

**Panel on Housing
Subcommittee on the Long Term Housing Strategy**

**Latest Progress in Reviewing the
Long Term Housing Strategy**

PURPOSE

This paper informs Members of the latest progress of the Long Term Housing Strategy (LTHS) review.

BACKGROUND

2. The review of the LTHS aims to ensure optimal use of the existing land and housing resources to meet housing needs of the community in the short, medium and long term. Specifically, the review will cover –

- (a) compilation, collation and comprehension of all relevant housing-related information;
- (b) ways to increase housing supply, including optimization of the usage of existing public and private housing stock, in the short, medium and long term; and
- (c) projection of housing demand for both public and private sectors to meet the needs of various groups in the community.

PROGRESS OF LONG TERM HOUSING STRATEGY REVIEW

3. Since its formation, the LTHS Steering Committee (SC) has held two meetings and one breakaway session. Issues which the SC will examine in the pipeline include the housing needs of specific groups (such as poorly-housed households, the elderly, non-elderly singletons and first-time home buyers) in the community and the priorities in addressing those needs; public rental housing (PRH) Waiting List (WL) position including reviewing the Quota and Points System; measures to maximize/rationalize the use of public housing resources; projection on housing demand for both public and private housing; housing supply issues

and recommendations on existing policies and practices where appropriate, so as to address the housing needs of different groups in the community.

Housing needs of specific groups

Poorly-housed households

4. According to the General Household Survey of the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), as at end June 2012, there are some 31 800 domestic households, with a total of 64 900 people living in private temporary housing or in rooms, cubicles, bedspaces, and cocklofts in private permanent housing. According to the 2011 Population Census, as at mid-2011, there are some 3 044 households, with a total of 6 230 people living in quarters in non-residential buildings (including commercial buildings and industrial buildings). The above figures, however, should not be regarded to cover the figures for subdivided flats (SDF). Nevertheless, these figures can, to a certain extent, reflect the number of people in the community that are poorly-housed.

5. The SC will engage an independent research organization to assess the characteristics of the households living in SDF and project the number of SDF in the territory. This will provide an objective basis for the SC to better understand and to examine the issues involved. Findings of the survey will be made available when the SC issues its public consultation document in around mid 2013.

The elderly

6. It is the Government's policy to assist the elderly to "age in place". With the aim to support the aging in place policy, the Government's existing objective is to strengthen the role of families in mutual support as well as to enhance support services and facilities, so that elderly people living in different places and with different needs can have access to appropriate social welfare, health care and community services. The Housing Authority (HA) seeks to cater for the specific needs of the elderly through a series of arrangements such as the "Single Elderly Persons Priority Scheme", "Elderly Persons Priority Scheme" and "Harmonious Families Priority Scheme", as well as the design and facilities of PRH estates. The Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS) has launched the Senior Citizen Residence Scheme (SEN) through projects in Tseung Kwan O and Jordan Valley, which provide one-stop "elderly housing" rental units with ancillary health-care and recreational facilities for middle-income senior citizens. We will review and assess the above

measures and other viable options in the LTHS review.

Non-elderly singletons

7. There are views in the community that we should accord fair treatment to non-elderly singletons that have housing problems. This is particularly the case for those who are relatively older as they have less opportunity to improve their living standard through upward mobility. The LTHS review will examine the effectiveness of the Quota and Points System (QPS) applicable to non-elderly one-person applicants of PRH and the situation of those non-elderly one-person applicants over the age of 35. The review will consider options to refine the QPS.

8. Suggestions have also been made on the provision of hostel accommodation for young people with limits on income and period of residence specified to ensure appropriate rotation of use. In this connection, the Home Affairs Bureau is developing a youth hostel scheme with a view to tapping into land currently held by non-Government organizations.

Focus Group Study

9. In order to collect views of the community at the early stage, the SC has commissioned a university institution to conduct a focus group study from January to March 2013. The main objective of the study is to collect views on housing needs from specific groups in the community with a view to providing SC with qualitative information to facilitate its deliberations and assessment.

Timeframe

10. Our target is to release a public consultation document in around mid 2013, to be followed by a three-month public consultation. The report on the public consultation will be published by end 2013.