

政府總部
勞工及福利局

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政府總部



LABOUR AND WELFARE BUREAU
GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT

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15 July 2019

Ms Connie SZETO
Clerk to the Legislative Council Establishment Subcommittee
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Ms SZETO,

**Legislative Council Establishment Subcommittee
Follow-up Actions for Meeting on 24 June 2019**

**Proposed creation of one permanent post of Senior Principal Executive Officer
in the Social Welfare Department
to head a new Planning and Development Branch**

At the meeting of the Establishment Subcommittee held on 24 June 2019, the Government was requested to provide information on (a) why the ex-Western Police Married Quarters site was not secured by the Social Welfare Department (SWD) for the construction of welfare facilities, and how would the new Planning and Development (PD) Branch would assist the SWD in securing that site; and (b) response to Members' concern on whether the new initiative of purchasing premises for the provision of welfare facilities would have any significant impact on property prices. Relevant information is set out as follows.

Regarding the ex-Western Police Married Quarters site (the subject site), it falls within the Permanent Government Land Allocation granted to the Hong Kong Police Force. In 2013, the Government planned to develop the subject site into government offices/facilities. Having examined the demand for social welfare facilities in the Central and Western District, the SWD indicated its wish at the time to use part of floor areas at the subject site or other "Government, Institution or Community" (G/IC) sites in the district for reprovisioning and setting up a number of welfare

facilities. In 2016, the Government indicated that the plan for redeveloping the subject site into government offices/facilities was not materialised and the option for redeveloping the subject site for departmental quarters use would be re-examined. The SWD reiterated at the time that, the SWD would in conjunction with relevant departments consider incorporating suitable welfare facilities as far as the development project permits, so as to meet welfare needs in the district. In March 2019, the Government indicated that the plan for developing the subject site for departmental quarters use was being finalised. The SWD will continue keeping in view of the matter with a view to incorporating suitable welfare facilities as far as the development project permits.

As mentioned in the Establishment Subcommittee Paper EC(2019-20)9, the new PD Branch will strive to strengthen the planning, coordination and implementation of capital works projects of welfare premises, and will formulate departmental policies and procedures on all matters relating to project planning, implementation as well as management and maintenance for the provision of welfare facilities. The new PD Branch will enable the SWD to pursue more effectively a multi-pronged approach with long, medium and short-term strategies for providing suitable welfare facilities in different types of development projects, including development projects on G/IC sites, public housing development projects, private land development projects, development projects of the Urban Renewal Authority, redevelopment/conversion projects of vacant school premises etc. so as to meet the welfare development needs of various districts.

In respect of purchasing premises for the provision of welfare facilities, the Financial Secretary announced in the 2019-20 Budget that \$20 billion will be allocated for the Government to purchase properties over some three years for accommodating welfare facilities, including child care centres, day care centres for the elderly, neighbourhood elderly centres, on-site pre-school rehabilitation services, etc. to help meet the acute shortfall of premises. The premises purchase plan would not have significant impact on the property market because the total floor area involved in the purchase exercise (around 57 000 square metres¹) will only constitute around 0.1% of the stock of non-residential building units in end 2018 (which is about 40 million square metres) and that the premises purchase plan will be completed in some three years. The Government will nonetheless keep in view the developments in the property market, adopt different methods to source a sufficient pool of premises for selection, and ensure that all premises are to be purchased at reasonable price level, with a view to minimising any possible impact on the property market and ensuring the proper use of public money.

¹ The SWD proposes to optimise the budget allocation by aiming to purchase as many premises as possible for accommodating welfare facilities subject to the ceiling of \$20 billion allocation. To this end, the SWD has prepared a list of around 160 welfare facilities spreading among 18 districts. The relevant figure of the total floor area refers to the total floor area requirements of the around 160 proposed welfare facilities as mentioned above. Nevertheless, it is envisaged that the ceiling of \$20 billion allocation would not be sufficient to purchase premises for accommodating all the proposed welfare facilities.

Yours sincerely,



(Ms Rebecca CHEUNG)
for Secretary for Labour and Welfare

c.c. Director of Social Welfare (Attn.: Mr Andy LIU)