

For information

## **Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs**

### **The co-ordinating role of District Officers at district level**

#### **Purpose**

This information paper sets out the co-ordinating role of District Officers in view of issues raised by Sham Shui Po District Council (SSPDC) members at their meeting with Legislative Council (LegCo) Members on 9 June 2005.

#### **Background**

2. At the meeting with LegCo Members on 9 June 2005, SSPDC members expressed concern about the effectiveness of enforcement action taken by departments concerned against illegal shop-front extensions in the district and the role of the District Officer in co-ordination.

#### **Responsibilities of different departments in addressing SSPDC's concern**

3. The issue of shop-front extension involves street management. It is important that the relevant departments exercise their statutory powers against illegal shop-front extensions to ensure effective street management. In this connection, they will take into account their departmental policies and resources available and the views of the District Councils. It is also important that the departments concerned keep under review their policies and the effectiveness of existing legislation.

4. Generally speaking, illegal shop-front extensions in Sham Shui Po mentioned in paragraph 2 above are mainly unauthorised structures which come under the purview of Buildings Department (BD) or Lands Department (Lands D) or both, under the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123) and the Lands (Miscellaneous Provisions) Ordinance (Cap. 28). Apart from BD and Lands D, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will take enforcement action under the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap. 132) against nuisances created by illegal shop-front extensions for the maintenance of environmental hygiene.

## **Co-ordinating role of District Officers at district level**

5. The District Officer is the representative of Government at district level. He is responsible for overseeing directly the operation of the District Administration Scheme in the district, ensuring that district problems are resolved promptly through inter-departmental consultation and co-operation.

6. The District Officer chairs the District Management Committee (DMC), which consists of representatives of the core departments in the district. Representatives of other departments may be invited to attend DMC meetings as and when necessary. To enhance communication between the DMC and the DC, the DC Chairman and Vice Chairman attend DMC as members. The chairmen of the DC committees also attend DMC meetings to assist discussions or to give views whenever appropriate.

7. Street management is a complicated issue that cuts across different departments. Depending on the extent and seriousness of the obstructions, the nuisances caused and the associated street management problems arising therefrom, it is often more effective for the departments concerned to plan and mount joint operations under the guidance and co-ordination of DMC. DMC will also monitor the progress of these inter-departmental operations in the district.

8. It is important that the District Officer, as Chairman of DMC, take an active co-ordinating role to ensure that district problems are resolved through inter-departmental consultation and co-operation.

## **Conclusion**

9. We will continue to review the role of District Officers as a co-ordinator at district level and the effectiveness of DMCs in resolving district issues.

**Home Affairs Department  
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