

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)025

(Question Serial No. 0188)

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 (Ms Irene YOUNG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

It is stated by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department that the provision for 2022-23 under this Programme is \$632.2 million (10.9%) higher than the revised estimate for 2021-22. This is mainly due to new initiatives to strengthen cleansing and refuse collection services. Please provide the details and a breakdown of the estimated expenditure of the new initiatives.

Asked by: Hon SHIU Ka-fai (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

The Financial Secretary announced in the 2022-23 Budget Speech that a total additional funding of \$500 million would be allocated within 2 years for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department to enhance environmental hygiene services, particularly strengthening the street cleansing and refuse collection services, inspections and enforcement actions in response to the epidemic to raise the community's awareness about hygiene.

The estimated expenditure under Programme (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services of the Department for 2022-23 is \$6.4417 billion, an increase of \$632.2 million when compared to the revised estimate of 2021-22. The estimated expenditure for the provision of street cleansing services, management of public toilets and refuse collection services is \$4.975 billion, an increase of \$586 million when compared to the revised estimate of 2021-22.

About \$200 million increase comes from the above additional provision in the Budget that will be used to strengthen law enforcement, street cleansing services, management of public toilets and refuse collection services in various districts. Specifically, the Department plans to increase the number of dedicated enforcement teams (DETs) from 40 to 60 in this year so as to strengthen law enforcement. DETs will convey environmental hygiene messages in the community to educate the public about the proper ways for disposal of refuse. The Department will, taking into account the situation of illegal deposit of refuse in various districts, deploy additional manpower to clean up refuse and waste as well as extend the opening hours of some refuse collection points to meet the demand at midnight or in the early

morning. The Department will also recruit additional toilet attendants to enhance public toilet management service, and try out a new approach of dedicated contracts under which public toilet management service will be procured separately in one of the districts upon renewal of its street cleansing services contract.

The remaining increase of about \$386 million is mainly due to higher outsourcing contract prices and other rising costs.

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