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# A-G heads govt panel to study one-woman flats

A TOP-LEVEL working party has been set up to study the proliferation of vice dens, particularly the one-woman apartments, an official source said yesterday.

The party, headed by the Attorney-General, will try to plug the loopholes of existing legislation which is being exploited by operators of vice establishments to steer themselves clear of the law.

The source said the party was formed at a recent meeting of the Fight Crime Committee, which discussed in detail the problems associated with vice establishments.

It was learnt that several committee members expressed grave concern over the findings of a report by the Mongkok District Board two months ago.

The members singled out one-woman apartments as the major nuisance because they are located right "in the heart of a residential building."

At the meeting chaired by the Secretary for District Administration, David Akers-Jones, some members said one-woman apartments were not confined to Mongkok alone, but also other districts.

It is estimated that about 10 per cent of flats in domestic buildings in Tsimshatsui, Yaumatei and Wanchai are being used as one-girl apartments or adult entertainment centres.

The source said members had asked the

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party to study whether there are any loopholes in existing legislation enabling the mushrooming of one-woman apartments and gauge the magnitude of the nuisance encountered by residents because of the presence of these establishments.

The vice problem has caused growing concern among law-makers since the publication of the study by the Mongkok District Board last November.

Unofficial members of Legislative and Executive councils then met representatives of residents of 15 buildings plagued by the problem of vice establishments to hear their views.

Umelco has discussed the issue with the police, the Legal Department, the City and New Territories Administration and the Urban Services Department to try to work out a solution.

They agreed that some short-term measures should be implemented to stop the growth of these establishments.

The dismantling of signboards advertising sex services at a Wanchai building late last year and another operation yesterday at a Mongkok building were the result of tedious talks over the past few months.