

MEDIA FACT SHEET FOR MSO COS 2016:
STRENGTHENING COLLABORATION WITH TOWN COUNCILS

1. Most of our population resides in HDB estates and will approach the Town Councils (TCs) on municipal issues, such as those relating to the maintenance and cleanliness of HDB estates' common areas. To enhance residents' overall experience with municipal services, MSO will be strengthening its collaboration with TCs.

2. Last year, the Municipal Services Office (MSO) embarked on a pilot with Jurong-Clementi TC and Holland-Bukit Panjang TC to try out working arrangements for more effective management of feedback on municipal issues. These include:

a. Feedback handling protocols

These are for feedback cases transferred between government agencies and TCs, as well as cases which require agencies and TCs to work together on a solution. The protocols will ensure proper handovers of cases between agencies and TCs, and residents are better updated on the status of their cases.

b. Comprehensive case referral manual

The manual serves to clarify responsibilities across government agencies and TCs on common municipal issues. With a common reference point to determine their respective roles and responsibilities, the manual will help to prevent situations where residents are referred from one agency to another unnecessarily, or referred to a wrong agency. It helps to facilitate faster resolution of cases.

c. Sharing sessions

These sessions are held for TCs and agencies to share best practices on common municipal issues (e.g. high-rise littering and animal-related issues).

3. Following the success of the pilot, MSO has invited all TCs to participate in similar collaborations with the MSO and government agencies so as to benefit more residents. All 16 TCs have agreed to join MSO as partners and they will come on board progressively from April 2016 onwards till Q42016.

New initiatives to coordinate operations between TCs and agencies

4. Beyond the existing initiatives on feedback management, we are also extending the partnership to collaborating on operations for cross-agency municipal issues so that residents' concerns can be addressed more effectively and faster.

5. One example is the water-supply issues in HDB estates. Depending on the cause of the issue, it may come under the purview of PUB or TCs. Therefore, it may be difficult at times to ascertain the right party to attend to the feedback. They may also require PUB and TCs to carry out separate inspections to attend to the same feedback.

6. Recognising that this may cause inconveniences to residents who have to accommodate multiple site inspections, PUB and the pilot TCs started a three-month trial in August last year to clarify their respective roles for various water-supply issues and to streamline the operational processes for response to public feedback. New protocols are now in place to reduce the need for separate inspections by both PUB and the pilot TCs. Residents' feedback on water-supply issues can also be resolved more efficiently due to the improved partnership and work protocols between PUB and the TCs.

7. Going forward, MSO will be exploring operational synergies with the TCs on other common municipal issues such as high-rise littering and pigeon feeding, where TCs can provide useful ground intelligence to help NEA and AVA in their enforcement. With closer coordination between TCs and agencies on operational processes, we hope to address the challenging issues of high-rise littering and pigeon feeding more effectively to minimise the dis-amenities to residents.

8. Through the close collaboration between government agencies and TCs, MSO hopes to improve the overall coordination and effectiveness of the delivery of municipal services to all residents. This will be done without affecting the roles and autonomy of the TCs in setting their own service standards and delivering services to their residents.

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