

29 September 2016

### **Competition Commission's response to the sentencing in the Garden Vista case**

The Competition Commission (Commission) notes that the District Court has today handed down a sentence in relation to the Garden Vista case.

Bid-rigging is a matter of grave public concern and the Garden Vista case has been closely followed. The successful prosecution of the defendant drives home the message that participants in building renovation and maintenance projects should steer clear of bid manipulation practices.

Under the Competition Ordinance, bid-rigging is considered to be a serious anti-competitive conduct and combating bid-rigging cartels is an enforcement priority for the Commission.

The Commission undertook a study into certain aspects of this market and released the findings in May 2016. The overall result of the study is consistent with the widespread concern that bid-manipulation practices were prevalent in the local residential building renovation and maintenance market in the recent past. The results enabled the Commission to better understand the market and inform the Commission's enforcement actions.

The Commission calls upon market participants to bid for projects on a competitive basis. Those contemplating rigging a bid should desist, while those already involved in rigging bids should consider approaching the Commission for leniency. Members of the public should also be alert and they are encouraged to report any potential bid-rigging to the Commission.

Bid-rigging is a complex issue and it may sometimes involve elements that contravene different areas of law. The Commission will work closely with other relevant law enforcement agencies such as ICAC and the Police to ensure a coordinated and effective approach to tackling this problem.