

Item 3(e)

**Environment and Housing Board – report from Cllr Mike Jones
(Chairman)**

Local Government Waste Review – Challenge group meeting

1. The Environment and Housing Board has commissioned a Local Government Waste Review to allow local government to proactively lead the future direction of waste policy. The Review will look into the issues and challenges councils face in delivering waste services in the context of spending cuts, increasing demands on waste management services and recycling and landfill targets.
2. A challenge group chaired by Cllr Clyde Loakes, Vice-Chairman of the Environment and Housing Board, and consisting of high level representation from local and central government and waste sector organisations will steer, develop and provide challenge to the Review. This met for the first time on 7 December.

**Greg Barker MP, Minister of State, Department of Environment and Climate Change
(DECC)**

3. Lead Members of the Board met with Greg Barker MP on 29 November to discuss a variety of issues where the Local Government Association (LGA) and DECC priorities coincide such as the Green Deal and Fuel Poverty. It was agreed that a strategic Memorandum of Understanding between the LGA and DECC would be developed to capture shared priorities and a clear programme of work.

**Nick Boles MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Planning, Department for
Communities and Local Government (DCLG)**

4. I met with Nick Boles MP in mid-December to discuss the government's proposals in a number of areas. We held a frank and productive discussion on the following topics: Permitted Development Rights; Local Development Orders; the government proposals to remove decision making on major applications from 'poor performing' authorities; barriers to plan making; and the Community Infrastructure Levy.
5. The LGA has cross party agreement to oppose the government's proposals to extend - for a time limited period - the current permitted development planning rules for householder extensions. The Government has opened a consultation on this measure, and the LGA has written to the leaders of all councils to ask them to write to the Minister and to the local MP expressing local concerns. We have also produced a model motion for debate at full council meetings.

Housing Finance Conference

6. Our 'Housing the Nation' conference on 19 December brought together councillors, officers and housing sector partners to discuss how councils are supporting building new homes, and the barriers and opportunities they face, and was chaired by Cllr Keith House and myself.
7. The conference heard from Lorely Burt MP, Parliamentary Private Secretary to Danny Alexander, key figures from the housing sector, and from member councils from around the country on how they are working to support new development.

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Housing and Planning All-Party Parliamentary Group breakfast meeting

8. Cllr Eddy Poll attended the All Party Parliamentary Group for Housing and Planning on 5 December to take part in a roundtable discussion on the Growth and Infrastructure Bill, along with Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), senior DCLG officials and the two parliamentary chairs of the group Clive Betts MP and Tim Yeo MP.

Green Deal Conference

9. The LGA Green Deal conference took place on 16 November and provided an opportunity for councils to explore the potential for the Green Deal to support economic growth and explored options for procuring and financing the Green Deal.
10. The conference heard from DECC Minister Baroness Verma. A series of workshops highlighted the important role that councils will play in the Green Deal, providing interesting examples of partnership working; the role of councils as community leaders; and innovative regional working.

Beds in Sheds and Criminal Landlords - Ministerial Working group

11. On 27 November, Cllr Frances Roden provided the LGA's view to the latest meeting of this working group which gave two new ministers an opportunity to ascertain the full complexity of the so-called 'beds in sheds' problem. Colleagues from around the country gave examples of the blight upon communities, and the impact on councils that can be generated by unlicensed and sub-standard Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs).

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