

# People & Places Board

## Agenda

Tuesday, 11 January 2022  
1.00 pm

Online via Microsoft Teams

## **Guidance notes for members and visitors** **18 Smith Square, London SW1P 3HZ**

Please read these notes for your own safety and that of all visitors, staff and tenants.

### **Welcome!**

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### **Security**

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The LGA also offers the Govroam network, a Wi-Fi network which gives Members seamless roaming internet access across multiple public-sector locations if you have also signed up for this service. This network is enabled throughout our Westminster building and allows Members and staff from other authorities who are part of the Govroam network to seamlessly connect to our Wi-Fi.

### **Further help**

Please speak either to staff at the main reception on the ground floor, if you require any further help or information. You can find the LGA website at [www.local.gov.uk](http://www.local.gov.uk)

People & Places Board  
11 January 2022

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There will be a meeting of the People & Places Board at **1.00 pm on Tuesday, 11 January 2022**  
Online via Microsoft Teams.

A sandwich lunch will be available at 1.00pm

**Attendance Sheet:**

Please ensure that you sign the attendance register, which will be available in the meeting room. It is the only record of your presence at the meeting.

**Pre-meeting for Board Lead members:**

This will take place from **Time Not Specified** in Smith Square Rooms 3&4 (Ground Floor).

**Political Group meetings:**

The group meetings will take place from 10.00 -11.00am. Please contact your political group as outlined below for further details.

**Apologies:**

Please notify your political group office (see contact telephone numbers below) if you are unable to attend this meeting.

<b>Conservative:</b>	Group Office: 020 7664 3223	email: <a href="mailto:lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk">lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk</a>
<b>Labour:</b>	Group Office: 020 7664 3263	email: <a href="mailto:labgp@lga.gov.uk">labgp@lga.gov.uk</a>
<b>Independent:</b>	Group Office: 020 7664 3224	email: <a href="mailto:independent.grouplga@local.gov.uk">independent.grouplga@local.gov.uk</a>
<b>Liberal Democrat:</b>	Group Office: 020 7664 3235	email: <a href="mailto:libdem@local.gov.uk">libdem@local.gov.uk</a>

**Location:**

A map showing the location of 18 Smith Square is printed on the back cover.

**LGA Contact:**

Emma West – [emma.west@local.gov.uk](mailto:emma.west@local.gov.uk)

**Carers' Allowance**

As part of the LGA Members' Allowances Scheme a Carer's Allowance of £9.00 per hour or £10.55 if receiving London living wage is available to cover the cost of dependants (i.e. children, elderly people or people with disabilities) incurred as a result of attending this meeting.

**Social Media**

The LGA is committed to using social media in a co-ordinated and sensible way, as part of a strategic approach to communications, to help enhance the reputation of local government, improvement engagement with different elements of the community and drive efficiency. Please feel free to use social media during this meeting. **However, you are requested not to use social media during any confidential items.**

The twitter hashtag for this meeting is #lgapp

## People & Places Board – Membership 2021/2022

Councillor	Authority
<b>Conservative ( 12)</b>	
Cllr Kevin Bentley (Chairman)	Essex County Council
Cllr Morris Bright MBE (Vice Chairman)	Hertsmere Borough Council
Cllr Rachel Bailey	Cheshire East Council
Cllr Marc Bayliss	Worcester City Council
Cllr Peter Butlin	Warwickshire County Council
Cllr Hilary Carrick	Cumbria County Council
Cllr Sam Chapman-Allen	Breckland Council
Cllr Jordan Meade	Gravesham Borough Council
Cllr Eddie Reeves	Oxfordshire County Council
Cllr Martin Tett	Buckinghamshire Council
Cllr Philippa Williamson	Lancashire County Council
Cllr Barry Wood	Cherwell District Council
<b>Substitutes</b>	
Cllr Colin Davie	Lincolnshire County Council
Cllr Peter Heydon	Bracknell Forest Borough Council
Cllr Colin Kemp	Woking Borough Council
<b>Labour ( 4)</b>	
Cllr Simon Henig CBE (Deputy Chair)	Durham County Council
Cllr Kyle Robinson	Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council
Cllr Doina Cornell	Stroud District Council
Cllr Damien Greenhalgh	High Peak Borough Council and Derbyshire County Council
<b>Substitutes</b>	
Cllr Alan Waters	Norwich City Council
Cllr Rosanne Kirk	Lincoln City Council
Cllr Erica Lewis	Lancaster City Council
<b>Liberal Democrat ( 3)</b>	
Cllr Emily Smith (Vice-Chair)	Vale of White Horse District Council
Cllr Caroline Leaver	Devon County Council
Cllr Stan Collins	Cumbria County Council
<b>Substitutes</b>	
Cllr Michael Mullaney	Leicestershire County Council
<b>Independent ( 3)</b>	
Cllr Emily O'Brien (Deputy Chair)	Lewes District Council
Cllr Kevin Etheridge	Caerphilly County Borough Council
Cllr Sue Roberts	South Oxfordshire District Council
<b>Substitutes</b>	

Cllr Georgina Hill	Northumberland County Council
Cllr Nicola Dillon Jones	North Kesteven District Council
Cllr Rosemarie Harris	Powys County Council

## Agenda

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### People & Places Board

Tuesday 11 January 2022

1.00 pm

Online via Microsoft Teams

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**Date of Next Meeting:** Tuesday, 15 March 2022, 1.00 pm, Hybrid meeting (via Microsoft Teams OR Beecham Room, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ)





## **Business in the Community update**

### **Purpose of report**

For information.

### **Summary**

This paper provides members with a brief overview of Business in the Community's Place Taskforce and the Board's involvement to date to support a discussion with Chair of the Business in the Community Place Taskforce, Lord Steve Bassam (Appendix A).

Is this report confidential? Yes  No

### **Recommendation/s**

Board members are asked to consider as background reading the LGA's response to Business in the Community's Place Taskforce call for evidence (Appendix B) ahead of the meeting.

### **Action/s**

Officers will use the meeting to shape our future work with the Business in the Community Place Taskforce within the context of the Levelling up White Paper.

**Contact officer:** Esther Barrott  
**Position:** Adviser  
**Phone no:** 07464652906  
**Email:** esther.barrott@local.gov.uk

## **Business in the Community Place Taskforce**

### **Background**

1. Business in the Community's (BITC) Place Taskforce sets out to capture and showcase 'what works' in transforming the prospects of a place, creating a blueprint for business engagement in place-based transformation. The findings will be shared through a report in April 2022 to coincide with the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of BITC. The ambition is for the blueprint to be utilised – from business leaders to local policy makers – to increase business engagement in regeneration and inform policy at a critical moment as the levelling up agenda takes shape.
2. The Place Taskforce ran a call for evidence which closed in December 2021 and received 34 written submissions. The taskforce ran an additional eight verbal evidence sessions with 17 speakers, conducted three formal interviews, visited Wisbech and Grimsby where there were discussion sessions with local stakeholders and visits to local regeneration initiatives and the LGA hosted a roundtable with members (see paragraphs 3-5).

### **LGA's involvement to date**

3. On 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021, the LGA hosted a roundtable providing an opportunity to bring the voices of local government leaders from across the country together on this agenda. The roundtable was co-chaired by Cllr Abi Brown and Cllr Simon Henig who are members of the taskforce representing the LGA's People and Places Board and City Regions Board.
4. The roundtable focused on three themes: collaborative and partnership working, levers and measuring impact and developing a strategy and vision. Donna Nolan, managing director of Watford Borough Council presented their collaborative working through the Growth Board, and local projects; Lisa Dale-Clough, head of industrial strategy at Greater Manchester Combined Authority discussed the work of the LEP and partnership working with business organisations to develop the Local Industrial Strategy; and Andrea Dell, head of Bristol City Office talked about the experience of creating the Bristol One City Plan and work to enable citywide collaboration.
5. Twenty-five people attended the roundtable including members of the LGA People and Places Board, City Regions Board and members of Business in the Community's Place Taskforce.
6. The LGA used the evidence gathered from the roundtable to inform their submission to the Place Taskforce's Call for Evidence (see Appendix B).

### **Next steps**

7. The Board meeting is an opportunity for members to hear about the Place Taskforce in greater detail from its chair, Lord Steve Bassam (Appendix A). Lord Bassam will discuss the taskforce's work to date, share emerging findings, and comment on next steps of the process.
8. Members are invited to comment on the emerging recommendations, noting the LGA's response (see Appendix B), and have a further discussion with Lord Bassam around next steps and publication of the report.

### **Implications for Wales**

9. While the UK Government has committed to level up the UK, economic development is a matter devolved to the Welsh Assembly.

### **Financial Implications**

10. The Board's activities are supported by budgets for policy development and improvement. The LGA's financial contribution to the Taskforce is funded through the budget for policy development.

### **Equalities Implications**

11. Ways in which place-based regeneration can reduce racial or ethnic inequalities were considered as part of the LGA's response to the call for evidence and equalities considerations are taken when selecting panels for events.

## **Appendix A**

### **Lord Steve Bassam, Place Director, Business in the Community**

Lord Bassam began his career working as a legal adviser in Deptford's Law Centre, moving on to several senior research roles in London local government. He served as an assistant secretary at the Association of Metropolitan Authorities, before consulting in the private sector for KPMG and Capita.



Lord Bassam became involved in local politics in the early 1980s and quickly rose to become Leader of Brighton, and then Brighton and Hove City Council. In November 1997, he was created a life peer and introduced into the House of Lords. Bassam was promoted to the frontbenches as Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Office in 1999. In 2001, he was appointed a Lord-in-waiting where he served until 2009. During the same period, he served at various times as Government spokesman for several other departments, including Communities and Local Government, Culture Media and Sport, and Transport. He was Chief Whip for 10 years.

In 2018/19 he chaired and authored a report as Chair of the Lords Select Committee on The Future of Seaside Towns, which recommended the expansion of town deals and argued for improved connectivity and levelling up. In 2020, Lord Bassam was appointed as Co-Director of Business in the Community's Place Programme.

## **Appendix B**

### **LGA Response to Business in the Community Call for Evidence**

Please refer to examples from yours / your organisations experience in your answers as much as possible. Please answer any questions that you have relevant experience in. You do not need to answer all of the questions. We welcome responses based on experiences at any point in the last 50 years.

#### 1. What is your current understanding or definition of place-based regeneration?

Place-based regeneration is rooted in the understanding that local economies are different and will need different things to stimulate them. Some require greater connectivity; some need to transition to new industries; and others are short of affordable housing.

Understanding the exact nature of an effective and sustainable stimulus can only be carried out locally in partnership between sectors. Local government is uniquely placed to convene stakeholders in an area and develop an overall vision for a place. Ideally, this vision should be backed by a commitment to long term sustainable finance and a place-led approach by Government to ensure that key ingredients of a successful community aren't held back by departmental silos and top-down priorities.

#### 2. Has your organisation been involved in any place-based regeneration efforts? If yes, please outline what was done, how successful the initiatives was gauged to be and what made it a success, any challenges or failures that you faced, if or how your organisation exited the initiative, and anything you would do differently now to improve the outcome.

Councils have always played an important role in helping local people and shaping local economies through place-based regeneration. Across the country, councils have been quick to mobilise to address the specific economic issues that they face in their areas be this related to major industries such as airport focussed economies, high street challenges or the visitor and culture economy.

More generally, councils help businesses to help themselves by surveying their needs, supporting local networks, working with local chambers of commerce and helping to establish new business improvement districts (BIDs). Such a coming together can enable mentoring in skills such as visual merchandising, achieve savings through group purchasing, enable joint marketing and stimulate collaborative regeneration projects.

Promoting, supporting and enhancing the role of local authorities in delivering economic growth in the form of regeneration is a key LGA priority. The LGA provides support to councils on all aspects of their place-based regeneration plans, including

employment, re-skilling, high streets, SME support and procurement in an [economic growth support hub](#). In addition to this, the LGA's economic growth advisers programme offers bespoke advice and support to local authorities to help them deliver economic growth in their area. A series of [case studies](#) can be found on the LGA website highlighting successful place-based regeneration initiatives and sharing lessons learned from local authorities to inform other areas looking to undertake similar projects.

We have also undertaken work to look specifically at the benefits of a [culture-led approach to regeneration](#), developing local skills, improving the public realm, and boosting the visitor economy at the same time as supporting economic growth. Alongside this, we have produced guides on [developing a cultural strategy](#), and [supporting local creative industries to grow](#).

### 3. What can national and local businesses, SMEs and social enterprises do to effectively contribute to place-based regeneration?

National and local businesses, SMEs and social enterprises play a key role in contributing to place-based regeneration given their expertise and the resources available.

Business improvement districts (BIDs) are a model for the local delivery of town centre regeneration that has grown rapidly over recent years and highlight the way in which businesses, SMEs and social enterprises effectively contribute to place-based regeneration. A BID is a business-led organisation set up to improve an area with funding from a levy on local businesses. While BIDs bring extra resources, they are considered as important allies to local authority-led regeneration alongside councils' statutory roles such as planning and their wider community remits.

Canterbury Council and the city's [BIDs](#) have worked together in supporting Canterbury in becoming one of 70 towns and cities who have been awarded the Association of Town and City Management's Purple Flag accreditation in recognition of work to support a high-quality evening and night time economy.

As we rethink high streets in light of the reducing prevalence of retail, there is increasing demand and scope for creative and experiential businesses to form clusters on a high street, offering new attractions to draw people into the communal streets and generating footfall for the remaining retail offer. They can also attract visitors from outside the area, boosting and improving public perceptions of the place – the impact of Hull's success as City of Culture is a good example of this. Other attraction-based forms of regeneration include the Turner Contemporary in Margate, which has led to clusters of small independent art galleries and studios developing around it, leading to Margate having the fastest growth in visitor numbers in the UK.

Councils and businesses can also work collaboratively to address skills shortages that may be inhibiting growth and limiting regeneration efforts. Councils can undertake coordination and match funding, while businesses share the insights into the skills needed and provide practical on the job work experiences to supplement the formal training experience. One strong example of this is the [Blackpool Tourism Academy](#), where council, local college and businesses have come together to tackle local skills issues.

4. Do you feel the best way for a business to contribute to place-based regeneration is through a collaborative partnership or through independent action?

Businesses, local government, voluntary organisations and wider communities should work across sectors to improve quality of place and shape economic development and regeneration. By working together they can deliver value and outcomes that would be difficult or impossible to deliver working individually.

Formal structures with cross-sector representation, shared civic goals and good personal relationships, can strengthen collaborative partnership working. Growth boards are one such example. [Hertfordshire Growth Board](#) was formed in late 2018 and brings together Hertfordshire's county council, the ten district and borough councils, the integrated care system, Homes England and the LEP. The co-created vision for place beyond democratic boundaries means issues are debated and decisions are made and respected. Covid-19 has only exacerbated the need for cross-sector collaborative working and has underlined the Growth Board's maturity and resilience to withstand political and economic shocks and highlighted the need for a robust governance model which the Growth Board brings.

5. In a partnership between local government, business and civil society, which actor is best suited to lead in relation to each of the following:

- Setting strategy

a) Local government

b) Business

c) Civil Society

- Making sense of and responding to changes amongst internal partners and the external operating environment

a) Local government

b) Business

c) Civil Society

- Providing funds

a) **Local government**

b) Business

c) Civil Society

- Accessing and managing resources (applying for project funding and administering project delivery)

a) Local government

b) Business

c) Civil Society

- **Other (Open text box)**

The LGA-commissioned '[Fragmented funding](#)' report found nearly 250 different grants were provided to local government in 2017/18: half were worth £10 million or less nationally and 82 per cent are intended for a specific service area. Around a third of the grants are awarded on a competitive basis. We could maximise the effectiveness of place-based public spend and regeneration and help deliver levelling up if we were able to coordinate and bring national programmes together, with local government playing a leading role.

- Providing knowledge, experience and assets

a) **Local government**

b) Business

c) Civil Society

- Advocating for the place (both internally and externally).

a) **Local government**

b) Business

c) Civil Society

- Problem solving, and the ability to “cut through” complex problems

a) **Local government**

b) Business



c) Civil Society

- Evaluating impact

a) **Local government**

b) Business

c) Civil Society

6. Is any action needed to improve collaborative working between businesses, public sector bodies, community organisations, and others? Do any frameworks for this currently exist and has your organisation used any?

Collaborative working can be hard, and needs to be driven by a passion, creative thinking, and a willingness to seize opportunities and take well-managed risks. The following list outlines the challenges and opportunities of collaborative working:

- Having the courage to pursue goals and the resilience to keep going in the face of inevitable difficulties.
- Aligning partners' interests and philosophy with your own to create a genuine partnership based on a culture of openness, trust and transparency across all work streams.
- Securing strong political support and engagement (regardless of political allegiance).
- Nurturing stakeholders through regularly reviewing your stakeholder plan which may be time intensive but less so than getting it wrong.

Greater Manchester has a long history of collaborative working between the public and private sectors. Recently, activity has been concentrated around the framework provided by the Local Industrial Strategy, which is based on the [Independent Prosperity Review](#), a detailed and rigorous assessment of the current state, and future potential, of Greater Manchester's economy to understand what needs to be done to improve productivity and drive prosperity across the city-region. A panel of economists with varying backgrounds led on the work and this encouraged collaborative working with businesses and social enterprises (for example).

The Prosperity Review's findings and recommendations underpin the Greater Manchester [Local Industrial Strategy](#) which was jointly developed with national government. The review encourages collaborative working by informing actions of local and national decision makers from across the public, private and voluntary, community and social enterprise sectors in driving forward the area's productivity and prosperity. A clear set of priorities around how to drive inward investment, what business support is commissioned and how to embed economic priorities in the planning framework have all helped encourage cross-sector collaboration. The

collaborative approach has also led to the creation of new partnerships such as the Greater Manchester Advanced Materials and Manufacturing Alliance.

It can sometimes be challenging to give a voice to all the relevant stakeholders, organisations and individuals. One way Greater Manchester try to manage this is through constant engagement between GMCA and other public bodies and representative organisations. For example regarding businesses they engage with the GM Chamber of Commerce, FSB, CBI, IOD, Pro Manchester, ICAEW, and North West Business Leadership Team every few weeks, through which new engagement exercises emerge and can be coordinated. The LGA run [modules supporting local authorities with business and stakeholder engagement](#).

7. Are existing policies and funds, such as the Towns Fund, Levelling-Up Fund and Community Renewal Fund, effective at encouraging businesses engagement in place-based working?

Councils can work with Government to deliver an ambitious programme of financial stimulus, and have the knowledge and expertise to direct funds where they will have the most immediate impact to protect jobs and livelihoods and support long-term transformation of the economy, infrastructure and services.

Local decision makers are best placed to know what resources they can expect for the long term, including from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, and the flexibility to use them in a way that makes sense locally. The scale of the challenge ahead means that a new approach to growth and policy responsibility is now required, one that matches the place leadership of councils and their crucial role in convening wider investment in public service with the need for locally tailored reconstruction and renewal.

It is welcome that councils have been given a leading role in the delivery of the Levelling Up Fund, but for existing policies and funds to be more effective at encouraging businesses engagement in place-based working there must be greater devolution to councils. Local leaders need the powers and resources to bring government departments, agencies and local stakeholders together to deliver locally determined and democratically accountable outcomes. Devolving economic powers means that local and regional leaders can use their local knowledge and their integration into the local community to utilise resources more efficiently and develop partnerships with businesses to grow their economies. Local leaders are better able to innovate to make the places they represent more inclusive through progressive procurement, living wage areas or anchor institutions.

In the longer term, we should test place-based budgets, bringing together the many funding streams into a single pot which is managed by the local council, but with the

widest ownership of strategy and delivery through a partnership with government, communities and business. The LGA's [Work Local model](#) shows the benefits and next steps to make this a reality.

8. To what extent is it currently possible to gain consensus across sectors and within the community to develop a 'vision' for individual places? What role should business play in this?

It is possible to gain consensus across sectors to develop a joint 'vision' for a place and there are many examples highlighting this. However, this is only possible when the following factors are observed:

- Thinking beyond political cycles to develop a longer-term vision

Bristol City Council brought together a huge range of public, private, voluntary and third sector partners within the city to share the aim to make Bristol a fair, healthy and sustainable city – the [One City Plan](#). The city's first plan was published in January 2019 with the goal of setting out the challenges facing the city and bringing together leading voices across sectors to tackle the common causes. The One City office believed that to create meaningful change, for example on issues such as the climate emergency, and to bring on board a range of sectors, they needed to think beyond the traditional five-year structure and have a whole city approach with realistic and long-term objectives. Sequencing the activity until 2050, and refreshing the plan every year, has brought on board a more diverse range of sectors including businesses as it shows the council, and wider community, is committed to the longevity of the project rather than it being the vision of one administration. Business leaders have since led workshops with the business community to develop the vision and the creation of the vision is a flexible process to respond to changing circumstances.

- Drawing upon areas of expertise and having a clear sense of how assets can help deliver economic vision

Watford Borough Council undertook a joint venture with Kier Group for a major residential and commercial development, [Watford Riverwell](#). The project will deliver over 1,000 homes (including affordable housing), a hotel, school and other commercial facilities creating a new sustainable neighbourhood community for Watford. The collaborative partnership brought together land, finance and expertise which unlocked significant investment and transformed difficult, under-developed urban land into a varied residential area. The project also maximised working relationships between partners and secured the council a regular profit and return on capital, with a regeneration uplift adding to sales values. The success of the project

demonstrates the need for collaboration between sectors in drawing on different pockets of expertise to achieve a common goal.

9. To what extent should place-based regeneration involve the local community? What benefits does community engagement bring? What are the challenges?

It is essential that place-based regeneration gives residents within local communities the opportunity to have their say on issues that affect or interest them to improve transparency and shape decision making and local democracy is strongest when there are high levels of civic representation. Community engagement holds the council and partners to account, while allowing for the voices of diverse communities to be heard. Good practice often takes the form of a comprehensive consultation process undertaken at the beginning of the project to inform the vision and approach. Following this, a community steering group is advisable in bringing together representatives from across the local area to feed into an iterative process.

In addition, local councillors are well positioned in their front-line role to engage with neighbourhoods and communities. The LGA's [workbook for councillors on community engagement](#) states how few other community leaders have the mandate to coordinate different interests, reconcile diverse views and encourage open debate and dialogue in the way councillors can. This is especially so for town and city centres where a range of commercial, community and cultural issues combine and provide a hub for a much wider geographical area.

It can often be a challenge for councils to reach diverse communities and ensure the views expressed are representative of a whole community rather than just groups and individuals who are easiest to reach. For example, if consultation processes are only shared online, residents who are digitally excluded are unable to engage. Councils can overcome this challenge through conducting outdoor engagement events, using empty shop windows for exhibitions, delivering print products and surveys in different languages to households, and working with community groups as well as parish and town councils to reach communities. The LGA has recently [published research](#) focusing on how councils can work with their local voluntary and community sector to improve civic participation of underrepresented groups. An engagement framework is an effective way of reaching communities and capturing views. Equality impact assessments can be conducted on an engagement framework to ensure all communities are reached.

10. What can be done to ensure that place-based regeneration reduces racial or ethnic inequalities? What role should business play in this?

There is a real opportunity for councils to address broader issues around inequality through place-based regeneration and as they recover from the impacts of the

Covid-19 pandemic. One such way is through the roles of microbusinesses. Microbusinesses are extremely diverse across age, gender, ethnicity, sector and industry. The understanding that councils have of their microbusiness community enables them to provide direct support to disadvantaged groups, which in turn can help shape regeneration programmes. For example the [Marches Growth Hub](#) (covering Herefordshire, Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin) highlighted that during the pandemic they received an increase in queries from taxi-drivers of Asian ethnicity asking for assistance with grants due to English not being their first language. Salford City Council has launched '[The Salford Way](#)' project which is focussed on tackling inequality and driving social change through economic development. This illustrates the targeted benefit councils can deliver around inequality when working closely with businesses. The LGA has produced [guidance on engaging microbusinesses](#) it has recently published an [export toolkit for councils](#) which highlights the role of trade in driving growth and the opportunities for councils in working closely with local diaspora communities.

11. Are there any lessons that were learnt during the Covid-19 pandemic, where we saw an increase in community self-organisation and cross-sector collaboration, that we should carry forwards? Do you think the increased use of digital technology since the start of the pandemic has changed the ability of businesses to contribute to a place?

Increased community self-organisation and cross-sector collaboration leads to new and innovative ways of designing projects. For example, during the Covid-19 pandemic Watford Borough Council saw a large increase in cross-sector collaboration. This gave the council an opportunity to reshape their [Town Hall Quarter regeneration programme](#), which previously comprised of a number of individual regeneration projects operating in isolation of each other. The council undertook a comprehensive market engagement exercise bringing together the views of stakeholders including businesses, start-ups and community representatives. Early engagement with the private sector played a critical role in shaping the ambition of the project and ensuring that it was firmly grounded in commercial reality. Although this project is still in its early stages, building on the cross-sector relationships established during the pandemic has allowed for a joined-up vision of place owned by all the actors involved.

Other councils took direct steps to support local businesses who may not have had an online presence prior to the pandemic. [Derbyshire County Council](#) funded an online retail platform for businesses, alongside employing specialist business advisers to support their badly affected tourism sector. They delivered over 60 webinars to support businesses and developed a wifi town centres initiative to support business resilience. In turn, businesses are coalescing around a shared

vision for the area, developing a distinctive town centre offer to build vibrancy and increase footfall. Many are also enthusiastically supporting a new programme of festivals and large events to rebuild community confidence, increase local pride in place, and attract more visitors to the region.

More broadly, during the pandemic, councils also demonstrated their place-leadership role by working with national government to support local communities and ensure future growth. When the pandemic hit, the sector was at the forefront of supporting the Government's national package of measures for businesses. Councils paid out over £19 billion in business grants. They were quick to work with their local businesses to ensure that places could reopen in a safe and manageable manner. Throughout the various lockdowns councils provided support and advice to local businesses via a range of phone and online options.

Covid-19 has shown us the interdependence between successful economies and the infrastructure needed to support them. During the pandemic access to effective broadband services has become essential to support businesses and enable people to fully participate in society. However, [17 per cent of rural residential premises and 30 per cent of rural commercial premises still do not have access to superfast broadband](#) (30 Mbit/s or higher). Businesses that have been unable to pivot their working models due to poor connectivity may be at risk. To truly level up communities across the country, Government must commit to continued transparency on contingency measures for residents and businesses in deeply rural and hard-to-reach areas in order for all businesses to fully contribute to a place.

The impacts of digital exclusion became significantly more pronounced during Covid. Councils used their cultural and sporting services, and worked with local cultural and sporting institutions to reach out to those in the community who lacked digital access or were particularly vulnerable. Our research on this, highlighting best practice examples, was published in '[Leisure under lockdown](#)'. Examples include distribution of food parcels in Holbeck and Beeston, provision of family creative activities in Norfolk and Cornwall, and tackling social isolation in East Lindsey.

12. What are the most effective ways of evaluating the impact of place-based regenerative working? What existing measurement frameworks exist?

There is no standard model used to evaluate the impact of place-based regenerative working and approaches will vary depending on the type of regenerative scheme taking place and organisation/s leading on the project. For effective evaluation, an outcome-focussed approach should be taken. Outcomes can either be selected generally giving a broad overview of how the place-based regenerative working contributes to local priorities and covers several policy themes, or they can be chosen thematically demonstrating in detail the contribution place-based

regeneration makes to the outcomes of one or more specific policy themes. The following steps can then be carried out to evaluate the impact of the project and determine whether the desired outcomes have been met:

1. Select a basket of performance indicators – Identify a small number of performance indicators that will help measure the outcome. These should be overarching strategic outcomes that set the overall responsibilities of councils and partners. The indicators can be both long and short-term and should be measured by both quantitative and qualitative data, alongside existing management information. As the debate around ‘levelling up’ has unfolded it has become increasingly clear that pockets of deprivation and other challenges on the microscale can be hard to detect without granular data – this is something we think the ONS should look at in more detail.
2. Challenge the effectiveness of each performance indicator – Understand whether the performance indicators selected will help deliver the desired outcomes. Remove any that aren’t effective.
3. Consider the data source – The performance indicators need to be populated with data so they can be measured. Consider whether there is an existing local or national data source that can be used, or whether a new data collection approach is necessary. Remove any performance indicators that are too expensive or difficult to collect and ensure the data is collected and can be measured on a regular basis.
4. Finalise the performance indicators so they reflect local priorities.

The LGA’s Local Government Inform (LG Inform) and Local Government Inform Plus (LG Inform Plus) are useful benchmarking tools to evaluate the impact of place-based regeneration and identify outcomes. [LG Inform](#) brings together a range of key performance, contextual and financial data for authorities in an online tool. [LG Inform Plus](#) provides ward-level access to more detailed information of an authority’s business challenges and performance. This information can be used to identify challenges and subsequently shape the outcomes the regenerative project is looking to achieve.





## **Green Skills and Employment**

### **Purpose of report**

For direction.

### **Summary**

Following discussions on the need to link together LGA activity on climate change and consider the employment and skills elements, the EEHT, City Regions and People and Places Boards were presented with a Green Skills and Employment report in November 2021 and agreed the next steps within it. This paper builds upon that work, focussing on next steps and seeks the boards views and agreement on direction outlined in this paper.

Is this report confidential? Yes  No

### **Recommendation/s**

For Members to provide a steer on paragraphs 4-17.

### **Action/s**

As directed by Members.

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## Green Skills and Employment

### Background

1. This paper build upon initial cross board discussions and feedback from the EEHT, CR and P&P Boards on net zero and green skills jobs and employment, which focused on the role that local government could play and suggested next steps for the LGA. The paper looks in more detail on the agreed next steps and seeks the Boards' views and agreement on the direction the LGA should take.

### Summary of Board discussions

2. The Boards had wide-ranging discussions, including the following main points:
  - 2.1 Local government has a key and expansive role as place shapers, employers, landlords, through statutory duties and through economic development.
  - 2.2 There is significant work being done across the LGA to support the sector including through the LGA productivity team Net Zero Innovation Programme, and it would be helpful to focus on the skills and employment aspects-.
  - 2.3 The definition of "green skills and jobs" could be quite broad, and future work should, where possible, include greater clarity of what sectors and skills were included in the analysis.
  - 2.4 The LGA should pursue strategic discussions with local government partners and engage relevant government departments, industry, and stakeholders to understand their planning and where appropriate lobby for a local approach on:
    - 2.4.1 **current and future green skills planning:** there is the potential to create large numbers of jobs across England (as highlighted in LGA analysis *Local green jobs*) but there is more to do to understand how to ensure that these jobs come to fruition in a timely manner, and that we have the skills in place locally
    - 2.4.2 **equality, diversity and inclusion** in the green workforce and how this can be delivered on the ground with support from local authorities, including any existing good practice.
    - 2.4.3 **managing transitions:** employment opportunities will be unevenly distributed across the country with some sectors having longer and more complex transitions. This creates the need for localised and targeted support to ensure no person or business misses out on opportunities created by the transition and that regions' socioeconomic challenges can also be met. To ensure this is reflected in the monitoring and delivery of the skills and employment needed to meet the England's net zero transition, we will continue to advocate for the LGA and relevant councils and combined authorities to be involved.
    - 2.4.4 **Work Local** - the LGA's positive vision for an integrated and devolved employment and skills service – bringing together information, advice and guidance alongside the delivery of employment, skills, apprenticeships and wider support for individuals and employers. This will be woven into all meetings and future green skills work.

### **Proposed next steps**

*Landing local government's added value with stakeholders, government and the private sector*

3. Since the last report the LGA has secured a place on the Net Zero Building Council, which provides expert advice, real-world insight, constructive challenge, and outward leadership to the Government, with the aim of supporting the planning and delivery of decarbonising almost all buildings by 2050. At the initial NZBC meeting, skills was a key topic and the LGA will be looking to understand if this is a challenge that requires DWP and DfE (who are not yet included), while also championing the support local government can offer.

*New policy piece on local retrofit employment and skills offer*

4. Following the conversations with the Boards, it was clear that there is an appetite for the LGA to lead more policy development in this area. Building on interest expressed across all three Boards, and taking likely Government activity into account, this paper sets out a proposal for work to develop an LGA policy position and recommendations on retrofitting.
5. There will be many carbon negative and net zero sectors which have skills and employment implications for local government between now and 2030. Net zero sectors will create new roles to undertake activities that will enable businesses to offset their emissions so the "net total" of their emissions is zero, while carbon negative sectors will see roles created that remove more CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the atmosphere than they put in. Examples of such sectors will include nature and restoration, energy efficiency of buildings, sustainable construction finance, energy generation, supply and storage and heat pump installation.
6. Energy efficiency of buildings / retrofit is a sub sector with clear roles for local government and should be a high priority. This is due to local government having their own housing and office stock which requires retrofitting as well as their role as place leaders, employers, through their statutory duties and in delivery of provision such as the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.
7. Government previously attempted to develop a retrofit system through the Green Homes Grant. It was a large scheme, aimed to upgrade 600,000 homes with a budget of £1.5 billion. When the scheme closed in March 2021, it had reached less than seven percent of intended households, which was around 47,500 homes costing £314 million.
8. Currently there are many projects, schemes, and provision available aimed at supporting the retrofit sector. This has created a complex range of provision that will need support to ensure they are able to reach their targets. The current and most recent provision includes:

8.1. £1.5 billion for the Green Homes Grant Voucher Scheme aimed to upgrade 600,000 homes.

- 8.2. £800 million for the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, as part of the £3.9 billion planned for investment in the decarbonisation of heat and buildings over three years.
  - 8.3. £450 million for the boiler upgrade scheme, paying £5,000 towards the installation costs of a new heat pump system.
  - 8.4. £60 million innovation fund launched to make clean heat systems smaller and easier to install and cheaper to run
  - 8.5. £338 million on the Heat Network Transformation programme, developing the country's heat networks.
  - 8.6. £1.425 billion for the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, retrofitting public sector buildings such as schools and hospitals.
  - 8.7. The Retrofit Academy has been successful in securing over £1.7 million pounds worth of funding to deliver qualifications and training to further education colleges and businesses in retrofit. With the model aiming to develop a franchise model that they would then offer across the UK.
9. The diversity of provision and varying degrees of success they are or have had, highlights the need for someone such as local government to knit together a coherent offer to stimulate the retrofit market. The key barrier to the sector has been that provision has come with the limited and timebound funding. This has prevented the development of long-term employment pipelines and hindered the sectors' ability to plan for the medium and long term.
  10. There is also a body of independent evidence from the National Audit Office and Public Accounts Committee which recommends how the system can work differently and which adds weight to the need for closer working between local government and government in the design and delivery of future provision.
  11. We will take into consideration connections with sustainable construction due to the close connections with retrofitting. This sector will also require local government to play a key role, such as in their work in the procurement of new buildings, which has the potential to support the sector's development.
  12. It is likely that the Government will again come forward with a new retrofit policy and funding. It is therefore recommended that the LGA develop a proactive policy recommendations paper on a place-based skills and employment retrofit offer which should aid discussions with industry and Government on what should follow the Green Homes Grant scheme. This paper will be based on:
    - 12.1 What local government needs from any new policy when it emerges. This could include skills and supply chain needs, the need for place-based market shaping, the value in delivering green construction (retrofit, heat pumps, water harvesting, solar panels, cavity wall insulation) for whole streets or neighbourhoods and funding strategies that will ensure businesses can effectively pivot into the sector.
    - 12.2 The work being done by Devon and Essex County Councils through their Community Renewal Fund projects and their planned applications for the Shared Prosperity Fund looking at how they aim to join all this work together with the funding and schemes that are already available, such as the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund and boiler upgrade scheme.

13. The work would establish LGA policy outlining government's potential role in retrofit:

- 13.1 Building on the learning of what worked well/less well from Government investments in greening buildings, such as the Green Homes Grant.
- 13.2 Focusing on how councils can help develop skills and supply chains to support and influence any future funding and provision.
- 13.3 Work with sector/industry and local government to establish potential for market shaping in places:
  - 13.3.1 Highlighting that waiting for individual consumers to access the market to green their homes is slowing down the sectors ability to line up skills and employment.
  - 13.3.2 The LGA and local government are ready to work with ministers and industry on councils bringing forward opportunities to green whole streets or neighbourhoods (as well as social housing stock) with necessary funding and influence devolved to local government.

14. We would work with our member authorities, to ensure any policy meets their need and expectations. This would include engaging with the 24 officers on the LGA's Housing Retrofit Action Learning Sets, part of the LGA productivity team's leading and learning programme. This programme provides support to local authorities in creating housing retrofit skills and jobs in their area.

15. We aim to share the draft policy paper for with the Boards (EEHT, CR, PP) in March 2022 for approval alongside suggestions on how to take the content forward with stakeholders, Government and industry.

16. As the policy work develops, we plan to create a resource for local government, which outlines potential strategies and funding routes to use to develop the retrofit sector to support them with their future planning.

**17. Members' views on the proposed actions plus any further reflections are welcome.**

### **Equalities Implications**

18. While developing policy work on the local net zero employment and skills offer, we will seek to outline the challenges and opportunities faced by specific communities.

### **Implications for Wales**

19. While employability is a devolved matter, the LGA and WLGA liaise to share approaches on the level of local / national collaboration.

### **Financial Implications**

20. All activity highlighted falls within existing LGA policy budget for 2021-2022.



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