

立法會

Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)906/19-20
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/HG/1

Panel on Housing

**Minutes of meeting
held on Monday, 6 January 2020, at 2:30 pm
in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex**

Members present : Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing, MH (Chairman)
Hon Andrew WAN Siu-kin (Deputy Chairman)
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP
Prof Hon Joseph LEE Kok-long, SBS, JP
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, SBS, JP
Hon CHAN Hak-kan, BBS, JP
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yee, GBS, JP
Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun, JP
Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen
Hon CHAN Han-pan, BBS, JP
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, SBS, MH, JP
Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen, BBS, JP
Hon KWOK Wai-keung, JP
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
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, JP
Hon SHIU Ka-chun
Hon YUNG Hoi-yan, JP

Hon CHEUNG Kwok-kwan, JP
Hon LAU Kwok-fan, MH
Hon Jeremy TAM Man-ho
Hon Vincent CHENG Wing-shun, MH, JP
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS
Hon CHAN Hoi-yan

Members attending : Hon WONG Kwok-kin, SBS, JP
Hon KWONG Chun-yu

Members absent : Hon WU Chi-wai, MH
Dr Hon CHENG Chung-tai

Public Officers attending : Agenda Item IV

Mr Frank CHAN, JP
Secretary for Transport and Housing

Mr Donald TONG, JP
Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing
(Housing)

Mrs Alice CHEUNG, JP
Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Ms Doris HO, JP
Deputy Secretary for Development (Planning & Lands)1

Ms Sandra LAM
Assistant Director (Strategy Planning)
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)294/19-20 — Minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2019)

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2019 were confirmed.

II. Information papers issued since last meeting

2. Members noted that the following paper had been issued since last meeting –

LC Paper No. CB(1)227/19-20(01) — Land Registry Statistics for November 2019 provided by the Administration (press release)

III. Items for discussion at the next meeting

(LC Paper No. CB(1)278/19-20(01) — List of follow-up actions

LC Paper No. CB(1)278/19-20(02) — List of outstanding items for discussion)

3. Members agreed to discuss the following items at the next regular meeting scheduled for Monday, 3 February 2020, at 2:30 pm –

- (a) Head 711 project no. B191GK - Community Hall, General Outpatient Clinic and Maternal and Child Health Centre at Ching Hong Road, Tsing Yi; and
- (b) Head 711 project no. B472RO - Water feature park and landscaped walk at Diamond Hill.

(Post-meeting note: The notice of meeting and agenda were issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)308/19-20 on 7 January 2020. In view of the situation of the novel coronavirus infection, the Chairman directed on 30 January 2020 that the meeting on 3 February 2020 would not be held. At the request of the Administration and with the concurrence of the Chairman, a meeting was held on 9 March 2020 to discuss the aforesaid two items, and the item "Review of income and

Action

asset limits for public rental housing for 2020-21". Members were informed of the meeting arrangements vide LC Paper No. CB(1)379/19-20 and CB(1)438/19-20.)

4. The Chairman advised that as the work period of the Subcommittee to Follow Up Issues Related to Inadequate Housing and Relevant Housing Policies under the Panel had expired in mid-December 2019 and many members of the Panel were very concerned about the subject of transitional housing, he had directed that the subject matter be retained in the Panel's list of outstanding items for discussion in order to facilitate the Panel's follow up. The Chairman said that after consulting the Deputy Chairman and members, he would instruct the Secretariat to make arrangements with respect to the timing for the Panel's discussion on the subject matter, etc., and would inform members of the details after they had been finalized. Members had raised no objection to the aforesaid arrangement.

(Post-meeting note: A special meeting of the Panel was held on 26 May 2020 to discuss transitional housing.)

IV. Long Term Housing Strategy Annual Progress Report 2019

(LC Paper No. CB(1)278/19-20(03) — Administration's paper on Long Term Housing Strategy Annual Progress Report 2019

LC Paper No. CB(1)278/19-20(04) — Paper on Long Term Housing Strategy prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (background brief))

5. At the invitation of the Chairman, the Secretary for Transport and Housing ("STH") briefed members on the progress of key aspects of the Long Term Housing Strategy ("LTHS") as at December 2019.

Projection of housing demand

6. Mr Andrew WAN found it puzzling that the 10-year housing supply target as presented in the LTHS Annual Progress Report 2019 was 20 000 units fewer than that announced in 2018, and enquired whether or not the LTHS projection on the long term housing demand had duly taken into

Action

account the number of public rental housing ("PRH") applicants. He opined that the Government's failure to address housing shortage over years had limited the availability of PRH units for allocation to PRH applicants and the supply of sale flats that the general public could afford. This had suppressed housing demand and discouraged the formation of new households. As under the LTHS methodology, the domestic household projections of the Census and Statistics Department ("C&SD") formed the basis for assessing the overall new housing demand, the LTHS housing supply target derived from the projected long term housing demand and hence the 10-year housing supply might continue to reduce in future, which would again suppress demand for housing and discourage household formation. The Chairman said that housing remained the biggest problem faced by members of the public and the LTHS annual projection results served as an important reference for them to consider the housing matters. He expressed disappointment that the 10-year housing supply target announced in December 2019 was 20 000 units fewer than that adopted in the LTHS Annual Progress Report 2018.

7. Ms YUNG Hoi-yan said that members of the public were concerned about the increasing housing demand, and asked why the projected total housing demand for the next 10 years had decreased compared with the LTHS projection in 2018. She questioned whether the 10-year housing supply target announced annually under LTHS would be on a decreasing trend. Ms CHAN Hoi-yan opined that the projection results with respect to the long term housing demand and the 10-year supply target announced in 2019 could not reflect the deteriorating housing problem in Hong Kong.

8. STH explained the methodology on which projection results were based. According to the LTHS methodology, the total housing demand was derived mainly from quantitative projections of the housing demand components, including the net increase in the number of households such as those formed through marriages/divorces, inadequately housed households ("IHHs") and households displaced by redevelopment. STH assured members that the LTHS projection results had sufficiently taken into account the increase in housing demand generated from these components. For example, households who were inadequately housed in 2018 and remained living in inadequate housing in 2019 would continue to be covered under the component of IHHs. In fact, the estimated number of IHHs in the LTHS Annual Progress Report 2019, i.e. 119 100, was higher than the previous year's estimate. STH also explained that among all the PRH applicants, about 110 000 were non-elderly one-person applicants under the Quota and Points System ("QPS"). According to the results of the regular checking exercise under QPS in past years, only about half of non-elderly one-person applicants were eligible for PRH.

Action

9. Ms YUNG Hoi-yan cast doubt on the reliability of the projection of "net increase in the number of households" in the LTHS Annual Progress Report 2019 which was about one-fourth less than that projected in 2014. Mr HO Kai-ming said that according to C&SD, the population in Hong Kong was projected to increase to 8.22 million in 2043. He asked whether the impact of such demographic changes was omitted in the LTHS.

10. STH and Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing) replied that under LTHS, housing demand was defined as the total number of additional housing units required to provide adequate housing to each and every household over the long term. The assessment of long term housing demand would therefore take into account, among others, the net increase in the number of households, which was derived from the domestic household projections by C&SD. According to C&SD's latest projections covering the period from 2016 to 2051, the total number of households would continue to increase but at a slower pace, before reaching a peak and decreasing slowly afterwards. In other words, the total number of households was still increasing, but the extent of increase had decelerated, hence resulting in a reduction in the net increase in the number of households.

Performance in meeting the supply target

11. Ms YUNG Hoi-yan queried whether the annual exercises to update the long term housing demand and the 10-year housing supply target had brought any concrete effect, having regard to the Administration's failure in meeting the public housing supply target since the formulation of LTHS. Mr SHIU Ka-chun cast doubt on whether the Administration had made any progress in 2019 in catching up with the supply target. Mr KWOK Wai-keung said that the number of public housing units actually produced from 2015 to 2019 was about 40 000 less than the number of units that should be produced in order to meet the LTHS supply target. He and Mr CHAN Han-pan asked whether the Administration would compensate such shortfall. Mr KWOK Wai-keung opined that the projection of long term housing demand for deriving the LTHS supply target was meaningless, as the Administration had all along failed to attain the target. Mr CHAN Han-pan expressed a similar view. He opined that the PRH waiting time had continued to increase in the current term of the Government, and asked about the Administration's measures to further shorten the public housing development and construction process.

Action

12. STH replied that the estimated 10-year public housing production had lagged behind the LTHS supply target since its announcement in 2014, and this was mainly attributable to the difficulties encountered by the Administration in securing adequate land for housing. The LTHS supply target was a 10-year rolling target updated annually according to the LTHS projection methodology. Housing demand which remained unmet would continue to be reflected in the housing supply target updated in the following years. He advised that the five-year total public housing production estimates since 2015-2016 to 2019-2020 had generally been on the rise. In fact, the new housing units produced over the past years had addressed part of the demand for public and private housing. The Administration estimated that the sites identified for PRH/Green Form Subsidised Home Ownership Scheme ("GSH")/other subsidised sale flats ("SSFs") would provide about 272 000 units over the 10-year period from 2020-2021 to 2029-2030, and the public housing production for the coming five years from 2019-2020 to 2023-2024 was about 100 700 units. As it would take time to increase the public housing production, the Administration would continue to make its best efforts to boost the public housing production in the latter half of the 10-year period in order to catch up with the public housing supply target. He appealed to members and local communities to give support to the implementation of the current-term Government's initiatives to increase and expedite housing supply as set out in the LTHS Annual Progress Report 2019.

13. Mr Vincent CHENG said that the Administration should ensure the effective implementation of each of the measures to increase housing supply as set out in the LTHS Annual Progress Report 2019. The Chairman said that he was all along dissatisfied with the long time taken by the Administration in carrying out the land and public housing development process for a land site. He asked about the Administration's concrete measures to ensure that relevant bureaux/departments would expedite the administrative procedures involved in the process. Deputy Secretary for Development (Planning & Lands)1 ("DS/DEV(P&L)1") replied that land and public housing development process comprised some statutory procedures, such as those involved in land rezoning and gazettal of road works, which could not be streamlined. The Development Bureau had recently studied the process for developing suitable brownfield sites for public housing development, and considered that as some administrative procedures could be carried out in parallel, the time taken to carry out planning and engineering study, site formation and infrastructure works and other relevant processes in order to make a project site ready for housing construction could be compressed from about eight years to about five to six years. STH advised that as regards the building construction process for public housing, it was generally the same as that for private housing.

Action

14. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok declared that he was a non-remunerated member of the Hong Kong Housing Authority ("HA"). He said that according to LTHS, the Administration would update the long term housing demand projection annually, taking into account C&SD's estimated changes in the number of domestic households and other factors. It was reasonable that there were ups and downs in the projected housing demand over time. In view that for the 10-year period from 2020-2021 to 2029-2030, the estimated public housing production on the sites identified by the Administration for providing PRH/GSH/Other SSFs was about 10% less than the LTHS public housing supply target of 301 000, and the public housing production in the first few years of the 10-year period would be relatively low, he expressed concern about the uncertainty as to whether the public housing production in the latter part of the 10-year period could catch up with the supply target.

15. Mr Andrew WAN opined that as the Administration's estimated public housing production for the coming five years was about 100 700 units only, in order to provide 272 000 public housing units in the coming ten years, HA and the Hong Kong Housing Society ("HS") had to produce about 170 000 public housing units in the second half of the 10-year period. He enquired about the ground on which the Administration was confident that such production requirement could be met. STH replied that as the sites for providing these 272 000 public housing units had already been identified by the Administration, it was practicable for HA/HS to achieve the said public housing production estimate within the 10-year period so long as the land and housing development processes, such as site formation works, local consultations, funding applications, building construction, could be carried out smoothly. The Administration would continue to report the progress in public housing production to the Panel annually.

Public and private housing supply targets

16. Noting the Administration's estimated supply of first-hand private residential flats was more than 90 000 for the coming three to four years, which was close to the 10-year private housing supply target, i.e. 129 000, Mr CHU Hoi-dick and Dr Fernando CHEUNG considered it inappropriate that the Administration continued to reserve land for catching up with the private housing supply target, while allowing the projected production of public housing to significantly fall behind the supply target. Mr CHU opined that the Administration should re-allocate the land sites originally intended for private housing development, including those in the North East New Territories NDAs, for public housing to improve the shortfall of public housing supply. Dr Fernando CHUENG raised a similar view, and suggested

Action

that the Administration should consider adjusting the public/private split of new housing supply under LTHS from 70:30 to 80:20 or 90:10. Mr Andrew WAN opined that the supply of more than 90 000 private housing units in the coming three to four years against the LTHS 10-year private housing supply target of 129 000 implied that the flat supply required in the latter half of the 10-year period would be about 20 000 units only, which might send a message to the market that the limited flat supply would boost the prices in the private property market.

17. STH replied that the Administration understood the community's keen demand for public housing, and had revised the public/private split of new housing supply under LTHS from 60:40 to 70:30 in 2018. Apart from providing public housing for needy households, maintaining the healthy development of the private residential property market remained one of the policy objectives of the Government. In its annual update of the LTHS supply target, the Administration would review the public/private split of new housing supply, taking into account relevant factors including the demand for different types of housing and the market situation. The Administration would then derive the 10-year supply targets for public and private housing according to the public/private split adopted.

18. Dr Fernando CHEUNG opined that there were all along concerns about the impact of GSH on the PRH waiting time because of the time taken by HA for renovating a PRH unit returned by the sitting tenant who had purchased a GSH flat in order to make ready the unit for allocation to a PRH applicant. Different from PRH, GSH flats were SSFs. Instead of presenting the supply of PRH and GSH under the category of "PRH/GSH supply" under LTHS, the Administration should make clear the split between the PRH and GSH supply. STH replied that eligible buyers of GSH were largely tenants of PRH. To flexibly cater for their home ownership aspirations which might be subject to changes from time to time, the Administration/HA considered it appropriate to maintain the inter-changeability between PRH and GSH, so as to adjust their supply in a timely manner.

[At 3:35 pm, the Chairman advised that he had received five motions from members and one amendment to one of the motions.]

Increasing land and housing supply

19. Mr Abraham SHEK opined that the Government's policy direction to assist members of the public to buy flats was wrong. The 2019 Policy Address initiative of raising the cap on the value of the properties under the Mortgage Insurance Programme of the HKMC Insurance Limited would

Action

enable the acquisition of flats by certain people who originally did not have adequate financial ability to do so and such people might become property owners in negative equity in the event of a property market downturn. He said that notwithstanding STH's efforts in performing his work, he and the current-term Government should think out of the box to make better use of the existing and under-utilized land to increase the supply of PRH units and elderly care homes to meet the demand of the PRH applicants and needy elderly. He commented that it was meaningless for the Administration to introduce vacancy tax on first-hand or second-hand residential properties.

20. Mr KWOK Wai-keung urged the Administration to expeditiously secure more land resources for increasing housing supply through all means available, including the suggestions set out in the motions proposed by him such as using the Fanling Golf Course and the site reserved for Phase Two development of the Hong Kong Disneyland for housing development, securing public support for near-shore reclamations, etc. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen relayed the public concern about the problems of under-utilization of brownfields and industrial buildings/sites, the cost involved in taking forward "Lantau Tomorrow Vision", etc., and opined that the Administration's failure to make effective use of existing idle land resources for providing housing would continue to give rise to grievances. Mr LAU Kwok-fan said that if there was inadequate land for housing, any adjustment to the public housing supply target was only a number game. Regarding the resumption of private lots as a measure to increase land supply for housing, he enquired about the anticipated land area to be resumed.

21. STH replied that to make available more land resources for increasing housing supply, apart from pressing ahead with rezoning of existing land, the Administration would continue to spearhead major development projects through land resumption and infrastructure provision. Under these projects, about 400 hectares ("ha") of private land were expected to be resumed in the next five years, significantly more than the 20 ha resumed in the past five years. The Administration was also reviewing around ten private land parcels which had been zoned for high-density housing development in statutory outline zoning plans but without any development plans to see whether they were suitable for public housing developments, and would form its preliminary views on the matter by mid-2020. In addition, the Administration had expedited the studies on the land use and supporting infrastructure of the urban squatter areas in Cha Kwo Ling Village, Ngau Chi Wan Village and Chuk Yuen United Village; proposed the implementation of the Land Sharing Pilot Scheme and invited the Urban Renewal Authority ("URA") to identify some clusters of Civil Servants' Co-operative Building Society Scheme lots for redevelopment.

Action

22. DS/DEV(P&L)1 advised that the about 400 ha of private land lots expected to be resumed in the next five years were mostly located in new development areas ("NDAs") including the Kwu Tung North/Fanling North NDA, Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen NDA, and other development areas such as Yuen Long South and Kam Tin South. Under the first phase of Kwu Tung North/Fanling North NDA project, the Administration had resumed about 68 ha of private land by end-2019. She and STH advised that as announced in the 2019 Policy Address, the Administration would assess, by phases, how many of the 450 ha of brownfield sites which had not been covered by NDAs or other development projects but had relatively higher potential for development would be suitable for public housing. The Planning Department had been conducting such assessment for the 160 ha of brownfields sites that were closer to existing infrastructure, and the Administration would report the progress of the assessment shortly.

23. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen reiterated his suggestion about a flexible use of the military sites in Hong Kong. He said that the Chinese People's Liberation Army Hong Kong Garrison might not have imminent needs for some of these military sites, and the Administration should ask the Garrison to consider releasing them for public housing construction. STH replied that the Administration had earlier on explained its stance on the subject matter raised by Mr CHAN.

24. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok opined that the land sites that had been identified for providing public housing were mainly provided in NDAs and New Town Extensions. He enquired about the extent to which the Administration was confident in completing on time the site formation/infrastructure works required to make fit these sites for housing developments. STH replied that the Administration was confident that such site formation/infrastructures works would be completed in a timely manner, subject to the support of local communities, District Councils and the Legislative Council for the relevant proposals.

25. The Chairman was concerned about how the Administration would garner support of the District Councils of the new term for its public housing development proposals. He opined that proposals for building one or two public housing blocks on infill sites in districts were not desirable, in view of the limited number of housing units provided, relatively high capital cost per housing unit and the impact of such proposals on local communities. The Administration should undertake large-scale public housing developments. STH replied that the Administration all along considered it desirable that public housing would be provided through large scale developments as far as practicable, and more community and open space facilities could be provided for the residents.

Action

Redevelopment of aged public rental housing estates

26. Ms CHAN Hoi-yan opined that redevelopment of aged estates would help increase housing supply. Noting that there would be 68 800 units in 26 public rental estates under HA and HS aged 50 years and above in the coming ten years which were not yet on the redevelopment timetable, she enquired whether and when the Administration would put in place a timetable for redeveloping them. Mr HO Kai-ming raised the same enquiry, and opined that many aged PRH estates should be redeveloped as soon as possible in view of their existing building conditions.

27. Mr Jeremy TAM opined that the impact of redevelopment of aged PRH estates as claimed by the Governments of previous and current term (i.e. redevelopment would reduce the number of PRH units which could be allocated to those waiting for PRH, as such units would have to be used to rehouse tenants displaced by redevelopment) could be offset by an increase in new housing supply through the Administration's land supply initiatives. As the building safety problems of aged estates would continue to worsen and redevelopment of them would facilitate a more efficient use of land resources, the Administration should formulate in a timely manner a holistic plan setting out the aged estates that would be redeveloped and the timeframes within which the redevelopment of them would commence.

28. STH replied that HA had undertaken 18 projects to redevelop some PRH estates over the past decade. The redevelopment projects under construction included Tung Tau Estate Phase 8, Pak Tin Estate Phases 7, 8, 10 and 11. In considering redevelopment of aged PRH estates, the Administration/HA would take into account various principles such as structural conditions of buildings, and relevant factors such as the overall demand for PRH in society, increase in the supply of PRH units as a result of the redevelopment and impact of the redevelopment on the PRH stock available for allocation to PRH applicants. The Administration believed that there was room to carry out redevelopment programme when there was relatively ample supply of land for public housing in future. In order to ascertain the state of structural safety of aged PRH estates, HA had implemented the Comprehensive Structural Investigation Programme.

Transitional housing

29. Mr Vincent CHENG opined that the number of IHHs was close to 120 000 and the PRH supply was currently inadequate. Transitional housing should serve as one of the components of the housing ladder in Hong Kong to meet the housing need of grassroots families waiting for PRH. He considered

Action

that there was room to enhance the quality and quantity of transitional housing projects, and asked whether the Administration would include transitional housing in LTHS to demonstrate its commitment on the provision of such housing. The Chairman said that transitional housing as a short-term measure would help address the imminent housing need in society. The Administration should include such housing as part of the housing ladder in order to make the overall housing policy comprehensive. Ms CHAN Hoi-yan reiterated her view that there should be greater commitment on the part of the Administration in providing transitional housing. Instead of relying non-government organizations to undertake transitional housing projects, the Administration should engage organizations which had experience in housing development, such as HA, HS and URA, to construct transitional housing in order to expedite its supply.

30. STH replied that the fundamental solution to the long-term housing issue in Hong Kong was to increase the supply of permanent housing. After the housing problem had been addressed, transitional housing should fade out at appropriate time. When the public housing supply was inadequate, transitional housing might serve as a transitional measure, and the Administration would continue to identify suitable idle land for such housing projects and facilitate their implementation. As mentioned in the 2019 Policy Address, URA, HS, Hong Kong Construction Association and other organizations would offer professional advice and project management support to community groups participating in transitional housing projects. The Administration had set up a task force which currently comprised five dedicated officers to provide support to facilitate the implementation of community-initiated transitional housing projects. To enable the task force to take a more proactive role in transitional housing projects and to step up its efforts in facilitating their implementation, the Administration had proposed to create a new Administrative Officer Staff Grade C post and ten non-directorate posts in the task force. As regards the suggestions to include transitional housing in LTHS or to set a supply target for it, the Administration would have to prudently consider them.

31. Mr Andrew WAN opined that the Administration's target of providing 10 000 transitional housing units within the next three years was inadequate to meet the demand of IHHs. He enquired whether relevant bureaux would take forward the suggestion of releasing the site in Penny Bay which had been reserved for the Phase 2 development of the Hong Kong Disneyland Resort ("HKDL") for providing transitional housing to increase its supply. Mr SHIU Ka-chun and Mr CHAN Chi-chuen queried whether the Administration would continue to leave the Penny Bay's site of about 60 ha idle. STH replied that according to the Option Deed signed between the

Action

Government and Hong Kong International Theme Parks Limited (i.e. the joint venture with the Government and The Walt Disney Company as shareholders) ("the joint venture") in 2000, the joint venture had an Option to purchase the site for taking forward the HKDL's further development. Before the joint venture exercised the Option, the site could be put to short-term uses, and such short-term uses had to comply with various permitted uses as listed in the Deed of Restrictive Covenant, including recreational, sports and cultural facilities, etc. but not residential use. The Administration was aware of the view in society suggesting that The Walt Disney Company should fulfill its corporate social responsibility and waive the relevant provisions in the Deed of Restrictive Covenant in order to allow the development of transitional housing at the site. When considering the short-term uses of the Phase 2 site, the Government also needed to take into account whether such uses were compatible with the use and atmosphere of HKDL.

32. Mr SHIU Ka-chun enquired about the Administration's response to the concern that individual property developers were willing to lend their land lots for transitional housing development for a limited period of time because they believed that the Administration would provide supporting facilities for the development, and the presence of such facilities would make them easier to obtain the Town Planning Board's approval for their applications for change of use of the land lots concerned for private residential developments in future. STH replied that constructing transitional housing on the land lots lent by the developers required application for planning permission under section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance (Cap. 131). If developers planned to change the use of such land lots for other purposes after the sites were returned to them in future, they needed to submit fresh planning applications under the Ordinance to the Town Planning Board.

33. Mr CHU Hoi-dick opined that by lending their land for transitional housing development for several years, the developers concerned could ensure that the Government would not resume such land under the Land Resumption Ordinance (Cap. 124) for public housing development. He held the view that transitional housing should be developed on the sites provided by the Government. STH replied that individual property developers had lent their land for transitional housing development for a period of time in view of the imminent housing difficulties faced by members of the public. If there were idle government sites suitable for housing development, the Administration would accord priority to providing permanent housing on them. If there were government sites available for short-term use only, the Administration would study the feasibility of providing transitional housing.

Action

Inadequate housing

34. Mr SHIU Ka-chun opined that the estimated number of households living in non-residential buildings had maintained no change since 2017. This reflected that in the absence of appropriate rehousing arrangements for these households, families who had been forced to move out from a non-residential building due to the Government's enforcement action would move to live in another non-residential building. He enquired about how the Administration would improve the rehousing policy for these households. Mr SHIU further opined that the Community Care Fund's relocation allowance was currently provided to some households only, such as the beneficiaries of the "Community Housing Movement" and those living in industrial buildings who had to move out as a result of the Buildings Department's enforcement action. In view that according to the LTHS projections, the number of households living in units made up of temporary structures such as huts, squatters and roof-top structures had increased over the past few years, he enquired about the measures to support and assist these households and whether the Administration would consider extending the relocation allowance to all grassroots families who had to move out as a result of the Government's enforcement action.

35. Ms CHAN Hoi-yan opined that the rent levels of sub-divided units ("SDUs") were unreasonably high and the living environment of such units was poor. The Administration should think out of the box in formulating measures to address the problems faced by SDU households, and re-consider members' suggestion to introduce tenancy control targeted at SDUs. She further said that families living in SDUs without independent electricity and water meters might be overcharged for the use of water and electricity by their landlords. The Administration should consider enacting legislation or issuing guidelines to tackle such issue. Mr Vincent CHENG enquired whether the Administration would study the simultaneous implementation of measures of tenancy control targeted at SDUs and rent subsidy. STH replied that the Administration had invited the Community Care Fund to launch two rounds of "one-off living subsidy" for the low-income households not living in PRH and not receiving Comprehensive Social Security Assistance in the next financial year, and would complete the study on devising a scheme to provide cash allowance on a regular basis towards the end of 2020 as remarked by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare on a separate occasion.

Action

Vacancy rate of second-hand residential properties

36. Mr Michael TIEN said that he had no particular view on the Administration's proposed introduction of vacancy tax on first-hand residential properties. However, to discourage landlords from leaving their properties vacant or withholding them from leasing, apart from first-hand flats, the Administration needed to introduce vacancy tax on second-hand flats also. He had made reference to relevant statistics about private residential units and occupied private housing in the 2017 edition of Hong Kong Annual Digest of Statistics and the 2016 Population By-census, and was concerned about the accuracy of the figures announced by the Administration regarding the vacancy rate of residential properties in Hong Kong. He opined that the figures obtained and derived from the relevant survey conducted by the Administration might under-estimate the flat vacancy situation in Hong Kong, and suggested that the Administration should consider developing a methodology for assessing the vacancy situation of private residential units in a more accurate and objective manner. STH replied that he would discuss with the Rating and Valuation Department the suggestion.

Motions

37. At 4:18 pm, the Chairman referred members to the following motions, which he considered relevant to the agenda item –

First motion moved by Mr KWOK Wai-keung and seconded by Mr HO Kai-ming —

"鑒於《長遠房屋策略》多年來的公營房屋供應上均未能達標，進一步加深香港社會住屋困難的問題，本事務委員會要求政府採取更多措施，以紓緩在房屋供應不足下，市民居住環境每況愈下及住屋負擔沉重的問題，當中包括：

1. 制訂明確目標及時間表，以恢復公屋輪候"3年上樓"的政策承諾；
2. 增加各類型的資助房屋，令不同階層市民可按自身需要置業；
3. 為市民提供租金免稅額，減輕租金的沉重負擔；

Action

4. 為基層家庭提供租金津貼，同時在不適切住房作出租務管制；及
5. 盡快以立法方式，解決劏房等不適切住房的租戶被濫收水、電費的問題。"

(Translation)

"Given that over the years, public housing supply has failed to meet the target under the Long Term Housing Strategy, thereby further aggravating the problem of housing difficulties in Hong Kong society, this Panel calls on the Government to put in place additional measures to alleviate the problems of deteriorating living conditions and heavy housing burden faced by members of the public due to inadequate housing supply, including:

1. formulating specific objectives and timetables to reinstate the policy pledge of allocating public rental housing units within three years;
2. increasing the supply of various types of subsidized housing, so as to enable members of the public from different strata to acquire home ownership according to their needs;
3. providing a tax allowance for rentals to members of the public to alleviate the heavy rental burden borne by them;
4. providing rent subsidy to grass-roots families while introducing tenancy control on inadequate housing; and
5. addressing, through legislative means as soon as possible, the problem of overcharging tenants of inadequate housing such as sub-divided units, etc. for use of water and electricity."

38. The Chairman put to vote the first motion moved by Mr KWOK Wai-keung. 11 members voted in favour of the motion, no member voted against and two members abstained from voting.

39. The Chairman declared that the motion was carried.

Action

Second motion moved by Mr KWOK Wai-keung and seconded by Mr HO Kai-ming —

"由於土地供應持續不足，是政府多年來未能大量增加房屋供應的原因之一，故本事務委員會要求政府盡快再就各項開發土地的倡議進行研究，例如就粉嶺高爾夫球場、迪士尼第二期用地建屋再進行研究。同時，政府也應加快現有增加土地項目的推展，包括加快推展近岸填海、加快棕地開發、盡快就可發展房屋的用地進行改劃等。除此以外，政府也應盡快就"明日大嶼"填海工程進行前期研究，以確保中、長遠的土地供應不再受耽誤。"

(Translation)

"As the persistent insufficient supply of land is one of the reasons for the failure of the Government to substantially increase the housing supply over the years, this Panel calls on the Government to expeditiously conduct further studies on various propositions of land development, such as use of the Fanling Golf Course and the site reserved for Phase Two development of the Hong Kong Disneyland for housing development. Meanwhile, the Government should also accelerate the implementation of the existing projects for increasing land supply, including speeding up near-shore reclamation, expediting brownfield development, rezoning as soon as possible sites available for housing development, etc. In addition, the Government should expeditiously conduct preliminary studies on the reclamation projects under Lantau Tomorrow, so as to ensure that the supply of land in the medium-term and long-term will no longer be delayed."

40. The Chairman advised that since Dr Fernando CHEUNG was not present at the meeting, his proposed amendment to the second motion moved by Mr KWOK Wai-keung would not be dealt with. The Chairman put to vote the second motion moved by Mr KWOK Wai-keung. Nine members voted in favour of the motion, four members voted against and one member abstained from voting.

41. The Chairman declared that the motion was carried.

Action

Third motion moved by Mr KWOK Wai-keung and seconded by Mr HO Kai-ming —

"本事務委員會對於政府在《長遠房屋策略》發表至今，每年均未能在公營房屋供應上達到目標表示強烈不滿及失望。本事務委員會要求政府、相關政策局及官員負起政策責任，以"公營房屋優先"為原則，盡一切能力加快及加大公營房屋興建，以令往後 5 年公營房屋興建量能達至《長遠房屋策略》2019 年周年進度報告的估算，同時政府也應制訂具體措施減少公營房屋延誤問題出現，以免公營房屋供應受到影響。"

(Translation)

"This Panel expresses strong dissatisfaction and disappointment as the Government has, since the promulgation of the Long Term Housing Strategy ("LTHS"), failed to attain the public housing supply target every year. This Panel calls on the Government and the relevant policy bureaux and officials to take up the policy responsibility based on the principle of according priority to public housing, and make every effort to accelerate and increase public housing production, so that it is possible for the public housing production in the coming five years to meet the projected production under the LTHS Annual Progress Report 2019. Also, the Government should put in place specific measures to minimize delays in public housing delivery to avoid impacts on the supply of public housing."

42. The Chairman put to vote the third motion moved by Mr KWOK Wai-keung. 15 members voted in favour of the motion, no member voted against or abstained from voting.

43. The Chairman declared that the motion was carried.

Motion moved by Mr Vincent CHENG and seconded by Mr LAU Kwok-fan—

"由於預計未來 10 年內，本港公營房屋將持續低於《長遠房屋策略》的目標，故此，本事務委員會促請當局：

1. 將過渡性房屋納入《長遠房屋策略》，並定位作房屋階梯的第一級，並為過渡性房屋制定長期供應目標，以長遠取代社會現存的不適切居所；

Action

2. 將公屋"3年上樓"的目標列入《長遠房屋策略》，並因應目標調整長遠公營房屋的供應目標；及
3. 盡快針對私營基層出租住所，包括劏房，引入租務管制，以保障基層市民。"

(Translation)

"As it is anticipated that the public housing production in Hong Kong within the next 10 years will be continuously falling short of the supply target under the Long Term Housing Strategy ("LTHS"), this Panel urges the authorities to:

1. include transitional housing in LTHS and have it positioned as the first rung on the housing ladder, as well as put in place a long-term supply target for transitional housing, with a view to replacing inadequate housing which currently exists in society in the long run;.
 2. include the objective of allocating public rental housing units within three years in LTHS, with adjustments to the long-term supply target for public housing having regard to the objective; and
 3. introduce expeditiously targeted tenancy control on private rental accommodation for the grassroots, including sub-divided units, so as to protect the grassroots."
44. The Chairman put to vote the motion moved by Mr Vincent CHENG. 13 members voted in favour of the motion, no member voted against and three members abstained from voting.
45. The Chairman declared that the motion was carried.

Action

Motion moved by Mr CHU Hoi-dick –

"本事務委員會要求特區政府與駐港部隊及北京商討，將香港境內空置或低度使用的軍事用地交回給特區政府，用作興建房屋之用。"

(Translation)

"This Panel calls on the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region ("HKSAR") Government to discuss with the Chinese People's Liberation Army Hong Kong Garrison and Beijing on returning vacant or under-utilized military sites within Hong Kong to the HKSAR Government for housing construction."

46. The Chairman put to vote the motion moved by Mr CHU Hoi-dick. Five members voted in favour of the motion, 10 members voted against and no member abstained from voting.

47. The Chairman declared that the motion was negatived.

(Post-meeting note: The wording of the motions passed was issued to members vide LC Paper Nos. CB(1)314/19-20(01) to (04) on 8 January 2020, and the Administration's responses to the motions were issued to members vide LC Papers No. CB(1)860/19-20(01) and CB(1)902/19-20(01) on 9 and 24 July 2020 respectively.)

V. Any other business

48. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:27 pm.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
30 July 2020