

Legislative Council Panel on Housing

**Role and positioning of the Hong Kong Housing Society
in the Government's housing policy**

Purpose

This paper briefs Members on the role and positioning of the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS) in the Government's housing policy.

Role and positioning of HKHS in the Government's housing policy

2. HKHS was established in 1948 and was incorporated as a body corporate in 1951 under the Hong Kong Housing Society Incorporation Ordinance (Cap. 1059) (the Ordinance). The mission of HKHS is to serve the needs of the Hong Kong community in housing and related services. HKHS is an independent, financially autonomous, self-financing and not-for-profit organisation. It does not receive any direct subsidy from the Government. According to the Ordinance, HKHS has full power in various aspects, for example, to dispose of land and property, to make investment decisions, to borrow or raise money, to do other things in accordance with its aim and objects, etc. The Ordinance does not empower the Government to monitor the operation of HKHS.

3. The HKHS Constitution under the Ordinance governs the functions and powers of HKHS. HKHS establishes its governance structure in accordance with its Constitution. The structure of HKHS includes a Supervisory Board which is responsible for setting HKHS' mission and direction, and an Executive Committee which is responsible for the day-to-day administration of HKHS. The Constitution has provided for the mechanism and related matters concerning the appointment of the HKHS Chairman, Vice-Chairman and other Committee members. The Government is not involved in these appointment matters. With regard to the actual operation of HKHS, Government representatives are invited to be members of its Supervisory Board, Executive Committee and Nomination Committee in accordance with its Constitution. In attending these Committees, the power and responsibility of the Government are no different from those of other members, and the Government has all along been giving advices on matters handled by these committees as appropriate.

4. HKHS has all along been a close partner of the Government in providing affordable housing and related services for the general public of Hong Kong, and meeting different housing needs of the community. Throughout the years, HKHS has been playing an active role in the provision of public rental units at affordable rents for low-income households, and in the development of subsidised sale projects. The Government has reaffirmed the role of HKHS as our close partner in the Long Term Housing Strategy promulgated in December 2014. In view of the tight housing supply, the Government has been actively exploring ways to increase the supply of subsidised housing through engaging different organisations including HKHS. As announced in the 2013 Policy Address, the Government invited HKHS to develop subsidised sale flats and public rental units in Sha Tin and Sha Tau Kok respectively. Also, as set out in the 2015 Policy Address, two sites in Tseung Kwan O and Tuen Mun respectively have been set aside for the development of subsidised sale flats by HKHS, so as to provide more choices and home ownership opportunities for low and middle-income families. Looking forward, subject to the overall planning of land resources, the Government will continue to grant suitable sites to HKHS to develop housing projects and provide more affordable housing for the community.

5. HKHS has also been assuming the unique role of “housing laboratory” in trying out innovative housing schemes. One example is the implementation of the Senior Citizens Residence Scheme which provides purpose-built flats for eligible elderly persons.

6. Members are invited to note the content of this paper.

Transport and Housing Bureau
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