

25 January 2018

## **Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board – report from Cllr Martin Tett (Chairman)**

### **Meetings and external events**

1. I met with the National Joint Utilities Group and representatives of broadband providers. We discussed how councils and broadband providers could work together to ensure broadband is rolled out as quickly as possible with as little disruption to the highways network as possible. In particular there was discussion of how greater sharing of forward plans could benefit all sides.
2. I also met with Colin Matthews Chair of Highways England. We discussed how Highways England are managing their relationship with local authorities since the transition to being a government owned company. I made it clear that Highways England needs to engage with local authorities in particular transport authorities who manage the local network and its interactions with the strategic network. We were particularly keen for Highways England to engage closely with those authorities that are having problems with air quality where the strategic network is a major contributor to emissions.
3. I attended the annual Environmental Services Authority (ESA) lunch which brings together a number of local authority environment officers and key figures from the waste and recycling industry. It was a good opportunity to speak to the ESA Chairman and identify where our organisations have common lobbying territory.
4. The LGA's Chairman and I met with Rt. Hon. Chris Grayling MP, Secretary of State for Transport, on 25 October 2017. In a productive meeting there was a constructive discussion across a range of issues including the importance of continued central and local government investment in local transport infrastructure. There was also discussion on possible solutions to address the funding gap on local bus services.

### **Board Business**

5. The board held a future transport seminar in December where experts from Government, the automotive sector and freight came to discuss trends in transport. We examined trends in automation, connectivity and electrification. We will be publishing a guide for members exploring some of the issues and how they are likely to impact councils, the opportunities they can represent as well as the risks that will have to be mitigated.
6. The EEHT Board discussed what our waste and recycling ambitions are after we leave the European Union. The discussion focussed around residual waste being considered as an alternative measure of effective waste management. Addressing carbon emissions were also discussed and members identified a need to look further at our approach to recycling plastics.

### **Housing**

7. Cllr Nick Forbes gave evidence to a Treasury Select Committee on housing on 28 November, as part of the Committee's Autumn Budget Inquiry. He spoke about the need for councils to have the tools and resources to support housebuilding at scale, highlighting the need for the borrowing cap and other restrictions on council housing finance to be lifted.

25 January 2018

8. Cllr Eburne gave evidence to the CLG committee on the Homelessness Reduction Act.
9. I wrote to MHCLG to request they delay the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act from its current proposed roll out of April 2018 to enable councils time to reform to implement the new duties.

### **Environment**

10. Cllr David Simmonds gave evidence to the Environmental Audit Committee on Disposable Packaging: Coffee Cups and Plastic Bottles on 24 October. He highlighted the costs to councils of dealing with plastic packaging, which is often difficult to recycle. He gave evidence on the low amount of money that UK packaging companies contribute to recycling costs compared to other countries, and called for a revised producer responsibility scheme. We also [responded to the disposable coffee cup report](#).
11. The LGA recently submitted both written and oral evidence to two separate Parliamentary committees: Firstly, the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on air quality and Clean Air Zones, and secondly, the Joint select committee inquiry: Improving air quality. Cllr Adele Morris represented the LGA at both oral evidence sessions.

### **Transport**

12. We responded welcoming the Government's draft accessibility action plan consultation. Our response stated that it was vitally important that as many transport options as possible are open to everyone and councils will do all they can to help meet the goals contained within the plan. [You can read our submission here](#).

### **Press Releases and Statements**

13. In December I [responded to the Environmental Audit Committee's Inquiry into plastic bottles](#) and emphasised how crucial it is that local authorities are consulted on the introduction of any new plastic bottle deposit return scheme.
14. I made a public statement [responding the Local Government Ombudsman's report into homelessness](#) stressing that at the root of all of this homelessness crisis is our desperate need to supply more affordable homes in the long term, and to help people most at risk of homelessness immediately.

<b>Contact officer:</b>	Eamon Lally
<b>Position:</b>	Principal Policy Adviser
<b>Phone number:</b>	0207 664 3132
<b>E-mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:eamon.lally@local.gov.uk">eamon.lally@local.gov.uk</a>