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Title	Minutes of the Open Meeting of the HONG KONG HOUSING AUTHORITY held on Thursday, 30 June 1994.
CONTENTS	<p>File Ref.: HA/COM/2/2 Paper No. HA 42/94</p> <p>Minutes of the Open Meeting of the HONG KONG HOUSING AUTHORITY held on Thursday, 30 June 1994.</p> <p>---O---O---O---</p> <p>PRESENT:</p> <p>Hon Rosanna WONG Yick-ming, CBE, JP (Chairman) Mr Y G LIM (Director of Housing) (Acting) (Vice-Chairman) Mr PAO Ping-wing, JP Ms LEUNG Wai-tung, MBE, JP Hon HUI Yin-fat, OBE, JP Rev Sean Patrick BURKE, JP Mr Victor SO Hing-woh Mr HAU Shui-pui Hon FUNG Kin-kee Prof YEUNG Yue-man Mr Stanford MILLER, JP Ms HO On-nei Mr CHAN Kam-man Mr Nicholas BROOKE Hon LEE Wing-tat Mr Daniel LAM Chun Mr YEUNG Ka-sing Mr Anthony WONG Luen-kin Miss Audrey EU Yuet-mee, QC Mr Joseph CHOW Ming-kuen, JP Miss Christine K T CHOW, JP (Regional Secretary/Hong Kong & Kowloon) Mr Leo KWAN Wing-wah, JP (Deputy Secretary for Planning, Environment and Lands/Housing Policy) Mr Stephen SELBY (Deputy Secretary for the Treasury/2)</p> <p>ABSENT WITH APOLOGIES:</p> <p>Hon Edward S T HO, OBE, JP Mr LEUNG Chun-ying</p> <p>IN ATTENDANCE:</p> <p>Mr LEE Kai-fat (Deputy Director/Administration & Policy) (Secretary of the Authority) Mr R A BATES, JP (Senior Assistant Director/Maintenance & Construction Services)</p>

Mr Stephen S C POON, JP (Senior Assistant Director/New Development)
Mr Marco M H WU, JP (Senior Assistant Director/Housing Administration)
Mr SIU Che-wing (Senior Assistant Director/Estate Management) (Acting)
Mr M L YUEN (Assistant Director/Construction Services)
Mr R N CARPENTER (Assistant Director/Maintenance)
Mr T C YUEN (Assistant Director/Development)
Mr R J AVON (Assistant Director/Finance)
Mr HO Wing-him (Assistant Director/Policy)
Mrs Joy AU (Assistant Director/Regional Management (1))
Mr Y L CHAN (Assistant Director/Commercial Properties)
Mr Peter K W YIP (Assistant Director/Operations & Redevelopment)
Mr C C HUI (Assistant Director/Applications & Home Ownership)
Mrs A SIMISTER (Chief Planning Officer)
Ms Mimi LEE (Senior Administrative Officer/Housing Management)
Mr C Y LEE (Senior Housing Manager/Headquarters)
Mr Safat HOOSAIN (Public Relations Officer)
Mr Raymond KO (Committees' Secretary)(Meeting Secretary)
Miss Grace KONG (Assistant Committees' Secretary/1)
Miss Sabrina LEE (Assistant Committees' Secretary/3)

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INDEX

PARAGRAPH

2 CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE OPEN MEETING HELD ON 31 MARCH 1994

3 CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL SPECIAL OPEN MEETING HELD ON 2 JUNE 1994

4 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

5 - 42 ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

5 - 18 Review of Financial Arrangements between the Authority and the Hong Kong Government
(Paper No HA 33/94)

19 - 32 Report on the Mid-term Review of the Long Term Housing Strategy
(Paper No HA 34/94)

33 - 37 Final Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Housing for the Elderly
(Paper No HA 35/94)

38 - 40 Response to the Annual Debate by the Director of Housing, Secretary for Planning, Environment and Lands and the Chairman, Housing Authority

41 - 42 Secretary's Report - Committee Work (March 1994 - May 1994)

(Paper No HA 30/94)

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

43 Provision of Land

44 Appointment of Secretary for Housing

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The Chairman opened the meeting at 8:45 a.m. and welcomed Mr Leo KWAN Wing-wah (Deputy Secretary for Planning, Environment and Lands/Housing Policy), Mr Stephen SELBY (Deputy Secretary for the Treasury/2) and Miss Christine K T CHOW (Regional Secretary/Hong Kong and Kowloon). Apologies for absence were recorded for Mr Edward S T HO and Mr LEUNG Chun-ying. She informed Members that Mr PAO Ping-wing had indicated that he would arrive at the meeting late and that the proceedings of the meeting were being broadcast to departmental officers in the Lecture Hall.

CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE OPEN MEETING HELD ON 31 MARCH 1994

2. The Minutes of the meeting held on 31 March 1994 were confirmed and signed.

CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTE OF THE ANNUAL SPECIAL OPEN MEETING HELD ON 2 JUNE 1994

3. Minutes of the Annual special open meeting held on 2 June 1994 were confirmed and signed.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

4. Members noted the Department's report (Paper No. HA 36/94) tabled at the meeting.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

(AGENDA Review of Financial Arrangements between Item 4) the Authority and the Hong Kong Government
(Paper No. HA 33/94)

5. Upon the Chairman's invitation, Mr Stanford MILLER introduced the paper. Mr Miller highlighted the salient features of the Government's proposal as follows -

Action

(a) The Authority was allowed to retain all funds generated from its own sources. This

was a significant improvement to the present arrangements under which the Authority might be required to return to Government any surplus in excess of the permitted level;

(b) The Authority's permanent capital would be restructured whereby \$13.5 bn became non-interest bearing and the remaining portion of \$12.8 bn would be converted into an interest-bearing loan at an interest rate of 5% per annum, repayable to Government over 14 years;

(c) The current arrangements regarding the payment of land cost and the dividends on commercial operations would remain unchanged;

(d) Land values would be taken out from the Authority's accounts and be shown as a note to the accounts to give a true reflection of the Authority's income and expenditure;

(e) An 'Improvement Account' with an initial annual balance of \$2 bn would be set up as a buffer to cater for the items arising from major improvement works not budgetted; and

(f) The surplus funds of the Authority would be put into a Development Fund and remain as part of HA funds. Any payment from that Fund would require the approval of both the Authority and the Government. A Works Liaison Committee to be chaired by the Chairman of the Authority would be set up to monitor the use of the Development Fund.

6. Mr. Stanford MILLER informed the meeting that in connection with the proposed financial arrangements, confirmation had been obtained from the Government that it would continue to supply formed land and supporting infrastructure for public housing production regularly and consistently. The Government would consider injecting cash into the Development Fund if the need arose. It would also enter into joint venture projects with the Authority on an entrustment basis. Funds in the Development Fund could also be transferred to the Authority's accounts to support the operations of the Authority.

Action

7. Mr Stanford MILLER said that having thoroughly considered all aspects of the Government's proposal, the proposed financial arrangements were considered financially more favourable to the Authority than the existing arrangements. The Government had shown flexibility during the course of negotiation with the Authority and the package proposed was in line with the Authority's established principles. The Establishment and Finance Committee (EFC) had taken into account all views expressed by Members as well as the public. Although Government's proposal might still fall short of the aspiration of some Members in certain areas, it was hoped that the proposal could be considered as a package in totality.

8. Ms LEUNG Wai-tung, Mr HUI Yin-fat, Rev S P BURKE, Mr Nicholas BROOKE, Mr Daniel LAM Chun, Mr YEUNG Ka-sing, Ms Audrey EU Yuet mee and Mr Joseph CHOW Ming-kuen supported the recommendations in the paper. Their comments regarding the Government's proposal were summarized below -

AD/F (a) Rev S P BURKE and Mr Nicholas BROOKE considered that more PRO publicity of the new financial arrangements was necessary so as to provide the public with a clear and correct picture as to how HA funds were utilized for housing purposes.

DDA (b) Mr Daniel LAM opined that further clarifications on the final authority for approval of payment from the Development Fund was needed because there might be occasions when the Authority and Government were unable to reach an agreement. Referring to the Government's response concerning the injection of funds into the Development Fund, Mr Lam said that the timing of injection of funds was also important. Ms Audrey EU Yuet-mee shared Mr Lam's view and stressed that more concrete guidelines and rules on the utilization of the Development Fund were needed.

SAD/HA (c) Mr Nicholas BROOKE said that consequent upon the acceptance of the Government's proposal, the Authority would take on a lot of additional responsibilities. He suggested that the Authority should assess its available resources against its additional commitments in practical terms, especially the additional manpower resources that would be required, and whether the construction industry had the capacity to absorb these additional works.

(d) Mr Joseph CHOW Ming-kuen said that the establishment of the Development Fund would not automatically alleviate all constraints currently encountered by the Authority. He envisaged that resources allocation would continue to be a major consideration of the Authority.

Action

9. Ms HO On-nei supported the setting up of an "Improvement Account". She however expressed concern whether the Government's injection of cash into the Development Fund would be in the form of an interest-bearing loan, thus imposing additional burden upon the Authority.

10. Mr CHAN Kam-man said the proposed financial arrangements had not offered significant concessions as the Authority was not given complete autonomy in the use of the Development Fund. However, as the proposed arrangements were, by comparison, more advantageous than the existing package, he was inclined to accept rather than reject the Government's proposal.

11. Members who had reservations over the Government's proposal expressed the following views -

(a) Mr HAU Shui-pui objected to the retention of part of the Authority's permanent capital as interest-bearing loan. He also did not support the proposal of maintaining the current 50:50 sharing of the net operating surplus generated from commercial operations.

(b) Mr FUNG Kin-kee said that apart from the aspects mentioned by Mr HAU Shui-pui in (a) above, he also disagreed with the proposed rate of payment of land cost (at

35%) and the setting up of the Development Fund. Mr Fung said that according to the information obtained from the Department, only 12% - 18% of the cost per HOS unit was attributed to site formation. Turning to the Development Fund, Mr Fung said unless the Government could undertake to inject sufficient cash into the Fund, the Authority's surplus should be used on its housing programme only, rather than on infrastructural works, urban renewal projects and so on which should be a responsibility of the Government.

(c) Mr LEE Wing-tat shared Mr HAU Shui-pui and Mr FUNG Kin-kee's views and considered that the Government's proposal was no better than a reshuffling of the Authority's accounts in the absence of any firm commitment from the Government on the provision of sufficient land to the Authority. Mr Lee said that the Authority should not accept the proposal of setting up a Development Fund when the Authority was not sure about its scope.

12. In response to Members' concern, Mr Stephen SELBY pointed out that the provision of housing and housing-related infrastructure would always be implemented on a partnership basis between the Authority and the Government. The proposal on the new financial arrangements could enable this partnership to operate with the greatest flexibility. He assured Members that the setting up of the Action Development Fund did not imply any compulsion on the Authority to agree to any particular project or proposal. Agreement of both sides would be required before embarking upon any project. Turning to the rate of payment of land cost, Mr Stephen SELBY said the 35% proposed by the Government was considered a realistic estimate to reflect the cost to the Government for forming and servicing the sites before handing them over to the Authority.

Action

13. On the issue of land supply, Mr Leo KWAN responded that the Government was committed to meeting the additional land demand of the Authority to meet approved production targets. The Government was actively considering the Authority's request for more land and 30 hectares of land had been identified by the Task Force for the Authority to build 20,000 units between 1998 and 2000. The Government would continue to maintain close liaison with the Authority with a view to meeting the additional demand.

14. Ms LEUNG Wai-tung said that the demarcation between HA funds and Government funds should not be exaggerated as they both were public funds. She believed that the acceptance of the new financial arrangements would not rule out the possibility of further reviews in the light of changing circumstances. She suggested that Members should adopt a pragmatic approach in considering the Government's proposal.

15. Mr YEUNG Ka-sing remarked that the Government's proposal on the whole had provided for more flexibility. It would not be advisable to reject the package merely because some of its elements fell short of the expectation of some Members.

16. The Chairman pointed out that it was important for the Authority and Government

to reach an agreement if the two parties were to continue their partnership in the future. She said that the recommendations put forward by the EFC were the result of very careful consideration. Although land supply would remain a major concern of the Authority, she hoped that Members would consider the package in the interest of the general public at large. She then referred Members to two petition letters received before the meeting in relation to this item.

17. After further deliberations and with the exception of Mr HAU Shui-pui, Mr FUNG Kin-kee and Mr LEE Wing-tat, Members -

(a) endorsed in principle the proposed changes to the financial arrangements; and

(b) agreed to delegate the consideration of points of detail of the revised financial arrangements to the EFC.

Action

18. The Chairman thanked Mr Stanford MILLER and Members of the EFC for their efforts in conducting a detailed examination of the Government's proposal. (Mr Stephen SELBY left the meeting at this juncture.)

(AGENDA Report on the Mid-term Review of the Item S) Long Term Housing Strategy

(Paper No. HA 34/94)

19. Mr HO Wing-him drew Members' attention to the corrigendum tabled and presented the paper.

(Five petition letters received on this item were tabled for Members' perusal. In the midst of Mr Ho's presentation, a group of audience at the public gallery displayed a number of banners to protest against rent increase. The Chairman reminded them that they were required to abide by the House Rules of the HA Open Meeting and asked them to remove their banners. The banners were subsequently removed.)

Housing Strategy

20. Mr Anthony WONG Luen-kin supported the recommendations of the paper and said the final report on the mid-term review of the Long Term Housing Strategy (LTHS) would form a valuable basis for the Authority to formulate policies in the future. He however hoped that more details on the land to be allocated to the Authority should be made available by the Government and that the LTHS should be reviewed and revised in future as necessary. Mr Stanford MILLER was also in support of the paper. He added that as the Authority was allowed greater flexibility under the new financial arrangements, the Department should consider adopting more imaginative approaches to bring forward housing production.

21. Referring to this paper's emphasis on public sector housing supply, Mr Victor SO Hing-woh cautioned that the involvement and contribution of the private sector should not be overlooked as the bunching of production after 1998 would carry a territory-wide impact on both the private and the public sectors. He suggested that a mission

statement on the future housing strategy, in particular, the coordination between the Authority and the private sector should be drawn up to provide the public with a clear picture regarding the issue.

22. Mr LEE Wing-tat agreed with Mr Victor SO that the future housing strategy should be made known to the public in clear terms. He however did not envisage that there would be a problem of over-supply as he believed that the increase in supply would be readily taken up by the strong pent-up demand for housing.

Action

23. Mr FUNG Kin-kee was of the view that the paper had not adequately recognized and addressed the need for a public sector-led housing strategy. Prof YEUNG Yue-man pointed out that the paper under discussion aimed at identifying the necessary adjustments to the LTHS and was not intended to review the overall strategy of the LTHS. Mr Leo KWAN said that it should be noted that the Government, in formulating housing policies, had to take into account the need of all strata of society, including those who were not eligible for public housing.

24. Prof YEUNG Yue-man pointed out that the commitment to raise home ownership rate to near to 60% by 1997 arose from the Governor's policy address. He asked whether this target should be taken rigidly as it was not covered in the original LTHS. Ms LEUNG Wai-tung shared Prof Yeung's view and said that the policy objective of provision of housing to those in need should be accorded higher priority. In response, Mr Leo KWAN said that we did not have to be too pessimistic in reacting to this target as yet. With the package of measures announced by the Task Force, there might be changes in the housing market conditions in favour of a higher home ownership rate. (Mr PAO Ping-wing joined the meeting at this juncture.)

Private Property Ownership

25. Mr CHAN Kam-man did not support the recommendation of the paper to set up an ad hoc committee to look into the issue of tenants' ownership of private properties. He said there were already policies and measures to reduce the housing subsidy enjoyed by well-off tenants. If a new policy was introduced, it might go against the Authority's effort of encouraging sitting tenants to solve their housing problems by their own means, such as buying HOS flats or private properties to relieve overcrowding. Mr FUNG Kin-kee echoed Mr Chan's view. He said that the Department's finding that private property ownership was most common among large households had demonstrated that these households were in genuine need of additional accommodation to relieve overcrowding. In response, the Chairman clarified that the purpose of setting up an ad hoc committee was to enable a more thorough examination of the issue. The ad hoc committee would report its findings and Members could then decide the course of action. On the Chairman's clarifications, Mr PAO Ping-wing supported the setting up of an ad hoc committee. Ms HO On-nei however cautioned that extreme care must be taken in taking the issue forward.

26. Prof YEUNG Yue-man, Mr Anthony WONG Luen-kin and Ms LEUNG Wai-tung were in favour of the Department's recommendation in view of the complexity of the subject and the diverse views expressed by Members as well as the public. Ms Leung

also held the view that any recommendations of the ad hoc committee should be open for public comments. Mr Victor SO pointed out that further examination of the issue might shed lights on the ways to encourage home ownership among sitting tenants who were no longer in need of their rental units.

Action

27. Mr Stanford MILLER supported the setting up of an ad hoc committee and remarked that the likely solution to tackle private property ownership was the introduction of fixed-term tenancy. The Chairman said that in connection with the Government's recent initiatives to curb property prices, the Authority had also been asked to consider this option.

Other Views

28. Mr FUNG Kin-kee and Mr LEE Wing-tat expressed concern that the Comprehensive Redevelopment Programme (CRP) should not be deferred. The Chairman clarified that as recommended in the mid term review report, the Authority would not delay or AD/D expedite the redevelopment programme. She said that the Development Committee would consider the five year CRP at its next meeting and would then make an announcement.

29. Referring to some tenants' negative response to the infill site projects, Mr Anthony WONG Luen-kin hoped that tenants would take into consideration the housing need of others. Mr Nicholas BROOKE however had reservation in implementing the infill site projects and suggested that other recommendations of the paper to bring forward housing production should take precedence.

30. Ms HO On-nei commented that if the Home Purchase Loan Scheme was not effective in helping public housing tenants to purchase private property, the viability of the Scheme should be reviewed.

31. With the above comments, Members endorsed the Department's recommendations as mentioned in chapter XII of the paper.

32. Mr HAU Shui-pui, Mr FUNG Kin-kee and Mr CHAN Kam-man's reservation on the proposal to set up an ad hoc committee to look into the issue of private property ownership among tenants was noted.
(Mr Victor SO Hing-woh and Prof YEUNG Yue-man left the meeting at this juncture.)

Action

AGENDA Final Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Item 6) Housing for the Elderly (Paper No. HA 35/94)

33. On behalf of the Authority, the Chairman extended deep appreciation to Mr HUI Yin-fat for leading the Ad Hoc Committee on Housing for the Elderly (CHE) and to Members of the CHE for their efficiency in completing a quality report within the specified six months' period. Upon the Chairman's invitation, Mr Hui took Members through the CHE's work, recommendations and proposed action plans which were

outlined in brief in the Executive Summary and detailed in the full report. Mr Hui also thanked Members of the CHE for their contributions and Ms Mimi LEE for her secretaryship. (Mr YEUNG Ka-sing left the meeting at this juncture.)

34. Rev S P BURKE said that the report and the recommendations therein were excellent. Referring to the various recommendations, he asked how they would be implemented as an integrated programme and which working group or panel would be responsible for the overall monitoring of the implementation. HK/ Mr HUI Yin-fat replied that the recommendations would be Estate carried out by different small groups and panels whereas the Liaison existing Steering Group on Estate Liaison Officers and Officers Emergency Alarm System chaired by Prof Nelson CHOW Wing-sun Scheme would be revamped by expanding its scope to review the existing services provided for the elderly within public rental estates.

35. Mr PAO Ping-wing remarked that the recommendations of the report were constructive and realistic. He however had the impression that the emphasis of the report seemed to have been placed on the handling of housing problems facing single elderly. He said that it would be equally helpful in alleviating the demand for elderly housing if more thoughts were given to encouraging youngsters to live together with their elderly family members. Mr HUI Yin-fat responded that the proposed social mix of elderly housing had already taken into account the importance of integration of younger and older generations. The Director of Housing advised that the recommended enhancement to the Elderly Priority Schemes, from which over 7,000 families had benefited since 1979, was also a step towards the direction as mentioned by Mr Pao. Ms Mimi LEE highlighted that publicity efforts would also be targeted at the non-elderly who may in turn assist or join their elderly family members in the application for public housing. (Mr HUI Yin-fat left the meeting at this juncture.)

Action

36. Mr FUNG Kin-kee asked how the petitions involving elderly housing would be handled. The Chairman answered that they DD/HMW would be looked into by the Department and the comments would be referred to the relevant committees for consideration. The Department would also follow up the recommendations through the respective Committees of the Authority.

37. With the above comments, Members endorsed the paper.

(AGENDA Response to the Annual Debate by the Item 7) Director of Housing,
Secretary for Planning, Environment and Lands and the Chairman, Housing Authority

38. The Director of Housing, Mr Leo KWAN Wing-wah and the Chairman each gave a speech in response to Members' comments and speeches made at the Housing Authority Annual Special Open Meeting held on 2 June 1994. The Director of Housing delivered his speech as follows -

"Madam Chairman,

I am most grateful to the Authority Members who made useful comments and put forward constructive proposals on the work of the Department when they spoke at the

meeting held on 2 June.

The Chairman and several Members have made reference to the need to make continued improvements to the management and maintenance of our estates. The Department shares with Members this objective.

To provide management and maintenance services to half the population in our estates in a rapidly changing social, economic, and political environment is an enormous task. For this I must thank Members for the unfailing support they have given us in the past year. With the growth and development of a representative and open government within a relatively short span of time, it is inevitable that there will be rapid political and social changes.

The end result of all these changes, from a housing management point of view, is that tenants' aspirations for better services are rising. They are more articulate in putting forward their views on housing matters, they would like to know more about the rationale to policies, and to some, they would like to participate and make contribution to the day-to-day management and maintenance of our estates. And this should be encouraged.

Action

Housing Management

As Members all know, it has always been the Authority's policy to decentralize the responsibilities of day-to-day estate management to our staff on the ground. All decisions concerning the day-to-day management are taken by estate managers. In discharging their responsibilities, our housing managers all recognise the importance of maintaining close contact with tenants, and local personalities who have an interest in housing matters. The estate staff try their best to offer explanation on the Authority's policies and decisions; and to listen to their views. District Senior Housing Managers sit on District Boards or their CommiKees at which housing matters are discussed. Housing Managers and Assistant Housing Managers regularly meet Mutual Aid CommiKees and aKend Area Committee meetings.

To help our staff make adjustments to the rapidly changing social and political environment, the Department has been strengthening management training for our staff. Emphasis is being placed on customer service and a client-oriented culture. In addition, we are making improvements to our system of handling complaints with a view to ensuring that they are all followed up adequately and efficiently.

So far we have been taking advantage of the representative government structure at district and local levels as the network through which local liaison and consultation is conducted. The Department has been considering whether and how we can build on the existing network to establish a dedicated local consultation mechanism on housing matters. Our objective is to put in place a mechanism which will enable us to hear directly from tenants their views on housing management matters. It is our plan to put forward preliminary proposals to the Management and Operations Committee and then the full Authority for consideration before the end of this financial year.

Housing Maintenance

Integral to successful housing management is an efficient housing maintenance service. Since the mid 1970's, the emphasis has been on the establishment of systematic planned and preventive maintenance programmes. These programmes cover essential maintenance tasks and major improvement initiatives to bring estates up to current standards in terms of provisions and facilities.

An equally important element is the day-to-day maintenance of our estate property. From the tenants' point of view, day-to-day repairs, however minor they may be, are of considerable importance to their daily life. Our ability to provide a prompt and effective repair service has significant impact on the tenants' perception of the Department's maintenance and management services.

Action

The Department has started a review of the arrangement through which our day-to-day repairs services are delivered. We have identified areas in which improvements can be made. It seems that we shall have to put in place new contractual and staffing arrangements. The Department plans to put forward proposals to the relevant policy committees for consideration in the second half of this financial year.

Employment of Consultants

Mr Edward HO and Mr C N BROOKE both pointed out the additional workload the Department will have to shoulder as we take on various initiatives to being forward or increase production. This point has been stressed again by Mr Brooke this morning. As usual, departmental staff will try to take on additional assignments as much as they can. However, given the significant amount of work that will arise in order to accelerate the maintenance and improvement programmes, to implement the infill site projects, elderly housing projects and the additional production of 10,000 flats a year on top of the set target of 40,000 flats a year, there is a need for departmental resources to be supplemented by external consultancies. Specific proposals to engage consultancies will be put to the relevant committees for approval in the normal course of event.

Performance Pledge

Mr CHAN Kam-man has reported at the meeting on 2 June that good progress has been achieved by the Department in meeting the targets set under Phase I of the Performance Pledge. I would like to supplement his report in relation to Phase II of the Performance Pledge. Since launching of Phase II of the Pledge in April, we have instituted a number of measures and initiatives to enhance the quality of our service. We shall continue to monitor progress of both the first and second phases of our Performance Pledge having particular regard to clients' feedback obtained through our regular contacts with Mutual Aid Committees and the customers liaison groups which have been set up.

Waiting List

As regards Mr LEE Wing-tat's suggestion that we should extend our Performance Pledge to set a maximum waiting time for flat allocation to Waiting List applicants, I am afraid that there would be practical difficulties. As Members are aware, Waiting List applicants are given three choices of location which they can change whilst they are waiting for the housing. On the other hand, the supply of flats by districts depends on a number of variables which are often not in our control. In particular, the number of vacated flats that become available in a district within a certain time frame cannot be accurately assessed. It would therefore be difficult to follow up this suggestion.

Action

Nonetheless, we appreciate the good intention of this suggestion. We should try to enable Waiting List applicants to be kept up-to-date on the rehousing progress and the latest position of their applications. At present, the Department publishes on a monthly basis the highest registration numbers currently under investigation for flat allocation in individual districts. We are now considering measures to improve communication with our housing applicants so that we can keep them informed of the position and progress of their applications.

Accountability

Madam Chairman, you mentioned in your address that the Authority should continue to improve its accountability, particularly in respect of disseminating information, explaining our policy decisions to the public and the handling of complaints. All these are very important tasks, and we will continue to strengthen our efforts in these areas. The Department is now drawing up proposals to enhance its information and community relations work which I hope will be put into effect in the next few months.

Concluding Remark

As the Authority provides homes for half of our population, public housing has inevitably remained a subject of keen public interest. There is abundant evidence of this in the activities of the concern groups on Thursdays and Saturdays when Members meet on occasions such as this. The Authority's objective is to provide greater customer satisfaction by making improvements on existing services and by introducing new initiatives.

There is always more to be done. To make Hong Kong's public housing programme a success requires full commitment and also cooperation between the residents and our staff. In conclusion, Madam Chairman, I would like to thank Members for their strong leadership and support given to the Department in meeting this challenge."
(Mr Anthony WONG Luen-kin left the meeting at this juncture.)

Action

39. Mr Leo KWAN Wing-wah then delivered his speech as follows-
in Chinese....

40. The Chairman's response was as follows -

in Chinese....

(Mr Nicholas BROOKE left the meeting at this juncture.)

(AGENDA Secretary's Report - Committee Work Item 8) (March 1994 - May 1994)
(Paper No. HA 30/94)

41. Members noted the contents of the paper.

Liaison with District Boards

42. Referring to the lateral stability improvement work in Cheung Sha Wan Estate, Mr FUNG Kin-kee enquired whether the redevelopment of this estate would be delayed and whether the improvement work was worthwhile in view of its scheduled redevelopment. Mr T C YUEN replied that the redevelopment in respect of Cheung Sha Wan Estate would not be deliberately AD/D delayed or slowed down. The detailed redevelopment programme for the coming five years would be submitted to the Development Committee for consideration shortly.

(Mr Joseph CHOW Ming-kuen left the meeting at this juncture.)

Action

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Provision of Land

43. In respect of Mr Leo KWAN Wing-wah's response at paragraph 39 above, Mr LEE Wing-tat wished to know the exact locations of the 30 hectares of land which would be allocated to the Authority as identified by the Task Force on Land Supply and Property Prices. Mr Lee pointed out that the Authority had previously requested 58 hectares of land to build 10,000 units per annum and queried about the provision of the shortfall of the 28 hectares. Mr Kwan replied that the locations of the sites were as mentioned in his speech. The details of the 30 hectares were being worked out by the Task Force and would be announced in due course. He said that the Government would soon undertake a comprehensive review of the demand for both public and private housing. The Authority's request for additional land would be examined in this context and acceded to if proved AD/D necessary to meet the public housing demand. The Chairman added that the Development Committee would follow up the recommendations of the Task Force and then report to the Authority.

Appointment of Secretary for Housing

44. Mr FUNG Kin-kee suggested that the Government should consult and discuss with the Authority the responsibilities and DDA appointment of the Secretary for Housing. The Chairman said that the Development Committee would consider this issue in detail in due course.

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45. There being no other business, the meeting closed at 12:01 p.m.

CONFIRMED on

Hon Rosanna WONG Yick-ming, CBE, IP
(Chairman)

Raymond KO
(Meeting Secretary)

[Back](#)