

LCQ17: Market Modernisation Programme

Following is a question by Ir Dr the Hon Lo Wai-kwok and a written reply by the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, in the Legislative Council today (September 8):

Question:

The Government announced in February 2018 that \$2 billion would be earmarked for launching a 10-year Market Modernisation Programme (MMP) to improve the facilities of public markets (markets) under the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it will conduct a comprehensive review on the extent of difficulty in and urgency for carrying out modernisation works for the various markets as well as on the development potentials of such markets, and set the priorities and timetable for carrying out related works for the various markets, with a view to speeding up the progress and ensuring that such works can be completed within 10 years; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) whether it will assess afresh the estimated expenditure of MMP, and seek approval from this Council for supplementary provisions as early as possible when necessary; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) whether, in order to dovetail with modernised markets for maximising their effectiveness, the Government will step up publicity and education efforts among stall operators and patrons of markets about maintaining the hygiene of markets, so as to build a new culture on using markets; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

The Government announced in the 2018-19 Budget that \$2 billion would be earmarked for implementing a 10-year Market Modernisation Programme (MMP) to improve the facilities in public markets under the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD). The MMP aims to improve the operating environment of public markets, thereby facilitating tenants' business operation and, at the same time, providing market patrons with a more pleasant shopping environment.

My reply to the question raised by the Member is as follows –

(1) and (2) In identifying suitable markets for the implementation of different scales of improvement projects under the MMP, the Government considers a host of factors, including the geographical locations and

distribution of the markets, condition of facilities in the markets, business viability, community needs and tenants' readiness, etc. In particular, the Government would seek to ensure that the selected markets are situated in locations which can support their future business viability, and that they are reasonably distributed across the territory to benefit the entire community. In implementing the MMP, the FEHD works closely with the relevant works departments to identify viable hardware improvement options and consults existing tenants on relevant matters such as the facilities improvement options, rental arrangements and management improvement measures, etc. The Government also reports to the concerned District Councils on the implementation of relevant MMP projects in a timely manner and seeks funding approval according to the established mechanism.

The pioneering project of the MMP is the overhaul of Aberdeen Market. After obtaining funding approval from the Legislative Council, the Government commenced the pre-closure preparatory work in August 2021. In November 2021, the Aberdeen Market will be closed fully for the commencement of the overhaul works. The Government will take appropriate measures, including the use of pre-fabricated parts with regards to the actual circumstances, to expedite the works progress, with a view to completing the overhaul works within 2022. Meanwhile, the Government is also carrying out the preparatory and consultation work for the proposed overhaul works for some other markets, including Yeung Uk Road Market, Ngau Tau Kok Market and Kowloon City Market. In addition, the Government has consulted and obtained the support of the relevant Market Management Consultative Committees (MMCCs) on the minor refurbishment or improvement works for 11 markets (including Ngau Tau Kok Market, Yeung Uk Road Market, Luen Wo Hui Market, Fa Yuen Street Market, Quarry Bay Market, Shui Wo Street Market, Tsuen Wan Market, Mong Kok Cooked Food Market, Ngau Chi Wan Market, Shek Tong Tsui Market and Nam Long Shan Road Cooked Food Market). The works in four of the above markets have been completed, while those in six others are scheduled for completion by the end of 2021. For the remaining market, preparation for the works is underway. The works are expected to commence in phases in the second half of 2022.

Support from relevant stakeholders, in particular tenants, is crucial to the smooth implementation of projects under the MMP. The FEHD will continue to actively follow up on the above projects and identify more suitable markets for the MMP, so as to make the best use of the \$2 billion earmarked to improve the operating environment of markets. When the projects are close to completion, the Government will review the effectiveness of the MMP in a timely manner and consider earmarking additional resources for the programme.

(3) The FEHD attaches great importance to the environmental hygiene of markets and endeavours to step up its promotion and education targeting tenants and consumers with a view to enhancing their awareness on market environmental hygiene and creating a market hygiene culture. Through the regular MMCC meetings of individual public markets, the FEHD reminds tenant representatives to pay attention to environmental hygiene, including to comply with the anti-epidemic measures, to handle the miscellaneous articles and refuse at their stalls properly, to take the appropriate anti-rodent measures, to conduct proper cleansing work at their stalls on the "market

cleansing day" organised by the FEHD twice a month, and, for poultry stall tenants, to take stringent cleansing and disinfection measures on a daily basis to prevent the spread of avian flu. In addition, the FEHD also from time to time puts up various promotional posters on health education at prominent positions within public markets and distributes leaflets to tenants and consumers, urging them to pay attention to personal hygiene, to take proper preventive measures against avian flu and to use contactless payment means, etc.

In addition to improving market facilities through the implementation of the MMP, the Government will also implement new market management measures, including strengthening the daily management of public markets and stepping up the promotion and publicity work for public markets, in order to enhance the overall competitiveness of public markets.