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Panel on Housing

Minutes of policy briefing
held on Wednesday, 20 October 2021, at 9:00 am
in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex

- Members present** : Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, GBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing, MH (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, SBS, JP
Hon CHAN Hak-kan, SBS, JP
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yee, GBM, GBS, JP
Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP
Hon CHAN Han-pan, BBS, JP
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, SBS, MH, JP
Hon KWOK Wai-keung, JP
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, GBS, MH, JP
Dr Hon Junius HO Kwan-yiu, JP
Hon SHIU Ka-fai, JP
Hon YUNG Hoi-yan, JP
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-kwan, JP
Hon LAU Kwok-fan, MH, JP
Hon Vincent CHENG Wing-shun, MH, JP
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS, JP
- Members absent** : Hon WONG Kwok-kin, GBS, JP
Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen, BBS, JP

Public Officers attending : Agenda Item I

Mr Frank CHAN, JP
Secretary for Transport and Housing

Miss Agnes WONG, JP
Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Dr Raymond SO, BBS, JP
Under Secretary for Transport and Housing

Mr Carlson CHAN, JP
Director (Special Duties)
Transport and Housing Bureau

Mrs Alice CHEUNG, JP
Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Mr Stephen LEUNG
Deputy Director of Housing
(Development and Construction)

Mr Ricky YEUNG
Deputy Director of Housing (Estate Management)

Clerk in attendance : Mr Derek LO
Chief Council Secretary (1)5

Staff in attendance : Mr Fred PANG
Senior Council Secretary (1)5

Ms Michelle NIEN
Legislative Assistant (1)5

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I. Briefing by the Secretary for Transport and Housing on the Chief Executive's 2021 Policy Address

- (LC Paper No. CB(1)1400/20-21(01) — Administration's paper on housing-related initiatives in the Chief Executive's 2021 Policy Address and Policy Address Supplement
- The Chief Executive's 2021 Policy Address
- The Chief Executive's 2021 Policy Address Supplement)

At the invitation of the Chairman, the Secretary for Transport and Housing ("STH") briefed members on the Administration's housing-related initiatives as stated in the 2021 Policy Address and Policy Address Supplement.

2. Mr LEUNG Che-cheung declared that the New Territories Association of Societies which was his political affiliation had applied for construction of transitional housing.
3. Mr SHIU Ka-fai declared that he was a member of the Hong Kong Housing Authority ("HA").

Supply of public housing

4. Mr LEUNG Che-cheung expressed concern that the waiting time for public rental housing ("PRH") would continue to be long when the Administration was working towards the target of producing some 330 000 public housing units in the coming 10 years (i.e. from 2022-23 to 2031-32). He was concerned that apart from facilitating the development of more transitional housing units, the Administration had no other measures to speed up the supply of public housing to meet the imminent demand. He suggested that the Administration should consider bringing together efforts from different sectors of the community in the provision of housing, such as the MTR Corporation Limited ("MTRC"), Hong Kong Jockey Club and other organizations which had land resources and relevant expertise. Mr Wilson OR asked whether the Administration would consider collaborating with the private sector in developing public housing in future as it did in implementing transitional housing projects.

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5. STH replied that of the about 330 000 public housing units to be produced in the coming 10 years, about 100 000 units were scheduled for completion in the first five years and the remaining about 230 000 units would be provided in the latter half of the 10-year period. The current-term Government would continue to bring together community efforts as far as practicable to increase housing supply. Apart from HA which was the main provider of public housing, the Hong Kong Housing Society ("HS") planned to provide about 23 000 housing units in the coming 10 years and the Urban Renewal Authority ("URA") had been undertaking projects to provide Starter Homes units. The Administration had been communicating with MTRC to develop subsidized sale flats in its residential development atop the Siu Ho Wan Depot. Some private corporations and non-profit making organizations would work to develop affordable housing. The Development Bureau ("DEVB") had received several applications for the Land Sharing Pilot Scheme which if approved would provide an additional source of land for providing public housing units. The Administration would continue to step up efforts in collaborating with public and private organizations to support the Government's land and public housing supply initiatives.

6. Mr CHAN Han-pan said that the total number of flats produced by HA and HS under their own public housing programmes had fallen short of the Government's housing supply target over past five years and enquired how the Administration ensured that these programmes would tie in with the 10-year public housing supply target in future. STH replied that in working out their public housing programmes, HA and HS had taken into account various factors, including the time when the Government would make available the land for HA and HS to construct public housing, etc.

Plot ratio of sites for public housing development

7. Mr LAU Kwok-fan enquired whether the supply of about 330 000 public housing units in the coming 10 years would enable the Administration/HA to meet the target of providing the first flat offer to general PRH applicants at around three years, and if not, whether the Administration would work out other measures to increase the public housing supply within a short period, such as raising the plot ratios of the land lots/sites concerned. STH replied that one of the existing initiatives of the Government to increase the supply of public housing was to allow an increase of domestic plot ratio for public housing sites in selected density zones of the main urban areas and new towns to a maximum of 30% in total where technically feasible. As the current development densities of some potential development areas in the New Territories such as the areas covered by the proposed Northern Metropolis

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were generally low, relevant bureaux/departments would assess the feasibility of raising the plot ratios when planning the land use of such areas, including the land for public housing development.

8. Mr LAU Kwok-fan opined that the number of public housing units provided in development projects in the New Territories such as the Hung Shui Kiu New Development Area ("NDA") project could be significantly increased if the average plot ratio of the development areas was increased, such as to a ratio of 7 or above. He asked whether the Administration had studied options to raise the plot ratios of the land lots/sites for producing the about 330 000 public housing units and the number of additional public housing units that could be provided by raising the plot ratios of these land lots/sites by 30%. The Chairman requested the Administration to provide supplementary information about the plot ratios of such land sites/lots to facilitate members' understanding of the impact of increasing the plot ratios on the public housing supply in future. STH replied that the question of whether and how far the plot ratio of each of these land sites/lots could be increased would need further study. The Administration would provide supplementary information in light of the Chairman's request.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's supplementary information was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1477/20-21(01) on 11 November 2021.)

Waiting time for public rental housing

9. In view that the Administration would update the 10-year housing supply target according to the Long Term Housing Strategy ("LTHS") around end-2021, Mr Wilson OR considered it important that the long-term housing supply under LTHS would tie in with the HA's target of providing the first flat offer to general PRH applicants at around three years. He enquired whether the Administration would actively consider incorporating the HA's target into the housing policy objective of the Government. Mr LAU Kwok-fan asked whether the target of providing the first flat offer to general PRH applicants at around three years was also the objective of the Government.

10. Ms Starry LEE opined that to demonstrate its determination to solve the housing problem in Hong Kong, the Government should make clear on when HA could achieve the objective of providing the first flat offer to general PRH applicants at around three years and make commitment to phasing out subdivided units ("SDUs").

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11. STH replied that providing the first flat offer to PRH general applicants at around three years was a target of HA. Despite the challenges brought about by the tight supply of public housing, HA would continue to strive to achieve the target with a view to meeting the PRH applicants' aspirations for receiving PRH allocation earlier. STH advised that while the Government had identified land for producing a total of about 330 000 public housing units in the coming 10 years, which would be sufficient to meet the public housing demand of 301 000 units for the same 10-year period according to the latest LTHS projection, it might take more than 10 years to completely meet the total demand for PRH as there would inevitably be new household formations within this 10-year period which would generate new demand for PRH. Subject to the change in the number of PRH applicants in future, it might be possible that the target of providing the first flat offer to general applicants at around three years would be achieved between 15 and 20 years. Ms Starry LEE remained of the view that based on the information provided by the Government about the future public housing supply, it should be practicable for the Administration/HA to make commitment to meet the target around 2030. STH advised that it was practicable to achieve the target when there were adequate housing units for meeting the demand. The Administration/HA would continue to work at full steam in increasing the public housing supply.

Measures to expedite land and housing development process

12. Mr Tony TSE referred to the rolling 10-year housing supply target presented by the Administration over years, and opined that the number of public housing units provided in the first few years of the 10-year period as estimated by the Administration was often much lower than that in the latter years of the same period. He considered such supply situation not desirable.

13. Mr Wilson OR expressed recognition of the efforts made by the Transport and Housing Bureau ("THB") and HA in developing public housing but was concerned that the number of PRH applicants on the waiting list and the PRH waiting time might continue to increase. In view that HA/the Housing Department ("HD") might need to wait for completion of site formation and infrastructure works undertaken by relevant government departments at a site before commencing public housing construction, Mr OR enquired how the Administration would streamline the relevant procedures.

14. STH replied that as at 2017, the Administration had yet to identify adequate land to meet the public housing demand as projected according to LTHS. After years of efforts, the current-term Government had identified about 350 hectares of land which could produce some 330 000 public housing units in the coming 10-year period to meet the estimated public housing

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demand of around 301 000 units. The actual number of public housing units that could be completed on such land within the coming 10 years would hinge on the implementation progress of the development projects concerned. As relevant government bureaux/departments needed to undergo many land production procedures in order to transform such land into spade-ready sites for public housing construction and the whole process might involve some legal challenges that needed to be overcome, it might not be practicable for the Administration to make all sites ready for public housing construction within a short time after they had been identified, and hence relatively more public housing units were expected to be completed in the latter half of the 10-year period. THB would continue to closely liaise with DEVB on measures to streamline the relevant land development processes so that more spade-ready sites could be made available earlier for HA to build public housing.

15. STH and Deputy Director of Housing (Development and Construction) ("DDH(D&C)") advised that it generally took four to five years for HA to complete the construction of a public housing project at a spade-ready site. While DEVB and relevant government departments were transforming a piece of land into a spade-ready site for public housing use, HA would at the same time carry out the design of its public housing project and other advanced works so that the piling works for public housing construction could be commenced immediately after the handover of the site from DEVB to HA. DDH(D&C) advised that to speed up its public housing projects, apart from Modular Integrated Construction ("MiC"), HA also adopted other innovative technology such as using construction robotics for carrying out painting of internal and external walls to reduce reliance on manpower; utilizing mobile devices and mobile applications for site supervision to streamline on-site communication and workflow, etc.

16. Mr Tony TSE relayed the concerns of the relevant trade on the work of the HD's Independent Checking Unit ("ICU"), such as its reliance on documents, problems of bureaucracy and inefficiency and the limited number of on-site checks conducted by the Unit. He asked whether the Administration would introduce measures to streamline and expedite the relevant work processes/procedures without compromising the standards currently adopted by ICU.

17. The Chairman said that his political affiliation was all along concerned about the long time taken by the Administration to transform a piece of primitive land into a spade-ready site and that the current-term Government had yet to formulate effective measures to shorten it. He reiterated his suggestion that individual government departments involved in the approval process for development projects should set time limits for processing the

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applications submitted to them, and the Administration should streamline the approval process involving multiple departments.

18. STH replied that the process for transforming a piece of primitive land into a spade-ready site was led by DEVB. DEVB had been reviewing the statutory procedures and other workflows with a view to streamlining the development process and expediting land supply as far as practicable.

19. Mrs Regina IP enquired about which of the initiatives in the Chief Executive ("CE")'s Policy Address would provide housing at the earliest within the coming five years and the quantity of housing units involved. STH replied that HA was the main provider of public housing, and according to the implementation progress of its public housing projects, HA was confident to provide about 100 000 public housing units in the coming five years. To meet the short-term housing need, the Administration would continue to facilitate the provision of transitional housing, and had raised its supply target from 15 000 units to 20 000 units.

20. Mrs Regina IP enquired about the housing supply situation in MTRC's property developments above railway stations and which of the MTRC's projects would provide flats at the earliest. STH replied that the Government had invited MTRC to carry out the respective detailed planning and design for Tuen Mun South Extension, Tung Chung Line Extension and Phase 1 of the Northern Link projects, and had urged MTRC to expedite such work. The Administration would follow up with MTRC.

Development of Northern Metropolis and other new development areas

21. The Chairman said that the current-term Government had accepted his political affiliation's various suggestions including adopting the public/private split of 70:30 of new housing supply to strike a better balance between the private and public housing supply and putting the infrastructure-led approach into practice to ensure the provision of adequate infrastructure/facilities to cater for the demand generated from land and public housing developments. He opined that many people rented inadequate housing units partly because they needed to reside near their working places in urban districts. Apart from public housing, the Administration should also provide land for shopping arcades in newly developed areas, such as the Northern Metropolis, in order to tie in with the new population intake and provide more employment opportunities in the nearby areas of the residential areas, and such shopping arcades should be managed by HA. Mr LEUNG Che-cheung questioned whether it was suitable for the Administration to adopt the public/private split of 70:30 of new housing supply in the Northern Metropolis in future.

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22. STH replied that the development strategy of the Northern Metropolis would advocate a home-job balance, meaning that adequate employment opportunities would be provided for residents so that they did not need to commute a long way to work in other districts. In planning new public housing estates, in particular those large ones, the Administration/HA would provide shopping arcades and markets where appropriate to cater for the basic needs of the residents of the estates and the nearby areas.

23. Mr LAU Kwok-fan said that the Administration had invited HS to provide rehousing estates for the residents affected by the Government's development clearance exercises. As the construction of rehousing estates would take time, the implementation of such land clearances would be delayed for at least four to five years. He said that the Administration needed to defer the relevant land clearance exercise to 2024 in order to wait for completion of a rehousing estate near Hung Fuk Estate for rehousing the existing residents affected by the Hung Shui Kiu NDA project. He enquired whether HA would take a more active role in facilitating NDA developments and assisting in handling issues arising from such land clearance exercises, including waiving the requirements for the affected squatter households to undergo the relevant income and asset tests so that they could move to PRH and the NDA projects could be completed earlier.

24. STH replied that the Administration had all along collaborated with HA and HS in catering for the needs of different types of households affected by the Government's land development projects in the New Territories, such as allocating PRH units to eligible clearerees, developing rehousing estates, etc. He advised that the income and assets limits for PRH adopted by HA took into account various factors, including the eligibility criteria for HA's rental units, and it was appropriate for HA to continue adopting the mechanism for setting such limits. Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing) ("PS(H)") advised that HA had all along liaised closely with the Lands Department in dealing with issues arising from land clearances under NDA projects. If clearerees met the PRH income and asset limits, HA would provide rehousing as early as possible for them to move to PRH. For clearerees who wished to move to PRH in districts that they were currently residing or in other specific districts, they might need to wait for availability of vacant flats that could meet their requests. HA also provided an annual quota of PRH units to URA for rehousing eligible residents affected by the land resumption for URA projects. PS(H) explained that as the number of PRH units that could be completed by HA annually was limited, HA had to take into account its policy on allocation of PRH and the PRH demand from the waiting list applicants, etc. when considering the number of PRH units that could be set aside for

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allocation to households affected by the Government's development clearance exercises. HS's assistance in handling issues arising from such clearance exercises was important and its Dedicated Rehousing Estates would provide an option to those affected households who did not meet the income and asset limits of HA's PRH.

25. The Chairman opined that to take forward a proposal for providing railway line connecting between Shenzhen and Hong Kong more efficiently, relevant authorities should consider allowing a single company to implement the railway project, instead of engaging different companies to carry out the projects for the Hong Kong section and the Mainland section of the railway line separately. STH replied that the relevant cross-boundary railway projects could be implemented by a single company or a joint venture. The Administration would take into account the Chairman's view and technical considerations for construction works spanning across Hong Kong and the Mainland when studying relevant railway proposals in future.

Supply of construction workers

26. Mr SHIU Ka-fai expressed concern about the increasingly tight labour supply and the rising cost of labour in construction as a result of the economic recovery, the ageing construction workforce and the implementation of a large number of public works projects approved by LegCo in the previous year. He enquired whether the Administration would consider importation of workers for housing construction projects as did Singapore and Macau. The Chairman said that importing construction workers would also help speed up the housing production.

27. STH replied that the Administration understood the problem of population ageing in Hong Kong which would be more serious in future. To tackle the challenge of construction labour shortage, DEVB had been promoting MiC to transfer labour-intensive processes to off-site manufacturing yards through standardization, with a view to enhancing productivity and site safety and allowing better quality control. He advised that the existing Government policy allowed employers with genuine difficulties in local recruitment to submit applications to import workers at technician level or below, and this ensured priority of local workers in employment. The Chairman remarked that over the past decade, his political affiliation supported the importation of construction workers for public housing projects, public infrastructure works and airport projects under the premise of safeguarding the priority employment of local workers.

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Living environment of households

28. Mr Tony TSE said that he had expressed concern since 2013 about the average living space per person in Hong Kong and the subject matter had been mentioned in the "Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy Transcending 2030". He asked whether the Administration would introduce measures regarding the average living space per person and how such measures would affect the supply of public housing. STH replied that when there was adequate land and housing supply, the Administration/HA could consider increasing the average living space per person through relaxation of the allocation standard. For instance, 1 to 2-person flats could be allocated to 1-person households only and 2 to 3-person flats could be allocated to 2-person households only.

29. Mr KWOK Wai-keung expressed concern about the problems arising from the poor building conditions of SDUs that grassroots households were residing when waiting for PRH, such as the problem of water seepage. In view that the Administration had no clear commitment on when HA could meet the target of providing the first flat offer to general PRH applicants at around three years, and it would take a decade or more for the Administration/HA to provide adequate public housing units to meet the demand, he enquired about the Administration's assessment on the number of short-term idle sites available for the development of transitional housing for meeting the imminent housing need of inadequately housed families.

30. STH replied that THB had been liaising with DEVB to identify land for transitional housing use. To improve the living conditions of inadequately housed families in the short and medium term, apart from facilitating the development of transitional housing, the current-term Government launched the Cash Allowance Trial Scheme to provide cash allowance to eligible General Applicant households, and would implement the tenancy control of SDUs subject to the passage of the relevant bill. The Administration would continue to make the best effort to speed up the public housing supply.

Increasing the supply of transitional housing

31. Dr Junius HO opined that apart from the production of 330 000 public housing units in the coming 10 years, the Administration should continue identifying more land for providing public housing taking into account the population growth in Hong Kong. He expressed appreciation of the THB's efforts in facilitating the development of transitional housing. Given that in contrast to permanent public housing, building transitional housing required relatively shorter time, the Government should consider acquiring more

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privately-owned land in the New Territories for the provision of such housing to help cater for the imminent housing demand. In the long term, the Administration might use such land for providing permanent developments. Dr HO further said that apart from non-government organizations ("NGOs"), the Administration might consider liaising with land owners who were interested to carry out transitional housing projects to provide transitional housing with simple design for meeting the basic housing need.

32. Mr Vincent CHENG said that he welcomed the initiative to increase the transitional housing supply target. He opined that instead of limiting the supply to 20 000 units, the Administration should further increase the supply of transitional housing in order to assist more inadequately housed households, and should continue to identify more land resources in urban areas, such as vacant school premises in Kowloon, for the provision of such housing. THB should also step up efforts in disseminating information in a more open and transparent manner about the land or premises available for transitional housing development, the NGOs interested in operating transitional housing, and the transitional housing units available for intake of residents.

33. STH replied that the current-term Government had put in efforts over years in identifying land for the development of transitional housing, and had increased the supply target for such housing from 10 000 to 15 000 in January 2020, and from 15 000 to 20 000 as undertaken in the 2021 Policy Address. The Administration would consider setting a higher target in future subject to the availability of land or premises that could be used for providing such housing. THB had maintained liaison with DEVB and the Education Bureau on the supply of idle government sites in urban areas for transitional housing use, and the Administration had been reviewing the use of some vacant school premises.

34. Mr CHAN Han-pan opined that the supply of public housing in the coming five years was limited to about 100 000 units only which fell short of the relevant supply target previously set by the Administration. It was necessary for the Administration to continue facilitating the development of transitional housing to meet the imminent housing need. In view that most of the transitional housing units planned to be provided were located in remote locations, he was concerned about the travelling time and expenses incurred by the households to travel between their transitional housing estates and their places of work/schools. He enquired whether the Government would acquire industrial buildings ("IBs") in urban districts for wholesale conversion to transitional housing.

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35. STH replied that although many transitional housing projects would be implemented in the New Territories, the Administration had conducted traffic impact assessments for them. Upon the population intake of large transitional housing estates, the Administration would arrange additional public transport services to cater for the travelling need of the households. He advised that as the number of idle government sites/premises suitable for transitional housing was limited in urban areas, the Administration had previously explored some proposals to wholly convert IBs into transitional housing, but considered them not feasible having regard to the adverse impact of the industrial activities of such IBs. If there were other owners who were interested in converting their IBs to transitional housing in future, the Administration would follow up with them and study the feasibility.

Tenancy control of subdivided units

36. Mr Vincent CHENG expressed thanks to THB's efforts in putting forward the tenancy control of SDUs, and opined that to get prepared for its commencement after the passage of the relevant bill, the Administration should promote SDU tenants' understanding of their rights under the new legislation. He enquired about the measures in this regard. STH replied that if the bill on tenancy control of SDUs was passed, the relevant Ordinance would come into operation in late January 2022. In preparing for the implementation of the Ordinance, the Administration would entrust NGOs to set up district service teams to provide the necessary support for SDU tenants and landlords at the district level, and to establish an information portal on tenancy control of SDUs to facilitate understanding of both tenants and landlords of their rights and obligations under the new legislation and provide other information about SDU tenancy matters. The Rating and Valuation Department, which was responsible for enforcing the Ordinance, had established a team to promote awareness of the new regulatory regime among members of the public, including ethnic minority people.

Cash Allowance Trial Scheme

37. Mr SHIU Ka-fai said that it was appropriate for the Government to launch the Cash Allowance Trial Scheme in June 2021 to provide cash allowance to eligible General Applicant households who had waited for PRH allocation for a long period of time. He referred to the idea mentioned by CE about HA's payment of the cash allowance, and opined that if the Government could in future provide adequate land to HA for meeting the PRH demand but HA could not produce housing units on such land quickly enough, it might be necessary for HA to take up the responsibility for paying the cash allowance to assist such PRH applicants. He urged HA to streamline its public housing

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production process as early as possible. STH replied that Mr SHIU's views had been noted.

Redeveloping aged estates and factory estates for public housing

38. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok said that his political affiliation all along promoted the redevelopment of aged public housing estates. The Administration/HA should implement the initiative of redeveloping Sai Wan Estate and Ma Tau Wai Estate as early as possible to help increase the supply of public housing. In view that apart from these two estates, there were also many aged public housing estates which had potential for redevelopment, he urged the Administration/HA to continue considering the redevelopment of such estates taking into account the public housing development projects underway and the public concern on the building conditions of the existing aged estates. STH replied that the Administration/HA planned for redevelopment of PRH estates in accordance with the established principles with a view to improving the living environment of existing tenants as well as the families waiting for PRH. The Administration/HA would continue to keep in view and take forward redevelopment projects where appropriate.

39. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok relayed the concern on the HA's decision to take forward the projects to clear four of its factory estates for redevelopment. He opined that such redevelopment projects would in future provide public housing units for a total of about 4 000 households which might be less than the number of families of those who were currently working in the about 2 000 units in these four factory estates and whose livelihood would be affected by the clearance. Ir Dr LO said that the industrial operations being carried out in these factory units included those which played an important part in the production chain serving some industries. The clearance might adversely affect the economy as the affected tenants might not be able to rent suitable industrial premises for continuing such operations given the limited supply of low-rent units in other factory estates of HA.

40. STH replied that the Administration understood the concerns on the HA's clearance of the four factory estates and its impacts on the about 2 000 affected tenants as well as the industrial operations being carried out by them. He advised that some affected tenants had participated in the restricted tender for priority bidding of vacant factory units in the HA's two remaining factory estates (i.e. Chun Shing and Hoi Tai Factory Estates) where they would be able to continue their business. According to relevant information, vacant private factory units were also available in the market for affected tenants to continue business. On the day of announcement of the clearance of the four factory estates, HA had approved the clearance package for affected tenants, which

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included ex-gratia allowance; an early bird package for the affected tenants who did not lease units in Chun Shing and Hoi Tai Factory Estates and would vacate their premises within nine months from the date of announcement of the clearance, etc. HA would continue to communicate with the affected tenants to provide relevant information for them to make early decisions before the clearance. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok said that the Administration/HA should pay due regard to the difficulties encountered by the affected tenants and figure out ways to help them in a case by case basis.

Sale of unsold flats in Tenants Purchase Scheme estates

41. Dr Junius HO said that the measures to accelerate the sale of unsold flats in the 39 Tenants Purchase Scheme ("TPS") estates and to include the about 800 recovered flats in these estates under the Green Form Subsidised Home Ownership Scheme for sale might help meet the home ownership aspirations of the public. He opined that the Administration/HA should consider suitable measures to address the problem of co-existence of flat owners and HA as the landlord of PRH tenants in TPS estates, such as whether arrangements should be made to facilitate sitting PRH tenants in TPS estates who did not have intention to purchase their flats to transfer out of the estates.

Design and delivery of public housing projects

42. Mr Tony TSE enquired about the HA's work to facilitate ageing in place and measures to cater for the need of their elderly residents including wheelchair users, such as whether HA would make available certain public housing units with flexible design that would suit the need of these residents. STH replied that in designing its public housing projects, HA all along promoted the importance of elderly-friendly and disability inclusive culture and ensured that its flat design could cater for the need of elderly or disabled tenants through adaptation/home modification works.

43. Mr Tony TSE asked about the proportion of public housing households with household members aged 65 or above and whether all public housing units including the kitchens and toilets could be converted through simple modification works in order to meet the need of elderly residents including wheelchair users. PS(H) replied that the proportion of PRH households whose family members were aged 60 or above was about 22%. For estates built before 2002, HA would undertake adaptation/home modification works upon the requests of elderly tenants or families with elderly person and as recommended by physiotherapists/medical officers. If it was not practicable to carry out such works for their PRH units, the tenants might apply for transfer to other PRH units and HA would make appropriate arrangements as far as

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practicable. DDH(D&C) advised that since 2002, HA had adopted Universal Design concept in the design of domestic flats of new public housing developments, such as larger switches and doorbell buttons installed at a height easier to access, lever type sink/shower mixers and door handles, etc. DDH(D&C) further advised that to provide a living environment suitable for all ages and to support inter-generational harmony, HA provided children's play equipment and elderly recreational facilities near to each other in the outdoor areas of PRH estates.

44. In view that HA had selected a 12-storey domestic block at Tung Chung Area 99 as one of its MiC projects, Mr Tony TSE enquired whether adopting MiC would help shorten the construction period and lower the capital cost of the project. He further enquired whether the HA's adoption of MiC in public housing projects would cause difficulties in converting the housing units in future to make them suitable for elderly residents. DDH(D&C) replied that HA would include in this 12-storey domestic block the elements of Universal Design concept similar to those currently adopted in HA's other new public housing development projects. According to the tender proposals received for the project, the construction time required would be similar to that of its other projects. As regards the cost-effectiveness of the project, HA would keep in view and conduct a detailed assessment at suitable juncture.

45. Mr Tony TSE enquired about the benefits that would be brought about by HA's adoption of the "Design and Build" procurement model in its projects. STH replied that to help keep up with the increasing public housing production over the coming 10 years, HA considered it appropriate to adopt the "Design and Build" procurement model to leverage on contractors' expertise for supplementing the HD's housing production capacity and this might also help shorten the construction time of public housing projects.

II. Any other business

46. The Chairman thanked the Clerk and the Secretariat for their work and efforts in this session.

47. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 10:30 am.