

**Summary of Discussions and Decisions
of the 16th Meeting of the
Housing and Building Management Committee held on 26 March 2015**

Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed Members and Government Representatives to the meeting.

Item 1 Confirmation of Minutes of Last Meeting

2. The minutes of the last meeting were confirmed without amendment.

Item 2 Progress Report on Handling of Signboards in Yau Tsim Mong District by Buildings Department (“BD”)
(YTMHBMC Paper No. 6/2015)

3. Several members said that there were many dangerous or abandoned signboards in the district in recent years. In response to members’ views, the BD had expedited the processing of outstanding cases since 2014 with pleasing results.
4. The BD proposed to deal with 1 400 dangerous or abandoned signboards in 2015, which was a higher target than 1 200 in 2014. The representative of the BD promised that the department would continue to deal with the problematic signboards in the district in 2015 as far as possible.

Item 3 Further Request for Government Provision of Management Expense Subsidy for Private Buildings in Light of Upward Adjustment of Statutory Minimum Wage
(YTMHBMC Paper No. 7/2015)

5. The member who submitted the paper said that in view of the increase of minimum wage, the Government should provide an one-off provision (such as rates concession for the third and the fourth quarters) to private residential buildings aged 30 years with multiple ownership to subsidise owners’ expenses on building management. However, it was disappointing that government officials merely gave written responses and did not attend the meeting to answer his enquiries. The written response from the Labour Department was also far from satisfactory. He requested the government departments and the organisations concerned to send representatives to attend the next meeting for continuous discussion of the item.
6. The Chairman said the government departments which were invited to the meeting, the Hong Kong Housing Society and the Urban Renewal Authority had clearly stated in their

written responses that the item concerned was not within their purview. These departments and organisations were unlikely to send representatives to the meeting even the discussion of the item continued. The member who submitted the paper said that he would consider initiating a discussion of the captioned paper in the District Council meeting.

Item 4 Report by Yau Tsim Police District — Police Enforcement Action Against Problematic Buildings in Yau Tsim District
(YTMHBMC Paper No. 8/2015)

7. The representative of the Yau Tsim Police District appealed to the public for information on the subdivided units suspected of engaging in prostitution activities to assist the Hong Kong Police Force (“HKPF”) in combating the prostitution problem in the district. Since these subdivided units might be related to unlicensed guesthouses, the HKPF would consult the Yau Tsim Mong District Office and explore with BD the possibility of conducting joint enforcement operations.

8. A member said that the penalty for overstaying and engaging in prostitution activities was too lenient, thus HKPF could hardly eradicate prostitution activities in the Yau Tsim Mong District (“YTM District”). The legislature should consider imposing a heavier penalty.

Item 5 Concern over Obstruction of Means of Escape and Fire Risks in Commercial Buildings
(YTMHBMC Paper No. 9/2015)

9. Several members said that there were many food premises and places of entertainment in some commercial buildings in the YTM District which aroused concern on fire safety.

10. The representative of the Fire Services Department (“FSD”) responded that the department had conducted random joint operations to inspect the licensed premises in the district with HKPF and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department every year. As licensed premises were regulated by the Fire Services (Fire Hazard Abatement) Regulation, the FSD staff would take enforcement action in accordance with the regulation against the irregularities identified during the inspections.