

Steering Group discusses new conceptual designs for recycling bins and litter containers in public places

The Secretary for the Environment, Mr Wong Kam-sing, chaired the sixth meeting of the Steering Group on the Modification of Recycling and Refuse Collection Facilities in Public Places today (May 10) to discuss new conceptual designs for recycling bins (RBs) and litter containers (LCs) in public places.

The Steering Group had earlier commissioned a Stage 2 consultancy study to review the existing designs of RBs and LCs in public places and to propose new designs. Prior to developing new conceptual designs for RBs and LCs, the consultants had conducted public engagement activities through various channels to solicit views from the general public and relevant stakeholders, including citizens, tourists, front-line cleaning workers, recyclers and green groups. Based on the collected views, baseline analysis of international experiences, and preliminary design parameters proposed in the Stage 1 consultancy study, the consultants put forward some proposed conceptual designs to the Steering Group.

The Steering Group considered that the new designs of RBs and LCs should encompass various elements. In addition to having conspicuous colours, RBs and LCs in various settings should be coherent in their designs to enable easy identification by the public. Apart from hygiene and durability considerations, the new designs should also care for the operational needs of front-line workers and facilitate their emptying of RBs and LCs. RBs should also allow for flexible combinations of individual compartments to meet the actual operational needs. For instance, the compartment for collecting plastic bottles should be larger in certain settings.

Meanwhile, considering that the Mainland has started to tighten the import standards for recycling materials since the beginning of this year, including imposing more stringent requirements on the purity required of paper recyclables, as well as views collected in public engagement activities, the Steering Group agreed that "mixed RBs" involving collection of waste paper together with other recyclables should not be introduced in public spaces at this stage.

After discussion, the Steering Group adopted some conceptual designs proposed by the consultants. Following the adopted conceptual designs, the consultants will make refinements and develop the detailed designs of RBs and LCs and relevant prototypes, as well as consult the public in the end of 2018 to collect the views of citizens, front-line workers and relevant stakeholders. The consultants will then report the findings and make recommendations to the Steering Group.

To complement the implementation of municipal solid waste charging, the

Steering Group was set up in February 2016 to review the design and distribution of recycling and refuse collection facilities in public places and recommend necessary modifications to facilitate waste reduction and resource recovery in the community. Chaired by the Secretary for the Environment, the Steering Group comprises members from the design, architectural, planning, academia and business sectors as well as non-profit making groups, district personalities and relevant government departments.