

LCQ5: Transitional housing projects

Following is a question by the Hon Tony Tse and a reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (November 20):

Question:

In this year's Policy Address, the Government put forward a plan to increase the number of transitional housing projects substantially to provide a total of 10 000 transitional housing units within the coming three years, and indicated that it had earmarked \$5 billion for meeting the costs. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the following details of each project (set out in a table): the location, the floor or site area, the parties owning the titles to the premises or site, the number of housing units that can be provided, the name of the operator, as well as the anticipated dates for completion and intake of residents;

(2) as some members of the construction sector have relayed that the construction standards to be met by transitional housing projects are quite high, resulting in high construction costs and long construction time, whether the Government has assessed if the earmarked provision of \$5 billion will be sufficient for meeting the expenditure, and whether it will relax the relevant construction standards; and

(3) given that community groups have been/will be responsible for all the tasks, from the construction or conversion works to the management and operation of the various transitional housing projects, how the Government ensures that all such projects will be completed on schedule, so as to achieve the target of providing 10 000 housing units within three years; of the reasons why the Government does not directly undertake such tasks?

Reply:

President,

Having consolidated the information provided by the Development Bureau and relevant departments, set out below is my consolidated reply of the question raised by the Hon Tony Tse:

The continued increase in land and housing supply remains the fundamental solution to resolve insufficient housing supply. Quality living is the cornerstone for ensuring social stability and the Government will continue to identify land for housing construction to rectify the housing problem with the greatest effort.

On transitional housing, we have earlier announced the provision of a total of over 6 000 units in three phases. The first phase, which includes the Community Housing Movement, commenced in 2017. Up to now, about 620 units

organisations can provide appropriate support for residents according to their needs. We will continue with our communication with the community and make use of the potential and resources in the community outside the Government, to offer flexible and multiple social services.

On monitoring and implementation of the funding scheme, we will vet applications and oversee the progress of projects to ensure that the projects are carried out in line with the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources thereby achieving good value for money. To ensure transparency and accountability on the use of the grants under the funding scheme, the Government will submit an annual report on the approved applications and implementation progress of projects to the Panel on Housing.

While it is a challenge to provide 10 000 transitional housing units within three years, as long as we work together with concerted efforts, we have confidence to overcome the difficulties and accomplish the mission.