

Task Force on Promoting Elderly-friendly Building Design holds first meeting (with photos)

The Chief Executive announced in the 2023 Policy Address that in order to promote elderly-friendly building design, the Deputy Financial Secretary, Mr Michael Wong, will co-ordinate with relevant bureaux to incorporate more comprehensively the concepts of universal design and accessibility into the Buildings Department (BD)'s building design manual and relevant regulations and guidelines. Mr Wong convened the first meeting as the Head of the Task Force today (February 6).

The Task Force will review existing legislation and elderly-friendly related design provisions in the BD's Design Manual: Barrier Free Access, and put forward proposals within this year. The directions of work are as follows:

- to make reference to the design requirements for elderly-friendly buildings or facilities in Hong Kong and other places, including building designs concerning common areas and private units, how to integrate technology application with user-centred designs, with a view to formulating more practicable elderly-friendly building design requirements and guidelines;
- to consider how to implement relevant design requirements, including which requirements should be mandated through legislative amendment, which can be advisory best practices, and which can be encouraged measures for the industry's adoption through provision of incentives; and
- to explore the adoption of relevant design requirements in public housing projects as pilots.

Mr Wong said that in face of an ageing population in Hong Kong, the Policy Address has proposed a series of cross-sectoral policies and measures to cater for the needs of the elderly. Of which, elderly-friendly building design is a beneficial measure complementing the Government's policy of ageing in place. The Government will put forward preliminary proposals later this year and listen to the views of stakeholders to finalise the plan.

At the meeting, Task Force members discussed the overall directions of the Task Force's work, as well as the upcoming work plan and arrangements.

Other members of the Task Force include the Secretary for Development, the Secretary for Housing, the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, the Permanent Secretary for Housing/Director of Housing, the Director of Architectural Services, the Director of Buildings, and the Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director of the Hong Kong Housing Society.

The terms of reference of the Task Force are set out in the Appendix.

