

Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board

Agenda

Thursday, 1 October 2015
11.00 am

Rathbone Rooms 1&2, 7th Floor, Local
Government House, Smith Square, London,
SW1P 3HZ

To: Members of the Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board
cc: Named officers for briefing purposes

Guidance notes for visitors

Local Government House, Smith Square, London SW1P 3HZ

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Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board
1 October 2015

There will be a meeting of the Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board at **11.00 am on Thursday, 1 October 2015** Rathbone Rooms 1&2, 7th Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ.

Lead Members will be meeting at 9.00 am before their Group Meetings.

A sandwich lunch will be available after the meeting.

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.

Political Group meetings:

The group meetings will take place in advance of the meeting. Please contact your political group as outlined below for further details.

Apologies:

Please notify your political group office (see contact telephone numbers below) if you are unable to attend this meeting.

Labour:	Group Office: 020 7664 3334	email: Labour.GroupLGA@local.gov.uk
Conservative:	Group Office: 020 7664 3223	email: lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk
Liberal Democrat:	Group Office: 020 7664 3235	email: libdem@local.gov.uk
Independent:	Group Office: 020 7664 3224	email: independent.group@local.gov.uk

Location:

A map showing the location of Local Government House is printed on the back cover.

LGA Contact:

Paul Goodchild
0207 664 3005 / paul.goodchild@local.gov.uk

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Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board – Membership 2015/2016

Councillor	Authority
Conservative (7)	
Cllr Martin Tett (Vice-Chair)	Buckinghamshire County Council
Cllr Steve Count	Cambridgeshire County Council
Cllr Jim Harker OBE	Northamptonshire County Council
Cllr Jason Ablewhite	Huntingdonshire District Council
Cllr Simon Cooke	Bradford Metropolitan District Council
Cllr Peter Fleming OBE	Sevenoaks District Council
Cllr David Westley	West Lancashire Borough Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Mark Mills-Bishop	Broxbourne Borough Council
Cllr Catherine Rankin	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Labour (7)	
Cllr Peter Box CBE (Chair)	Wakefield Metropolitan District Council
Cllr Timothy Moore	Liverpool City Council
Cllr Tony Newman	Croydon Council
Cllr Ed Turner	Oxford City Council
Cllr Alyson Barnes	Rossendale Borough Council
Cllr Gillian Campbell	Blackpool Council
Cllr Simon Greaves	Bassetlaw District Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Sarah Russell	Derby City Council
Independent (2)	
Cllr John Northcott (Deputy Chair)	Mole Valley District Council
Cllr Julian German	Cornwall Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Andrew Cooper	Kirklees Metropolitan Council
Cllr Anne Hawkesworth	Bradford Metropolitan District Council
Cllr Geoff Knight	Lancaster City Council
Cllr Graham Whitham	Sutton London Borough Council
Liberal Democrat (2)	
Cllr Keith House (Deputy Chair)	Eastleigh Borough Council
Cllr Adele Morris	Southwark Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Simon Galton	Harborough District Council

Agenda

Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board

Thursday 1 October 2015

11.00 am

Rathbone Rooms 1&2, 7th Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

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Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday, 2 December 2015, 11.00 am, Smith Square 1&2, Ground Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

1 October 2015

Membership, Terms of Reference and Outside Body Appointments

Purpose

For discussion and direction.

Summary

For members to note the Board membership (set out on the page before the agenda in this pack) and the Board's Terms of Reference (**Appendix A**).

Members are also invited to agree appointments to outside bodies (**Appendix B**).

Recommendation

Members to note the membership and Terms of Reference of the Board, and agree appointments to outside bodies.

Action

Officers respond accordingly to Members' direction.

Contact officer: Paul Goodchild
Position: Assistant Member Services Manager
Phone no: 020 7664 3005
Email: paul.goodchild@local.gov.uk

Appendix A: Terms of Reference

1. The purpose of the Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board is to provide strategic oversight of the LGA's policy, regulatory and improvement activity in relation to the economy and environment, including transport, employment and skills, economic development and business support, housing, planning, waste and climate change, in line with the LGA priorities and any specific regulatory and LGA European lobbying priorities as they relate to this activity.
2. Boards should seek to involve councillors in supporting the delivery of these priorities (through task groups, Special Interest Groups (SIGs), regional networks and other means of wider engagement) operating as the centre of a network connecting to all councils and drawing on the expertise of key advisors from the sector.
3. The responsibilities of the Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board include:
 - 3.1 Ensuring the priorities of councils are fed into the business planning process.
 - 3.2 Developing a work programme to deliver the business plan priorities relevant to their brief, covering lobbying, campaigns, research, improvement support and events and linking with other boards where appropriate.
 - 3.3 Sharing good practice and ideas to stimulate innovation and improvement.
 - 3.4 Representing and lobbying on behalf of the LGA including making public statements on its areas of responsibility.
 - 3.5 Building and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders.
 - 3.6 Involving representatives from councils in its work, through task groups, Commissions, SIGs, regional networks and mechanisms.
 - 3.7 Responding to specific issues referred to the Board by one or more member councils or groupings of councils.
4. The Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board may:
 - 4.1 Appoint members to relevant outside bodies in accordance with the Political Conventions.
 - 4.2 Appoint member champions from the Board to lead on key issues.

Appendix B: EEHT Board Outside Bodies

Outside Body	Representatives 2014/15	Representatives 2015/16	LGA Contact Officer	Outside body officer	Background	Meeting Frequency
HS2 Environmental Forum	2 representatives Cllr James Lewis, Leeds City Council (Labour) Cllr Martin Tett, Buckinghamshire CC (Conservative)		Kamal Panchal and Charles Loft	Amanda.John@df.t.gsi.gov.uk and Fran.Queen@df.t.gsi.gov.uk	Forum for Government departments and statutory bodies to advise on environmental policy for the HS2 project.	Quarterly
Planning Advisory Service Board	4 representatives Cllr Mike Jones (Con) Cheshire West and Chester Cllr Ed Turner (Lab) Oxford City Council Cllr John Northcott (Independent) Mole Valley DC Cllr Keith House (Lib Dem) Eastleigh BC		Alice Lester (PAS) alice.lester@local.gov.uk		The PAS Governance Board was set up to provide sector leadership to ensure the support offered by PAS is responsive to councils' needs and supports exchange of good practice. The aim is to support on-going improvement in plan making and decision taking including helping councils to avoid designation on performance on major applications. The Board consists of the LGA, DCLG Directors and representatives of SOLACE, ADEPT and the Planning Officers Society.	Quarterly
National Fly-tipping Prevention Group	1 representative Cllr Clyde Loakes (Lab) LB Waltham Forest			flytipping@defra.gsi.gov.uk	The National Fly-tipping Prevention Group (NFTPG) is a group of organisations working with a common aim: coming up with solutions to the problem of fly-tipping. Chaired by the Environment Agency, membership includes regulatory bodies, Government departments and	Quarterly

					organisations with a wide membership of landowners and land managers.	
HCA Rural Housing Advisory Board	1 representative Cllr Deborah Croney (Con) North Dorset District Council		Hilary Tanner	mail@homesandcommunities.co.uk	The Rural Housing Advisory Board's aim is to advise Government on and seek ways to improve delivery of affordable rural housing, promoting joint working between key stakeholders through the provision of a forum for sharing good practice and encouraging innovation. Three meetings are held in London each year for 2-3 hours.	Quarterly
Climate Local Steering Group	2 representatives Cllr Tim Moore (Lab) Liverpool City Council Cllr Andrew Cooper (Indep) Kirklees MBC		Mazvita Chari		This steering group replaced the Climate Local / Nottingham Declaration Board and will provide a forum for councils and partners to influence the development of the resource.	Quarterly
Canal & River Trust Council	1 representative Cllr Jim Harker (Con) Northamptonshire County Council			council@canalrivertrust.org.uk	Canals and rivers managed by British Waterways in England and Wales, transferred to a charitable trust - now named Canal & River Trust - in April 2012. Within the governance structure of the Trust, a Council has a remit to safeguard the long-term values and purposes of the Trust. The Council helps to shape policy, raise and debate issues, and provide guidance, perspective and a sounding board	Every 6 months

					for Trustees. The full Council will meet two times a year.	
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Task and Finish Groups

The four EEHT Task and Finish Groups from 2014/15 (Active Travel, Buses/Community Transport, Energy and Apprenticeships) have completed their work and reported back to the Board.

Proportionality Figures 2015/16

Members are asked to ensure that appointments for 2015/16 are in broad proportionality with the 18 Member political group makeup of the Board, which is as follows:

7 Conservative, 7 Labour, 2 Independent, 2 Liberal Democrat.

Chair's Report

Tackling rogue landlords and improving the quality of the private rented sector

1. DCLG issued a discussion paper in July on "Tackling rogue landlords and improving the private rental sector". In the LGA's response we called for the introduction of sentencing guidelines for magistrates on housing act offences, and a wider range of penalties. We also asked for clarity on the proposals for a blacklist of persistently offending landlords and agents and how it will be funded. LGA recommendations were highlighted in a press release, attracting national media attention.

http://www.local.gov.uk/web/quest/briefings-and-responses/-/journal_content/56/10180/7461929/ARTICLE

Influencing EU proposals for a circular waste and recycling economy

2. The EU invited public feedback on the barriers to creating a circular economy for waste services. In the LGA response and position paper submitted in August 2015 we called for the EU to take a fresh look at the balance of responsibilities across the lifecycle of waste.
3. Regulations and responsibilities are currently heavily weighted towards local authorities and their role in collecting and disposing of waste materials. Developing a circular economy is an opportunity to create a better balance by designing out waste, and adopting the "polluter pays" principle so that those who create waste make a contribution to the cost of dealing with it.

http://www.local.gov.uk/web/quest/waste-management/-/journal_content/56/10180/7449429/ARTICLE

Affordable housing exemptions on small developments and vacant buildings

4. We published research commissioned by the Board on the impact of affordable housing exemptions on small developments and vacant buildings in July 2015, receiving wide media coverage. Headline findings showed that almost 80% of respondent councils said the policy would result in a decrease in new affordable homes in their areas, with two-thirds saying the change was having a negative impact on existing planning applications. We called for the exemptions to be replaced with a more flexible system that would allow councils to reflect local market conditions and agree contributions with developers at an early stage. Shortly after our research was published the High Court ruled the government's policy as unlawful following a case brought forward by West Berkshire and Reading Councils. DCLG are now appealing the decision.

http://www.local.gov.uk/media-releases/-/journal_content/56/10180/7397262/NEWS

Consultation on improving the compulsory purchase processes

5. We submitted a response to the DCLG/HM Treasury consultation on improving compulsory purchase processes. In a response we called for a more fundamental consolidation of compulsory purchase legislation, stronger compulsory purchase powers where planning permissions have expired and development has not commenced and powers for councils to direct the use of publicly owned land. We also called for a default position that all decisions on confirmation of a compulsory purchase order are delegated to the acquiring authority.

Sunday trading

6. Lead members signed-off the LGA's response to the Government's recent consultation on Sunday Trading hours. In summary, the LGA welcomed the new powers, believing the Government is right in recognising the role of councils in driving local growth and being better placed in shaping decisions that affect the well-being of local people and businesses. However, we urged the Government to make the power to extend Sunday trading hours available to all areas and do so in a way that avoids central prescription and bureaucracy, additional costs and gives local places the freedom to make their own choices. The LGA response is appended to this report. Please see attached appendix titled Consultation on devolving Sunday Trading Rules.

Parking reform: tackling unfair practices

7. The LGA responded to a DCLG discussion paper on the management and regulation of parking on private land, and land owned by public bodies, and cash payment facilities for municipal parking. We expect the department to announce the outcome of the consultation this autumn. Please see attached appendix titled Parking reform: tackling unfair prices.

Written evidence to the CLG committee on the future of housing associations and the right to buy

8. The Government must carefully consider the cumulative impact of different housing proposals on the joint ability to build new homes and support home ownership while reducing welfare spending, and on councils' capacity to deliver their duties to house the homeless. We recommended that the extension of the Right to Buy to housing association tenants and the sale of high value council properties should be treated as two separate initiatives, and that an alternative source of funding could be found from the sale of surplus public land.
9. In addition the LGA:
 - 9.1. Provided a short submission to the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (EFRA) select committee calling on the committee to consider flooding as one of its priorities.

- 9.2. We submitted questions to the CLG committee on the government's planning and productivity plan. We suggested questions for committee members to put to the Housing and Planning Minister. Our questions covered the delivery of starter homes and plans to streamline compulsory purchase orders.
- 9.3. We submitted a short submission to the Energy and Climate Change Committee calling on the Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) to look at energy efficiency and fuel poverty as one its main priorities. We said that action by councils to tackle fuel poverty needs to be backed up by co-ordinated central policy and backed up by funding. We repeated LGA recommendations for councils to have a stronger role in the roll-out of energy efficiency measure in their local areas.

Consultation on devolving Sunday Trading Rules Response from the Local Government Association (LGA)



Date: 16th September 2015

About the LGA

We are a politically-led, cross party organisation which works on behalf of councils to ensure local government has a strong, credible voice with national government. We aim to influence and set the political agenda on the issues that matter to councils so they are able to deliver local solutions to national problems.

Overview

The LGA welcomes the opportunity to respond to this consultation. We believe the Government is right in recognising the role of local government in driving local growth and that local people are best placed in shaping decisions that affect their well-being. However, we urge the Government to make the power to extend Sunday trading hours available to all areas and do so in a way that avoids central bureaucracy and prescription and gives local places the freedom to make their own choices.

LGA response

Question 1. Should local areas have the power to extend trading hours on Sunday?

We welcome the proposed flexibilities for councils on Sunday trading hours. The LGA sees this as further endorsement by central government of local government's central role in driving local growth, based on their accountability to local people and understanding of the needs of local communities, businesses and growth. However, it is vital that any changes are permissive and must not place a duty on local government. The proposals must allow councils to meet the needs of their communities and local businesses without undue restriction, pressure from central government or unnecessary bureaucracy.

Councils are committed to promoting local growth and such powers will give local areas greater control of their economies. We encourage the Government to continue to take a joined-up approach to devolution, working with councils to support local prosperity through a range of measures to suit local circumstances.

Submission

Local Government House, Smith Square, London SW1P 3HZ
Email info@local.gov.uk
Tel 020 7664 3000 Fax 020 7664 3030
Information centre 020 7664 3131 www.local.gov.uk

Question 2. If the power is devolved, who do you think should be given the power to change Sunday trading rules?

We strongly feel that the Sunday Trading proposals should be devolved to all areas and not just as measures as part of 'devolution deals'. The Government rightly recognises that local authorities are accountable to the local community and understand the needs of local people and businesses and are better placed to do so than central government. We see no reason why all businesses and communities should not benefit from Sunday trading flexibilities. In fact, delaying the spread of such measures through 'devolution deals' risks local businesses unnecessarily missing out on growth opportunities.

Where councils are members of a Combined Authority or any similar binding sub-regional governance arrangement it should be a matter of local deliberation whether or not the Sunday trading hours powers are to be delegated upwards at the sub-regional decision-making level.

Question 3. How would you be impacted by local changes to Sunday trading rules?

Councils will apply these powers as part of their decision-making process in the management of the well-being of their local communities and local economies, as they do already, for example through their planning, licensing, street trading and parking responsibilities. The impact will therefore vary from place to place. Some places may want to use the powers as part of their tourism and visitor economy strategies, others in response to attracting demand to specific localities as part of their growth strategies.

It is also important that these proposals offer value for money for local taxpayers. As long as there are no central prescriptions in how these powers are applied, councils should be able to manage the administration of Sunday trading powers within existing resources. Therefore any new legislation should:

- Be applied at the discretion of each local authority, based on local circumstances and consultation. Councils should be able to decide how and when to apply the proposed powers.
- Not place additional burdens on councils - for example there should be no central prescription or requirement to consult or requirement to place notices in newspapers. These are costly and councils already have cost-effective means in place to consult and publish information.
- Ensure that the responsibility for making this decision is as flexible as possible. For those councils with Cabinet structures, decisions are automatically the responsibility of the Executive unless specified otherwise, therefore any primary legislation will need to amend the Functions and Responsibilities Regulations. This amendment could make this power either a non-executive function, like a licensing or planning committee, or preferably a function to be determined by the council under Schedule 2 of the Regulations.

- Enable councils to easily make changes to other planning and trading conditions, such as licensing hours, loading/ delivery hours etc, as a result of designation of extended Sunday trading hours and without incurring additional cost burdens.
- Allow councils to recover all costs associated with any application process which involves individual businesses applying for permission to extend their business hours.
- Ensure that councils are free from any potential legal challenge if they have differential policies in different areas of the council e.g. supporting a town centre trading extension to revive a declining town centre but not an 'out of town' extension by the same store.

The LGA would be happy to work with councils and partner organisations on sharing learning and good practice as councils start to take up new powers.

Parking reform: tackling unfair practices
 27th May 2015



Discussion paper and call for evidence

LGA Response

The Local Government Association (LGA) is a voluntary membership body and our member authorities cover every part of England and Wales. Together they represent over 50 million people and spend around £113 billion a year on local services. They include county councils, metropolitan district councils, English unitary authorities, London boroughs and shire district councils, along with fire authorities, police authorities, national park authorities and passenger transport authorities. The LGA welcomes the opportunity to respond to this consultation.

1. Do you think there are problems with how parking on private or public land is regulated, or the behaviour of private parking companies?

We are not aware of any systemic problems in the regulation of parking on council-owned land either by councils or by private contractors operating on their behalf. As with any other regulated activity, there will be occasions when mistakes are made or performance falls below acceptable standards. There is no evidence to suggest that the appeals systems in place covering council-managed car parking are failing to deal with these issues effectively.

2. If you answered Yes to Question 1, what problems do you think there are with parking on private land, or the practices of parking control companies managing parking on private or public land?

N/A

3. If you answered Yes to Question 1, what steps do you think the Government should take to rectify these problems?

N/A

4. Are you able to offer any evidence to support a case for change, or examples of best practice?

The LGA provided some examples of best practice in its written evidence to the Transport Select Committee's inquiry into local authority parking

Submission

Local Government House, Smith Square, London SW1P 3HZ
 Email info@local.gov.uk
 Tel 020 7664 3000 Fax 020 7664 3030
 Information centre 020 7664 3131 www.local.gov.uk

enforcement in 2013.¹ The LGA does not collect parking case studies on a regular basis, but if the Department wishes to be better informed on the subject we recommend that it consults the British Parking Association and the Association for Town Centre Management

5. Do you think there are other steps the Government could take to ensure that parking supports local shops and high streets?

The LGA believes that parking and local traffic management are local matters and it is councils that are best placed to provide solutions to local challenges. The Government's role should therefore be to equip them with the tools to do this job effectively. For example, DfT has attempted to prevent councils using ANPR technology in council car parks. The use of this technology – commonplace in the private sector – allows car park operators to offer a better and more cost effective service to customers and councils should not be prevented from using this technology.

At present councils lack sufficient powers to ensure that all high streets have an optimal bus service, or to enforce moving traffic offences such as banned turns and yellow box junctions in England (outside London). Without these powers councils are effectively attempting to manage town centre traffic with one hand tied behind their backs. The DfT estimates that traffic on local roads will increase by 42 per cent by 2040. If realised, this would bring many town centres to a standstill with catastrophic implications for local businesses. Unless the government empowers councils to manage traffic effectively and provide viable alternatives to the car for town centre business, congestion will force increasing numbers of shoppers to abandon the high street altogether

6. If you answered Yes to Q5, what steps do you think the Government should take to help support local shops and high streets, for example by encouraging the provision of free and competitively priced parking spaces?

The discussion document seems to start from the false premise that shortcomings in parking provision are responsible for the supposed decline of the high street. However the available evidence suggests that the price and availability of parking are not key issues here and that availability is more significant than price.²

The idea that the problems of the high street are caused by overly high parking charges is incorrect. UK high streets are evolving as a result of changing economic and retail circumstances. For example, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) recently highlight that six out of ten British adults use the internet to buy products such as food, clothing, music or holidays, twice the average of the

¹ <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmtran/118/118we14.htm>

² http://www.britishparking.co.uk/write/Documents/The_relevance_of_parking_in_the_success_of_urban_centres_-_A_review_for_London_Councils.pdf
http://www.britishparking.co.uk/write/Documents/Re-thinking_Car_Parking.pdf
<http://www.parkmark.co.uk/key-issues-for-drivers>

OECD's 34 member states (including the US, Germany, Australia and France).³

A recent report by the government-led Future High Streets Forum pointed out that:

'In many cases, increasing parking provision may not even be desirable regardless of the practical impediments. An opportunity cost often comes with the loss of other uses that parking provision may replace, potentially taking footfall and spend with it. More cars could also contribute to undesirable changes to the public realm that come with roads and traffic, something that is especially problematic for historic centres that thrive on tourism. Recognising the potential incompatibility of the car with historic architecture, many of Europe's best preserved and attractive towns and cities limit access by private motorised vehicles as a matter of necessity. There is also the issue of the cost of parking. Both local authorities and private companies have to cover their costs in relation to parking. Maintenance, management and long-term investment in the quality of the car park are all serious considerations that must be taken into account. ... car parks attract business rates that must be paid. Consequently, neither on-street nor off-street parking is free. The cost needs to be covered by someone, somewhere, somehow'.

The decision on whether to provide free or cheap parking around local shops is one that can only be sensibly taken at local level. In particular it is important to remember that where all-day free parking is provided in high street locations it is likely to be occupied by commuters and shop workers rather than by shoppers.⁴

The ideal parking policy will vary from place to place depending on road system capacity and alternative means of access and the nature of the 'offer'. In some locations it may be necessary to limit free parking or set charges at a particular level to encourage turnover and discourage commuter parking, but the correct use of these methods can only be determined in relation to the specifics of location. Councils already have an incentive to help high streets succeed and have made considerable investment in providing car parks to support town centres. Quite often council car parking is cheaper than that provided by the private sector.

7. Should there be an obligation for local authorities to offer the ability to pay for parking by cash within a reasonable distance of where they have parking (for example via ticket machines or via local shops)?

No. We are not aware of any local authority which currently does not offer this option other than Westminster where cash payment is not available for on-street parking. This step has been taken by Westminster in response to customer demand. Statutory obligations of this nature are likely to prove burdensome as technology develops to a point where there may – in

³ <http://tinyurl.com/cfmt7tl>

⁴⁴ *Spaced Out - Perspectives on parking policy* -John Bates & David Leibling July 2012 RAC foundation p.53

perhaps ten years – no longer be any demand for cash payment facilities and are likely to involve the imposition of an inappropriate one-size-fits-all approach. Councils consult on changes to parking policy. Moreover, the government has already granted businesses and residents the power to challenge parking policies and if councils fail to provide appropriate cash payment options this will provide a suitable avenue for complaint and policy change.

8. Do you have any examples demonstrating best practice approaches in the UK or abroad?

See response to Q4.

9. Do you have any best practice suggestions for councils to follow?

The LGA believes the BPA and ATCM are already providing their members (many of whom are our members) with access to best practice and advice on these matters.

The LGA would be happy to assist the department in any further consideration it wishes to undertake on either the future of the High Street or parking regulation.

1 October 2015

Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Work Programme 2015/16

Purpose

For discussion and direction.

Summary

This report sets out a draft work programme for the Environment Housing and Economy Board for 2015/16. The work programme seeks to:

- Reflect the broad remit for the Board and provide some continuity.
- Recognise the government's legislative agenda including the forthcoming Housing and Buses bills as well as the Welfare Reform and Work Bill 2015.
- Reflect the LGA Leadership Board priorities, specifically for the EEHT board to lead a Housing Commission (a Housing Commission Item is on this agenda).

Recommendation

The Board is asked to consider and comment on the draft work programme set out in this report and to agree a final version.

Action

Officers will take action as directed.

Contact officer: Eamon Lally
Position: Principal Policy Adviser
Phone no: 0207 6643132/ 07799768570
Email: Eamon.lally@local.gov.uk

Draft EEHT Work programme 2015/16

Priority	Key outcomes	Board Activity	Timescales
Housing/planning	Undertake a Housing Commission to look at housing supply and the future role of local authorities in shaping, with their partners, and meeting housing that meets the needs of communities and employers, helping drive growth and employment and meets the specific challenges of an aging population	The EEHT Board will lead the Housing Commission (which is a Leadership Board priority) and will draw on the advice and guidance of a network of experts.	Completion/publication by March/April 2015- Part of the publication at the 2016 LGA annual conference June/July 2016
	Housing Bill and housing elements of the Welfare Reform Bill: to support the government broad aims of increasing housing supply and to mitigate any negative impacts of recent government housing policies	The Board will provide political leadership as the LGA seeks to influence the implementation of government policy through the Housing Bill and the housing elements of the Welfare Reform Bill	Housing Bill laid mid-October 2015. The resulting Act is expected to come into effect from April 2016. Welfare Reform Bill is currently before the House.
	Productivity Plan (Planning): to work with government to strengthen the local planning function and to mitigate any negative impacts from the implementation of the Productivity plan	The Board will provide political leadership as the LGA seeks to influence the implementation of government's planning policy through the Housing Bill	Bill laid mid-October 2015 The resulting Act is expected to come into effect from April 2016
Transport	Local transport infrastructure: to ensure that local transport infrastructure is a priority for	Continue to push for a fair deal for local roads	July 2016

	government, reflected in the negotiations on city and county deals and that future investment strategies for the strategic roads network and the rail network is better integrated with local transport and provides the maximum opportunity for investment in local growth.	Ensure that councils and their local partners are full participants in the development of national transport infrastructure, through the Highways England Roads Investment strategy and influence the next control period of the Rail Investment Strategy	
	Buses: to ensure that the Government takes the opportunity of the Buses Bill to bring forward measures that will lead to a more strategic approach to ensuring that buses meet the needs of communities and contribute to local growth and community health and wellbeing	Produce a Buses publication based on the work of the Task and Finish Group in the last session. To work with government on the content of the buses bill, through engagement with ministers and political leadership of the sector.	October 2015 October 2015-March 2015
	To ensure councils have the correct tools available for effective traffic management and in meeting local needs. .	Defend local government's reputation and freedom of action in respect of off street parking' Ensure the government's response to the supreme court's air quality ruling enhances the ability of councils to tackle the problem through a package of relevant	July 2016

		transport measures – in conjunction with buses bill.	
	That councils have funding certainty for highways maintenance and that Government support for local roads maintenance is at least equal to that for strategic roads network.	For the Board to keep a watching brief on highways maintenance spending, the national backlog of maintenance and repairs and continues to press Government for fair treatment as opportunities arise.	July 2016
Growth	Local growth fund: Reduce the number of ring-fenced budgets, ensuring that the local growth fund evolves into a genuine reflection of the Heseltine single pot	The Board will continue to lobby government through the Spending review process.	
	Local growth: maintaining local government’s momentum as a leader in the creation of the conditions for local growth, through the sharing of experiences and innovative practice	Board to Commission two growth seminars. Research: future proofing local economies: the role of LAs	March 2016
	That local government’s ambition in supporting and promoting local growth is coherent, integrated, reflects membership priorities and recognised nationally.	Board to commission an overview of councils’ role in promoting local growth and to highlight the opportunities and challenges through a small number of case studies.	December 2015
Environment/Waste	To ensure that producers are bearing an appropriate responsibility for waste within the circular economy model Recycling targets from 2020 are reasonable and reflect the current position of nation states	The Board will provide political leadership as the LGA seeks to influence the UK’s approach to meeting the 2020 50% recycling target and the development by the EU of potentially more testing future	July 2016

		targets.	
Winter weather	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and defend the reputation of councils and their work to help residents and businesses prepare for and respond to severe winter weather. 	<p>Winter readiness survey of local authorities.</p> <p>In the event of severe weather provide communications, policy and advocacy support at a national level. E.G. Salt Cell</p>	Oct/ Nov 2015

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Housing update

Purpose of Report

This paper updates the Board on the progress of activity to inform the development of policy impacting on housing supply, and seeks views on next steps.

Summary

Housing is at the forefront of public debate as the Government prepares to implement the commitments made in its manifesto, in the Summer Budget and in the Productivity Plan. The proposals will have a significant impact on councils. The Board is proactively seeking to influence policy in advance of the forthcoming Housing Bill and Spending Review, and around the Welfare Reform and Work Bill.

This paper updates on LGA activity following agreement of policy and the LGA's position at the last Board meeting, and seeks Member views on the next steps.

Recommendations

That the Board:

- Provide further comment on the policy position set out in the LGA's Spending Review submission and in this paper
- Note the activity undertaken over the summer, providing additional steer on the future positioning of our messages to the Government
- Comment on the proposed next steps for influencing the forthcoming Housing Bill and the current Welfare Reform and Work Bill, set out in paragraph 21 and 22

Action

To take forward the proposed next steps subject to Members' views.

Contact officer: Nick Porter
Position: Senior Adviser
Phone: 020 7664 3113
Email: nick.porter@local.gov.uk

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Housing update

1. Local government is ambitious to support house building. Building more homes can help meet housing demand, meet aspirations of home ownership, and reduce Housing Benefit spending, all key priorities for the Government. Councils must play a central role in expanding the stock of housing where it is most needed and be supported to take an active and innovative role in shaping local housing markets.
2. The Government's proposals set out in its manifesto, the Summer Budget, and the Productivity Plan will have a significant impact on the capacity of councils to deliver more houses. The Government has committed to:
 - 2.1. Requiring the reduction of social rents by 1 per cent a year over 4 years from April 2016.
 - 2.2. Extending the Right to Buy to housing association tenants.
 - 2.3. Funding the extension of Right to Buy to housing associations by requiring councils to sell their most expensive council housing.
 - 2.4. Delivering an additional 275,000 affordable homes by 2020.
 - 2.5. Require an increase in rent to social tenants earning above a certain threshold through a Pay to Stay.
 - 2.6. Review the use of lifetime tenancies with a view to limiting their use.
 - 2.7. Deliver 200,000 new Starter Homes.
 - 2.8. Prioritising brownfield development by requiring councils to have a register of what is available and ensure that 90 per cent of brownfield sites have planning permission by 2020.
 - 2.9. Enable councils to retain 10 per cent of receipts from the sale of wider public estates.
 - 2.10. Conduct a review of the Community Infrastructure Levy.
 - 2.11. Streamline the Local Plan making process.
 - 2.12. Bring forward proposals to make the compulsory purchase regime clearer, fairer and faster.

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2.13. Strengthening planning performance measures.

3. An LGA briefing and expressed view on the full range of new announcements is available on the LGA website¹.

LGA activity

4. The Board has continued to make a strong, pro-active and positive offer to the Government on the behalf of councils that want to be able to increase housing supply. This has included arguing for the powers and flexibilities to invest in building and to bring forward development, for instance calling for powers over the wider public estate, and making the case for council housing expenditure and borrowing to be excluded from the counting against the UK index of public debt².

5. The LGA Chairman and Board have undertaken a range of activity over the summer seeking to lead the debate in a way that mitigates the negative impacts of recent policy developments on councils and local housing markets. This has included:

5.1. Regular representations to Ministers and discussions on policy detail with officials

5.2. Research and analysis on the impact of proposals, including press releases attracting national media coverage³

5.3. Activity and events, including a seminar with officials, seeking to bring together a consensus view to the Government, involving a range of councils, Association of Retained Council housing (ARCH), Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE), District Council Network (DCN) and London Councils

5.4. Engagement in Parliament, including representations to the Communities and Local Government Select Committee, and on the progress of the Welfare Reform and Work Bill⁴

6. The activity has been underpinned by the housing chapter of the LGA Spending Review submission (Annex A). It is proposed that the Board

¹ LGA briefing: Budget and national Productivity Plan: housing and planning announcements, 2015
http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/planning/-/journal_content/56/10180/7393878/ARTICLE

² Investing in our nation's future, the first 100 days of the next government, 2014 http://www.local.gov.uk/campaigns/-/journal_content/56/10180/6348141/ARTICLE

³ For example - Social housing rent reforms to cost councils £2.6 billion, Financial Times, July 2015
<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/11714258-31e8-11e5-91ac-a5e17d9b4cff.html#axzz3m6WiVeCf>

⁴ For example – Welfare Reform and Work Bill, Public Bill Committee evidence session, Housing of Commons, September 2015 http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/briefings-and-responses/-/journal_content/56/10180/7396343/ARTICLE

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seek to build on this work over the coming months, setting out a strategy to inform the Government's thinking and to influence the Housing Bill and Welfare Reform and Work Bill as they progress through Parliament.

7. Key areas of work include:

The cumulative impact and unintended consequences

8. The Board has set out an offer to work with the Government to understand and mitigate the potential cumulative impact of the different housing policies on the collective ambition to build more homes. In particular, to explore the impact of policy initiatives on:

8.1. The capacity of councils and housing associations to help deliver the levels of house building needed;

8.2. The availability of affordable homes and the medium-term impact of less affordable and specialist housing stock on the demand for Housing Benefit and other financial assistance;

8.3. The proportion of families able to pursue home-ownership, and the impact on mixed tenure in communities particularly in areas with high house prices.

9. To inform work around the Housing Bill and Welfare Reform and Work Bill, the Board has commissioned Savills Ltd, a global real estate company, to undertake a statistical analysis of the potential cumulative impact and unintended consequences of the Government's proposals on its ambitions to build more homes, on affordable housing stock, and on housing tenure. The analysis will assess the impact on local government specifically, and will likely provide further evidence for mitigating the impact of policy proposals on councils. The project will be split into two reports: one produced in advance of the Housing Bill, and a second produced afterward to take into account additional detail from the Bill.

Required social rent reductions

10. Proposals to reduce the rents paid by tenants in social housing in England by 1 per cent a year for four years from 2016 will have a significant impact on council's 30 year housing investment strategies, which were agreed with the Government just two years ago.

11. The Board has estimated councils will lose around £2.6 billion in planned revenue over the four years up to 2019/ 2020, with a gap of £1 billion per year thereafter once the lower rent base of CPI+1 per cent is reintroduced

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in 2020/2025. The annual £1 billion gap is equivalent to 25 per cent of the controllable expenditure in the Housing Revenue Account or 60 per cent of the total maintenance budget, and will have implications for planned investment in housing and in maintaining existing stock. This analysis has been widely covered in the media⁶.

12. The analysis has underpinned LGA's work on the Welfare Reform and Work Bill, including a written submission recommending the deletion of the social rent clause, and the Chairman's evidence session to the Bill Committee⁷. It is proposed the Chairman and Board continue to make representations aiming to reduce the financial implications of the proposed rent reduction on councils, pursuing and evidencing a number of amendments ahead of the Report Stage of the Bill in Parliament.

Sale of vacant high value council homes

13. Councils are committed to managing their housing stock in a way that benefits local communities. It is important that measures to encourage the sale of vacant high value council homes support this ambition, and do not risk a drop in affordable housing.
14. The Chairman and the Board continue to make the case for the sale of high value council homes and the extension of RtB to be pursued as two separate policies, that a number of exemptions are introduced – such as those to protect specialist properties, newer properties with high levels of debt, and properties tied to regeneration programmes - and for councils to retain 100 per cent of receipts to invest in new homes locally.
15. The Government is not undertaking a public consultation but officials are running a technical working group. The LGA have a place on this group but have felt it important that the Department engage more openly with the sector. Therefore, following the roundtable with council Chief Executives and DCLG Permanent Secretary Melanie Dawes, the LGA has hosted a workshop with councils and senior officials on the implications of the policy, and supported the Department to run a programme of workshops with councils around the country.

Planning for infrastructure and growth

16. The Board continues to make the case that the planning system is not a barrier to house building. Councils are making good progress in

⁵ Local Government Association, July 2015

⁶ Reducing social rents will cost councils £2.6 billion by 2019/20, LGA, 2015 http://www.local.gov.uk/media-releases/-/journal_content/56/10180/7397692/NEWS

⁷ Welfare Reform and Work Bill, Public Bill Committee debate, September 2015
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/hansard/commons/this-weeks-public-bill-general-committee-debates/read/?date=2015-09-15&itemId=1186>

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implementing local plans and there is a need to avoid further fundamental reform of the planning system which would undermine progress towards long-term strategic planning.

17. The Board is working with the Government to ensure that the proposed reforms support councils to continue their progress, making a range of representations as the Government plans to deliver its ambitions for 200,000 Starter Homes, on the proposals to streamline the Local Plan making process, on the review of the Community Infrastructure Levy, and on the proposed targets for development on brownfield land.

18. There are measures the Government could take which could support both councils and developers in their shared aim to bring forward housing with the necessary infrastructure to build strong communities, including:

18.1. Introducing locally-set planning fees to ensure effective, responsive and fully funded council planning services, removing the burden from taxpayers who currently subsidise 30 per cent of total costs.

18.2. Removing national exemptions to section 106 contributions and Community Infrastructure Levy, to be replaced by a robust and transparent local viability assessment process to ensure development and supporting infrastructure meets community need. For instance section 106 exemptions for delivering 200,000 Starter Homes could cost £3 billion in lost investment into affordable housing.

18.3. Enabling local communities to have a say over new development on all brownfield land and the conversion of office to residential property, combined with giving councils the power to ensure developers prioritise brownfield sites.

Skills to build

19. The Board has continued to lead the debate on the availability of construction skills a central factor limiting the capacity of developers to build more homes. The Board is calling on the Government to implement a national Skills to Build strategy that devolves skills funding so that councils can work with colleges to resolve the widening construction skills gap threatening building and development.

20. The project has attracted significant media attention, gaining national media coverage for six days running⁸. It has been widely supported by private developers and building companies that are increasing focusing

⁸ For instance – UK trains 'too many hairdressers, and not enough bricklayers, Financial Times, 2015
<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/fa93ed04-4274-11e5-b98b-87c7270955cf.html>

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on skills gaps, rather than the planning system, as a key barrier to development.

Next steps

21. It is proposed that the Board continue to press for councils to be enabled with the powers and flexibilities to increase housebuilding, making this case through proactively engaging with the development of the Government's policies, including those within the Housing Bill and Welfare Reform and Work Bill.

22. The following further work is proposed to support this:

22.1. Complete and promote analysis on the cumulative impact of the Government's housing policies on councils and the unintended consequences they might have on house building, affordable housing stock, and home ownership. Use analysis as the basis for proactively informing the development of the Housing Bill and Welfare Reform and Work Bill, working with the Government, parliamentarians, partners and councils.

22.2. Refresh research into the number of unimplemented planning permissions and develop an LGA position on the future of funding infrastructure for development, including proposals for a robust approach to viability assessments to influence the review of CIL, and to make the case for the removal of national exemptions from infrastructure and affordable housing contributions.

22.3. Take forward discussions with the Government for a new deal with central government on public land and property, promoting the need for giving councils a power to direct the use of surplus public land and retaining a proportion of receipts for reinvestment locally.

22.4. Work with Lead Members to develop the priorities and the approach to take in discussions with Ministers and officials.

Achieving the nation's ambition on housing

KEY POINTS

The Spending Review is an opportunity for Government, councils and housing associations to work together to understand the cumulative impact of different housing policy initiatives on our collective ambition to build more homes, support home ownership, and reduce the welfare bill.

The Government should raise its ambition to sell off public assets from the current target of £5 billion between 2015 and 2020 up to £13 billion – the level that councils are set to achieve. If councils had a 'power to direct' the sale of government-owned public land and the ability to retain 10 per cent of receipts, they could deliver 180,000 new homes across the government-owned land. The sales would generate £11.7 billion capital receipts for the Government, which should be used to fund the extension of Right to Buy (RTB).

Local government must be given the tools to take an active direct role in shaping local housing markets, and the flexibilities to mitigate the impact of measures requiring the sale of high value council homes and the reduction of social rents on affordable housing in local housing markets. In particular, councils must be able to retain 100 per cent of all sales to reinvest in new and existing housing.

Building more homes can help meet aspirations of home ownership and meet housing demand, both of which are reflected in the Government's housing agenda. Local government is ambitious to support building. It must play a central role in expanding the stock of housing where it is most needed and be supported to take an active and innovative role in shaping local housing markets, for instance through local housing companies.

Tackling the housing deficit will require an increase in supply across all tenures, including bringing empty buildings back into use. Every local housing market is different and getting best value from public investment depends upon councils being able to develop a locally responsive mix of housing tenure that can work towards supporting home ownership while reducing welfare spending.

The Government has announced a number of initiatives which will have a significant cumulative impact on local housing markets around the country.

We want to work with the Government to understand potential effects on our collective ambition to provide more homes. In particular, we want to explore the impact of policy initiatives on:

- **The capacity of councils and housing associations to help deliver the levels of house building needed.** The country needs an additional 230,000 homes a year to keep up with the number of new households. The private sector cannot meet this demand alone, rarely building over 150,000 homes a year over the last 25 years.²⁰ Councils will need the stability, flexibility and levers – set out in this submission – to build the additional homes and associated infrastructure needed by our communities.
- **The number of families needing additional housing support, as falls in affordable and specialist housing stock lead more into the private rented sector.** The proposed extension of Right to Buy to housing associations, the sale of high value council homes, and the emphasis on home ownership – such as through the Starter Homes commitment – risks reducing

²⁰ Live tables on house building, DCLG, August 2015

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affordable housing stock by 150,000 over the Spending Review period,²¹ which could generate an additional £460 million pressure on an already increasing Housing Benefit bill, as more tenants move into the private rented sector.²² Furthermore, falls in the availability of specialist accommodation would generate upward pressure on health and social care costs.

- **Home ownership and the reduction of mixed tenure in communities, particularly in areas with high house prices.** Falls in affordable housing could lead more tenants into the more expensive private rented sector, reducing their capacity to pursue home ownership. It also risks creating recruitment challenges for employers in areas of higher house prices, particularly for vacancies on lower wages. This will likely have a knock-on impact on economic performance in a number of urban and rural economies, as employers struggle to fill vacancies that they need to grow.

In developing this understanding we would like to explore specific implications of individual policy initiatives. The Government has announced a set of policies affecting the local housing supply, and the following are sets of our initial recommendations for ensuring that they are implemented in a way that contribute to its housing ambitions.

Sale of high value council homes. Councils are committed to managing their housing stock in a way that benefits local communities. It is important that measures to encourage the sale of high value council homes support this ambition, and do not risk a drop in affordable housing which generates additional costs for the Government.

²¹ Estimate based on council Right to Buy replacement rate of less than 50 per cent, applied to estimate sale of 221,000 housing association homes through Right to Buy extension, estimated by the National Housing Federation (April 2015), and estimate 78,000 sales of high value council homes, estimated by Savills (June 2015)

²² Based on private sector tenants receiving £110 per week in housing benefit in England compared to £89 per week for those renting from a social rent landlord

As a starting point we believe that:

- the sale of high value council homes and the extension of RTB should be pursued as two separate policies
- councils should locally retain 100 per cent of receipts from selling their assets to reinvest in building more new homes
- homes should be defined as high value relative to the local housing market, rather than relative to council housing stock
- property built after 2008 and likely to have higher levels of debt, housing for vulnerable groups and specialist homes that reduce health costs should be exempt
- the policy should be time limited and subject to review of impact on asset management and housing investment plans.

RTB extension to housing associations.

There is a need to ensure homes sold through the extended RTB are replaced locally and that housing associations continue to invest in new affordable homes. At the same time, the policy should be designed to ensure replacement homes are delivered with least additional cost to the public purse. Therefore, arrangements for compensation to housing associations should ensure that:

- housing associations are required to manage and utilise their assets effectively to make a contribution to the costs of the scheme
- the Government compensates housing associations for the cost of replacing homes sold net of capital receipts, not for the discount
- the grant subsidy element of housing association properties is recycled into the replacement property when a home is sold through RTB
- receipts from council RTB properties that have been retained by the Government are used to fund replacements
- the reform takes into account the impact on specialist housing which has adaptations in place to support vulnerable residents.

Better use of public land. There is significant value to be realised through better and more strategic management of public sector land, part of which could be used to fund the extension of the RTB to housing associations. The One Public Estate programme has demonstrated that council management of public land can achieve significant additional capital receipts, providing they have the necessary powers to do so. The Government has recognised this by allocating additional funding as part of the Summer Budget.

The public sector holds more than £300 billion worth of land and buildings. While local government is set to achieve £13.3 billion land and property sales up to 2018²³, the Government had a target of realising just £5 billion by 2020.²⁴ We therefore recommend that:

- the Government match the scale of ambition and pace of change achieved by local government on management of assets and raise its own target to £13 billion by 2020
- councils are given the ‘power to direct’²⁵ the strategic development and sale of publicly owned sites in order to bring forward the land to develop 180,000 additional homes, and are able to retain at least 10 per cent of receipts from sales of surplus central government land for local investment²⁶
- the remainder of the £11.7 billion central government receipts from the sale of surplus land is used to help fund the extension of the RTB, with councils retaining 10 per cent (£1.3 billion) of capital receipts to reinvest in further development.

Social rent reductions. Proposals that Government will seek to reduce rents paid by tenants in social housing in England by 1 per cent a year for four years from 2016 will have a significant financial impact on

councils and housing associations, adversely affecting their long-term housing investment plans. This will significantly limit their capacity to build new homes needed to deliver the Government’s ambitions. Furthermore, council tenants already pay the lowest rents across all housing providers at an average £82 per week in 2012/13,²⁷ less than the £96 per week charged on average by private registered social landlords,²⁸ and the average £137 per week in the private rented sector.²⁹

The LGA estimates councils will lose around £2.6 billion in planned revenue over the four years up to 2019/20, equivalent to almost 19,000 new homes, with a gap of £1 billion per year thereafter assuming the lower rent base of CPI+1 per cent is reintroduced in 2020/21.³⁰ The annual £1 billion gap is equivalent to 60 per cent of the total maintenance budget. We recommend that the Government:

- reduces the duration of the social housing rent reduction policy from four to three years, ending in 2018/19 in line with the Government’s timetable to achieve a surplus by 2019/20
- includes exemptions to protect investment in specialist accommodation for the vulnerable, in line with RTB exemptions, and for council tenants that do not claim housing benefit and can afford social rent levels
- delivers wider flexibilities enabling councils to adapt to the impact on their Housing Revenue Account (HRA), in particular allowing councils to retain 100 per cent of all sold assets and additional receipts generated

23 Fiscal Supplementary Tables, Office for Budget Responsibility, March 2013

24 Investing In Britain’s Future, HM Treasury, June 2013

25 As recommended by the Elphicke-House Report, DCLG, January 2015

26 The Conservative Party Manifesto 2015, Conservative Party, April 2015

27 Local authority housing statistics: year ending March 2014, DCLG, 2014

28 Private registered provider social housing stock in England, DCLG, January 2015

29 Private rental market statistics, Valuation Office Agency, December 2014

30 Reducing social rents will cost councils £2.6 billion by 2019/20, LGA, July 2015

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- gives councils additional powers to set differential discounts on house sales in the same way as the proposed differential rent levels policy
- offers additional stability and flexibility to HRAs by committing to no further changes to the rent policy and lifting the borrowing cap.

Pay to stay. Councils welcome the principal of additional powers to set differential rent levels based on local circumstances. Tenants need to be protected so they can remain in their own home and retain the incentive to work and earn more. The proposal should also be delivered at minimum cost to the taxpayer. We would recommend that:

- information on tenant pay is generated nationally using HMRC data and an additional national tax is applied to bring up rent to the wider local housing market level
- whatever the delivery model, the Government pass the additional rental income to councils and housing associations to invest in new and existing homes
- a taper is introduced so tenants are not discouraged from earning above the threshold, particularly in areas with a large gap between social and market rent.

Planning for infrastructure and growth.

The planning system is not holding back house builders from delivering the homes we need. There are measures the Government could take which could support both councils and developers in their shared aim to bring forward housing in a way that brings forward the necessary infrastructure to build strong communities:

- introducing locally-set planning fees to ensure effective, responsive and fully funded council planning services, removing the burden from taxpayers who currently subsidise 30 per cent of total costs

- removing national exemptions to section 106 contributions and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), to be replaced by a more robust and transparent local viability assessment process to ensure development and supporting infrastructure meets community need
- ensuring that local areas are able to use the growth fund to support local housing and infrastructure investment strategy
- enabling local communities to have a say over new development on all brownfield land and the conversion of office to residential property, combined with giving councils the power to ensure developers prioritise brownfield sites
- streamlining and simplifying CIL regulations and guidance
- removing the restriction on pooling section 106 contributions for strategic sites identified in local plans.

Skills to build. The construction sector identifies skills shortages as one of the greatest barriers holding back housebuilding, rather than the planning system. The industry's forecasted annual recruitment needs have increased for the last three years consecutively, up from 29,050 a year in 2013, to 44,690 a year from 2015. More than half of skilled trade vacancies in the construction sector were hard-to-fill in 2013, up from 46 per cent in 2011.³¹

At the same time, the number of people in construction-related training has declined across all learning. Since 2012/13, the number of construction-related vocational learning qualifications has dropped by 4 per cent, including apprenticeships which have fallen by 58 per cent, and higher education qualifications in construction and engineering fell by 17 per cent.

³¹ Skills to Build. Local Government Association, 2015

Our proposals to ensure local labour markets have the right mix of skills to maximise employment opportunities are set out earlier in this paper. Specifically for the housing labour market we also recommend that:

- the Government works with industry, councils and education providers to explore and develop a national Skills to Build strategy
- councils who work with developers through the planning process to identify skills gaps are empowered to ensure publicly funded local skills and training providers train unemployed residents to take jobs created
- councils and local partners gain the levers to shape the local skills and employment services so that they meet the needs of employers as set out in the section above.

Housing Commission

Purpose of report

To decide on the direction of an LGA housing commission

Summary

This paper sets out the background for an LGA housing commission which the Board has been requested to undertake by the LGA Leadership Board, and asks members to discuss and agree the objectives and governance for this work.

Recommendation

The Board comment and agree the objectives and governance for an LGA housing commission.

Action

Officers to progress as directed by the Board.

Contact officer: Nick Porter
Position: Senior Adviser
Phone no: 020 7664 3113
E-mail: nick.porter@local.gov.uk

An LGA housing commission

Background

1. As part of the recent member-led review of governance, the LGA Executive and Leadership Board have been asked to commission work from the LGA Policy Boards where a clear corporate priority has been identified or where an important policy issue straddles more than one Board.
2. At the Leadership Board in July 2015 members were asked to consider the policy priorities for the work programme for the coming year.

Work commissioned by the LGA Leadership from Boards

3. The following cross-cutting areas of work have been commissioned from relevant Boards in 2015-16. Specific Boards have been asked to lead this work as stated below:
 - 3.1. **Housing.** This work is to be led by the Economy, Environment, Housing and Transport Board, with any supporting evidence submitted to EEHT from other relevant Boards. There should also be support from independent expert advisers (to be developed by the Board).
 - 3.2. **Devolution and the future shape of local government.** To be led jointly by the City Regions and People and Places Boards, with any supporting evidence submitted to these Boards from other relevant Boards.
 - 3.3. **Finance.** This work should be commissioned from the Resources Board, with support from all relevant Boards.
 - 3.4. **Promoting health and wellbeing.** This work should be commissioned from the Community Wellbeing Board, with input from other relevant boards and potential wider contributions from think-tanks and other parts of the public sector including the NHS and Public Health England. It can draw on ongoing projects such as tackling Child Sexual Exploitation, Ageing and Skills which already operate across Boards.

LGA Leadership Board steers on Housing

4. The Leadership Board has given a strong steer for the development of the housing commission. The Leadership Board agreed that:

- 4.1. Addressing housing need was a clear priority at LGA conference from all political groups, and that our recent work and evidence base has supported councils' clear role to support residents in this area.
- 4.2. Through leadership of the debate on the Housing Bill we have the opportunity to ensure that a much bigger agenda about place shaping is developed, focusing on issues such as skills, welfare reform, community safety and an aging population that are vital parts of delivering our housing ambition.
- 4.3. Whilst we would commission new research, it has also stated that we should draw on existing work such as Hidden Talents which showed that empowered local government can deliver the local construction skills needed to be able to build the number of new houses required.
- 4.4. The focus on housing needed to be clear, rather than a wider debate on infrastructure in general.

Taking the LGA-wide work forward

5. In 2016, it is intended that we could draw on all of these pieces of work to inform a more forward-looking vision for the future of local public services and the relationship with communities, perhaps for a launch at next year's annual conference.
6. All lead Boards have been asked to detail the scope of the Leadership's request at their first meeting and to report back to the LGA Executive.
7. Members are asked to comment and agree the proposed objectives and governance for the commission, set out below.

LGA housing commission, proposed objectives and governance

8. This short paper proposes early options for the Board to establish an LGA housing commission, requested by the LGA Leadership Board.

Objective

9. An LGA housing commission would aim to take forward the role of councils as central to delivering housing critical to resolving a number of public service challenges. It is proposed that the commission build on the findings of recent reviews into the council role in housing, such as the Elphicke-House Review and Lyons Review, focusing on how central and local government can practically deliver on those recommendations in a way that:

- a. drives housebuilding
- b. shapes prosperous communities and places
- c. boosts employment and social mobility
- d. supports an ageing population.

10. The commission would take a medium-term view incorporating current housing reforms but looking beyond them in making the case for the specific powers, flexibilities and support that councils will need to innovate and deliver.

Governance

11. It is proposed that the Board shape and lead the housing commission internally, reporting into the LGA Leadership Board and seeking the input of other Boards as and when it is important to do so, in particular the LGA Resources Board and the LGA Community and Wellbeing Board.

12. The Board would also seek the input from a small network of key expert stakeholders. The expert advisers may not need to meet regularly, but would provide input into the development and activity of the commission. The network would include a representative from local government, the housing association sector, private developers, tenants, third and health sectors, and academia.

Process

13. The commission would work towards delivering a final report in spring 2016, the findings of which will be brought together with those of the other commissions into an overarching report for the 2016 LGA Annual Conference.

14. In working towards the final report the commission might seek to undertake and launch specific pieces of research, reports or improvement activity focused around four priority themes, including housebuilding, prosperous communities and places, employment and social mobility, supporting an ageing population.

15. It will be important to engage councils in the development of the commission's activity. As a starting point, the commission would open a call for evidence, inviting short submissions on the key issues for councils, the good practice successfully seeking to address those issues, and the further powers and flexibilities needed to build on those successes.

Proposed next steps

16. Subject to member views, it is proposed that the Board lead members shape and agree a work plan to feedback to the Leadership Board.



Agenda Item 6

**Environment, Economy,
Housing and Transport
Board**

1 October 2015

1 October 2015

Transport Update

Purpose of Report

This paper provides an update on key transport related developments in relation to the Board's work programme, specifically:

1. Buses
2. Devolution proposals and the Spending Review
3. Air Quality
4. Rail

Summary

This paper updates on LGA activity following agreement of policy and lobbying lines at the last Board meeting, and seeks Member views on the next steps.

Recommendations

That members:

- Note the summary findings of the buses research and agree to continue to represent councils' interests on the recommendations in the report.
- Note the focus on transport in the latest devolution proposals and agree that the Board continues to represent councils' calls for a fair deal for local transport
- Note the Government's consultation on air quality, endorse the LGA's intention to respond to the consultation (in conjunction with the Community Wellbeing Board), and agree that the Board continues to call for further devolution of transport powers, levers and resources enabling councils to do more in meeting local outcomes.
- Are invited to share any local perspectives on barriers to doing more on air quality, and in particular on NOx emissions management
- Note the update on Rail, recognising councils' ambitions to influence Network Rail and to provide a steer on any future actions in representing local government interests.

Action

To take forward the proposed next steps subject to Members' views.

Transport Update

Buses

1. The research commissioned by the buses/ community transport Task and Finish group on how councils have addressed the pressure on bus funding in the past five years and how they see bus policy developing over the next five years is now complete. A report, *Missing the Bus?*, drew on interviews with a small number of councils and pulls together the findings and recommendations from the research. The report focuses on non-metropolitan councils and in most respects complements the PTE (Passenger Transport Executive's) report *Making the Case for the Urban Bus*.
2. *Missing the Bus?* has now been published on the LGA website and the report's key points are set out below:
 - 2.1. Cuts to council funding and underfunding of the English National Concessionary Fares Scheme (ENCFS) have forced many councils to cut bus budgets and this, combined with cuts to the Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG), has put services at risk.
 - 2.2. The report highlights the positive action taken by councils in order to mitigate against the impact of budget reductions. Councils have responded by consulting communities and working with operators to encourage the latter to take on the commercial risk of some services, to find other sources of funding, to target necessary cuts appropriately and to provide alternatives to the bus such as community transport, on-demand services and car-sharing schemes.
 - 2.3. Councils are also working in partnership with other parts of the public sector, to pilot a 'Total Transport' approach to planning a more cost effective public transport solution, across tendered bus networks, home-to-school transport and NHS non-emergency transport.
3. However, councils have said that it is unlikely that these measures will be able to mitigate the effects of any further cuts to a significant extent. Community transport operators are facing similar difficulties to bus operators and volunteers are harder to find; there is no long term guarantee for services where the operator has taken on the financial risk; on demand services have high per-passenger costs and there is increasingly limited scope for thinning out underused services.
4. Although the positive initiatives undertaken by councils have protected many services, reductions to supported services have been inevitable. This is why the report calls on the Government to act swiftly on the findings of Total Transport pilots; devolve BSOG and maintain its current level; properly fund the ENCFS and introduce a package of reform in the Buses Bill including:
 - 4.1. Franchising as an option for all councils

- 4.2. Powers to impose effective multi-operator ticketing
 - 4.3. Improved licensing powers to tackle rogue operators
 - 4.4. Requirements on operators to release data in line with requirements on rail
 - 4.5. Enhanced traffic management powers to eliminate journey delays
5. The findings confirm and support previous analysis and calls for buses policy and funding reform and will be used to influence the Spending Review as well as the Buses Bill. The report will be sent to key members of the Government and the Chair of the EEHT Board will have an opportunity to raise the issues and recommendations at his meeting with Andrew Jones MP, the Minister for local transport and buses on 21st October.

Devolution proposals and Spending Review

6. On 21st July the Government, in setting out its priorities for Spending Review 2015, called on areas that want to agree a devolution deal by the Spending Review to submit formal, fiscally-neutral proposals and an agreed geography to the Treasury by 4 September 2015. 34 submissions were made by English sub-regions made to the Government by this deadline. Early LGA analysis shows that local areas are calling for greater local powers and funding for skills, business support and enterprise, housing, transport and health and social care.
7. LGA analysis shows that further devolution of transport powers and funding featured in at least 28 of the submissions. Typically, transport related devolution asks include:
- 7.1. Further bus franchising powers and control of resources, including bus subsidies
 - 7.2. A single, smart-ticketing system
 - 7.3. Multi-year funding and consolidated transport budgets
 - 7.4. Traffic management powers
 - 7.5. Memoranda of Understanding/ strategic partnerships with Highways England and influence spending from RIS 2 (Roads Investment Strategy)
 - 7.6. More influence over rail assets, operations and future investment (see below under the Rail update)
8. Some councils are fearful that local transport spending is at greater risk in the coming Spending Review as funding for local roads as well as bus services, cycling and walking are set on an annual basis through funding to local government, whereas budgets for Network Rail and Highways England are

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agreed in five-year cycles, making them more difficult to cut. The LGA, in its Spending Review submission has repeated its call for multi-year and long-term certainty of funding to allow more effective planning and use of resources.

9. Members may have seen the recent media coverage, including in the Financial Times, promoting devolution and how it could boost economic output and raise productivity. The LGA's media release is supported by an infographic which can be found in the appendix.
10. LGA officials are continuing with further analysis of devolution asks to inform ongoing and regular discussion with Whitehall officials in order to ensure that Government properly reflects and addresses councils' devolution ambitions.

Air Quality

11. Transport is a major contributor to poor air quality – for example, road transport still accounts for just under one third of total NO_x emissions. Emissions of NO_x can cause breathing problems, trigger asthma, reduce lung function and cause lung diseases.
12. Earlier this year, the European Commission formally launched infraction proceedings against the UK for breach of nitrogen dioxide limit values under the EU Air Quality Directive. Furthermore, a recent Supreme Court ruling required the Government to produce plans to improve air quality in line with EU requirements on Nitrogen Dioxide pollution by the end of this year. Government has issued a consultation on its draft plans and the deadline for responses is 6 November.
13. The LGA intends to respond, however, that the Government's plan appears to offer no new powers or funds to councils (although the Government is making money available to support Ultra-Low Emission Vehicles and to retrofit buses with low emission engines). It places the onus on councils and is accompanied by individual plans for each of the 38 air quality zones exceeding the annual mean limit value for NO₂. The Government sees reducing transport emissions as key to compliance.
14. In preparing a response LGA officers will consult councils over whether there are legislative and other barriers to compliance which we should seek to have removed as well as their views on the quality of the consultation with councils by Defra in preparing the plan. For example powers under Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act could help target particular congestion and pollution hotspots.
15. The consultation can be found here https://consult.defra.gov.uk/airquality/draft-aq-plans/supporting_documents/Consultation%20document%20%20draft%20plans%20to%20improve%20air%20quality.%20September%202015%20final%20version%20folder.pdf
16. The process of infraction proceedings can take many years – although the Commission has stated that it would like to “to achieve full compliance with

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existing air quality standards by 2020 at the latest". Defra, however, wrote to all councils in summer this year to remind them of the discretionary power in Part 2 of the Localism Act under which the Government could require responsible authorities to pay all or part of an infraction fine. The procedures are set out in a policy statement published by DCLG. This power or requirement is at the relevant Minister's discretion, it would be decided on a case-by-case basis whether or not it should be exercised, and whether or not to initiate a process to recover some, or all, of the EU financial sanction. Whilst the Government hopes that through cooperative working between Government, local authorities and the EU that the UK avoids the infraction reaching the European court with the prospect of fines, the fact that they have reminded councils shows that councils are at risk of fines being passported to them.

17. Local authorities are responsible for reviewing and assessing air quality, to check they meet national air quality objectives. If they are falling short, they must declare an Air Quality Management Area and produce an action plan showing what they are going to do to work towards meeting the air quality objectives. LGA officers are now consulting local authorities, but the early indications are that councils feel that the passporting of fines will be unfair as:

17.1. They are responsible for working towards the objectives and not accountable for achieving them;

17.2. That they feel they do not have the necessary levers and resources available to them to effectively reduce NO2 emissions

17.3. That the fault primarily lays with the ineffectiveness of EU emission standards applied to motor vehicles, in particular those with diesel engines. New and stricter EU emissions standards are now being introduced but only apply to new vehicles and there are reports that it could take 10-15 years for the new standards to make a real difference.

18. *The Board are invited to share any early thoughts legislative and other barriers that would help with compliance and their perspectives on the relationship with Defra on air quality issues.*

Rail

19. In late spring the Government announced changes to Network Rail's investment plans. Lead members of the Board have therefore asked for an update to the Board on:

19.1. What Network Rail's current priorities are for the 2014-19 control period;

and

19.2. Within the context of devolution what it is that councils are asking for in terms of their ability to influence local spend on rail with a view to improving local transport and promoting local growth.

Network Rail investment plan

20. In July 2012 the previous Government announced its outline five year spending plans for the 'control period' between 2014 and 2019. The Government agreed a High Level Output Statement' (HLOS) with Network Rail on what should be achieved given The Statement Of Funds Available (SOFA), which totals £38.5 billion and is underwritten by the Government.

21. The HLOS is built around four priorities:

- 21.1. Creating an electrified high-capacity freight and passenger corridor
- 21.2. Providing more capacity and faster journeys between key cities
- 21.3. Supporting commuter travel into major urban areas
- 21.4. Improved rail links to major ports and airports

22. Network Rail was subsequently reclassified as a public body and as a result the Government's accountability has become more apparent with more direct intervention in the rail investment plans and performance of Network Rail. In late spring 2015, the Government announced that due to rising costs and missed targets aspects of the plan would be delayed, although the total amount of spending will remain as planned. The most significant changes were the 'pausing' of the electrification of the two key routes: The Trans-Pennine (York – Manchester) and Midland main line (Bedford – Sheffield). Peter Hendy, the new Chairman for Network Rail, is reviewing the remainder of the company's programme of rail investment and will report back to the Secretary of State in the autumn.

Devolution and Rail

23. Councils and groupings of councils have long called for greater influence over investment in rail as well as operational aspect of rail so that there is greater integration with local transport and local economic growth strategies. Notably, Rail North Limited was created to bring together Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) across the North of England into one cohesive body to represent the regional and local economic, transport and strategic objectives for the rail industry. In March 2015 the Government and Rail North signed a partnership agreement which will govern the new Northern and Trans-Pennine Express franchises from April 2016.

24. More recently the latest round of devolution deals has shown appetite from amongst councils to control a greater element of local rail spend, including:

- 24.1. Ownership of local rail stations, including devolved budgets
- 24.2. Influence over unused or surplus Network Rail land assets and where such assets which are blocking strategic development sites

1 October 2015

24.3. Creation of local infrastructure delivery plan to influence Network Rail and infrastructure investment by other national bodies

24.4. Greater influence over rail franchise awards and collaboration with Network Rail on local rail service improvements.

25. Looking ahead, it is anticipated the Government and Network Rail will start to plan for control period 6, running between 2019 and 2024, in the next year. It will be in the interests of councils to engage at an early stage in the development of control period 6 to ensure the best chances of influencing future outcomes.

Recommendations

26. That members:

26.1. Note the summary findings of the buses research and agree to continue to represent councils' interests on the recommendations in the report.

26.2. Note the focus on transport in the latest devolution proposals and agree that the Board continues to represent councils' calls for a fair deal for local transport

26.3. Note the Government's consultation on air quality, endorse the LGA's intention to respond to the consultation (in conjunction with the Community Wellbeing Board), and agree that the Board continues to call for further devolution of transport powers, levers and resources enabling councils to do more in meeting local outcomes.

26.4. Are invited to share any local perspectives on barriers to doing more on air quality, and in particular on NOx emissions management

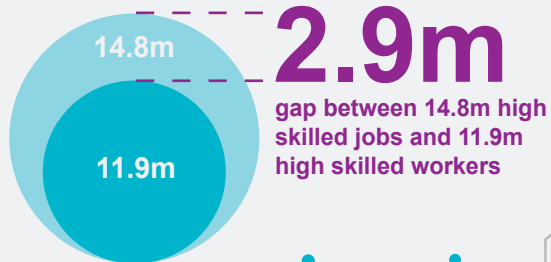
26.5. Note the update on Rail, recognising councils' ambitions to influence Network Rail and to provide a steer on any future actions in representing local government interests.

Powering productivity

What businesses could gain from devolution

DEVO
NEXT

Skills that businesses need



£375 billion



could be lost to the economy if employers can't recruit the workers they need



Devolve education and skills funding and incentivise more in-work training to boost growth and productivity.

Housing fit for a growing economy



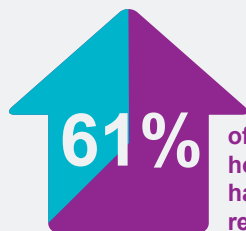
£2.84

of demand generated in the wider economy for every



£1

of construction output



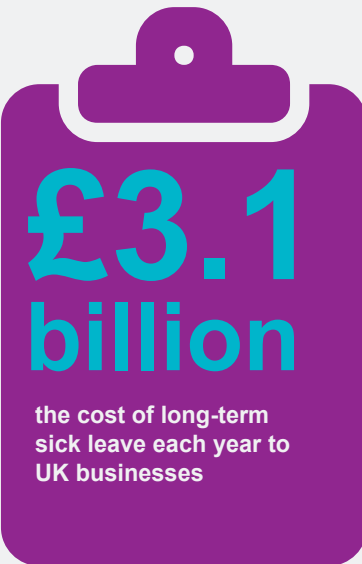
of London businesses list housing costs and availability as having a negative impact on recruitment of entry level staff



Giving councils 'power to direct' the sale of government-owned public land and retain 10 per cent of receipts, could see councils deliver 180,000 new homes across government-owned land.

If councils could retain 100 per cent of receipts from selling their assets they could build more new homes.

Healthier workforce



the cost of long-term sick leave each year to UK businesses

Less congestion, better connectivity

Yearly congestion costs for individuals



32 seconds

per mile will be lost to congestion by 2035



Reduce congestion costs and provide an integrated transport system, giving more choice to commuters and consumers.

Fast broadband, everywhere

Only **15%** of small businesses are very satisfied with their broadband provision



1 in 7 small businesses say lack of reliable and fast broadband is their main barrier to growth



Devolve future public funding of broadband rollout to councils, giving value for money through supplier side, helping to achieve 100 per cent coverage and supporting local business needs.

Simple access to business support

34% increase in productivity for SMEs that export in their first year than SMEs who do not



Just **1 in 5** SMEs are currently exporting their products



Simplify, localise and improve access to business advice, including on exporting and international trade, will help SMEs to grow and benefit from expanding overseas economies.

Only **41%** of employees are operating at peak physical level and 29% are unable to concentrate at work due to poor health

Agenda Item 7



Create a place-based health system to allow for an enhanced focus on prevention activities.

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

Title:	Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board
Date:	Thursday 4 June 2015
Venue:	Smith Square 1&2, Ground Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A** to this note

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
1	Declarations of Interest No delcarations of interest were made.	
2	Chair's Report The Chair introduced the report, which was for information. The report summarised the work which had been undertaken by the Chair, Lead Members and the Board since the previous meeting. Decision <ul style="list-style-type: none">The Board noted the report.	
3	Queen's Speech The Chair introduced the report, which provided an overview of the legislative programme for the new Government as set out in the Queen's Speech on 27 May 2015. The Board noted that the Bills of particular interest to the Board were the Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill, the Buses Bill and the Housing Bill. Future housing policy was the focus of a report later on the agenda. Regarding the Cities and Devolution Bill, the Chairman commented that it would be useful for Lead Members of the Board to meet with the new Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. A further report on this Bill should be considered by the Board at the next meeting following discussions with the Secretary of State. The Head of Policy explained that the Bill had already started progress through the Houses of Parliament, and that a report would also be considered by the City Regions Board and the People and Places Board. Members endorsed the LGA view of the Buses Bill, which had been set	

out in the 'on the day' briefing on the Queen's Speech.

Decision

- That a meeting between the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and the EEHT Board Lead Members be sought to discuss the Cities and Local Government Bill.
- That the LGA position on the Buses Bill be endorsed.

Action

- Officers to arrange meeting between the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and the EEHT Board Lead Members.

4 Housing Priorities and the New Government

The Chair introduced the report, which was to inform the Board's discussion on refreshing the LGA's housing policy following the General Election. Caroline Green, Senior Advisor, highlighted that housing was a priority for the new government, which was endorsed by the forthcoming Housing Bill announced in the Queen's Speech. The current indication was that the Housing Bill would be debated in the autumn, but initial discussions were already taking place.

Measures expected to be in the Bill included commitment to deliver more affordable homes and deliver additional starter homes, extend Right to Buy to housing association tenants by requiring local authorities to sell their most expensive council housing, provide councils with stronger powers to bring forward brownfield land for development, and provide additional funding for infrastructure development.

The proposed LGA positions, which would form the basis of a refreshed LGA policy on housing and were intended as the priorities for discussion with Ministers and wider lobbying activity, were set out in the report.

In the discussion that followed the following points were discussed:

- Housing associations were concerned that they would be losing their housing stock if Right to Buy was extended to housing association tenants, and could raise legal challenges. Housing associations should be given the full value of the house if tenants were able to purchase.
- There was cross-party concern regarding the proposal that councils should sell off housing stock to fund Right to Buy.
- Local Government needed to take a lead in researching how the government's proposals would impact upon regions.
- There was a need to define the percentage of council land available for development nationally.
- There was an urgent need to increase funding for strategic infrastructure to support development, including the building of roads and schools to support new communities.
- Consideration should be given to how the withdrawal of housing benefit for young people would impact upon local authorities if

council housing stock was also reduced.

- Clarity should be sought on who would receive infrastructure funding in three tier areas.
- Current Section 106 contributions were inadequate and required revision.
- 'Like for like' development of housing should be implemented, so that councils and housing associations built houses with the same number of bedrooms to replace those which were sold.
- Councils should have the ability to take control and develop brownfield land which had been unused for a long period of time, such as ex-MOD sites.
- Transparency and reporting of landholdings and valuation should be increased.
- Compulsory purchase powers should be quicker and cheaper for councils to use.
- There was a potential for the Rural Exception Scheme to be lost in the new Right to Buy arrangements, which was particularly important in many rural local authority areas.
- The LGA should reaffirm that sustainability of development should remain a priority.
- Any City deals should include funding for infrastructure in the areas concerned.

The Chair summarised that the areas raised by the Board would be taken into account, and further research would be conducted into the potential implications of the proposals. He would also raise the issues discussed at the Board with the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

Decision

- That further research into the potential implications of the Housing Bill proposals be undertaken for consideration at the next meeting of the Board.

Action

- Members' comments on the proposed LGA positions set out in the report to be taken into account as part of the process to refresh the LGA policy on housing, and future reports to the Board.

5 EU Circular Economy Proposals and Meeting EU Recycling Targets

The Vice-Chair introduced the report, and informed members that he had led a delegation to Brussels to discuss proposals for the Circular Economy with MEPs, UK government representatives, the Commission official leading the work on the proposals and the CBI team in Brussels. Meetings had also taken place with a former Defra Minister and Defra officials. Following these meetings LGA policy position papers on the EU Circular Economy and meeting EU recycling targets had been produced, and were included with the Board papers.

The Vice-Chair drew attention to what councils had already achieved on the Circular Economy. He highlighted that there had been a 78% reduction

in waste to landfill (per household) since 2002/03, which would have been impossible without investment from local authorities. He also commented that a number of other EU member countries were not achieving the high rates of recycling and reduction of waste to landfill seen in the UK. Meeting recycling targets should not mean an additional burden on taxpayers; instead a waste market in reusable waste should be created.

In the discussion which followed the following points were raised:

- The EU Circular Economy and EU recycling targets policy position papers should be endorsed.
- A great deal of work with the private sector had been undertaken to change product design so that products and packaging were reusable and recyclable. Packaging was a big concern for local authorities, and work would continue to make it more easily recyclable.
- Food waste was also a major concern for councils, as it was expensive to collect. Supermarkets should examine the most effective way of tackling food waste, as there should be responsibility all the way through the food chain. Further work with WARP would continue to address this issue.
- Urban and rural councils shared responsibility for meeting waste and recycling targets, and poor performers should be targeted.
- The drive for secondary materials to improve the financial viability of recycling collection should be increased.
- Longer product warranties could potentially reduce the amount of residual waste produced.

In response to a question on fines, it was highlighted that the Secretary of State had the authority to distribute fines equally amongst councils. There should be a focus on improving the recycling rates and reducing the waste sent to landfill of metropolitan councils as that would protect all councils against fines if targets were not met.

Decisions

- That the policy positions set out in the two policy papers in the report be noted, and members' comments on them be taken into account.
- That the next steps, as outlined in the report, be agreed.

Actions

- Arrange a meeting with Defra Ministers to present both sets of proposals.
- Respond to revised consultation on the EU Circular Economy proposals.
- Potentially send a further delegation to Brussels in the autumn at the end of the consultation period.
- Develop a further media strategy to support the work on recycling targets.

The Chair introduced a report which provided an update on developments related to the EEHT Work Programme, including the work of Task and Finish Groups.

One member asked if there was any opportunity to include further work on skills in the work programme for 2015/16. The Board had led some successful work on apprenticeships, but there was a need to ensure there were opportunities for reskilling, and to make sure residents were digitally skilled to meet the aspirations of councils. The Head of Policy highlighted that the LGA had delivered a paper on localising skills before the General Election, and there would be a need to adapt that work to make sure there was an evidence base for city and county deals. There was a national concern that there was not a big enough skill base to build the number of houses expected over the next five years. The Chair highlighted that the Board had already done a lot of work on this issue through the Hidden Talents campaign.

Decision

- The Board noted the updates on the Work Programme.

7 EEHT End of Year Board Report

The Chair introduced the Board's End of year Report, which summarised the issues and work the Board had overseen over the previous year.

Decisions

- The Board noted the work which had been undertaken in 2014/15.
- The Board noted the programme of meetings for 2015/16.

8 Minutes of the previous meeting

Members agreed the notes of the meeting held on 18 March 2015 as correct.

It was confirmed that the Secretary of State for Transport had been unable to attend the Board meeting, but would attend a future meeting of the Board later in the year.

The Board expressed their thanks to Caroline Green, Senior Advisor for Waste, Housing and the Environment, for her hard work and support of the Board. Caroline would be leaving the LGA over the summer.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Peter Box CBE	Wakefield Metropolitan District Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Mike Jones	Cheshire West and Chester Council
	Cllr Jim Harker OBE	Northamptonshire County Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr John Northcott	Mole Valley District Council
Members	Cllr James Lewis	Leeds City Council
	Cllr Timothy Moore	Liverpool City Council
	Cllr Tony Newman	Croydon Council
	Cllr Ed Turner	Oxford City Council
	Cllr Steve Count	Cambridgeshire County Council
	Cllr Martin Tett	Buckinghamshire County Council
	Cllr Geoffrey Theobald OBE	Brighton & Hove City Council
	Cllr Deborah Croney	North Dorset District Council
	Cllr Julian German	Cornwall Council
Apologies	Cllr Brenda Arthur	Norwich City Council
	Cllr / Dr Joan Dixon	Derbyshire County Council
	Cllr Keith House	Eastleigh Borough Council

In Attendance

LGA Officers

Ian Hughes
 Caroline Green
 Kamal Panchal
 Jo Allchurch
 Charles Loft
 Paul Goodchild

LGA location map

Local Government Association

Local Government House
 Smith Square
 London SW1P 3HZ

Tel: 020 7664 3131
 Fax: 020 7664 3030
 Email: info@local.gov.uk
 Website: www.local.gov.uk

Public transport

Local Government House is well served by public transport. The nearest mainline stations are: Victoria and Waterloo: the local underground stations are

St James's Park (Circle and District Lines), **Westminster** (Circle, District and Jubilee Lines), and **Pimlico** (Victoria Line) - all about 10 minutes walk away.

Buses 3 and 87 travel along Millbank, and the 507 between Victoria and Waterloo stops in Horseferry Road close to Dean Bradley Street.

Bus routes – Horseferry Road

- 507** Waterloo - Victoria
- C10** Canada Water - Pimlico - Victoria
- 88** Camden Town - Whitehall - Westminster - Pimlico - Clapham Common

Bus routes – Millbank

- 87** Wandsworth - Aldwych
- 3** Crystal Palace - Brixton - Oxford Circus

For further information, visit the Transport for London website at www.tfl.gov.uk

Cycling facilities

The nearest Barclays cycle hire racks are in Smith Square. Cycle racks are also available at Local Government House. Please telephone the LGA on 020 7664 3131.

Central London Congestion Charging Zone

Local Government House is located within the congestion charging zone.

For further details, please call 0845 900 1234 or visit the website at www.cclondon.com

Car parks

Abingdon Street Car Park (off Great College Street)

Horseferry Road Car Park
 Horseferry Road/Arneway Street. Visit the website at www.westminster.gov.uk/parking

