

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)122

(Question Serial No. 0251)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified

Programme: (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer: Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Miss Diane WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Regarding “fixed pitch hawkers” under the indicator “licensed hawkers”, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (the Department) launched the scheme of re-allocation of 435 vacant fixed hawker pitches and issue of new licences in 2019. In this connection,

1. what is the expenditure involved in this scheme? Has the Department reviewed the scheme? If yes, what are the outcomes of the review? If no, what is/are the reason(s)?
2. the new licence issued under the scheme has a validity period of 7 years. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, stall operators are seriously affected and have not been able to operate their business normally for a year. Will the Department consider extending the validity period of the licence for at least 2 years on compassionate grounds? If yes, what are the details? If no, what is/are the reason(s)?
3. will similar scheme be launched again to allow interested parties to apply for hawker licences? If yes, what are the details? If no, what is/are the reason(s)?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Wai-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

- 1.& 3. The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department launched the scheme of Re-allocation of Fixed Hawker Pitches and Issue of New Licences at the end of September 2019. Under the scheme, 435 vacant fixed hawker pitches located at 7 districts were opened for application by persons who were interested in the hawking business and able to meet the required conditions. Successful applicants will operate at the pitches after a licence is granted. The expenditure of the entire scheme is around \$8.29 million. As at 1 March 2021, all vacant pitches under the scheme have been selected, while some of the applicants have yet to collect the licences. The Department is currently following up the licence applications. After completion of the scheme, the Department will review the hawker pitches then vacated and consider how to allocate them and issue new licences.

2. Under the scheme, an operation validity period of 7 years is specified on the fixed-pitch hawker licences for the registered assistant and general public categories to create a positive impact on promoting the turnover of hawker licences, facilitating the turnover of hawker pitches and allowing admission of new traders. Due to the COVID-19 epidemic, the business of stall operators may be affected to varying degrees. In view of this, the Department particularly allows applicants from the registered assistant and general public categories under the scheme to apply for an extension of time for licence collection, and the operation validity period is counted from the date of issue of licence. The applicant can collect the hawker licence at any time within 3 months from the issue of a notification letter by the Department. A number of these applications were approved last year. The Department has no plan to extend the operation validity period of the relevant licences at the moment.

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