

Advisory Council on the Environment
Waste Management Subcommittee
Notes of the Ninth Meeting
Held on 6 July 2006 at 2:30 pm

Present

Professor Poon Chi-sun	(Chairman)
Dr. Ng Cho-nam	
Mrs Ng Fong Siu-mei	
Mr. Tsang Kam-lam	
Mr. Raymond Fan	Deputy Director of Environmental Protection
Mr. Tang Kin-fai	Assistant Director of Environmental Protection
Dr. Lawrence Wong	Principal Environmental Protection Officer, EPD
Mr. Patrick Lei	Principal Environmental Protection Officer, EPD
Dr. Cherie Lee	Environmental Protection Officer, EPD
Mr. K.S. Wong	Chief Health Inspector, FEHD [For agenda item 3]
Ms. Sandy Cheung	Senior Administrative Officer, EPD [For agenda item 4]
Mr. Te Chi-wang	(Secretary)

Absent with apologies

Mr. James R. Graham
Professor Ho Kin-chung
Professor Howard Huang
Ms. Iris Tam
Professor Wong Tze-wai

Action

Agenda Item 1: Confirmation of Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the eighth meeting held on 6 April 2006 were confirmed without amendment.

Agenda Item 2: Matters Arising

Letters to Funding Schemes and Trade Associations

2. Members endorsed the draft letters without amendments.

[Post-meeting note: The letters were issued on 6 July 2006.]

Agenda Item 3: Waste Collection Service (Paper WMSC 5/06)

3. Mr. K S Wong gave a presentation on the waste collection service provided by the FEHD. A Member suggested that refuse collection vehicles (RCVs) should be equipped with separate compartments to collect recyclables. The Member also suggested that the cleansers of FEHD should not only focus on waste collection, but also on resource recovery. Mr. Wong responded that under the current 3-colored recycling bin system, recyclables were collected through a contract let out by FEHD (except those in public and private housing estates). The contractor had to collect and deliver those recyclables to recyclers. The idea of equipping RCV's with compartments for recyclables could be explored in the longer term.

FEHD

4. Regarding the 3-colored recycling bins, the Chairman suggested that the recycling bins and the rubbish bins should be put together for the convenience of the public. A Member added that the design and size of the recycling bins could be improved to cater for the different usage patterns. Another Member also suggested that the collection frequency of recyclables from the 3-colored recycling bins could be improved to avoid over-flow. Mr. Wong thanked members for their suggestions, but noted that the placement of 3-colored recycling bins was very much subject to site constraint in some locations, especially those with heavy pedestrian flow. Besides, it was already a practice that a litter container would be provided near to the 3-colored recycling bins for convenience of the public. FEHD would consider requests from the public/organizations/government departments for provision of additional recycling bins for different locations.

Agenda Item 4: Public Education Plan for the “Policy Framework” (Paper WMSC 6/06)

5. The Secretary introduced the paper, which summarized the views expressed at the brainstorming session in June and proposed a public education plan for members’ consideration. Mr. Raymond Fan added that the public education plan would closely tie in with the implementation timetable of the key policy initiatives in the Policy Framework. Members suggested that dedicated funding should be sought from the Environment and Conservation Fund (ECF) to implement the public education plan. A Member added that projects under the public education plan should be more sustainable and longer term in nature. More flexibility should be allowed for project operation and implementation. Ms. Sandy Cheung noted that there were some precedents where the ECF set aside a lump sum for specific purposes, and similar arrangement could be explored. Mr. Fan said that the Secretariat would prepare a paper to seek dedicated funding from the ECF. The paper would set out the objectives of the public education, the vetting mechanism and the funding guides for Members’ consideration.

EPD

Agenda Item 5: Planning and Development of the Integrated Waste Management Facilities (Paper WMSC 7/06)

6. Mr. Patrick Lei briefly introduced the paper, which set out the proposed scale and technology mix for conducting a site search for the construction of the Integrated Waste Management Facilities (IWMF). Mr. Fan emphasized that we needed to go ahead with the site search given our imminent waste problem, and the proposed scale was generally in line with the projection of our waste generation. A Member expressed reservation on the proposed capacity of the facilities, noting that our emphasis should be put on waste reduction, recovery and recycling. Mr. Fan responded that a modular approach would be adopted and the capacity would be generally matched with the actual amount of waste to be handled. The Subcommittee generally agreed with the proposed planning parameters for the site search exercise.

Agenda Item 6: Trial Scheme on Municipal Solid Waste Charging (Paper WMSC 8/06)

7. Mr. Lei introduced the paper, which set out the details of the trial scheme on municipal solid waste (MSW) charging. Mr. Fan added that the main objective of the trial scheme was to understand the logistics of a variable rate charging system. We would also take the opportunity to study the feasibility of food waste separation. Members suggested that positive incentive could perhaps be included in the trial scheme to resemble the effect of charging. Mr. Lei responded that the inclusion of positive incentive might complicate the trial scheme as it might not be a good proxy of MSW charging. The Subcommittee agreed with the proposed trial scheme.

Agenda Item 7: Progress of Key Initiatives in the “Policy Framework” (Paper WMSC 9/06)

8. Members noted the progress made for the key initiatives in the Policy Framework. The Chairman suggested that public education efforts could be separately reported. Secretary

Agenda Item 8: Any other business

9. The Chairman raised a question on our waste recycling statistics. Dr. Lawrence Wong explained that the statistics were based on the data compiled by the Census & Statistic Department and the figures obtained from waste collectors and recyclers in our annual surveys. Our methodology was similar to that of other countries, and provided a reliable indicator of our recycling performance.

Agenda Item 9: Date of next meeting

10. The next meeting would be scheduled in due course.