

Item 6

Transport Update

Purpose of report

For discussion.

Summary

This paper updates the Board on the future of the Highways Agency and Strategic Roads Network, winter resilience, streetworks and parking.

Recommendation

Members are asked to discuss.

Action

As directed by members.

Contact officer: Kamal Panchal / Charles Loft
Position: Senior Adviser / Adviser
Phone no: 020 7664 3174 / 3874
E-mail: kamal.panchal@local.gov.uk
charles.loft@local.gov.uk

Item 6

Transport Update

Highways Agency and Strategic Roads Network

1. As agreed by the Board at previous meetings, the LGA held a roundtable discussion on 5 November bringing the Highways Agency (HA) and Department for Transport (DfT) to discuss local growth. Members were keen that the views of local business leaders were heard so they were also joined by three Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Chairs. This meeting followed a submission by the LGA to the Transport Select Committee's enquiry on the Strategic Roads Network which can be found [here](#)¹.
2. Our Town Hall debates identified that councils were experiencing great difficulty in working with the Highways Agency at a local level and that this, consequently, was a blockage to growth. On behalf of the LGA, Cllr Tony Ball, Cllr Mike Haines, Cllr Ian Stewart and Cllr James Lewis led a very successful discussion with senior HA and DfT officials as well as the three LEP Chairs. The key outcome from the meeting was that the HA acknowledged that it needed to be able to converse and have genuine engagement with councils and LEPs about their growth plans, rather than only consulting them on their plans for the strategic roads network.
3. As a result of this discussion, the HA have agreed to have new strategic level conversations with sub-regions and local leaders to see how the HA can play a much more proactive role on growth. We are currently working with LEPs and the HA to convene the meetings.

Winter resilience

4. On behalf of the LGA, Cllr Mike Haines provided oral evidence to the Transport Select Committee enquiry on winter resilience on 11th November. This followed a written submission to the Transport Select Committee, which can be found [here](#)². Both DfT's survey and the emerging evidence from the LGA's own winter weather survey shows that councils are well placed to deal with the impact of severe winter. The final report of the LGA's winter weather survey is expected to be published by the end of November.

Streetworks

5. The LGA has continued with the utilities companies to try and ensure that they manage streetworks more effectively and cut the costs to councils and business. Cllr Peter Box chaired the third Streetworks Task Force meeting on 4 November and was joined by Cllr Tony Ball and Cllr Mike Haines. The Task Force agreed to a launch event to promote the joint statement of what good streetworks look like, together with a brief information pack for businesses. The Task Force has also set up a research project looking at the drivers to good contractor performance which will report next year.

¹ <http://www.local.gov.uk/documents/10180/5533246/LGA+submission+to+Transport+Ctte+-+Strategic+Road+Network+FINAL+APPROVED.pdf/6eaaa4fb-be9f-4a01-b744-90ceffb9b4f9>

² <http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/WrittenEvidence.svc/EvidencePdf/2735>

Item 6

Parking

6. On 27 September, Cabinet Ministers, The Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP and The Rt Hon Patrick McLoughlin MP, announced that the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and the DfT will in due course publish details of further reforms, including:
 - 6.1. stopping CCTV being used for on-street parking enforcement.
 - 6.2. new open data on parking to allow the public to 'go compare'.
7. There will also be proposals for consultation on:
 - 7.1. updating parking enforcement guidance to support local shops.
 - 7.2. tackling wrongly-issued fines.
 - 7.3. stopping unacceptable parking fine collection practices.
 - 7.4. reviewing unnecessary yellow lines and the scope for residents' reviews.
 - 7.5. reviewing the grace period for parking offences.
 - 7.6. clamping down on anti-social driving and encouraging social responsibility.
 - 7.7. spreading best practice on supporting town centres and tackling illegal parking.
 - 7.8. analysis of the impact of different transport policies on town centre vitality.
8. In addition, the Transport Select Committee published its report on Local Authority Parking Enforcement following its enquiry which was launched in January 2013. There are 25 recommendations in the report, however members may wish to give particular attention to the following:
 - 8.1. There is a need for a better understanding of parking finance issues and we recommend that the LGA works with local authorities and ensures that they proactively and clearly explain these issues in their annual reports on parking.
 - 8.2. Annual reports be made mandatory so that information on parking is in the public domain for all local authorities.
 - 8.3. That the Government freeze the maximum penalty charge.
 - 8.4. A 25 per cent penalty charge discount should be introduced for motorists who pay within 7 days of losing their appeal to the parking tribunals.
 - 8.5. The Government introduce a statutory requirement for local authorities to take all reasonable steps to refund money received from invalid Penalty Charge Notices.

Item 6

9. Councils have raised some concerns about the impact of safety outside school premises if CCTV cameras were to be banned. However, no date has been set yet for consultation on the High Street parking proposals and LGA officers continue to liaise with DCLG and DfT officials for further information on this as well as the Government's response to the Transport Select Committee's report on parking enforcement.
10. The LGA will continue to press to Government that there are bigger issues which need tackling, such as supporting local growth and managing the local impact of the Government's predicted increase in traffic on local roads by 40 per cent by 2040, and that councils are best placed to deal with parking in order to deal with congestion and keep traffic moving.