

## SFST visits public market to inspect use of e-payment and appeals for public participation in Legislative Council General Election (with photos)

The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Christopher Hui, today (November 25) visited Smithfield Market in Kennedy Town, Central and Western District, to inspect the use of electronic payment (e-payment) by stall operators and customers there. He also took the opportunity to call on members of the public to vote in the Legislative Council General Election to be held next month.

Accompanied by the Under Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Joseph Chan; the Deputy Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Environmental Hygiene), Miss Diane Wong; and the District Officer (Central and Western), Mr David Leung, Mr Hui visited several stalls to learn about operators' feedback and their customers' reviews on the use of e-payment in aspects such as efficiency, transaction fee and adaptability.

Responding to the feedback received, Mr Hui said, "E-payment is fast and convenient, making it an irreversible trend in retail development. Under the pandemic, contactless payment is also in line with the public health perspective. The Consumption Voucher Scheme announced by the Financial Secretary at the Budget has brought multiple benefits by significantly encouraging the use of e-payment and accelerating the application of fintech in daily life."

With the popularisation of e-payment, Mr Hui said he believed that stored value facilities (SVF) operators will progressively reduce their fees as a result of competition in future, which will in turn benefit merchants.

Since the announcement on the selection of the four SVF operators to assist in implementing the Consumption Voucher Scheme in April this year, the number of consumer accounts of the four operators and the number of merchants accepting e-payment have increased by more than 3.3 million and 80 000 respectively as at end-September.

Meanwhile, Mr Hui today called on stall operators and members of the public at Smithfield Market to exercise their right to vote on the polling day of the 2021 Legislative Council General Election on December 19.

"There will be competition in Election Committee, functional and geographical constituencies in the upcoming Legislative Council General Election. Therefore, the active participation of voters is of utmost importance to bring a new style of policy discussion to the Legislative Council. I strongly believe that a diverse and pragmatic legislature which cares about the well-being of the public will be conducive to Hong Kong's

future economic and financial development," Mr Hui said.

"Please cast your vote to elect new members with capability and aspiration for the Legislative Council to ensure 'patriots administering Hong Kong' under the improved electoral system."

