

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)1946/13-14
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/HG/1

Panel on Housing

Minutes of meeting
held on Monday, 7 April 2014, at 2:30 pm
in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex

Members present : Hon WONG Kwok-hing, BBS, MH (Chairman)
Hon WU Chi-wai, MH (Deputy Chairman)
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP
Hon Vincent FANG Kang, SBS, JP
Prof Hon Joseph LEE Kok-long, SBS, JP, PhD, RN
Hon CHAN Hak-kan, JP
Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP
Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun, JP
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, BBS, MH, JP
Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen, JP
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Hon KWOK Wai-keung
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, BBS, MH, JP
Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun, BBS, MH, JP
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen

Members attending : Hon CHAN Yuen-han, SBS, JP
Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, JP

Members absent : Hon LEE Cheuk-yan
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP
Hon WONG Yuk-man
Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP

Public Officers attending : **For item IV**

Mr Stanley YING, JP
Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

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

Ms Susanna WONG
Chief Architect 4
Housing Department

Mr Kenneth WONG
Chief Civil Engineer 1
Housing Department

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

Mr Benjamin MOK, JP
District Officer (Sham Shui Po)
Home Affairs Department

Mr FONG Kai-leung
Assistant Director
(Rehabilitation & Medical Social Services)
Social Welfare Department

For item V

Mr Stanley YING, 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

For item VI

Miss Agnes WONG, JP
Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Mr Anson LAI
Assistant Director (Strategic Planning)
Housing Department

Mr LEUNG Sai-chi
Assistant Director (Estate Management)1
Housing Department

Clerk in attendance : Ms Miranda HON
Chief Council Secretary (1)1

Staff in attendance : Mr Ken WOO
Senior Council Secretary (1)5

Ms Mandy LI
Council Secretary (1)1

Miss Mandy POON
Legislative Assistant (1)1

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I. Confirmation of minutes

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1188/13-14 — Minutes of the meeting held on
6 January 2014)

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 January 2014 were confirmed.

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II. Information papers issued since last meeting

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

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1040/13-14(01) — Land Registry Statistics for February 2014 provided by the Administration (press release)

LC Paper No. CB(1)1063/13-14(01) — Referral memorandum from the Public Complaints Office of the Legislative Council Secretariat regarding the request for reviewing the policy on tenancy agreement and rent control (Chinese version only) (Restricted to Members)

LC Paper No. CB(1)1131/13-14(01) — Referral memorandum from the Public Complaints Office of the Legislative Council Secretariat regarding the request for the Housing Department to review its existing measures for handling water seepage in public rental housing flats (Chinese version only) (Restricted to Members)

LC Paper No. CB(1)1206/13-14(01) — Letter dated 3 April 2014 from Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen to the Chairman requesting the Administration to brief the Panel on the progress made in studying the redevelopment potential of Kwai Shing West Estate and related matters (Chinese version only)

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LC Paper No. CB(1)1207/13-14(01) — Letter dated 3 April 2014 from Hon KWOK Wai-keung to the Chairman requesting the Administration to brief the Panel on the progress of the provision of Home Ownership Scheme flats and related matters (Chinese version only))

III. Items for discussion at the next meeting

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1189/13-14(01) — List of follow-up actions

LC Paper No. CB(1)1189/13-14(02) — List of outstanding items for discussion)

3. Members agreed to discuss the following items at the next regular meeting scheduled for Monday, 5 May 2014, at 2:30 pm –

- (a) Measures to tackle under-occupation in public rental housing estates; and
- (b) Rental increase by the Hong Kong Housing Society in 2014.

IV. Public Works Programme Item No. B197SC – Reprovisioning of Pak Tin Community Hall and special child care centre-cum-early education and training centre in Pak Tin Estate redevelopment site, and construction of footbridge link at Nam Cheong Street, Sham Shui Po

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1189/13-14(03) — Administration's paper on "Public Works Programme Item No. 197SC – Reprovisioning of Pak Tin Community Hall and special child care centre-cum-early education and training centre in Pak Tin Estate redevelopment site, and construction of footbridge link at Nam Cheong Street, Sham Shui Po")

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4. The Deputy Director of Housing (Development & Construction) ("DDH(D&C)") gave a power-point presentation on the Administration's proposal to upgrade Public Works Programme Item No. B197SC to Category A for the construction of a new complex building at Pak Tin Estate for the reprovisioning of the existing Pak Tin Community Hall ("CH") and special child care centre-cum-early education and training centre ("SCCC-cum-EETC"), and a footbridge link at Nam Cheong Street, Sham Shui Po.

(Post-meeting note: A set of the power-point presentation materials was circulated vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1213/13-14(01) on 9 April 2014.)

The proposed complex building

5. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung requested the Administration to raise the plot ratio of the site for the proposed complex building so that more storeys could be built to accommodate the social service facilities and kindergartens affected by the redevelopment of Pak Tin Estate. Mr Tony TSE expressed a similar view and urged the Administration to make good use of the site and optimize the design and greening of the new complex building. He also sought the Administration's re-assurance of the project estimate at about \$300 million in view of the rising construction cost. Dr KWOK Ka-ki considered that the construction of a complex building with only five storeys was a waste of precious land resource. He stressed that more storeys should be built to house more social service facilities, in particular those services which were in great demand, such as day-time elderly centres and homes for the elderly.

6. DDH(D&C) replied that the proposed five-storey complex building would be constructed in an existing open space in Pak Tin Estate with a floor area of 1 510 square metres and a plot ratio of about three. The site area available had been fully utilized and there was no room for further expansion. The project estimate was reasonable with possible price escalation duly considered. The Chief Architect 4, Housing Department, added that given the high headroom required for the Pak Tin CH upon reprovisioning, the height of the proposed complex building was in fact equivalent to that of an eight-storey building. Residents of Pak Tin Estate had expressed concerns about the impacts of the proposed complex building on ventilation and view due to its location in the edge of Pak Tin Estate, and the current proposal was an optimum design after a number of consultations with the local community and the Sham Shui Po District Council ("SSPDC"). The premises of other existing social service and community facilities being affected by the redevelopment of Pak Tin Estate had been or would be reprovided in other areas in Pak Tin Estate as far as practicable. With arrangements made to reprovide premises to existing social service providers in Pak Tin Estate as well as the reservation of additional space for other social service providers upon completion of the redevelopment, there would be adequate social service facilities to meet the needs of the local community.

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7. The Assistant Director (2), Home Affairs Department ("AD(2)/HAD"), responded that as new CHs were now commonly provided in complex buildings along with other public and social services, the lead department would consider the design of CH and other facilities in totality to ensure a suitable blend.

8. Dr Fernando CHEUNG expressed support in principle for the Administration's proposal which was an improvement to the existing facilities. He asked whether all entrances to the proposed complex building as well as the stage of the new Pak Tin CH would be barrier-free. DDH(D&C) replied in the affirmative.

9. Mr IP Kwok-him supported the proposed project. He asked if the Administration would accede to the requests of SSPDC for providing vertical greening on the external wall of the proposed complex building and for providing adequate storage space. DDH(D&C) replied that there would be a large amount of green elements that suited the surrounding environment. As for storage space, AD(2)/HAD advised that a store room of about 20 square meters would be provided at the Pak Tin CH for its users upon reprovisioning.

10. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok indicated support for the proposal to enhance the facilities of the Pak Tin CH and SCCC-cum-EETC. Pointing out that the audio-visual equipment provided at CHs was not user-friendly and CH users very often had to pay additional costs to rent audio-visual equipment from other providers, he urged the Administration to enhance the provision of such equipment to facilitate CH users. AD(2)/HAD responded that while audio-visual equipment at existing CHs would continue to be enhanced under the District Minor Works programme, subject to the views of the District Councils concerned, the audio-visual equipment at newly developed CHs, such as the Hung Hom CH at Bailey Street, with pre-defined modes of operation, would be able to deliver high definition audio-visual effects at fingertips.

11. Noting that there would only be one multi-purpose hall and one multi-purpose conference room in the Pak Tin CH upon reprovisioning, Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung asked whether more conference rooms could be provided to meet the great demand of the local community for smaller activity rooms. AD(2)/HAD responded that the size of the conference room to be provided at the Pak Tin CH would be 45 square meters, which could be converted into two smaller venues by full-height sliding partitions. Together with the multi-purpose stage meeting room, there would be three multi-purpose rooms in the Pak Tin CH for use by three groups at the same time.

12. Mr Albert CHAN pointed out that the competition for CH facilities at the local level had been great. In some cases, there were even over a hundred applications for the same timeslot. In response to Mr CHAN's concern that

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applications for CH facilities from organizations having a tie with the pan-democratic camp were always unsuccessful, AD(2)/HAD advised that allocation of CH facilities to users would be decided by drawing lots should there be more than one applications for a timeslot.

Reprovisioning of the special child care centre-cum-early education and training centre

13. Dr Fernando CHEUNG was keen to ensure the continuity of the services of SCCC-cum-EETC in the course of reprovisioning. He also enquired about the number of increase in service places following the reprovisioning, and urged the Administration to engage the service providers of SCCC-cum-EETC in the provision of facilities with a view to enhancing their service delivery, such as Sensory Integration Therapy. The Assistant Director (Rehabilitation & Medical Social Services), Social Welfare Department ("AD(RMSS)/SWD"), responded that service providers of SCCC-cum-EETC would be consulted accordingly to ensure that they would continue to be suitably equipped upon reprovisioning. Although there would not be an increase in service capacity for SCCC-cum-EETC upon reprovisioning due to space constraints, four such centres offering some 500 places were being planned for provision in the Sham Shui Po district. On Dr CHEUNG's request for further exploring the feasibility of increasing the service capacity of SCCC-cum-EETC upon reprovisioning, AD(RMSS)/SWD undertook to discuss with the service providers concerned.

14. Mr IP Kwok-him enquired about the planning standards in relation to the provision of services for early education and pre-school training of disabled children, and how the Administration would ensure that the services of SCCC-cum-EETC would not be affected by the reprovisioning. AD(RMSS)/SWD explained that services for early education and pre-school training of disabled children were provided based on the demand for such services. Currently, there were a total of 1 757 SCCC and 2 628 EETC places respectively, while 1 240 and some 3 800 applicants were waiting for the two services respectively. The average waiting time was about 15 months. As announced by the Chief Executive in the 2014 Policy Address, the number of places for the above services would be increased by 1 471 and the Social Welfare Department ("SWD") was actively identifying suitable sites around the territory to meet the increasing demand. DDH(D&C) advised that works for the new complex building were expected to start in December 2014 for completion in November 2016. The service providers of SCCC-cum-EETC had agreed to continue operation at the new complex building.

Redevelopment of Pak Tin Estate

15. Mr Albert CHAN said that he was opposed to the redevelopment programme for Pak Tin Estate, which would only be completed in 2025. The

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supply of public rental housing ("PRH") flats would reduce during the redevelopment and hence further aggravating the waiting time of PRH applicants. He therefore was also opposed to the proposed project.

16. Mr Frederick FUNG said that he could not understand why the Housing Department ("HD") had refused to take his suggestion of redeveloping Pak Tin Estate on a "south-north" approach such that the area south to Pak Wan Street would first be redeveloped to provide rehousing resource for residents in the north. HD's "east-west" approach in redeveloping Pak Tin Estate would result in works being carried out in close proximity to occupied residential blocks and hence causing disturbance and inconvenience to residents. He also expressed concern on the increased pressure on road traffic and public facilities of Pak Tin Estate as the total population in the area was expected to increase to over 50 000 by 2025 after redevelopment.

17. DDH(D&C) responded that in conducting the detailed design for the redevelopment programme, the Hong Kong Housing Authority ("HA") had examined various factors including an increase in population, traffic and demand for community facilities. To cater for enhanced service needs, a wet market and a covered public transport interchange would be provided at Pak Tin Estate upon redevelopment. To minimize inconvenience to the residents, premises of existing social services and community facilities being affected by the redevelopment would be demolished only after they had been relocated. HA would speed up the redevelopment process as far as practicable and arrange for in-situ rehousing as a priority.

Concluding remarks

18. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung and Dr KWOK Ka-ki said that they were opposed to the proposal as the Administration did not give positive response to their request for increasing the number of storeys of the proposed complex building.

19. The Chairman concluded that with the exception of a few members, the Panel in general supported the submission of the proposal to the PWSC.

V. Progress report on addition of lifts and escalators to existing public rental housing estates

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1189/13-14(04) — Administration's paper on "Progress report on addition of lifts and escalators to existing public rental housing estates"

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LC Paper No. CB(1)1189/13-14(05) — Updated background brief on "Progress of addition of lifts and escalators in Housing Authority's existing public housing estates" prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat)

20. The Assistant Director of Housing (Estate Management)2 ("ADH(EM)2") gave a power-point presentation on the progress of the programme for adding and modernizing lifts, escalators and footbridges to HA's existing PRH estates.

(Post-meeting note: A set of the power-point presentation materials was circulated vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1213/13-14(02) on 9 April 2014.)

Lift Addition Programme

21. Mr IP Kwok-him sought the Administration's response to the strong request of residents of Sun Man House of Oi Man Estate for addition of lifts. ADH(EM)2 responded that under Stage 2 of the Lift Addition Programme ("LAP"), lifts would be provided to connect Sun Man House with Chung Hau Street. Tender would be invited in 2014 and the works were expected to be completed in 2016.

22. Mr LEUNG Che-cheung noted that the scale of Stage 2 of LAP was smaller than that of Stage 1. Pointing out that residents of Siu Hong Court, which was completed in 1983, had to go up and down a staircase for the Siu Hong Commercial Complex, he expressed concern that Siu Hong Court had yet to be included in LAP. He also asked if HA would consider according priority to aged estates in the addition of lifts. The Deputy Director of Housing (Estate Management) ("DDH(EM)"), responded that under the existing mechanism, HA would enhance the accessibility of two shopping malls in aged PRH estates per year. As for LAP which was a rolling programme, aged PRH estates most in need of lifts had been included in Stage 1 of LAP. Stage 2 of LAP was launched in 2013 to add lifts to connect elevated platforms in external areas and existing footbridges within PRH estates. While Stage 2 of LAP was expected to be completed in 2016, preparatory work for Stage 3 would soon commence in the second half of 2014. HA would continue to invite views from the public for further planning.

23. Miss Alice MAK said that it was difficult for wheel-chair users to commute between the housing blocks and the estate shopping mall and other public facilities by escalators. She urged HA to provide lifts in Cheung Ching Estate and Kwai Shing East Estate where there was a large level difference

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between the estate shopping mall and the domestic blocks uphill. DDH(EM) responded that lifts had been added as far as practicable to estate shopping malls and in cases where it was technically infeasible to do so, ramps would be provided. HA would look into the case of Kwai Shing East Estate, and would continue to improve the accessibility between domestic blocks and estate shopping malls.

24. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung asked whether HA had a full picture of the degree of lift enhancement required in PRH estates. He also urged HA to expedite the works to enhance the accessibility of wheel-chair users. DDH(EM) explained that both LAP and the Lift Modernization Programme which aimed at modernizing aged lifts were implemented on a rolling basis. HA would continue to gauge the views of the public for further planning.

25. Noting that HA had recently completed a review of the redevelopment potential of 22 aged PRH estates, Mr Frederick FUNG urged the Administration to avoid recurrence of the Pak Tin case in which lifts had to be demolished shortly after they were installed due to redevelopment. DDH(EM) responded that HA would ensure that where lifts were provided at PRH estates, they would be used for at least six years. As for the lifts demolished in Pak Tin Estate, the majority of the mechanical components could be reused.

Lift Modernization Programme

26. Citing the inconvenience caused to residents of Lai Kok Estate due to the suspension of lift services for modernization works as an example, Mr Frederick FUNG emphasized the need to shorten the time required for the works. DDH(EM) responded that to minimize the inconvenience caused by lift enhancement works, only one lift would be closed with the rest remained in service. HA would look for ways to shorten the time required for the works, which was about nine to ten and a half months at present, with more experience gained.

27. Dr Fernando CHEUNG asked how HA would improve the situation of some aged PRH estates where lift services were not available at certain floors. ADH(EM)2 explained that lift services were mostly unavailable at the topmost floor where the machine room located and some other floors due to structural constraint. Tenants living in floors without lift services could apply for transfer if they were in need of such services for various reasons. Dr CHEUNG urged HA to reach out to needy tenants, such as the elderly and people with disabilities, to assist them in applying for transfer if necessary. At Dr CHEUNG's request, ADH(EM)2 undertook to provide information on existing PRH blocks where lift services were not provided or not provided in full (such as services unavailable at certain floors) as well as the number of units affected, and the reasons for not adding lifts to these blocks.

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28. Mr KWOK Wai-keung noted that lifts would be replaced upon reaching their service life of over 25 years, and enquired about the number of lifts due for replacement and the criteria for setting replacement priority. He also asked whether the latest energy-saving technology was used in modernizing the lifts. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan expressed a similar concern.

29. DDH(EM) responded that as existing lifts in service would gradually reach the service life of over 25 years, some 100 lifts would be replaced in each of the coming five years. To enjoy the economy of scale from the bulk contracts awarded, some lifts with special circumstances would be replaced before they reached the end of their service life. In view of the high usage rate of lifts in PRH estates, a more stringent maintenance requirement was adopted, and inspection was conducted weekly rather than monthly as required by law. ADH(EM)2 added that HA would make reference to the usage and maintenance records in setting priority for lift modernization works. Modernized lifts would be environment-friendly in operation and barrier-free to users.

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30. The Chairman requested HD to arrange a site visit for the Panel to PRH blocks for which –

- (a) lifts had been added recently;
- (b) additional lifts were planned to be provided; and
- (c) lift services were requested but not provided, including those where lift services were unavailable at certain floors and where lifts were required to facilitate wheel-chair users in commuting between the housing block and the estate shopping mall, as in the case of Kwai Shing East Estate.

VI. Rent payment for public housing tenants

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1189/13-14(06) — Administration's paper on "Rent payment for public housing tenants")

31. The Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing) ("DSTH(H)") explained the Administration's proposal to pay one month's rent for tenants living in PRH units of HA and the Hong Kong Housing Society ("HS") by highlighting the salient points of the discussion paper.

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The proposal

32. Miss CHAN Yuen-han said that tenants of PRH were gravely concerned about the Administration's proposal to pay only one month's rent as opposed to two in previous years. Pointing out that the grassroots had not benefited from the economic growth and their living was further pressurized by increased inflation, she queried why HD had not relayed to the Financial Secretary ("FS") the difficult situation currently faced by PRH tenants. Mr KWOK Wai-keung also relayed the request of PRH tenants for the Administration to continue to pay two months' rent to relieve their rental burden. DSTH(H) explained that in drawing up the proposal, which was a one-off relief measure, FS had taken into account a number of factors such as the economic outlook for the next financial year and the inflation rate. To help the grassroots to cope with short-term financial pressure, the 2014-2015 Budget also proposed an extra allowance to Comprehensive Social Security Assistance ("CSSA") Scheme recipients, which was equal to one month of the standard rate CSSA payments, and an extra allowance to recipients of Old Age Allowance, Old Age Living Allowance and Disability Allowance, which was equal to one month of the allowances.

33. Mr LEUNG Che-cheung was opposed to the Administration's proposal to pay only one month's rent for PRH tenants on account of the substantial fiscal reserve accumulated. He also said that he had been approached by CSSA recipients who claimed that the proposal had not provided them with additional relief as their rent had already been paid for by SWD. Dr Fernando CHEUNG expressed a similar concern.

34. DSTH(H) replied that the purpose of the rent payment was indeed to provide relief for PRH tenants. However, as the PRH rent of CSSA households had already been paid for directly by SWD on their behalf, the rent payment proposal would not have actual effect on those households.

35. Pointing out that the assistance programme under the Community Care Fund to provide a living subsidy for low-income households was only a one-off measure, Dr Fernando CHEUNG urged the Administration to introduce continuous measures to improve the living standard of those non-CSSA recipients who were waiting for PRH allocation. DSTH(H) responded that there was a suggestion to reinstate rental control to alleviate the rental burden of low-income families. However, given the divided views on the suggestion in the community, the Administration would not act hastily. In response to Dr CHEUNG's question, DSTH(H) advised that HA would soon commence the biannual rent review and would report the outcome to the Panel.

36. The Chairman referred to the proposed measure to waive rates for the first two quarters of 2014-2015 as announced in the 2014-2015 Budget, and asked whether the rates would be returned to PRH tenants. The Assistant

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Director of Housing (Estate Management)¹, replied that rates concession would be passed on to domestic and non-domestic tenants/licensees on a monthly basis, except for car parking spaces for reason of administrative efficiency.

Rent increase by the Hong Kong Housing Society

37. Referring to the rent increase of HS's rental units in April 2014, Mr KWOK Wai-keung sought elaboration on the mechanism for monitoring rental adjustments by HS and the role of the Director of Housing in HS. DSTH(H) responded that given the financial autonomy of HS, rent adjustments by HS did not require the approval of the Administration. HS would take into account its operation costs and tenants' affordability in its rent adjustments. The Director of Housing, as a member of HS, enjoyed the same status as other members. Mr KWOK Wai-keung opined that HS's rent adjustments should be subject to monitoring by the Administration as public money was used to subsidize tenants living in the rental units of HS. Miss Alice MAK echoed Mr KWOK's views and urged the Administration to strengthen its monitoring of HS's rental policy.

38. The Chairman reminded the meeting that the Panel would discuss the rent increase by HS in 2014 at the coming meeting in May 2014, and he invited members to attend the meeting to give views on the matter.

Concluding remarks

39. The Chairman concluded that members supported the submission of the proposal to the Finance Committee.

VII. Any other business

40. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:30 pm.