

Note of last Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board meeting

Title: Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board
Date: Friday 14 December 2018
Venue: Westminster Room, 8th Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A** to this note

Item	Decisions and actions
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1 Chairman's Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2 Resources and Waste Strategy

Sonika Sidhu and Hilary Tanner opened the item to the members, as a chance to discuss the current LGA Resources and Waste Strategy as we wait for the Governments' strategy to be published.

Sonika Sidhu highlighted the following points around waste and recycling

- Producers are reacting more to public demand for change in packaging and are willing to pay more for the waste they are producing from their products.
- Any additional funding from government will come at a cost for local government delivering more services and giving the public more options in waste.
- The public are ahead of recycling and waste expectation, then what their local council will offer.
- The LGA Strategy needs to look at next the 5-10 years of waste and recycling, covering three main areas: risk, transparency and consistency.

Cllr Tett commented that local government needs to be on the right side of history when it comes to waste and recycling. How the LGA reacts to the new government strategy will be important, we either can resist the strategy or work with it to make it better. While this will be a fundamental change to LGA policy, the Board will not be changing its stance of how important the reduction of waste is.

Members made the following comments

- There is a role for both local and national government on waste and recycling. But a blanket approach to waste and recycling will not work, local government can draw up its own next steps.
- Urban and rural recycling needs to have their own strategies.
- The cost implications of changing waste contracts will be huge to meet any new targets on collections.
- London authorities could do more to work together to ensure collaboration on recycling a greater amount of waste. Collaboration between authorities can close the gap in unrecyclable items due to location. This needs to be a cultural change in local government

- Greater transparency on green waste would make understanding local government's role in food waste clearer. Food waste recycling is not standardised right now. Reducing food waste is the ideal start to the waste process.
- The government needs to take a hard line with producers on what they deliver products in, there should be a corporate social responsibility.
- The waste strategy should consider waste security and waste should be a potential fuel.
- Authorities that have already invested in recycling infrastructure need funding just as much as those who have not, so further work can be done.

Cllr Tett summarised the key points:

1. The move towards producer pays is right
2. Changes in policy that impact on councils must be fully funded
3. A transition period for councils will be required with any policy change
4. Changes must reflect local factors.

Decision

Members agreed the recommendations from the report with their comments

Action

Officers to take members comments forward.

3 Homelessness Prevention

Cllr Tett welcome Kate Gregory-Smith, from the Homeless Strategy Team at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

Kate Gregory-Smith highlighted the following points about the current work of the Homeless Strategy Team

- The Rough Sleeping Strategy was recently published in August 2018 with the strategy committed to halving rough sleeping by 2022 and ending it by 2027.
- A count of rough sleepers is done every November with support from local government; this is just a snap shot.
- Wrap around support is key to supporting those who are rough sleeping.
- Tackling rough sleeping will take more than MHCLG to get this work done, this is cross government work
- The Homelessness Reduction Act has seen work done on prevention and relief of homelessness issues. There are still lots of different factors in creating homelessness, so the Act will be reviewed within 2 years.
- The Homelessness Reduction Act gave local government more powers to act when residents are referred for help, so councils should be seen to be acting quickly.

Members made the following comments

- The Ministry of Defence should be a key stakeholder in supporting homelessness reduction
- Housing Authorities should be sharing their best practice within the sector to stop homelessness before it happens
- An LGA Paper on reducing homelessness and rough sleeping would be helpful for members to work with.
- The targets to half homelessness will be hard due to many external factors,

including the private renting sector. The private renting sector needs greater scrutiny

- Residents' lack of connection to a local area makes it hard to rehouse them.
- Universal credit is having a huge effect on homelessness. Some landlords are refusing to accept tenants who are in receipt of universal credit
- Young people's homelessness needs a unique approach
- Lots of multidisciplinary work is being done by local authorities on reducing homelessness and it needs to be funded better by government

Kate Gregory-Smith responded

- A support team will work hard to ensure local differences are captured for the national picture for better understanding.
- Work will be done to ensure learning is shared across departments.
- Work is done on the ground to ensure that best practice is shared and not just held nationally

Cllr Tett summarised the key points from the discussion:

1. Rough sleepers and homelessness issues need to be separate areas in policy work
2. A roundtable event of relevant government departments and LGA would be helpful
3. Prevention strategy is important in dealing with homelessness
4. Greater funding for local government and stakeholders that is sustainable and accessible
5. Greater scrutiny of private sector tenancies

Cllr Tett thanked Kate Gregory-Smith for attending the meeting.

Decision

Members noted the presentation and asked for their comments to be taken forward by officers to work on.

Action

Homeless Strategy Team to provide a summary of the key points of their work.

4 Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board Update Paper

Eamon Lally introduced the update of the policy work that has been carried out for the Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board and asked for members comments.

Members made the following points

- Grenfell has provided many challenges for local authorities on building safety. Fire doors that are any safer than those which have been criticised are increasingly hard to find
- The LGA should develop a policy position on future transport policy including air quality.
- Planning policy which enable commercial buildings to be redeveloped into residential property via permitted development needs reform.
- Fly tipping needs to be put on the agenda for a future meeting,
- Housing development extensions being allowed in the flood plane is an issue for local government.

Officers responded

- Fire doors is a current area of national government interest. The LGA is waiting for the results of the last phase of fire door testing.
- Work is currently being done on future transport issues. This may come back as a paper to a future meeting

Decision

Members noted the contents of the report.

Action

Officers to bring a fly tipping paper to a future board meeting

5 Any other Business

Cllr Tett highlighted the recent developments around the Independent review to tackle barriers to building, lead by Sir Oliver Letwin. Cllr Tett reported that Sir Oliver Letwin will be returning to May 2019 Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board for member questions.

6 Minutes of the previous meeting

The Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board agreed the minutes of the last meeting.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Martin Tett	Buckinghamshire County Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Judith Blake CBE	Leeds City Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Adele Morris	Southwark Council
Members	Cllr Patrick Nicholson	Plymouth City Council
	Cllr David Renard	Swindon Borough Council
	Cllr Barry Wood	Cherwell District Council
	Cllr Tony Newman	Croydon Council
	Cllr Ed Turner	Oxford City Council
	Cllr Rachel Blake	Tower Hamlets Council
	Cllr Michael Mordey	Sunderland City Council
	Mayor Philip Glanville	Hackney London Borough Council
	Cllr Linda Gillham	Runnymede Borough Council
Apologies	Cllr Ainsley Arnold	Cheshire East Council
	Cllr Simon Dudley	Windsor & Maidenhead Royal Borough
	Cllr Louise Goldsmith	West Sussex County Council
	Cllr Catherine Rankin	Kent County Council
	Cllr Gillian Campbell	Blackpool Council
	Cllr Peter Thornton	Cumbria County Council
	Cllr Rachel Eburne	Mid Suffolk District Council
In Attendance		
LGA Officers		