

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)161

(Question Serial No. 0441)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

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

Programme: (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

In "Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2021-22", it is mentioned that the Department will follow up proactively the recommendations in the Audit Report released in November 2019 and the Public Accounts Committee report concerned to further enhance the planning, provision and management of public toilets. The Department will also continue to implement the Enhanced Public Toilet Refurbishment Programme to improve the design and facilities of existing public toilets by phases. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. the specific action to be taken to follow up the recommendations, whether additional funding and other resources will be accordingly deployed in 2021-22;
2. the funding allocated to implement Enhanced Public Toilet Refurbishment Programme, and the numbers of toilets refurbished by the end of Feb 2021;
3. the criteria for selecting public toilets which will be considered for improvement;
4. whether the workplace facilities for the cleaning workers will also be improved, to safeguard the occupational safety and health. If yes, of the details. If no, of the reasons;
5. whether the Administration will consider reconstructing some dilapidated public toilets with a large numbers of defective facilities, instead of simply repairing and maintenance.

Asked by: Hon SHEK Lai-him, Abraham (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

1. The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) continues to proactively follow up the recommendations in the Audit Report released in November 2019 and the relevant Public Accounts Committee report. With regard to the proposals of planning for public toilets, FEHD will review its guidelines and criteria on construction and reprovisioning of public toilets. In reviewing the adequacy of public toilet facilities at tourist spots, FEHD will communicate with the Tourism Commission on a regular basis to listen to the views of the industry on the

refurbishment or facelifting works of the public toilets at major tourist spots. In parallel, the procedures of public consultation will be rationalised with best efforts so that works can be carried out on schedule as far as possible. The revamped electronic Contract Management System has been fully implemented since November 2019 to better monitor the management outcome of public toilets. Since March 2020, FEHD has applied the newly developed “Minor Works Order Record System” mobile application to make repair requests to the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) and the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department, as well as to track the progress and enhance the efficiency of repair works. It is also proactively planning to conduct surveys to collect the views of public toilet users and other stakeholders. FEHD will continue to adopt new technology for headcount and review the utilisation rates of public toilets on a regular basis, so as to further enhance the planning, provision and management of public toilets. The expenditure for the review and planning of the above measures will be absorbed by existing resources. Therefore no additional recurrent expenditure will be incurred.

2. It was announced in the 2019-20 Budget that the Government would make an additional allocation of over \$600 million to implement the Enhanced Public Toilet Refurbishment Programme (Enhanced PTRP), under which FEHD would roll out the refurbishment or facelifting works for about 240 public toilets by phases in 5 years starting from 2019-20, so as to improve toilet facilities and the level of hygiene. FEHD has been working closely with ArchSD. In the first year of the programme (2019-20), refurbishment or facelifting projects for 42 public toilets, with a project estimate of about \$168 million, were rolled out. The facelifting or refurbishment works for 22 public toilets have been completed. Refurbishment or facelifting projects for 49 public toilets at a project estimate of about \$149 million commenced in the second year (2020-21). The facelifting works for 20 public toilets have been completed. As at February 2021, FEHD has completed the facelifting or refurbishment works of 42 public toilets under the Enhanced PTRP and the remaining works are underway as planned.
- 3-5. FEHD will prioritise the public toilets for inclusion in the Enhanced PTRP having regard to their utilisation rates, locations, maintenance conditions and the time lapsed since they were constructed or last refurbished, with special attention to those with high utilisation rates and in ageing conditions. There are 2 types of works under the Enhanced PTRP, namely refurbishment and facelifting. New design and layouts will generally be adopted for the refurbishment of public toilets, with beautified facades and modern facilities, with a view to making them hygienic, clean and safe. The refurbishment works may cover exterior design, installations and equipment, materials, ventilation, odour control, lighting, infra-red sensor-activated taps and flushing facilities, etc. FEHD will adjust the scope of the refurbishment of individual toilets having regard to the actual circumstances. The scope of facelifting works does not involve the prevailing layout and mainly includes replacement of aged facilities and installation of new features, repainting of ceiling, replacement of cubicle partitions, wall tiles and floor tiles as well as repainting or replacement of piping, conduits and water pipes, so as to improve the facilities and hygiene level of public toilets. Attendant rooms will be provided or enhanced as far as possible when new toilets are built or existing ones reprovisioned or refurbished, so as to safeguard the occupational safety and health of staff.

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