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Panel on Housing

Meeting on 5 January 2009

Background brief on Total Maintenance Scheme

Purpose

This paper set out the development of the Total Maintenance Scheme, and gives a brief account of the views and concerns expressed by the Panel on Housing (the Panel).

Background

2. The Housing Authority (HA) is responsible for managing and maintaining its assets with a view to maximizing their performance and economic life. While the common and external areas in public rental housing (PRH) estates are properly maintained, there is room for improvement in the standard of maintenance within the flats. In 2006, HA launched the Total Management Scheme (TMS), which aims at providing comprehensive, customer-oriented maintenance service featuring proactive in-flat inspection and enhanced services upon tenants' requests for repairs. A three-pronged approach has been adopted to achieve the targets –

- (a) A proactive and comprehensive approach to identify maintenance problems;
- (b) Prompt response to emergencies and tenants' requests for repairs; and
- (c) Enhanced promotional and educational programmes.

It is expected that in-flat inspection for 30 estates can be carried out each year so that all PRH flats will be inspected over a period of five years. The expenditure for the maintenance and repair works under TMS would be about \$1,257 million per annum, totalling about \$6,300 million over the five-year period.

3. Key features of TMS include -

- (a) In-flat Inspection Ambassadors (IIAs) – to provide one-stop service for inside flat inspection and repairs, educate tenants on home care and maintenance issues, record the maintenance conditions through

flat-to-flat inspections, and build up a communication network with tenants;

- (b) Dedicated Task Forces –to handle major maintenance items, including works under the Comprehensive Structural Investigation Programme (CSIP), in a expeditious and coordinated manner;
- (c) Estate Improvement Programme – to carry out comprehensive structural investigation for PRH estates aged about 40 years or above under CSIP. Necessary works will be undertaken to enhance the condition of blocks or estates which are structurally safe but require repair;
- (d) Total Maintenance Scheme System (TMSS) – a computerized system to facilitate the effective management of in-flat inspection records, issuing and processing of works orders and scheduling of inspection and repair works appointments;
- (e) Maintenance Hotline – to enable tenants to make inspection appointments, enquire about the progress of repair works, put forward maintenance requests and lodge complaints;
- (f) Proactive public relations management – to strengthen communication with tenants with wider use of the HA Channel to ensure that policies and issues affecting the tenants are widely publicized. A TMS website has been set up to allow tenants to make enquiries on the one hand, and HA to gauge the tenants' views on maintenance services on the other; and
- (g) Publicity and Tenants Education Programme – to promote TMS through various means of publicity, including pamphlets, posters, and road shows, with a view to win the support of the tenants and the general public.

Progress

4. As at April 2008, HA has completed in-flat inspection for 50 relatively old estates. Inspection findings showed that more than 85% of the flats required different levels of repairs. Repair/maintenance works for 24 estates, involving about 150 000 works items, have been completed by February 2008, with a total of expenditure of around \$107 million.

Deliberations by the Panel

5. The progress of implementation of TMS was discussed by the Panel at its meetings on 5 February 2007 and 8 April 2008. Query was raised on how HA could prevent the recurrence of problems encountered in previous maintenance schemes, such as disputes and poor performance of works contractors etc, under TMS. To

ensure quality of works of outside contractors, members stressed the importance of putting in place a sound quality control system. Consideration should also be given to reviewing HA's practice of awarding the contracts to the lowest bidder lest this would inevitably compromise the quality of works. To minimize the nuisance to the tenants during maintenance works, efforts should be made to coordinate the works among different contractors and sub-contractors with a view to completing the works in a flat within the same day. Temporary rehousing should be considered for residents affected by large-scale in-flat repairs/maintenance works. Transfer to other housing units should be provided for tenants whose flats were in extremely poor condition.

6. Questions were also raised on the criteria adopted in determining which elements or service installations should be repaired or replaced, how disputes in this regard should be handled, and whether old estates scheduled for demolition within the next five years would be covered by TMS. Some members questioned the adequacy of IIAs recruited under TMS to carry out in-flat inspections, and cost implications associated with the development of computer systems for TMS.

7. Some members opined that the Administration should make use of TMS to promote greening and environmental protection initiatives, such as green rooftops and energy conservation, in PRH estates. Barrier-free access and appropriate facilities in common areas and inside individual flats should also be provided to cater for the needs of disabled and elderly residents. Facilities, such as ramps and railings, should be provided in estates with high proportion of elderly residents. Wherever possible, consideration should be given to providing lifts or escalators in some old estates.

Relevant papers

Information paper provided by the Administration for the Housing Panel meeting on 5 February 2007

<http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/hg/papers/hg0205cb1-836-6-e.pdf>

Minutes of the Housing Panel meeting on 5 February 2007

<http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/hg/minutes/hg070205.pdf>

Information paper provided by the Administration for the Housing Panel meeting on 8 April 2008

<http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/hg/papers/hg0408cb1-1161-3-e.pdf>

Minutes of the Housing Panel meeting on 8 April 2008

<http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/hg/minutes/hg080408.pdf>