementation of MSW charging. In addition, the two departments have been closely discussing relevant enforcement arrangements and division of work.
HD	The EPD and HD have all along maintained regular and close communication. The EPD has briefed the Subsidised Housing Committee of the HKHA on the implementation arrangements of and the latest progress of MSW charging. To enable more stakeholders in public rental housing (PRH) settings to try out MSW charging first-hand in actual settings and help PRH residents get prepared for the implementation of MSW charging, the Environment and Conservation Fund (ECF) has funded non-profit-making organisations to roll out Community Involvement Projects covering, inter alia, three PRH estates since 2015. Besides, the EPD

Departments / Organisations*	Examples of Co-operation
	and HD also jointly launched a Trial Project in PRH Estates in ten PRH estates between 2018 and 2019.
EDB	For 20 government secondary/primary schools under the purview of the EDB, pilot schemes on MSW charging are underway to allow the schools and their frontline staff to experience MSW charging in actual settings and get well prepared. The EPD has conducted briefings and site visits for the participating schools.
HAD	The EPD, in consultation with the HAD, has invited District Councils (DCs) to incorporate elements of “Dump Less, Save More” and MSW charging into the next year’s Community Participation Programmes in Environmental Protection funded by the EPD.
FEHD, LCSD, AFCD & HAD	<p>In 2016, the Government set up the Steering Group on the Modification of Recycling and Refuse Collection Facilities in Public Places (the Steering Group) to review, in a more systematic manner, the design and provision of recycling bins and litter containers in public places, with a view to enhancing waste separation and reduction as well as resource recovery at district level.</p> <p>The FEHD, LCSD, AFCD and HAD are members of the Steering Group, and have been closely collaborating with the EPD on the review of relevant facilities.</p>
2. Outreaching Service	
HD	The EPD commenced its preparatory work for the outreaching service in mid-2018 and has been working closely and exchanging views with the HD on the arrangements for launching the outreaching service in

Departments / Organisations*	Examples of Co-operation
	<p>PRH estates under the purview of the HD. With the support from the HD, outreaching teams have progressively started their services for PRH estates in three pilot districts (Sha Tin, Eastern and Kwun Tong). Their efforts include conducting on-site assessments on PRH estates' waste reduction and recycling management and related recycling facilities, and advising on enhancements measures; as well as collaborating with the HD to organise various publicity and education activities to tie in with the HD's programme "Green Delight in Estates".</p>
3. Pilot Scheme on Free Collection Service for Non-C&I Waste Plastics	
HD	<p>The EPD commenced its preparatory work for the pilot scheme in mid-2018 and has been working closely and exchanging views with the HD on the arrangements for collecting waste plastics from PRH estates under the purview of the HD.</p>
Other relevant departments or organisations including DH, EDB, FEHD, GPA, HAD, LCSD, SWD, HA & JUD, etc.	<p>Apart from liaising with the HD, the EPD also held an inter-departmental meeting in October 2018 to brief the relevant departments and organisations on the pilot scheme under preparation, and consult them on the arrangements for collecting waste plastics from the government facilities and buildings under their purview. The EPD will continue to co-ordinate with the departments and organisations concerned so as to include more government facilities and buildings in the pilot scheme with a view to raising the overall recovery quantities of waste plastics.</p>

Departments / Organisations*	Examples of Co-operation
4. Community Recycling Centres (CRCs)	
FEHD & ASD	<p>With the EPD's enhanced efforts in promoting waste reduction and recycling, as well as the implementation of MSW charging in future, it is anticipated that public demand for means of recycling will be on the rise. In this connection, the EPD has been in close dialogue with the FEHD on the planning for new RCPs to explore the provision of space or facilities therein to accommodate preliminary recycling activities or temporary storage of collected resources, on the premise that the effectiveness and efficiency of refuse collection service at RCPs will not be affected. The two departments have agreed that, under the FEHD's project of constructing a six-storey building at the junction between Hung Yuen Road and Hung Ping Road, Hung Shui Kiu for re-provisioning of the existing RCP at Hung Tai Road, the EPD will set up a CRC on the second floor of the proposed building, with reference to the operation mode of the existing CRCs, to serve the local community. The EPD, FEHD, ASD and the consultant architect met in February 2019 to exchange views on the design of the proposed CRC. The EPD and FEHD have consulted the DC concerned, and will work closely together on the design and other aspects of the proposed building to take forward the proposal.</p>
5. Developing Food Waste/Sewage Sludge Anaerobic Co-digestion Technology at STWs to Treat Food Waste	
DSD	<p>The EPD is working with DSD to examine the use of existing and planned STWs to take forward the "food waste/sewage sludge anaerobic co-digestion" technology in order to expedite the enhancement of the overall food waste recycling capacity in Hong Kong. The first "food waste/sewage sludge anaerobic co-</p>

Departments / Organisations*	Examples of Co-operation
	<p>digestion” trial scheme (Trial Scheme) will be carried out in the Tai Po to confirm the feasibility of this technology in local application. In parallel, the EPD and DSD are examining the engineering feasibility of enhancing the sewage sludge treatment facilities at STWs for food waste recycling, including upgrading the anaerobic digestion system of the Tai Po STW during its expansion project in future so as to process more food waste, as well as extending the application of the technology to other STWs where sewage sludge anaerobic digestion facilities are or will be available (such as the STWs in Yuen Long and Hung Shui Kiu).</p>
6. Pilot Scheme on Free Collection Service for Food Waste	
FEHD, HKHA, AFCD, HA, EDB & HKHS	<p>To encourage the commercial and industrial sectors to recycle food waste properly and turn waste into energy, we are running a pilot scheme to collect food waste from government departments and public institutions for delivery to Phase 1 of the Organic Resources Recovery Centre (ORRC1) for treatment. The pilot scheme covers, inter alia, 40 public markets and cooked food venues managed by the FEHD, nine shopping malls and markets managed by the HKHA, two wholesale food markets run by the AFCD and 13 hospitals under the purview of the HA.</p> <p>In future, we will progressively extend the scheme to other shopping malls, markets, wholesale food markets and hospitals run by the public sector. We will also work with the EDB to provide all primary/secondary schools and tertiary institutions in Hong Kong with free food waste collection service via school lunch suppliers or caterers in tertiary institutions. This will not only help educate and encourage students to practise</p>

Departments / Organisations*	Examples of Co-operation
	<p>separation of food waste at source, but also disseminate the messages of “Food Wise, Waste Reduction” and “Turning Waste into Energy” in educational establishments and the community.</p> <p>Additionally, we will make use of part of the treatment capacities of the ORRC1 and the Trial Scheme at the Tai Po STW to provide free collection and recycling services for food waste from certain households. Priority will be given to food waste from housing estates with experience in food waste separation and recycling, such as private housing estates having participated in the “Food Waste Recycling Projects in Housing Estates” under the ECF. We will also invite the HKHA and HKHS to participate in the pilot scheme to extend its coverage to PRH estates.</p>
7. Phasing-out Disposable Plastic Tableware	
LCSD	<p>Supported by the LCSD, the EPD ran the “Plastic Free Beach, Tableware First” campaign at all public beaches during the summer of 2018 to encourage members of the public and eateries on/near beaches to avoid using or handing out disposable plastic tableware. A total of 51 restaurants and fast food kiosks joined the campaign by using greener tableware such as bamboo sticks, paper straws and paper bags instead of disposable plastic tableware, with a view to fostering a plastic-free and marine-friendly culture for all.</p>

Departments / Organisations*	Examples of Co-operation
Relevant bureaux / departments	<p>Since 1 January 2019, the Government has taken the initiative in banning the use of plastic straws and polyfoam food containers in designated premises and canteens mainly serving government staff. Starting from the same date, when relevant bureaux or departments invite tenders for new contracts/tenancies or renewal of existing ones, they will put down new terms requiring all restaurant operators at suitable government venues to avoid using disposable plastic tableware wherever practicable, including not providing disposable tableware for dine-in customers, not providing disposable tableware by default or in sets for take-away customers, and using tableware made of greener materials (e.g. plant fibre) to replace disposable plastic tableware.</p>
8. Promoting Yard Waste Recycling	
CEDD and other departments participating in the clearing of tree waste generated due to Super Typhoon Mangkhut	<p>To facilitate and expedite the clearance of tree waste generated due to Super Typhoon Mangkhut, the EPD worked with the CEDD and other relevant departments earlier on to set up a temporary collection area in the Kai Tak Development Area for temporary stockpiling of fallen trees and branches collected and delivered by the public. The collection area received a total of around 8 200 truckloads of tree waste, among which 2 300 tonnes were delivered to the government land near the T•PARK together with another 700 tonnes of tree waste collected by various government departments. Shredding of suitable tree waste has commenced to try out their possible uses.</p>

Departments / Organisations*	Examples of Co-operation
LCSD	In collaboration with the LCSD, the EPD had given out about 20 tonnes of suitable tree waste to local art creators and horticulturists for their creation of wood craft items and art pieces which were then displayed at the Hong Kong Flower Show in March 2019.
Relevant bureaux / departments	The EPD has started discussion with a number of relevant bureaux and departments on means of more effective treatment of post-typhoon tree waste to not only minimise the impact on the public but also maximise the recovery and reuse of yard waste resources for less disposal at landfills. The EPD will continue to work with the DEVB and relevant departments on introducing more diversified solutions to yard waste management, including the provision of yard waste recycling facilities, etc. Subject to trial results, the EPD will consider incorporating these solutions into the long-term strategy for yard waste management.
9. PRSs on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) and Glass Beverage Containers	
FEHD	The EPD has arranged with the FEHD to deliver regulated electrical equipment received at RCPs to the Government's WEEE•PARK for proper treatment. The FEHD also provides temporary storage space at appropriate RCPs for the EPD's Glass Management Contractors (GMCs) to manage the large quantity of waste glass containers collected from bars and restaurants for delivery to treatment facilities.

Departments / Organisations*	Examples of Co-operation
HD	Since 2010, the EPD and HD have jointly run glass bottle recycling programmes for PRH estates to encourage PRH residents' participation in glass container recycling. Currently, the HD continues to support the EPD's GMCs / the Community Green Station operators in recovering glass containers at PRH estates and arranging publicity.
LCSD	The LCSD has set up glass container collection points at its various facilities (e.g. cultural centres, sports centres and parks) since 2014 to facilitate public participation in glass container recycling.

***Abbreviations of Departments/Organisations**

AFCD	Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department	HA	Hospital Authority
ASD	Architectural Services Department	HAD	Home Affairs Department
CEDB	Civil Engineering and Development Department	HD	Housing Department
DEVB	Development Bureau	HKHA	Hong Kong Housing Authority
DH	Department of Health	HKHS	Hong Kong Housing Society
DSD	Drainage Services Department	JUD	Judiciary
EDB	Education Bureau	LCSD	Leisure and Cultural Services Department
FEHD	Food and Environmental Hygiene Department	SWD	Social Welfare Department
GPA	Government Property Agency		

Environment Bureau / Environmental Protection Department
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