

Legislative Council Panel on Housing
Supplementary Information

Purpose

Regarding the supplementary information requested on Use of non-domestic premises of the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) at the Legislative Council Panel on Housing meeting on 6 July 2020, this paper provides the relevant response.

Follow-up actions

(a) how the Administration/Hong Kong Housing Authority ("HA") would make good use of the rooftop areas of building blocks in HA's estates for providing social welfare facilities/other facilities for residents' use

2. HA has been reviewing the usage of various facilities in public housing estates (PHEs) from time to time. On the premise that adequate public space will be provided for residents' access and leisure, HA endeavours to balance residents' needs for various types of facilities, and considers increasing the provision of non-domestic facilities as far as practicable, in order to provide various community, educational, welfare and retail facilities for residents. Some of HA's shopping centres and carparks are situated below the podium of domestic buildings. Apart from being used for residents' access and leisure purposes, some of the podium areas have also been provided with welfare or other non-domestic facilities. As regards rooftops of domestic buildings, they generally accommodate building services facilities, such as water tanks, common antennae, machine rooms, etc. For safety reasons and to avoid nuisance to residents, it is considered not suitable to use rooftop areas to provide welfare/other facilities.

(b) number of storerooms in public housing estates which were vacant and the vacancy rate

3. As at 31 March 2020, there are about 2 500 storerooms in domestic blocks of PHEs, the majority of which is within domestic areas (commonly demarcated by security gates at the ground floor entrance of buildings) and mainly small in size (less than 10m²). HA has all along been reviewing the

usage of storerooms in PHEs and has in recent years completed conversion of a number of storerooms and spaces within domestic areas into domestic units, having considered technical feasibility, compliance with the Buildings Ordinance and other relevant ordinances, land use and planning restrictions, environmental considerations and residents' views. Some storerooms and other spaces outside domestic areas have also been converted into welfare and retail facilities. HA has also strengthened the publicity of information about letting of vacant storerooms through various channels such as posting notices and Estate Newsletter with a view to improving occupancy. At present, the overall vacancy rate of storerooms has been reduced from about 40% in 2017 to around 35%. HA will continue to explore various ways to better utilise the storerooms.

(c) number of incumbent District Council members who had not yet been provided non-domestic units/space for setting up their ward offices in HA's estates in their constituencies

4. In the 2019 District Council Election, among the total of about 450 constituencies under the 18 administrative districts in Hong Kong, 230 constituencies have premises managed by HA situated within their respective boundaries. In around 190 PHEs and subsidised sale flat developments under HA, HA has provided about 340 ward offices. Due to limited space in PHEs and the keen demand for use of non-domestic premises in PHEs to provide various types of services to residents, HA is not able to provide ward offices in PHEs for all councillors. For District Councillors who are not able to lease a ward office in the PHEs within their respective constituencies, they may choose to lease ward offices in other constituencies within the same District Council under the second priority of allocation or have joint tenancies with other councillors. Some councillors have also leased private premises for ward offices. As at 31 May 2020, in constituencies with PHEs, about 20 District Councillors have yet been able to lease HA premises as ward offices. HA has identified suitable premises in some of the concerned estates and feasibility study on conversion of those premises into ward offices is being conducted.