

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PANEL ON WELFARE SERVICES

Meeting on 27 July 1998

**REVIEW OF PILOT NEIGHBOURHOOD LEVEL COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS (NLCDPs) IN OLD URBAN AREAS**

Background.

This paper informs Members of the outcome of the Review of Pilot NLCDPs in Old Urban Areas.

2. NLCDPs have been introduced in the 1970s to deprived and transient communities where the provision of welfare services and facilities were considered inadequate or non-existent. With the substantial increase in the overall provision of welfare and community building services over the years, the role of NLCDPs in filling social service gaps is fast diminishing. Having considered all relevant factors, the former Executive Council decided on 5 December 1995 that there was no need to extend NLCDP service to new towns, rural areas and Public Housing Estates (PHEs) not yet affected by redevelopment.

3. However, as there were some doubts as to the extent to which NLCDP - type of services might be needed in old urban areas, two pilot NLCDP projects were commenced in Nam Cheong and Mong Kok South in January 1995 to test the suitability of NLCDP services in old urban areas for a trial period of three years, to be followed by a review. The former Executive Council also decided in December 1995 that an independent review group should be set up to review the two pilot NLCDPs serving the old urban areas of Nam Cheong and Mong Kok. The Secretary for Home Affairs has appointed Professor Lieh Mak as the Chairperson of the Review Group for the Pilot NLCDPs in Old Urban Areas. Ten other members drawn from a wide cross-section of the community have also been appointed to serve on the Review Group. The principal task of the Review Group was to examine the effectiveness of the two pilot NLCDPs and to make recommendations on whether NLCDP services should be extended to other old urban areas.

4. The initial Report of the Review Group on Pilot NLCDPs in Old Urban Areas has been submitted to the Secretary for Home Affairs on 19 January 1998. It recommended, inter alia, that NLCDP services per se were not suitable in old urban areas but a form of Integrated Neighbourhood Projects (INPs) should be adopted to serve targeted old urban areas according to a set of selection criteria.

5. Having carefully examined the Review Group's initial report and having taken into account public views, including those of the social welfare sector, the Administration suggested that certain modifications to the INPs recommended by the Review Group should be made to enable modified INPs to be introduced in selected old urban areas to strengthen the outreaching efforts of appropriate local service units run by Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), in particular, to exclusively serve the target groups of new arrivals, the elderly and low-income families. The Review Group headed by Prof. Lieh Mak has endorsed the proposal under the modified INP scheme and has submitted its final report, incorporating its final recommendations, to the Secretary for Home Affairs on 2 July 1998.

6. Based on the recommendations in the report, we have made an ExCo submission on the Review of Pilot NLCDPs in Old Urban Areas on 21 July 1998.

Outcome of Review

7. After deliberation, ExCo decided that the two pilot NLCDPs in Nam Cheong and Mong Kok South should cease to operate upon their completion, and that a system for Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) to undertake modified Integrated Neighbourhood Projects (INPs) should be introduced in old urban areas to strengthen the outreaching efforts of appropriate local service units run by NGOs to exclusively serve the target groups of new arrivals, the elderly and low income families.

8. Moreover, ExCo decided that the interim practice of allowing NLCDP teams which require re-provisioning to operate new welfare projects offered to them on an exclusive basis should no longer continue, and that the existing practice to provide NLCDP services to public housing estates (PHEs) undergoing redevelopment or Temporary Housing Areas qualified under existing policy should continue.

9. We will now proceed to make detailed arrangements to implement the modified INPs for selected service areas. We will develop a set of service agreement including annual work plan and output indicators to ensure that the performance of the modified INPs could be effectively evaluated and monitored. NGOs will then be invited to apply to operate these new services. The modified INPs will be critically reviewed after their 3-year term to determine whether they need to be continued. We expect that the modified INPs will be able to meet the service needs of targeted old urban areas.

Conclusion

10. The above decision has been made after careful consideration of all relevant factors. The modified Integrated Neighbourhood Projects will represent a more focused and better approach to provide outreaching service to clearly defined targeted groups, i.e. new arrivals, the elderly and low-income families in the targeted service areas.

11. A copy of the LegCo Brief on the above subject is attached for Members' reference.

Home Affairs Bureau

23 July 1998