

**Memorandum for the Subsidised Housing Committee of  
the Hong Kong Housing Authority**

**Notes of Members' Meeting with Concern Groups**

Attached for Members' information are the notes of Members' meeting with Concern Groups held in Oi Man Community Hall, Oi Man Estate on Thursday, 15 May 2014.

<b>Concern Group</b>	<b>Discussion Item</b>
Hong Kong Ethnic Minority Concern Group on Equal Access to Government Services	(A) Providing Ethnic Minorities (EM) with interpretation/ translation services, especially in Urdu/ Panjabi, during detailed eligibility vetting interviews; and  (B) Providing EM public rental housing (PRH) applicants with application forms and all standardised correspondence in both English and EM languages, together with an option for their preferred language.
The Federation of Public Housing Estates	(A) Domestic Rent Review  (B) Quota and Points System  (C) Adopting a flexible approach to the letting of parking spaces in public housing estates
Oi Chun Fans Club	(A) Concern over the loophole in building security created by the inter-connected corridors and multiple entrance gates of the domestic blocks of upper Oi Man Estate, and the proposals to increase the number of security guards stationed in each block and to install Smart Card System with a view to tightening building security

	<p>(B) Request for additional resources to be provided by the Housing Department for free replacement of old metal gates of all flats throughout the housing estate</p> <p>(C) Commencing, as soon as possible, the construction of the barrier-free passage that links up the lift entrance on the rooftop of Oi Man Plaza with the podium of Lai Man House on the fourth floor</p> <p>(D) Exploring the feasibility of building a covered walkway linking up the lift towers of the footbridge across Princess Margaret Road near Tun Man House with the lift entrance on the ground floor of Tak Man House</p>
Kowloon City District Resident Association	Meeting cancelled

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(Corporate Services Division)  
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# **THE HONG KONG HOUSING AUTHORITY**

## **Notes of Members' Meeting with Concern Groups**

Date : 15 May 2014 (Thursday)  
Time : 2:40 p.m.  
Venue : Oi Man Community Hall, Oi Man Estate, Homantin, Kowloon  
Concern Group : Hong Kong Ethnic Minority Concern Group on Equal Access to Government Services

### **PRESENT**

#### **Members of the Housing Authority and its Committees**

Mr Stanley WONG Yuen-fai, SBS, JP (Chairman)  
Ms Angela LEE Wai-yin, BBS, JP  
Mr LEE Ping-kwan, JP

#### **Representatives of the Housing Department**

Mr Michael LEE Koon-kau	Chief Housing Manager / Applications
Mr Samson LOK Yuk-leung	Senior Housing Manager / Applications 1
Ms Cindy CHAN Wan	Assistant Committees' Secretary 2 (Recording Officer)

#### **Representatives of the Hong Kong Ethnic Minority Concern Group on Equal Access to Government Services**

Ms Sidra, Bibi	Ms No Sheen	Ms Mussarat, Bibi
Ms Sujata Tamang	Ms Najma Shaheen	Ms Vlfat Batool
Ms Mussurat Jan	Ms Shabana	Mr Li Ka Shu
Ms Sairah Abbas	Ms Naseeb-un-Nisa	

**The Chairman** welcomed representatives of the Hong Kong Ethnic Minority Concern Group on Equal Access to Government Services (The Concern Group) to attend the meeting.

2. **The Chairman** explained that the objective of the meeting was to allow the Housing Authority (HA) Committee members to meet concern groups to listen to their views on housing issues and to convey their concerns to HA's Committee.

3. **The Concern Group's** major concerns to be expressed at the meeting had been issued to Members before the meeting. Their views at the meeting were summarized as follows -

- (a) It was the third time that they came to meet the Members. They were very disappointed that the Housing Department (HD) did not provide solutions to their problems raised in the previous two meetings. HD kept on telling them that the interpretation services to the Ethnic Minority (EM) were enough, which was not true.
- (b) HD should hire EMs at HA Customer Services Center (HACSC) who were specialized in EM spoken languages and with good command in English as part-time interpreters to help the EM applicants make application for public rental housing (PRH).
- (c) HD should put the option for language selection on the top of the front page of their website, to facilitate the EM in choosing the right language before going through the website.
- (d) HD should translate templates of frequently sent letters or important letters, such as the application forms, confirmation of receipts, reply letters, etc. into EM languages, so that the applicants knew about their application status and the need to provide HD with further information if so required.
- (e) Many of the applicants did not speak Cantonese and no language support was given to them. The Hall Attendants stationed at the HACSC did not have proper interpretation training and were not competent in providing professional interpretation services to meet their needs. In fact, these Hall Attendants were employed from the outsourced property management companies to provide

security services at the front door. Once the EM applicants were inside the centre, no one was there to offer them assistance.

- (f) The Concern group brought up some cases during the meeting where the EM applicants had encountered difficulties in the course of their PRH application process.
- (g) The low usage rate of interpretation services by EM applicants was not because they did not need the services. It reflected that HD was unwilling to provide the services. With roughly 20 000 EM visiting the HACSC during the period from 2010 to 2013, the usage of On-site (Escort) Interpretation Service (EIS) was zero. It was unreasonable and it showed that there were problems with the service. The fact that EM applicants had not launched any complaint about the EIS or Telephone Interpretation Services (TELIS) did not mean that they were satisfied with the services provided. It was just because they did not know the language and did not know how to launch complaints. There was no centre at which they could launch complaints in their languages.
- (h) The EM applicants could not rely on their friends /relatives who knew Chinese and English to help them all the time as their friends or relatives were busy with their own work. Even though some of them were able to come with the EM applicants for the first time, they could not come every time.
- (i) In the letter to the EM applicants, it was stated that if they did not know the language, they should bring along friends who knew the language for the interview. However, the letter was written in English. If the EM applicants did not know English, they did not even know that they should bring along their friends. This showed that HD was not willing to provide interpretation services for the EM applicants.
- (j) Many EM applicants did not know how to use computers and thus could not access to information on the HA/HD website. The relevant information in different EM languages should be available from other sources.

4. The replies of **the Department's representatives** were summarized as follows –

- (a) The Department had always been willing to arrange the interpretation services as provided by the Centre for Harmony and Enhancement of Ethnic Minorities Residents (CHEER). The low usage rate was because many of the individual EM applicants who did not speak English and Chinese brought along their friends/relatives who knew English and/or Chinese and trusted by the applicants to help in making their applications for PRH and in attending detailed vetting interviews.
- (b) There were cases where the interpretation service was arranged with the CHEER prior to the EM applicants attending the detailed interview, but the applicants brought along their friends/ relatives when they turned up for interview and did not use the interpretation service. HD staff had proactively asked if they would like to have the interpretation to be provided by CHEER, but some of the EM applicants had more trust in their friends in providing the interpretation services than using the services provided by CHEER.
- (c) As many EM applicants lived in large families and , their children who grew up in Hong Kong knew Chinese and English, they had no problem understanding the language. So far, HD had not received any complaint from EM applicants on language barrier during the time of application for PRH. If there were such complaints, HD would handle and provide them with appropriate services immediately. Given the series of measures in place for language support to the EM applicants, HD considered that the services provided at the HACSC were appropriate and adequate to help them in making application for PRH and in attending interviews.
- (d) The Hall Attendants could only provide simple interpretation services, and more professional interpretation services would be provided by the CHEER, which could be accessed directly at the HACSC via the webcam.
- (e) The application information was very extensive and there were practical difficulties translating all the documentation into different EM languages. The EM applicants were encouraged to use the

interpretation services provided by CHEER or other non-government organizations. The Department was most willing to assist the EM applicants to get access to the interpretation services if so required.

5. **Members'** views were summarized as follows –
- (a) The letter to the EM applicants inviting them for an interview should be revised to state that if the applicants could bring along their friends who knew English or Chinese for the interview, and also if they did not have friends to help, there were readily available interpretation services for their use. The letter should be in six different EM languages so that the applicants knew what they were going to do.
  - (b) The outline of the HA/HD website should be re-designed to make it more user-friendly, such as putting the language selection option at the top of the front page of the website.

[Post-meeting Note : Six EM languages with selection option had already been provided at the front page of the HA/HD website for the EM applicants to access the essential information of public housing services, including application for PRH. The information brief in EM languages attached to the letter inviting the EM applicants for the detailed vetting interview will be revised to incorporate a note in different EM languages reminding the EM applicants of the availability of interpretation services from CHEER should they have difficulties understanding the invitation letters.]

- (c) Many EM applicants who did not speak English or Chinese brought along their friends/relatives who knew English and/or Chinese and the low usage rate of the readily available interpretation services reflected that the need for the language support services was not that much as claimed. Nevertheless, to ensure that both the EM applicants and the HD were talking on the same wave length, the number of applicants using the interpretation services should be recorded properly in order that the HD could assess how well such services could assist the EM applicants in making applications for PRH.

- (d) The cases as brought up during the meeting and other cases that needed to be resolved should be dealt with separately on individual basis. Members of the concern group should leave their details to HD representatives after the meeting.
- (e) The concern group would not be disadvantaged just because they did not understand English or Chinese, and that their average waiting time for the public rental housing would not be affected due to the fact that they did not speak English or Chinese languages.

6. **The Chairman** thanked the concern group for attending the meeting.

7. The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

----- (Post-meeting submission by the Concern Group was appended **at Annex 1** for Members' reference.)

To Mr. Stanley WONG Yuen-fai, Chairman of the Subsidized Housing Committee,

The Hong Kong Ethnic Minority Concern Group on Equal Access to Government Services (a.k.a. the Concern Group, former Pakistani Concern Group on Public Housing Application) hereby requests, again, the Housing Department (HD) to offer equal access to all Public Housing applicants regardless of their ethnicity.

On 14th May, 2013, the Concern Group was once again disappointed by the HD's bureaucracy and ignorance, turning a blind eye to the inconvenient fact of a significant number of ethnic minorities (EM) was inaccessible to the service of the HD; at the same time turning a deaf ear to EM's voice on the profoundly minimal and sensible request on acquiring basic cultural sensitivity. Instead the HD put blame on EM applicants, urging them to "use the services", ignoring the fact that frontline staff is not proactively inform applicants in the Housing Authority Customer Service Centre (HACSC).

1. The HD repeatedly claimed that two ethnic minority "hall attendants" are available to provide services for applicants, also without proof in the last meeting, claiming that EMs without any company of English or Cantonese speaking peers find the two hall-attendants' services as "satisfactory"<sup>1</sup>. The HD, in this sense, repeatedly turning a deaf ear on our voice that the two "hall attendants" are security guards in suit with a pin of their outsourced property management company, and interpretation services could not be properly delivered by non-professionals.

The HD, turning a blind eye to our facts and cases provided, resorted to and put their efforts into wordplay and selective disclosure of statistics instead of attempting on actual improvements. The wordplay of "service" and "interpretation services" could be seen as the HD never admit the hall attendants providing interpretation services, only mentioning those who do not need "interpretation services", at the same time stating that ethnic minorities find their "service" useful. The HD, selectively disclose statistics, was able to, accurately,

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<sup>1</sup>香港房屋委員會建築小組委員會及資助房屋小組委員會議事備忘錄:「委員與關注團體交流會」的會議紀要, 編號 BC 61/2013, SHC 38/2013

point out 20-30 applicants visit the HACSC every day<sup>2</sup>, while refrained to disclose actual figures of “the concerned applicants satisfied with the Hall Attendants’ service”<sup>3</sup> and those who “do not need interpretation services”.

Moreover, the so-called hall attendants provide minimal and insufficient “services” only at around the entrance. Once applicants reach their counters or into cubicles meeting with HD officers, they could not communicate thus access to those services. Even if EMs with adequate English proficiency or if they bring English speaking peers, HD frontline staffs’ English proficiency is not up to standard when cases and application progress are to be elaborated.

2. The pathetically low usage of CHEER interpretation services by the HD is totally unacceptable. The HD, in the last meeting, had been covering up statistics against its case. Here is one of the figures the HD would never disclose, only we came to find out:

Usage of interpretation and translation services by the HD from 2010 to 2013

	Usage (no. of times)		
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Telephone Interpretation Services (TELIS)	5	42	53
On-Site (Escort) Interpretation Service (EIS)	0	0	3

If the HD’s claim is true that 20-30 EMs visit the HACSC every working day, in that sense nearly 20,000 EMs visited within three years. It is obvious that with only 100 TELIS and 3 EIS services in 3 years for nearly 20,000 EMs, even if half of them do not need interpretation services, is NOT a result from mere EM service users’ reluctance in using quick interpretation services simply through phone calls. This would DEFINITELY not be the result if HD staffs proactively assist, as the HD claimed, in providing interpretation services for EM applicants.

3. The HD claimed that they send brief letters showing in six EM languages of EM service centers funded by the Home Affairs Department (HAD) and they send to

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<sup>2</sup>[See footnote 1]

<sup>3</sup>[See footnote 1]

applicants with non-Chinese surnames. This is a fault-prone procedure as the training of the Race Discrimination Ordinance (RDO) and the administrative guidelines on race equality does not include cultural sensitivity education especially in distinguishing surnames. This could easily be proven by many EMs not receiving such “brief letters”, instead only letters in English were received.

4. The HD stated that “selected information on PRH application and policy was available in six EM languages in their website”<sup>4</sup>. Again, the HD turned a blind eye on the outline and design of the website, even we voiced out multiple times in different occasions. Even the limited “selected information” in six EM languages could not be accessed with empty language options at the top and the front pages and most EM would not notice their availability. The Internet is also not an effective means for EMs with low education level, and grassroots who could not afford computers.

Also, seems the HD does not see application forms as important as it has to be selected to be translated in EM languages. If provided application forms in EM languages requiring to be filled in English, most EMs are capable to fill in English their names, address and numbers (i.e. income and assets).

Under negligent attitude from the HD, we never run out of cases whose application process had been obstructed, delayed or time and quota being wasted. These additional insults to injuries were made possible, simply and exactly, due to the HD’s “already done enough” attitude and their sufferings are not merely two “Hall Attendants” in the HACSC could help:

### **Case 1:**

Ms. A applied for public Housing from several years; there are 5 people in the family. Her husband has been living in Hong Kong for several years. The husband speaks fair English but Ms. A cannot listen and read English and Chinese. He had very good job before so he easily managed to live in Private Housing but few years ago the sudden increase in rent all over Hong Kong worsened their situation. In this hard time, Ms. A’S Husband lost the job also so they are living in very difficult time. Around 4 months before, the Landlord increase the rent to \$8000 which was totally out of the affordability of the family, and now the family has to live on CSSA. During that hard time they got and allocation opportunity from the Express Flat Allocation

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<sup>4</sup>[See footnote 1]

Scheme (EFAS) letter from the Housing Authority. Because they were having a lot of pressure from Landlord to move out or pay the unaffordable rent. When they were called for EFAS, they did not have any options other than to select a flat in Tai O. At that stage they do not have any idea about the place as they never been there. **During the selection, even the husband speaks fluent English, the Housing Authority officer did not clearly explain to him the EFAS procedures, the location in Tai O and consequences upon rejection of the offer.** Eventually Ms. A came to find out the exact location and decided to reject the offer within three days, not knowing one quota on Public Rental Housing allocation had already been used once the allocation letter had been released.

### **Case 2:**

Ms. B has been living in Hong Kong for 7 years. She is living in a private old building in YMT with three children and her husband. The Husband speaks little English and Cantonese but Ms. B does not speak both languages. The flat is in terrible condition – water showers on furniture and floor when raining and cracks were all over the walls. Under such imminent condition the landlord is still not going to do any repairs and suggest them to leave if they cannot take it anymore. Ms. B's husband does not have a stable job, thus the deposit and other extra expenses have made moving impossible. The family is already suffering from poverty so along with that is geographical immobility. They have been on Public Rental Housing waitlist for around 5 years but still far away from allocation. They would like to ask one simple question: **Are there any measures by the Housing Authority to remedy their plight?**

### **Case 3:**

Ms. C is living in SSP in a rooftop flat on 10<sup>th</sup> floor with 6 children and her husband. The husband is the only breadwinner. Both Husband and wife cannot speak much English and Chinese. They filled in the form and applied for Public Rental Housing under the assistance of a friend at the end of 2012. Their application was rejected. All personal information and proofs were sent back to them for further supplementation. They attached the required documents and sent again. No further reply from the Housing Department (HD) had been heard from for almost a year, until they reached a NGO to ask the HD about their application progress, only to find out that the HD sent all documents in one envelope to them again for information re-supplementation and the package was lost during delivery. The HD then required

Mr. C to re-apply. It was not until March 2014 they re-apply, **and an extra year had been wasted due to the negligence of the HD and lack of language support.**

We are once more highly disappointed that the HD holds the “already done enough” attitude, as well as the view towards their current internal guidance and training for the frontline staff had “already served the intended purpose of providing EM with equal and easy access to PRH application”, given the fact that most of the services that either the committee mentioned during the meeting or the HD mentioned in the memorandum, might not even exist in real case scenarios.

Due to the HD’s indifferent attitude towards the request to tackle language barriers faced by the EM PRH applicants as seen from their post-meeting notes in the 6/11 memorandum, we keep **pressing on urging the Housing Authority to improve their administrative procedures and staffing structure to achieve a genuine easy access to all PRH applicants:**

1. To hire EM officers at HA/ HACSC who specialize in interpretation with EM spoken languages ability (especially Urdu/ Panjabi) and with good command in English in order to ensure precise and concise communication between South Asian EM PRH applicants, and the HD. The EM officers handling the EM PRH application and vetting interviews can avoid unnecessary misunderstandings due to language barriers;
2. To ensure equal accessibility by making all corresponding written documents, for PRH applicants from different ethnic backgrounds, to be available in different bilingual languages (English to EM languages), including PRH application forms and all standardized corresponding letter templates, which require EM applicants to respond in English (most EMs could write their addresses and names in English, and needless to say, numbers). We suggest there should be an option box in the application form for the choice of the second language to be preferred by the applicants.
3. To translate templates of frequently-sent letters, for instance, application confirmations, in six EM languages.

Yours Sincerely,

Ms Sujata Tamang and Ms Shaheen Begum (Contact persons)

**Hong Kong Ethnic Minority Concern Group on Equal Access to Government Services**

**Correspondence via**

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# **THE HONG KONG HOUSING AUTHORITY**

## **Notes of Members' Meeting with Concern Groups**

Date : 15 May 2014 (Thursday)  
Time : 3:45 p.m.  
Venue : Oi Man Community Hall, Oi Man Estate, Homantin, Kowloon  
Concern Group : The Federation of Public Housing Estates

### **PRESENT**

#### **Members of the Housing Authority and its Committees**

Mr Stanley WONG Yuen-fai, SBS, JP (Chairman)  
Ms Angela LEE Wai-yin, BBS, JP  
Mr LEE Ping-kwan, JP

#### **Representatives of the Housing Department**

Ms Rosaline Wong Lai-ping	Chief Estate Surveyor/ Commercial Properties
Mr Percy LEUNG Siu-to	Senior Administrative Officer/ Strategic Planning 1
Ms Iona SHAM Hiu-tung	Senior Administrative Officer/ Strategic Planning 2
Ms Cindy CHAN Wan	Assistant Committees' Secretary 2 <b>(Recording Officer)</b>

#### **Representatives of the Federation of Public Housing Estates**

(See Chinese version for names of the representatives)

**The Chairman** welcomed representatives of the Federation of Public Housing Estates (the Concern Group) to Members' Meeting with Concern Groups under the auspices of the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA).

2. **The Chairman** explained that the purpose of the meeting was to provide a forum for Members to listen to the views of the Concern Group and relay them to the committees concerned.

3. Most of the opinions expressed by representatives of **the Concern Group** at the meeting were stated in their submission prior to the meeting. Their opinions put forth at the meeting were consolidated as follows:

- (a) The Concern Group put forward a number of proposals in respect of the review on rent adjustment mechanism including the proposed incorporation of the factor of inflation, but none of them were accepted by HA eventually.
- (b) Although the existing mechanism under which rent was adjusted on the basis of the change in the PRH household income index was better and fairer than the old one, there was still room for improvement. The existing mechanism failed to exactly reflect the social conditions. The Department should review and further enhance the mechanism.
- (c) In recent years, the total household income of the grass roots had increased due to pay rise, but the wage increase was outpaced by inflation rate. The income growth, which served as the basis for rent adjustment, failed to truly reflect the affordability of PRH households.
- (d) HA would exercise the powers conferred by legislation, to introduce rent relief measures in parallel with a view to alleviating the pressure on PRH households after the rent increase on the basis of the outcome of the review under the mechanism. This showed that the existing mechanism for rent adjustment was not sound enough, and therefore HA considered that the outcome of the review should not be implemented. The factor of inflation was not incorporated in the mechanism, thus resulting in such a deviation.

- (e) If the rent was reviewed in accordance with the existing mechanism, it was anticipated that, having regard to the existing level of workers' wages, the outcome for this year would be an increase in rent. Under such circumstances, HA should, while implementing rent relief measures, review the existing mechanism as soon as possible to incorporate the factor of inflation. The specific method for calculating inflation should be subject to further discussions in detail. For instance, deduction of the inflation rate from the income in real terms could be considered.
- (f) It was understood that amendments to the housing legislation would be involved if the existing mechanism was to be revised. It would be very difficult to do such a task, and it would take a long time to accomplish. However, HA should face this problem to ensure that the mechanism could truly reflect the affordability of PRH residents.
- (g) At present, some utility companies, such as the MTR Corporation Limited, took into account the factor of inflation under their fare adjustment mechanism.
- (h) In 2005, there were only about 50 000 young one-person applicants for PRH. However, as HA introduced the Quota and Points System (QPS) applicable to non-elderly one-person applicants since 2005, the number of applicants had risen significantly to 122 000 as at the end of 2013. This showed that the QPS encouraged more youngsters to queue up for PRH instead of reducing the number of this category of applicants, and compelled many singletons to resort to other methods, such as applying for PRH as general applicants with their siblings, thereby leading to an increase in the number of PRH applicants.
- (i) The existing annual quota for PRH allocation to non-elderly one-person applicants, subject to a ceiling of only 2 000 flats, was unable to address their housing needs at all.
- (j) The Government undertook to reduce the waiting time of non-elderly one-person applicants aged above 35 for PRH, and the Long Term Housing Strategy Steering Committee (the Steering Committee) also recommended that additional points be given to applicants aged above 45. However, in view of inadequate PRH

resources at present, it seemed that it would be difficult to implement such a recommendation or fulfill such a pledge.

- (k) HA had all along ignored the housing needs of non-elderly one-person applicants. Among these applicants, many had difficulties in getting along with their family members and hence had genuine and pressing needs for admission to PRH. The Department should seriously consider their housing needs.
- (l) Since the QPS failed to effectively address the housing needs of non-elderly one-person applicants, and arrangements under which were unfair to them, the QPS should be scrapped. These applicants should be re-categorised as general applicants, so that they could also benefit from the target of maintaining the AWT at around three years for general applicants.
- (m) Prior to scrapping the QPS, the annual allocation quota for non-elderly one-person applicants should be increased. In the long run, the Government should increase PRH production, so as to meet the target of maintaining the AWT at around three years for general applicants.
- (n) There was obviously a shortage of parking spaces for light goods vehicles but a surplus of those for private cars in some housing estates such as Kai Ching Estate and Wing Cheong Estate. Yet, their uses were not mutual. The Concern Group hoped that the Department would adopt a flexible approach so that surplus parking spaces for certain types of vehicle could be used by other types of vehicle or be modified for better utilisation of parking resources in housing estates and higher occupancy rates of car parks. This could also obviate roadside parking by residents due to the shortage of parking spaces.
- (o) There had been a shortage of parking spaces in Oi Man Estate and Chun Man Court since a nearby site that had been used as a temporary car park was recovered last year. Available parking spaces had to be allotted to vehicle owners by ballot. Some vehicle owners, especially those who used their vehicles as a means to earning their living, were deeply troubled by the arrangement. The Concern Group hoped that the Department

would adopt a flexible approach to easing the shortage of parking spaces.

4. **Members'** views were consolidated as follows:

- (a) The existing rent adjustment mechanism was adopted following extensive discussions, with the endorsement of the Legislative Council (LegCo). The mechanism was based on PRH households' affordability and the premise that their affordability would be directly reflected by the changes in income index.
- (b) Under this mechanism, HA had to adjust the rent in the light of changes in income index. Of course, HA could exercise the powers conferred by legislation to introduce relief measures, such as a one-month rent waiver, for the benefit of PRH households.
- (c) The 2013 survey on household income was completed, and data analysis was being conducted by the Census and Statistics Department. The results and the need of introducing relief measures had to be discussed at the upcoming meeting of the Subsidised Housing Committee before confirmation.
- (d) Since the mechanism was stipulated in the legislation, no changes could be effected without extensive discussions in the community, to be followed by legislative amendment in LegCo. This entailed a substantial amount of work, and would take a very long time to accomplish.
- (e) In view of the fact that PRH households were subsidised by HA, it was reasonable for HA to make upward adjustment to the rent according to the increase in household income under the mechanism. Given that a household with a higher income level could afford a higher rent, HA should avoid introducing rent relief measures across the board.
- (f) The Steering Committee conducted an extensive consultation on public housing policy. The community generally opined that PRH allocation should be prioritised, giving family and elderly applicants the priorities. The Steering Committee also recommended that a review of the QPS be conducted when ample housing resources were made available, so as to consider giving

more points to non-elderly one-person applicants more senior in age, in order that their waiting time for housing offer could be reduced. HA would consider and examine, in detail, the recommendations of the Steering Committee.

- (g) As at the end of March 2014, the AWT for general applicants was three years. Given the increasing number of applicants, the waiting time for non-elderly one-person applicants would be even longer if they were re-categorised as general applicants.
- (h) HA's main task was to provide accommodation to low-income families who could not afford private rental accommodation, and it considered that family and elderly applicants should be accorded priority in housing offers because PRH allocation to a family would at least benefit two people. The existing arrangement of separating family and elderly applicants from non-elderly one-person applicants was appropriate in order to ensure that more people with pressing housing needs could be taken care of in a short time. The possibility that non-elderly one-person applicants might also have a pressing need for housing was not ruled out, but their urgency for housing was relatively lower than that of family and elderly applicants.
- (i) As it would be very difficult to identify which types of vehicles were used as a means to earning a living, so the allotment of parking spaces should not be based on this principle. They, however, agreed that HA was not restricted in any way from handling and deploying the parking spaces in a flexible way under the existing legislation.

5. The responses of **representatives** of the Housing Department were consolidated as follows:

- (a) They understood that parking spaces arrangements in individual housing estates were made according to the planning standard in housing development, hence a gap between the arrangements and the real situation. Thus there were occupancy problems in parking spaces. To optimise the resources, the Department would review the actual letting of and demand for parking spaces from time to time to make flexible arrangements.

- (b) The current average occupancy rate of 130 carparks under HA was 87%. All along, if parking spaces for certain types of vehicles in individual housing estates were in surplus, the Department would consider converting them into parking spaces for other types of vehicles which were in greater demand for parking spaces as appropriate. Upon confirmation of the feasibility of the conversion, the Department would follow up accordingly. Past experience showed that there was a shortage of parking spaces for motorcycles. As this type of parking space required a smaller area, conversion of parking spaces for private cars into those for motorcycles to meet the demand was generally feasible. As for light goods vehicles, it would be generally more difficult to convert parking spaces for private cars into those for light goods vehicles owing to the larger area required. In addition, the conversion could be easier done in public housing estates than in HOS courts as prior permission had to be obtained from the Lands Department for the latter. The Department would, however, try its best to coordinate.
- (c) Owing to the new intake of Kai Ching Estate and Wing Cheong Estate, the respective occupancy rate of parking spaces was still not too stable. When everything settled down after occupation, they could then determine which types of parking spaces were in surplus. The Department would closely monitor the situation and follow up.
- (d) The occupancy rate of the parking spaces of Oi Man Estate and Chun Man Court was 90%. In view of the high demand for parking spaces, it was inevitable that their allotment would be by ballot. The Department would continue to liaise closely with the Estate Office for better arrangements on applications for parking spaces.

6. **The Concern Group** added that the existing Rent Assistance Scheme offered by HA and poverty alleviation policies of the Government provided assistance to needy PRH households. Although the rent waivers offered by HA after the rent increase could alleviate their burden, this should not become a long-term measure, irrespective of whether the rent waivers were offered across the board or selectively to some. The most thorough solution should be a review of the existing rent review mechanism.

7. **The Chairman** thanked representatives of the Concern Group for attending the meeting.

8. The meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

----- (Post-meeting submission by the Concern Group was appended **at Annex 2** for Members' reference.)



## 出席「房委會委員與關注團體交流會」 要求完善租金檢討機制、反對非長者單身人士計分制以及 建議彈性處理屋邨泊車位問題

### 前言

公屋聯會代表於 2014 年 5 月 15 日，出席於愛民邨社區會堂舉行的「房委會委員與關注團體交流會」，就下列問題反映意見：

#### 1. 要求完善租金檢討機制

《2007 年房屋(修訂)條例》於 2007 年 6 月，獲立法會通過，由 2008 年 1 月 1 日起實施，新機制公屋租金每兩年檢討一次。第一次租金檢討於 2010 年進行，上調租金 4.68%，而第二次租金檢討則於 2012 年進行，上調租金 10%。按規定，今年需進行第三次租金檢討。

現行機制按公屋戶家庭入息指數的變動，而作租金調整的依據。本會認為，有關的計算方式只看收入的增減，未顧及公屋戶的家庭開支狀況。多年來，通脹嚴重，基本生活開支，包括主副食品價格大增，直接削弱基層市民的生活質素，薪金增加抵擋不到通脹的蠶蝕。現任房屋局局長三年前，亦曾兩次提出要檢討機制。本會認為，房委會必需檢討租金釐定機制，以更準確反映租戶的負擔能力。

隨著最低工資的落實，打工仔得到基本的保障，薪金有了一定的升幅，公屋戶家庭收入指數相信也必然會上升。然而，在 2013 至 14 年度財政預算案中，指出 2013 年全年平均整體通脹率為 4.3%，基本通脹率為 4%，而預測 2014 年全年平均整體通脹率為 4.6%，基本通脹率為 3.7%。最近，有公共服務機構已先後提出加價申請，不論衣、食、住、行各個方面，都紛紛漲價，即使市民的薪金上升，也遭到蠶蝕，得不償失，如果公屋租金調整仍只顧收入，不理通脹令住戶負擔能力降低，現時的租金檢討機制就變成一個有加無減機制，對住戶極不公平。因此，本會要求房委會應盡快完善租金檢討機制，在計算時應加入通脹因素。若今年按現有機制加租，房委會應同時實施免租一個月以上的紓困措施。

#### 2. 反對非長者單身人士配額及計分制

自 2005 年起，政府實施非長者單身人士配額及計分制，編配公屋單位，修改了輪候「三年」上樓承諾的內涵。房委會目前的目標，是把一般申請人，包括家庭申請者及長者一人申請者的平均輪候時間，維持在三年左右，但把非長者單身人士剔除在外。而在 2013 年 3 月 31 日的審計報告中，更揭示了約有 30% 申請人已等候超過三年，而且 57% 屬 30 歲或以下。

除了計分制外，每年編配予非長者單身人士的公屋單位，也僅限於 2,000 個內。截至 2013 年 12 月底，非長者單身人士的申請宗數有 122,200 宗，首次超越了一般家庭申請人。若每年 2,000 個公屋單位的配額不變，最少要花上數十年時間才能完全消化目前的輪候人數，並未計入每年新增的申請宗數。年青單身申請人士輪候公屋可謂遙遙無期。

行政長官梁振英在競選的政綱中，承諾會縮短 35 歲以下人士的輪候時間，但上任兩年來，束手無策，長策會亦只提出為 45 歲以上人士加分，承諾難以兌現，令人失望。本會認為，政府應取消有關的配額及計分制，恢復所有人士輪候三年上樓的承諾。再者，在計分制未取消之前，本會建議政府增加對非長者人士的公屋單位編配名額，以讓更多合資格的人士能夠得到獲配公屋的機會。

據政府估計，在未來的 5 年，公營房屋落成量約為 8 萬間，即平均每年約 1 萬 6 千間，另每年平均可收回 7 千間公屋單位，合計即每年平均只提供約 2 萬 3 千個單位，但目前卻有逾 24 萬宗公屋申請，每年更有逾萬宗的新申請，長遠難以維持所謂的「三年」上樓承諾。政府應增建公營房屋單位，不應犧牲有住屋需要的非長者單身人士的住屋權利。

### 3. 彈性處理公共屋邨泊車位問題

在 2009 年之前，公營房屋的停車場設施是按 2003 年的《香港規劃標準與準則》所訂作規劃而興建的。及至 2009 年，大幅修改了公營房屋的停車位標準，並納入到有關的準則中。私家車由每 13 至 24 個單位提供 1 個停車位，降至每 26 至 46 個單位 1 個停車位；輕型貨車由每 100 至 200 個單位提供 1 個停車位，降至每 200 至 600 個單位 1 個停車位，而電單車則為每 110 至 250 個單位提供 1 個停車位，房署按上述的準則把停車場的車位井然有序地劃分。

縱然作了上述的修訂，本會卻收到有意見表示，部分公共屋邨的泊車位仍有錯配的情況，以九龍城的啟晴邨及深水埗的榮昌邨為例，邨內客貨車泊車位不足，而私家車車位則有剩餘，但客貨車卻不能租用私家車位作停泊。在服務當邨居民為大前提下，本會認為房署可把泊車位作更具彈性的處理及協調，如泊車位出現剩餘的情況下，可兼容其他車輛作泊車處，既可滿足居民的需要，也可讓資源得以有效運用，而不必把多出的車位租予外邨的人士，以圖提高停車場租用率。



公屋聯會

2014 年 5 月 15 日

# **THE HONG KONG HOUSING AUTHORITY**

## **Notes of Members' Meeting with Concern Groups**

Date : 15 May 2014 (Thursday)  
Time : 4:45 p.m.  
Venue : Oi Man Community Hall, Oi Man Estate, Homantin, Kowloon  
Concern Group : Oi Chun Fans Club

### **PRESENT**

#### **Members of the Housing Authority and its Committee**

Mr Stanley WONG Yuen-fai, SBS, JP (Chairman)  
Ms Angela LEE Wai-yin, BBS, JP  
Mr LEE Ping-kuen, JP

#### **Representatives of the Housing Department**

Mr LUI Kwong-fai	Chief Manager/ Management (Kowloon West and Hong Kong)
Ms Suzanna TING Wan-sin	Senior Housing Manager (Kowloon West and Hong Kong)1
Ms Cindy CHAN Wan	Assistant Committees' Secretary 2 (Recording Officer)

#### **Representatives of the Oi Chun Fans Club**

(See Chinese version for names of the representatives)

**The Chairman** welcomed representatives of the Oi Chun Fans Club (the Concern Group) to Members' Meeting with Concern Groups under the auspices of the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA).

2. **The Chairman** explained that the purpose of the meeting was to provide Members with the opportunity to listen to the views of the Concern Group and relay them to the committees concerned.

3. Most of the opinions expressed by representatives of **the Concern Group** at the meeting were stated in their submission prior to the meeting. Their opinions put forth at the meeting were consolidated as follows:

- (a) They hoped that additional resources would be provided by the Department to expedite the construction of a lift tower linking up the podium on the fourth floor of Sun Man House, Oi Man Estate with the pavement at Chung Hau Street, and a barrier-free passage from the roof landing of the lifts of Oi Man Plaza to the podium of Lai Man House. They noted that the Department had submitted relevant works information to the Independent Checking Unit. But it took a long time for vetting and approval, causing inconvenience to the residents.
- (b) With regard to the project of barrier-free passage linking up the podium of Lai Man House, as the lot was under the purview of The Link, so far The Link did not undertake to build another covered barrier-free passage. At present, the superstructure of the covered walkway was dilapidated with the leakage of water during rainy days, and the condition was quite undesirable. Also, the staircase outside Oi Man Community Hall was quite inconvenient for residents to get in and go out. They urged the Department to enhance communication with The Link for timely completion of the enhancement project.
- (c) They hoped that works for the lift towers at both ends of the footbridge across Princess Margaret Road near Tun Man House would commence as soon as possible, and a covered walkway linking up the lift tower entrance on the ground floor of Tak Man House would be built too. They understood that the Lands Department would be involved in the project, and hoped that the Department would enhance communication with the Lands

Department and consider setting up an inter-departmental working group to conduct a feasibility study on the project.

- (d) They hoped that additional resources would be provided by the Department to replace old metal gates for tenants of Oi Man Estate which was over 40 years old and humid owing to its location on the hillside. The metal gates were in a very serious state of rusting. Many of them, worn out and damaged, could not function properly, thus constituting a loophole in security.
- (e) The old metal gates of Oi Man Estate, which were heavier, would generate noises in the process of opening and closing, and hence a nuisance to residents. Moreover, it would be physically straining for elderly tenants to open and close these metal gates.
- (f) In early 2014, replacement of metal gates was carried out for some residents, who were very satisfied with the quality of the replacement works. However, the replacement works had been suspended since March 2014 due to the shortage of resources. Up till now, over 4 000 households had yet to have their metal gates replaced. The Department was urged to expedite the replacement of metal gates.

4. The responses of **representatives** of the Housing Department were consolidated as follows:

- (a) Provision of a covered walking to link up the footbridge across Princess Margaret Road near Tun Man House with Tak Man House would improve the living standard of residents. The Department would, in collaboration with the District Council, urge the Lands Department to provide information on the works as soon as possible, and would conduct a feasibility study on the works once the information was obtained.
- (b) The proposal to construct a barrier free passage linking up the fourth floor of Lai Man House, Oi Man Estate with the roof of Oi Man Plaza was submitted to the Independent Checking Unit for vetting and approval. It was anticipated that the works could be completed in 2014/15.

- (c) As the roof landing of the lifts of Oi Man Plaza was under the purview of The Link, the request by district councillors and residents to construct an enhanced barrier free passage that met residents' needs was referred to The Link for its consideration. It was hoped that The Link could launch the works as soon as possible.
- (d) The Department would closely monitor the progress of infrastructure works, and would provide support as far as possible for the convenience of residents.
- (e) At present, the Department adopted a three-tiered approach to estate security, including upgrading the estate security system to Security System A in 2002 and arranging patrols by security guards. Meanwhile, representatives of the Police would attend EMAC meetings to advise on anti-theft measures and security in the light of the conditions in housing estates. Our records showed that Oi Man Estate maintained rather good law and order in the past.
- (f) The Department had all along been replacing metal gates for eligible households that needed such replacements in accordance with the existing policy. The works to be arranged depended on the funding available each year. The Department had not cut down on the resources for such works.
- (g) Households who found their metal gates damaged as a result of natural wear and tear could register with the Department. Depending on the conditions of the damaged metal gates, free repair or replacement would be arranged by the Department, following the principles of cost-effectiveness and environmental cause.
- (h) The Department would prioritise the replacement of damaged metal gates for households. Generally speaking, gates that could be fixed by replacing their parts would be repaired first, while those beyond repair would be replaced in their entirety, with priorities given to elderly households.

5. Supplementary views expressed by **the Concern Group** were as follows:

- (a) Resident groups were more than willing to maintain communication with the Department, and to render assistance whenever necessary, including meeting with The Link. The Concern Group hoped that the Department would keep resident groups informed of the progress of such works, so as to facilitate better coordination between both parties.
- (b) Oi Man Estate was more than 40 years old. With the children of the families leaving the nest one after another over the years, the housing estate was inhabited mainly by elderly households at present. The Concern Group hoped that the Department would let people-orientedness be its guide, and replace the metal gates for these households as soon as possible, resources permitting.

6. **The Chairman** thanked representatives of the Concern Group for attending the meeting.

7. The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

----- (Post-meeting submission by the Concern Group was appended **at Annex 3** for Members' reference.)

致：房屋委員會  
黃遠輝主席

### **強烈要求增撥資源為愛民邨公屋更換鐵閘**

愛民邨由 1974 年入伙至今已逾 40 年，近年新搬入伙的單位已把舊款鐵閘(俗稱「籃閘」)換成新式、噪音較少的鐵閘，但是愛民邨大部份住戶仍在使用籃閘，其生鏽及損壞情況嚴重，很多都出現難以開關和滑輪嚴重損耗，甚至是斷腳、壞鎖、甩轆等，而且開關鐵閘時都會發出很大的噪音，破壞鄰里和睦，開關鐵閘要用很大的力氣，對傷殘弱老更造成極大的不便。房屋署以環保為理由，對老化和損壞的鐵閘只做小修小補，長遠卻令維修費大大增加。

再者，愛民邨每座大廈有一個保安崗位，但出入口就有三個之多，嘉民樓一名保安更要看管六個出入口，而且一座樓宇又與另外的三座樓宇的層層走廊連接互通，令大廈的大閘形同虛設，保安員巡查和驅趕未經登記的陌生人、推銷員、「收數佬」、「收賣佬」，甚至是追截爆竊的賊人，即使疲於奔命亦未必收到效果，所以，居民唯一能依靠來保護自己的財產和人身安全的最後防綫，就是房屋署為他們安裝的鐵閘。然而可悲的是，鐵閘已使用了四十年，老化和損耗嚴重，在關鍵時刻根本靠不住。

今年初，房屋署終於為部份有需要的愛民邨住戶免費更換第一代的舊款鐵閘，深受居民歡迎和贊賞，然而，成功更換的僅屬小數，大部份住戶仍在使用第一代舊款鐵閘和第二代噪音大、保安差的舊鐵閘，他們仍期待著房屋署能儘快增撥資源安排更換。

九龍城區議會轄下房屋及基礎建設委員會分別在 2013 年及 2014 年兩次動議通過要求房屋署增撥資源為愛民邨全邨更換鐵閘，但多年來，房屋署對區議會、區議員、地區團體和居民強烈要求為愛民邨全邨更換鐵閘的訴求沒有重視，每每只是搬字過紙，單單表示會維修了事，但情況卻是「修修補補，於事無補」。為體現房屋署以人為本的宗旨，本會懇請房委會能增撥資源，為愛民邨全邨更換鐵閘的進度。

愛俊之友  
左滙雄區議員  
梁美芬立法會議員 謹啟

2014 年 5 月 15 日

致：房屋委員會  
黃遠輝主席

## 要求盡快展開愛民邨優化 行人通道的工程及公佈工程時間表

政府近年提倡「人人暢道通行」政策，優化現有行人通道設施，政策廣受市民和地區支持。由於愛民邨是依山而建，居民外出都要上高落斜，十分不便；而且愛民邨建邨已四十年，人口老化嚴重，為此，本會認為政策應盡快在適當的行人通道加建升降機和加設無障礙通道，以改善行人通道設施。本會要求如下：

### 一、 盡快興建由愛民邨新民樓四樓平台連接忠孝街行人路面的升降機

港鐵觀塘延線及沙中線將分別於 2015 年和 2018 年投入服務，由愛民邨新民樓四樓平台連接到忠孝街行人路面升降機的工程討論多年卻仍未落實施工及工程進度時間表。本會認為，該加建升降機的工程應盡快上馬，並在 2015 年港鐵觀塘延線通車前投入服務，以便本區居民使用港鐵服務，和何文田體育館及周邊的公園設施。

此外，部門可否告知興建該升降機工程的進展情況和時間表？升降機由新民樓四樓平台連接忠孝街行人路面及愛民邨社區會堂的在技術上是否可行？如否，原因為何？

### 二、 盡快加設由愛民商場天台升降機出入口連接禮民樓平台的無障礙通道

本會十分關注愛民邨加建有行人通道上蓋的無障通道，接駁由愛民商場天台的升降機到愛民邨上邨(建民、禮民、保民、嘉民樓)四樓平台的工程進度，爭取無障通道盡快投入服務，便利有需要的居民。

本會認為該無障通道有逼切需要，為此，部門可否詳細告知上述無障通道的工程展進情況？及工程能否在 2014 至 15 年度內完成。

**三、 盡快展開公主道近敦民樓的行人天橋兩端的升降機工程，並加建上蓋連接至德民樓地下升降機出入口**

由於橫跨公主道近愛民邨敦民樓的行人天橋(結構編號 KF6)兩端只有樓梯及比現有設計標準較斜的斜道，政府年前已承諾於天橋每一各設置一部升降機。為便居民免受日曬雨淋之苦，本會建議由現有的德民樓地下升降機出入口，加建行人通道上蓋連接至公主道近敦民樓的行人天橋兩端的升降機。為此，本會要求房署能盡快展開對上述天橋兩端升降機加建行人通道上蓋連接至德民樓地下升降機出入口的工程進行可行性研究。

愛俊之友  
左滙雄議員  
梁美芬立法會議員 謹啟

2014年5月15日