

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

### **Meetings and external events**

#### **Industrial Strategy**

1. I chaired an informative and lively session on Industrial Strategy at the LGA's Annual Conference. The discussion focused on the work that is needed if local government is able to play as full role as possible on delivering and ensuring that their Local Industrial Strategies are inclusive, sustainable and tackle the nation's skills gap and poor productivity record against our global competitors. The session included expert input from Irene Lucas, the chief executive for Sunderland City Council on the role of council leadership, and Lesley Giles, from the Work Foundation on overcoming the challenges of poor productivity and 'good' jobs. Cllr Mark Hawthorne then rounded of the session to launch the interim report of the LGA's Post Brexit Commission which has been set up to examine the challenges and opportunities faced by non-metropolitan England.

#### **Future Transport**

2. I also chaired an interesting session on a topic that the board has done some important work on this year, future transport technology. In particular we have been looking at ways in which councils will need to respond to developments in connected, electric and autonomous vehicles. The session included a presentation from Konstanze Sharring from the Society of Motor vehicle Manufacturers and Traders on the current state of vehicle technology and likely developments in the near future. We also heard from Cllr Yvonne Constance of Oxfordshire County Council and Laura Shoaf from Transport for the West midlands about the work their authorities are doing to prepare and how they are harnessing the opportunities arising from this new technology. There was also an interesting question and answer session with discussions of modal shift, commercial opportunities and sharing best practise. This is an important area of work for the board and we will be looking at it again next year in order to provide leadership for local government on an emerging policy area.

#### **Clean Air Summit**

3. Uk100, a grouping of local authorities concerned about environmental issues, hosted a clean air summit this month bringing together Metro Mayors, Council leaders and the Secretary of State Michael Gove. The summit examined ways in which cities could work together to improve the UK's illegal air quality and how the Government could do more to help authorities. The LGA was represented at the event by Cllr Susan Hinchliffe leader of Bradford City Council. She made the case for greater government support and national action as well as properly resourcing local authority plans to improve clean air. The Government has recently launched a draft clean air strategy which the LGA will respond to as well as announcing their intention to legislate in order to give councils appropriate powers to improve air quality in their area. We will continue to engage with the

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Government at every opportunity to ensure the final strategy and any legislation give us the tools we need to improve air quality.

### **Right to Buy**

4. LGA has published a report with Savills on the sustainability of Right to Buy, which looks at the different factors limiting councils from building replacement homes sold via the scheme and makes recommendations for how adjustments would enable councils to build again. The full report is available at <https://www.local.gov.uk/sustainability-right-buy>

### **Housing, planning and homelessness**

5. The LGA Annual Conference saw the publication of a suite of documents setting out the case for long term, sustained investment in local government. The housing publication highlights the impact of the housing crisis and sets out a series of recommendations that put councils at the heart of solutions, and empowers them to play their full role in ensuring the provision of housing that supports health, jobs, and community.  
<https://www.local.gov.uk/moving-the-conversation-on/housing>

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