

# Environment and Housing Board

Agenda

Monday 01 July 2013  
15.00

Staff House Room 8,  
Staff House Conference Centre,  
Sackville Street Campus  
University of Manchester,  
Manchester  
M1 3BB

**To:** Members of the Environment and Housing Board  
**cc:** Named officers for briefing purposes

## **Environment and Housing Board**

01 July 2013

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There will be a meeting of the Environment and Housing Board at:

15.00pm on **Monday 01 July 2013** in Staff House Room 8, Staff House Conference Centre, Sackville Street Campus, University of Manchester, Manchester, M1 3BB.

A sandwich lunch will be available during the group meetings.

### **Pre-meeting for the Board Lead members**

The briefing for Lead members will take place from **13.15pm** in Staff House Conference Room 8.

### **Political Group meetings**

Please notify your political group office (see contact telephone numbers below) if you are unable to attend this meeting, so that a substitute can be arranged and catering numbers adjusted, if necessary.

Political Group meetings will occur in the following rooms, from **14.00pm – 15.00pm**:

- **Conservative:** Staff House Conference Centre Room 8  
Luke Taylor: 020 7664 3264, email: [luke.taylor@local.gov.uk](mailto:luke.taylor@local.gov.uk)
- **Labour:** Staff House Conference Centre Room 3  
Aicha Less: 020 7664 3263, email: [aicha.less@local.gov.uk](mailto:aicha.less@local.gov.uk)
- **Liberal Democrats:** Staff House Conference Centre Room 7  
Group Office: 020 7664 3235, email: [libdem@local.gov.uk](mailto:libdem@local.gov.uk)
- **Independents:** Staff House Conference Centre Room 6  
Group Office: 020 7664 3224, email: [Vanessa.chagas@local.gov.uk](mailto:Vanessa.chagas@local.gov.uk)

### **Attendance Sheet**

Please ensure that you sign the attendance register, which will be available in the meeting room. It is the only record of your presence at the meeting.

### **Location**

A map showing the location of the Staff House Conference Centre is printed at the back of this pack.

### **LGA Contact**

Liam Paul: Tel: 020 7664 3214, e-mail: [liam.paul@local.gov.uk](mailto:liam.paul@local.gov.uk)

### **Carers' Allowance**

As part of the LGA Members' Allowances Scheme a Carer's Allowance of up to £6.19 per hour is available to cover the cost of dependants (i.e. children, elderly people or people with disabilities) incurred as a result of attending this meeting.

## Environment & Housing Board - Membership 2012/13

Councillor	Authority
<b>Conservative (8)</b>	
Mike Jones <b>(Chairman)</b>	Cheshire West and Chester Council
Clare Whelan OBE	Lambeth LB
Frances Roden	Stroud DC
Vacancy	
Eric Allen	Sutton LB
Jim Harker	Northamptonshire CC
Geoffrey Theobald OBE	Brighton & Hove City
Brian Williams	Shropshire Council
<b>Substitutes:</b>	
Rock Feilding-Mellen	Kensington & Chelsea RB
Christopher Garland	Maidstone BC
Burt Keimach	West Lindsey DC
Chris Pillai	Calderdale MBC
<b>Labour (6)</b>	
Clyde Loakes <b>[Vice Chair]</b>	Waltham Forest LB
Tony Newman	Croydon LB
Ed Turner	Oxford City
Tim Moore	Liverpool City
Barbara Cannon	Allerdale BC
Gwen Hassall	Stoke-on-Trent City
<b>Substitutes:</b>	
Clare Pritchard	Hyndburn BC
<b>Liberal Democrat (3)</b>	
Keith House <b>[Deputy Chair]</b>	Eastleigh BC
Terry Stacy JP MBE	Islington LB
Simon Galton	Leicestershire CC
<b>Substitute</b>	
Tony Trent	Borough of Poole
<b>Independent (1)</b>	
Andrew Cooper <b>[Deputy Chair]</b>	Kirklees MBC
<b>Substitutes:</b>	
John Taylor	Northumberland Council
Julian German	Cornwall Council
Peter Jones	Babergh DC



## Environment and Housing Board

01 July 2013

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### LGA Environment and Housing Board Attendance 2011-2012

Councillors	18.09.12	21.11.12	23.01.13	20.03.13	14.05.13	24.07.13
<b>Conservative Group</b>						
Mike Jones	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Clare Whelan OBE	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	
Frances Roden	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Eddy Poll	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A	N/A
Eric Allen	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	
Jim Harker	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	
Geoffrey Theobald OBE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Brian Williams	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	
<b>Labour Group</b>						
Clyde Loakes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Tony Newman	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	
Ed Turner	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Tim Moore	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Barbara Cannon	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Gwen Hassall	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
<b>Lib Dem Group</b>						
Keith House	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Terry Stacy JP MBE	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	
Simon Galton	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	
<b>Independent</b>						
Andrew Cooper	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	
<b>Substitutes</b>						
Rock Feilding-Mellen	Guest	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	
Clare Pritchard	Guest	No	No	No	Yes	
Tony Trent	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	
Julian German	No	Guest	No	No	No	
Chris Pillai	No	No	Guest	Yes	No	
Peter Jones	No	No	No	No	Yes	



## Agenda

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### LGA Environment and Housing Board

01 July 2013

15.00 - 17.00

Staff House Room 8, Staff House Conference Centre, University of Manchester, M1 3BB

Item	Page	Time
<b>For discussion</b>		
1. <b>Wealth from Waste – the LGA local waste review</b>	<b>3</b>	
2. <b>Environment and Housing Board Review of the year</b>	<b>11</b>	
3. <b>Responding to the LGA funding challenge</b>	<b>25</b>	
4. <b>Priorities and Work Programme for 2013 - 14</b>	<b>27</b>	
5. <b>Environment and Housing Board Update paper</b>	<b>33</b>	
<b>To note</b>		
6. <b>Any other business</b>		
7. <b>Decisions and actions from previous meeting</b>	<b>45</b>	

**Date of next meeting:** 11.00am, Monday 09 September 2013, Local Government House, Westminster Suite.





## Wealth from Waste – the LGA local waste review

### Purpose of Report

This report provides a summary of the content of the recently launched Wealth from Waste report which presented the findings of LGA local waste review.

### Summary

The LGA's Wealth from Waste report was launched on 4 June at an event at Local Government House. It received positive media coverage for its articulation of the challenges and opportunities for councils on waste. The report includes a number of recommendations. These include enabling councils to maximise the income from recyclable material as well as a request to cap and redistribute the landfill tax to finance forward thinking waste and recycling infrastructure. It also proposes follow-up action which should shape the Board's work programme for next year.

### Recommendations

That the Board:

1. **Note** and **comment** on the launch of the Wealth from Waste report, positive media coverage and associated recommendations; and
2. **Note** that work to take the review and its recommendations forward will be agreed as part of discussion of priorities and work programme for next year at agenda item 4.

### Action

As directed by members.

**Contact officer:** Dan McCartney  
**Position:** Adviser  
**Phone no:** 020 7664 3238  
**E-mail:** [dan.mccartney@local.gov.uk](mailto:dan.mccartney@local.gov.uk)



## **Wealth from Waste – the LGA local waste review**

### **Background**

1. The Local Waste Review was commissioned by the LGA Environment and Housing Board in November 2012 to enable local government to proactively lead the future direction of waste policy. It was led by a LGA elected member panel comprised of Cllr Clyde Loakes as Chair, Cllr Clare Whelan, Cllr Keith House and Cllr Peter Jones. We also convened a challenge group of 19 key stakeholder organisations to help develop and test recommendations, and received 55 responses to our Call for Evidence.
2. The outcome of the Review was our Wealth from Waste report, launched on 4 June at an event at Local Government House chaired by Cllr Loakes. Lord de Mauley, the Minister with responsibility for Waste, delivered an address, in addition to contributions from Matthew Farrow, Environmental Services Association, Paul Vanston, Kent Waste Partnership and Emma Hallet, REalliance. The event was attended by over 80 delegates from local and central government as well as other waste related organisations.
3. The full report can be downloaded from: <http://www.local.gov.uk/waste-management>
4. The review received good coverage in the media: Cllr Mehboob Khan was interviewed on BBC Breakfast; Cllr Loakes did a broadcast interview for BBC 5 live which was used across all the regional BBC radio bulletins; and there were positive pieces in the Daily Express and the Times. We also issued a press release in advance of Recycling Week (commencing 17 June) to highlight the role and success councils have had on recycling and reinforce the case for freezing the landfill tax and returning its receipts to local government, as recommended in our report. On the back of this, Cllr Loakes was interviewed by Sky news radio, which was used across commercial radio over the following weekend.

### **Summary of the review**

5. The report makes a strong case that there is wealth in waste. The waste and recycling sector is currently worth £11 billion and could be a key growth sector for the UK economy with the right support and investment.
6. At the heart of our report is the recognition that councils' track record on waste management is very strong: they have dramatically reduced the amount of waste going to landfill and increased the amount being recycled over the past 15 years. Their excellent performance is borne out by high resident satisfaction levels, with the most recent polling data finding that satisfaction rates with waste collection services are at 86 per cent, irrespective of the frequency of collection. Thus we conclude that councils should be trusted to design their waste management services, including kerbside collection arrangements, as a local deal with their residents. Central government should instead be focusing on getting more value from the nine-tenths of the country's waste that is generated by businesses, not householders.
7. We hone in on material recovery as the activity that has the greatest potential to generate growth in the sector, on the basis that, once collected, recycling, unlike other methods of waste disposal, offers a net income because the product has a market value.

We suggest that the time is ripe for the country to look beyond meeting our EU waste targets by 2020, and be more ambitious in trying to unlock the full economic potential of the waste and recycling sector. If recycling rates were increased to 70%, this could generate 51,400 jobs nationwide and an additional £3 billion in value for the UK economy.

8. For local government, this could mean a projected additional income of £820 million between now and 2020 if councils are able to increase their share of the income for dry recycling from 28 per cent (as it sits now) to 40 per cent. If, in addition, the quality of recycling was reflected in price and contamination was reduced by half, this would yield an additional £1 billion by 2020.
9. The report makes a dozen recommendations to enable this vision to be realised, which can be summarised as follows:
  - 9.1 **Cap the landfill tax rate and re-invest receipts** to return to the principle of revenue neutrality with which the landfill tax was originally introduced. We call for the rate of the tax to be capped at 2014/15 levels and receipts to be re-distributed to local authorities. At the same time, we suggest that receipts from commercial waste companies should be used to capitalise the Green Investment Bank or local Waste and Recycling Boards;
  - 9.2 **Improve the quality of our recyclable waste** in order to increase its value through changes to the rules and auditing of sorting facilities through the Material Recovery Facility (MRF) Code of Practice;
  - 9.3 **Address the exporting of waste and recycling** to provide a level playing field for the domestic recycling and reprocessing industry. We call for the reform of the compliance regime for packaging companies, which currently provides an incentive to export poor quality material overseas;
  - 9.4 **Improve capacity to deal with high value recyclable material** for example waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE). We are calling for councils, if they choose, to be able to access a greater proportion of the value of these materials by marketing them themselves, as part of reforms to the producer compliance arrangements;
  - 9.5 **Encourage more reuse and reconditioning** in order to avoid landfilling and incinerating many thousands of tonnes of WEEE, textiles and furniture. To foster the market for reused material, we recommend the introduction of a reuse product standard, the exploration of tax breaks, and domestic landfill bans on products such as furniture, paint and textiles. We propose to establish a Reuse Commission with the key stakeholders to drive growth in the reuse market.
  - 9.6 **Rebalance responsibility for packaging waste** to incentivise producers to explore better design and reduce the cost burden on taxpayers. We recommend reforms to the Packaging Recovery Note regime and have offered to broker a negotiation that would result in a more binding agreement with business to reduce packaging and other waste, building on the principles of the voluntary Courtauld commitment and extending it to other waste producing areas.

9.7 **Rewarding residents as a means to nudge households to recycle more**, based on offering them a direct share of the proceeds of increased value. We point to a number of council reward schemes that are testing different techniques to encourage higher rates of recycling.

10. The full set of recommendations is set out at **Annex A**.

#### **Next steps**

11. The launch of the review will be followed up with a series of proactive press releases and media activity to ensure continued coverage of the recommendations and findings of the review over the next 6 months.

12. Proposals for further work to take the review and its recommendations forward are set out for discussion of priorities and work programme for next year.

#### **Financial implications**

13. The proposals within this paper can be delivered within the existing programme budget.



## **Annex A: Wealth from Waste Recommendations**

**Recommendation 1:** Freeze the landfill levy at its 2014/15 level in recognition that there is no evidence that further increases would have an effect on recycling trends.

**Recommendation 2:** The MRF Code of Practice should require full transparency of information and a robust system of sampling to enable price differentiation to drive higher quality, improve confidence in quality, and recover the associated value for local tax payers.

**Recommendation 3:** Amend the PERN system and improve enforcement at ports of waste exports so that the domestic reprocessing industry has a level playing field.

**Recommendation 4:** Revise the PRN system to include greater transparency, a direct incentive to local authorities for increasing their capture of packaging for recycling and an incentive for producers to use more recycled material and better design for recycling.

**Recommendation 5:** Revise the WEEE compliance arrangements to ensure that local authorities that collect and store WEEE have the ability if they wish to manage and receive an appropriate income for it. There should also be additional incentives to reuse an increasing proportion of WEEE while providing assurance that the material will not be illegally exported and landfilled overseas.

**Recommendation 6:** Introduce targeted landfill bans in the UK on selected materials – potentially furniture, paints, and textiles – and link them to an increased producer contribution to encourage a thriving recycling and reuse industry.

**Recommendation 7:** Restore the principle of revenue neutrality with which the landfill tax was originally introduced. Tax receipts from local authorities should be redistributed to local taxpayers. One option for the proportion raised from the commercial sector is to provide underpinning capital for forward thinking waste infrastructure projects, e.g. by capitalising the Green Investment Bank or establishing a network of local Waste and Recycling Boards for investment in recycling infrastructure.

**Recommendation 8:** Build on the principles of the Courtauld Commitment with a new agreement binding more businesses and directly involving local authorities. The LGA is willing to convene discussions and lead a negotiation process that can lead to a new and more effective agreement with business.

**Recommendation 9:** To build the reuse market, develop a reuse product standard that will provide quality assurance to consumers.

**Recommendation 10:** To build the reuse market, introduce a tax incentive for reused and refurbished products, possibly by pressing in Brussels for a lower rate of VAT.

**Recommendation 11:** To drive public debate about reuse, bring partners together and develop new thinking, the LGA proposes to establish a Reuse Commission tasked with reporting by the end of 2013 on measures government, councils, businesses and the voluntary sector can take to mainstream reuse and drive growth in the reuse of products, including developing specific detail and implementation timetables for the two recommendations above.

**Recommendation 12:** The Government should recognise that kerbside collection arrangements reflect a local deal between councils and their residents and are not a proper subject of national policies.





## Environment and Housing Board Review of the year

### Purpose

For information and discussion.

### Summary

This report reviews the progress and achievements in relation to the priorities, objectives and deliverables agreed by the Board in September 2012.

### Recommendation

Members of the Board are invited to **note** the achievements against the objectives and deliverables agreed for 2012/13.

### Action

As directed by the Board.

**Contact officer:** Caroline Green  
**Position:** Programme Lead  
**Phone no:** 0207 664 3359  
**E-mail:** [caroline.green@local.gov.uk](mailto:caroline.green@local.gov.uk)



## Environment and Housing Board Review of the year

### Introduction

1. At its meeting in September 2013 the Environment and Housing Board agreed a set of key objectives and deliverables for the year on each of its priority areas of work.
2. The board agreed 4 key areas of focus for the year as:
  - 2.1 Growth – incorporating planning, housing and green growth;
  - 2.2 Waste;
  - 2.3 Sustainability and Carbon Reduction; and
  - 2.4 Flooding.
3. This report summarises key achievements against the agreed objectives in each of these areas. A full description of achievements against each of the deliverables agreed by the board under each objective is set out in **Annex A**. The report also provides a summary of achievements of the Climate Local programme and the Planning Advisory Service (PAS).

### Growth

4. **Objective:** *to promote the positive role that councils play in driving economic growth through their roles on planning, housing and supporting green industries and to present an evidenced case for the powers and flexibilities to allow them to go further.*
5. **Key achievements:**
  - 5.1 Our research and analysis of **unimplemented planning permissions** for residential development and councils' record on approving planning applications provided evidence to support our arguments that planning is not a barrier to growth and has been widely quoted in the media and by parliamentarians.
  - 5.2 The Board presented a forceful challenge to the Government's proposals for a raft of extension of **permitted development rights** for householder extensions, broadband infrastructure, offices, temporary use of shops and other buildings and schools. This included a high profile media and parliamentary lobbying campaign that secured a significant media and parliamentary profile for councils' concerns and opposition to the proposals.
  - 5.3 The **Growth and Infrastructure Bill** was a priority area of work for the Board with a significant parliamentary and media lobbying activity against proposals that would undermine local decision making on planning and extend the powers of the planning inspectorate. The Board used the Bill as an opportunity to lobby for alternative proposals which would promote growth, including removal of the housing borrowing cap. Throughout the Bill's passage through Parliament we secured extensive high profile coverage of councils' concerns and our position on the Bill. Our work secured a number of changes to the Bill including time-limiting the ability of the Planning Inspectorate to renegotiate affordable housing agreements, and securing a new clause to making it easier for councils to use Local Development orders.

- 5.4 The Board's work to demonstrate the potential for councils to invest in housing through **the removal of HRA borrowing restrictions** gained widespread support from by a range of stakeholder organisations and parliamentarians across all parties. Our publication, 'Let's Get Building', produced jointly with key housing organisations alongside research on the implementation on self-financing, has supported a high profile lobbying campaign and we continue to discuss options at a political level with the Government.
- 5.5 The Board also supported the Finance Panel's work to **assess the cumulative impact and costs of welfare reform and the impact for councils and delivery of affordable housing**. This work is due to be launched in July and will provide an evidence base for on-going work on welfare reform and future lobbying work on funding for social and intermediate housing.

### Waste

6. **Objective:** *to champion local innovation in waste management and lobby for greater local decision making on waste, as the only means of addressing future funding gaps in waste.*
7. **Key achievements:**
- 7.1 **Wealth from Waste – the LGA Local Waste Review** was a significant area of work for the Board this year and examined the future opportunities, challenges and risks for waste services with the aim of enabling the sector to proactively lead the debate on future waste policy. The Review engaged widely with key stakeholders in the waste sector and brought together a range of evidence and analysis on future cost drivers and income and saving opportunities. The Review sets out a range of recommendations around the central theme of maximising the value or wealth in waste and presents a powerful case for local decision making. The Review was widely and positively received by the media and across the waste sector and we will continue to publicise the Review through further media work.
- 7.2 **Securing a positive outcome in the Waste Judicial Review.** The LGA as an Interested Party had significant input into, and was represented at, the court hearing of the Waste Judicial Review case. The outcome was recognition that EU law recognises the role of councils in determining whether separate collection of recyclables is practicable and necessary to meet quality standards and saved councils from incurring costs that could have been in the order of tens of millions of pounds. Following the successful outcome of the case the Board has been working to influence the Materials Recovery Facility Code of Practice and the guidance on the regulations to make the case for a better system of sorting recycling which will increase quality and therefore value to councils and tax payers, as well as helping to safeguard the use of co-mingling by councils' whose circumstances require it.

### Carbon reduction and sustainability

8. **Objective:** *to champion local action on fuel poverty, energy efficiency and reducing the cost of energy, giving councils the flexibility and access to the resources they need to support local initiatives.*

9. **Key achievements:**

- 9.1 **Lobbying for councils to have access to the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) brokerage** without having to seek Green Deal provider accreditation. The LGA pressed the case in our submission to the Spending Review on energy-related issues, as well as through our response to the DECC consultation on making it mandatory for energy suppliers to trade on the brokerage in April 2013. DECC is currently reviewing the decision to restrict access to the brokerage to Green Deal providers.
- 9.2 **Demonstrating how locally-led solutions for addressing fuel poverty are the most effective.** The LGA submitted evidence to the Energy and Climate Change Select Committee 'Inquiry into energy prices, profits and poverty' in February. Lead Members also presented recommendations on how DECC could support local action at their meeting with the Minister with responsibility for fuel poverty, Greg Barker MP, in May. This work is being followed up with a more detailed paper to be published in July.
- 9.3 Members have consolidated **engagement with DECC** Ministers. This work has secured recognition of councils' unique role in delivering carbon reduction and the value of engaging with local government. This recognition is reflected in agreement of a new Memorandum of Understanding between the LGA and DECC and quarterly meetings with the Minister for Climate Change.

**Flooding**

10. The Board delegated responsibility for the work on flooding to the Inland Flood Risk Management Group which has led key elements of the work to achieve the objective identified by the Board.
11. **Objective:** *To ensure that flood defences are properly planned for and funded to make the case for adequate funding for exceptional flood damage, including insurance cover.*

12. **Key achievements:**

- 12.1 **Lobbying on floods funding.** The LGA made the case for extension of the Bellwin Scheme and additional funding for councils dealing with damage from the 2012 floods presenting evidence of costs from exceptional floods in letters to Ministers. The LGA also gathered evidence from councils' initial experience of new Partnership Funding model for flood defences to highlight areas in which the model could be improved to maximise the value-for-money and support local priorities. The LGA gave evidence to the EFRA select committee inquiry into floods funding in February and is feeding into Defra's evaluation of the Partnership Funding model which is expected to report to Ministers in September 2013. The Group has continued to raise its concerns at senior officer and political level on the importance of a new model for flood insurance. The current Statement of Principles has been extended to end of July to allow more time for negotiations between ABI and the Government and it is expected that solutions will be carried forward through the Water Bill.
- 12.2 The LGA has been working with Environment Agency, Ofwat and Water UK to **promote more investment in water and drainage infrastructure** from joining up

public and water company investment plans. This was pursued through a proposed amendment to the Growth and Infrastructure Bill to encourage greater investment in water infrastructure; by highlighting opportunities for councils to engage with water company business plans as part of the 2014 Price Review process; and by working with the Environment Agency to develop arrangements for the future of flood maintenance.

### **The Climate Local programme**

13. The work of the Climate Local programme is overseen by a steering group of local authority officers, Members from the Environment and Housing Board and officials from Government departments.

14. **Objective:** *To showcase how councils are helping people to reduce energy costs and help people out of fuel poverty and use this evidence to lobby for locally-led initiatives rather than energy supplier-led initiatives.*

#### **15. Key achievements:**

15.1 **70 local authorities have signed up to the Climate Local Commitment**, of which 29 have submitted and shared details of their local actions. Membership of the Climate Local Network has now reached 300 members across councils.

15.2 An independent **impact report** summarising case studies from 20 councils was launched in March 2013 at the Climate Local conference. The report demonstrated activity and impact of locally-led initiatives in three priority areas: driving local growth, making savings across council services and supporting vulnerable communities. Case studies from the impact report have been used to support the LGA's work on growth and fuel poverty.

15.3 **New web resources** have been produced which include guidance and information on local actions that councils can take that benefit local communities and businesses whilst tackling the climate change. These include information sheets and slide packs for elected members covering leadership, local economy, finance, housing and planning, environment and transport and health and wellbeing.

### **Planning Advisory Service**

16. The Board secured recognition from the Planning Minister, Nick Boles MP of the importance of a sector-led approach to driving improvement in planning. With agreement from DCLG, new governance arrangements have been established to ensure that the local government sector provides leadership and direction to support provided by PAS and hold the PAS team to account for delivery of effective support on planning.

17. In 2012-13 PAS concentrated on working with local authorities on supporting their plan-making; 101 councils received one to one support, with many more attending PAS sessions on plan-making. PAS ran another successful benchmark for planning services round, with 95 authorities taking part. This provided the 65 authorities who completed the exercise with a benchmarking report focussing on activities, costs and performance which can then be used as an improvement tool. More than 300 councils attended PAS events covering the NPPF, Community Infrastructure Levy, viability, and Neighbourhood Planning, and 40 councillor briefing sessions were delivered on site at Councils.

Approximately 100 councillors attended 6 leadership academies, and 9 authorities had planning peer challenges. From the PAS impact assessment, 90 per cent of people PAS worked with in 2012 said that it helped them get their job done better.

**External engagement and wider activity**

18. The profile and influence of the Board has remained high with the Chair and members of the Board meeting with Ministers from DCLG, DECC and Defra to discuss policy issues on a regular basis. Engagement at senior level with key partners including the Environment Agency, the Homes and Communities Agency; the National Housing Federation, Water UK and Energy UK has consolidated and strengthened relationships and added weight to our lobbying.
19. Members of the Board have given evidence to a number of select committees and all party parliamentary groups across the Board's remit and have represented the LGA at numerous conferences and events. The LGA programme of events has included conferences on planning for growth, housing finance, energy efficiency and the Green Deal and Climate Local.
20. The Board has also maintained a strong media presence with 35 press releases issued since last September. There has also been strong broadcast and newspaper coverage of our priority areas of work including planning reforms, a range of housing issues, the Waste Review and councils' response to flooding. Since January, the Environment and Housing Board has been mentioned or quoted 93 times by national newspapers and broadcasters.





Deliverable	Activity	Impact
<p><b>Planning</b></p> <p>Forcefully challenge government proposals to undermine local authorities' role in decision making regarding development and safeguarding their ability to negotiate affordable housing and infrastructure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Media and parliamentary campaign against extension of permitted development rights for householder extensions, broadband infrastructure, offices, temporary use of shops and other buildings and schools.</li> <li>Lobbying against proposals in the Growth and Infrastructure Bill to remove decisions from local authorities and extend the powers of the Planning Inspectorate (PINS).</li> <li>Defending flexibility and local determination against changes to the Community Infrastructure Levy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant media and parliamentary profile for councils' concerns and opposition to the extension of permitted development.</li> <li>Amendments to the Growth and Infrastructure Bill including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time limiting the expansion of PINS powers to renegotiate affordable housing s106 agreement.</li> <li>The criteria for designating councils for poor performance being subject to parliamentary approval.</li> <li>Removing bureaucracy surrounding Local Development Orders.</li> <li>Reform of the Town and Village Green system that will prevent the system being abused as a tool to prevent much needed development.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Presenting evidence that councils are getting their plans in place and planning positively for growth and through the Planning Advisory Service supporting councils to do that</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research and analysis of unimplemented planning permissions for residential development and councils' record on planning applications.</li> <li>The Planning Advisory Service has provided direct support to 101 councils this year, in many cases to assist them in getting plans in place.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LGA research on unimplemented planning permissions secured wide media coverage and evidenced our arguments against further reform to planning system.</li> <li>Majority of councils expect to have published their local plan by the end of the year.</li> </ul>
<p>Seek to ensure that the review of Local Housing Standards does not result in national standards that constrain councils' ability to ensure quality of new homes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Input to CLG review process with Cllr Ed Turner representing LGA on the Review Group.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government proposals following the review due to be subject to consultation.</li> </ul>
<p>Presenting evidence to support the case for the decentralisation of planning fees and press for technical reforms which would remove unnecessary red tape.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presented evidenced case for decentralisation of fees in our Spending Round submission.</li> <li>Submitted response to Red Tape Challenge review of planning administration.</li> <li>Developed proposals for simplification and streamlining tools for Local Development Orders, Compulsory Purchase Orders and an advice note to support early agreement of infrastructure contributions with applicants.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government updated planning fees by 15%. The LGA continues to press for deregulation of fee setting.</li> <li>Secured improvements to the process for Local Development Orders through the Growth and Infrastructure Bill.</li> </ul>

Deliverable	Activity	Impact
<p><b>Housing</b></p> <p>Evidenced based proposals for how councils could invest more in building affordable homes through removing borrowing restrictions and increased flexibility on the Right to Buy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developed evidence of the potential of councils to develop new housing if borrowing restrictions were limited through 'Let's Get Building' publication.</li> <li>Surveyed the city to develop an evidence base on the market reaction to an increase in borrowing to support council and ALMO led house-building.</li> <li>Collated data on the impact of the reinvigorated right to buy over the first 12 months of implementation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secured an increased media presence and wide ranging support for the removal of the HRA borrowing cap from partner organisations including Shelter, National Housing Federation, Chartered Institute of Housing, Federation of Master Builders, National Federation of Builders and House Builders Federation, along with parliamentarians.</li> <li>Amendments tabled by Lord Best on behalf of the LGA during the Growth and Infrastructure Bill.</li> </ul>
<p>Evidenced based proposals for sustainable funding model for social and intermediate housing in the next spending review period</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research in partnership with ARCH, CIH, CWAG and others on the implementation of self-financing to date (to be launched in the summer).</li> <li>Joint work with the LGA Finance Panel to ensure the housing impacts of welfare reform are fed into the Panel's work on the cumulative impacts and costs for local authorities (to be launched in July).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This work is linked with that of the Finance Panel to evidence the impact of welfare reform.</li> <li>See update above on campaigning activity to secure the relaxation of the HRA borrowing cap.</li> </ul>
<p>Support to councils to develop long term business plans for councils housing stock; develop skills for innovative models of housing led growth, and the championing of good practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with CIH and CIPA to develop a series of good practice principles to underpin long term business planning and elected member oversight (to be launched in July).</li> <li>Series of local authority round tables have informed the production of five practice notes providing advice and good practice on housing led growth, engagement with communities and the implementation of welfare reform (to be launched in July).</li> <li>Case study library, knowledge hubs, practitioner networks and a range of conferences provide an opportunity to share good practice.</li> </ul>	<p>A support package will be launched in July.</p>

Deliverable	Activity	Impact
<b>Housing (continued)</b>		
Monitoring the impact of welfare reform on homelessness, access to housing and local housing strategies and councils ability to invest in affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joint work with the LGA Finance Panel to ensure that the housing impacts of welfare reform are fed into their work on the cumulative impacts and costs for local authorities (to be launched in July).</li> </ul>	Research report evidencing the cumulative impact of welfare reform to be launched in July 2013.
<b>Waste</b>		
A manifesto for waste management services and a clear set of proposals to ensure sustainable services and effective tackling of fly-tipping and other forms of nuisance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wealth from Waste – the LGA Local Waste Review identifying challenges and risks for future waste policy. Recommendations on maximising value and exploiting potential for growth.</li> <li>Directly contributing to a positive outcome in the waste Judicial Review The LGA as an Interested Party had significant input into and was represented at the court hearing</li> <li>Influencing the Materials Recovery Facility Code of Practice through high level meetings and consultation response to make the case for a better system of sorting recycling which will increase value to councils and tax payers, and safeguard the use of co-mingling by councils' whose circumstances require it.</li> <li>Spending Review submission on waste calling for landfill tax to be both capped at its 2014/15 level and redistributed back to councils to spend on waste and recycling infrastructure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive media Coverage for LGA positions and well received by waste sector.</li> <li>The outcome of the JR was recognition that EU law recognises the role of councils in determining whether separate collection of recyclables is practicable and necessary to meet quality standards, avoiding significant costs to councils.</li> <li>Outcome awaited later this summer</li> <li>Outcome awaited later in June</li> </ul>
Presentation and dissemination of good practice models for councils on minimising costs, maximising revenue opportunities.	Case studies covering delivery of infrastructure, rewarding residents for recycling, achieving efficiencies and managing waste electrical products featured in the Waste Review	Case studies substantiated the Waste Review call for a Local Deal on waste demonstrated by the excellent work of councils already. The case studies will prove useful to councils to follow. Further work on good practice models is planned over the summer.

Deliverable	Activity	Impact
<b>Sustainability and Carbon Reduction</b>		
Showcase and disseminate good practice on how councils are helping people to reduce energy costs and help people out of fuel poverty	Project with Energy UK to disseminate good practice on reaching residents, data-sharing, designing area-based schemes, and planning.	Work is expected to be completed over the summer.
Campaign for councils to have access to ECO brokerage to invest in energy efficiency and fuel poverty initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pressed the case in our submission to the Spending Review on energy-related issues</li> <li>• Response to the DECC consultation on mandatory trading on the brokerage in April 2013.</li> <li>• Joint lobbying with the National Housing Federation through ECO Steering Committee.</li> <li>• Lead members raised the issue in their meetings with the Minister for Climate Change.</li> </ul>	DECC is reviewing the decision to restrict access to brokerage to Green Deal providers. No date for a final determination has yet been indicated.
Provide support to councils in developing business cases for the Green Deal and ECO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a toolkit to help councils work through their options for financing energy efficiency measures.</li> </ul>	Toolkit to be published in July.
Demonstrate how locally-led solutions are effective in addressing fuel poverty and develop proposals to inform delivery of the fuel poverty strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submitted evidence to the Energy and Climate Change Select Committee <i>Inquiry into energy prices, profits and poverty</i> in February.</li> <li>• Lead members presented recommendations on how DECC could support local action at their meeting with Greg Barker in May, which is being followed up with a detailed paper.</li> </ul>	DECC is expected to publish a new national strategy on fuel poverty shortly before recess.

Deliverable	Activity	Impact
<p><b>Flooding</b></p> <p>Gather evidence on how well the new Partnership Funding model for flood defences is helping local priorities and to continue to press Defra for better models for allocating funding.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collected evidence which highlighted improvements that could be made to maximise the value-for-money of different sources of funding to support flood defences.</li> <li>Shared evidence on 'Floods funding' at an EFRA Select Committee in February 2013.</li> <li>Feeding into Defra's evaluation of the Partnership Funding model through a place on the steering group.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The evidence is limited so far as the Partnership Funding model is still in a relatively early stage.</li> <li>Defra's review is expected to report to Ministers in September 2013.</li> </ul>
<p>To apply pressure on Government and the insurance industry to deliver a new system of flood insurance and protect communities during the transition period.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our media releases on the impact of 2012 floods asked for the Government and ABI to urgently find a resolution.</li> <li>Inland Flood Risk Management Group shared concerns with and continued to apply pressure on Defra through Group meetings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insurance industry and Government extended the current agreement (Statement of Principles) to 31 July 2013 in order to allow more time for negotiation.</li> <li>Government have indicated that the Water Bill is the likely legislative vehicle to carry forward any solution.</li> <li>Defra have significantly increased the number of people working on finding a sustainable solution.</li> </ul>
<p>Investigate other avenues which could help avoid a regular request of support from central government each time a major flooding incident causes infrastructure damage.</p> <p>To identify how owners of infrastructure and key assets, such as land, and those responsible for managing flood risk, can work better together to improve resilience of infrastructure and minimise the risk.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A request for Government to change the Bellwin Scheme to cover infrastructure damage.</li> <li>The LGA have engaged with EA, Ofwat and Water UK to promote more resilient drainage infrastructure from joining up public and water company investment plans.</li> <li>Proposed amendment to the Growth and Infrastructure Bill to encourage greater investment in water infrastructure.</li> <li>Highlighting opportunities for councils to engage with water company business plans as part of the 2014 Price Review process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Government confirmed that the scheme was not designed for longer term works or repairs as they fall under a recovery stage, and not the immediate emergency phase.</li> <li>There is growing evidence of greater cooperation between local authorities, water companies and others in ensuring greater alignment of drainage infrastructure investment plans.</li> </ul>

Deliverable	Activity	Impact
<b>Flooding (continued)</b>		
Supporting promotion of good practice, intelligence and lessons in flood risk management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launched a one-stop shop portal (<a href="http://www.local.gov.uk/floodportal">www.local.gov.uk/floodportal</a>) in June 2012 with the support of funding from Environment Agency and Defra.</li> <li>Captured lessons learned from 2012 floods.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The 'FlowNet' community has 1200 subscribers and is showing high levels of use and self-sufficiency.</li> <li>Summary of lessons learned to be published in July</li> </ul>
Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) implementation  Press Government for clarity on the introduction of SuDS legislation and on the long-term funding model for the maintenance of SuDS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence presented to the All Party Parliamentary Group on Water in February 2013</li> <li>Push for resolution on charging and funding issues through representation on Defra working groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obtained clarity on timing of SuDS implementation which Government have stated will be April 2014 at the earliest and not in 2013 as originally indicated.</li> </ul>
<b>The Climate Local Programme</b>		
Showcase how councils are helping people to reduce energy costs and help people out of fuel poverty and use this evidence to lobby for locally-led initiatives rather than energy supplier-led initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued push for more councils to sign up to Climate Local in order to increase value to other councils and strengthen evidence of council action.</li> <li>Collected and recorded evidence of council actions on climate change that deliver positive local impact.</li> <li>Provided evidence to support Board and wider LGA priorities.</li> <li>Developed information and learning material for councils and elected members to in support of local actions on climate change.</li> <li>Established a steering group of local authority officers, members from the Environment and Housing Board and officials from Government departments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>70 local authorities have signed up to the Climate Local Commitment; 29 have submitted and shared details of their local actions. Membership of Climate Local Network has now reached 300 members.</li> <li>An independent impact report summarising case studies from 20 councils was published and launched at a national conference in March 2013.</li> <li>Case studies from the impact report have been used to support the LGA's work on growth and fuel poverty.</li> <li>A set of information sheets and slide packs for elected members covering a range of local priorities had been published.</li> </ul>

## Responding to the LGA funding challenge

### Purpose

For information and comment.

### Summary

This item will provide a verbal update to the Board on the way the LGA is proposing to respond to a £2 million reduction in its RSG topslice funding for 2013/14 and the further planned £1.5 million cut in 2014/15 and the implications for the resources available to the Board.

### Recommendation

That the Board **note** the verbal update provided.

### Action

As directed by the board.

**Contact officer:** Paul Raynes  
**Position:** Head of Programmes  
**Phone no:** 0207 664 3037  
**E-mail:** [caroline.green@local.gov.uk](mailto:caroline.green@local.gov.uk)





## Priorities and Work Programme for 2013 - 14

### Purpose

For discussion and agreement.

### Summary

This report sets out proposals for the Board's priorities and key areas of work for the coming year. Subject to discussion and members' views officers will develop a work programme to deliver these priorities for discussion and agreement at the first meeting of the new Board cycle in September.

### Recommendation

That Members of the Board **discuss** the suggested priorities and areas of focus set out at **paragraphs 8, 10, 12 and 14**.

### Action

Subject to agreement by the Board, officers to undertake the 13 projects set out in this report over the course of the next year.

**Contact officer:** Caroline Green  
**Position:** Programme Lead  
**Phone no:** 0207 664 3359  
**E-mail:** [caroline.green@local.gov.uk](mailto:caroline.green@local.gov.uk)



## **Priorities and Work Programme for 2013 - 14**

### **Introduction**

1. The purpose of this report is to facilitate an early discussion about the focus and priority areas of work for the coming year. The Board's aim is to lead the agenda for local government on the key challenges and issues within its remit and support the overall objectives of the LGA as set out in the Business Plan.
2. In light of further reduction to the LGA budget and resources, it is important that the work programme is focused on a defined set of priorities on which we can deliver significant impact and demonstrate value to councils. We currently believe that the projects below can be delivered within available resources, however the work programme that is developed for discussion in September will be constrained by the overall resource envelope of the LGA, which may have implications for the scale and timing of the work to be delivered.
3. The paper suggests key themes and outline work programme on the following priorities:
  - 3.1 Housing;
  - 3.2 Planning;
  - 3.3 Waste;
  - 3.4 Energy Efficiency; and
  - 3.5 Climate Local.

### **Context – key issues and LGA Business Plan Priorities**

4. The Board has a powerful role to play in delivering the LGA's priorities set out in the business plan 2013-14 and particularly in relation to the priority on economic growth, jobs and prosperity which aims to ensure that councils are recognised as central to economic growth.
5. The Business plan includes specific objectives within the Board's remit as follows:
  - 5.1 Councils maintain their planning powers and freedoms and there is certainty and stability in the planning system;
  - 5.2 Councils drive the increase in housing supply that the nation needs;
  - 5.3 Councils support green growth by taking action on energy efficiency and reducing the costs of energy; and
  - 5.4 Councils lead the future direction of waste policy and set the agenda for reducing waste and increasing re-use and recycling whilst reducing cost pressures.
6. Growth is also a key theme of the LGA's work on Rewiring Public Services which will be launched at annual conference. The Board's work over the next year should seek to support and inform that work as it moves forward.

**Proposed focus for Board work programme for 2013/14**

**Housing**

7. With 1.8 million households on council waiting lists, increasing homelessness; and unaffordability of housing and stalled developments in many areas of the country, housing remains a key issue for all councils. Increasing the supply of housing is crucial to addressing these issues and has an important role to play in supporting growth by ensuring housing supply matches job opportunities and boosting the construction industry. Investment in housing is also needed to reconfigure the existing stock to manage the impacts of the governments' welfare reforms. With greater numbers of people renting in the private sector, councils also have an interest in ensuring it offers a high quality and stable option for residents to play its full part in meeting housing need.
8. To lead the debate on solutions to allow councils to meet these challenges, it is proposed that the Board's work on housing is focused on 3 strands of work:
  - 8.1 **Increasing housing supply** – Supporting councils to invest in housing led growth that meets local needs and demands to invest in new and existing stock. This would include an extension of our campaign for the removal of the centrally set HRA borrowing cap for stock holding authorities, and proposals for tackling empty homes alongside work to maximise the use of land and assets, financial guarantees and planning to encourage appropriate housing development either directly or in partnership for all (stock owning and non-stock owning) authorities.
  - 8.2 **Securing a better deal for tenants in the private rented sector** – Developing evidenced proposals to secure a better deal for tenants in the private rented sector by removing unnecessary red tape and central control and equipping councils with clear and effective tools to promote a high standard of quality and take action against those landlords that fail to provide safe and appropriate accommodation and agents who do not offer redress when things go wrong and charge excessive and inappropriate fees. We will also support councils to encourage investment in the private rented sector through sharing good practice and pressing for greater flexibilities where barriers exist.
  - 8.3 **Managing the housing implications of Welfare reform** - Working with the LGA Finance Panel to assess the emerging impact and costs of welfare reform to understand the behavioural and market changes to inform future policy responses and to develop evidenced proposals for funding for affordable housing.

**Planning**

9. Looking to influence the development of future policy, the Board's focus should be on continuing to make the case that councils are using their planning functions to support growth and meet demand in their areas with a view to presenting a strong case against further centralisation of the planning system and to support greater local determination on planning matters. The board should also focus on areas of potential challenge to councils in their planning role, for example in planning for housing and infrastructure across local authority boundaries.
10. It is proposed that the Board's work on planning is focused on:

- 10.1 **Promoting a locally-led planning system** - Making the case for local democratic decision making on planning as a means of proactively driving growth whilst ensuring residents and business to have a say about development that affects them. This will include monitoring the cumulative impact of the extension of permitted development rights to schools, high streets, commercial buildings and household extensions. That evidence will be used to support the case for local decision making, and oppose any further extensions to the role and scope of the Planning Inspectorate.
- 10.2 **Strategic planning for infrastructure and growth** – Focusing on the role planning can play in attracting investment and funding strategic infrastructure to ensure areas remain successful and sustainable over the longer term. The work would include providing evidence of the positive role that councils play and developing policy for:
- 10.2.1 planning across local authority boundaries and work with Local Enterprise Partnerships and Growth Deals to share examples of the positive role planning can play in meeting wider needs and growth ambitions;
  - 10.2.2 planning and funding for floods defences and water infrastructure; and
  - 10.2.3 how planning can maximise growth through cultural, heritage and sporting assets (working with the LGA's Culture Tourism and Sport Board and arts, heritage and sports agencies).
- 10.3 **Supporting councils to drive improvement in planning** – A programme of support for councils on planning will be delivered by the Planning Advisory Service. The PAS Board will agree the objectives and programme of work to be delivered to ensure that it supports councils' improvement priorities. Key priorities for this year are support for plan making, leadership of planning; councils working together on strategic planning issues and service improvement and value for money in planning. The latter priority includes a programme of support for those designated or at risk of designation for planning performance.

## **Waste**

11. The Board's work on Wealth from Waste has demonstrated that waste and recycling are economic issues and could be a key growth sector for the UK economy. It also demonstrated council ambition and local leadership on waste and made the case for decisions on waste to be made locally. Our work on waste for the coming year would aim to continue to lead the debate on the future of waste and to build on the findings and deliver on the recommendations of the Local Waste Review.
12. The suggested work programme would include:
- 12.1 **Communication of key messages from the review**- a series of media stories until December 2013 to highlight research and key findings and recommendations from the review.
  - 12.2 **Establishing a Reuse Commission** to bring together key stakeholders to develop proposals to mainstream reuse and drive growth in the reuse of products; and

- 12.3 **A more ambitious agreement to reduce packaging waste** - convening discussions and negotiation with business to go further than the Courtauld commitment in reducing packaging waste.

### Energy Efficiency

13. With energy prices rising and levels of fuel poverty increasing, energy efficiency programmes will continue to be an important means by which councils can assist vulnerable residents and those on low incomes to save on their bills and avoid ill health. With ever increasing pressures on public spending it is more important than ever that funding from tax payers – in this case through their energy bills – is used as effectively and efficiently as possible. It is proposed that the Board's focus for the coming year is leading the policy debate on energy efficiency with a view to securing greater value for money for the tax and energy bill payer and to support vulnerable households more effectively. It will be important to work with the energy companies and the National Housing Federation in taking this forward.
14. This programme of work would include:
- 14.1 **Evaluation of existing energy efficiency delivery and funding models** to establish value for money provided;
- 14.2 **Exploration of trading standards and consumer protection issues** arising from the marketing and targeting of energy efficiency programmes; and
- 14.3 **Develop evidenced proposals for changes to policy** and delivery of energy efficiency programmes to influence manifestos in the lead up to the next election.
15. The LGA and DECC have recently agreed a revised Memorandum of Understanding under which we have agreed to work with DECC to promote ways that councils can play a lead role in delivering the Green Deal and ECO; promote ways in which councils can tackle fuel poverty and raise awareness and support councils' action to on carbon reduction and energy efficiency initiatives and renewable energy. These commitments can be delivered through the work programme set out above and by the Climate Local programme.

### Climate Local

16. The Climate Local programme is resourced by a post fully funded by the Environment Agency until March 2014. The proposed work programme for 2013-14 will continue to promote and support green growth and local action on climate change. As well as continuing to increase the number of signatories, activity will centre on enabling councils to demonstrate that they are delivering actions that benefit local people and tackle local priorities such as fuel poverty and sustainable economic growth. There will be a focus on providing evidence of good practice and identifying barriers to council action, to support the Environment and Housing Board's work on growth, and energy. It is suggested that in developing the work programme, consideration is given to identifying specific contributions that the Climate local programme could make to delivering each of the Board's priorities.

## Environment and Housing update paper

### Purpose

For information and comment.

### Summary

This paper provides an update on LGA activity and recent developments relating to the Board's work programme and priorities in the following areas:

- Housing and Planning
- Impact of Welfare Reform on Housing
- Flooding and water infrastructure
- National Adaptation Plan
- Quarterly Meeting with Greg Barker
- ECO Brokerage
- LGA evidence to anti-social behaviour bill

### Recommendations

That Board Members **note** the updates provided.

### Action

As directed by the board.

**Contact officer:** Caroline Green  
**Position:** Programme Lead  
**Phone no:** 0207 664 3359  
**E-mail:** [caroline.green@local.gov.uk](mailto:caroline.green@local.gov.uk)





## Environment and Housing update paper

### Introduction

1. This paper provides an update on activities undertaken to progress the Board's agreed work programme not covered by other items on the agenda for the meeting on 01 July and covers key policy developments relating to issues within the Board's remit that have taken place since the last Board meeting on 14 May 2013.

### Housing and Planning

2. The LGA responded to the government's consultation on further changes to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The LGA stressed that the changes proposed in the consultation, coupled with the recent changes to CIL guidance will increase the evidential requirements on local authorities when preparing a charging schedule and may result in delay and additional costs to councils. CIL does not and cannot meet the whole infrastructure needs in an area and it is crucial that it remains a flexible system to respond to local needs and priorities. The LGA highlighted that the Government proposals to introduce mandatory exemptions to CIL will reduce flexibility for charging authorities to cater for local needs and could significantly reduce the amount of funding necessary to invest in crucial infrastructure.
3. The government has laid its proposed criteria to designate councils for poor performance on planning grounds under the Growth and Infrastructure Act before Parliament. The Act sets out provisions that enable the Secretary of State to designate a local planning authority (LPA) as poorly performing on the basis of its performance on major applications. Designation will mean that applicants may choose for their major application to be handled by either the LPA or the Planning Inspectorate (PINS). The criteria have been laid before Parliament for 40 days. The criteria will have effect at the end of this period, provided that neither House has resolved not to approve it.
4. The LGA has issued a briefing (available at [http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/planning/-/journal\\_content/56/10171/4031014/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE](http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/planning/-/journal_content/56/10171/4031014/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE)) to our members highlighting our concerns with the proposed criteria and is making representations to parliamentarians.
5. Councillor Mike Jones met with the District and County Councils Networks to discuss good practice to bring forward viable and sustainable development that is supported by necessary infrastructure. DCN and CCN agreed to work with the LGA to develop an advice note which will set out key principles and examples to encourage an early dialogue with applicants regarding the totality of infrastructure contributions and the viability of a site. This note is currently being developed and will be made available to councils in the summer.
6. At the Board's request at the 14 May meeting, Cllr Jones wrote to Mark Prisk MP to highlight the case for flexibility on the borrowing cap and to outline a number of other areas for follow up in light of the discussion, as follows:
  - 6.1. How to encourage the use of smaller sites to bring forward housing;
  - 6.2. Meeting changing demographic pressures and the needs of older people over the longer term;

- 6.3. Bringing empty homes back into use;
  - 6.4. Further consideration of how we might use recent flexibilities on Local Development Orders to encourage Self Build; and
  - 6.5. Out of area placements and the LGA's work with councils to respond to the impacts of welfare reforms.
7. Officers are in dialogue with counterparts at DCLG regarding both to the issues highlighted above and also the New Homes Bonus as raised in the Minister's response. The LGA's letter to the Minister and his reply are attached as **Appendix 5a** and **Appendix 5b** respectively.

### **Impact of Welfare Reform on Housing**

8. Councillor Jones met with Chair of the Finance Panel, Cllr Sharon Taylor to discuss the impact of the Government's package of welfare reform on housing. The scale, scope and pace of the welfare reforms will have a significant impact on councils and communities, much of which will only be seen and understood in real time as the changes are implemented and the Finance Panel are leading work to collate data on the impact and costs of the reforms. The Environment and Housing Board will continue to work with the Finance Panel to feed in specific housing impacts on this cross cutting issue. One particular area that we will continue to discuss with local authorities is availability of appropriate and affordable housing stock and out of area placements. Officers have continued to discuss information sharing on out of area placements with London Councils and others.

### **Flooding and water infrastructure**

9. The Inland Flood Risk Management Group met on 5 June and discussed issues relating to Partnership Funding for flood defences, surface water maps, SUDs implementation and insurance. They also received a presentation from the National Farmers Union (NFU) on the challenges faced by the farming community in managing flooding, how the NFU's members work with local flood risk authorities and their perspectives on their future role in reducing flood risk. The Inland FRM Group invited the NFU to future Group meetings. Key actions agreed by the Group included:
- 9.1. Members of the Group agreed to feed in their council's views on Partnership Funding to Defra's review;
  - 9.2. To discuss with their colleagues and finance officers the potential implications for recovering costs for SUDs maintenance;
  - 9.3. To share recent concerns on floods insurance with LGA officials for inclusion in a letter to the relevant Minister, highlighting the need for the Government and the insurance industry to urgently find a sustainable solution to current floods insurance problems; and
  - 9.4. Requested that officers provide a briefing on the Water Bill and an assessment of the effectiveness of any clauses on flood insurance, when the Bill is published.
10. The LGA responded to Ofwat's consultation on how they should assess water company business plans with regards under the Price Review 14 process, via a letter from Cllr Mike Jones. The letter (attached as **Appendix 5c**), included the following key points:

- 10.1. Water companies' periodic reviews of depreciation profiles of their assets should continue to accurately reflect their lifetime, thereby maximising money for investment;
- 10.2. That the water companies consider future housing demand when setting prices, giving water companies more certainty and headroom to invest, and that water companies should use housing data from locally derived sources, with local plans being the best source of information; and
- 10.3. To ensure that local priorities are being considered, the LGA encouraged Ofwat to examine the degree to which companies are engaged with councils and other flood risk authorities.

### **National Adaptation Plan**

11. On 2 July, Defra will publish the National Adaptation Plan, setting out how government, businesses, communities and civil society should prepare for and adapt to climate change. The plan recognises the vital role of local government in building resilience at a local level and acknowledges the importance of the LGA's Climate Local initiative in helping to build council capacity on climate change. The LGA will continue to support councils deliver their adaptation commitments through the Climate Local initiative.

### **Quarterly Meeting with Greg Barker**

12. Councillors Tim Moore, Frances Rhoden and Andrew Cooper met with the Minister for Climate Change, Greg Barker MP, on 21 May. At the meeting, members agreed a joint Memorandum-of-Understanding (MoU) between the LGA and DECC which set out how the two organisations will work together. The MoU recognises that councils have a unique insight and reach into communities that can ensure carbon reduction policies and programmes benefit communities and protect the most vulnerable.
13. Members pressed for flexibility in the design of ECO and Green Deal policy to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to rolling out schemes. They also sought and received assurances that local authorities will have access to data about the take-up of Green Deal and ECO measures in order to be able to target their efforts to best effect. Members also set out the case for local leadership for tackling fuel poverty, including proposals for joint work with Energy UK and the National Housing Federation to promote good practice.

### **ECO brokerage**

14. In support of our work on ECO Brokerage Cllr Jones met with Angela Knight, Chief Executive of the Energy UK. They discussed the LGA and Energy UK's priorities on energy efficiency, and how both organisations can support councils and energy suppliers to work effectively together. It was agreed that the LGA and Energy UK should promote good practice (showcasing a range of examples of effective local partnerships between councils, energy suppliers, and other agencies), explore options to promote action on energy efficiency by Registered Providers, and to consider a joint conference on the theme of local action on energy efficiency in the autumn, in collaboration with the NHF.

### **LGA evidence to anti-social behaviour bill**

15. Cllr Mehboob Khan (Chair, LGA Safer and Stronger Communities Board) and Angela

Mawdsley (Anti-social Behaviour Manager, Leeds City Council) provided oral evidence to the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill Committee on behalf of the LGA on 19 June.

16. On tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB) committed by tenants in private rented accommodation, Cllr Khan advocated the roll out across the UK of the Scottish system, whereby private landlords can be prevented from obtaining their rent from tenants if they fail to act against ASB committed in their properties. Cllr Khan also highlighted the high costs incurred by local authorities in trying to encourage some private sector landlords to take action, suggesting that local authorities should be allowed to re-charge these costs to such landlords.

Mark Prisk MP  
Minister of State for Housing  
Department for Communities and Local Government  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London  
SW1E5DU

20 May 2013

Dear Mark,

Thank you for attending the recent LGA Environment and Housing Board. It was particularly helpful to discuss with you our shared ambitions for housing growth to meet ever rising need. I wanted to follow up this discussion with some further thoughts on housing finance which would enable local authorities to deliver additional homes and a summary of areas we agreed to work collectively on.

The discussion at the Board demonstrated the range of activity and the appetite from authorities to make the most of the opportunity presented by self-financing. The centrally set cap on borrowing is not reflective of housing need and at is below what many authorities could afford to borrow prudentially. Indeed, a number of authorities have little or no borrowing capacity under the arrangements. For example, we estimate that removing the cap could deliver up to an additional 60,000 new homes over the next five years.

I understand that the main opposition to lifting the cap is the Government's commitment to reducing overall government borrowing. The borrowing under consideration would not only result in an appreciable asset and the corresponding rental stream but would have wider economic benefits for the area. Our discussions with financial commentators have indicated that this approach to additional responsible borrowing is unlikely to cause concern.

There are some interim steps which could provide short term relief for those authorities near their cap and with significant investment ambitions. These include relaxing restrictions to enable local authorities to trade borrowing headroom within the overall envelope, raising the cap in line with centrally agreed indicators and linking the cap to inflation to ensure it remains constant in real terms.

We agreed a number of areas where further discussion and collaboration would be useful. We will be following up with further information and proposals on all these issues with your officials.

- Encourage the use of smaller sites to bring forward housing.
- Meeting changing demographic pressures and the needs of older people over the longer term.
- Bringing empty homes back into use.
- Consider further how we might use recent flexibilities on Local Development Orders to encourage Self Build.
- Out of area placements and the LGA's work with councils to respond to the impacts of welfare reforms.

Thank you again for your time at the Board meeting and I would be happy to discuss any of the issues above further.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Jones', followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Cllr Mike Jones  
Chairman of the LGA Environment and Housing Board



Department for  
Communities and  
Local Government

Cllr Mike Jones  
Chairman of the LGA Environment and Housing  
Board  
Local Government House  
Smith Square  
London  
SW1P 3HZ

**Mark Prisk MP**  
*Minister for Housing*

**Department for Communities and Local  
Government**  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London SW1E 5DU

Tel: 0303 444 3460  
Fax: 020 7828 4903  
E-Mail: [mark.prisk@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:mark.prisk@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

[www.gov.uk/dclg](http://www.gov.uk/dclg)

Our Ref: MP/MP/015966/13

5/6/13

Thank you for your letter of 20 May, following our discussion at the LGA Environment and Housing Board on 14 May. I found the discussion very useful and as you say in your letter, it demonstrated the appetite among local authorities to deliver more housing and to think creatively about the future of housing finance.

As you know, it is still some weeks until the outcome of the Spending Round process is announced. In our discussion, I explained that while I fully agree that local authorities should be ambitious and should aim to build more new homes, the Government remains very strongly committed to the aim of reducing public borrowing. In that context, I suggest that it would be most helpful for local government to consider how best it can support new housing supply through innovative working with the private sector. I know that some authorities are already working on ideas such as joint ventures, and many are looking at how to make the best use of available local authority land. I would be very interested to learn more about the work along these lines that local authorities are doing across the country, and to consider what steps Government could take to help.

On the other points you raise for further discussion, I am very happy to consider any further information or proposals you have to put forward. We are of course in dialogue with local government on older people's housing, for example DCLG is represented on the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services' Housing Policy Network. In addition, I intend chairing a roundtable on older people's housing in the near future and I will be inviting a local government representative to attend. I have also asked my officials to contact you to see if there are other potential avenues of communication which we can explore.

Finally, I would also like to raise the issue of the New Homes Bonus with you. I am aware that the Bonus featured in your Spending Round overview document, and that you are supportive of the evaluation of the Bonus we are carrying out this financial year, and that was referred to in the National Audit Office's recent study of the Bonus. I would like to invite you to nominate a LGA official that my officials can liaise with in taking forward the evaluation. If you would like to take up this opportunity please send details to [Andrew.lynych@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Andrew.lynych@communities.gsi.gov.uk).

**MARK PRISK MP**





Mr S. St Pier  
Finance and Networks Division  
Ofwat  
Centre City Tower  
7 Hill Street  
Birmingham  
B5 4UA.  
23rd May 2013

Dear Stephen,

### **Setting price controls for 2015-20 – business planning expectations**

The LGA welcomes this opportunity to comment on Ofwat's water company business planning expectations consultation. The LGA is committed to supporting councils drive economic growth and build local resilience to climate change. As such, we wish to see water company investment during the 2015-20 period that supports local growth and makes water supply, people and property more resilient to the impacts of drought and flooding.

We are keen that Ofwat encourages innovation in water company financing and investment planning that could result in more money being released to invest in resilience and growth. We note that Ofwat will consider how companies will depreciate their assets in reviewing their business plans and feel it is important that water companies periodic reviews of depreciation profiles of their assets continue to accurately reflect their lifetime, thereby maximising money for investment.

We also believe that the consideration of future housing demand when setting prices, will give water companies more certainty and headroom to invest. We therefore support Ofwat's proposal that water company business plans consider the impact of housing growth. We recommend that companies source housing projection data from locally derived data. Over 70% of councils have now published their Local Plans and these should be the primary source of information used.

We welcome the new outcome focused approach to business planning, which should give water companies greater freedom and flexibility to address local priorities. To ensure that local priorities are being considered, we encourage Ofwat to examine the degree to which companies are engaged with councils and other flood risk authorities. Effective engagement with local flood risk authorities is essential, if water company outcome packages are to represent the best value investments.

Whilst we recognise that Customer Challenge Groups are a good opportunity for water companies to engage with councils, we are keen to see this engagement deepened and maintained for the longer-term. Such stronger alliances between water companies and councils should feature better sharing of data and information to enable more mutually

beneficial outcomes. We hope the new Price Review approach enables water companies to deliver outcomes which reflect local priorities. In the meantime, the LGA will continue to engage with water companies, Ofwat, DEFRA and the Environment Agency, to ensure the long-term water needs of cities, towns and villages are met.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Mike Jones  
Chair, LGA Environment and Housing Board

## Note of decisions taken and actions required

**Title:** Environment and Housing Board  
**Date and time:** 11.00, Wednesday 14 May 2013  
**Venue:** Westminster Suite

### Attendance:

Position	Councillor	Council
Chairman	Mike Jones	Cheshire West and Cheshire UA
Vice chair	Clyde Loakes	Waltham Forest LB
Deputy chairs	Keith House	Eastleigh BC
Members	Clare Whelan	Lambeth LB
	Frances Roden	Stroud DC
	Eric Allen	Sutton LB
	Geoffrey Theobald OBE	Brighton & Hove City Council
	Brian Williams (substitute)	Shropshire Council
	Rock Feilding-Mellen	Kensington and Chelsea RB
	Ed Turner	Oxford City Council
	Tim Moore	Liverpool City Council
	Barbara Cannon	Allerdale BC
	Gwen Hassall	Stoke-on-Trent City Council
	Clare Pritchard	Hyndburn BC
	Terry Stacy JP MBE	Islington LB
	Simon Galton	Leicestershire CC
	Peter Jones	Babergh DC
Apologies	Andrew Cooper	Kirklees MBC
	Jim Harker	Northamptonshire CC
	Tony Newman	Croydon LB
In attendance	Paul Raynes	LGA
	Caroline Green	LGA
	Rose Doran	LGA
	Piali DasGupta	LGA
	Dan McCartney	LGA
	Tom Coales	LGA
	Liam Paul	LGA

1. **Housing**

The Board Chairman welcomed Mark Prisk MP, the Housing Minister, to the meeting. In his introductory remarks, the Minister highlighted that the spending round will reflect the continued focus on deficit reduction and inevitable pressure on departmental budgets. He emphasised the need to use what grants there are available to lever in other sources of funding for housing and invited the sector's experience and examples of good practice to better utilise existing housing stock.

As well as increasing the broader supply of housing, the Minister's focus was on addressing the housing needs of the elderly as the ageing population had growing implications for housing stock.

The Minister noted the LGA's Spending Round submission on Housing and expressed an interest in continuing discussions with the LGA on investment in housing investment.

In the ensuing debate the following themes were discussed:

*Encouraging growth of smaller sites* – Government has focused on unblocking major sites and members highlighted opportunities to unlock smaller sites that could bring forward housing more quickly than larger sites. The Minister said he would be willing to discuss this further.

*Implications of welfare reforms for size of housing* - Members highlighted that welfare reforms were likely to lead to increased need for smaller units but that accessing HCA funding for smaller units was problematic, The Minister acknowledged these comments and added that it was important that HCA funding should support the type of housing needed.

*HRA borrowing cap* – Members highlighted the case for lifting the HRA borrowing cap and asked if consideration would be given to increased flexibility as part of City Deals. The Minister replied that DCLG were engaged with discussions following the Heseltine report and second wave of City Deals.

*Local Housing Allowance rates* –The Minister agreed to engage with Oxford City and Brighton and Hove councils on issues they raised in relation to Local Housing Allowance rates.

*Out of area placements* – Members discussed the potential increased need for some councils to look beyond their boundaries to house people. The Minister recognised that this would be an issue for some authorities. The Board Chairman highlighted that a meeting was being arranged to discuss these issues further with LGA members.

*Housing benefit Direct Payment pilots* – members highlighted the potential problems arising from increased non-payment and rent arrears as a result of the introduction of Direct Payments. The Minister commended the work of the pilot areas. He was encouraged by initial

results regarding non-payment and arrears but indicated that DWP and DCLG are open to flexibility for the small percentage of people who will be unable to manage paying their rent.

*Housing for an older society* – The Minister explained that he and the Planning Minister, Nick Boles MP were interested in housing models that could provide for an ageing population. He highlighted that this would require collaboration between the health, care, finance and design sectors and invited the LGA to participate in the discussions.

*Unimplemented permissions* – Members highlighted the need to focus on bringing forward development on sites with unimplemented planning permissions (highlighting LGA research on the issue). In response the Minister highlighted the governments programmes aiming to address access to finance and potential to explore new sources of funding such as pension funds to help unlock schemes.

### Decision

### Action

The Members of the Board **agreed** that the Environment and Housing Board Chairman should write to Mark Prisk to highlight the case for flexibility on the borrowing cap and outline areas for further follow up.

**Caroline Green,  
Clarissa  
Corbisiero**

## 2. Growth and Infrastructure Act 2013

Members received a short verbal update on LGA lobbying on the bill and amendments that were accepted prior to the Bill receiving Royal Assent.

There was widespread concern amongst the Members of the Board that Government measures to liberalise the Permitted Development regime (to be enacted through secondary legislation) which make it easier to change a property's use from commercial to residential would have a negative impact on high streets.

Members highlighted that there was a lack of clarity from DCLG as to why certain areas which applied for exemptions from the changes were successful and others were not. It was suggested that the LGA should continue to lobby on this issue.

### Decisions

### Actions

The Members of the Board:

1. **agreed** that a note of meeting with Nick Boles MP to be circulated to whole board;
2. **agreed** that officers should follow up with CLG to seek clarity on how decisions on applications for exemptions from change of use from commercial to residential;
3. **requested** that officers circulate information detailing the number of PINS appeals and their outcomes;
4. **agreed** that the LGA Press lines issued against elements of the changes to Permitted Development and use classes be circulated; and

**Caroline Green**

**Clarissa  
Corbisiero**

**Clarissa  
Corbisiero, PAS**

**Caroline Green /  
Clarissa  
Corbisiero**

5. **requested** that officers collect and collate evidence on the impact of permitted development changes as they emerge.

**Clarissa  
Corbisiero**

3. **Local Government Waste Review – emerging findings**

Dan McCartney, Adviser summarised the emerging findings of the Review which were circulated at the meeting.

Members suggested that the Waste Review should include:

- Clear headline recommendations for maximum impact;
- Good practice from across the industry;
- Consideration of over-packaging;
- Clear ways forward for local government, as well as suggestions for the Government and partner organisations;
- Highlight the local government role in waste prevention
- The need to reduce food waste.

Members of the Board were invited to attend the launch of the Local Government Waste review on 04 June.

**Decisions**

**Actions**

The Members of the Board **noted** the progress of the Waste Review and **requested** that officers incorporate Members' comments into the final draft of the LGA Local Waste Review.

**Dan McCartney**

4. **Environment and Housing Board Update**

Members noted the LGA's policy positions and lobbying work on the items contained within the update paper and that officers were investigating options for the continuation of the Gypsy and Travellers planning support, currently delivered by the Planning Advisory Service (PAS).

Members of the Board then put on record their thanks for the work of Eddy Poll in support of the Board and the Inland Flood Risk Management Group.

**Decisions**

**Action**

Officers to provide an update on the Gypsy and Traveller support offer.

**Caroline Green  
PAS**

5. **Any other business**

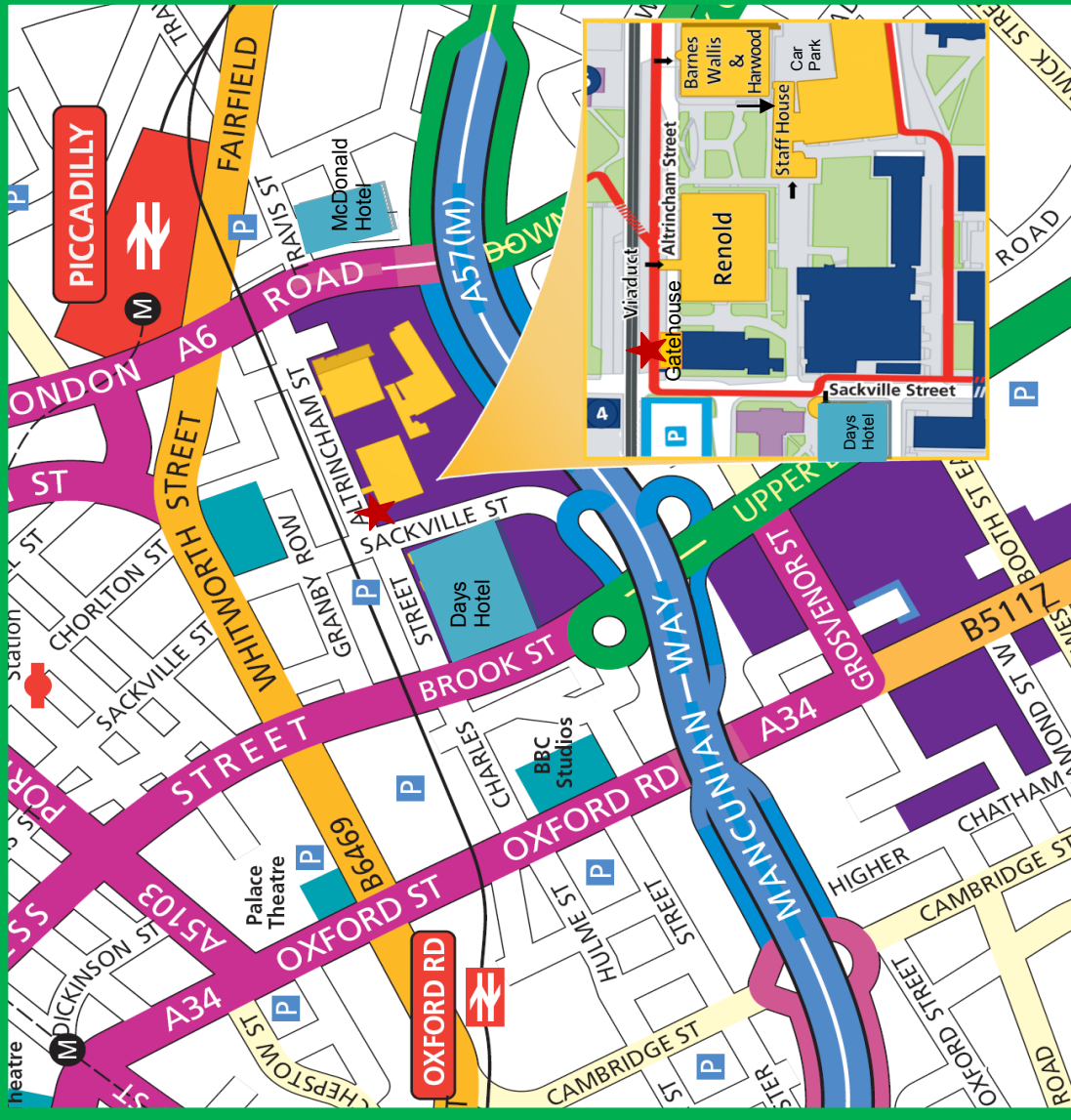
None.

6. **Decisions and actions from previous meeting**

Members **noted** and **approved** the notes of the last meeting



# Staff House Conference Centre, The University of Manchester Sackville Street Campus



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## Route Information

### TO MANCHESTER FROM THE NORTH VIA M6 M61:

Follow STRET福德 signs into M60. Leave at Exit 12 and join M602 SALFORD. At end of Motorway, follow A57 MANCHESTER sign (Regent Road) for approx. 1 mile. Proceed under railway bridge, continuing into A57M (Mancunian Way). Continue on A57M, take 2nd exit. Immediately fork right on slip road into Sackville St. following University sign. Turn left at the Retro Bar into Charles St for the NCP CAR PARK.

### YORKSHIRE VIA M62/M60:

Leave at Exit 17 signed MCR CITY CENTRE, and follow A56 towards Manchester for 4 miles (Bury New Road, becoming Gt. Ducie St). Enter city under railway bridges and keep straight ahead, still on A56, into Deansgate. In 1/2 mile, after passing KENDALLS store, left at traffic lights (signed UNIVERSITIES) into John Dalton St. and straight ahead at next lights into Princess St. In 1/2 mile, pass under the railway bridge and immediately turn left at lights into Charles St. NCP CAR PARK is on left.

### DERBYSHIRE VIA A6:

Follow A6 signs towards Manchester City Centre until reaching the flyover junction with A57M. Continue on A6 and in 200 yards pass under railway bridge and turn left at traffic lights into Fairfield St. Pass Sackville St Building on left in 200 yards and then turn left at next lights into Sackville St. Pass under railway bridge and turn right into Charles St. for NCP CAR PARK.

### THE POTTERIES VIA A34:

Follow signs for Manchester through Congleton. 3/4 mile through Alderley Edge, take 2nd exit at roundabout still following A34. In 7 miles, pass over M60 and continue for a further 3 miles. At roundabout, take 2nd exit, following LONGSIGHT signs. (Ignore the A34 for the City Centre, which takes the 1st exit and passes under the railway) In 1 mile, merge with A6 and follow this road towards the City Centre as for DERBYSHIRE.

### THE SOUTH & MIDLANDS VIA M6:

Leave at Exit 19 and follow A556 MANCHESTER for 4 miles. Join M56 MANCHESTER at roundabout and follow to end as for NORTH WALES & CHESTER.

### NORTH WALES & CHESTER VIA M56:

Follow MANCHESTER signs, past Manchester Airport to end of M56 Motorway and keep straight ahead into A5103 MANCHESTER for 4 miles. On reaching roundabout beneath overhead road take 3rd exit following A57M SHEFFIELD signs to next roundabout; then 2nd exit up ramp to join A57M. Keep to near side lane for 200 yards and leave at next exit signed UNIVERSITY; immediately fork right on slip road, following UNIVERSITY sign. Turn left at the Retro Bar into Charles St. for the NCP CAR PARK.

### MERSEYSIDE VIA M62:

Leave at Exit 12 and join M602 MANCHESTER. At end of this MOTORWAY follow A57 MANCHESTER as for THE NORTH.

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## RAIL

### PICCADILLY STATION:

Head for the escalators to the left of the concourse, following the signs for 'Taxis' /Fairfield Street. Immediately outside the station main entrance, turn right and cross London Road to the Bulls Head pub. Keeping the Bulls Head on your right walk down London Road & turn right again immediately after the railway viaduct, onto Altrincham Street. Continue straight ahead, and to your left you will see the Barnes Wallis Building/Harwood; continue ahead for a short distance and you will see a set of stone steps on your left leading down to a landscaped lawn. The Staff House Conference Centre is on the other side of this lawn and can be clearly seen from here, with entrances at either end of the building.

### OXFORD ROAD STATION:

At the bottom of the station approach, cross over Oxford St. into Whitworth St (to the right of the Palace Theatre). Turn right before the University's Sackville Street Building and continue along Sackville St.. Proceed under the railway viaduct, turn left immediately before the security lodge and continue along the pedestrian walkway. Continue past the Renold Building on your right and you will come to a set of stone steps leading down to a landscaped lawn. The Staff House Conference Centre is on the other side of this lawn and can be clearly seen from here, with entrances at either end of the building.

### VICTORIA STATION:

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