

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

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<b>Title:</b>	Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board
<b>Date:</b>	Thursday 14 December 2017
<b>Venue:</b>	Westminster Suite, 8th Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

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### Attendance

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

Item	Decisions and actions
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<b>1</b>	<b>Apologies and Declarations of Interest</b>
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Apologies were received from Cllr Alistair Auty.

Cllr Philip Broadhead attended as substitute.

<b>2</b>	<b>Waste and Recycling Policy</b>
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The Chairman welcomed Dominic Hogg and Eric Bridgwater from Eunomia who attended as guest speakers and delivered their presentation on the measuring of waste management. This follows from a decision made at the July Board meeting to invite specialist speakers to present to members with alternative options for how waste could be measured in the future.

Dominic and Eric focused on a brief indication on the future of waste management, an analysis of the current framework and provided an options appraisal of the alternative frameworks of waste measurement.

Sonika Sidhu, Senior Adviser, introduced the report and outlined its timely nature as we anticipate the Department for Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs' (DEFRA) 25 year environmental strategy and an accompanying waste and resource strategy in the New Year. Additionally, the UK's exit from the EU will have a significant impact at local authority level, creating opportunities to do things differently and challenges that will need to be addressed.

Sonika stressed waste and recycling is one area that the LGA would be prioritising in its discussions with Government as this is a service which should be subject to local determination.

### Discussion

In the discussion which followed, these points were made;

- There was general agreement from the Board that incremental waste and recycling

targets should be set, outlining a clear path to the final target.

- The Board also highlighted the salience of plastic minimisation with the current media attention this issue is getting. Particular issue raised was that plastic, being a light object, does not appear too highly on waste reduction reporting. The Board requested LGA officers dedicate some work on specific plastic reduction.
- The Chairman requested for a future Board meeting officers to develop a strategy for how the Board can better work with government to reduce the amount of plastic use.
- Members stressed the difficulty of a national strategy due to the variance in waste and recycling levels between urban and rural areas.

### **Decision**

Members supported focussing on broadening out the approach to waste management beyond recycling targets to residual waste arising and measuring this per capita.

Members expressed an interest in the possibility of a dashboard approach which also looks at income.

The Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board agreed to move towards a recycling residual waste rising target rate per individual and to move away from recycling rate.

### **Action**

The Board requested officers work and bring to a future Board meeting an analysis on current issues and work on plastic reduction.

## **3 Private Rented Sector Housing**

Hilary Tanner, Adviser, introduced this item and provided the Board with information on some of the challenges for councils and summarised recent changes to rented housing regulation.

Hilary mentioned the strong anecdotal evidence which suggested an increase in the number of houses subdivided to maximise rental income and noted the significant impact this is having on councils in relation to increased flytipping and antisocial behaviour.

It was also reported that the private rented sector has the largest proportion of non-decent homes and the highest number of older properties compared to other tenures. The estimated cost of bringing all privately rented homes up to standard is £8 billion (on average £7,700 per property). The Board noted the fear of making the improvements compulsory was that landlords would simply stop renting the property.

Hilary stressed that a source of frustration for council enforcement officers is that they cannot easily identify the landlord of a rented property. A national register of landlords has been proposed by many organisations and exists in Scotland. The Board requested that officers undertake a review of Scotland's national register of landlords and bring this to a

future Board meeting.

### **Discussion**

In the discussion which followed, these points were made:

- Members raised the issue of the lack of implementation of The Housing and Planning Act 2016, especially the power for councils to seek a banning order for landlords and letting agents. Hilary informed the Board that the LGA expects the implementation of banning orders to happen by April 2018.
- The Board expressed interest in the work the Scottish Government has done in implementing policies regarding the security of tenure for private rented housing. The Board requested officers provide a review of the Scottish policy.
- Members noted that distinct areas within the private rented sector such as student housing and retirement living link with other forms of social policy.

### **Decision**

Officers to undertake a review of Scotland's national register of landlords and bring findings to a future Board meeting.

Officers to undertake a review of Scotland's security of tenure policy for private tenants.

The Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board agreed to support the proposals in the report.

## **4 Fire safety in high rise buildings update**

The Chairman reminded the Board that today was the six month anniversary of the Grenfell fire.

Eamon Lally, Principal Policy Adviser, introduced this report which provided the Board with an update on the work of central and local government to ensure that high rise buildings are safe.

### **Discussion**

In the discussion which followed, these points were made:

- Members expressed their disappointment regarding the decision of no additional funding for local authorities to fund making high rise buildings fire safety compliant. Members requested clarity on whether greater flexibility would be granted to allow for borrowing to fund the improvements. Eamon responded that through conversations held with Department for Communities and Local Government officials he expects local authorities will be granted greater flexibility to borrow from their Housing Revenue Account.

## **Decision**

The Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board:

- Noted the ongoing work at a national and local level to improve fire safety in high rise buildings; and
- Noted the LGA's submission to the Building Regulations and Fire Safety Review.

## **5 Industrial Strategy**

Kamal Panchal, Senior Adviser, introduced this report which updated members on the publication of the Industrial Strategy White Paper and the LGA's headline response from the LGA briefing for member councils.

Two particular areas of development from the Industrial Strategy were explained:

1. The creation of a new £1.7 billion Transformational Cities Fund, which is for projects that improve connectivity, reduce congestion and utilise new mobility services and technology. Half of this funding will be allocated through a competition for transport projects in cities, with the remainder allocated to the six combined authorities with elected metro mayors.
2. There will be a review of Local Enterprise Partnerships, covering roles and responsibilities and will bring forward reforms to leadership, governance, accountability, financial reporting and geographic boundaries.

## **Discussion**

In the discussion which followed, these points were made:

- Members expressed their concern of half of the funding being allocated to the six combined authorities with elected metro mayors, an unrepresentative allocation of the money.
- Members noted the variability of quality of LEPs with some being very responsible and accountable whereas others being very problematic.

## **Decision**

The Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board noted the publication of the Industrial Strategy White Paper, the LGA's response and the key developments highlighted for the Board.

## **6 The Autumn Budget 2017**

Eamon Lally, Principal Policy Adviser, introduced this item and provided the Board with a commentary on the measures set out in the Autumn Budget Statement by the Chancellor on 22 November 2017.

### **Decision**

The Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board examined and noted the implications of the Budget Statement for local government.

## **7 General Board Update**

Eamon Lally, Principal Policy Adviser, introduced this report which provided the Board with a general update on activity in relation to transport and economy since the last Board meeting.

### **Decision**

The Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board noted the updates detailed in the report.

## **8 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

### 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
	Cllr Rachel Eburne	Mid Suffolk District Council
Members	Cllr Simon Cooke	Bradford Metropolitan District Council
	Cllr Lynne Duffy	Wychavon District Council
	Cllr Blake Pain	Harborough District Council
	Cllr David Renard	Swindon Borough Council
	Cllr Mark Mills-Bishop	Broxbourne Borough Council
	Cllr Colin Davie	Lincolnshire County Council
	Cllr Philip Broadhead	Bournemouth Borough Council
	Cllr Tony Newman	Croydon Council
	Cllr Helen Holland	Bristol City Council
	Cllr Ed Turner	Oxford City Council
	Cllr Rachel Blake	Tower Hamlets Council
	Cllr Michael Mordey	Sunderland City Council
	Cllr Peter Thornton	Cumbria County Council
	Cllr Linda Gillham	Runnymede Borough Council
Apologies	Cllr Alistair Auty	Wokingham Borough Council
	Cllr Gillian Campbell	Blackpool Council
In Attendance		
LGA Officers	Eamon Lally	Principal Policy Adviser
	Sonika Sidhu	Senior Adviser
	Kamal Panchal	Senior Advisor
	Hilary Tanner	Adviser
	Andrew Jones	Adviser
	Harry Parker	Member Services Officer