

民政事務總署
香港灣仔軒尼詩道一百三十號
修頓中心二十九及三十樓



Home Affairs Department
29th and 30th Floors, Southorn Centre,
130 Hennessy Road,
Wan Chai,
Hong Kong.

本署檔號： HAD HQ CR/4-35/10/(C)
來函檔號： CB4/PAC//CS(68,68A,69&69A)
電話： 2835 1483
傳真： 2834 5466

(By e-mail only)

17 January 2019

Mr Anthony CHU
Clerk to Public Accounts Committee
Legislative Council
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central
Hong Kong

Dear Mr Chu,

**Follow-up to Public Accounts Committee Report No. 68
Provision of district council funds for community involvement projects**

Thank you for your letter of 4 January 2019. Our response is set out in the ensuing paragraphs.

Response to paragraph 2 (a)

The Home Affairs Department (HAD), in consultation with the Independent Commission Against Corruption, formulated guidelines on “other declarable interests” under the first-tier declaration with a view to facilitating District Council (DC) members in making their first-tier declarations more comprehensive and accurate. As at 9 January 2019, 12 DCs have adopted the Guidelines and the revised declaration forms have been issued to DC members for updating their declarations as appropriate. For the other 6 DCs, they are in the process of considering the Guidelines; for instance, by submitting them to DC/relevant committee for consideration.

As regards the second-tier declaration, HAD has requested DC Secretariats to remind, at every meeting or during circulation of papers,

DC/committee/working group members to declare interests and the Chairpersons to make rulings on the interests declared and to record such rulings in the minutes of meetings. Under the current practice, minutes of meetings are uploaded to DC websites for public inspection. In addition, HAD has worked with DC Secretariats to devise a Good Practice in handling declaration of interests and making rulings at meetings by DC/committee/working group Chairpersons. The Good Practice has been distributed to DCs for reference. As at 9 January 2019, 14 DCs have already adopted the Good Practice in their standing orders or procedures and relevant reminders have been included in the brief for the chairpersons of the meetings concerned to make rulings on interests declared. The other four DCs will go through the necessary consultation process before adopting the Good Practice.

Response to paragraph 2 (b)

HAD has issued Guidelines to facilitate DC Secretariats in assisting their DCs in processing community involvement (CI) project applications and evaluating CI projects. We have highlighted the points to note in the Guidelines with the aim to enhance accountability, transparency and good governance in handling CI projects. One of the areas covered in the Guidelines is the management of conflict of interest in CI projects. For instance, it has been highlighted in the Guidelines that DC members should make a declaration on any conflict of interest or a perception thereof, chairmen of meetings should be reminded to make rulings on all interests declared and that all declarations on interest should be recorded in the minutes of meeting, etc. By doing so, we hope consistency can be achieved amongst the DCs as far as possible.

Yours sincerely,



(Howard YAM)

for Director of Home Affairs

c.c. (By email)

Secretary for Home Affairs

Director of Leisure and Cultural Services

Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury

Director of Audit