

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)050

(Question Serial No. 3121)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer: Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Donald NG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

The number of fixed pitch hawkers and itinerant hawkers, as well as the letting percentage of stalls are decreasing. Meanwhile, it is also mentioned under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 that the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will take action to close public markets which are under-utilised.

1. Please provide a list of public markets to be closed. What is the estimated amount of expenditure to be saved?
2. Are there any utilisation plans for these public markets after their closure?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Chun-ying (LegCo internal reference no.: 9)

Reply:

With demographic changes, new development/redevelopment projects and competition from other fresh provision outlets, the appeal of some long-established public markets/cooked food markets (CFMs) has been diminishing over time with low patronage and high vacancy rates. With a view to optimising land use, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) has been closely monitoring the utilisation of existing markets/CFMs and considering consolidating or closing under-utilised markets/CFMs, so that the sites could be vacated for better development by other departments, thereby benefitting the public. To determine the relevant arrangements, including the future use and development timetable, various factors will be taken into consideration, including the vacancy rate, room for improvement, availability of fresh provision outlets in the vicinity, possible cost-effectiveness of upgrading works and the views of the local community. FEHD will, in accordance with the established procedures of the Government, seek views from the relevant departments, including the Planning Department and the Lands Department, to formulate proposals for putting the relevant premises or sites to gainful long-term uses.

FEHD has commenced the preparatory and consultation work for the closure of individual markets/CFMs. For example:

- (1) In September 2021, FEHD consulted the relevant committee of Central and Western District Council on consolidating Centre Street Market and Sai Ying Pun Market, for vacating the Centre Street Market for the planning of medical and healthcare-related facilities; and
- (2) In March 2023, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department and FEHD consulted Yau Tsim Mong District Council on the conversion of Kwun Chung Market to an urban sports centre.

The overall expenditure (revised estimate) of FEHD on the management of public markets in 2024-25 is \$1.1363 billion. FEHD does not maintain a breakdown of the management expenditure of individual public markets.

- End -