

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)45/13-14

(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/HS/1/12

Subcommittee on Poverty

**Minutes of the fifth meeting
held on Monday, 25 March 2013, at 4:30 pm
in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex**

Members present : Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP (Chairman)
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Albert HO Chun-yan
Hon LEE Cheuk-yan
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, SBS, JP
Hon CHAN Kin-por, BBS, JP
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
Hon WONG Yuk-man
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming
Hon Charles Peter MOK
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, SBS, JP
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, BBS, MH, JP
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Hon KWOK Wai-keung
Hon TANG Ka-piu

Members absent : Hon Ronny TONG Ka-wah, SC
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, JP
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC

Member attending : Hon WU Chi-wai, MH

**Public Officers : Item I
attending**

Mrs Connie LAI
Chief Planning Officer/1
Development and Construction Division
Housing Department

Mr Ryan CHIU
Principal Assistant Secretary (Planning & Lands) 3
Development Bureau

Mr CHOW Wing-hang
Principal Assistant Secretary (Welfare) 4
Labour and Welfare Bureau

**Clerk in
attendance** : Mr Colin CHUI
Chief Council Secretary (2) 4

**Staff in
attendance** : Ms Catherina YU
Senior Council Secretary (2) 4

Dr Yuki HUEN
Research Officer 2

Ms Ivy CHENG
Research Officer (2) 2

Miss Maggie CHIU
Legislative Assistant (2) 4

Action

The Subcommittee deliberated (index of proceedings attached at **Annex**).

- I. Relationship between housing and poverty**
[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)823/12-13(01) to (02), CB(2)674/12-13(02)
and IN15/12-13]

Action

2. The Subcommittee requested the Administration to provide –
 - (a) the implementation details of the re-launching of the "Subsidy for low-income persons who are inadequately housed" programme by the Community Care Fund;
 - (b) the number of flats occupied by sitting disabled and elderly public rental housing ("PRH") tenants which had undergone free home modification works in the past five years and the expenses incurred in the modification works; and
 - (c) the time frame for providing lifts to all domestic floors in all PRH estates.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's response to (b) and (c) above was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(2)1827/12-13(01) on 27 September 2013.)

II. Support for disadvantaged groups such as persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, new-arrivals and single-parent families

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)823/12-13(03) and (04)]

3. Members agreed that the discussion of this item should be deferred.

III. Proposal to conduct an overseas duty visit to study poverty alleviation measures

[LC Paper No. IN16/12-13]

4. Members agreed to conduct a duty visit to two places in Northern Europe in mid-August 2013 to study their experience in alleviating poverty and addressing relevant problems arising from an ageing population.

IV. Any other business

[LC Paper No. CB(2)823/12-13(05)]

5. Members agreed that a meeting should be held as early as practicable to discuss poverty line. Members also agreed that

Action

deputations should be invited to give views on poverty line and the Chairman of the Commission on Poverty should be invited to attend the meeting.

6. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 6:27 pm.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
11 October 2013

**Proceedings of the fifth meeting of the
Subcommittee on Poverty
on Monday, 25 March 2013, at 4:30 pm
in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex**

Time marker	Speaker(s)	Subject(s)	Action required
<i>Agenda item 1 – Relationship between housing and poverty</i>			
000443 - 001021	Chairman Research Officer 2	Opening remarks Briefing on the housing policies to assist low-income households in Singapore by Research Officer 2 ("RO2").	
001022 - 001233	Mr Frankie YICK Chairman Administration	Mr Frankie YICK's enquiry on when the "Subsidy for low-income persons who are inadequately housed" programme launched by the Community Care Fund ("CCF") would be extended to cover low-income persons who were living in sub-divided flats. The Administration's response that CCF was working on the re-launching of the programme to benefit more families living in sub-divided flats. It would provide members with the implementation details in due course.	Admin (paragraph 2 of the minutes)
001234 - 001848	Mr LEUNG Che-cheung Chairman Administration	Mr LEUNG Che-cheung's view that given the greater demand for public rental housing ("PRH") in urban districts, the Administration should review the PRH allocation mechanism and increase the supply of PRH in these districts through redevelopment or by way of increasing the development density. This could help address the housing needs of persons who were living in sub-divided flats or "caged homes" and preferred to live in urban districts. The Administration's response that – (a) the Long Term Housing Strategy ("LTHS") Steering Committee had commissioned a research institution to conduct a study on the profile and living conditions of tenants living in sub-divided flats, and to estimate the number of sub-divided flats and households living in those flats in the territory. The report of the study was expected to be released around mid-2013; (b) the existing PRH allocation mechanism had been adopted for a long time and was effective;	

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		<p>(c) there was close liaison among the Housing Department, the Planning Department and the relevant government departments on identification of sites for PRH development in different parts of the territory;</p> <p>(d) to ensure efficient use of land resources, development potential of PRH sites would be optimized. The Housing Authority ("HA") would liaise with concerned bureaux and departments to examine the scope for increasing plot ratio wherever possible, subject to technical studies and assessments;</p> <p>(e) in considering redevelopment of HA's aged PRH estates, factors like build-back potential, availability of rehousing resources, structural safety and cost effectiveness in repair works would be considered; and</p> <p>(f) 55% and 29% of the PRH flats to be constructed in the coming five years would be situated in urban and extended urban districts respectively.</p>	
001849 - 002344	Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che Chairman Administration	The Administration's response to Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che's enquiry about the reasons for not imposing rent control as detailed in its paper (item 5 of the Annex to LC Paper No. CB(2)823/12-13(02)).	
002345 - 002907	Mr TANG Ka-piu Chairman Administration	<p>Mr TANG Ka-piu's enquiry about whether –</p> <p>(a) the Administration had set any target on the production of PRH units in a year in order to meet the pledge regarding the average waiting time for PRH allocation; and</p> <p>(b) the LTHS Steering Committee would discuss the provision of rent allowance for the waitlistees for PRH who had financial hardship.</p> <p>The Administration's response that –</p> <p>(a) the LTHS Steering Committee would examine issues relating to housing demand, including that for PRH. Public consultation on LTHS would be conducted in around mid-2013;</p> <p>(b) the LTHS Steering Committee would discuss issues relating to rent allowance for needy persons who were on the waiting list for PRH; and</p>	

Time marker	Speaker(s)	Subject(s)	Action required
		(c) a production target of at least 100 000 new PRH flats in the five years starting from 2018 would be adopted to meet the society's demand for PRH.	
002908 - 003257	Dr Fernando CHEUNG Chairman Administration	At Dr Fernando CHEUNG's request, the Administration undertook to provide information on – (a) the number of flats occupied by sitting disabled and elderly PRH tenants which had undergone free home modification works in the past five years and the expenses incurred in the modification works; and (b) the time frame for providing lifts to all domestic floors in all PRH estates.	Admin (paragraph 2 of the minutes)
003258 - 003934	Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung Chairman Administration	Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung's view that because of the housing policy mistakes, the poverty situation and living condition of the underprivileged were worsened. Before improvements were made to the living conditions of and the allocation of PRH to the persons who were inadequately housed, they should be allowed to continue to live in their homes at rooftops unless there were building safety problems. The Administration's response that to ensure building safety, the Buildings Department ("BD") would take action against the unauthorized building works at rooftops. Persons affected by BD's enforcement actions would be provided with temporary accommodation if they were not eligible for PRH. Mr LEUNG's view that temporary accommodation could not solve the housing problems of the persons who were homeless as a result of BD's enforcement actions.	
003935 - 004441	Mr KWOK Wai-keung Chairman Administration	Mr KWOK Wai-keung's call for an upward adjustment of the rent allowance under the CSSA Scheme. His enquiry on when the Administration would conduct a comprehensive review on the calculating method for setting the rent allowance. The Administration's response that the maximum levels of rent allowance ("MRA") would be adjusted annually according to the established mechanism.	
004442 - 004948	Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung	Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung's view that the	

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	Chairman	Administration should impose rent control and the level of rent allowance should be adjusted according to the projected rate of increase in the rental of private housing. The Administration should defer the clearance of unauthorized structures at rooftops which did not cause building safety problems, and find ways to improve the living conditions of the persons who were living in substandard sub-divided flats.	
004949 - 005524	Miss CHAN Yuen-han Chairman Administration	<p>Miss CHAN Yuen-han's concern that some PRH policies had made the grown-up children unable to live with their elderly parents in PRH. These policies had departed from the Government's policy of "ageing in place".</p> <p>The Administration's response that HA currently offered a number of housing schemes to encourage family members to live with/close to the elderly. They included the Harmonious Families Priority Scheme, Harmonious Families Additional Scheme etc.</p> <p>The Chairman's expression of dissatisfaction that the Commission on Poverty ("CoP") had not sent any representative to attend the meeting to answer members' questions concerning the relationship between housing and poverty. This had seriously affected the effectiveness of the discussion. His request that representative(s) of CoP should attend future meetings of the Subcommittee.</p>	
005525 - 010106	Chairman Miss CHAN Yuen-han Research Officer 2	At the Chairman's request, RO2 undertook to try to provide information on the effectiveness of the housing policies to assist low-income households in Singapore.	RO2
010107 - 013659	Mr WONG Yuk-man Chairman Miss CHAN Yuen-han Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung Dr Fernando CHEUNG Mr Abraham SHEK Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che	<p>Members' view that the officers attending the meeting were not in a capacity to answer their concerns on poverty-related issues. To facilitate useful discussions, representatives from CoP should attend future meetings of the Subcommittee.</p> <p>Members agreed that the Subcommittee should write to CoP and condemn it for not sending the subject principal officials to the meeting and strongly request the Chairman of CoP or the relevant principal officials who were also members of CoP to attend future meetings of the Subcommittee. The matter should be referred to the House Committee if CoP refused to accede to the Subcommittee's request.</p>	

Time marker	Speaker(s)	Subject(s)	Action required
		(Post meeting note: the letter was sent to the Chief Secretary for Administration as Chairman of CoP on 28 March 2013.)	
<i>Agenda item II – Support for disadvantaged groups such as persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, new-arrivals and single-parent families</i>			
013700 - 014548	Chairman	Members' concurrence that the discussion of this item should be deferred.	
<i>Agenda item III – Proposal to conduct an overseas duty visit to study poverty alleviation measures</i>			
013700 - 014548	Chairman Mr Abraham SHEK Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che Dr Fernando CHEUNG Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung	Members' concurrence with Dr Fernando CHEUNG's suggestion that a duty visit to two places in Northern Europe should be conducted in mid-August 2013 to study their experience in alleviating poverty and addressing relevant problems arising from an ageing population.	
<i>Agenda item IV – Any other business</i>			
014549 - 015719	Chairman Mr Abraham SHEK Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung	Subjects to be discussed at meetings in April to June 2013. Closing remarks	