

**Advisory Council on the Environment
Waste Management Subcommittee**

Notes of the 35th Meeting held on 29 January 2016

Present

Prof Jonathan WONG (Chairman)

Prof FUNG Tung

Dr HUNG Wing-tat

Ir Prof Irene LO

Mr Anthony LOCK

Ir MA Lee-tak

Miss Yolanda NG

Dr Carrie WILLIS

Mr Luther WONG

Ir Conrad WONG

Mr Stanley WONG

Mr Niki KWOK (Secretary)

Absent with Apologies

Ms Pansy YAU

In Attendance

Mr Donald NG Deputy Director of Environmental Protection

Mr Howard CHAN Deputy Director of Environmental Protection - for
Agenda item 4

Mr Samson LAI Assistant Director of Environmental Protection
(Waste Management Policy)

Mr George NG Senior Statistician

Mr Ronald MAK Statistician

Miss Bonnie MAN Administrative Officer
(Special Duties Division)

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Agenda Item 1: Confirmation of Minutes of Last Meeting

1. The minutes of the 34th meeting held on 11 September 2015 was confirmed as circulated without amendment.

Agenda Item 2: Matters Arising

2. There was no matter arising.

**Agenda Item 3: Review of Construction Waste Disposal
Charging Scheme (Paper WMSC 01/2016)**

3. A Member declared his interest in a local construction company. The Chairman ruled that he might continue to participate in this discussion of the agenda item.
4. Upon the Chairman's invitation, Mr Donald NG briefed members on the review and Mr Samson LAI took members through a PowerPoint presentation.
5. A Member inquired whether the Government would consider other monitoring and enforcement tools, in addition to mandating the use of global positing system ("GPS") technology to track waste collection vehicles.
6. Mr Donald NG advised that EPD completed a trial using surveillance cameras at selected black spots where fly-tipping of construction waste was repeatedly reported. As for GPS, CEDD was conducting a pilot trial. Subject to the successful completion of the trial and consideration of relevant legal implications, EPD would consider mandating the use of GPS technology in construction waste collection vehicles through suitable legislative amendments.

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7. A Member acknowledged the need to revise the disposal charges, but opined that the trade, especially the contractors, should be briefed of the latest proposals as soon as possible.
8. On the proposed charging level, a Member considered that it was not high enough to reflect the environmental cost. A Member opined that a better option was to set the sorting charge at full cost recovery and the other two charges at an above-cost level so as to maintain the differential for encouraging sorting. Other Members echoed that the charging scheme would be meaningful only if the charging level could provide sufficient economic incentive to promote waste reduction.
9. In response, Mr Donald NG said that the proposed charging level were set having regard to the established government fees and charges policy as well as the “polluter-pays” principle, hence the proposed landfill charge and public fill charge were set to achieve full cost recovery whereas the sorting charge at cost recovery rate of about 66% so as to maintain a differential against landfill charges for promoting the use of sorting facilities. The proposed increase would help sustain an economic incentive for the trade to take further steps in reducing waste or boosting the recovery of reusable fill materials.
10. Mr Samson LAI supplemented that how an environmental cost element might be derived would likely be highly complicated. Charging above full cost would also require explicit statutory authorization.
11. On the promotion of reuse and recycling of construction materials, a Member suggested that the trade should be given sufficient information, such as the technical specification of the recycled construction materials, so as to facilitate better planning during the design phase. A Member agreed that the lack of clear technical specification could hinder the trade’s interest in using recycled construction materials.

12. Mr Samson LAI said that EPD and DEVB had been working with Construction Industry Council (“CIC”) on possible measures to promote reduction of construction waste. It was one of the future directions that more research and development efforts be devoted to the development of technical specifications.
13. A Member asked for the relationship between the landfill charge for construction waste and that for Municipal Solid Waste (“MSW”). In response, Mr Samson LAI said that at present, MSW could be disposed of at landfill free of charge. Based on feedback received during public engagement conducted by the Council for Sustainable Development in respect of MSW charging, the community would find the MSW gate fee at \$400 to \$499 per tonne were acceptable. Mr Donald NG supplemented that as the Government was concurrently making necessary preparation for the implementation of MSW charging, further review on the construction waste disposal charges in the light of the charging principles in respect of the MSW gate fee would be necessary in future.
14. After some deliberation, the Chairman concluded that the Subcommittee noted that the current levels of the construction waste disposal charges had not been revised for some years and supported that the proposed revision would provide the necessary economic incentive for waste reduction at sources. Besides, the Subcommittee suggested that the Government should timely update the trade on latest developments and continue to explore new measures for the promotion of reduction, recycling and reuse of construction waste.

**Agenda Item 4: 2014 Waste Statistics
(Paper WMSC 02/2016)**

15. Upon invitation by the Chairman, Mr George NG gave a presentation on “2014 Waste Statistics”.
16. A Member inquired if further actions would be taken on

waste reduction and recycling.

17. Mr Howard CHAN advised that the Recycling Fund was launched last year aimed to assist the local recycling industry in enhancing their operational standards and productivity. The MSW Charging Scheme in future would provide further economic incentive for waste reduction, separate and recycling. Moreover, the Hong Kong Productivity Council would conduct a study to review and develop suitable technology to promote the use of recycled materials.
18. A Member further inquired on the planning of Producer Responsibility Schemes (“PRS”) and the control on disposal of rechargeable batteries generated from electric vehicles.
19. Mr Donald NG advised that the legislative proposals for the mandatory PRS on waste electrical and electronic equipment (“WEEE”) and glass beverage containers had been introduced to Legislative Council for scrutiny. EPD would keep in view and follow up on the other products in accordance with the Blueprint.
20. Mr Howard CHAN advised that the disposal of rechargeable batteries fell into the voluntary PRS schemes, whereas the processing of waste car batteries in commercial and industrial scale would be regarded as chemical waste under the present regulatory regime.
21. A Member inquired on the details of the methodology in carrying out the annual waste composition survey. Mr George NG explained the sample design, operation procedures and estimation method of the annual waste composition survey for measuring the waste compositions.
22. In response to a Member’s question on the composition of various construction and demolition (“C&D”) materials, Mr George NG responded that composition survey for construction waste, as compared with that for municipal solid waste, will in general be more

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complicated and difficult to conduct particularly in view of the nature, size and sorting method of C&D waste. He added that EPD had once conducted a small scale trial survey in 2012 and found that most construction waste samples mainly comprised of bamboo and wood waste as well as other less valuable inert materials.

23. In conclusion, the Chairman said that the Subcommittee noted the relevant statistics and more efforts might be spared on waste reduction in commercial and industrial sectors in addition to food waste.

Agenda Item 5: Any Other Business

24. There was no other business.

Agenda Item 6: Date of Next Meeting

25. The Secretariat would contact individual members to arrange the next meeting.

**ACE Waste Management Subcommittee
Secretariat
June 2016**