

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(1) 2406/11-12  
(These minutes have been seen  
by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/HG/1

**Panel on Housing**

**Minutes of meeting**  
**held on Tuesday, 17 April 2012, at 10:00 am**  
**in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex**

**Members present** : Hon LEE Wing-tat (Chairman)  
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH (Deputy Chairman)  
Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, SBS, S.B.St.J., JP  
Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, SBS, JP  
Hon James TO Kun-sun  
Hon CHAN Kam-lam, SBS, JP  
Hon Mrs Sophie LEUNG LAU Yau-fun, GBS, JP  
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung  
Dr Hon Joseph LEE Kok-long, SBS, JP  
Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP  
Hon CHAN Hak-kan  
Hon WONG Sing-chi  
Hon WONG Kwok-kin, BBS  
Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP  
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC  
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung

**Members absent** : Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, SBS, JP  
Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP  
Hon Vincent FANG Kang, SBS, JP  
Hon Tanya CHAN

**Public officers** : **For item IV**  
**attending**

Transport and Housing Bureau

Mr D W PESCOD, JP  
Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing  
(Housing)

Ms Annette LEE, JP  
Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing  
(Housing)

Mr Eugene FUNG  
Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Special  
Duties)

Buildings Department

Ms Clarice YU  
Chief Building Surveyor/Hong Kong East and  
Heritage Unit

Lands Department

Mr CHAU Hon-yum  
Deputy Director/Legal (Legal Advisory and  
Conveyancing Office)

Mr Armstrong CHU  
Chief Land Conveyancing Officer/Port and Railway  
Development (Legal Advisory and Conveyancing  
Office)

**For item V**

Transport and Housing Bureau

Mr D W PESCOD, JP  
Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing  
(Housing)

Ms Annette LEE, JP  
Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing  
(Housing)

Housing Department

Mr Tony LIU  
Assistant Director (Estate Management) 3

**For item VI**

Transport and Housing Bureau

Mr D W PESCOD, JP  
Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing  
(Housing)

Housing Department

Ms Ada FUNG, JP  
Deputy Director (Development & Construction)

Ms Ferna SHUM  
Chief Architect 2

Mr Kenneth WONG  
Chief Civil Engineer

Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Miss Margrit LI  
Assistant Director (Leisure Services) 1

Mr Harry TSANG  
Chief Executive Officer (Planning) 1

**For item VII**

Transport and Housing Bureau

Mr D W PESCOD, JP  
Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing  
(Housing)

Housing Department

Ms Ada FUNG, JP  
Deputy Director (Development & Construction)

Ms Annie TANG, JP  
Deputy Director (Corporate Services)

Environmental Protection Department

Mr Benny WONG, JP  
Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (1)

Transport Department

Mr Anthony LOO, JP  
Acting Deputy Commissioner for Transport/Planning  
and Technical Services

**Clerk in attendance** : Miss Becky YU  
Chief Council Secretary (1)1

**Staff in attendance** : Mrs Mary TANG  
Senior Council Secretary (1)1

Miss Mandy POON  
Legislative Assistant (1)1

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**I. Confirmation of minutes**

(LC Paper No. CB(1) 1524/11-12 — Minutes of the special meeting held on 5 January 2012)

The minutes of the special meeting held on 5 January 2012 were confirmed.

**II. Information paper issued since last meeting**

2. Members noted that the following information papers had been issued since last meeting -

LC Paper Nos. CB(1) 1240/11-12(01) — Administration's papers on  
and CB(1) 1516/11-12(01) Land Registry Statistics in  
February and March 2012  
(press release)

**III. Items for discussion at the next meeting**

- (LC Paper No. CB(1) 1538/11-12(01) — List of follow-up actions  
LC Paper No. CB(1) 1538/11-12(02) — List of outstanding items for discussion)

3. Members noted that the Administration had proposed the following two items for discussion at the next regular meeting scheduled for Monday, 7 May 2012, at 2:30 pm -

- (a) Progress report on the addition of lifts and escalators in Housing Authority's existing public rental housing estates; and  
  
(b) Redevelopment of Pak Tin Estate.

Mr Alan LEONG noted with concern that the Housing Department (HD) seemed to have exercised self censorship on display of posters/banners in public rental housing (PRH) estates by political parties. Mr LEONG suggested and members agreed to include the subject on "Policy on display of posters/banners in public rental housing estates" in the agenda of the next meeting. The Administration should be requested to brief the Panel on the existing policy on display of posters/banners in PRH estates, and the reasons behind the recent tightening of the policy.

**IV. Proposed legislation to regulate the sale of first-hand residential properties**

- (LC Paper No. CB(1) 1538/11-12(03) — Administration's paper on proposed legislation to regulate the sale of first-hand residential properties  
  
LC Paper No. CB(1) 1538/11-12(04) — Paper on regulation of sales of first-hand private residential properties prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (updated background brief))

4. The Chairman said that while the Residential Properties (First-hand Sales) Bill (the Bill) was being scrutinized by the relevant Bills Committee, members would like to know the measures being taken to deal with problems, such as the recent complaints about floor numbering of residential blocks in the recent sale of "Oceanaire" (a first-hand residential development in Ma On Shan), pending the enactment of the Bill and setting up of the relevant enforcement authority.

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5. The Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing) (PSTH(H)) explained that the complaints were mainly on insufficient information provided in the sales brochures regarding the difference in levels between the lowest residential floor of the buildings and the adjacent streets. In fact, the Buildings Department (BD) had revised the Practice Note on standardization of floor numbering in May 2010. In the light of the incident, BD had reminded stakeholders of the requirements set out in the revised Practice Note, and requested them to revisit the building plans (including those approved prior to the promulgation of the revised Practice Note) and make necessary amendments if the floor numbering system did not comply with the prevailing requirements. To help the public to visualize the relationship between the lowest residential floor of a building and the street level (regardless of how that lowest residential floor was named), an additional requirement had been included in the Bill to require the inclusion of a plan in the sales brochures showing a cross-section of the building in relation to every street adjacent to the building, and the level of every such street in relation to a known datum and to the level of the lowest residential floor of the building.

Residential Properties (First-hand Sales) Bill

6. While welcoming the additional requirement in the Bill to address public concerns, Mr WONG Kwok-hing opined that this might have demonstrated that the Bill had not been well thought out in the first place. He enquired if there were other provisions in the Bill which would require further improvements. PSTH(H) said that the Bill was drawn up after extensive and detailed discussion at the Steering Committee on the Regulation of the Sales of First-hand Residential Properties by Legislation (the Steering Committee). The Bill covered a comprehensive spectrum of issues relating to the sales of first-hand residential properties, and took into account problematic practices in the sales of first-hand residential properties over the years. The Transport and Housing Bureau (THB) refined the Bill taking into account the views received during the public consultation exercise. The relevant Bills Committee was scrutinizing the Bill, and THB welcomed views to further refine the Bill to enhance its effectiveness.

7. Mr Alan LEONG was concerned that vendors might tend to provide less property information in the sales brochures to reduce the chances for being caught for misrepresentations and dissemination of false or misleading information. This might deprive prospective buyers of the knowledge in making informed decisions. He enquired if the Bill had set out all the essential information to be included in the sales brochures, without which the vendors would be held liable for. PSTH(H) confirmed that the Bill had set out the detailed requirements for a sales brochure which should contain all the prescribed information, including the facilities and the use of land in the

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surrounding areas. The sales brochure of a first-hand residential development would be a definitive and authoritative document which would be the reference point for anyone who wished to buy a property in the development. The Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Special Duties) (DSTH(SD)) added that Schedule 1 to the Bill had set out comprehensively all the information required to be included in a sales brochure.

8. The Chairman enquired if the enforcement authority could respond to complaints in an expeditious manner. He also enquired if the guidelines to be issued by the enforcement authority were mandatory or advisory in nature. PSTH(H) said that the enforcement authority was expected to develop guidelines and to carry out investigations proactively within the scope of the legislation. DSTH(SD) added that the guidelines to be developed by the enforcement authority were not mandatory. The guidelines would be reviewed and updated from time to time.

9. Mr Alan LEONG opined that instead of relying on the Consumer Council (CC), consideration should be given to empowering the enforcement authority to lodge legal proceedings on behalf of consumers against misrepresentations and dissemination of false or misleading information in relation to the sale of first-hand residential properties. DSTH(SD) said that while the Bill had provided that misrepresentation and dissemination of false or misleading information were criminal liabilities, it would not preclude consumers from taking civil proceedings against the vendors. Given that agreements on the sale and purchase of first-hand residential properties were contracts entered into between the vendor and the purchaser, it was appropriate that disputes relating to the agreements be resolved between the two parties. Apart from the Consumer Legal Action Fund under CC which would provide financial and legal assistance to meritorious cases of significant public interest or injustice, the Home Affairs Bureau had proposed expanding the scope of the Supplementary Legal Aid Scheme under the Legal Aid Ordinance (Cap. 91) to cover monetary claims against vendors in the sale of first-hand residential properties. The Administration considered the existing arrangements appropriate.

10. Mr WONG Kwok-hing expressed concern about possible duplication of the enforcement authority under the Bill and the Estate Agent Authority (EAA) in regulating the sales practices in relation to residential properties. PSTH(H) said that there should not be any duplication between EAA and the enforcement authority as the former dealt with estate agents while the latter primarily dealt with vendors of first-hand residential properties. As a member of the Steering Committee, EAA followed closely the progress of the Bill. THB would continue to liaise closely with EAA to work together to ensure that estate agents were well aware of the provisions in the Bill.

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11. Mr WONG Kwok-hing enquired when the Ordinance would come into effect after enactment of the Bill. PSTH(H) said that the Bill was the top priority work of THB. THB would work closely with the Legislative Council in order for the Bill to be enacted within the current Legislative Council term. The Ordinance would come into operation on a day to be appointed by the Secretary of the Transport and Housing by notice published in the Gazette. Given the time required for setting up the enforcement authority, it was expected that the Ordinance would take effect one year after enactment of the Bill. Mr WONG expressed concern about the long lead time for the Ordinance to come into operation.

A recent case

12. Referring to the Administration's reply to the oral question raised by Mr Alan LEONG at the Council meeting on 29 February 2012 regarding the floor numbering system of buildings, the Chairman noted that BD issued the revised Practice Note on standardization of floor numbering in May 2010 to provide a code of good practice on floor numbering for the industry to follow. While the general building plans of "Oceanaire" were first approved by BD in December 2007, the authorized person concerned had subsequently submitted amendment plans and finalized plans in July 2009 and December 2010 respectively, the latter of which should have taken into account the revised Practice Note. Given that the site of "Oceanaire" was in the shape of a pot with the lowest point in the middle part where the clubhouse was built, the fifth floor of the clubhouse was at the same level of adjacent streets. It followed that the lowest floor of the residential blocks built around the clubhouse should be designated as the fifth floor. He enquired whether BD was aware of the unique topography of the site when it approved the building plans of "Oceanaire" that the fifth floor of the residential blocks was actually at the same level as adjacent streets.

13. The Chief Building Surveyor/Hong Kong East and Heritage Unit (CBS/HKEHU) explained that the residential floors of towers 6 and 7 were connected to the clubhouse. As the residential floor above the podium floor of towers 6 and 7 was at a level similar to the fifth floor of the clubhouse, such residential floor was also designated as the fifth floor of the residential blocks. The numbering system adopted for towers 6 and 7 was applicable to all other residential blocks. The fifth floor of the residential blocks, at a level of approximately 11.6 metres (m) above the principal datum, was actually higher than the adjacent streets, which was at a level ranging from approximately 5.2m to 8.2m above the principal datum. BD was aware of the situation as a cross-section of the buildings and the adjacent streets had been incorporated into the building plans and submitted to BD for approval. BD considered that the floor numbering system was generally acceptable and in line with the revised Practice Note.

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14. The Chairman enquired if BD had notified the Lands Department (LandsD) about the anomaly since under the Consent Scheme, LandsD might require the developers to set out the relevant information in the sales brochures for reference by prospective buyers. CBS/HKEHU said that upon receipt of the building plans, BD had referred the plans to the relevant departments for consideration under the centralized processing system. The Deputy Director/Legal (Legal Advisory and Conveyancing Office) said that the draft Deed of Mutual Covenant required under the land grant to be approved by the Director of Lands should set out the floor numbering in accordance with the building plans approved by BD. To prevent similar recurrences before the coming into effect of the Ordinance, LandsD issued a Circular Memorandum on 22 March 2012 to incorporate into the Consent Scheme a requirement for sales brochure to set out a plan showing a cross-section of the building in relation to every street adjacent to the building, and the level of every such street in relation to a known datum and to the level of the lowest residential floor of the building. This would help the public to visualize the relationship between the lowest residential floor of a building and the street level, regardless of how that lowest residential floor was named.

15. The Chairman opined that there should be better coordination between BD and LandsD to guard against malpractices in the property trade. PSTH(H) said that LandsD and BD each had well established guidelines for the approval process. In the light of the present case, both LandsD and BD had responded quickly by introducing additional requirements in the Consent Scheme and reminding stakeholders of the requirements set out in the revised Practice Notes respectively. The Ordinance, if enacted, would regulate the sale of first-hand residential properties in a comprehensive manner to prevent abuse by unscrupulous developers.

**V. Rent payment for public housing tenants**

(LC Paper No. CB(1) 1538/11-12(05) — Administration's paper on rent payment for public housing tenants)

16. The Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing) (DSTH(H)) briefed members on the Administration's proposal to pay two months' rent for tenants living in the rental units of the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) and the Hong Kong Housing Society (HS).

17. While supporting the proposal, Mr WONG Kwok-hing enquired if consideration could be given to providing rental assistance to those applicants on HA's Waiting List (WL) whose eligibility for public rental housing (PRH) had been confirmed and pending allocation due to insufficient supply of PRH

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flats. He held the view that these applicants, who had been paying high rentals for private accommodation, should be entitled to the same rental assistance given to PRH tenants. PSTH(H) clarified that the eligibility of WL applicants for PRH would only be assessed when their turn of allocation was due. DSTH(H) added that the proposal to pay two months' rent for tenants living in rental units of HA and HS formed part of the package of relief measures announced in the 2012-2013 Budget. The rent payment proposal was in line with what had been done in the past. Apart from the relief measures provided within the social safety net (including the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA)), the Community Care Fund (CCF) had launched various programmes to provide assistance to people facing economic difficulties, in particular those who fell outside the social safety net or those within the safety net but had special circumstances that were not covered. These included the one-off subsidy to CSSA recipients living in private housing and paying rents that exceeded the maximum rent allowance under the CSSA Scheme. CCF was also considering to provide one-off allowance assistance to those inadequately housed, such as low-income households living in cubicles and bedspace apartments. Mr WONG however pointed out that some WL applicants were not eligible for CSSA and CCF.

18. As the role of HS was to provide subsidized housing for low-income households, Mr WONG Kwok-hing said that tenants of HS rental units were dissatisfied with the recent hefty rental increase by HS, which would indeed offset the benefit to be brought by the rent payment proposal. Given the financial autonomy of HS, the Administration had no control over rental policy of HS. Together with HS tenants' representatives, he had staged a protest at the head office of HS in Tai Hang against the rental increase. PSTH(H) explained that the rent payment proposal was separate from rental adjustments which should be determined by HS, and that it would not be appropriate for the Administration to interfere with such decisions. Notwithstanding this, DSTH(H) said that the Administration had advised HS to take into account the affordability of tenants in making rental increases.

19. Mr WONG Kwok-hing enquired about the timeframes for the rent payment proposal to be submitted for approval by the Finance Committee (FC), and the implementation of the proposal. DSTH(H) said that the proposal would be submitted to FC in May/June 2012. Subject to FC's approval, HA tenants/licensees and HS tenants would not be required to pay all or part of the rent/licence fees for the months of July and August 2012.

20. In concluding, the Chairman said that members did not raise objection to the submission of the proposal to FC.

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**VI. PWP Item No. 437RO – District open space adjoining Lower Ngau Tau Kok Public Housing Redevelopment**

(LC Paper No. CB(1) 1538/11-12(06) — Administration's paper on PWP Item No. 437RO – District open space adjoining Lower Ngau Tau Kok Public Housing Redevelopment)

21. PSTH(H) gave a power-point presentation on the Administration's proposal to upgrade **437RO** to Category A for constructing a district open space (DOS) adjoining Lower Ngau Tau Kok (LNTK) public housing redevelopment (the Project).

*(Post-meeting note: A set of the power-point presentation materials was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1) 1633/11-12(01) on 18 April 2012.)*

Project scope

22. While welcoming the Project, Mr CHAN Kam-lam noted that the two basketball courts originally provided in the old LNTK Estate area were not included in the design of the proposed DOS, except for a mini-soccer pitch. Given the scale of DOS, there should be enough space for the reprovisioning of at least one basketball court. Mr Fred LI echoed that part of the sizable jogging track could be used to provide for a basketball court instead. The Chief Architect 2 (CA2) said that a basketball court had already been provided at the rooftop of the carpark in of LNTK Estate Redevelopment Phase 1. Therefore, it might not be necessary to use up part of the jogging track to provide for a basketball court.

23. Mr Fred LI enquired about the utilization rate of the basketball court, adding that it would be justified to use part of the jogging track to develop a basketball court within DOS if the utilization rate was high. Mr Alan LEONG supported narrowing down the scale of the jogging track to make way for a basketball court, which could also be used as a volley ball court. CA2 said that apart from the basketball court at LNTK Estate Redevelopment Phase 1, other sports facilities (including a badminton court) would also be provided at DOS. The Assistant Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Leisure Services)1 (ADLCS(LS)1) added that the inclusion of an additional basketball court in DOS might not be necessary as there were already three existing basketball courts managed by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) in the vicinity. While there were no formal statistics on the utilization rate of the three existing basketball courts, these were patronised by students

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and nearby residents after school or after work. Mr LI however pointed out that basketball courts managed by HD would be quite different from that by LCSD as the former would mainly serve tenants while the latter would be open to the general public. The provision of a basketball court in DOS managed by LCSD would be more welcome by the LNTK community. To ascertain the need for an additional basketball court in DOS, the Administration was requested to provide information on the utilization rate of the three existing basketball courts for members' reference.

*Mini-soccer pitch with covered spectator stand*

24. Mr CHAN Kam-lam enquired if the mini-soccer pitch and the covered spectator stand could be used as the venue for celebrating the Yu Lan Festival which was a major annual event of the community. He also asked if an open performance area complete with a stage and cover should be provided. As the use of artificial lawn might limit the usage of the mini-soccer pitch, Mr Fred LI enquired about the type of materials to be used in paving the mini-soccer pitch. CA2 said that the mini-soccer pitch would be a hard pitch. Together with the covered spectator stand, these could be used for multi-purposes such as open performances. ADLCS(LS)1 added that, subject to prior application by organizers, the mini-soccer pitch could be used for celebration of the Yu Lan Festival.

*Fitness corner*

25. Given the ageing population in LNTK, Mr Fred LI held the view that more facilities should be provided for the elderly. Mr Alan LEONG also enquired about the facilities to be provided at the fitness centre and the children's play area. CA2 said that recreational and fitness facilities would be included in DOS for use by the elderly, children and disabled persons.

*Sitting out areas with pergolas*

26. Mr CHAN Kam-lam stressed that the pergolas at the sitting out areas of DOS should be large enough to provide shelter in times of rain. CA2 said that in addition to the existing pergolas along Kwun Tong Road and Ngau Tau Kok Road, a number of pergolas would also be provided in the recreational areas of DOS. ADLCS(LS)1 added that a sufficient number of pergolas would be provided in DOS. Details on the facilities to be provided would be worked out in consultation with HD.

27. Noting that the sports and recreational facilities managed by LCSD were mostly fenced off, Mr CHAN Kam-lam enquired if the same would apply to DOS. To facilitate easy access to DOS, he considered more entrances to DOS

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should be provided. CA2 said that the mini-soccer pitch would be fenced off for safety reasons to prevent passers-by from being hit. She added that DOS would be an open area with entrances suitably located for the convenience of users. Meanwhile, noise barriers would be provided near Block 6 of LNTK Estate Redevelopment Phase 2 facing the park to mitigate noise nuisances. Mr CHAN was concerned that the noise barriers might block the views of estate blocks and might not be welcomed by the community.

Barrier-free access

28. Mr CHAN Kam-lam pointed out that with the closure of Ngau Tau Kok Road Municipal Services Building at night, pedestrians could not use the lift to gain access to the footbridge nearby. He also enquired about the feasibility of providing a covered walkway connecting the two footbridges at Chun Wah Road and Ngau Tau Kok Road near the Ngau Tau Kok Road Municipal Services Building for the convenience of pedestrians. The Deputy Director (Development & Construction) said that the Highways Department had commissioned a consultancy study on the design and installation of a lift for the footbridge at Chun Wah Road to enable barrier-free access. As there were a lot of trees and underground utilities at the southern side of the Chun Wah Road footbridge along the Ngau Tau Kok Road, it would be difficult to carry out construction works in the area. Residents of the Amoy Gardens could make use of the lift connecting the footbridge at Fuk To Road to reach the Kowloon Bay MTR Station. There were also a number of connecting footbridges that would lead to the Kowloon Bay MTR Station. Where possible, HD would provide road-crossing facilities for the convenience of the public.

Others

29. Given the proximity of DOS to Kowloon Bay MTR Station, Mr WONG Kwok-hing opined that consideration should be given to providing an underground carpark in DOS to encourage car owners to make use of the mass transit system. PSTH(H) said that while HD would endeavour to provide various facilities for the proposed public housing redevelopment, the need for an underground carpark might not be imminent given the fairly low level of car ownership among residents in the neighborhood of DOS which mainly comprised public housing estates. Besides, he was not in a position to comment on the policy on provision of carparks which fell outside his remit. It would be for the Transport Department and the Highways Department to decide on the need for feeder services. Nevertheless, he would relay members' views to the relevant departments for consideration. Mr WONG however pointed out that different departments should work together to make the best use of land resources. The provision of an underground carpark in DOS might encourage vehicle owners not living in the area to make use of the "park and ride" service.

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Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung however cautioned that the provision of an underground carpark would increase the traffic flow in the area.

30. In concluding, the Chairman said that members did not raise objection to the submission of the proposal to the Public Works Subcommittee.

**VII. Proposed creation of directorate posts in Housing Department and increase in establishment ceilings for Transport Department and Environmental Protection Department to cope with the upfront increase in workload for implementation of the New Home Ownership Scheme**

(LC Paper No. CB(1) 1538/11-12(07) — Administration's paper on proposed creation of directorate posts in Housing Department and increase in establishment ceilings for Transport Department and Environmental Protection Department to cope with the upfront increase in workload for implementation of the New Home Ownership Scheme)

31. PSTH(H) briefed members on the proposed creation of six directorate posts in HD, and increase in establishment ceilings for the Transport Department and the Environmental Protection Department. He said that the proposals aimed to allow HD to cope with the upfront increase in workload for implementation of the New Home Ownership Scheme (HOS). DD(D&C) gave a power-point presentation on the proposals.

*(Post-meeting note: A set of the power-point presentation materials was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1) 1633/11-12(02) on 18 April 2012.)*

32. Mr Fred LI noted that the average HOS production before the cessation of HOS in 2002 was about 13 630 flats per annum, which was much higher than the targeted annual production of 5 000 under the New HOS. He enquired whether the proposed creation of posts under HD was necessitated by the earlier deletion of posts following the cessation of HOS. Mr CHAN Hak-kan also enquired if the proposed six new directorate posts under the New HOS were required because the professional staff who were formerly engaged in HOS production prior to the cessation of HOS had all retired. While not opposing to

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the proposed creation of posts, Dr Joseph LEE considered it necessary for the Administration to provide a comparison between the establishment of the Development and Construction Division (DCD) prior to the cessation of HOS and under the proposal in question.

33. In response, PSTH(H) explained that there were a number of reasons for the loss of posts, including the cessation of HOS and downsizing of the Administration. Some 3 700 posts (including 26 directorate posts) in HD were lost between 2003 and 2009 mainly through voluntary retirement, and none of these posts had been re-created since. Staff previously engaged in HOS production prior to its cessation had either retired or re-deployed to other Government departments. At present, DCD had a total establishment of 1 786, including non-directorate staff. To meet the target under the New HOS, there was a need for re-prioritization of the workload in order to fast-track the production of HOS projects and additional manpower resources would be required. DD(D&C) added that the workload of DCD had significantly increased over the years as the housing development work had become more and more complex. Given the difficulty of land supply, sites earmarked for housing development were often heavily constrained and difficult to develop. The introduction of more stringent statutory, planning and environmental requirements as well as the need for public consultation and community engagement had necessitated more studies and efforts. With the annual targeted production of 5 000 new HOS flats on top of the annual production of 15 000 PRH units, DCD would not have sufficient manpower to cope with the increased workload and additional creation of posts would be necessary. To facilitate better understanding, the Administration was requested to provide information on the establishment of DCD before and after the cessation of HOS, and how this compared with the proposed establishment to cope with the increase workload for implementation of the New HOS. Mr Fred LI also requested to include in the Administration's response additional information on the progress of studies on redevelopment of the seven aged estates.

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34. Dr Joseph LEE noted that in addition to the six directorate posts, 176 non-directorate posts would also be created under DCD. He enquired about their terms of employment (i.e. whether they would be employed on contract terms or on a supernumerary basis) and the deployment of staff under the varying schedule of public housing production. Mr IP Kwok-him considered the proposed creation of posts justified, adding that these posts should be created on a permanent basis to provide the needed job security. PSTH(H) said that the posts to be created would be permanent in nature and there was no question of redundancy. Promotion and recruitment boards would be held to identify suitable staff (including serving contract staff) to fill these posts once approval was granted. The additional posts to be created would enable the continuation of the programme to progressively convert contract staff

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to permanent staff. It was expected that contract staff with experience in housing production would have an advantage in filling the additional permanent posts. On staff deployment, PSTH(H) said that relevant staff would be engaged and deployed as and when appropriate taking into account the skill requirements at different stages of development.

35. Mr CHAN Hak-kan enquired whether, with the proposed creation of posts, HD could increase PRH production from 15 000 to 25 000 flats per year to meet the demand. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung concurred that apart from expediting HOS production, there was also a need to provide more PRH flats to meet the demand. He also reiterated that HOS flats could only be re-sold to HA and not on the open market. PSTH(H) said that DCD was responsible for the production of new PRH units which were expected to increase to some 17 100 and 19 700 in 2013-2014 and 2015-2016 respectively. The number of flats to be produced would largely depend on land supply and scale of development. In addition to PRH production, DCD was also responsible for other housing-related initiatives arising from the Policy Address (including redevelopment of aged PRH estates, site search for housing development etc. Given the existing workload situation, DCD simply did not have sufficient manpower to cater for the additional average production of 5 000 units under the New HOS. Therefore, a new team had to be created to take over the workload arising from the New HOS. The new team would comprise existing staff who had worked with HOS production prior to its cessation as well as new recruits.

36. While supporting the need for a new team to take forward the New HOS and fast-track the production of six HOS projects for completion by 2016-2017, the Chairman enquired about the number of HOS flats to be produced under the six projects. PSTH(H) said that some 2 500 HOS flats would be produced for pre-sale in 2014 or 2015. Apart from the 2 500 new HOS flats, the Chairman enquired about the feasibility of identifying more sites for prioritized HOS production, adding that larger sites were more preferable. PSTH(H) said that the Transport and Housing Bureau maintained close liaison with the Development Bureau and LandsD in identifying suitable sites for the production of 17 000 HOS flats in the next four years. The first six sites had been prioritized as these were already zoned for residential use and site investigations were underway. While the Administration would endeavor to identify more suitable sites as far as practicable, he could not guarantee that HOS production could be increased at the present stage. He nevertheless agreed that larger sites were more preferable to meet district interests.

37. Mr Alan LEONG said that Members belonging to the Civic Party had all along supported the resumption of HOS. It was also the pledge of the next term of Government to increase HOS production. Therefore, he would welcome the proposed creation of posts to implement the New HOS. Mr WONG Kwok-hing

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also indicated support for the proposed creation of posts to take forward the long awaited New HOS.

38. In concluding, the Chairman said that members did not raise objection to the submission of the proposal to the Establishment Subcommittee.

**VIII. Any other business**

39. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:45 pm.

Council Business Division 1  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
25 July 2012