

14 December 2019

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

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**Title:** Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board  
**Date:** Friday 12 October 2018  
**Venue:** Smith Square 3&4, Ground 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**

#### **1 Welcome, Apologies, Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **2 Terms of Reference, Membership and Appointments to Outside Bodies**

A query was raised as to the reason National Fly-tipping Prevention Group was suggested as becoming officer led.

Hillary Tanner, Senior Adviser, explained that as the group had become more focused on the procedural side of fly-tipping officers view was that this was no longer good use of members time. Hillary emphasised that the groups work was technical, it was not very strategic and that Councils represented on the group send waste or enforcement officers as opposed to their elected members.

The Chairman emphasised that fly-tipping should be revisited by the Board latter in the year.

#### **Decision**

The Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board:

- i. agreed its Terms of Reference (**Appendix A**);
- ii. formally noted the membership for 2017/18 (**Appendix B**);
- iii. noted the Board meeting dates for 2017/18 (**Appendix C**); and
- iv. agreed the Board's nominations to outside bodies (**Appendix D**).

#### **3 Social Housing Green Paper**

The Chairman welcomed Jane Everton, Deputy Director at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, to the meeting of the Board.

Nick Porter, Senior Adviser, introduced the report and highlighted that the Prime Minister's announcement at the Conservative Party Conference that the HRA borrowing cap would be removed was a real victory for the LGA. He emphasised that this had been an LGA priority and focus of sustained lobbying since it was introduced in 2012. He also raised that there was a lot of work across the sector to demonstrate what lifting the HRA borrowing cap will mean and that it was anticipated that more details would be presented as part of the Chancellor's Budget.

Jane Everton, gave a presentation on her views on the Social Housing Green Paper. In particular she emphasised the role the Grenfell tragedy played in developing the Social Housing Green Paper and the need to acknowledge there are many further issues that need to be addressed coming out this. She also highlighted that 14 events were held across the country, where Ministers engaged with a range of residents including social housing tenants, with the aim of these events informing the Social Housing Green Paper. She also explained the Social Housing Green Paper would be in four chapters, of which the first three focus on experience including recommendations from the Hackett Review. The fourth chapter was focused on the stigma around social housing.

In the discussion that followed, the following points were raised;

- Following a query on whether there will be a review of decent home standards, Jane emphasised that whether decent home standards should be changed will be considered once they receive further information following the green paper.
- A concern was raised that central government need to consider a national standard on what a housing unit looks like.
- Jane encouraged Members continue to give evidence with their consultation responses.
- In response to a query an MHCLG official confirmed that Housing Association right to buy decisions would be evaluated in detail.
- In response to a query, Jane confirmed there was not yet a date for the spending review.
- In response to concerns raised about stigma, Jane emphasised the best course of action we can take is to continue to talk positively about social housing. Jane also highlighted that this has been acknowledged by government.

The Chairman gave thanks to Jane Everton for her presentation and invited Members to discuss the confidential draft LGA responses to the Social Housing Green Paper and Right to Buy consultations.

In the discussion that followed, the following points were raised:

- Views were expressed that the lifting of the HRA borrowing cap was a positive direction of travel.
- A view was expressed that really increasing the Social Housing supply would be crucial going forwards.
- The Chairman congratulated officers for their work, and emphasised the importance of local authorities getting back into the market and meeting the demand now the HRA borrowing cap has been lifted.
- The importance of homes being fully insulated was also raised.
- A view was expressed that the stigma on social housing was in part caused by under supply of social housing stock.

## **Decision**

The Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board;

- provided direction and comments to incorporate into the submission on the Social

- Housing Green Paper; and
- agreed the consultation response on Right To Buy.

#### **Action**

Officers to incorporate Members comments into the submission on the Social Housing Green Paper.

Officers to submit consultation response on Right To Buy – as agreed by Members.

#### **4 Town centre revitalisation**

Cllr Graham Galpin, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Property at Ashford Borough Council, was invited by the Chair to speak to the Board. Cllr Galpin explained he was one of the eight members of the expert panel tasked to diagnose issues that currently affect the health of our high streets and advise on the best practical measures to help them thrive now and in the future. He also explained he was present to update the Board the work of the panel, take feedback from Board members, and share his view of local government's role.

In the following presentation, Cllr Galpin informed the Board of the following;

- That he had been chosen to take this position following the success of Ashford high street.
- He expressed a view that local authorities should take a leadership role in the revitalisation of local town centres.
- He advised local authorities appoint town centre portfolio holders or champions.
- He emphasised the importance of a Town Strategic Board in bringing key funders together and for place changing decision making.
- He highlighted that local authorities need to act fast to prevent high streets decaying.
- He also suggested it would be beneficial to have incentives put in place to turn retail into accommodation.

The Chairman invited Alan Harris, Partner at Montagu Evans, to also share his expertise on how local government can maximise its influence and control of important town centre assets.

In the following presentation, Alan Harris informed the Board of the following;

- He informed the Board that he had worked with around one hundred local authorities across the country.
- He emphasised the impact generational differences would have on our high streets.
- He advised that local authorities and local businesses needed to think about what is unique about their town.
- He highlighted the Grimsey Review as evidencing the need for a focus on place.
- The need for more people working in town centres and more agile co-working spaces.
- He advised local authorities put together a plan and know their targets.
- Regarding how local authorities can best control change – need to build relationships with local businesses etc.
- Consider different perceptions and change perceptions.

In the discussion that followed, the following points were raised:

- Alan highlighted that it would be important for Councillors to communicate the need

- to be less focused on retail in high streets going forwards.
- Concerns were raised as to the collapse of town centres in regions secondary towns.
  - The work done in Blackpool's city centre was raised as a prominent example of high street regeneration.
  - A view was expressed that a review of parking charges could help fund struggling high streets.
  - A view was expressed it would be helpful to ascertain if there is a difference for town centres reliant on more independents.

The Chairman thanked the speakers for a fascinating discussion, and suggested that visits to key examples of town centre revitalisation would be beneficial for the Board.

### **Decisions**

The Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board considered the views of invited experts and gave a steer on the future work of the LGA in this area.

### **Actions**

Officers to plan and organise visits for those Members who are interested to see town centre revitalisation projects across the country.

## **5 Board priorities and work programme 2018/19**

The Chairman introduced the report setting out draft priorities for the Board together with a draft work programme for the period to July 2019.

In the discussion that followed, Members asked the following be included in the Board priorities and work programme;

- a greater emphasis on building communities in the planning section of the work programme;
- further emphasis on the viability of housing; and
- the importance of infrastructure alongside housing developments to be emphasised in the housing section of the work programme.

### **Decision**

The Board considered and agreed a final version of the Board's priorities and work Programme.

### **Action**

Officers to incorporate Members comments into the Board priorities and work programme.

## **6 Update paper**

The Chairman introduced the update of the policy work that has been carried out over the summer for the Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board. He particularly brought Members attention to the updates on the impact on Chinese restrictions on waste imports and the importance of this issue.

Regarding Members interest in the current position with incinerators Eamon Lally, Principal Policy Adviser, emphasised that more would come out on this in the waste strategy. In the discussion that followed, Members also expressed an interest in an update on the waste strategy at the next meeting of the Board.

### **Decision**

Members noted the contents of the report.

### **Actions**

Officers to ensure the December EEHT Board meeting focuses on Waste.

## **7 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
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Adele Morris	Southwark Council
	Cllr Rachel Eburne	Mid Suffolk District Council
Members	Cllr Patrick Nicholson	Plymouth City Council
	Cllr Catherine Rankin	Kent County 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 Gillian Campbell	Blackpool Council
	Cllr Michael Mordey	Sunderland City Council
	Mayor Philip Glanville	Hackney London Borough Council
	Cllr Peter Thornton	Cumbria County 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 Judith Blake CBE	Leeds City Council