

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1) 2074/99-00
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration and cleared
by the Chairman)

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**Subcommittee on
Rehousing Arrangements for Residents Affected
by Clearance of Squatter Areas**

**Minutes of third meeting
held on Tuesday, 15 February 2000, at 4:30 pm
in Conference Room B of the Legislative Council Building**

Members present : Hon LEE Cheuk-yan (Chairman)
Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, JP
Hon CHAN Yuen-han
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung

Member absent : Hon LEE Wing-tat

**Public officers
attending** : **Housing Bureau**

Miss Sandy CHAN, Principal Assistant Secretary

Housing Department

Mr K H LAU, Business Director/Allocation & Marketing

Mr K N CHEUNG, Assistant Director/Operations &
Redevelopment

Miss Cecilia LEUNG, Senior Planning Officer

Clerk in attendance : Mrs Mary TANG, Chief Assistant Secretary (1)6

Staff in attendance : Miss Becky YU, Senior Assistant Secretary (1)3

Action

I Internal discussion

Members were dissatisfied with the Administration's negative response to the Subcommittee's requests made at the earlier meetings. They decided that the following requests should be pursued -

- (a) provision of urban Interim Housing (IH) units;
- (b) the relaxation of the 1984/85 Squatter Occupancy Survey, the 923 policy and the Comprehensive Means Test; and
- (c) the formulation of a rehousing policy for elderly residents affected by clearance of squatter areas.

2. Members also decided to meet with the Chairman of the Housing Authority (HA), the Chairman of the Rental Housing Committee of HA, and the Secretary for Housing regarding the Subcommittee's requests.

II Meeting with the Administration

(LC Paper No. CB(1) 956/99-00)

Progress of the Diamond Hill Squatter Area Clearance

3. The Business Director/Allocation and Marketing (BD/AM) reported the progress of the Diamond Hill Squatter Area Clearance and highlighted the rehousing position as at 11 February 2000 which was tabled at the meeting. Noting that there were 2,565 affected families, but only 2,121 families were eligible for rehousing under the Diamond Hill Squatter Area Clearance, Mr LI Wah-ming enquired about the outcome of application of the remaining 444 families. BD/AM replied that the 444 families were ineligible for rehousing as they were not covered by the pre-clearance survey. Since it was Government's policy not to render anyone homeless, the ineligible families would be rehoused to transit centres available upon the inception of Po Tin IH at Tuen Mun.

4. Responding to Miss CHAN Yuen-han's concern about the 953 families awaiting allocation to IH units, the Assistant Director/Operations and Redevelopment(AD/OR) said that these families would be given more choices in their selection of IH units at the forthcoming allocation exercise for IH held between 29 February and 14 March 2000. These families would be advised to make their choices earlier, because the longer the wait, the lower the chances of having urban units.

5. Regarding the allocation method, BD/AM advised that the priority of allocation was decided by ballot. The results indicated preference for urban units in Shek Lei Estate to rural units in Po Tin IH. More urban units in Shek Lei Estate would be made available through trawling exercises.

Action

6. As regards the rehousing of the 60 elderly households at the Diamond Hill Squatter Area Clearance, AD/OR informed that 19 households had been rehoused to PRH units upon the recommendation by the Social Welfare Department while the remaining were still under consideration.

Provision of IH in urban areas

7. Referring to the Administration's response circulated to members under LC Paper No. CB(1) 956/99-00(02), BD/AM reiterated that it would be undesirable to provide IH units in the urban areas. He stated that as new Waiting List (WL) applicants could only apply for PRH in the extended urban areas and the New Territories (NT), IH accommodation should likewise be provided in NT. It would be unfair to WL applicants if clearerees who were ineligible for PRH would be given urban units.

8. Miss CHAN Yuen-han stressed that squatter clearerees should be dealt with in a manner different from WL applicants since the former were forced out of their homes as a result of Government's clearance operations. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung queried whether there had been a policy change as he was aware that IH units had all along been provided in the urban areas. He considered that the present policy of allocating IH units in rural areas had deprived squatter clearerees the right to live in the urban areas. The uprooting of affected families from urban to rural areas would give rise to social and family problems. He urged the Administration to consider re-provisioning IH blocks in urban areas.

9. BD/AM said that the Temporary Housing Areas (THAs) in the past were meant to meet the short-term demands for IH. These THAs were mostly basic structures with shared toilet and kitchen facilities. New purpose-built IH had now been provided and these would replace THAs. The new IH units were much improved than THAs and had self-contained toilet and kitchen facilities. The IH units would be allocated to residents affected by squatter clearance and redevelopment who were not yet eligible for public rental housing (PRH) units. In accordance with the 923 policy, all residents rehoused to THA/IH after 23 September 1995 had to register on WL. They would be allocated PRH when their WL applications matured and they satisfied WL eligibility criteria. The purpose of the 923 policy was to prevent queue-jumping by squatting and to ensure rational allocation of public housing resources. The policy had achieved its intended purpose since its implementation and was well received by the public. It would not be fair to WL applicants if squatter clearerees were given choices of urban units. The Principal Assistant Secretary (PAS/H) said that the suggestions put forward by members would be carefully assessed by the Administration and where appropriate, flexibility would be exercised in implementing the rehousing policy.

10. On the Chairman's enquiry as to whether it was Government's intention to move all public housing developments to NT so that the more precious urban area could be reserved for private developments, PAS/H said that this was not the case as a lot of land in the urban area had been set aside for public housing developments. As regards members' query as to why existing IH sites could not be redeveloped to meet IH purposes, PAS/H said that redevelopment plans would have to be compatible with the surrounding environment with regard to land use and planning.

Action

11. The Chairman expressed concern that when all the urban IH units in Shek Lei Estate had been allocated, squatter clearances would be left with no choice but to be rehoused to the Po Tin IH in Tuen Mun. There would be serious opposition from the affected residents who would have to uproot their families to move to NT.

12. BD/AM said in response that the Po Tin IH was adjacent to the Leung King Estate and the area was currently served by the Light Rail. Transportation would be made more convenient upon the operation of the West Rail. Supporting infrastructure would be provided for the convenience of the residents. The IH units would be ready for occupation in March/April 2000 and the residents would be able to see for themselves that the units were much more improved than the existing THA/IH units.

Request for meeting the key decision-makers in housing policies

13. As regards the way forward, the Chairman informed the Administration that the Subcommittee had earlier agreed to invite the Chairman of HA, the Chairman of the Rental Housing Committee of HA, and the Secretary for Housing to meeting to exchange views on the rehousing arrangements for residents affected by the clearance of squatter areas. The meeting could be open or closed to the public, subject to the Administration's view.

14. BD/AM said that it would be desirable to await the allocation results of the Diamond Hill Squatter Area Clearance and the progress of resettlement in Po Tin IH before convening the proposed meeting. He added that much assistance had been given to the affected residents, and these included arranging rehousing of elderlies, providing information and assistance in the choice of allocation to IH units; and arranging visits to IH units etc. As the allocation results would be available in late March/early April 2000, members agreed that the meeting should be held sometime in April 2000. Meanwhile, members would decide on the need or otherwise to hold an internal discussion in March 2000.

15. PAS/H agreed to convey the Subcommittee's request to the Administration.

III Any other business

16. There being no other business, the meeting closed at 5:50 pm.

Legislative Council Secretariat

27 September 2000