

**House Rules of the
Kowloon City District Urban Renewal Forum (DURF)
(Proposed Draft)**

June 2011

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1. Definitions

In these House Rules, unless the context otherwise requires,

- (1) “Forum” means the Kowloon City District Urban Renewal Forum;
- (2) “Panels” means the Panels established under the Forum; and
- (3) the expression “clear days” includes Saturdays but excludes the day of the relevant meeting and intervening public holidays.

2. Notice of Meeting

The Secretariat shall give notice of a meeting in writing to each Member in not less than 7 clear days before the date of the meeting. If the circumstances warrant, the Chairman may in his/her discretion dispense with such notice.

3. Issue of Agenda and Meeting Papers

- (1) The Secretariat will discuss the items to be included in the agenda with the Chairman before finalizing the agenda for the coming meeting. Members may also raise particular issues and bring such issues to the attention of the Chairman through the Secretariat for incorporation into the agenda of the meeting. The agenda of any meeting shall be approved by the Chairman prior to issue.
- (2) The Secretariat shall deliver the agenda and papers of a meeting to each Member, unless the Chairman instructs otherwise, in not less than 5 clear days before the date of the meeting.
- (3) Any defect in the dispatch of a notice of meeting or in the issue of papers or agenda to any Member shall not affect the validity of the meeting or render its resolutions void.

(4) Members will receive minutes of all meetings.

4. Chairmanship

(1) If the Chairman cannot attend a meeting or part of a meeting, Members present shall elect among themselves a Member to preside at the meeting. Such a Member shall not be one who has declared or has to declare conflict of interest in relation to any of the agenda items.

(2) Panels on specific subjects can be formed on a need basis. Members shall elect among themselves a Chairman for each Panel. If the Panel Chairman so elected cannot attend a meeting or part of a meeting, Members present shall elect among themselves a Member to preside at the meeting. Such a Member shall not be one who has declared or has to declare conflict of interest in relation to any of the agenda items.

5. Membership

(1) Non-official members of the Forum are appointed in their personal capacity by the Secretary for Development. There is no representation system.

(2) Expert advisors are allowed in the Panels and shall be agreed by the Forum. The number of expert advisors of each Panel shall not exceed one-third of the Panel Membership. The expert advisors shall not have voting rights.

(3) Subject to Section 9, each Member presents at the Forum/Panel meeting has one vote.

6. The Secretariat

Studies will be conducted and public engagement as well as related activities will be undertaken as part of the secretariat service and professional support to be rendered to the Forum and its Panels by the Planning Department.

7. Quorum

- (1) The quorum for a Forum meeting shall be no less than half of the number of the Members, of whom the Chairman or the Member presiding over the meeting shall be included.
- (2) For any meeting of the Panels, the quorum shall be no less than half of the number of the Members of the Panel concerned (excluding expert advisors), of whom the Chairman or the Member presiding over the meeting shall be included .
- (3) If a quorum cannot be formed within 15 minutes after the time appointed for the meeting, the meeting shall be deemed to be cancelled or shall be reconvened on another date to be decided by the Chairman or the Member presiding. The waiting time can be extended by a maximum of thirty minutes subject to the agreement of the Chairman or the Member presiding.
- (4) If a disclosure is made under Section 11(5) and the Member concerned is not required to withdraw from the relevant meeting under a non-votable condition, his/her presence will be disregarded for the purpose of forming a quorum when the matter relates to such disclosure is being discussed or considered during the meeting.

8. Conduct of Business

The Forum and its Panels may deal with matters submitted to them for decision either by circulation of papers or by discussion with the prior approval of the Chairman.

9. Voting Rights

- (1) Any matters put to the Forum/Panels for voting shall be decided by a simple majority of votes of the Members present and voting. The Chairman or the Member presiding shall, if the votes are equally divided, have a casting vote in addition to his/her original vote.
- (2) Subject to sections 9(1) and 11(6), each Member present at a meeting has one vote.

10. Suspension and Adjournment of Meetings

At a Forum/Panel meeting, the Chairman or the Member presiding may, with the consent of the simple majority of the Members present, suspend or adjourn the meeting at any time.

11. Declaration of Interests

Registration of Pecuniary Interests

- (1) The Chairman and Members shall register in writing their pecuniary interests upon commencement of the term of appointment, and update the information once every year. The registration should be made on a standard form (**Appendix I**). Members should complete and return the registration form within one month to the Secretariat. Any change of Members' interest should be registered within 14 days of any such change. A register of Members' pecuniary interest will be kept by the Secretariat and will be made available for public inspection on request by members of the public.
- (2) The registrable interests are the pecuniary interests Members hold and those of their spouses and children under the age of 18 including:
 - (i) directorships or partnerships in companies;
 - (ii) direct or indirect substantial shareholdings in companies (1% or more of the issued share capital);
 - (iii) holdings in land and properties; and
 - (iv) remunerated employment, offices, trades, professions or vocations.
- (3) Where practicable, Members should also give a brief description of the lines of business of companies in which they are involved.
- (4) Guidelines for completing the registration form on Members' pecuniary interests are at **Appendix Ia**. Members should register their interests and those of their spouses and children under the age of 18 to the best of their knowledge.

Declaration of Interest before or at Meeting

- (5) If a Member (including the Chairman or the Member presiding) has any direct or potential personal or pecuniary interest in any matter under consideration by the Forum or its Panels, he/she must, as soon as practicable after he/she has become aware of it, disclose to the meeting prior to the discussion of the item.
- (6) The Chairman (or the Member presiding) shall decide whether the Member disclosing an interest may speak or vote on the matter, may remain in the meeting as an observer, or shall withdraw from the meeting.
- (7) If the Chairman declares an interest in a matter under consideration, the Chairmanship may be temporarily taken over by the Member presiding (must not have any direct or potential personal or pecuniary interest in the matter under consideration).
- (8) Where a Member is in receipt of a paper for discussion which he/she knows presents a direct conflict of interest, he/she shall immediately inform the Secretariat and return the paper (if it involves sensitive information, confidential information or specific commercial information) to the Secretariat, as appropriate. The Secretariat shall bring this to the attention of the Chairman. Any such case of known interest should also be made known to the meeting at its beginning.
- (9) All cases of declaration of interests shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

12. Mode of Meetings

- (1) All forum meetings shall be open to the public except in situations where sensitive, confidential or specific commercial information is involved.
- (2) The agenda, papers for discussion and minutes of meetings of the Forum should be uploaded onto the Forum's website for public information, except in situations where matters of commercial sensitivity and confidentiality are sensitive, confidential and specific

commercial information is involved.

- (3) The Panels shall meet as Members consider necessary.
- (4) The Panels shall make progress reports to the Forum on its major findings and recommendations. The Forum shall have the final decision on the major recommendations made by the Panels.

13. Rules on Public Observation of Meetings

- (1) All observers:
 - (i) must dress properly and behave in an orderly manner;
 - (ii) must turn off the sounding device of radio pagers and mobile phones;
 - (iii) must be seated as directed by the Secretariat staff or venue staff;
 - (iv) must not bring large-sized objects into the venue; the venue staff may refuse the entry of an observer into the venue if there is reason to believe that his/her presence is likely to cause a nuisance;
 - (v) must not clamour or chant slogan;
 - (vi) must not display any sign, slogan or banner; and
 - (vii) must not drink, eat or smoke.
- (2) The Chairman or the Member presiding shall require an observer to leave the venue immediately if he/she fails or refuses to follow any of the above rules or causes any disturbance to the observation of the meeting.

14. Arrangements During Tropical Cyclones and Rainstorms

- (1) Meetings shall continue to be held when Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 1 or No. 3 is hoisted or Amber Rainstorm Signal is issued.

- (2) Meetings shall, unless directed otherwise by the Chairman or the Member presiding, be cancelled if, within two hours before the appointed time of the meeting, Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 8 or above is hoisted or remains in force or the Red or Black Rainstorm Signal is issued or remains in force.
- (3) If Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 8 or above is hoisted or the Red or Black Rainstorm Signal is issued while a meeting is in progress, the Chairman or the Member presiding shall decide whether to adjourn or continue with the meeting.
- (4) The Chairman or the Member presiding shall also decide whether to adjourn or continue with the meeting if other unforeseen circumstances arise.

15. Amendment to the House Rules

The Forum and its Panels may in future amend the House Rules having regard to their operational experience.

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