

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

**Long Term Housing Strategy
Report on Public Consultation**

Purpose

This paper sets out the key points contained in the report on the public consultation on the Long Term Housing Strategy (LTHS).

Background

2. The LTHS Steering Committee (the Steering Committee) issued a consultation document on Hong Kong's LTHS for the coming ten years for public consultation from 3 September 2013 to 2 December 2013. During the three-month public consultation period, the Steering Committee and the Transport and Housing Bureau team attended over 50 meetings and fora, including six open fora organized by the Steering Committee for the general public, concern groups and other stakeholders; as well as the meeting with deputations arranged by this Subcommittee, etc. About 800 written submissions were received. The Steering Committee submitted its report on the consultation to the Government on 17 February 2014. A copy of the report was sent to all Legislative Council Members on the same day (LC Paper No. CB(1)915/13-14(01) refers).

Key Points of the Report on Consultation

Issues with General Public Support

3. There is wide public support on the following issues –
- (a) the public generally concurred with the Steering Committee's analysis and assessment of Hong Kong's housing problem and the overall strategic direction to resolve the problem through a supply-led strategy with public housing accounting for a higher proportion of the new housing production;

- (b) there was considerable support for the long term housing supply target of 470 000 units for the coming ten years. There was also widespread support for public housing to make up a higher proportion of at least 60% of the new housing production;
- (c) the public generally agreed that higher priority should be accorded to addressing the housing needs of inadequately housed households;
- (d) there was widespread support for building more flats under the Home Ownership Scheme to meet the home ownership aspirations of youngsters and first-time home buyers;
- (e) the public generally agreed that the average waiting time (AWT)¹ for public rental housing (PRH) for general Waiting List (WL) applicants (i.e. family and elderly applicants) should be maintained at about three years, and that more should be done to ensure the rational use of precious PRH resources; and
- (f) the public generally welcomed more private sector participation in the provision of subsidized housing. The public also supported further efforts by the Government to facilitate housing development, both in terms of streamlining the housing development processes and strengthening manpower resources in the construction industry.

Other Issues of Public Concern

4. On the other hand, the public expressed divergent views on a number of issues, including the introduction of a licensing or a landlord registration system for subdivided units used for domestic purposes (SDUs); and the reinstatement of some form of rental control (including control on rent and the security of tenure). In view of the public sentiment, the Steering Committee considers that the Government needs to consider carefully whether a licensing or a landlord registration system for SDUs should be pursued, taking into account the pros and cons of the proposal. The Steering Committee also cautions the Government that clear community consensus has to be secured before any form of rental control is contemplated.

¹ Under the established methodology, waiting time refers to the time taken between registration on the WL and first flat offer, excluding any frozen period during the application period (e.g. when the applicant has not yet fulfilled the residence requirement; the applicant has requested to put his/her application on hold pending arrival of family members for family reunion; the applicant is imprisoned, etc). The average waiting time for general applicants refers to the average of the waiting time of general applicants housed to PRH in the past 12 months.

Way Forward

5. The Government will take full account of the consultation report and other views collected in formulating the LTHS. Follow-up action will be taken on the various recommendations and relevant policy initiatives will be formulated. We hope to announce the LTHS within this year. As for PRH-related policies which fall under the purview of the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA), such as recommendations on how to maximize the rational use of PRH resources, are being referred to the HA for consideration and necessary follow-up action.

Transport and Housing Bureau
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