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Legislative Council

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Panel on Housing

Meeting on 7 December 2015

**Background brief on "Performance of the environmental targets
and initiatives of the Hong Kong Housing Authority"
prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat**

Purpose

This paper provides background information on the environmental targets and initiatives of the Hong Kong Housing Authority ("HA") and gives a brief account of the views and concerns expressed by members on the subject.

Background

2. To promote healthy living and a green environment, HA established an Environment Policy in 1999. In addition to complying with environmental legislation and regulations, HA has developed a strategic framework and implemented environmental management strategies for the promotion of sustainable development. To effectively manage the overall implementation of the Environmental Policy, HA establishes environmental targets and initiatives at the beginning of each fiscal year and the performance is reviewed quarterly.

Environmental targets and initiatives in 2013-2014

3. HA set 40 environmental targets for the fiscal year 2013-2014 for the promotion of sustainable development on various fronts, including planning and construction of new housing estates, the operation of existing estates and its office at work. The targets covered the following six environmental aspects –

- (a) energy efficiency;
- (b) water conservation;
- (c) greening;
- (d) waste management;

- (e) control of hazardous materials; and
- (f) enhancement of environmental awareness and participation.

4. According to HA, all targets set for 2013-2014 were fully met. Detailed performance of HA in respect of its environmental targets and initiatives in 2013-2014 are set out in Annex 1 to LC Paper No. CB(1)1516/13-14(05), which is hyperlinked in the **Appendix**.

Food waste recycling

5. In pursuing a green environment, HA has started developing food waste recycling in public housing estates. Since November 2012, HA has also partnered with three green groups to conduct a trial scheme on food waste recycling. Fourteen estates have joined the scheme with about 3 000 households participated.

Deliberations by the Panel on Housing

6. The Panel on Housing ("the Panel") receives the Administration's briefings on the performance of HA in respect of its environmental targets and initiatives regularly, and was last briefed on the progress made by HA in 2013-2014 on 3 June 2014. The major views and concerns expressed by members at previous meetings are summarized in the ensuing paragraphs.

Waste management

7. Noting that some social enterprises had been promoting waste recycling through incentives such as provision of coupons in exchange for recycled products, some members called on the Housing Department to promote such recycling schemes to all public rental housing ("PRH") estates.

Food waste recycling

8. Members expressed support for implementing food waste recycling projects in all PRH estates and suggested that the Environmental Protection Department and green groups should develop a territory-wide food waste recycling programme which would help reduce the food waste being disposed at landfills. The compost converted from food waste should be used for greening purposes in PRH estates.

9. The Administration advised that HA had conducted on-site and off-site food waste recycling trial schemes in some PRH estates. Given the practical difficulties associated with the collection, storage and treatment of food waste and the fact that there had been complaints against odour nuisances from food

waste recycling, HA did not have plan to extend the on-site trial scheme to all PRH estates. As the prevention and reduction of food waste at source would be the most effective way to reduce food waste, HA would focus its efforts on promoting tenants' awareness and participation in waste separation at source, waste reduction and green management initiatives through various publicity channels.

Energy efficiency

10. Members held the view that lighting at the communal areas of housing estates should be reduced during late night hours in order to conserve energy and that the more energy efficient light-emitting diode lighting and sensor systems should be adopted. Some members suggested introducing incentives to encourage energy conservation. For example, PRH households which could achieve electricity savings in the past six months could be entitled to rental deductions equivalent to the savings achieved. The Administration advised that HA was not in favour of providing financial incentives for energy conservation in the form of rental reductions as the PRH rentals were already very low and further reductions would affect the viability of PRH programmes.

Greening

11. Members suggested that roof and vertical greening should be promoted in shopping arcades, car parks and community facilities. They also considered it aesthetical to provide "at grade" greening.

Environmental awareness and participation

12. Members considered that there should be more interaction with PRH tenants in implementing greening and energy efficiency initiatives, and that more resources should be provided to Estate Management Advisory Committees in promoting environmental awareness and community participation by way of environmental campaigns and seminars.

Control of hazardous materials

13. On members' concern about the progress of removing the asbestos-containing materials in the 17 PRH estates which had such materials, the Administration advised that most of the asbestos-containing materials in PRH estates had been removed and those remaining were mainly in balcony grilles, staircases and lobby grilles as well as chimneys. They should not cause health hazards under normal circumstances. HA would keep them in satisfactory condition by conducting two condition surveys per year and engaging a registered asbestos contractor for emergency repair of underground asbestos cement water-mains for all estates.

Latest development

14. The Administration will brief the Panel on the performance of HA in respect of its environmental targets and initiatives in 2014-2015 at the Panel meeting on 7 December 2015.

Relevant papers

15. A list of relevant papers is in the **Appendix**.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
1 December 2015

**Performance of the environmental targets
and initiatives of the Hong Kong Housing Authority**

List of relevant papers

Council/ Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Housing	10 February 2011	<p>Administration's paper on "Performance of Environmental Targets and Initiatives in 2010" (LC Paper No. CB(1)1209/10-11(05)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/hg/papers/hg0210cb1-1209-5-e.pdf</p> <p>Updated background brief on environment-friendly designs and green measures implemented in public rental housing estates prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (LC Paper No. CB(1)1209/10-11(06)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/hg/papers/hg0210cb1-1209-6-e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)2023/10-11) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/hg/minutes/hg20110210.pdf</p>
Panel on Housing	3 December 2012	<p>Administration's paper on "Performance of Environmental Targets and Initiatives in 2011/12" (LC Paper No. CB(1)231/12-13(03)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/hg/papers/hg1203cb1-231-3-e.pdf</p> <p>Background brief on "Environment-friendly designs, green measures and energy saving initiatives implemented in public rental housing estates" prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (LC Paper No. CB(1)231/12-13(04)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/hg/papers/hg1203cb1-231-4-e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)515/12-13) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/hg/minutes/hg20121203.pdf</p>

<p>Panel on Housing</p>	<p>3 June 2014</p>	<p>Administration's paper on "Performance of Environmental Targets and Initiatives in 2013/14" (LC Paper No. CB(1)1516/13-14(05)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr13-14/english/panels/hg/papers/hg0603cb1-1516-5-e.pdf</p> <p>Background brief on "Performance of the environmental targets and initiatives of the Hong Kong Housing Authority" prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (LC Paper No. CB(1)1516/13-14(06)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr13-14/english/panels/hg/papers/hg0603cb1-1516-6-e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)192/14-15) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr13-14/english/panels/hg/minutes/hg20140603.pdf</p>
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