

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

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(Question Serial No. 2416)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

With regard to implementing the trial scheme to enable licensed food business to properly store refuse pending collection at rear lanes, please advise this Committee of:

1. the manpower and estimated expenditure involved in the trial scheme;
2. the effectiveness of the trial scheme since its implementation;
3. the number of complaints received about the environmental hygiene of rear lanes and the number of enforcement actions taken since the implementation of the trial scheme; and
4. whether the Department will regularly review the effectiveness of the scheme and extend it to cover the rear lanes in other districts; if yes, the details; if no, the reason(s).

Asked by: Hon LI Sai-wing, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)

Reply:

1. The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department has launched a trial scheme for 9 rear lanes in various districts since November 2022. Under the scheme, licensed food premises are allowed to place 240-litre refuse bins labelled with their shop signs in their connected rear lanes under specific conditions for temporary storage of refuse pending collection by the cleaning workers hired by them. The aim is to improve the environmental hygiene of the rear lanes and contain rodent infestation. The work involved is undertaken by staff of the respective District Environmental Hygiene Offices without additional manpower provided. The Department provided 240-litre refuse bins to the food premises at the early stage of the trial scheme, and the expenditure is around \$24,400.
2. The operation of the trial scheme has been generally smooth since its implementation. With the co-operation of the licensees of the food premises and under the supervision of

our staff, the hygiene conditions of the rear lanes concerned have improved with fewer problems of refuse accumulation, making it more difficult for rodents to find food and harbourage. The overall results of the trial scheme are satisfactory.

3. At the early stage of the trial scheme, our staff issued a fixed penalty notice to a staff member of one of the licensed food premises for discharging sewage at a rear lane. Verbal warning was also given to the food premises requiring rectification of the irregularity. The Department does not keep a separate breakdown of the number of complaints received about the rear lanes concerned.
4. The overall results of the trial scheme are satisfactory. The Department is refining its implementation details. It is expected that the trial scheme will be extended to cover more rear lanes in other districts in the second quarter of 2023.

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