

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1) 2071/08-09
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/HG/1

Panel on Housing

Minutes of meeting
held on Monday, 4 May 2009, at 2:30 pm
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building

Members present : Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH (Chairman)
Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, JP
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon CHAN Kam-lam, SBS, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, SBS, JP
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, SBS, JP
Hon LEE Wing-tat
Dr Hon Joseph LEE Kok-long, JP
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC
Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP
Hon KAM Nai-wai, MH
Hon CHAN Hak-kan
Hon WONG Sing-chi
Hon WONG Kwok-kin, BBS

Members absent : Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung

Public officers attending : **For item IV**

Ms Eva CHENG, JP
Secretary for Transport and Housing

Ms Ada FUNG, JP
Deputy Director (Development & Construction)
Housing Department

Mr Daniel LEE
Assistant Director (Project) 2
Housing Department

For item V

Mr YAU Shing-mu, JP
Under Secretary for Transport and Housing

Mr LAU Kai-hung, JP
Deputy Director (Estate Management)
Housing Department

Mrs Jennifer YIU
Assistant Director (Estate Management) 2
Housing Department

Mr CHAN Lik-sun
Acting Chief Manager/Management
(Support Services 1)
Housing Department

Clerk in attendance : Miss Becky YU
Chief Council Secretary (1)1

Staff in attendance : Mrs Mary TANG
Senior Council Secretary (1)2

Miss Mandy POON
Legislative Assistant (1)4

Action

- I. Confirmation of minutes**
(LC Paper No. CB(1) 1445/08-09 — Minutes of the meeting held on
2 March 2009)

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2009 were confirmed.

II. Information paper issued since last meeting

2. Members noted that the following information paper had been issued since last meeting -

- LC Paper No. CB(1) 1354/08-09(01) — Referrals arising from the meeting between Duty Roster Members and the Society for Community Organization and 全港租客大聯盟 on 17 and 21 November 2008 respectively regarding the request for review of the Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) Ordinance (Cap. 7) (Chinese version only) (Restricted to Members)

III. Items for discussion at the next meeting

- (LC Paper No. CB(1) 1447/08-09(01) — List of follow-up actions
LC Paper No. CB(1) 1447/08-09(02) — List of outstanding items for discussion)

3. Members agreed to discuss the following items proposed by the Administration at the next regular meeting scheduled for Monday, 1 June 2009, at 2:30 pm -

- (a) Provisions for green, safe and healthy living in new public rental housing developments; and
- (b) Provision of services in public rental housing estates through "Mobile Office".

Mr KAM Nai-wai requested for early discussion of the review of the Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) Ordinance (Cap. 7). The Chairman also enquired if the supply and cost of liquefied petroleum gas in public housing estates could be discussed at the next regular meeting. The Secretary for Transport and Housing (STH) undertook to revert to the Panel on the time frames for discussion of these subjects.

(Post-meeting note: The item on "Supply and cost of liquefied petroleum gas in public housing estates" was subsequently included in the agenda of the next regular meeting on 1 June 2009.)

IV. Progress of public engagement for public housing developments

- (LC Paper No. CB(1) 1447/08-09(03) — Administration's paper on progress of public engagement for public housing developments)

4. The Deputy Director of Housing (Development & Construction) (DDH(D&C)) gave a power-point presentation on the progress of public engagement

in major public rental housing (PRH) developments by the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA). The Assistant Director of Housing (Project) 2 then reported on the public engagement workshops of the Anderson Road Development and So Uk Redevelopment projects.

(Post-meeting note: A copy of the power-point presentation materials was circulated to members under LC Paper No. CB(1) 1501/08-09(01) on 5 May 2009.)

5. Given the shortage of land for PRH development, Mr Frederick FUNG said that cleared PRH sites should be used for redevelopment of PRH rather than returning back to the Government for other uses. Likewise, as a matter of principle, land earmarked for PRH development should not be used for other purposes. He also stressed that the public engagement process should only focus on the design and planning of PRH development, and not on the usage of the land. STH assured members that efforts would be made to identify more suitable land for PRH development in order to meet the target of maintaining the average waiting time for PRH at around three years. Land, including cleared sites, earmarked for PRH developments would not be used for other purposes. By way of illustration, the cleared site of So Uk Estate would be used for in-situ redevelopment of the estate. While agreeing that the public engagement process should be confined to the design and planning of PRH development, STH said that there might be need to take into account views on the proportion of commercial premises within the development.

6. Mr WONG Sing-chi expressed concern about inadequate consultation with District Councils (DCs) on PRH development. He emphasized the need for regular meetings between DCs and the Housing Department (HD) to exchange views on PRH developments as well as management of facilities within PRH estates. STH said that to enhance the level of community participation, workshops had been organized for major PRH developments at the planning and design stages. The formalization of the consultation process aimed at strengthening the role of PRH tenants and DCs. Meanwhile, Housing Managers maintained regular contact with PRH tenants on the management of estates and more regular meeting with tenants would be held if necessary. DDH(D&C) added that DCs had been consulted on community projects, including major refurbishment of PRH estates.

7. Mr CHAN Kam-lam concurred that public engagement workshops, such as the workshops of Yau Tong Estate and the Lower Ngau Tau Kok Estate, had proved to be very useful in gathering views and information as well as enhancing communication on PRH development. He hoped that these workshops could be extended to cover other projects, such as the rehabilitation of Ping Shek Estate, as well as greening and renovation projects. Public consultation on the provision of supporting and ancillary facilities within PRH developments should also be held to meet the changing needs of tenants. STH thanked Mr CHAN for his suggestions, which would indeed be the way forward in PRH development.

8. Mr Alan LEONG supported for early consultation on the design and planning of PRH development. To facilitate a free and interactive exchange of views during the public engagement process, participants should be given sufficient information on the PRH developments beforehand. In this connection, consideration could be given to uploading the relevant information onto the Housing Authority (HA)'s website. Exhibition booths or mobile exhibition centres could also be set up to facilitate public consultation. He added that HD should review the public engagement process from time to time with a view to improving the process. STH said that before conducting the public engagement workshops, efforts would be made to consult the relevant stakeholders first. An independent third party would also be engaged to moderate the public consultation process. DDH(D&C) supplemented that an open and impartial approach would be adopted in conducting the public engagement workshops. Sufficient information would also be provided to facilitate discussion. However, as most of the projects were district based, it might not be necessary to upload the information onto HA's website. In the light of Mr LEONG's suggestion, STH said that consideration could be given to placing more posters and signboards publicizing details on the projects to be consulted.

9. Given the difficulties faced by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in securing premises within retail facilities operated by the Link Management Company, Mr WONG Sing-chi asked if HD would consider allowing NGOs to use vacant PRH flats to set up social enterprises to provide enhanced services to the community on the one hand and create more job opportunities on the other. Expressing similar concern, Mr Frederick FUNG pointed out that there was insufficient supply of open spaces at the ground floor of PRH estates for NGOs to provide the necessary supporting and ancillary facilities to meet the changing demands of the community. STH advised that project proponents of community facilities to be set up within PRH estates would need to submit their proposals to HD which would have to consult the relevant departments. DDH(D&C) said that HD welcomed the development of community facilities within PRH estates and sufficient space would be provided as far as practicable, either at the ground floor of estates, provided that technical issues like fire safety could be resolved, or in a separate block as in the case of Tin Ching Estate.

V. Progress of the provision of barrier-free access in public housing estates

(LC Paper No. CB(1) 1447/08-09(04) — Administration's paper on progress of the provision of barrier-free access in public housing estates

LC Paper No. CB(1) 1447/08-09(05) — Paper on progress of the provision of barrier-free access in public housing estates prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Background brief)

10. The Assistant Director of Housing (Estate Management) 2 (ADH(EM)2) gave a power-point presentation on the progress of provision of barrier-free access by the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) in the existing PRH estates.

11. The Chairman drew members' attention to the six submissions from 「無障礙社區關注組」 tabled at the meeting, requesting for the provision of barrier-free access in various PRH estates. He added that following the Panel visit to PRH estates on 5 March 2009 to observe how the need for elevator links and elevator systems could be met, the Administration had completed the study on "Establishment of an assessment system for provision of hillside escalator links and elevator systems". The outcome of the study, including the provision of barrier-free access facilities at Kwong Fai Circuit outside the Kwai Chung Estate area, would be discussed by the Panel on Transport at its meeting on 27 May 2009. Members of the Panel on Housing would be invited to attend.

Improvement works for the elderly and people with limited mobility

12. Noting that the Buildings Department had issued an updated version of the Design Manual on Barrier Free Access in 2008, Mr CHAN Kam-lam hoped that HA would gradually adopt the relevant design requirements in all new buildings and improvement works to existing buildings to provide barrier-free access for the elderly and the disabled. When implementing barrier-free access improvement works, in particular the installation of lifts and escalators, efforts should be made to consult the residents at the design and planning stage so that the facilities could be provided in such a way and in such location that would best suit the needs of the community. This would help solicit support for construction of these facilities. He also emphasized the need to expedite the provision of these facilities given that some of these installations would require a lead time of four years. The Under Secretary for Transport and Housing (USTH) assured members that stakeholders' views would be sought before proceeding with the design and planning of improvements works, and that efforts would be made to expedite the improvements works as far as practicable for the benefit of the community. In response to Mr CHAN's further request for a list of improvement works and the respective schedules for completion, the Deputy Director of Housing (Estate Management) (DDH(EM)) said that the required information had been provided for consideration by the Panel at its meeting in January 2009. While the overall work programme for the addition of lifts, escalators and footbridges was expected to complete under a five-year programme starting 2008, efforts would be made to shorten the work programme from five to four years. He also agreed to provide a progress report on the improvements works by the end of the year.

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13. Mr LEE Wing-tat opined that as some PRH estates did not have lift access to every floor, such as Lai Yiu Estate, elderly tenants living in these estates should be transferred to other estates with lift access. A review should also be conducted to ascertain the efficacy of barrier-free access facilities. DDH(EM) said that when planning for lifts or escalators, HD would take into account factors such as vertical

level difference, land status as well as technical feasibility. It would also have to identify a more direct access for the convenience of the disabled and the elderly. HD had planned to install lifts in 35 buildings in more than 10 PRH estates currently without lift services. ADH(EM)2 added that both the estate management advisory committees as well as the Association for the Blind would be consulted when planning for barrier-free access facilities to ensure that their requirements were met. These facilities were also subject to scrutiny by the Equal Opportunities Commission.

14. Mr Alan LEONG enquired about the progress of implementation of barrier-free access improvement works in public areas outside the purview of HA. DDH(EM) said that HA would actively enhance communication and discussion with the concerned departments and organizations regarding the implementation of barrier-free access improvement works in public areas outside the purview of HA. ADH(EM)2 added that barrier-free access had been provided to facilitate access of tenants to retail facilities within PRH estates but under the management of The Link Management Limited. However, access to MTR stations had yet to be provided.

Improvement works for the visually-impaired residents

15. Mr Fred LI was concerned that the tactile guide paths were subject to wear and tear over the years and some of these were made from plastic materials which were very slippery when wet. DDH(EM) said that in order to ensure the quality of tactile guide paths and to improve their durability, consideration had been given to using precast components for the purpose. New specifications had since been introduced on the types of materials to be used for tactile guide paths. ADH(EM)2 added that non-slip materials had been identified and had since been used for the provision of new tactile guide paths. A coating of non-slip materials would be applied to existing tactile guide paths to prevent slippery. Meanwhile, precast components would mostly be used in the hind staircase.

Alteration of in-flat facilities

16. Mr WONG Sing-chi enquired about the performance pledge for alteration of in-flat facilities since some elderly or disabled tenants had complained about the long lead time for completion of the alteration works. Mr Fred LI echoed that he had received complaints from disabled tenants who had to wait a long time for re-allocation to suitably modified flats because their existing flats were not technically feasible for the necessary alteration works. DDH(EM) said that HD had set up a joint task force with various welfare and medical agencies to arrange for the tetraplegics to move to modified flats in PRH estates to help them re-integrate into the community. These flats would be suitably modified in accordance with the advice provided by the therapists and would be made available to the tetraplegics upon discharge from hospitals. ADH(EM)2 added that these alteration works would usually be completed within two to three weeks. However, individual special requests which were beyond common standard from elderly or disabled tenants to suit their needs might not be entertained.

17. Mr Alan LEONG enquired about the frequency of meeting of the joint task force. ADH(EM)2 said that joint task force was set up to speed up the alteration works for in-flat facilities for the tetraplegics. It was worth noting that there might be cases where the required alteration works could not be carried out because the entrances, lifts, corridors, flat doors, kitchen doors and bathroom doors of some existing estates could not allow for easy access of wheelchairs and walking aids.

VI. Any other business

18. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:08 pm.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
3 July 2009