

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

### **Conferences, meetings and external events**

1. In June Mayor Philip Glanville gave oral evidence to the HCLG select committee on the impact of Defra's waste and recycling proposals on local government. Our evidence highlighted the need for local flexibility in service delivery, and for retailers and packaging producers to pay the full costs of recycling.
2. Also in June Councillor Martin Tett spoke at a Parliamentary meeting with MPs and industry stakeholders on preventing food waste, highlighting the need to focus equally on food waste prevention and recycling.
3. The LGA's annual conference included a homelessness workshop on 2 July, exploring the role of local and central governments in preventing homelessness. Speakers included Andrew Hudson (Centre for Homelessness Impact) and Jean Templeton (Chair, West Midlands Homelessness Taskforce), and the session was chaired by Cllr Nick Forbes (Leader, Newcastle City Council)
4. The LGA Annual conference included a packed workshop on innovation in housing delivery. Councillor Tudor Evans presented an overview of housing delivery and regeneration in Portsmouth and Sinead Butters, talked about the opportunities for partnership working between councils and housing associations. Councillor Adele Morris from the EEHT Board chaired the session.
5. Cllr Tett chaired the workshop session at the LGA annual conference on the future of our town centres and it is clear that this continues to challenge local leaders. Sean Fielding, leader of Oldham Council, Diane Wehrle from Springboard and Claudia Kenyatta, Historic England helped stimulate a rich discussion with the debate focusing on changing shopping habits, repurposing the town centre offer and making the most of heritage assets.
6. Cllr Judith Blake, Vice Chair of the LGA's Economy, Environment, Housing and Transport Board chaired the workshop on Clean Air, Clean Energy. Polly Billington, Director of UK 100, and Matthew Pencharz, Head of Air Car explored some tough issues on the future of environmental protection. The debate focused on who's responsibility it is to ensure that we have clean air, the role of local and national government and how civil society can get involved.

### **Press releases and statements**

7. The LGA has written to the Minister of State for Housing with a series of suggestions to help inform the development of the proposed Accelerated Planning green paper. We still

expect the green paper to be published later this year which will discuss what improvements can be made to accelerate the end-to-end planning process.

8. The LGA submitted a response to the Building Better, Building Beautiful commission which focused on ensuring that councils have the right level of oversight and influence in shaping places through a properly resourced, local plan-led system. This included our calls to scrap permitted development rights and a need for renewed national leadership on standards for new homes
9. The LGA has published advice and guidance for councils wanting to use data in ways to best inform their decisions for intervening in the local housing market. This includes advice to councils on different data sets, options for matching data or using other techniques to gain more understanding, and where there might be particular gaps. There is also a tool that generates a report for individual councils summarising what the latest data reveals at a local authority level, and a more specific look at what data can reveal below local authority level.
10. The LGA has responded to the Environment Agency's consultation on the draft flood and coastal erosion risk management strategy for England. The response focused on the need for councils to have the right skills, capacity and resources and a more flexible funding model to deliver flood and coastal resilience in the future.
11. The board responded to a report by the Transport Select Committee on local roads funding and maintenance. The report rightly recognises the significant funding pressures councils are under and the detrimental impact this is having on local services such as roads maintenance.
12. The Board has also made public statements on: [Responding to HCLG Committee report on modern methods of construction](#); [responding to government planning proposals](#); [responding to PAC report on planning and housing market](#); [responding to Prime Minister's housing announcement](#); [responding to calls to repeal Vagrancy Act](#); [responding to local government homelessness commission report](#); [responding to Habinteq's accessible homes report](#); [responding to affordability report by Affordable Housing Commission](#); [St Mungo's report on local homelessness funding, a report by the Affordable Housing Commission](#), [calls to repeal the Vagrancy Act](#), [LGIU's local government homelessness commission report](#), and [an APPG report on domestic violence and homelessness](#).

## **Transport**

13. Members of the LGA's EEHT Board held a seminar with senior representatives from Network Rail to discuss their transformation to become a more customer focussed, service driven organisation that puts passengers first. Board members took the opportunity to share their local experiences in engaging with Network Rail, for example on regeneration projects and the challenges caused by level crossings. Members also

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shared their desire for better communication with local leaders when there are significant changes to operations in order to better manage local impacts.

### **Air Quality**

14. The LGA met with some councils who had been given ministerial direction to produce air quality action plans to reduce NO<sub>2</sub> in order to share their experiences and good practice and for the LGA to understand how the process of formulating plans is working, in particular their interactions with Defra. We have emailed all affected authorities to invite their comments, which will be treated confidentially and also used to highlight and iron out any issues with senior civil servants. If you are an affected local authority, and you haven't received the email, please contact Andrew Jones [andrew.jones@local.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.jones@local.gov.uk).

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