

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)1245/14-15
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/HG/1

Panel on Housing

Minutes of special meeting
held on Wednesday, 22 July 2015, at 10:45 am
in Conference Room 2 of the Legislative Council Complex

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

Members attending : Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, GBS, JP
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan, JP
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, JP
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP
Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP
Hon James TIEN Pei-chun, GBS, JP
Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS
Hon Gary FAN Kwok-wai
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Hon Dennis KWOK
Hon SIN Chung-kai, SBS, JP
Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan
Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, JP
Hon TANG Ka-piu, JP
Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, JP

Members absent : Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP

Public Officers attending : **For item I**

Transport and Housing Bureau

Professor Anthony CHEUNG, GBS, JP
Secretary for Transport and Housing

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

Housing Department

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

Mr LAM Sze-chuen
Assistant Director (Project)1
Housing Department

Mrs Irene CHENG
Assistant Director (Development & Procurement)
Housing Department

Development Bureau

Mr Eric MA, JP
Acting Secretary for Development

Food and Health Bureau

Dr KO Wing-man, BBS, JP
Secretary for Food and Health

Department of Health

Dr Constance CHAN, JP
Director of Health

Dr Regina CHING, JP
Consultant Community Medicine
(Non-Communicable Disease)
Department of Health

Water Supplies Department

Mr Enoch LAM, JP
Director of Water Supplies

Mr CHAN Kin-man
Chief Chemist
Water Supplies Department

Hospital Authority

Dr LEUNG Pak-yin, JP
Chief Executive

Dr Raymond WONG
Consultant
(Poison Treatment Centre, Prince of Wales Hospital)

Clerk in attendance : Ms Angel SHEK
Chief Council Secretary (1)1

Staff in attendance : Ms Anita SIT
Assistant Secretary General 1

Miss Winnie LO
Assistant Legal Adviser 7

Mr Ken WOO
Senior Council Secretary (1)5

Ms Mandy LI
Council Secretary (1)1

Miss Mandy POON
Legislative Assistant (1)1

Action

I. Excessive lead found in tap water samples from public rental housing estates

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1133/14-15(01) — Administration's paper on excessive lead in fresh water supply in public housing estates

LC Paper No. CB(1)1133/14-15(02) — Background brief on "Excessive lead found in tap water samples from public rental housing estates" prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat

Relevant papers

LC Papers Nos. CB(1)1095/14-15(01), (02) and (03) — Letters dated 13 July 2015 from Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan and Hon KWOK Wai-keung respectively,

Action

as well as a joint letter from Hon James TO Kun-sun, Hon WU Chi-wai and Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan respectively on issues arising from excessive lead found in tap water samples from Kai Ching Estate (Chinese version only)

- LC Paper Nos. CB(1)1098/14-15(01) and (02) — Letters dated 13 July 2015 from Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun and Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee respectively on issues arising from excessive lead found in tap water samples from Kai Ching Estate (Chinese version only)
- LC Paper No. CB(1)1131/14-15(01) — Letter dated 16 July 2015 from Hon WU Chi-wai proposing a motion on setting up a select committee to inquire into matters relating to excessive lead found in tap water samples from public rental housing estates (Chinese version only)
- LC Paper No. CB(1)1131/14-15(02) — Letter dated 17 July 2015 from Hon Gary FAN Kwok-wai requesting the Panel on Housing to discuss at the special meeting on 22 July 2015 whether a select committee should be set up to inquire into matters relating to excessive lead

Action

found in tap water samples from public rental housing estates (Chinese version only))

Briefing by the Administration

The Secretary for Transport and Housing ("STH"), Acting Secretary for Development ("Atg SDEV") and Secretary for Food and Health ("SFH") briefed members on the major events relating to the recent incident of excessive lead found in tap water samples taken from public rental housing ("PRH") estates ("the excessive lead in water incident"), and the follow-up actions taken/to be taken by the Government.

(Post-meeting note: Copies of the speaking notes for STH, Atg SDEV and SFH were circulated to members vide LC Paper Nos. CB(1)1137/14-15(01) to (03) respectively on 23 July 2015.)

Declaration of interest

2. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan declared that her spouse was an independent non-executive director of one of the main contractor companies for the PRH developments from which tap water samples taken were found to contain a lead content beyond the World Health Organization ("WHO")'s provisional Guideline Value of 10 micrograms per litre ("µg/l") for tap water. Dr CHIANG said that her spouse had not participated in the daily operation of the contractor company concerned and did not have a direct interest in it.

3. Mr Dennis KWOK declared that he was a member of the Hong Kong Housing Authority ("HA") and its "Review Committee on Quality Assurance Issues Relating to Lead in Fresh water of Public Housing Estates" ("the Review Committee") recently established in response to the excessive lead in water incident.

4. Mr Tommy CHEUNG, Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok and Prof Joseph LEE declared that they were HA members.

5. Mr Vincent FANG and Mr Alan LEONG declared that they were ex-HA members and were now members of HA's Commercial Properties Committee.

(At 11:08 am, the Chairman announced that the meeting would be extended for 15 minutes to 1:00 pm to allow more time for discussion and handling of motions put forth by some members.)

Action

Discussion

General

6. Members in general expressed dissatisfaction over the manner in which the excessive lead in water incident was being handled by the Administration. Dr KWOK Ka-ki, Dr Fernando CHEUNG and Mr Gary FAN in particular criticized that at the outbreak of the incident, the Administration appeared to conceal the name of the main contractor company responsible for the housing development of Kai Ching Estate from which tap water samples taken were found to contain excessive lead, and take the view prematurely that a licensed plumber concerned was responsible for the incident before investigation.

Admin

7. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan criticized the Administration for failing to take immediate action to conduct water sampling tests in a more comprehensive manner as soon as the presence of excessive lead in the water samples taken from Kai Ching Estate was confirmed. Prof Joseph LEE opined that the Administration should consider how to avert the growing panic among PRH tenants, and centralize dissemination of information to tenants of the affected PRH estates about the latest findings of the water sampling tests for their estates and the follow-up measures taken/to be taken.

Admin

8. Referring to Annex I to the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(1)1133/14-15(01)) which set out the major events of excessive lead found in the tap water samples of Kai Ching Estate, Dr Helena WONG requested the Administration to provide supplementary information on the meetings held between herself and various government departments, including the Centre for Health Protection and the Water Supplies Department ("WSD"), in May and June 2015 on related matters.

Ascertaining the source of excessive lead found in tap water

Admin

9. Members including Mr Frederick FUNG, Mr LEE Cheuk-yan, Ms Cyd HO, Mr IP Kwok-him, Mr Christopher CHUNG, Mr Albert CHAN and Mr LEUNG Che-cheung considered it top priority for the Administration to find out as soon as possible the source of excessive lead in the tap water samples taken from PRH estates concerned in order to allay the tenants' concerns. These members enquired about the progress and results of the tests on water taps and soldering materials used for water pipes of PRH estates in respect of their lead contents, and urged the Administration to identify residential developments for which lead was used in the soldering materials of their fresh water supply systems.

Action

10. STH advised that the Development Bureau had established the "Task Force on Excessive Lead Content in Drinking Water" ("the Task Force") to carry out investigation to ascertain the causes of the presence of excessive lead in water drawn from PRH households, and to recommend measures to prevent recurrence of similar incidents in the future. The Director of Water Supplies ("DWS") pointed out that the use of soldering materials containing lead was prohibited under the Waterworks Ordinance (Cap. 102) ("WO"). The Task Force would examine the whole water supply chain in PRH estates concerned to ascertain the source of excessive lead in water, and aimed at announcing its preliminary findings in two months' time.

11. Mr CHAN Hak-kan sought the Administration's explanation on whether and how HA's resident site staff monitored the plumbing works for PRH estates and examined the soldering materials used. The Deputy Director of Housing (Development & Construction) said that HA's staff monitored the main contractors' works regularly to ensure fresh water plumbing installations were executed in accordance with the relevant contractual requirements. Under the existing practice, HA did not inspect the joints between pipes (including the soldering materials) for lead content. Besides, the construction industry was obliged to use soldering materials that met the relevant requirements of WO. Following the incident, the Housing Department ("HD") had formulated various short and medium term improvement measures regarding water sample testing requirements and inspection on soldering materials, etc. as set out in paragraph 26 of the Administration's paper.

12. Mr WONG Kwok-hing said that he was pleased with the Chief Executive ("CE")'s recent announcement to appoint a commission of inquiry ("CoI") under the Commissions of Inquiry Ordinance (Cap. 86) to conduct an independent and comprehensive investigation into the excessive lead in water incident. Mr WONG believed that the CoI would conduct investigation and seek legal remedies in the most effective and professional manner. Both Mr WONG and Mr TANG Ka-piu urged the Administration to make available to the public as soon as possible relevant information about the CoI. STH pointed out that the CE-in-Council was inclined to identify a judge to be the Chairman of CoI. Relevant details such as membership of the CoI and its work timetable would be announced in due course.

(Post-meeting note: At the special Executive Council meeting held on 13 August 2015, the CE-in-Council approved the setting up of a CoI to inquire into the incidents of excess lead found in drinking water. Details and membership list of the CoI are available at the following website: http://www.coi-drinkingwater.gov.hk/eng/pdf/legco_brief_coi.pdf.)

Action

13. Mr Dennis KWOK requested the Administration to undertake to make available to the public the full report of the Review Committee and the Task Force without any masking or deletion. STH advised that the Chairman of CoI and HA would consider the manner in which the reports of CoI and the Review Committee should be published respectively.

14. In view of the wide public concern, Mr Gary FAN said that he had written to the President of the Legislative Council ("LegCo") requesting that a special Council meeting be convened to discuss the excessive lead in water incident. Expressing disappointment on the ways in which the incident was being handled, both Mr WU Chi-wai and Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung indicated that they would move a motion respectively at the current meeting to seek the Panel's support for LegCo to appoint a select committee to investigate into the incident. Mr WONG Yuk-man said that he would support these motions.

Scope and validity of water sampling tests

15. Mr WONG Kwok-hing said that The Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions had met with the Administration and suggested that, in light of the incident, water sampling tests for lead level should be conducted for all PRH estates. Members including Dr Priscilla LEUNG, Dr Elizabeth QUAT, Ms Starry LEE, Mr WONG Yuk-man and Mr CHAN Hak-kan expressed similar views. Mr KWOK Wai-keung, Dr Helena WONG, Mr Frederick FUNG, Mr TANG Ka-piu, Mr LEUNG Che-cheung and Prof Joseph LEE requested the Administration to draw up a timetable for conducting water sampling tests for all PRH estates. Dr WONG and Mr TANG opined that the tests should cover older PRH estates where new pipes for fresh water supply were laid since 2011, and subsidized sale housing estates as well.

Admin

16. STH responded that taking into account the existing manpower of HD and WSD, water sampling tests were being conducted on a risk-based approach and had been extended to cover all PRH blocks completed since 2011. An assessment was being made for expanding the scope of water sampling tests to PRH estates completed before 2011, and the relevant details would be announced in due course. The Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing) ("PSTH(H)") added that for older PRH estates where new pipes for fresh water supply were laid, soldering was in general not adopted for pipe connections.

17. Mr KWOK Wai-keung said that although the Administration had extended the coverage of water sampling tests, PRH tenants in general remained concerned about the standard of fresh water supplied to them. As

Action

such, he would move a motion at the meeting requesting the Administration to expeditiously conduct comprehensive water sampling tests for all PRH estates.

18. Dr Priscilla LEUNG expressed concern that in the tap water sampling tests conducted by the Kowloon West New Dynamic, a number of water samples collected from Shek Kip Mei Estate, Wing Cheong Estate and Hung Hom Estate were also found to contain lead at levels exceeding the WHO standard. Pointing out that some of the tap water samples were found to contain other heavy metals according to the tests commissioned by her office recently, Dr CHIANG Lai-wan suggested the Administration consider expanding the scope of water sampling tests to cover heavy metals other than lead. PSTH(H) said that the Administration noted these findings and was taking up the matter with WSD.

Admin

19. Citing that the lead level of the tap water samples collected from a unit of Shui Chuen O Estate varied from 2 µg/l (for tap water collected after running the tap for two minutes) to 24 times or more above the WHO's provisional Guideline Value (for the first draw of tap water after eight to 18 hours of stagnation inside the water pipes), Dr Helena WONG cast doubt on the Administration's current practice to ascertain the presence of lead in tap water by collecting samples only after running the tap for a few minutes. She requested the Administration to provide information on whether and when it would collect stagnation samples as well for the sampling tests. Expressing similar concerns, Mr WU Chi-wai pointed out that tap water samples collected after running the tap for minutes might not fully reflect the quality of the tap water. He urged the Administration to take stagnation samples instead in order to obtain more accurate findings. Mr SIN Chung-kai enquired about the Administration's criteria for collecting water samples.

20. The Chief Chemist, WSD explained that the water sampling practices and procedures varied in different countries and regions depending on their own situations and sampling objectives. Stagnation samples were only indicative of the quality of the water upon standing in the water pipes for a period of time, and did not reflect the representative quality of the water to be consumed by an individual on a routine basis. DWS added that the current practice of collecting samples after running the taps for two to five minutes was consistent with the international standard for monitoring water quality under WHO Guidelines. In parallel, the Task Force would look into the chain of the water supply system to identify the cause of excessive lead in the tap water of PRH estates.

Action

Temporary water supply for affected PRH estates

21. Noting that temporary water supply points would be set up at each floor of the affected blocks of Kai Ching Estate and Kwai Luen Estate with supply drawn directly from the roof tanks, Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok enquired whether the water would be safe for consumption. DWS responded that the water samples taken at the roof tanks concerned had been tested and confirmed to comply with the relevant Values of the WHO Guidelines. Water samples would be collected at the temporary supply points for further testing to ensure that the water quality was up to standard.

22. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan and Dr Fernando CHEUNG expressed concern about the difficulty of the elderly and persons with disabilities at the affected PRH estates to get water from the temporary water supply points. PSTH(H) advised that HD staff would deliver fresh water to the elderly, infirm and persons with disabilities who were physically incapable of getting water from the temporary water supply points themselves.

23. Ms Emily LAU, Dr Fernando CHEUNG and Mr Gary FAN relayed the concerns of tenants that excessive lead was also detected in the tap water samples taken from Shui Chuen O Estate in the tests commissioned by various political parties. Dr CHEUNG and Mr FAN requested the Administration to meet with the tenants and put in place temporary water supply measures for Shui Chuen O Estate as well. Both Mr FAN and Ms Starry LEE asked the Administration to follow up on the test results announced by the political parties.

24. STH responded that HD and WSD had adopted a systematic approach to collect tap water samples from units on different floors to ensure the representativeness of the samples. According to the test results, the lead content of the samples collected from Shui Chuen O Estate complied with the WHO standard.

Installing water filters for affected units of PRH estates

25. Referring to the findings of a study conducted by the Consumer Council that seven types of water filters currently available in the market were certified by the National Sanitation Foundation Standard 53 as effective in filtering out lead, Dr CHIANG Lai-wan requested the Administration to consider installing such filters for affected PRH units. Dr Priscilla LEUNG and Mr Vincent FANG made the same request. Mr Tommy CHEUNG urged the Administration to provide the filters for all PRH households as a more effective measure to allay the tenants' concerns promptly. He envisaged that this measure would not incur much costs on the Administration through bulk purchase.

Action

26. Referring to Regulation 24 of the Waterworks Regulations (Cap. 102A) which stipulated that an apparatus for the treatment or filtration of water shall not be installed or used without the permission in writing of the Water Authority, Mr Alan LEONG asked whether WSD's customers would breach the law if they installed water filters at their households without seeking WSD's prior approval.

27. STH responded that the Administration was considering the option of providing water filters to affected households and the performance of different types of water filters was being tested. DWS advised that installation of a water filter the type of which was faucet or countertop with no stop valve downstream was regarded as minor modification of the internal water supply system not requiring the approval from the Water Authority under Cap. 102A.

Admin 28. The Chairman requested the Administration to provide a timetable for providing water filters for affected PRH units, including information on the specifications/models of the water filters and implementation details; and the timetable for replacing sub-standard water taps/pipes of PRH estates where tap water samples were found to contain excessive lead.

Blood tests for affected tenants and follow-up measures

Admin 29. Noting that free blood tests on lead level were currently provided only for the more easily affected groups of Kai Ching Estate and Kwai Luen Estate, namely infants, young children under six years of age, pregnant women and lactating women, Dr Helena WONG, Ms Emily LAU and Mr Frederick FUNG shared the view that the scope of free blood tests should be widened to cover all tenants of both estates so as to ease their worries.

Admin Dr WONG, Dr KWOK Ka-ki and Prof Joseph LEE sought the Administration's response as to how it would expedite the collection and testing of blood samples, and whether consideration would be given to adopting portable devices, and/or deploying additional resources in collaboration with the private healthcare sector. Mr Steven HO, however, expressed concern that as blood samples collected from the private practice would ultimately be sent to Government laboratories for testing, the Administration should better explore ways to enhance its blood testing capacity.

30. SFH said that, responding to the concerns of affected tenants, the scope of blood test had been extended lately to cover children who were under six years old when moving into Kai Ching Estate, Kwai Luen Estate and Wing Cheong Estate. Arrangements were being made for over a

Action

thousand residents to receive blood tests, and the Hospital Authority had been fully utilizing its clinical capacity to provide blood tests beyond working hours. The Hospital Authority would further enhance the capacity of blood taking as much as possible, including increasing the number of blood taking sessions and hospitals providing blood taking service. The Hospital Authority was also actively studying on the means to enhance the blood testing capacity, including purchase of new blood testing equipment, and the feasibility of sending blood samples to overseas laboratories for testing.

Admin

31. Mr Steven HO was concerned that for the blood tests undertaken so far, the blood lead level of 13% test takers was borderline raised, which was well above the international norm at 2%. Ms Emily LAU was particularly concerned about the potential health risks on the 27 children under six years old whose blood lead level was borderline raised. She asked whether continuous medical follow-up would be provided by the Administration to monitor the growth and development of these children. Dr Elizabeth QUAT asked whether the Administration would consider bearing the medical expenses for PRH tenants whose blood lead level was elevated.

Admin

32. Mr Vincent FANG expressed disappointment that the Administration had not explained clearly the potential health impacts caused by drinking water containing lead for a prolonged period of time. Mr Tommy CHEUNG echoed Mr FANG's views and urged the Administration to provide the relevant information.

33. Mr Albert CHAN envisaged that the number of PRH tenants found to have an elevated blood lead level would surge along with more PRH estates subject to the tap water sampling tests gradually. He suggested that the Administration should set up a high level inter-departmental task force to coordinate the blood tests and other necessary arrangements.

34. SFH responded that long-term exposure to lead, which when accumulated in large amounts in the body, might result in damages to organs and hence their functions. For lactating women and children who were found with borderline raised blood lead level, both the Department of Health ("DH") and the Hospital Authority would follow up on their health conditions according to the care plan formulated by Hospital Authority experts, DH would also make special arrangements for the children concerned to receive development assessments at its Child Assessment Centres.

Supporting services and compensation to affected tenants

35. Pointing out that the excessive lead in water incident had caused a great deal of inconvenience to tenants of the PRH estates concerned, such as

Action

Admin

the need to take water from the ground floor and purchase bottled water to replace lead-contaminated tap water for drinking/cooking purposes, Dr Elizabeth QUAT asked whether consideration would be given to waiving the water charges and/or rentals of the households concerned for a reasonable period of time. Referring to the Administration's indication that running tap water for a few minutes would help reduce the level of heavy metals, including lead, in tap water, Ms Cyd HO and Mr WU Chi-wai expressed concern that tenants of affected PRH blocks would inevitably use more water than the average households, and requested the Administration to waive the water charges of these tenants accordingly. Mr Frederick FUNG took the view that the affected tenants should be given appropriate compensation. As HA might receive a large number of claims from affected PRH tenants for compensation, Mr Dennis KWOK enquired whether HA would consider handling the claims through mediation instead of litigation so as to minimize the legal expenses incurred on the tenants concerned.

36. STH responded that the Administration would accord priority to investigating into the source of lead found in the tap water of PRH estates and supplying fresh water safe for consumption. The suggestions on waiving PRH rentals and/or water charges involved complicated issues that would entail further study.

Admin

37. Dr Priscilla LEUNG suggested that the Administration should station social workers at the affected PRH estates to answer tenants' enquiries and provide counselling and emotional supports to them. Members including Ms Emily LAU, Mr SIN Chung-kai, Prof Joseph LEE and Mr Steven HO expressed similar views. Ms Starry LEE urged the Administration to consider setting up one-station service counters at the estates concerned to render assistance to tenants. SFH took note of members' suggestions.

Advice for owners of private housing estates

Admin

38. Mr Tony TSE and Mr Michael TIEN sought the Administration's elaboration on the advice and guidelines for owners (such as owners' corporations and property management companies) of private housing estates for taking precautionary measures in the light of excessive lead found in water samples taken from PRH estates, and the follow-up measures if excessive lead was also found in the tap water samples from private housing estates. Mr TIEN also sought the Administration's advice on the recommended types of water filters for filtering lead, and the level of lead identified in water samples above which members of the relevant households should consider taking tests for their blood lead level. STH advised that owners of private housing were advised to take sampling tests of the tap water from their buildings to ascertain its quality in case of doubt.

Admin

Action

(At 12:42 pm, the Chairman suggested and members agreed to further extend the meeting for 15 minutes to 1:15 pm.)

Enhanced measures on quality assurance checks for fresh water supply

39. Dr KWOK Ka-ki, Mr IP Kwok-him and Mr CHAN Hak-kan sought the Administration's elaboration on the measures to ensure the quality of fresh water supply in existing residential buildings. Dr Elizabeth QUAT and Ms Starry LEE opined that the excessive lead in water incident was indicative of certain inadequacies in respect of works monitoring and inspection prior to issuing occupation permits. They enquired about the improvements to be made to the existing works procedures to ensure the supply of quality water to new housing developments. Dr KWOK commented that legislative amendments to WO might be warranted to update the requirements for examination of the fresh water supply system of buildings. Expressing similar views, Mr Tony TSE suggested that consideration be given to reviewing the licensing requirements for Authorized Persons and licensed plumbers to ensure that soldering works were conducted up to a reasonable standard.

40. DWS responded that following the excessive lead in water incident, in applying to the Water Authority for connection upon completion of a fresh water supply system, a licensed plumber should arrange to provide tap water samples which would be subject to, among others, tests on lead content. PSTH(H) advised that HA had been endorsing water supply system in new public housing developments in accordance with standards stipulated under WO. Following the lead incident, HA had put in place measures to incorporate additional water sampling requirements and the checking of lead content in all new HA projects, and to step up inspection on soldering materials used at pipe joints of fresh water plumbing systems to ensure that the materials were lead-free.

41. DWS further advised that WSD had introduced the "Quality Water Supply Schemes for Buildings – Fresh Water" to encourage proper maintenance and repair of water supply systems in buildings by responsible parties. Atg SDEV added that the Task Force would carry out an investigation to ascertain the causes of the excessive lead in water and recommend measures to prevent recurrence of similar incidents. Depending on the findings of the Task Force, legislative amendments to WO might be considered if necessary.

Admin

42. At the request of Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok, the Administration agreed to provide information on the guidelines and specifications currently available

Action

for the reference of the trade regarding installation of pipes and fittings for internal water supply system of public housing estates.

Motions

43. The Chairman referred members to the motions put forward by Mr WU Chi-wai, Mr KWOK Wai-keung and Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung respectively as well as the amendment motions put forth by Mr Frederick FUNG and Dr Fernando CHEUNG respectively to the motion moved by Mr KWOK Wai-keung. At this juncture, Mr LEUNG withdrew his motion. The wording of the remaining motions/amendment motions in accordance with the order of their receipt by the LegCo Secretariat were as follows –

The first motion, moved by Mr WU Chi-wai:

"本事務委員會促請本會委任一個專責委員會，調查有關在房屋委員會轄下的公共屋邨單位內，食水樣本含鉛量超出世界衛生組織標準的原委及有關事宜，包括運輸及房屋局、發展局、房屋委員會及其他政府部門在事件中有否妥善履行部門職責，以及調查負責建造有關項目的機構的失責行為及責任，以及有關事宜；並根據上述調查的結果，就日後政府確保食水質素安全及有關事宜作出建議；而該委員會在執行其職務時獲授權根據《立法會(權力及特權)條例》(第382章)第9(2)條行使該條例第9(1)條所賦予的權力。"

(Translation)

"That this Panel urges that this Council to appoint a select committee to inquire into the causes of lead levels of water samples drawn from public housing estate units under the Housing Authority exceeding the standards set by the World Health Organization and related issues, including whether the Transport and Housing Bureau, the Development Bureau, the Housing Authority as well as other Government departments have duly discharged their duties in the incident, and investigate into the act of default and responsibilities of the entities responsible for implementing the projects concerned and related issues, with recommendations made in accordance with the results of the above inquiry on how the Government can in the future ensure that the quality of drinking water is safe and related issues; and that in the performance of its duties the committee be authorized under section 9(2) of the Legislative Council (Powers and Privileges) Ordinance (Cap. 382) to exercise the powers conferred by section 9(1) of that Ordinance."

Action

The second motion, moved by Mr KWOK Wai-keung and seconded by Mr WONG Kwok-hing:

"近日有公共屋邨的食水被驗出含鉛量超標，直接影響居民健康，並令市民感到非常憂慮。雖然政府當局已擴大檢驗食水範圍至由2011年起落成的屋邨，惟各區居民仍然擔心屋邨食水未符標準。為釋除公眾疑慮，令居民可以安心用水，本委員會要求政府當局儘快全面為本港所有公共屋邨及資助房屋屋苑，包括近年經「全方位維修計劃」更換新喉的舊屋邨，進行食水檢驗工作。"

(Translation)

"Recently, tap water at some public housing estates was tested and found to contain excessive lead. Such an incident has direct impacts on the residents' health and has aroused serious public concern. Although the Administration has extended the coverage of water testing to include public housing estates completed since 2011, residents in various districts remain concerned that water at public housing estates is not up to standard. To address the public concern and enable the residents to feel at ease in using water, this Panel requests the Administration to conduct comprehensive water testing expeditiously for all the public housing estates and subsidized housing estates in the territory, including old housing estates where water pipes have been newly replaced under the "Total Maintenance Scheme" in recent years."

Amendment motion moved by Mr Frederick FUNG to the motion moved by Mr KWOK Wai-keung:

"近日有公共屋邨的食水被驗出含鉛量超標，直接影響居民健康，並令市民感到非常憂慮。雖然政府當局已擴大檢驗食水範圍至由2011年起落成的屋邨，惟各區居民仍然擔心屋邨食水未符標準。為釋除公眾疑慮，令居民可以安心用水，本委員會要求政府當局儘快全面為本港所有公共屋邨及資助房屋屋苑，包括近年經「全方位維修計劃」更換新喉的舊屋邨，進行食水檢驗工作。**並為有居民被驗血含鉛超標的屋邨，包括啟晴邨及葵聯邨，全邨居民驗血與及向受「含鉛超標」屋邨居民作出補償。**"

Action

(Translation)

"Recently, tap water at some public housing estates was tested and found to contain excessive lead. Such an incident has direct impacts on the residents' health and has aroused serious public concern. Although the Administration has extended the coverage of water testing to include public housing estates completed since 2011, residents in various districts remain concerned that water at public housing estates is not up to standard. To address the public concern and enable the residents to feel at ease in using water, this Panel requests the Administration to conduct comprehensive water testing expeditiously for all the public housing estates and subsidized housing estates in the territory, including old housing estates where water pipes have been newly replaced under the "Total Maintenance Scheme" in recent years. ***And to carry out blood tests for all residents of housing estates (including Kai Ching Estate and Kwai Luen Estate) where some residents were found to have excessive levels of lead in blood, as well as to offer compensation to residents of housing estates which are affected by the "excessive lead" incident.***"

Amendment motion moved by Dr Fernando CHEUNG to the motion moved by Mr KWOK Wai-keung:

"近日有公共屋邨的食水被驗出含鉛量超標，直接影響居民健康，並令市民感到非常憂慮。雖然政府當局已擴大檢驗食水範圍至由2011年起落成的屋邨，惟各區居民仍然擔心屋邨食水未符標準。為釋除公眾疑慮，令居民可以安心用水，本委員會要求政府當局儘快全面為本港所有公共屋邨及資助房屋屋苑，包括近年經「全方位維修計劃」更換新喉的舊屋邨，進行食水檢驗工作，***並為所有曾驗出食水含鉛量超標的屋邨(包括水泉澳邨)，用水車或其他有效方法提供清潔食水，直至維修正常供水系統完成為止。***"

(Translation)

"Recently, tap water at some public housing estates was tested and found to contain excessive lead. Such an incident has direct impacts on the residents' health and has aroused serious public concern. Although the Administration has extended the coverage of water testing to include public housing estates completed since 2011, residents in various districts remain concerned that water at public

Action

housing estates is not up to standard. To address the public concern and enable the residents to feel at ease in using water, this Panel requests the Administration to conduct comprehensive water testing expeditiously for all the public housing estates and subsidized housing estates in the territory, including old housing estates where water pipes have been newly replaced under the "Total Maintenance Scheme" in recent years, ***and to use water wagons or other effective means to provide clean drinking water for housing estates where tap water has been found to contain excessive lead (including Shui Chuen O Estate), until repair works to restore the water supply system to normal have been completed.***"

44. Members agreed to proceed dealing with the motions. Members also agreed that there was no need to debate on the motions.

45. The Chairman put the motion moved by Mr WU Chi-wai to vote. At the request of Mr WU, the Chairman ordered a division. Eight members voted for the motion and 10 members voted against it. The Chairman declared that the motion was negatived. The voting results of individual members were as follows –

For:

Mr LEE Cheuk-yan	Mr Frederick FUNG
Prof Joseph LEE	Mr Alan LEONG
Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung	Mr WONG Yuk-man
Mr WU Chi-wai	Dr Fernando CHEUNG
(Eight members)	

Against:

Mr Vincent FANG	Mr WONG Kwok-hing
Mr CHAN Hak-kan	Mr IP Kwok-him
Mr LEUNG Che-cheung	Miss Alice MAK
Mr KWOK Wai-keung	Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok
Mr Christopher CHUNG	Mr Tony TSE
(10 members)	

46. The Chairman then put to vote the amendment motion moved by Mr Frederick FUNG to the motion moved by Mr KWOK Wai-keung. Eight members voted for the motion and 10 members voted against it. The Chairman declared that the amendment motion was negatived.

47. The Chairman then put to vote the amendment motion moved by Dr Fernando CHEUNG to the motion moved by Mr KWOK Wai-keung. Eighteen members voted for the motion and no member voted against it. The

Action

Chairman declared that the amendment motion was carried.

48. The Chairman then put to vote the motion moved by Mr KWOK Wai-keung as amended by Dr Fernando CHEUNG. Eighteen members voted for the motion and no member voted against it. The Chairman declared that Mr KWOK's motion as amended was carried.

Admin 49. The Chairman requested the Administration to provide a written response to the motion passed as amended at the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The wording of the motion passed as amended was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1136/14-15(01) on 23 July 2015 and was provided to the Administration via the letter dated 23 July 2015.)

Conclusion

Admin 50. Summing up, the Chairman requested the Administration to provide supplementary information with regard to the concerns and suggestions raised by members at the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's written response to the concerns and suggestions raised by members and to the motion passed as amended at the meeting was circulated to members on 28 August 2015 vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1215/14-15.)

II. Any other business

51. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 1:15 pm.