

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)654/18-19

(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/HG/1

Panel on Housing

Minutes of meeting
held on Monday, 7 May 2018, at 2:30 pm
in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex

Members present : Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen, BBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon Andrew WAN Siu-kin (Deputy Chairman)
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP
Hon CHAN Hak-kan, BBS, JP
Hon CHAN Kin-por, GBS, JP
Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun, JP
Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, SBS, MH, JP
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Hon KWOK Wai-keung, JP
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, SBS, MH, JP
Hon CHU Hoi-dick
Dr Hon Junius HO Kwan-yiu, JP
Hon HO Kai-ming
Hon SHIU Ka-fai
Hon SHIU Ka-chun
Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing, MH
Hon YUNG Hoi-yan
Hon Tanya CHAN
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-kwan, JP
Hon LAU Kwok-fan, MH
Dr Hon CHENG Chung-tai

Hon Jeremy TAM Man-ho
Hon AU Nok-hin
Hon Vincent CHENG Wing-shun, MH
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS

Members absent : Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Prof Hon Joseph LEE Kok-long, SBS, JP
Hon WONG Kwok-kin, SBS, JP
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yee, GBS, JP
Hon WU Chi-wai, MH
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Hon LUK Chung-hung
Hon KWONG Chun-yu

Public Officers attending : Agenda Item V

Miss Rosaline WONG
Deputy Director (Estate Management)
Housing Department

Mr Martin TSOI
Assistant Director (Estate Management) 1
Housing Department

Mr NG Shu-chung
Chief Manager/Management(Support Services 2)
Housing Department

Agenda Item VI

Dr Raymond SO, BBS, JP
Under Secretary for Transport and Housing

Ms Esther LEUNG, JP
Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Mr Alan HUI
Assistant Director (Housing Subsidies)
Housing Department

Mr MAK Yook-ming
Chief Housing Manager/Applications
Housing Department

Clerk in attendance : Mr Derek LO
Chief Council Secretary (1)5

Staff in attendance : Mr Fred PANG
Senior Council Secretary (1)5

Ms Michelle NIEN
Legislative Assistant (1)5

Action

I. Confirmation of minutes

(LC Paper No. CB(1)892/17-18 — Minutes of meeting held on
9 January 2018)

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2018 were confirmed.

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)788/17-18(01) — Land Registry Statistics for
March 2018 provided by the
Administration (press release)

LC Paper No. CB(1)848/17-18(01) — Administration's paper on
Progress of the Total
Maintenance Scheme

LC Paper No. CB(1)901/17-18(01) — Letter dated 27 April 2018
from Hon Wilson OR Chong-
shing regarding the Green
Form Subsidised Home
Ownership Scheme (Chinese
version only)

Action

III. Items for discussion at the next meeting

(LC Paper No. CB(1)898/17-18(01) — List of follow-up actions

LC Paper No. CB(1)898/17-18(02) — List of outstanding items for discussion)

3. The Chairman advised that the next regular meeting of the Panel on Housing ("HG Panel") was scheduled for Monday, 4 June 2018, at 2:30 pm and at 2:45 pm HG Panel would hold a joint meeting with the Panel on Welfare Services to receive public views on and discuss with the Administration the subject of tenancy control.

(Post-meeting note: In view of the number of deputations/individuals who had registered for attending the joint meeting on 4 June 2018, the Chairmen of the two Panels had directed that another joint meeting be held at 10:45 am on 6 July 2018. The notices of the regular and joint meetings and agendas were issued to members vide LC Papers No. CB(1)928/17-18, CB(1)929/17-18 and CB(1)1036/17-18 on 9 and 29 May 2018.)

4. The Chairman advised that pursuant to the HG Panel's request earlier on, the Administration had provided a paper on "Progress of the Total Maintenance Scheme", which was issued on 25 April 2018 (vide LC Paper No. CB(1)848/17-18(01)). The Secretariat had not received members' request for discussing the item at a meeting.

5. The Chairman advised that HG Panel had agreed at the meeting on 5 February 2018 to hold a joint meeting with the Panel on Development ("DEV Panel") on 13 March 2018 to receive public views on and discuss with the Administration "General ex-gratia compensation and rehousing arrangements for Government's development clearance exercises and Head 711 project no. B780CL - Site formation and infrastructure works for public housing development at Wang Chau, Yuen Long". At the Administration's request, the joint meeting would be re-scheduled to a later date. In response to Dr KWOK Ka-ki's enquiry about when the joint meeting would be held, the Chairman advised that the Secretariat had earlier on written to the Administration on the matter pending its reply.

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6. The Chairman, who was also Chairman of the HG Panel's Subcommittee to Follow Up the Issues Related to the Wang Chau Development Project ("the Subcommittee"), said that the Subcommittee had discussed with the Administration the latest progress of the Wang Chau development project on 25 April 2018, and the Administration had advised at the meeting that it would arrange the Subcommittee's members to visit Wang Chau. Members of the Subcommittee had earlier on suggested that a public hearing be arranged to receive views on the Wang Chau development project. The Chairman suggested that the decision on whether to hold the Subcommittee's public hearing be deferred until after the aforesaid joint meeting with DEV Panel was held. This was to avoid duplication of the work of the Subcommittee with that of the joint Panel meeting as issues discussed at the joint meeting were also the issues of concern of the Subcommittee. Members raised no objection to the Chairman's suggestion.

(Post-meeting note: The Panel on Housing and Panel on Development held joint meetings on 26 and 29 June 2018 to receive public views on and discuss with the Administration "General ex-gratia compensation and rehousing arrangements for Government's development clearance exercises and Head 711 project no. B780CL - Site formation and infrastructure works for public housing development at Wang Chau, Yuen Long". Members raised no objection to the submission of the proposal B780CL to the Public Works Subcommittee for consideration.)

IV. Matter arising from the meeting on 10 April 2018

(LC Paper No. CB(1)789/17-18(01) — Wording of the motion moved by Hon Jeremy TAM Man-ho (Chinese version only))

7. The Chairman advised that at the meeting on 10 April 2018, Mr Jeremy TAM had moved a motion when the Panel was discussing the agenda item on "The work of the Sales of First-hand Residential Properties Authority", and members had agreed that the motion would be put to vote at this meeting.

Motion moved by Mr Jeremy TAM –

"就一手住宅物業賣方的銷售手法，本會要求售樓說明書必須列明樓宇能否飼養動物。"

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(Translation)

"With respect to the sales practices of vendors of first-hand residential properties, this Panel requests that information on whether the keeping of animals is allowed in premises be set out in sales brochures."

8. The Chairman put to vote the motion moved by Mr Jeremy TAM. Six members voted for the motion, no member voted against it or abstained from voting. The Chairman declared that the motion was carried.

(Post-meeting note: The wording of the motion passed was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)932/17-18(01) on 8 May 2018. The Administration's response to the motion was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)310/18-19(01) on 10 December 2018.)

V. Marking Scheme for Estate Management Enforcement in Public Housing Estates of the Hong Kong Housing Authority

(LC Paper No. CB(1)894/17-18(01) — Administration's paper on Marking Scheme for Estate Management Enforcement in Public Housing Estates

LC Paper No. CB(1)898/17-18(03) — Paper on Marking Scheme for Estate Management Enforcement in Public Housing Estates prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (updated background brief))

9. Deputy Director (Estate Management), Housing Department ("DD(EM), HD") briefed members on the latest position of the implementation of the Marking Scheme for Estate Management Enforcement in Public Housing Estates ("the Marking Scheme") by the Hong Kong Housing Authority ("HA"), and the HA's trial scheme for allowing public rental housing ("PRH") tenants to become foster families keeping guide dog puppies under training. With the aid of powerpoint, Assistant Director (Estate Management)¹, Housing Department elaborated the details and way forward of the Marking Scheme and the trial scheme.

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(*Post-meeting note:* Presentation materials (LC Paper No. CB(1)930/17-18(01)) for the item were issued to members on 8 May 2018 in electronic form.)

Marking scheme for Estate Management Enforcement in Public Housing Estates

10. Mr KWOK Wai-keung opined that to facilitate members to consider the seriousness of misdeeds in public housing estates and the effectiveness of the Marking Scheme, HA should provide for members' reference statistics on the number of complaints received regarding the misdeeds, the investigations/follow-up actions with respect to the complaints, etc. He enquired whether the number of warnings issued to PRH tenants committing a misdeed was much less than the number of complaints received/investigated by HA regarding the misdeed. DD(EM), HD replied that the purpose of the Marking Scheme was to induce changes in the behaviour of tenants who had committed misdeeds. If a complaint regarding a misdeed was substantiated, HA would consider the appropriate follow-up actions. In respect of the misdeeds to which the warning system was applicable, the Administration had provided the number of warnings issued for the misdeeds in Annex 2 to the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(1)894/17-18(01)). In general, for a tenant who had committed a misdeed and received a written warning, the Housing Department ("HD") would allot points if the offender committed the same misdeed again thereafter.

11. Mr Andrew WAN enquired about the number of tenants who had accrued 16 valid points or more within two years and had been issued notices-to-quit ("NTQs") and whether HD would publicize this information to enhance PRH tenants' awareness of the possible consequences of committing misdeeds. Mr Wilson OR declared that he was a member of HA's Subsidised Housing Committee ("SHC"). He enquired about the reason that as at end December 2017, HA had withheld the issuance of NTQs to 15 households on special grounds.

12. DD(EM), HD replied that after the implementation of the Marking Scheme, as at end December 2017, there were 84 households accrued 16 or more valid points, among which three had surrendered their PRH units voluntarily and 66 had received NTQs. Among these 66 households, HA had recovered the PRH units of 38 households, and of which, 30 had lodged an appeal to the Appeal Panel (Housing). After considering their cases, the Appeal Panel (Housing) had cancelled the NTQs issued to 25 households. There were three cases in which HA had pursuant to the decision of the Appeal Panel (Housing) granted a new PRH tenancy on compassionate

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grounds. DD(EM), HD advised that HA would continue the publicity efforts to remind tenants that a tenancy might be terminated if the tenant concerned accrued 16 valid points or more.

Water dripping from air-conditioners

13. In view that the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department ("FEHD") might take law enforcement actions under the relevant legislation against the nuisances caused by dripping air-conditioners in areas under the FEHD's purview, Mr LEUNG Che-cheung enquired whether HA/the Administration could take prosecutions against the misdeed of water dripping from air-conditioners in public housing estates. Chief Manager/Management (Support Services 2), Housing Department ("CM/M(SS2), HD") replied that FEHD might take law enforcement actions against water dripping from air-conditioners in public housing estates according to the relevant legislation. There was no inconsistency between the FEHD's enforcement of laws of Hong Kong and the implementation of the Marking Scheme.

(The Chairman left the meeting at 3:14 pm and the Deputy Chairman took over the chair.)

14. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok enquired whether HA/the Administration had put in place guidelines for contractors to follow when installing air-conditioners in PRH units as PRH tenants might not know how to fix the problem of water dripping from air-conditioners.

(The Chairman resumed the chair at 3:16 pm.)

15. DD(EM), HD replied that as a general practice, as summer approached, HA would remind PRH tenants to fix the problem of water dripping from the air-conditioners inside their flats, if any, and estate management staff would provide appropriate assistance to needy tenants, such as elderly households and tenants with disabilities, in this regard. Tenants or contractors who needed information about installation of air-conditioners inside PRH units might approach the estate management staff for assistance. Ir Dr LO remarked that HA should proactively provide relevant guidelines for contractors' reference.

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Throwing objects from heights

16. Mr SHIU Ka-chun enquired about the measures, if any, other than the Marking Scheme to reduce cases of throwing objects from heights in public housing estates. DD(EM), HD replied that the measures adopted by HA in combating throwing objects from heights included promoting the message against throwing objects from heights through the Housing Channel, posters and partnering functions by Estate Management Advisory Committees ("EMACs") and non-governmental organizations; deployment of Mobile Digital Closed Circuit Television sets, Mobile Surveillance System sets and Special Operation Teams to detect suspected offenders; and intensified patrols and inspections by estate staff at regional level. The number of point-allotment cases for this misdeed had increased from 127 in 2016 to 163 in 2017, reflecting the effectiveness of the Special Operation Teams in detecting offenders. Mr SHIU Ka-chun requested the Administration to provide supplementary information on the number of operations conducted by the Special Operation Teams against throwing objects from heights, the number of cases of throwing objects from heights detected by the Special Operation Teams and the number of such cases in which HA/the Administration had instituted prosecutions in the past year.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's supplementary information was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1176/17-18(01) on 25 June 2018.)

17. In respect of handling cases of throwing objects from heights, Mr Wilson OR requested the Administration to provide after the meeting information about (i) the time from the receipt of a complaint to the completion of investigation and follow-up actions such as issue of warnings, allotment of points, etc. by HA/the Administration; and (ii) measures, if any, to enhance the transparency and shorten the time of the complaint handling procedures. The Chairman requested the Administration to provide details on handling of cases of throwing objects from heights in public housing estates.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's supplementary information was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1176/17-18(01) on 25 June 2018.)

18. Mr KWOK Wai-keung enquired about cases, if any, of throwing objects from heights in public housing estates against which prosecutions could not be instituted because the relevant video record was not available. DD(EM), HD replied that HA/the Administration had to ensure the presence of supporting evidences for taking actions against the misdeed of throwing objects from heights. Upon receiving a complaint regarding throwing objects

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from heights, Special Operation Teams would step up patrols and surveillance. Where the complaint was found substantiated, HA would consider taking the appropriate follow-up actions such as allotment of points, reporting the case to the Police, etc. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok enquired about the number of cases of throwing objects from heights in public housing estates which involved casualties over the past several years, and the number of such cases in which the suspected offenders had been prosecuted and convicted. DD(EM), HD undertook to provide supplementary information in respect of Ir Dr LO's enquiries.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's supplementary information was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1176/17-18(01) on 25 June 2018.)

19. Mr LEUNG Che-cheung said that throwing objects from heights was a serious offence. HA should set up more surveillance systems to help ensure that the tenants committing such misdeed could be successfully prosecuted. Dr CHENG Chung-tai asked whether the surveillance systems for detecting throwing objects from heights in public housing estates were installed on ad-hoc, instead of permanent, basis. He said that there was suspicion that the removal of surveillance system from a black spot by HD was to keep the number of detected cases of throwing objects from heights in the black spot to a minimum. Mr Andrew WAN opined that cases of throwing objects from heights in a black spot might increase again after removal of the surveillance system originally set up to monitor the black spot. Given the limited cost of a surveillance system, HD should consider procuring more such systems in order to extend the coverage of surveillance. He enquired about the size of the Special Operation Teams.

20. DD(EM), HD and CM/M(SS2), HD replied that the number of surveillance systems set up by HA in public housing estates had increased over the past few years. The rotation of the systems was for the purpose of ensuring their effective use but not reducing the number of detected cases of throwing objects from height. HA took into account factors such as the locations and frequencies in the estates where complaints were received in deciding whether to set up additional systems or rotate the systems to different estates. DD(EM), HD advised that HA had set up 191 surveillance systems to monitor the throwing of objects from heights, and would consider members' suggestion of setting up more surveillance systems. The Special Operation Teams comprised about 69 members. Apart from carrying out routine patrol duties, the teams would deploy manpower to detect throwing of objects from heights in black spots. If a tenant committed a misdeed which caused casualties, HA might terminate the tenancy concerned immediately.

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Dr CHENG Chung-tai requested the Administration to provide supplementary information on the details, with figures if appropriate, about the deployment of the surveillance systems in the past three years, including the public housing estates where the systems were installed and whether the installations were on permanent or ad-hoc basis, the public housing estates at which the systems had been installed and later removed, etc.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's supplementary information was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1176/17-18(01) on 25 June 2018.)

Smoking in estate common areas

21. Mr Andrew WAN enquired about the reason for the large number of point-allotment cases for the misdeed of smoking in estate common areas and enhancement, if any, in publicity measures against the misdeed. DD(EM), HD replied that HD had all along been balancing the need of smokers and non-smokers, and would continue the publicity to remind tenants that smoking in estate common areas was a misdeed.

Keeping of dogs

22. Mr SHIU Ka-chun requested the Administration to provide after the meeting information on the reasons for the reduction in the number of permitted dogs under the Temporary Permission Rule in public housing estates and response to the concern that the measures adopted by HA earlier on to prohibit the keeping of unauthorized dogs in public housing estates had given rise to the problem of abandonment of dogs by tenants.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's supplementary information was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1176/17-18(01) on 25 June 2018.)

Trial scheme for keeping guide dog puppies

23. Mr Wilson OR supported the introduction of the trial scheme. He relayed the concern of some EMACs that the co-existence of guide dog puppies allowed to be kept under the trial scheme and other authorized dogs kept by PRH tenants would give rise to management issues in public housing estates. DD(EM), HD replied that HA considered it appropriate to allow two PRH households for keeping guide dog puppies under training for around one year and would review the PRH tenants' feedback towards the trial scheme for taking measures, if any, to facilitate the improvement of the scheme.

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24. Mr CHAN Hak-kan welcomed the arrangement made by HA in PRH estates for the trial scheme and enquired (i) whether HA would increase the number of foster families; (ii) whether it had discussed with/taken into account the views of the two guide dog organizations taking part in the trial scheme (i.e. Hong Kong Guide Dogs Association and the Hong Kong Seeing Eye Dog Services) when considering the public housing estates suitable for implementing the scheme; and (iii) whether HA had plans to extend the trial scheme to all public housing estates.

25. DD(EM), HD replied that HD considered it appropriate to adopt a prudent approach in introducing the arrangement of allowing PRH tenants to keep guide dog puppies in PRH units. HD would work closely with the two guide dog organizations to implement the trial scheme, and the eight PRH estates from which foster families would be selected were proposed by the two organizations. HD would give permission to the selected foster families for keeping guide dog puppies in mid-2018. Upon completion of the training, HD would evaluate the effectiveness of the trial scheme and determinate the way forward. The Chairman requested the Administration to provide, if any, other supplementary information in addition to the information provided at the meeting, in respect of Mr CHAN's questions about the trial scheme.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's supplementary information was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1176/17-18(01) on 25 June 2018.)

26. Mr CHAN Hak-kan suggested that when implementing the trial scheme, HA should consider enhancing the awareness of the public on certain rules that should be followed when encountering guide dogs, such as they should avoid feeding them, they should not disallow them to access a public place, they should not harass them and they should proactively ask the visually impaired person bringing along a guide dog whether he/she needed help. DD(EM), HD replied that the Administration would liaise with the two guide dog organizations to consider Mr CHAN's suggestion.

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VI. Quota and Points System of the Hong Kong Housing Authority

(LC Paper No. CB(1)898/17-18(04) — Administration's paper on implementation of the refined Quota and Points System of the Hong Kong Housing Authority since February 2015

LC Paper No. CB(1)898/17-18(05) — Paper on the refined Quota and Points System prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (background brief))

27. At the invitation of the Chairman, Under Secretary for Transport and Housing ("USTH") briefed members on the implementation of the refined Quota and Points System ("QPS") of HA since February 2015, details of which were set out in the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(1)898/17-18(04)).

Refined Quota and Points System

28. Mr KWOK Wai-keung and Mr SHIU Ka-chun enquired why HA set the minimum age for being awarded the bonus at 45. Mr SHIU further enquired about the Administration's response to the concern that it would take about 60 years for HA to allocate PRH units to the about 120 000 QPS applicants, given that the flat allocation under the refined QPS was subject to an annual quota of 2 200. Mr Wilson OR enquired about the rationale for the small increase in the annual allocation quota from 2 000 to 2 200.

29. USTH and the Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing) ("DS(H)") replied that QPS was introduced by HA in September 2005 to rationalize and re-prioritize the allocation of PRH units to non-elderly one-person applicants. Unlike general applicants (i.e. family and elderly one-person applicants), the target of providing the first flat offer at around three years on average was not applicable to QPS applicants. The allocation of PRH units under QPS was subject to an annual quota. In the formulation of the Long Term Housing Strategy ("LTHS"), the LTHS Steering Committee considered that older applicants might have relatively limited upward mobility and therefore should be given higher priority under QPS. During the public consultation on LTHS in 2013, a considerable number of respondents agreed that more points should be given to non-elderly one-person applicants

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who were above the age of 45. In the Report No. 61 on the allocation and utilization of PRH units, the Director of Audit observed that there was a built-in incentive for applicants to apply for PRH early under QPS and recommended HA to conduct a comprehensive review of QPS. Taking into account relevant views/recommendations, SHC decided to refine QPS in 2014. Refinements included awarding a one-off bonus of 60 points to QPS applicants reaching the age of 45 and increasing the scale of "age points" from 3 to 9 points per year of age increase at the time of application, so as to accord a higher priority to older QPS applicants in the allocation of PRH units over other applicants. To increase PRH allocation to QPS applicants without significantly affecting the waiting time of general applicants, HA had increased the annual quota for QPS from 2 000 to 2 200 PRH units starting from 2015/2016.

30. Mr Wilson OR enquired whether it was possible for HA to further increase the annual PRH quota for QPS. USTH replied that the current demand for PRH in the community exceeded its supply. Since PRH was precious and limited public resources, further increasing the annual quota for QPS would adversely affect the PRH allocation for general applicants. It was the policy of the Government and HA to accord priority to general applicants over non-elderly one-person applicants in the allocation of PRH units. The Administration believed that the existing arrangement under the refined QPS had balanced the needs of these two types of applicants.

31. Mr AU Nok-hin enquired whether HA would review the arrangement of awarding the one-off bonus to QPS applicants reaching the age of 45, as this might encourage singletons who originally did not have a strong incentive to apply for PRH to submit applications under QPS, hence resulting in prolonging the waiting time of other QPS applicants. USTH replied that the number of newly-registered QPS applicants aged below 30 was 8 500 in 2015-2016 and 5 400 in 2016-2017, and the number of newly-registered QPS applicants aged 30 or above was 7 600 in 2015-2016 and 5 400 in 2016-2017, reflecting that assigning a higher priority to applicants aged 45 or above under the refined QPS did not necessarily attract more PRH applications from older singletons.

32. Mr KWOK Wai-keung enquired about the number of non-elderly one-person applicants under QPS aged below 45, and the number of them aged 45 or above. DS(H) advised that among the about 120 000 QPS applicants, about half were aged 30 or above. She undertook to explore if the requested information would be available after the meeting.

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(Post-meeting note: The Administration's supplementary information was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)310/18-19(01) on 10 December 2018.)

33. Mr Wilson OR enquired whether HA/the Administration would consider setting a waiting time target for QPS applicants so that the latter would have a better idea of the chance for them to be allocated PRH units. He opined that putting in place such target might also facilitate the Task Force on Land Supply to consider suitable measures to meet the housing demand of non-elderly singletons. USTH replied that as an application under QPS would switch to general application if the applicant concerned reached 60 years old or got married, it might not be practicable for HA to set a waiting time target considering the ongoing fluctuation in the number of QPS applications. Furthermore, the PRH allocation under QPS was subject to an annual quota and the priority of QPS applicants was determined by a points system. Putting in place a waiting time target for QPS applicants might not serve any meaningful purpose. To enable the public to understand the allocation status for QPS applicants, HA would continue to publish monthly through its website and in the press media the lowest score point of QPS applicants being arranged for detailed vetting on eligibility.

Review and reinstatement

34. Mr Wilson OR enquired about the implementation of the regular checking under QPS, including how HA ascertained that an application should be cancelled on grounds of failure to respond to HA's repeated requests for checking. USTH replied that to conduct regular checking on the eligibility of QPS applicants, HA issued letters by post to all target applicants requesting them to declare their latest personal particulars, and the target applicants might indicate withdrawal of their applications if they so wished. For those who did not respond to the letters, HA would try to contact them through other means such as phone, SMS message, etc. to remind them to respond to the HA's request in the letters.

35. Mr SHIU Ka-chun noted that among the about 20 900 QPS applications which had been cancelled by HA through the regular checking on the eligibility of QPS applicants in 2015-2016 and 2016-2017, HA had received around 1 660 requests for review and reinstatement and of which, some 760 applications had been reinstated and 840 continued to be cancelled. He enquired about (i) the criteria for considering whether an application should be reinstated or not; (ii) the reasons that HA reinstated the about 760 applications; and (iii) the reasons that HA continued to cancel the about 840 applications. USTH undertook to provide supplementary information after the meeting.

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(*Post-meeting note:* The Administration's supplementary information was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)310/18-19(01) on 10 December 2018.)

Housing needs of non-elderly singletons

36. Mr KWOK Wai-keung opined that compared to family applicants, non-elderly one-person applicants might have more difficulties in coping with high and increasing private flat rentals. The Administration/HA should explore effective measures to increase PRH supply, rather than just setting priority in the allocation of PRH. USTH responded that in the light of limited PRH resources, it was the Government's and HA's policy to accord priority to general applicants over non-elderly one-person applicants in the allocation of PRH units. To this end, QPS was introduced to rationalize and re-prioritize the allocation of PRH to non-elderly one-person applicants, rather than to disregard the housing need of these applicants.

37. Mr KWOK Wai-keung said that the arrangement to assign lower priority for non-elderly one-person applicants had lengthened their PRH waiting time thereby increasing the pressure on them. Mr SHIU Ka-fai enquired whether HA would consider further increasing the PRH income and asset limits so that more people who could not afford private rented accommodation would be eligible for PRH. USTH replied that HA had conducted the annual review of PRH income and asset limits according to established mechanism, and had endorsed the latest PRH income and asset limits in April 2018.

38. Mr Wilson OR opined that HA/the Administration should examine the public housing need of non-elderly singletons for formulating appropriate strategies for them. He enquired whether HA would provide more one/two-person PRH units in its new PRH development projects to meet the housing need of singletons. USTH replied that in the midst of limited land supply for housing, providing more one/two-person PRH units would compromise the supply of other types of PRH units. The current mechanism had struck a balance to meet the different needs.

39. Mr SHIU Ka-chun did not subscribe to the Administration's view that the housing need of family applicants was more imminent than that of non-elderly one-person applicants. He opined that the Administration should give due regard to the continued increase in the number of one-person households, which was 360 000 in 2006 and 450 000 in 2016 in Hong Kong. As of March 2018, it might take a QPS applicant some 32 years to earn sufficient "points"

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before they had a chance to receive a flat offer. He enquired about the number of non-elderly one-person applications allocated with PRH units since the implementation of the refined QPS and their average waiting time for the PRH offers. He opined that HA/the Administration should start to record and maintain such information if it was not available. Mr AU Nok-hin enquired about other avenues through which a non-elderly singleton might apply for expeditious allocation of PRH.

40. USTH replied that the number of QPS applicants housed was 1 623 in 2015-2016 and 2 145 in 2016-2017. In addition to applying for PRH under QPS, non-elderly singletons with pressing housing needs due to social or health reasons could apply for Compassionate Rehousing ("CR") upon recommendation of the Social Welfare Department. Same as other PRH applicants, non-elderly one-person applicants might also apply under the Express Flat Allocation Scheme ("EFAS") for earlier allocation of PRH units. Over the past five years, about 8% to 14% of non-elderly one-person applicants had been allocated with PRH units under EFAS and more than 20% of non-elderly one-person applicants had been allocated one-person PRH units under CR.

41. Mr SHIU Ka-chun opined that there were few successful cases where non-elderly one-person applicants had been allocated PRH units under CR. He and the Chairman considered that CR was not a practicable solution to the need of these applicants. USTH replied that eligibility for CR was not determined by a points system and the allocation of PRH unit under CR was not subject to a quota.

42. The Chairman said that there was an impression that HA put in place QPS because PRH supply was inadequate to meet the demand. Some non-elderly one-person applicants were low-income working people and they remained single because they had yet to secure an affordable housing unit, such as PRH. The policy of according lower priority to these applicants in the allocation of PRH had paid little regard to their public housing need, and they might consider it unacceptable that their waiting time for PRH was longer than that of family applicants merely because they were singletons. She enquired whether HA would review the refined QPS with a view to ensuring that the PRH waiting time of these applicants would not exceed a reasonable length of time.

Action

43. USTH replied that the current housing demand-supply imbalance was the fundamental cause of the situation faced by non-elderly singletons as mentioned by the Chairman. HA was all along committed to making the best use of the land site allocated to it to maximize the PRH production. QPS was put in place to balance the demand of general applicants and non-elderly one-person applicants. He advised that HA had not disregarded the housing needs of singletons. In particular, it was HA's target to provide the first flat offer to PRH elderly one-person applicants at around two years on average. As at end-December 2017, their average waiting time was about 2.6 years. For non-elderly one-person applicants, HA reviewed their eligibility regularly in order to have a more realistic grasp of the situation of these applicants and better assess the demand. The refined QPS had been put into implementation for about three years and HA considered that the scheme had been operating well. He assured members that HA would continue to review QPS from time to time in light of the changes in society.

Supply of public housing

44. Mr Wilson OR urged the Administration to step up its efforts in addressing the shortage of housing land. Mr SHIU Ka-fai said that the Administration should identify more options to increase land supply for providing public housing. USTH replied that the Task Force on Land Supply had launched a five-month public engagement exercise with a view to forging a consensus on the priority of the 18 land supply options identified by the Task Force. In response to Mr SHIU Ka-fai's enquiry on the Administration's stance towards Mr Tony TSE's proposal about providing modular housing in some existing PRH estates, USTH advised that Mr Tony TSE's proposal involved hanging of modular flats on the vertical walls of about 250 PRH blocks. The Administration would further study it after obtaining more relevant details from Mr TSE.

45. Mr KWOK Wai-keung enquired whether the Task Force had taken into account the housing demand of non-elderly one-person applicants when estimating the long-term land requirements in Hong Kong. USTH replied that the estimated land requirement included the land for providing public housing. The Task Force on Land Supply was of the view that land shortfall in the long run would be at least 1 200 hectares, which included not only land requirement for housing, but also other land uses such as commercial, infrastructures and community facilities, etc. If there was more land resource, there would be more flexibility in meeting the changing development needs of the society. While maintaining the 60:40 split between public and private housing supply based on the LTHS, the Administration/HA would continue its efforts in increasing the supply of PRH units for allocation to general applicants and non-elderly one person applicants.

Action

Motion

46. The Chairman referred members to the motion proposed by Mr Wilson OR, which she considered relevant to the agenda item –

Motion moved by Mr Wilson OR and seconded by Mr LEUNG Che-cheung –

"鑒於當局已設立覆核機制以更準確掌握輪候公屋的非長者單人申請數目，本會促請當局重新研究為非長者單人申請者制訂輪候公屋的目標時間，並最終達至與一般公屋申請者的輪候目標時間看齊。"

(Translation)

"Given that the authorities have already established a review mechanism in order to have a more accurate grasp of the number of non-elderly one-person applicants waiting for public rental housing ("PRH"), this Panel urges the authorities to consider afresh setting a target PRH waiting time for non-elderly one-person applicants, and ultimately bring the target waiting time in line with that of general PRH applicants."

47. The Chairman put to vote the motion moved by Mr Wilson OR. Eleven members voted in favour of the motion, no members voted against the motion, and no members abstained from voting. The Chairman declared that the motion was carried.

(Post-meeting note: The wording of the motion passed was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)932/17-18(02) on 8 May 2018. The Administration's response to the motion was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)310/18-19(01) on 10 December 2018.)

VII. Any other business

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