

Management scheme for the display of roadside non-commercial

Response to the concern of the Kwai Tsing District Council

At its meeting on 14 November 2002, the Kwai Tsing District Council (KTDC) passed a motion prohibiting the display of all publicity materials in Kwai Tsing district for one year. It also requested the Administration to:

- (a) inform the Legislative Council (LegCo) of this motion; and
- (b) to revert to KTDC on the way forward regarding its motion on the prohibition period.

2. In February 2003, the Lands Department was informed that LegCo Members would meet KTDC representatives on 6 March 2003 to discuss, among other things, the illegal display of publicity materials in public places. The LegCo Secretariat asked the Administration to provide, among other things, response to the aforesaid issue to facilitate discussion between LegCo and KTDC Members at the meeting scheduled for 6 March 2003. The Administration included in its response, among other things, the KTDC motion in the paper. A copy of the Administration's paper is at Annex (part (d) of the paper is relevant). The Administration expected that matters relating to the KTDC motion would be followed up, if necessary, by LegCo Members at the meeting of the LegCo Panel on Planning, Lands and Works on 7 March 2003. The Administration was unaware of the postponement of the meeting between LegCo and KTDC Members to 25 March 2003. The matter was therefore not raised at the LegCo Panel meeting on 7 March 2003.

3. At the LegCo Panel meeting on 7 March 2003, LegCo Members indicated their support of the management scheme for the display of roadside publicity materials. Subject to some refinements to the scheme, LegCo Members had no objection to the implementation of the scheme with effect from April 2003. Taking into account LegCo Members' requirements and the need of other users (including District Council Members, government departments and non-profit making organisations) for the display of roadside publicity materials, the Administration considered it appropriate to implement the scheme in all 18 districts with effect from April 2003.

4. The Lands Department wrote to all District Councils, on 25 March 2003, on the implementation of the management scheme. It will liaise further with KTDC on the way forward relating to the management scheme.

Lands Department
April 2003

**Meeting of Legislative Council Members and
Kwai Tsing District Council on 6 March 2003**

**Public Housing Management and Land Administration
Raised by Kwai Tsing District Council**

Purpose

This paper provides information on the following issues raised by Kwai Tsing District Council :

- (a) control of illegal hawkers in public rental housing estates;
- (b) quality of outsourced management of public housing estates;
- (c) design of Housing for Senior Citizens and proposed lifts for Lai Yiu Estate; and
- (d) unauthorized display of publicity materials at roadside.

(a) Control of Illegal Hawkers in Public Rental Housing Estates

2. The Housing Department seeks to maintain a decent living environment for public housing tenants. Preventing nuisance from illegal hawking is one of the major duties of day-to-day estate management. Hawker control is provided by private property services companies in outsourced public housing estates and by private security companies in estates managed by the Housing Department. In both cases, such companies are under strict contractual obligations to ensure that the estates under their charge are free from hawker nuisance.

3. The Housing Department supervises these companies closely to ensure their effectiveness in hawker control. Most companies have effectively restricted illegal hawking activities. For those which are less effective, the Housing Department will

give guidance on possible improvement measures. If necessary, the Housing Department will also issue warnings, suspend the companies from tendering new contracts, terminate existing contracts or even delist the companies.

4. Meanwhile, the Housing Department also maintains a dedicated Mobile Operations Unit to conduct random raids on illegal hawking in public rental estates. This Unit will take more vigorous enforcement actions like seizures and arrests in public housing estates with more persistent hawker control problems. In October 2002, the five regional teams of the Mobile Operations Unit were centralized so that resources could be focused on estates with recurrent and serious illegal hawking problems. Where necessary, the assistance of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will also be sought.

5. Kwai Tsing District Council has expressed concern about illegal hawking in four public housing estates, i.e. Cheung Fat Estate, Cheung On Estate, Tai Wo Hau Estate and Cheung Hang Estate. Because of their proximity to major transport facilities and resultant heavy pedestrian flow, some locations in these estates are particularly attractive to illegal hawkers. To curb illegal hawking, we have taken vigorous enforcement actions. For example, the property services company in charge of Cheung Fat and Cheung On Estates has since September 2002 carried out 10 major anti-hawking operations. As regards Tai Wo Hau Estate, the security company has, after receiving warnings from the Housing Department, deployed additional guards to combat illegal hawking and the Mobile Operations Unit has conducted six raids since October 2002. The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department has also taken vigorous actions against illegal hawkers outside Cheung Hang Estate. As a result of all these efforts, the illegal hawking situation of these estates at daytime is now generally under control. We will continue to monitor the situation and will deploy the Mobile Operations Unit for nighttime operations if necessary.

(b) Outsourcing of Management of Public Housing Estates

6. Kwai Tsing District Council is concerned about the quality of estate management services provided by private property services companies in outsourced public rental estates. The District Council suggested that complaints lodged by tenants against property services companies should be taken into account in assessing private property services companies' performance.

7. The Housing Department outsources the management of public housing estates to private property services companies to enhance cost-effectiveness and encourage innovative management measures. To ensure quality, property services companies are required to meet stipulated performance standards such as handling tenants' enquiries or requests within prescribed response time in line with those observed by the Housing Department's Estate Management Offices.

8. The Housing Department closely monitors the performance of property services companies. Periodic and surprise audits according to an objective scoring system are carried out to assess their effectiveness. The number and nature of complaints lodged by tenants against property services companies are taken into account. In appraising these companies' performance, the Housing Department's own assessment, results of in-house quarterly surveys and annual independent surveys on tenants' satisfaction, as well as assessments of Estate Management Advisory Committees are taken into account to form the total scores.

9. If a property services company fails to discharge its contractual obligations satisfactorily, the Housing Department will take disciplinary actions, including issue of warnings, demand for replacement of key staff, suspension of tendering for new contracts, termination of existing contracts or even delisting.

10. The seven property services companies of 10 public housing estates in Kwai Tsing District are generally satisfactory in their performance. The Housing Department will monitor their performance and work with them closely to strive for continuous improvement.

(c) Design of Housing for Senior Citizens (HSC) and Proposed Lifts for Lai Yiu Estate

11. Kwai Tsing District Council has suggested installation of metal gates for individual HSC flats in Lai Yiu Estate so that residents can keep their flat doors open for better ventilation. With the current design, the fire alarms above each flat entrance and the railings along common corridors, which facilitate movement of

elderly residents, prevent the installation of metal gates at the entrance of individual HSC flats. In any event, the flats are already equipped with large windows in accordance with the ventilation requirements of the Buildings Ordinance. If tenants wish to keep their doors open, metal gates with electronic locks and closed-circuit televisions **on each floor** and round-the-clock warden service should provide adequate security.

12.

The District Council has also proposed lift towers and footbridges in Lai Yiu Estate to link the two housing blocks on the upper terrace with the lower terrace where shopping and transport facilities are located. We have reservation with this proposal. Covered staircases have already been provided to enable tenants' easy travelling between the upper and lower terraces. Moreover, the proposed project is technically complex and very costly, involving extensive slope excavation and necessitating foundation strengthening works for the affected housing blocks.

(d) Unauthorized Display of Publicity Materials at Roadside

13. Kwai Tsing District Council has raised concern about the unauthorized display of publicity materials at roadside and suggested prohibiting such displays in the District for one year.

14. At present, staff of District Lands Offices, on discovering any unauthorized publicity materials during their routine inspection or upon receiving a complaint, will make referral to the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department for follow-up removal action. To improve the management and processing of applications for the display of roadside non-commercial publicity materials, the Lands Department has recently consulted all District Councils on a proposed management scheme. The Legislative Council Panel on Planning, Lands and Works will also be consulted on 7 March 2003. The scheme will be finalized in the light of the views received for implementation later this year.

15. As regards the suggestion to prohibit display of publicity materials for one year, the Lands Department will consider this further after consulting the Legislative Council on the proposed management scheme.

Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau
February 2003