

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)618/18-19(04)

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Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene

Subcommittee on Issues Relating to Public Markets

**Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat
for the meeting on 21 January 2019**

Vacancy situation in public markets and related issues

Purpose

This paper provides background information on the vacancy situation in public markets and related issues, and summarizes the major views and concerns expressed by members of the Subcommittee on Issues Relating to Public Markets ("the Subcommittee") on the subject in the Sixth Legislative Council ("LegCo").

Background

2. In 2008, when the Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene discussed with the Administration its review of the provision of public markets in Hong Kong, the Panel members were advised that vacancy rate at 60% and above for three consecutive year and with deficit had proven to be effective indicators in identifying markets with viability problems.¹ In the process of its review of public markets with viability problems, the Administration would discuss with the relevant district councils ("DCs") possible improvement proposals. If there were no viable options to improve the viability of the markets, the Administration would pursue the possibility of market closure in consultation with the relevant DCs and returning the vacated building structures

¹ In 2003, the Director of Audit published a report and raised a number of issues related to the management of public markets, including high vacancy rates and large operating deficits in some markets. The report recommended that the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department ("FEHD") should conduct a review and identify those public markets that should be closed down.

and land to the Government for other uses. The Administration further advised that four public markets were identified with viability problems, namely Bridges Street Market in Central and Western District, Mong Kok Market in Yau Tsim Mong District, Kwong Choi Market in Tuen Mun District and Tang Lung Chau Market in Wan Chai District. These four public markets were subsequently closed down.

3. During the deliberations of the Subcommittee on Issues Relating to Public Markets formed in the Fifth LegCo, the Administration advised that in order to boost the occupancy rate of public markets, FEHD had since February 2009 lowered the upset auction prices to 80% and 60% of the open market rental for stalls which had been left vacant for six months and eight months respectively. In addition, FEHD had also widened the trade mix by introducing service trades, light refreshment and bakery stalls since July 2009, and started to let out small stalls through short-term tenancies on a trial basis since October 2010.

4. According to the Administration, as at 31 March 2018, FEHD managed 99 public markets. Among them, 35 were standalone wet markets, 39 comprised both a wet market and a cooked food centre, and 25 were standalone cooked food markets. Out of a total of 14 086 stalls, 12 779 (or 90.7%) were rented. A table setting out the number of vacant stalls and vacancy rates of individual public markets from 2015 to 2017 is in **Appendix I**.

Major views and concerns of members of the Subcommittee

5. Members' major views and concerns on the subject are summarized in the ensuing paragraphs.

Vibrancy of public markets

6. Pointing out that a number of stalls were inactive and used for storage or other purposes, members expressed concern about the vibrancy of public markets and urged the Administration to take measures to enhance the vibrancy and patronage of public markets. Some members considered that stalls being vacant for a long period of time should be put into other uses, and that under-utilized public markets could be converted to other uses. At its meeting on 10 July 2018, the Subcommittee passed a motion requesting the Government to, among others, "conduct a study on setting up planters, gym centres, public clinics, etc. in markets where there are space that has been left vacant for a long period of time, with a view to fully utilizing land resources".²

² For wording of the motion, please refer to **Appendix II**. As for the Administration's response, please refer to LC Paper No. CB(2)368/18-19(01).

7. The Administration advised that vibrancy of each public market depended on various factors including competition from fresh provision shops in the vicinity, pedestrian traffic, serving transport network, etc. Nevertheless, the Administration noted that about 20% of all the rented stalls in public markets were selling non-food dry goods such as clothes and footwear, and its observation was that stalls of this type constituted a major source of relatively inactive operation in markets. The Administration was conducting a fundamental review for taking forward the Market Modernization Programme ("MMP"), and considered that hardware and management issues should be dealt with in parallel, in a bid to break the longstanding logjam and find concrete solutions to the problems.

8. Members noted that FEHD had, starting from June 2018, suspended the open auction of public market stalls to make available a certain number of vacant stalls for re-siting stall operators affected by the implementation of MMP. There was a view that if such arrangement was made to facilitate the implementation of MMP, FEHD should expeditiously provide a timetable for taking forward MMP.

Closing down of public market with high vacancy rates

9. Members noted that where necessary, the Administration would consider the need for consolidation of public markets to release precious land resources for more gainful use to better serve the community. However, some members questioned why the Administration would consider doing so, as in their view, more public markets should be built to compete with the markets of Link Real Estate Investment Trust. Members also noted that in the 2017-2018 financial year, Tsuen King Circuit Market and Shau Kei Wan Market were closed down. An enquiry was raised as to whether FEHD had taken into account views and suggestion of residents in the vicinity of Tsuen King Circuit Market that stall tenants scattered on different floors could be relocated to one single floor while the remaining two floors could be vacated for other community uses. A question was also raised as to whether the Administration would consult the public regarding the future use of Shau Kei Wan Market.

10. The Administration advised that when considering whether an under-utilized market was to be closed, FEHD would take into account a host of factors, including vacancy rate, prospects for improvement, availability of alternative sources of fresh provision outlets in the vicinity, and the likely cost-effectiveness of upgrading works, etc. Where it was not possible to revitalize an under-utilized public market, then the Administration would consider consolidating the public market and converting it to other uses. The Administration would listen to the views of the community and the relevant DCs before reaching such a decision. According to the Administration, Tsuen King

Circuit Market, which was closed down in March 2018, would be converted to other community uses.

11. An enquiry was also raised about the use of the site of Mong Kok Market which was closed in 2010. There was a view that the Administration should explore the possibility of putting the site to other uses before it was redeveloped, such as for organizing bazaars. The Administration advised that where a market was closed and the premises were no longer required by FEHD, the vacated building space would be handled according to the established procedures. Depending on the circumstances, FEHD might request the Government Property Agency, the Planning Department or the Lands Department to seek inputs from other government departments on proposals to put the premises to gainful long-term use. As regards the redevelopment of the site of Mong Kok Market, the relevant statutory planning procedure and preparatory works were underway. The Administration would welcome views from the public concerning how the Mong Kok Market building could be utilized before the redevelopment. The Administration adopted a positive attitude towards bottom-up and district-led proposals for organizing bazaars. The proposals would be handled and considered by relevant bureaux and departments according to their established procedures and vetting criteria.

Latest development

12. The Subcommittee will discuss with the Administration the vacancy situation in public markets and related issues at its meeting on 21 January 2019.

Relevant papers

13. A list of the relevant papers on the LegCo website is in **Appendix III**.

Appendix I

The number of vacant stalls and vacancy rates of public markets, 2015-2017

(Page 1 of 4)

Serial No.	Name of Market@	No. of stalls			No. of Vacant Stalls (of which frozen#) as at 31 December			Vacancy rate* as at 31 December		
		2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
1	Aberdeen Market	335	335	335	2(0)	4(0)	10(0)	1%	1%	3%
2	Aldrich Bay Market	71	71	71	11(0)	10(0)	4(0)	15%	14%	6%
3	Apleichau Market	63	63	63	1(0)	0(0)	2(0)	2%	0%	3%
4	Bowrington Road Market	296	296	296	2(0)	10(0)	14(14)	1%	3%	5%
5	Causeway Bay Market	51	51	51	1(0)	1(0)	1(1)	2%	2%	2%
6	Centre Street Market	46	46	46	7(5)	10(5)	10(5)	15%	22%	22%
7	Chai Wan Kok Cooked Food Market	32	32	32	2(2)	2(2)	2(2)	6%	6%	6%
8	Chai Wan Market	173	173	174	9(0)	9(0)	8(0)	5%	5%	5%
9	Cheung Chau Cooked Food Market	17	17	17	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0%	0%	0%
10	Cheung Chau Market	237	240	240	0(0)	5(0)	5(3)	0%	2%	2%
11	Cheung Sha Wan Cooked Food Market	28	28	28	16(16)	16(16)	17(17)	57%	57%	61%
12	Cheung Tat Road Cooked Food Market	12	12	12	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0%	0%	0%
13	Choi Hung Road Market	116	116	116	30(28)	36(36)	38(38)	26%	31%	33%
14	Electric Road Market	99	99	99	5(0)	3(0)	3(0)	5%	3%	3%
15	Fa Yuen Street Market	180	180	180	0(0)	0(0)	3(1)	0%	0%	2%
16	Fo Tan (East) Cooked Food Market	24	24	24	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0%	0%	0%
17	Fo Tan (West) Cooked Food Market	15	15	15	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0%	0%	0%
18	Haiphong Road Temporary Market	88	88	86	30(30)	30(30)	26(14)	34%	34%	30%
19	Heung Che Street Market	223	223	225	9(9)	10(8)	5(5)	4%	4%	2%
20	Hung Cheung Cooked Food Market	11	11	11	0(0)	1(0)	0(0)	0%	9%	0%
21	Hung Hom Market	224	224	224	0(0)	0(0)	3(1)	0%	0%	1%
22	Hung Shui Kiu Market	215	174	172	135 (133)	44(38)	58(37)	63%	25%	34%
23	Java Road Market	194	194	194	7(0)	9(0)	10(3)	4%	5%	5%
24	Ka Ting Cooked Food Market	16	16	15	5(0)	6(0)	6(6)	31%	38%	40%
25	Kam Tin Market	41	41	41	0(0)	1(0)	0(0)	0%	2%	0%
26	Kik Yeung Road Cooked Food Market	14	14	14	1(0)	0(0)	0(0)	7%	0%	0%
27	Kin Wing Cooked Food Market	17	17	17	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0%	0%	0%
28	Kin Yip Street Cooked Food Market	14	14	14	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0%	0%	0%

Serial No.	Name of Market@	No. of stalls			No. of Vacant Stalls (of which frozen#) as at 31 December			Vacancy rate* as at 31 December		
		2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
29	Kowloon City Market	581	581	581	11(0)	1(0)	3(0)	2%	0%	1%
30	Kut Shing Street Cooked Food Market	11	11	11	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0%	0%	0%
31	Kwai Shun Street Cooked Food Market	12	12	11	1(0)	2(0)	1(1)	8%	17%	9%
32	Kwu Tung Market Shopping Centre	98	98	98	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0%	0%	0%
33	Kwun Chung Market	218	218	218	3(2)	5(2)	18(5)	1%	2%	8%
34	Kwun Tong Ferry Concourse Cooked Food Market	29	29	29	0(0)	0(0)	1(1)	0%	0%	3%
35	Lai Wan Market	42	42	42	1(0)	1(0)	1(1)	2%	2%	2%
36	Lam Tei Market	7	7	7	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0%	0%	0%
37	Lau Fau Shan Market	25	25	25	3(3)	3(3)	3(3)	12%	12%	12%
38	Lei Yue Mun Market	20	20	20	2(0)	0(0)	0(0)	10%	0%	0%
39	Lockhart Road Market	166	166	166	28(0)	34(0)	38(38)	17%	20%	23%
40	Luen Wo Hui Market	338	338	338	2(0)	3(0)	0(0)	1%	1%	0%
41	Mong Kok Cooked Food Market	14	14	14	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0%	0%	0%
42	Mui Wo Cooked Food Market	20	20	20	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0%	0%	0%
43	Mui Wo Market	35	35	35	1(0)	1(0)	0(0)	3%	3%	0%
44	Nam Long Shan Road Cooked Food Market	28	28	28	3(3)	4(3)	5(3)	11%	14%	18%
45	Ngau Chi Wan Market	402	402	402	27(0)	30(0)	41(16)	7%	7%	10%
46	Ngau Tau Kok Market	466	466	466	64(58)	59(58)	61(59)	14%	13%	13%
47	North Kwai Chung Market	222	222	222	4(0)	1(0)	6(0)	2%	0%	3%
48	North Point Market	42	42	42	1(0)	0(0)	3(0)	2%	0%	7%
49	On Ching Road Flower Market	13	13	13	0(0)	1(0)	0(0)	0%	8%	0%
50	Pei Ho Street Market	227	227	234	0(0)	4(0)	2(2)	0%	2%	1%
51	Peng Chau Market	18	18	18	1(0)	0(0)	1(0)	6%	0%	6%
52	Plover Cove Road Market	244	244	244	7(0)	10(0)	19(0)	3%	4%	8%
53	Po On Road Market	449	449	449	16(0)	31(1)	48(48)	4%	7%	11%
54	Quarry Bay Market	113	113	113	9(0)	20(0)	28(27)	8%	18%	25%
55	Queen Street Cooked Food Market	11	11	11	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0%	0%	0%

Serial No.	Name of Market@	No. of stalls			No. of Vacant Stalls (of which frozen#) as at 31 December			Vacancy rate* as at 31 December		
		2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
56	Sai Kung Market	209	209	209	2(0)	2(0)	11(0)	1%	1%	5%
57	Sai Wan Ho Market	274	274	274	4(0)	7(0)	8(0)	1%	3%	3%
58	Sai Ying Pun Market	102	102	102	11(7)	11(7)	11(9)	11%	11%	11%
59	San Hui Market	324	324	324	0(0)	3(0)	5(0)	0%	1%	2%
60	Sha Tau Kok Market	66	66	66	0(0)	1(0)	1(0)	0%	2%	2%
61	Sha Tin Market	172	172	172	0(0)	3(0)	3(0)	0%	2%	2%
62	Sham Tseng Temporary Market	29	29	29	0(0)	3(3)	3(3)	0%	10%	10%
63	Shek Tong Tsui Market	151	151	151	9(0)	3(0)	8(8)	6%	2%	5%
64	Shek Wu Hui Market	392	392	393	1(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0%	0%	0%
65	Sheung Fung Street Market	71	71	71	1(0)	0(0)	1(0)	1%	0%	1%
66	Sheung Wan Market	222	222	223	3(0)	1(0)	3(0)	1%	0%	1%
67	Shui Wo Street Market	302	302	302	2(0)	0(0)	2(1)	1%	0%	1%
68	Smithfield Market	216	216	216	0(0)	0(0)	1(0)	0%	0%	0%
69	Stanley Waterfront Mart	20	20	20	2(0)	1(0)	1(0)	10%	5%	5%
70	Sze Shan Street Cooked Food Market	17	17	17	2(0)	0(0)	2(2)	12%	0%	12%
71	Tai Kiu Market	379	379	379	8(0)	3(0)	12(0)	2%	1%	3%
72	Tai Kok Tsui Market	135	135	135	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0%	0%	0%
73	Tai O Market	26	26	26	3(0)	0(0)	4(0)	12%	0%	15%
74	Tai Po Hui Market	313	313	313	2(0)	2(0)	1(0)	1%	1%	0%
75	Tai Shing Street Market	446	442	442	21(16)	23(22)	29(29)	5%	5%	7%
76	Tai Tong Road Cooked Food Market	18	18	18	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0%	0%	0%
77	Tai Wai Market	195	195	195	22(22)	23(23)	28(28)	11%	12%	14%
78	Tai Yuen Street Cooked Food Market	20	20	20	4(0)	9(3)	13(13)	20%	45%	65%
79	Tang Lung Chau Market	34	34	34	1(1)	2(1)	2(2)	3%	6%	6%
80	Tin Wan Market	180	180	180	0(0)	0(0)	6(0)	0%	0%	3%
81	Tokwawan Market	267	267	267	2(1)	5(1)	3(2)	1%	2%	1%
82	Tsing Yeung Cooked Food Market	18	18	18	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0%	0%	0%
83	Tsing Yi Market	76	76	76	7(0)	0(0)	1(0)	9%	0%	1%

Serial No.	Name of Market@	No. of stalls			No. of Vacant Stalls (of which frozen#) as at 31 December			Vacancy rate* as at 31 December		
		2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
84	Tsuen Wan Market	381	381	381	25 (25)	27 (25)	38(38)	7%	7%	10%
85	Tsun Yip Cooked Food Market	56	56	56	0(0)	0(0)	4(4)	0%	0%	7%
86	Tui Min Hoi Market	34	34	34	0(0)	5(0)	14(14)	0%	15%	41%
87	Tung Chau Street Temporary Market	359	359	359	178 (177)	212 (212)	238 (238)	50%	59%	66%
88	Tung Yick Market	446	446	446	259 (258)	262 (258)	262 (262)	58%	59%	59%
89	Tung Yuen Street Cooked Food Market	8	8	8	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0%	0%	0%
90	Wanchai Market	50	50	50	0(0)	2(0)	1(0)	0%	4%	2%
91	Wing Fong Street Market	112	112	112	8(0)	9(0)	2(0)	7%	8%	2%
92	Wo Yi Hop Road Cooked Food Market	18	18	18	1(0)	0(0)	0(0)	6%	0%	0%
93	Wong Nai Chung Market	69	69	69	2(0)	1(0)	2(2)	3%	1%	3%
94	Yan Oi Market	108	108	108	2(0)	3(0)	2(0)	2%	3%	2%
95	Yau Ma Tei Market	144	144	144	2(0)	6(0)	9(6)	1%	4%	6%
96	Yee On Street Market	65	65	65	3(0)	1(0)	1(0)	5%	2%	2%
97	Yeung Uk Road Market	318	318	318	7(7)	8(8)	7(7)	2%	3%	2%
98	Yue Kwong Road Market	197	197	197	0(0)	3(0)	6(0)	0%	2%	3%
99	Yue Wan Market	374	374	380	13(0)	22(0)	18(0)	3%	6%	5%

Remarks:

@ The information in respect of two public markets is not included as they have been closed since 28.2.2018.

Including the number of vacant stalls that are frozen for reasons such as forthcoming improvement works.

* Vacancy rate is the percentage of stalls not leased versus the total number of stalls in a market. The degree of active business operation of leased stalls is diverse.

- End -

Source: *Extracted from Reply Serial No. FHB(FE)305 of Replies to initial written questions raised by Finance Committee Members in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2018-19*

食物安全及環境衛生事務委員會
研究公眾街市事宜小組委員會

在2018年7月10日會議上
就議程項目I "有關公眾街市的定位及管理事宜及街市現代化計劃"
通過的議案

就有關公眾街市的定位及管理事宜及街市現代化計劃，本小組委員會促請政府：

1. 全面檢討街市的使用率、缺乏空調等問題，並盡快提交街市現代化計劃的時間表，及早令各街市租戶及市民受惠；
2. 責成有關官員與各街市持份者溝通安裝冷氣事宜，例如為出售肉類的攤檔安裝封閉式冷氣，蔬果乾貨等攤檔則按實際情況而定；
3. 研究於街市長期空置的地方設置花圃、健身中心、公營診所等，以地盡其用；及
4. 就恢復街市養貓的政策諮詢各街市持份者，以期改善鼠患問題。

動議人：蔣麗芸議員, SBS, JP

(Translation)

**Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene
Subcommittee on Issues Relating to Public Markets**

**Motion passed under agenda item I
"Issues relating to the positioning and management of public markets and
the Market Modernization Programme"
at the meeting on 10 July 2018**

That, on issues relating to the positioning and management of public markets and the Market Modernization Programme ("MMP"), this Subcommittee urges the Government to:

1. conduct a comprehensive review on issues such as the utilization rate of markets and the lack of air-conditioning ("A/C") systems therein, and expeditiously submit a timetable for implementing MMP, with a view to benefiting the tenants of various markets and the public as early as possible;
2. instruct the officials concerned to communicate with the stakeholders of various markets on matters relating to the installation of A/C systems such as the installation of closed A/C systems for meat stalls and depending on the actual circumstances, for stalls selling vegetables, fruits and dried goods;
3. conduct a study on setting up planters, gym centres, public clinics, etc. in markets where there are space that has been left vacant for a long period of time, with a view to fully utilizing land resources; and
4. consult the stakeholders of various markets on a policy of re-allowing the keeping of cats in markets, with a view to alleviating rodent problem.

Moved by: Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, SBS, JP

**Relevant papers on
Vacancy situations in public markets and related issues**

Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene ("FSEH Panel")	11.11.2008 (Item IV)	Agenda Minutes
Subcommittee on Issues Relating to Public Markets	25.9.2015*	Report of the Subcommittee to FSEH Panel
Subcommittee on Issues Relating to Public Markets	10.4.2018 (Item I)	Agenda Minutes
	12.6.2018 (Item I and II)	Agenda Minutes
	10.7.2018 (Item I)	Agenda Minutes
	6.11.2018 (Item III)	Agenda

* Issue date