

**立法會**  
***Legislative Council***

LC Paper No. CB(1)258/13-14  
(These minutes have been seen  
by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/HG/1

**Panel on Housing**

**Minutes of meeting**  
**held on Monday, 3 June 2013, at 2:30 pm**  
**in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex**

**Members present** : Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH (Chairman)  
Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon LEE Cheuk-yan  
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung  
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, SBS, JP  
Dr Hon Joseph LEE Kok-long, SBS, JP  
Dr Hon LAM Tai-fai, SBS, JP  
Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP  
Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun, JP  
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC  
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung  
Hon WONG Yuk-man  
Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP  
Hon WU Chi-wai, MH  
Hon Gary FAN Kwok-wai  
Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen, JP  
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki  
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung  
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kiwok, BBS, MH, JP  
Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun, BBS, MH, JP  
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen

**Member attending** : Hon TANG Ka-piu

**Members absent** : Hon James TO Kun-sun  
Hon Vincent FANG Kang, SBS, JP  
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, BBS, MH, JP  
Hon Kenneth LEUNG  
Hon KWOK Wai-keung

**Public Officers  
attending** : **For item IV**

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

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

Mr Kenneth WONG  
Chief Civil Engineer  
Housing Department

Mr Alan HUI  
Acting Chief Architect (3)  
Housing Department

Mr Eric HUI, JP  
Assistant Director (2)  
Home Affairs Department

Ms Carmen YU  
Assistant District Officer (Kwun Tong)  
Kwun Tong District Office  
Home Affairs Department

**For item V**

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

Mr Albert LEE, JP  
Deputy Director (Estate Management)  
Housing Department

Mr CHAN Siu-tack  
Assistant Director (Estate Management) 2  
Housing Department

Mr LEE Yeung-to  
Chief Manager/Management  
(Tuen Mun & Yuen Long)  
Housing Department

**For item VI**

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

Mr Tony LIU  
Assistant Director (Estate Management) 3  
Housing Department

Mr CHIU Kin-chee  
Assistant Director (Housing Subsidies)  
Housing Department

**Clerk in attendance :** Ms Miranda HON  
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)1152/12-13 — Minutes of the joint meeting  
with the Panel on Development  
held on 9 November 2012)

The minutes of the joint meeting with the Panel on Development held on  
9 November 2012 were confirmed.

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

2. Members noted that no information paper had been issued since last meeting.

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

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1153/12-13(01) — List of follow-up actions

LC Paper No. CB(1)1153/12-13(02) — List of outstanding items for discussion)

3. Members agreed to discuss the following items at the next regular meeting scheduled for Tuesday, 2 July 2013, at 4:30 pm -

- (a) Continuous enhancements in Modular Flat Design for public housing development of the Housing Authority; and
- (b) Implementation of the Residential Properties (First-hand sales) Ordinance and the work of the Sales of First-hand Residential Properties Authority.

**IV. Public Works Programme Item No. B195SC – Community Hall at Sau Ming Road, Kwun Tong**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1153/12-13(03) — Administration's paper on "Public Works Programme Item No. B195SC – Community Hall at Sau Ming Road, Kwun Tong")

4. The Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing) ("PSTH(H)") briefed members on the Administration's proposal to upgrade Public Works Programme Item No. **B195SC** to Category A for the construction of a Community Hall ("CH") adjoining the public housing development at Sau Ming Road, Kwun Tong. The Deputy Director of Housing (Development & Construction) ("DDH(D&C)") gave a power-point presentation on the subject.

*(Post-meeting note: A set of the power-point presentation materials on the subject was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1227/12-13(01) on 4 June 2013.)*

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Reprovisioning of existing services

5. Dr Fernando CHEUNG said that as the demand for CH facilities in the local community was very high, he would support the construction of a new CH in place of the existing Sau Mau Ping (Central) Estate Community Centre ("SMP(C)ECC") to be demolished. As there were training programmes and welfare services provided by four non-government organizations ("NGOs") in the existing SMP(C)ECC, he enquired about the reprovisioning arrangements for those facilities. He also enquired whether the plot ratio could be increased to allow more services to be provided at the new CH, in particular those services which were in great demand such as day-time rehabilitation centres. PSTH(H) replied that welfare facilities would not be provided at the new CH site. The Housing Department ("HD") had made arrangements with the Home Affairs Department ("HAD") and the Social Welfare Department ("SWD") to continue to provide the welfare facilities concerned at other PRH estates. For example, the Integrated Children and Youth Service Centre operated by The Boys and Girls Club Association of Hong Kong and funded by SWD had been looking at a possible relocation site at Sau Wong House of Sau Mau Ping (South) Estate.

6. Dr Fernando CHEUNG remained concerned that despite the increase in floor area, the design of the new CH had not included space for the welfare facilities which were previously provided in SMP(C)ECC. PSTH(H) said that the new CH was designed as a community hall and not a multi-service welfare facility. The new CH would be adjoining the public housing development at Sau Ming Road, Kwun Tong which would provide 318 flats. The Administration accepted the need to provide alternate locations for reprovisioning welfare facilities. The Assistant Director of Home Affairs (2) ("ADHA(2)") supplemented that HD, HAD and SWD were working with the NGOs concerned on the reprovisioning of welfare facilities. As the four NGOs needed not be re-housed within the same estate and given the need for interfacing arrangements during the on-site redevelopment process, the welfare facilities could be separately provided in suitable locations in other public rental housing ("PRH") estates.

7. The Chairman sought confirmation that the existing welfare services provided by NGOs at SMP(C)ECC would not be discontinued upon the development of the new CH. PSTH(H) responded that the composite development of the new CH together with public housing blocks would optimize the site development potential, and allow for the replacement of the existing substandard SMP(C)ECC. The new CH would not be an integrated services centre, and the Administration did not intend to relocate the welfare facilities to the new CH. ADHA(2) added that as the NGOs concerned would have to be relocated to other premises upon the commencement of the on-site redevelopment project, there would not be a need for these NGOs to move

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back upon the completion of the project in 2017 if they were already suitably accommodated in other estates. Dr Fernando CHEUNG said that he would find it difficult to support the proposal at this stage if the reprovisioning arrangements were not known to the NGOs providing services at the existing SMP(C)ECC which would be demolished in a year's time. At members' request, the Administration would advise the arrangements made for reprovisioning the services currently provided by NGOs at the existing SMP(C)ECC.

Maximization of plot ratio and usage of the project site

8. Mr WU Chi-wai shared the concern that the existing welfare facilities at SMP(C)ECC would not be reprovisioned to the new CH upon its redevelopment. This would mean that these facilities would be separately provided in other PRH estates within Sau Mau Ping, leaving less space in these estates for accommodating other facilities. Given the limited land and housing resources, he questioned why the new CH would only provide for CH facilities and not other facilities as well. He supported maximizing the plot ratio of the project site to allow more services to be provided. Consideration should be given by HD to developing the CH and housing sites jointly into an integrated development with residential units on the upper floors and CH and other facilities on the lower floors.

9. PSTH(H) explained that there was a general shortage of sites in urban areas for the provision of housing and other facilities. The Administration would try to get the best out of the sites in consultation with the District Councils to meet the aspirations of the community. As the use of the project site concerned had already been maximized, alternative sites would have to be identified for the reprovisioning of the welfare facilities. HD would work closely with SWD on the provision of welfare facilities in new public housing developments at Anderson Road and Kai Tak. DDH(D&C) added that the CH project had taken into account the needs of the community. She assured members that efforts would continue to be made to identify suitable sites for the reprovisioning of the services currently provided by NGOs at the existing SMP(C)ECC.

10. Mr WU Chi-wai further enquired about the area of the project site, whether its plot ratio had been maximized and how the floor areas were distributed. DDH(D&C) said that the plot ratio had been maximized and she agreed to provide members with the information as requested.

11. Mr Tony TSE sought elaboration on the short and long-term arrangements for reprovisioning the services currently provided by NGOs at the existing SMP(C)ECC. He also enquired if the plot ratio of the project sites had been maximized and whether use could be made of the underground areas to

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accommodate more facilities. PSTH(H) responded that the use of the project site had been optimized. It might not be feasible to have underground developments because of the ground conditions and the extra cost involved. DDH(D&C) said that the composite development would provide for the new CH and housing blocks, along with the lift tower and pedestrian footbridge and would facilitate residents in their access to the Kwun Tong MTR station.

12. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok enquired if the adjacent open carpark was within the boundary of the composite development. He also enquired about the standard of the CH facilities to be provided as he was concerned about the standard of the audio and visual systems and the availability of storage space for users. He emphasized the need to expedite the construction of the new CH to tie in with the completion of the housing development at Sau Ming Road. DDH(D&C) responded that the new CH facilities to be provided would be up to the standard required. Upon the demolition of SMP(C)ECC, the construction of the new CH and housing blocks, together with the lift tower, footbridge link and covered walkway, would proceed in parallel in an attempt to expedite the completion of the project.

13. Sharing similar concern about maximization of the site's plot ratio, Mr Alan LEONG enquired whether consideration had been given to integrating the new CH with the planned housing development. He also enquired about the measures to mitigate the nuisances caused by the construction process given the close proximity of the project site to Sau Mau Ping Estate, and whether consultation had been held with the residents on the mitigation measures to be taken. DDH(D&C) said that the new CH would be abutting the public housing development at Sau Ming Road, Kwun Tong. Efforts had been made to maximize the development potential of the entire site, taking into account site constraints and vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Measures would also be taken to mitigate the environmental impacts during the construction stage. Consultation would be held with Kwun Tong District Council ("KTDC") and affected residents on the mitigation measures to be taken.

14. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung pointed out that it was a common practice to include other facilities such as sports and welfare facilities in the development of CH to meet the needs of the community. Given the size of investment and the scale of development, he would support that more use should be made of the project site by providing more facilities, such as residential care homes for the elderly which were in great demand. PSTH(H) said that efforts had been made to maximize the use of the project site. Basically, the spread was between the development of CH and housing blocks, which had already used up the site. Apart from providing lift towers and footbridge links, there was not much capacity for further development of other facilities. In response to members' request, the Administration would advise whether the plot ratio of the project site had been maximized and whether it was possible to increase the

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floor area of the new CH to provide more facilities.

Policy on the provision of CH

15. Mr WONG Yuk-man said that he would welcome the proposal to construct the new CH which had had the support from KTDC and the local community. As the new CH was scheduled for completion by December 2017, he hoped that efforts would be made to expedite its construction. Noting that the development of the new CH was meant to cater for the aspiration of KTDC and the local community, he enquired about the policy and criteria on the provision of CH, as there had been requests from other District Councils on the provision of similar CH facilities. PSTH(H) responded that HD had worked according to the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines which set out the proportion of facilities against the population in the districts. As to the timing for completion, he said that the construction schedule had already been compressed, taking into account the need for demolition of the existing SMP(C)ECC. Efforts would be made to add value to the housing projects as far as possible by providing more facilities.

Liaison with Labour and Welfare Bureau

16. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung enquired whether the Labour and Welfare Bureau ("LWB") had been consulted on the CH project. He pointed out that LWB, rather HD, should be responsible for providing CH facilities. PSTH(H) said that in planning for the development of the site, views had been sought from relevant bureaus and departments, including LWB and SWD which had input on the project. There would be continued cooperation with LWB and SWD on the project. HD would ensure that the welfare services currently provided by NGOs at the existing SMP(C)ECC would continue to be provided in other estates.

17. Dr Fernando CHEUNG noted that the existing SMP(C)ECC was a six-storeyed building while the new CH would only have two storeys. He failed to see the rationale of providing a new CH with fewer storeys, as a result of which the services currently provided at SMP(C)ECC had to be reprovisioned elsewhere. With the long waiting list for residential care homes for the elderly and the physically handicapped, consideration should have been given to providing more of such facilities. Instead, the Administration had chosen to construct a much larger CH which only provided for CH facilities but not welfare facilities which were in greater demand. He enquired if LWB or SWD had requested for more space to be allocated within the project site for the development of welfare facilities. PSTH(H) responded that there were development gains in the adjoining public housing development. The services currently provided by NGOs would be reprovisioned to other estates.



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18. Dr Fernando CHEUNG reiterated his concern that the Administration had not provided adequate information on the reprovisioning arrangements for developing the new CH. The Chairman suggested and members agreed that prior to submitting the proposed project to the Public Works Subcommittee, the Administration should provide the information requested by members and to put up the item for the Panel's consideration again. Representatives from LWB should also be invited to the meeting.

**V. Improving the living environment of Po Tin Estate and related issues**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1153/12-13(04) — Administration's paper on "Improving the living environment of Po Tin Estate")

19. PSTH(H) briefed members on the measures implemented by the Hong Kong Housing Authority ("HA") to improve the living environment of Po Tin Estate by highlighting the salient points of the information paper. The Assistant Director of Housing (Estate Management) 2 ("ADH(EM)2") gave a power-point presentation on the subject.

*(Post-meeting note: A set of the power-point presentation materials on the subject was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1227/12-13(02) on 4 June 2013.)*

20. Mr Michael TIEN said that following HA's endorsement in June 2004 to gradually convert the vacant and subsequently recovered Interim Housing ("IH") units in Po Tin Estate into PRH units, some 6 820 of such units were offered for PRH allocation. PRH applicants had since then been forced to accept the small and substandard PRH units at Po Tin Estate. He was particularly concerned about the small size and layout of the bathrooms, all of which were smaller than one square metre. He showed photographs taken in these bathrooms illustrating the problems posed by their small size. He was aware that before moving into the units, tenants were required to sign an undertaking to the effect that they could not request for transfer on grounds of the small bathrooms. He said that some tenants had requested for re-configuration of the unit layout to enlarge the bathrooms at their own expenses, but their requests were turned down. He urged for the re-configuration of the layout of all units in Po Tin Estate with a view to enlarging the bathrooms. He sought the Administration's explanation on the feasibility of the proposed re-configuration, adding that tenants would be willing to move out when the alteration works were in progress.

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21. In response, PSTH(H) explained that it was not feasible to enlarge the bathrooms by re-configuring the layout from a technical point of view as some of the structures were pre-fabricated. There was a need to ensure that any altered bathrooms were water-tight, or else it would cause water seepage problem.

22. Dr Fernando CHEUNG said that the problems posed by the small-sized bathrooms were long standing. He did not agree with the Administration that the bathrooms were "small but functional" as he had earlier visited Po Tin Estate and found the living conditions "inhuman". According to a survey conducted by students of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, over 60% of the tenants surveyed had hurt themselves while using the bathrooms. He opined that if it was not possible to enlarge those bathrooms, the units should be demolished. Meanwhile, there were contractors who indicated that it was feasible to enlarge the bathrooms. He would like to invite PSTH(H) to visit and use the bathrooms at Po Tin Estate. He urged the Administration to improve the layout of the units as well as the security and maintenance of Po Tin Estate. PSTH(H) responded that he had actually visited the units and seen the bathrooms. While those bathrooms were not the standard ones normally provided in PRH units, it would not be possible to enlarge the bathrooms without undertaking major alteration works. Having regard to the relatively small size of the bathrooms, PRH applicants who were allocated a unit in Po Tin Estate would still be given a maximum of three other allocation offers even if they eventually rejected the allocation offer of a PRH unit in Po Tin Estate.

23. Dr Fernando CHEUNG further enquired whether tenants were required to sign an undertaking that they would not seek transfer to other units in three years' time on the ground of the small size of the bathrooms after acceptance of the units at Po Tin Estate. PSTH(H) explained that as was the case in all PRH estates, HA would always try to cater for special needs or difficulties experienced by tenants or their families. To this end, HD would consider arranging special transfer for tenants of Po Tin Estate who had special needs or genuine difficulties (such as persons with disabilities) when using the small-sized bathrooms after moving in. Given the pressure to provide safe and decent accommodation for people who lived in much worse living conditions, HA had tried to make the best use of the available resources at Po Tin Estate to provide public housing. To address tenants' aspiration for a more spacious bathroom, HA had provided tenants with enhancement measures for free since 2006. These included relocating wash basin from the bathroom entrance to the inside corner by using a new type of "corner basin" and repositioning the shower. While efforts would be made to improve the situation, there were constraints in doing so.

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24. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung said that tenants living in IH units were mostly people awaiting PRH allocation due to family changes and they should not be forced to tolerate substandard living conditions. He urged the Administration to improve the living conditions in Po Tin Estate and if it could not, consideration should be given to demolishing the Estate. He also pointed out that the undertaking to be signed by applicants accepting the units at Po Tin Estate was not standard practice and it was unfair to request such undertaking.

25. The Chairman sought clarification on whether tenants were required to sign an undertaking as mentioned by Dr CHEUNG. PSTH(H) explained that the specific undertaking in relation to the small-sized bathrooms was to ensure that applicants were aware of the situation of Po Tin Estate. Mr Michael TIEN produced for members' reference an undertaking which was signed by an applicant who accepted the allocation of a unit in Po Tin Estate.

26. Dr Fernando CHEUNG was concerned that tenants who had signed the undertaking would have to tolerate the substandard conditions and could not apply for transfer even though they had genuine difficulties when using the small-sized bathrooms after they had moved in. Applicants on the Waiting List, particularly those from the Mainland, would have no choice but to sign the undertaking in order to be allocated a PRH unit. He requested that the requirement for signing the undertaking be stopped immediately. PSTH(H) said that in-situ redevelopment was the most complex form of redevelopment as tenants were required to move out and be re-housed. The purpose of signing the undertaking was to ensure that those moving in were well aware of the living conditions. Tenants who had signed the undertaking could approach HD for assistance if they had special needs or difficulties.

27. Miss Alice MAK commented that the living conditions of the units at Po Tin Estate were even worse than those of subdivided flats. She could not accept that HA would be providing such substandard flats for allocation to PRH applicants. The provision of incentives such as reduced rentals and additional rent-free period for acceptance of units at Po Tin Estate would give a wrong message that those who could not afford to pay would have to tolerate poor living conditions. She enquired if there was a chance to improve the units at Po Tin Estate and if not, whether the Estate would be demolished.

28. PSTH(H) said that HA recognized that the units at Po Tin Estate were not normal PRH units and this had been reflected in the rentals. This also explained why PRH applicants who were allocated a unit in Po Tin Estate would still be given a maximum of three other allocation offers even if they eventually rejected the allocation offer of PRH units in Po Tin Estate. The chance of redeveloping Po Tin Estate at this stage was very slim as priority would have to be given to other estates which were in worse conditions. HA had been exploring the feasibility of improving the living environment of Po Tin Estate,

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including the possibility of enlarging the bathrooms. The viability of unit layout re-configuration or combining two units to enlarge the bathroom had been studied. However, given the constraints of the building structure and the nuisances that might be caused, the re-configuration or enlargement works were considered to be impracticable. The demolition of Po Tin Estate would result in losing about 9 000 units at a time when there were a large number of applicants on the Waiting List.

29. Mr Frederick FUNG pointed out that the Po Tin Estate was originally meant to provide IH units on a temporary basis pending the allocation of PRH. However, the situation had changed and the units of Po Tin Estate had since been converted into PRH units for allocation to Waiting List applicants. However, the standard of these units was way below that of other PRH units. With reference to the three incentive measures for acceptance of units at Po Tin Estate, he was concerned that the rental was only reduced by 5% of the district best rent for PRH units and that the additional one-month rent-free period was only a one-off arrangement. Although applicants would still be given a maximum of three other allocation offers even if they eventually reject the allocation offer of PRH units in Po Tin Estate, this would mean a longer waiting time for re-allocation since the waiting time between offers could be as long as one year. He supported that alteration works be carried out to enlarge the bathrooms and queried why this could not be done. He also supported that consideration be given to the redevelopment of the substandard Po Tin Estate.

30. PSTH(H) responded that concessions were given to applicants who accepted units at Po Tin Estate despite the small-sized bathrooms. He clarified that the rental reduction of 5% applied to the rents within the same district and not across the territory. The housing staff, together with the Estate Management Advisory Committee, would try to cater for special needs or difficulties experienced by the tenants or their families. There were difficulties in redeveloping Po Tin Estate which was built less than 20 years ago when there were other estates aged 40 or more awaiting redevelopment. Besides, redevelopment would take time as decanting facilities would have to be identified for the purpose.

31. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung said that members had been urging for improvements to the living conditions in the units of Po Tin Estate and if not, consideration should be given to demolishing it. He learnt from other contractors that the re-configuration of units to enlarge the bathrooms was feasible and measures could be taken to prevent water seepage arising from the re-configuration. Consideration could also be given to combining two units. The modifications works associated with the use of the new type of “corner basin” with the repositioning of the shower which had been completed in 5 400 units should be discontinued as this could not resolve the problems associated with the small size of bathrooms. He supported that all the possible options

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should be put before the Panel for members' consideration. Meanwhile, the allocation of PRH units in Po Tin Estate should be stopped pending the conduct of re-configuration works. PSTH(H) said that the challenge associated with the redevelopment of Po Tin Estate was the need to provide re-housing for existing tenants.

32. Mr Michael TIEN said that members present were unanimous in their request for the enlargement of the bathrooms for units of Po Tin Estate. While the problem could be resolved by re-configuring the layout, the Administration did not consider it feasible because this might lead to water seepage problems. He would request that a consultancy study be commissioned by the Administration to assess the feasibility of enlarging the bathrooms. He said that he would also be appointing a private consultant in parallel to assess the situation. PSTH(H) said that studies on the viability of enlarging the bathrooms had been conducted. Apart from water-proofing, there were other problems associated with drainage and relocation of tenants when the alteration works were in progress. Besides, there were constraints in the building structure as the units had not been designed for larger bathrooms. Mr TIEN however pointed out that tenants would rather move out from their units to await the alteration works than to continue to tolerate the small-sized bathrooms. Mr Frederick FUNG said that alteration works to enlarge the bathrooms would be possible as long as the structural walls of the units were not affected. PSTH(H) agreed to further look into the situation.

Motions

33. The Chairman referred members to the following two motions -

- (a) *Motion moved by Mr Michael TIEN and seconded by Mr LEUNG Yiu-ching*

本委員會要求房委會提交擴大寶田邨單位內面積細小的浴室方案；若不能，則清拆此等不符合標準的樓宇。

(Translation)

That this Panel requests the Housing Authority to submit the proposal for enlarging the small bathrooms in the flat units of Po Tin Estate; if this is not possible, to demolish such substandard buildings.

- (b) *Motion moved by Dr Fernando CHEUNG*

鑒於寶田邨設施不合乎標準，尤其廁所狹小令居民飽受困苦，容易受傷，設計不人道，本委員會對當局要求居民入住時先簽署接受廁所面積

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細小聲明書，並不能以上述理由要求調遷之做法表示遺憾；本委員會認為當局應立即改善寶田邨廁所設計，若不可行，應計劃將整條邨重建，居民應獲原邨安置；房屋署亦應立即停止要求居民簽署聲明書。

(Translation)

That, given that the facilities of Po Tin Estate are not up to standard, in particular that as its bathrooms are small and of inhuman design, residents have been suffering a lot and easily get hurt, this Panel expresses regret at the Administration for requesting residents to sign declarations for accepting the small bathrooms at the time of intake and disallowing residents to demand for relocation on the above ground; this Panel is of the view that the Administration should immediately improve the design of the bathrooms of Po Tin Estate; if this is not feasible, it should make plan to redevelop the entire Estate and residents should be re-housed in-situ; in addition, the Housing Department should immediately stop requiring residents to sign the declarations.

34. The Chairman suggested and members agreed that the motions could be moved and voted on separately.

35. The Chairman put the motions to vote. On the motion moved by Mr Michael TIEN, nine members voted for the motion, no member voted against it and no one abstained. The Chairman declared that the motion was carried.

36. On the motion moved by Dr Fernando CHEUNG, seven members voted for the motion, no member voted against it and two members abstained. The Chairman declared that the motion was carried.

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37. In concluding, the Chairman requested the Administration to conduct a feasibility study on the different ways for enlarging the bathrooms in the units of Po Tin Estate and the alternative of redeveloping the entire Estate, and report the outcome to the Panel. After completing the feasibility study, arrangement should be made for Panel members to pay a site visit to observe the living environment of Po Tin Estate, to be followed by a meeting of the Panel on this issue.

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**VI. Overcrowding relief in public rental housing estates**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1153/12-13(05) — Administration's paper on "Overcrowding relief in public rental housing estates"

LC Paper No. CB(1)1153/12-13(06) — Background brief on "Overcrowding relief in public rental housing" prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat

LC Paper No. CB(1)1153/12-13(07) — Referral by the Public Complaints Office arising from the meeting between Duty Roster Members and 東涌民生監察組 on 19 April 2013 (Chinese version only) (Restricted to Members))

38. PSTH(H) briefed members on the measures on overcrowding relief in PRH estates by highlighting the salient points of the information paper.

39. Mr Christopher CHUNG enquired if separate thresholds for providing overcrowding relief had been applied in new and old PRH estates. He was concerned about the small size of PRH units, particularly for three to four-member families with grown up children. As overcrowding was the cause of many family disputes, he considered that there was a need to review the thresholds for providing overcrowding relief under the Territory-wide Overcrowding Relief Transfer ("TWOR") exercise and the Living Space Improvement Transfer Scheme ("LSITS"). He also supported that partitioning be provided within PRH units. PSTH(H) responded that a common approach to relieve overcrowding had been applied to all estates, except that in older estates, there would be more supply of larger units due to the flat mix. As to the suggestion to review the thresholds for providing overcrowding relief under TWOR and LSITS, there was a need for balance between demand and availability of resources. TWOR and LSITS exercises were held on a regular basis to enable overcrowded households to apply for transfer to larger flats.

40. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung pointed out that with the sale of sites vacated by the demolition of four major PRH estates, namely, North Point Estate, Valley Road Estate, Homantin Estate and Wong Chuk Hang Estate, to private developers, it was no wonder that there was insufficient land for public housing. He demanded an explanation from the Government for selling those sites instead of redeveloping them to provide for more public housing units. PSTH(H) explained that land had to be released to make way for major

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infrastructure developments. For example, the Wong Chuk Hang Estate site had to be used to construct the South Island Line MTR Station. Likewise, part of the Valley Road Estate site was used to provide for the Shatin to Central Line. Apart from public housing, land was also required for Home Ownership Schemes, private housing and other community uses. In fact, when public housing land was released for infrastructural developments, the Government would make compensatory arrangements to provide land for the construction of the same number of PRH units.

41. Miss Alice MAK stated that there was a need to review the threshold for overcrowded households as the living density of less than 5.5 and 7 square metres ("sq.m") per person Internal Floor Area ("IFA") under TWOR and LSITS respectively was overly stringent by present standards. She also enquired about the measures to improve the overcrowding situation. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung shared the view that the threshold for providing overcrowding relief was overly stringent and should be reviewed. PSTH(H) responded that the allocation standards were reviewed from time to time. As at the end of December 2012, the average actual living space per person in IFA for all PRH households was 12.9 sq.m. As there were a limited number of larger units available for allocation to overcrowded households, arrangements would be made to move under-occupied households from larger to smaller flats to make way for overcrowded households. PSTH(H) further said that while the Administration noted the suggestion for relaxing the threshold, there were still about 3 000 overcrowded households to be dealt with, and the Administration should strike a balance between demand and available resources.

42. Mr TANG Ka-piu pointed out that the overcrowded households with living density between 5.5 and 7 sq.m. per person IFA would have to wait for a long time in order to be transferred to larger flats under TWOR and LSITS. This was because such households would lose out to the overcrowded households with living density below 5.5 sq.m. per person IFA as the latter would be transferred to larger flats if they had participated in TWOR and LSITS for six times. He suggested that those overcrowded households with living density between 5.5 and 7 sq.m. per person IFA should be given a similar treatment. PSTH(H) explained that while there might be larger units available for allocation, they might not be within the applicants' preferred districts. In the absence of larger flats in the preferred location of the overcrowded households, it would be difficult to encourage transfer of these households to larger flats. The Administration was trying its best to provide overcrowding relief with the available resources.

43. Mr Frederick FUNG said that the threshold for providing overcrowding relief for households with living density of 5.5 sq.m. per person IFA was set in 2001 while that of 7 sq.m. per person IFA was set in 2006. Both thresholds were outdated and should be increased to 7 and 11 sq.m. per person IFA



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respectively. He suggested that priority for transfer to larger flats should be given to the overcrowded households which had participated in TWOR and LSITS exercises many times. PSTH(H) responded that as there were still 3 000 overcrowded households with living density below 5.5 sq.m. per person IFA, there was a need to deal with them first. Once these households were accommodated to larger flats, the option of raising the threshold for TWOR and LSITS exercises would be looked into. As for the suggestion of according priority to overcrowded households which had participated in TWOR and LSITS exercises many times, it remained their personal choice as to whether to accept the larger units which were made available to them. At the moment, priority was set based on the living density of households.

44. Dr Fernando CHEUNG commented that the threshold for providing overcrowding relief was not only outdated but also overly stringent as compared to other places. By way of illustration, the average actual living space per person in IFA in Singapore was 300 square feet while that for the Mainland was 360 square feet. Given that there were only 1 500 suitable flats per year for providing overcrowding relief to the 24 000 households with living density below 7 sq.m., it would take about 16 years to accommodate these households. He enquired if the provision of overcrowding relief under TWOR and LSITS exercises could be expedited. He also enquired if there was a target on the living space per person in IFA in PRH. There might also be a need to review the flat mix to increase the production of larger flats.

45. PSTH(H) responded that Hong Kong could not be compared to Singapore which had much more usable space and was using the home purchase approach rather than the rental approach. With the availability of more housing resources following the increased public housing production of 20 000 units per annum in five years' time, the situation could be reviewed. Given the present housing constraints, not much could be done to relax the threshold for the TWOR and LSITS exercises. As annual reviews on the forecast production had been conducted five years ahead of the actual delivery, the demographic projection had revealed that the demand would be greater for smaller units. Notwithstanding this, there was an increase in the number of two and three bedroom units to cater to the needs of larger families.

46. Mr IP Kwok-him said that the Administration should be committed to providing relief for the overcrowded households, particularly when newly moved-in households were able to enjoy much more living space. Longer term planning as well as more proactive measures should be adopted to resolve the overcrowding situation. The Administration should also make use of urban units to provide overcrowding relief to households which had participated in TWOR and LSITS exercises many times but were unable to be transferred to their desired units. PSTH(H) said that a lot of effort had been made to provide overcrowding relief to households. As a result, the number of overcrowded

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households with living density below 5.5 sq.m had been reduced from 18 000 in 2001 to 3 000 as at the end of 2012-2013 while the number of households with living density below 7 sq.m had been reduced from 40 000 in 2001 to 24 000 in 2012-2013.

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47. Dr Fernando CHEUNG said that with the increased production of smaller units to meet the growing demand, there were not many larger flats available for allocation. As a result, the ethnic minorities with larger families would have to wait a long time for larger flats. There was hence a need to provide larger flats to meet the demand of larger families. PSTH(H) agreed that ethnic minorities tend to have larger families and would usually have to wait for longer time for larger flats. In response to Dr CHEUNG, the Administration undertook to provide the average waiting time for those households with five or more persons to be allocated with PRH units as well as for overcrowded households to be transferred to larger flats.

**VI. Any other business**

48. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:45 pm.

Council Business Division 1  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
7 November 2013