

**For information
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**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
PANEL ON WELFARE SERVICES**

**Subcommittee on Improving Barrier Free Access
and Facilities for Persons with Disabilities**

**Rehabilitation Advisory Committee's Discussion with
The Link Management Limited on the
Provision of Barrier-Free Access and Facilities**

Purpose

As requested by Members at the meeting of 21 June 2011, this paper summarises the discussion between the Rehabilitation Advisory Committee ("RAC") and The Link Management Limited ("The Link") regarding the provision of barrier-free access and facilities in the properties managed by The Link.

Background

2. RAC serves as the principal advisory body to the Government on matters pertaining to the well-being of persons with disabilities. Its Subcommittee on Access ("Subcommittee") is specifically responsible for advising on matters relating to accessibility, including the provision of barrier-free access and facilities.

3. In view of the growing public concerns over the accessibility of premises and facilities managed by The Link, the Subcommittee invited The Link to attend its meeting on 3 December 2010 to discuss the concerns of persons with disabilities, with a view to improving the accessibility of its premises and facilities.

Issues of concern and follow up action taken by the Link

4. The views put forward by the Subcommittee at the meeting on 3 December 2010 are summarised as follows -

- (a) The Link should enhance the accessibility of its website to facilitate the use by persons with disabilities;
- (b) The Link should maintain regular contacts with groups of persons with disabilities in order to understand their needs;
- (c) Taking note of the Housing Department (“HD”)’s proactive efforts in devising a comprehensive retrofitting programme to improve the accessibility of the properties under its management in response to recommendations of the Equal Opportunities Commission Formal Investigation Report on Accessibility in Publicly Accessible Premises, the Subcommittee requested The Link to take similar action and cooperate with HD in the implementation of the retrofitting programme;
- (d) The Link should also follow the Government’s practice to appoint access officers to take care of the accessibility matters of the properties under its management;
- (e) The Subcommittee invited The Link to attend the Subcommittee meeting once a year in the future to maintain efficient communication;
- (f) Signage of barrier-free route should be prominently and clearly displayed at The Link’s premises/facilities; and
- (g) Apart from accessibility issues, The Link should also take other measures to promote social inclusiveness, such as providing venues for rehabilitation groups to organize arts and cultural activities for persons with disabilities and providing concessionary rent for social enterprises which employ persons with disabilities.

5. The Link undertook to favourably consider the Subcommittee’s suggestions. Subsequently, The Link has also announced the implementation of a retrofitting programme for its properties.

Way Forward

6. The Subcommittee will continue to monitor the progress of improvement works to be carried out by The Link, and maintain close contact with The Link to convey the needs of persons with disabilities regarding barrier-free facilities.

Labour and Welfare Bureau

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