

**Confirmed Minutes of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Meeting  
of the Waste Management Subcommittee  
on Tuesday, 10 October 2023 at 10:00 a.m.**

**Present:**

Prof Dan TSANG (Chairman)  
Ms Carmen CHAN, BBS, JP  
Dr Sylvia CHAN, MH  
Ms Ada FUNG, BBS  
Mr Eric HO  
Ms Linda HO  
Prof Dennis LEUNG  
Dr Raymond YAU  
Dr William YU  
Ms Karen CHEK (Secretary)

**Absent with Apologies:**

Mr Alex KWAN  
Prof Alexis LAU, JP  
Mr Simon NG  
Ms Christina TANG  
Dr WONG Kwok-yan, MH

**In Attendance:**

Mr Bruno LUK, JP	Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (Waste Reduction), Environmental Protection Department (EPD)
Dr Vanessa AU	Assistant Director (Waste Reduction), EPD
Ms Theresa WU	Assistant Director (Municipal Solid Waste Charging), EPD
Mr Ray LEE	Assistant Director (Environmental Infrastructure) (Acting), EPD
Miss Sally SHEK	Executive Officer (CBD) 1, Environment and Ecology Bureau (EEB)
Miss Avynn WONG	Executive Officer (CBD) 2, EEB

\*\*\*\*\*

Action

The Chairman welcomed Members for attending the meeting, and informed them that apologies of absence had been received from Mr Alex Kwan, Prof Alexis Lau, Mr Simon Ng, Ms Christina Tang and Dr Wong Kwok-yan.

**Item 1 : Confirmation of the draft minutes of the 42<sup>nd</sup> meeting held on 1 June 2023**

2. The draft minutes of the last meeting were confirmed without any proposed amendments.

**Item 2 : Matters arising**

3. There were no matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting.

**Item 3 : Implementation of Municipal Solid Waste Charging**  
*(ACE-WM Paper 2/2023)*

4. The Chairman invited Members to refer to *ACE-WM Paper 2/2023* which briefed Members on the implementation strategy and progress of various preparatory work of municipal solid waste (MSW) charging, the proposal on free distribution of designated bags (DBs), as well as the proposed adjustments to charging levels of construction waste disposal.

5. The Chairman declared that he was currently the Chairman of the Hong Kong Waste Management Association. Two Members declared that they were involved in various MSW charging-related projects in collaboration with EPD. One of the two Members added that her organisation was one of the recycling store operators. The meeting agreed that the above Members could stay to participate in the discussion.

6. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Bruno Luk briefed Members on the MSW charging mechanism and implementation plan, as well as other waste reduction and recycling initiatives.

*Implementation of MSW Charging*

7. Members were appreciative of the implementation progress of MSW charging and other ongoing waste reduction initiatives of EPD. With reference to a Member's question on the achievement targets of MSW charging, Mr Bruno Luk indicated that the Government aimed at achieving the overall targets set out in the Waste Blueprint for Hong Kong 2035, which was to gradually reduce the per capita

MSW disposal rate by 40% to 45% and increase MSW recovery rate to about 55% through the implementation of MSW charging and other waste reduction and recycling initiatives.

8. In response to a Member's enquiry on the charging mechanism, Ms Theresa Wu explained that premised on the "polluter-pays" principle, MSW charges would be levied by either charging through purchasing and using DBs, or designated labels (DLs) (if the waste could not fit into the DBs), or charging by weight-based gate-fee (applicable to largely over-sized waste or waste which was irregular in shape generated from commercial and industrial premises to be disposed of at landfills). The property management companies (PMCs) might liaise with the occupants and choose to adopt any of the above charging modes based on their waste disposal needs. Mr Bruno Luk supplemented that the DBs came in 11 sizes, ranging from \$0.3 to \$73 each depending on the size. All retailers must follow the prescribed selling price of DBs and DLs as stipulated in the schedules of the relevant ordinance.

9. Two Members asked for the operational details for PMCs and cleansing contractors (including those for residential and commercial premises) to purchase DBs and DLs. Mr Bruno Luk replied that the Government was considering to offer a service fee to cover the additional expenses incurred by the PMCs, cleansing or security contractors for selling DBs and DLs. While EPD had issued various Best Practice Guides on the frontline operational arrangements for different trades, the Government would defer to the PMCs, cleansing contractors and the owners' organisations to work out the operational arrangements which best suited their needs.

### *Compliance and Enforcement*

10. Four Members were concerned about the potential non-compliant cases in particular in private residential estates and open spaces in public areas. Mr Bruno Luk explained that the Government would focus more on publicity and public education during the initial six-month phasing-in period. He indicated that the Government would closely monitor the compliance situation and suitably take enforcement actions on non-complaint cases if the nature or magnitude of the offence called for such actions. One of the above Members was worried that the PMCs might put away the recycling bins to avoid additional MSW charges arising from misuse of the bins as trash bins. Mr Luk shared that the Government planned to require by legislation next year PMCs or owner's organisations of private residential

buildings to set up a system in the buildings to collect separated recyclables from residents.

11. A Member was worried that there might be serious non-compliant cases, such as dumping of construction waste, in the rural areas as many of the refuse collection points for rural villages were at remote locations without surveillance. Ms Theresa Wu said that villagers might consider establishing their own patrol teams and report non-compliant cases to EPD for follow-up actions. EPD would gather relevant intelligence and draw up a list of black spots for regular inspection and enforcement.

12. Addressing a Member's enquiry on the need to put in place more stringent surveillance or control measures, Mr Bruno Luk responded that the Government would closely monitor the compliance situation, in particular at the beginning of the implementation of MSW charging and consider appropriate follow-up actions. He stressed that experiences of other places showed that it would take time for the public to change their waste disposal behaviour and thus intensive and strict enforcement actions during the early stage might not be the best approach.

13. A Member pointed out that refuse chutes were set up for the collection and disposal of wastes in places like shopping malls and the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks, which made it difficult to trace the source of any non-compliant cases. He suggested that the Government might explore the use of technology to monitor the compliance situation. With reference to the practice of Public Rental Housing (PRH) estates where only the cleansing contractors could access the refuse chutes, Mr Bruno Luk remarked that venues like shopping malls might have to review the existing operation and consider the appropriate measures to better manage the waste disposal arrangements for handling non-compliant cases.

#### *Food Waste Recycling*

14. On questions about the capacity and end-product of food waste treatment facilities, Mr Bruno Luk advised that O · PARK1 could handle about 250 tonnes of food waste daily while O · PARK2 (expected to commence operation in 2024) could treat about 300 tonnes daily. The treated food waste could be used as compost for agricultural purpose or for electricity generation.

15. Two Members were of the view that there was a lack of food waste collection facilities for the general public. One of the two Members suggested that EPD should explore ways to minimise waste generation from takeaway services. Mr Bruno Luk remarked that the Government had introduced a new legislation to prohibit the provision of disposable plastic tableware for both dine-in and takeaway customers by phases, subject to the availability and affordability of the non-plastic alternatives. For the time being, the public was encouraged to recycle the cleaned plastic tableware as far as practicable.

16. A Member suggested that smart recycling bins with odour control technology should be used to replace the traditional food waste collection bins such as those currently placed in the alleys. Mr Bruno Luk explained that smart recycling bins with automatic open and closure functions and odour control technology were currently deployed in the Trial Scheme on Food Waste Collection in PRH estates. He explained that it might not be suitable to install such bins in the alleys considering their need of electricity supply and the large volume of food waste to be collected from street-level restaurants. Mr Luk confirmed Members' understanding that hard materials like large pork or beef bones were not to be disposed of in the smart recycling bins.

17. A Member suggested that the Government should share with the public the lessons learnt in previous trial projects and community involvement projects related to MSW charging with a view to facilitating recycling. For example, the Government could help source or provide information on the appropriate reusable containers for storing and disposing of food waste.

#### *Community Recycling Network*

18. Two Members pointed out that the community recycling facilities were inadequate in some residential areas such as Kowloon Tong and Mid-levels. They suggested increasing the frequency of the existing mobile recycling spots to cover also the weekends. Mr Bruno Luk said that EPD would continue to expand the community recycling network with the hope that all Hong Kong residents would have access to a recycling facility, including mobile recycling spots, within a 10-minute walk. With the new bill to be introduced next year, all PMCs or owner's organisations of private residential buildings would be required to provide recycling bins to collect recyclables from residents for proper handling. This would facilitate

residents in practicing clean recycling. One of the two Members remarked that EPD should strengthen the publicity efforts to keep the public informed of the recycling facilities available.

19. To help minimise waste generation in the first place, a Member opined that the Government could encourage the return of glass and plastic beverage containers to the suppliers or retailers for reuse through the provision of rebate to consumers. Mr Bruno Luk responded that the Producer Responsibility Scheme (PRS) on glass beverage containers had been implemented to encourage the recovery and reuse of glass beverage containers. For plastic beverage containers, the PRS to be introduced would encourage further recovery. Responding to another Member's question, Dr Vanessa Au indicated that yard waste such as trees and plants could be disposed of and recycled at Y·PARK in Tuen Mun.

#### *Publicity and Public Education*

20. A Member highlighted the importance of publicity and public education which should be tailor-made to fit different targets. Another Member reminded that the Government should not neglect the new immigrants and the non-local tertiary and post-graduate students. Mr Bruno Luk agreed with the two Members and indicated that EPD would tailor-made as far as possible the publicity materials for different target groups. Ms Theresa Wu added that the District Service and Community Care Teams of the Home Affairs Department would help promote MSW charging during their household visits at the district level.

21. Highlighting that there was a lack of awareness of the importance of clean recycling, in particular for plastic beverage containers, two Members suggested that the Government should strengthen the relevant public education. Mr Bruno Luk indicated that clean recycling for plastic beverage bottles had been a challenge as such drinks were usually consumed on-the-go. He hoped that the PRS on Plastic Beverage Containers and Beverage Cartons to be introduced in 2025 would help encourage the public to properly recycle those containers.

22. On a Member's enquiry about the publicity strategy and another Member's suggested inclusion of a message on reducing the number and size of garbage bags in the publicity campaign, Mr Bruno Luk responded that the publicity campaign would be rolled out in three phases. The initial phase of the publicity campaign

would focus on promulgating the implementation date of MSW charging and the message of “Recycle More, Dump Less, Save More”, which reflected the policy objectives of encouraging the public to reduce waste at source and to practise clean recycling with a view to reducing the overall amount of waste disposal. At later phases, more implementation details such as the charging mechanism and sales network of the DBs and DLs would be included.

#### *Charging Levels of Construction Waste Disposal*

23. In response to a Member's question on the charging levels of construction waste disposal, Mr Bruno Luk explained that the charging level at landfills was the highest while that of the public fill reception facilities was the lowest. The difference in charging levels of construction waste disposal was meant to provide financial incentives to encourage construction waste producers to reduce and sort their waste, which has proven to be an effective means in promoting waste reduction and recycling at source. With the implementation of MSW charging, the landfill charge for construction waste would be increased to align with the gate-fee of MSW disposed of at the landfills to prevent any deliberate mixing of MSW and construction waste due to the difference in charging level.

24. A Member was pleased to share with Members that the EPD contractor responsible for the construction project of “I-Park - openBIM Application in Hong Kong Integrated Waste Management Facilities Phase 1 (IWMF) - Construction” had been awarded the buildingSMART openBIM® Awards 2023. She encouraged EPD to keep up the good efforts in promoting green building.

#### *Conclusion*

25. The Chairman thanked the subject team for the detailed presentation and invited the Government representatives to consider the suggestions of Members. He invited EPD to update Members of the progress after the implementation of MSW charging and the various waste management initiatives next year.

#### **Item 4 : Any other business**

26. There was no other business for discussion at the meeting.

**Item 5 : Date of next meeting**

27. Members will be advised on the date and agenda for the next meeting in due course.

28. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 11:55 a.m.

**Waste Management Subcommittee Secretariat  
December 2023**