

Councillors' Forum

Agenda

Thursday, 22 July 2021
12.30 pm

Online via Zoom

To: Members of the Councillors' Forum
cc: Named officers for briefing purposes

Councillors' Forum
22 July 2021

There will be a meeting of the Councillors' Forum at **12.30 pm on Thursday, 22 July 2021** Online via Zoom.

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.

Conservative:	Group Office: 020 7664 3223	email: lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk
Labour:	Group Office: 020 7664 3263	email: labour.grouplga@local.gov.uk
Independent:	Group Office: 020 7664 3224	email: independent.grouplga@local.gov.uk
Liberal Democrat:	Group Office: 020 7664 3235	email: libdem@local.gov.uk

LGA Contact:

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Carers' Allowance

As part of the LGA Members' Allowances Scheme a Carer's Allowance of £9.00 per hour or £10.55 if receiving London living wage is available to cover the cost of dependants (i.e. children, elderly people or people with disabilities) incurred as a result of attending this meeting.

Social Media

The LGA is committed to using social media in a co-ordinated and sensible way, as part of a strategic approach to communications, to help enhance the reputation of local government, improvement engagement with different elements of the community and drive efficiency. Please feel free to use social media during this meeting. **However, you are requested not to use social media during any confidential items.**

Councillors' Forum – Membership 2020/21

Councillor	Authority
Conservative (36)	
Cllr James Jamieson (Chairman)	Central Bedfordshire Council
Cllr Izzi Seccombe OBE (Vice Chairman)	Warwickshire County Council
Cllr Robert Alden	Birmingham City Council
Cllr John Fuller OBE	South Norfolk District Council
Cllr Teresa O'Neill OBE	Bexley Council
Cllr Philip Atkins OBE	Staffordshire County Council
Cllr Marc Bayliss	Worcester City Council
Cllr Kevin Bentley	Essex County Council
Cllr Paul Bettison OBE	Bracknell Forest Borough Council
Cllr Morris Bright MBE	Hertsmere Borough Council
Cllr Abi Brown	Stoke-on-Trent City Council
Cllr Nick Chard	Kent County Council
Cllr Janet Clowes	Cheshire East Council
Cllr Steve Count	Cambridgeshire County Council
Cllr Andrew Day	Warwick District Council
Cllr Geoff Driver CBE	Lancashire County Council
Cllr Peter Fleming OBE	Sevenoaks District Council
Cllr Peter Golds CBE	Tower Hamlets Council
Cllr John Hart	Devon County Council
Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE	Gloucestershire County Council
Cllr Teresa Heritage	Hertfordshire County Council
Cllr Rory Love OBE	Kent County Council
Cllr Paul Middlebrough	Worcestershire County Council
Cllr Colin Noble	Suffolk County Council
Cllr William Nunn	Breckland Council
Cllr Tim Oliver	Surrey County Council
Cllr Roger Phillips	Herefordshire Council
Lord Gary Porter CBE	South Holland District Council
Cllr Andrew Proctor	Norfolk County Council
Cllr David Renard	Swindon Borough Council
Cllr John Riley	Hillingdon London Borough Council
Cllr Linda Robinson	Wychavon District Council
Cllr Glen Sanderson JP	Northumberland Council
Cllr Linda Taylor	Cornwall Council
Cllr Michael Wilcox	Lichfield District Council
Cllr Katrina Wood	Buckinghamshire Council

Labour (34)	
Cllr Louise Gittins	Cheshire West and Chester Council
Cllr Nick Forbes CBE (Senior Vice-Chair)	Newcastle upon Tyne City Council
Cllr Tom Beattie	Corby Borough Council
Cllr Nesil Caliskan	Enfield Council
Cllr Judi Billing MBE	Hertfordshire County Council
Cllr Anntoinette Bramble	Hackney London Borough Council
Cllr Clare Coghill	Waltham Forest London Borough Council
Cllr Doina Cornell	Stroud District Council
Cllr Amy Cross	Blackpool Council
Cllr James Dawson	Erewash Borough Council
Cllr Tudor Evans OBE	Plymouth City Council
Cllr Georgia Gould	Camden Council
Cllr Paulette Hamilton	Birmingham City Council
Cllr Richard Henry	Stevenage Borough Council
Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe	Bradford Metropolitan District Council
Cllr Simon Henig CBE	Durham County Council
Cllr Helen Holland	Bristol City Council
Sir Stephen Houghton CBE	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Anthony Hunt	Torfaen County Borough Council
Cllr Farah Hussain	Redbridge London Borough Council
Cllr Brigid Jones	Birmingham City Council
Cllr Naushabah Khan	Medway Council
Sir Richard Leese CBE	Manchester City Council
Cllr John Merry CBE	Salford City Council
Cllr Dhanisha Patel	Bridgend County Borough Council
Cllr Michael Payne	Gedling Borough Council
Cllr Oliver Ryan	Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Timothy Swift MBE	Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Shama Tatler	Brent Council
Cllr Sharon Taylor OBE	Stevenage Borough Council
Cllr Leigh Redman	Somerset County Council
Cllr Darren Rodwell	Barking and Dagenham London Borough Council
Cllr Andrew Western	Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Alan Rhodes	Bassetlaw District Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Muhammed Butt	Brent Council
Cllr Shaun Davies	Telford and Wrekin Council
Cllr Peter Marland	Milton Keynes Council
Cllr Shabir Pandor	Kirklees Metropolitan Council
Cllr Alice Perry	Islington Council
Cllr Bryony Rudkin	Ipswich Borough Council
Cllr Sian Timoney	Luton Borough Council
Cllr Alan Waters	Norwich City Council
Cllr Debbie Wilcox	Newport City Council

Independent (10)	
Cllr Helen-Ann Smith	Ashfield District Council
Cllr Marianne Overton MBE (Vice-Chair)	North Kesteven District Council
Cllr Sue Baxter	Bromsgrove District Council
Cllr Wayne Davies	Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council
Cllr Rosemarie Harris	Powys County Council
Cllr Phelim Mac Cafferty	Brighton & Hove City Council
Cllr Colin Mann	Caerphilly County Borough Council
Cllr Sarah Rouse	Malvern Hills District Council
Cllr Clive Woodbridge	Epsom and Ewell Borough Council
Cllr Paul Woodhead	Cannock Chase District Council
Liberal Democrat (11)	
Cllr Alan Connett	Devon County Council
Cllr Mark Cory	Colchester Borough Council
Cllr Ruth Dombey OBE	Sutton London Borough Council
Cllr Liz Green	Kingston upon Thames Royal Borough Council
Cllr Richard Kemp CBE	Liverpool City Council
Cllr Heather Kidd	Shropshire Council
Cllr Adele Morris	Southwark Council
Cllr Bridget Smith	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE	Portsmouth City Council
Cllr Chris White	Hertfordshire County Council
Cllr Joe Harris (Vice-Chair)	
Substitutes	
Cllr Keith House	Eastleigh Borough Council
Cllr David Neighbour	Hart District Council

Agenda

Councillors' Forum

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Date of Next Meeting: Thursday, 21 October 2021, 12.30 pm, Westminster Room, 8th Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

Chairman's Update

This report covers the Chairman's activities from 14 June – 23 July 2021

LGA and Ministerial/Parliamentary business

June	
15	Chris Pincher MP
17	Nadine Dorries MP
17	Richard Coates, DEFRA
17	SofS MHCLG Robert Jenrick
18	Cheshire & Warrington Leaders Meeting
22	National Newly Elected Members Event
23	Chris Heaton-Harris MP
23	Greg Clark MP
23	Andrew Selous MP
24	Helen Whately MP
25	Local Outbreak Plan Advisory Board
25	Yorkshire Leaders Board
28	Philippa Williamson, Leader Lancashire CC
28	National Newly Elected Members Event
29	Andrea Leadsom MP
30	Skills Briefing Call with Peers
July	
1	SofS DHSC Sajid Javid
5	Helen Whately MP
5	Sam Rowlands MS
5	Lord Stephen Greenhalgh
6	Ben Everitt MP
6	Vicky Ford MP
6	Chris Pincher MP
14	Will Quince MP

Meetings with organisations and individuals

June	
21	Council of Europe Peer Review
22	Mike Driver, DHSC

Events and speaking engagements

July	
5	National Service of Thanksgiving, St Pauls Cathedral

Children & Young People Board – Report from Cllr Antoinette Bramble (Chair)

Children and Young People Board

1. On 8 June I chaired the Children and Young People Board. The Board heard from officers from Hackney Borough Council on their initiatives to introduce greater diversity into lessons in schools and ensure that black and ethnic minority voices and perspectives are heard.
2. I was pleased to welcome Dame Rachel de Souza, the new Children's Commissioner for England, to the meeting. Members took the opportunity to discuss a range of issues with Dame Rachel, including the importance of building back better for children post-Covid and the value of ensuring children and young people's voices are heard in policy making.

LGA Annual Conference

3. Cllr Sara Rowbotham chaired a session at the LGA Annual Conference, focussed on the impact of Covid-19 on children and young people. "A child-centred recovery: supporting children and young people to recover from the impact of COVID-19" allowed delegates to hear from and discuss the shape of recovery for children and young people with the Children's Commissioner, Dame Rachel de Souza, and Tia Carmichael, Member of the Youth Parliament for Plymouth.
4. Cllr Lucy Nethsingha chaired a session at the LGA Annual Conference on emotional wellbeing and mental health. "*Are you listening? The importance of mental health and wellbeing in a post-Covid world*" had speakers from Leaders Unlocked, a representative group of young people, Cllr Ed Davie who shared his experience with his own mental health challenges as a councillor, and Roman Kemp who spoke about his experience of depression and the loss of a close friend to suicide.

Children's Improvement Board

5. Cllr Teresa Heritage chaired the meeting of the LGA/ADCS/Solace/DfE/Ofsted Children's Improvement Board that took place on the 29th June. Discussions focussed on the LGA's Department for Education-funded children's improvement support programme and the work of the North West Regional Improvement and Innovation alliance.

Children's services

6. On 23 June, Cllr Teresa Heritage chaired an LGA webinar for corporate parents focussing on support for care leavers. The webinar included contributions from a care-experienced young person, the Department for Education, the Care Leaver Covenant and Become, the charity for children in care and care leavers. Over 200 delegates joined the webinar, with a lively question and answer session focussing on the ways in which corporate parents can ensure care leavers get the support they deserve.

7. Baroness Blake of Leeds, the LGA's representative for the Independent Review of Children's Social Care, attended the second meeting of the Review's Design Group on 1 July. The Group discussed the [Case for Change](#), with Baroness Blake emphasising the importance of ensuring the voices, wishes and experiences of children are consistently central to the review. The group also discussed the next steps for the review, starting with a consultation on the case for change which the LGA will be responding to.
8. The LGA has submitted a joint response to the DfE's [consultation on national standards](#) for unregulated accommodation for children in care and care leavers aged 16 and 17. In the submission, we emphasise the importance of good quality provision for these young people while noting ongoing challenges around placement sufficiency. We also call for more flexibility in the regulatory system to ensure that young people receive the care and support they need, when they need it.

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

9. We launched a must know guide for councillors on [whole household approaches to mental health](#). This draws together key recommendations from a [series of case studies](#) and discussions with children and young people. The report highlights the need for partnership working, bringing together preventative services and engaging families and young people in the re-design of services.

Early Years

10. I and the vice-chairs of the children's board, alongside the chair and vice chairs of the community wellbeing board, met with Andrea Leadsom MP to discuss the [the Best Start for Life review](#). We welcomed the proposals, and continuing engagement with the early years sector, and also raised the challenges local authorities would experience due to the reductions in the public health grant.

Youth Services

11. On 16 June, I gave evidence at the Youth Services APPG. I raised the challenges for councils to deliver youth services whilst they have had to challenge the rising demand in children's social care. I also called for the release of the youth investment fund to provide some much needed support to the youth sector.

Youth employment and skills

12. I am pleased we have continued to maintain a focus on improving youth participation. Last Autumn, following some engagement activities and discussions with the sector and stakeholders, we published our report on [Re-thinking youth participation for the present and next generation](#). The report provides clear evidence, featuring case studies from different areas, and recommendations to the Government for improving youth participation.
13. To build on this work and support the sector, we published [Education to Employment - Supporting Youth Participation](#). It captures what works in overcoming barriers to youth participation and showcase the innovative approaches by the areas involved in the project.
14. During the year we have published a series of First articles, including, a [case study feature](#) and why it is important that [no young person should be left behind when it comes to training and jobs](#).

15. The LGA has submitted a response to a number of House of Lords inquiries to highlight the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on young people and their skills and employment prospects. These include the [Employment and Covid-19 Inquiry](#) and [Youth Unemployment Inquiry](#).

Unaccompanied asylum seeking children

16. Members of the Board attended or informed a meeting of the member led [LGA Asylum, Refugee and Migration Task Group](#) with Home Office and DfE Ministers, Chris Philp MP and Vicky Ford MP. The Task Group discussed a range of improvements to the revised [rota system](#) for the transfer of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC), including increased funding for UASC and care leavers. The LGA is encouraging councils to both consider participation and to help find placements for recent arrivals in Kent while these regionally led arrangements are put in place.

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City Regions Board – Report from Cllr Sir Richard Leese CBE (Chair)

Devolution

1. The Devolution APPG, which is supported by the Local Government Association, has agreed its work programme for the next year and will look at aspects of health devolution, constitutional reform and councils' role in economic recovery. On 13 July Minister Stephen Greenhalgh attended a meeting to discuss the APPG's recently published report *Levelling Up Devo* and gave a positive response on several issues including skills devolution, the devolution baseline and local governance reform. He reassured the Group that devolution would feature in the forthcoming levelling up white paper.

Urban Issues

2. In the Autumn 2020, the CR Board agreed to commission new work to set out a vision for urban growth and recovery. This work is now concluding, and the final report would be published this Summer. The report highlighted the differential impact that the Covid-19 pandemic has had, with urban areas being acutely affected, including with higher rates of infections and a higher proportion of deaths. The report also demonstrated how the Covid-19 pandemic has amplified existing challenges and exacerbated existing inequalities and identifies five priorities for urban areas in the next five years: restructuring, functioning places, tackling inequalities, addressing environmental sustainability and climate change, and securing sufficient resources.

Employment and skills

3. We continue to work with the sector to set out the implications of the Government's Adult Education Budget funding rule change on councils' adult and community learning provision.

EU Funding/UK Shared Prosperity Fund

4. Following the launch of the UK Community Renewal Fund prospectus, officers are speaking to a number of lead authorities to seek feedback on the CRF process and any learning that might be made available for the design of the forthcoming UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Freeports

5. East Midlands Airport, Felixstowe & Harwich, Humber, Liverpool City Region, Plymouth and South Devon, Solent, Teesside and Thames have been successful in the Freeports bidding process for England. We have called on Government to remain alive to the risk of economic displacement of UK domestic businesses as it progresses with winning areas. There were over 30 bids for Freeport status from across the country evidencing a high-level interest from local areas. We have asked Government to continue to consider how it can best work with the unsuccessful areas as part of its wider ambition to 'level up' the country and ensure no area is left behind.

Programme of work and priorities

6. Future areas of work and priorities include:

- 6.1 We will seek to ensure the Government's plans for economic recovery account for the interests and challenges of urban places and lobby for them to have the powers and resources to lead a successful and sustainable recovery and drive improved outcomes in their communities.
- 6.2 We will continue to work to ensure that the Government puts councils at the heart of its Levelling Up Agenda.
- 6.3 We will continue to take forward the LGA's lobbying work on skills, making the case for the Work Local model and continuing to engage with key stakeholders.
- 6.4 We will continue to seek feedback on the UK Community Renewal Fund process to help the development of the design of the forthcoming UK Shared Prosperity Fund, and ensure that councils play a key role in managing growth funding through the Levelling Up Fund and UKSPF.

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Community Wellbeing Board – Report from Cllr David Fothergill (Chair)

Adult Social Care

1. On 24 June, Cllr David Fothergill spoke alongside Ed Davey MP and Liz Kendall MP at a summit on the future of the adult social care workforce, organised by the Future Social Care Coalition.
2. On 20 June, the LGA – along with several national adult social care partners – [wrote publicly](#) to the Prime Minister, Chancellor and Secretary of State for Health and Social Care stressing the urgent need for Government to act on care and support reform. The letter called on the Government to publish its proposals before the parliamentary summer recess, a call that was [reiterated](#) at our annual conference.

Health integration

3. On 16 June, Cllr David Fothergill chaired a panel session on integrated care systems (ICSs) at the NHS Confederation annual conference.
4. On 29 June, Alyson Morley gave a presentation on integrated care systems to the LGA induction session for new adult social care cabinet members and health and wellbeing board chairs.
5. On 7 July, Cllr Paulette Hamilton chaired a parallel session at the LGA annual conference on the role and contribution of local government to ICSs.

Mental Health

Suicide prevention

6. On 30 June, Cllr Richard Kemp attended the National Suicide Prevention Strategy Advisory Group.

Loneliness

7. On 9 June Cllr Richard Kemp spoke at an All-Party Parliamentary Group on Loneliness' event on 'Local Action'

Children and Young People's Mental Health

8. On 8 July, Cllr Nethsingha, Deputy Chair of the Children and Young People Board, chaired a parallel plenary session at the LGA Annual Conference about the importance of mental health and wellbeing to COVID-19 recovery. At the joint session with the Community Wellbeing Board, we launched [new research](#) from the Centre for Mental Health into whole family/household approaches to supporting good mental health and wellbeing.

Autism

9. On 14 July, the Community Wellbeing Board was represented at the launch of the Government's new all ages Autism Strategy

Public Health

10. On 17 June, Cllr Amy Cross chaired the LGA's heatwave and summer preparedness webinar.
11. On 17 June, Cllr David Fothergill spoke at the APPG on Smoking and Health to discuss their new report setting out recommendations for the 2021 Tobacco Control Plan for England.
12. On 1 July, to coincide with the launch of the new NHS and LA weight management services, the LGA published a ['must know'](#) for elected members on obesity and weight management services.
13. On 6 July, Cllr David Fothergill chaired a parallel session at the LGA annual conference on the theme of 'living with Covid' with guest speaker Prof Chris Whitty, Chief Medical Officer.
14. On 6 July, the LGA launched 'A perfect storm', the first in a series of briefings on [health inequalities and the health impact of Covid](#).

Other Board Priorities

15. The [LGA Asylum, Refugee and Migration Task Group](#) reports to both the Community Wellbeing and Children and Young People's Board. Many councils have stepped forward to pledge offers of accommodation and support for the [relocation scheme for locally employed Afghan staff](#). As it may be extremely challenging to quickly secure sufficient housing if the situation in Afghanistan further deteriorates, the Home Office is developing contingency plans for temporary accommodation. Government is aware of the need to engage with councils as soon as possible and the need to place this in other current requests to councils.

Parliamentary Activity

16. We briefed MPs ahead of the Second Reading of the Health and Care Bill. Ahead of the Second Reading, we also released a joint statement with NHS Confederation and NHS providers which set out our joint support and concerns for the Bill.
17. We submitted written evidence to the Public Accounts Committee's inquiry Test and Trace 2. In the submission, we highlighted the crucial role public health leaders have played in contract tracing and the success of the Local-0 scheme. This inquiry followed on from the first part of the Test and Trace inquiry, which we submitted earlier this year.
18. We briefed Peers ahead of a debate on social care and the role of carers. Peers across the House highlighted that the current social care system is unfair, financially unsustainable and is too often failing to provide the care the most vulnerable people need.

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Culture, Tourism & Sport Board – Report from Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE (Chair)

Parliamentary Engagement

1. Engagement with the DCMS Secretary of State and Ministers continues to be a priority for the Board. CTS Lead Members met with the Secretary of State for DCMS on 13 July, discussing the contribution of local government to DCMS sectors, and particular concerns about the finances of public leisure services. The Minister for Sport also attended the CTS Board on 24th March and the Commissioner for Cultural Recovery met with CTS Lead Members on 4 March prior to attending the CTS Board on 17 March.
2. Cllr Vernon-Jackson also spoke at the APPG for Theatre on 18 June to discuss how Local Authorities and theatres can help each other recover from COVID-19, and a follow-on meeting with Giles Watling MP, Chair of the APPG, has been arranged.
3. The LGA provided a parliamentary briefing ahead of the [debate on promoting tourism in the House of Lords on 24 June](#), and the debate subsequently included several mentions of local authorities. This complemented our [response to the consultation on the future of Destination Management Organisations](#).

Events

4. Cllr Vernon-Jackson chaired a webinar on the Mass Events Pilots attended by over 650 delegates; and a webinar on the new Sport England Strategy and Webinar attended by over 60 councillors, providing a chance to influence Sport England's spending and delivery plans.
5. Cllr Golds also spoke at the Leadership Essentials for Sport and Physical Activity on 13 July.

Summer Workplan

6. The CTS teams' work over the Summer will focus on the following key areas:
 - 6.1 **Supporting reopening and the recovery** – the majority of facilities have now reopened, but issues are emerging with interpreting guidance on the safe running of events, and the financial outlook for some facilities and community partners remains challenging. As part of this work, on 23 June, we published our '[guide to the emergency insourcing for leisure services](#)' publication to assist councils respond in the event of a provider becoming insolvent.
 - 6.2 **Making the case for financial investment** – the leisure sector remains financially vulnerable, with particular risks in areas of deprivation, so the team will continue to make the case for a further round of the National Leisure Recovery Fund, drawing on data collected through the Moving Communities Platform, and working with partners to build a collective and consistent ask of Government. We will also develop plans across the CTS portfolio in preparation for the Comprehensive Spending Review expected in the Autumn,

and explore opportunities to strengthen cultural and heritage focused bids to the Levelling Up Fund and UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

6.3 Strengthen the Board's engagement with DCMS and key stakeholders – the pandemic has demonstrated the importance of having strong, effective networks. We have begun regular meetings with the DCMS place team and are setting up similar engagements with the DCMS sports team – these relationships will need an investment of time before they reach the strength of relationship experienced with the DCMS libraries and museums teams. New sector partnerships have also been established, primarily in the sport and physical activity sector, and we will continue to work with them to ensure that they have an understanding of the local government role, and that it is reflected in the collective offers and asks they are developing for Government.

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Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board– Report from Cllr David Renard (Chair)

Environment and Climate Change

Environment Bill

1. The Environment Bill has now reached the House of Lords. The LGA is supporting amendments to the nature and biodiversity section of the Bill including a requirement for Government to review the impact of new measures on councils.

Waste and recycling

2. We have now submitted all of our [responses](#) to the second set of consultation papers on the new waste and resources strategy which were discussed by Members in a special waste meeting. We also [responded](#) to the Government's consultation on the draft policy statement on environmental principles.

COP26

3. Our three expressions of interest to the Cabinet Office for a thought leadership event, exhibition space and joint partnership submission with our European and international networks CEMR and UCLG are being considered for inclusion in the UK-managed space. We've been informed that two of these proposals are being considered for the green zone only and await further information on our joint partnership proposal. It is not guaranteed at this stage and we expect to hear the final outcome in August.

Annual Conference

4. The climate change plenary session at Annual Conference took place on 7 July and was joined by Allegra Stratton, COP26 spokesperson, Niclas Svenningsen in the UNFCCC and Conservative and Labour Group Leaders. It was chaired by Liz Green, Vice-Chair of the LGA Improvement and Innovation Board. A motion on local government contributions towards national climate action in the year of COP26 also passed at the General Assembly which was supported by the LGA.

A local path to net zero

5. This is the LGA's [campaign](#) that highlights the significant role of councils in advancing the UK's net zero ambitions and our offer to work in partnership with government. It also includes a range of videos and think pieces by councils and industry experts, themed around the COP 26 goals as well as information about COP 26 and our asks.

Climate Change Task Group

6. The LGA established a Climate Change Task Group in April to oversee our strategic engagement with government and Ministers on climate change, particularly this COP 26 year. It is co-chaired by the LGA's Conservative and Labour Group Leaders and I also sit on the Group. At the last meeting, we met with Minister Eddie Hughes MP and COP26 Business Champion Andrew Griffith MP.

Low Carbon Infrastructure Research

7. We commissioned WPI Economics to produce a robust and credible business case that sets out the economic, social and environmental benefits for investing in councils to deliver local low carbon infrastructure. The research will strengthen our lobbying on climate change and a green economic recovery. We expect the research to be completed soon.

London Climate Action Week

8. I represented the LGA at London Councils' local government panel discussion on 2 July. Eddie Hughes MP also took part and other local government leaders. I spoke about local leadership and our offer to work in partnership with government. This can be found on the LGA's [A local path to net zero](#) campaign page.

Press Releases

9. We have issued the following press releases: '[Councils spearheading national climate change effort](#)' to mark Earth Day, '[Councils battling fly-tipping](#)' and '[Local leadership crucial in climate change challenge](#)' to mark the G7 Summit in June.

Economic recovery

10. A plenary session on the importance of place to local economic recovery took place on the first day of the LGA's annual conference. The session was chaired by Matthew Holehouse, political editor from the Economist and panellists included Adam Marshall, former DG from the British Chambers of Commerce, Kate Nicholls, CE of UK Hospitality, Katie Schmuecker, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe, Bradford Metropolitan District Council and Cllr Barry Lewis, Leader, Derbyshire County Council. Discussion centred around the nature of the post-pandemic economic recovery, labour market changes and the importance of inclusive growth and sector vs place-based support.

Transport

Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure

11. A discussion took place in May at the EEHT Board led by Local Partnerships in order to help the LGA's understanding of councils' ambitions and roles with regards to electric vehicle charging infrastructure. Roundtables were also held with councils and findings will be made available via a webinar on 15th July and a report will be published shortly afterwards. The findings will be used to inform national policy and resources, including the work of OZEV.

Parking

12. Since the beginning of the pandemic the LGA has worked closely with the British Parking Association and London Councils on good practice parking operational advice for councils. In parallel, and during the initial stages of the pandemic, the LGA made a voluntary agreement with the Government to provide critical health workers and volunteers with free parking as they dealt with the national emergency. Subsequently, the Government issued a free parking pass for those eligible. Whilst this agreement operated fine when traffic levels were low, it became problematical for councils as traffic levels reverted back to normal. With the roadmap to full reopening in sight, the LGA successfully worked with MHCLG to pull back from the voluntary agreement to full local control.

Buses

13. The Buses Minister, Baroness Vere, wrote to all bus operators and local transport authorities giving formal notification of the 8-week period for the Coronavirus Bus Service Support Grant (CBSSG) and announcement of bus recovery funding. In recognition of the continued support that will be required for local bus services the Government is making available £226.5m in bus recovery funding, which will be made available to the sector until the end of the current financial year. A viable bus service will be important in order to play a meaningful role in the decarbonisation of transport and to connect people to jobs, services and wider society.

Housing, Planning and Homelessness

14. I chaired a session on council housebuilding on the first day of the annual conference. Panellists included Polly Neate, Chief Executive of Shelter, John Boughton, Author and Social Historian, Councillor John Adams, Portfolio Holder for Housing, Gateshead Council and Julie Abbey-Taylor from Rentplus. Discussion focused on how investment in new council homes would accelerate our recovery from the impact of COVID-19, support a boost in local green jobs and skills, and ensure delivery of much needed carbon neutral homes.
15. On the last day of annual conference, Councillor Adele Morris chaired a session on planning reform. Panellists included Ojay McDonald, Chief Executive of the Association of Town and City Management; Professor Janice Morphet, the Bartlett School of Planning UCL and Mike Kiely, Chair of the Planning Officers Society. Discussion focused on what the new planning system may mean for communities as we recover from the pandemic and how we ensure communities and councils are empowered to lead their local recoveries.

Future Foundations council housing campaign

16. The [Future Foundations](#) campaign has been developed to highlight positive council housing stories. The online hub features case studies, podcasts, think pieces, and other resources for member councils. The campaign also covers planning and homelessness issues through topics such as the financial impact of building 100,000 council homes per year, how council housing can support people who are homeless into safe homes, and how councils can tackle their climate challenge and support community resilience by improving homes and places. The hub provides a one-stop shop for content that will be added to over time and used for future lobbying and housing campaigns.

Parliamentary Activity

17. We have briefed MPs for parliamentary debates on the following: [planning](#); [the future of the planning system and the upcoming Planning Bill](#).
18. Cllr Rachel Blake gave evidence to the HCLG Committee on 21 June as part of the Committee's inquiry into local government and the path to net zero
19. We contributed lines on planning to an evidence submission to the APPG for Rural Business and the Rural Powerhouse inquiry.

Press Releases and Statements

20. We have issued proactive press releases on the following: Eight in 10 say it is important to have a say on all housing in their local area; [430% increase in B&B spend for people who are homeless](#); [plan needed to prevent families at 'cliff-edge' of homelessness](#). We have also made public statements on the following: [response to launch of new planning apps](#); [response to ONS rough sleeping figures](#); [response to HCLG Committee report on planning](#).

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Improvement & Innovation Board – from Cllr Peter Fleming OBE (Chairman)

Sector support programme: Change of control support

1. Following local government elections in England, the LGA has proactively engaged with councils that have undergone changes of control. Change of control support, including top team development, mentoring and other leadership training, has been offered to all 32 councils that have seen a change of political control. Our regional teams will remain in conversation with councils to determine their support needs over coming months. Two thirds of councils who have experienced change of control have accepted support offers and we have already provided change of control support to 10 councils.
2. We have also extended support offers to all 22 councils where there has been a change of political leadership only and engagement is now being taken forward.

Climate Change

LGA Councillors' Forum

3. Councillor Liz Green launched [A Councillor's workbook on the local pathway to net zero](#) at Councillor's Forum on June 10, attended by 82 Councillors.

Webinar: [Design in the Public Sector: Innovative approaches to low energy housing](#)

4. Councillor Laura Miller chaired a webinar on June 15 which shared insights and experiences of design skills when applied to housing. You can find a blog and slides from the session which explored innovative approaches to low energy housing and retrofitting. It was attended by 147 people.

Webinar: [Place-based leadership for biodiversity](#)

5. On the May 28, 122 people attended an LGA webinar hosted by Councillor Liz Green on taking action to protect biodiversity. Attendees heard from a range of speakers, covering topics on engaging with local farmers, using data for biodiversity action plans, developing Local Nature Recovery Plans and Biodiversity Net Gain. The slides and blog post of the event can be found on [our webpage](#). There was a 97 per cent satisfaction rate for the webinar.

Cyber Security and Digital

Digital Connectivity Programme

6. The digital connectivity programme is ongoing to improve capability and innovation in councils. Westminster City council are working on a toolkit that will provide councils with guidance to help identify connectivity hot-spots in urban places. The toolkit will also provide best practice materials and resources that can be reused and recycled by other local authorities.

7. Within the programme, there are projects that have made significant progress in the last quarter, they are likely to deliver scalable and nationally important solutions for other councils.
8. Durham County Council are working to deliver a sustainable mobile connectivity mapping tool that will allow them to identify and understand the quality of mobile (3G and 4G) connectivity, split by the four UK network providers, in County Durham. They are currently entering into a partnership with Durham University to develop the devices that will capture the data through installation into council fleet vehicles. The specifications and methodology will be shared with the sector to enable other councils to replicate this approach.

Digital Connectivity Webinar

9. On Wednesday 16th June, the Local Government Association's Cyber Security and Digital team hosted a [webinar](#) focusing on Digital Connectivity. The session showcased some of the excellent and innovative work that councils are doing to deliver digital connectivity provision for their local place through superfast and gigabit broadband in addition to the mobile rollout and the emerging possibilities of 5G. Cllr Neil Prior Chaired this session where 100 attendees had the opportunity to learn from these examples and hear from leading sector representatives in the digital space. Resources and information can be found [here](#)

WIG Organisational raid

10. On Wednesday 30th June 2021, representatives from the Local Government Association, Edinburgh City Council and Dorset County Council collaborated with Browne Jacobson LLP to discuss sector wide initiatives and thoughts on Digital Transformation. Interesting discussion took place and crucial networks between the two sectors were made. Reflection and follow up is taking place to develop the priorities of digital transformation within Local Government.

Cyber Security – Tech Essentials, Technical Lessons from recent cyber attacks in local government webinar

11. On Friday 23rd July 2021, The Local Government Association will be hosting a [webinar](#) which will focus on sharing technical lessons and experiences from recent cyber incidents within Local Government. The discussion will explore the risk to local authorities and highlight the need for preparation as well as protection in the face of cyber threats. This webinar is an opportunity for IT and cyber practitioners from across the sector to discuss the cyber threat to local government and the actions that should be taken to help mitigate both the risk of a cyber incident occurring, and the impact on the council and community if one does. Speakers will include representatives from Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council and the London Borough of Hackney.

Leadership and Localism

National Newly Elected Councillor event

12. Cllr Judith Billing chaired a National Newly Elected Councillor event on 28 June 2021. This was the 3rd and final event and included an introductory session from Mark Lloyd and Cllr Jamieson to provide a welcome and an overview of the key national priorities for the sector; a Q&A session with delegates; a session to outline further LGA support offers; breakout groups for delegates to meet in smaller groups with their regional LGA Teams; and groups led by the PGOs with lead peers to talk about political support.

Spotlight on Leadership

13. Cllr Judith Billing chaired the 'Spotlight on Leadership' session at LGA Conference on 7 July 2021. The session heard three perspectives on how we can increase diversity and representation in local government.

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People and Places Board – Report from Cllr Kevin Bentley (Chairman)

Devolution

1. The Devolution APPG, which is supported by the Local Government Association, has agreed its work programme for the next year and will look at aspects of health devolution, constitutional reform and councils' role in economic recovery. On 13 July Minister Stephen Greenhalgh attended a meeting to discuss the APPG's recently published report *Levelling Up Devo* and gave a positive response on several issues including skills devolution, the devolution baseline and local governance reform. He reassured the Group that devolution would feature in the forthcoming levelling up white paper.
2. Following discussions at the Board, and an emerging narrative from Ministers supporting greater devolution to parish and town councils, the Board approved the commissioning of research to explore the implications of operationalising "double devolution." The project will provide a practical guide for councils and help ensure Board members are well placed to lead the policy debate on devolution and the future of town and parish councils at the most appropriate future point. The final report will be published imminently.

Rural Issues

3. In November, the Board commissioned work to explore how to strengthen recovery and resilience in rural and coastal areas. The final report considers the impact of COVID-19 outside cities and outlines the underlying and structural challenges they face such as population sparsity, remoteness/connectivity and peripherality. The report also proposes a number of steps national and local government can take to tackle these issues and benefit from a successful post-pandemic recovery. It will be published before the end of July.

Employment and skills

4. We continue to work with the sector to set out the implications of the Government's Adult Education Budget funding rule change on councils' adult and community learning provision.

EU Funding/UK Shared Prosperity Fund

5. Following the launch of the UK Community Renewal Fund prospectus, officers are speaking to a number of lead authorities to seek feedback on the CRF process and any learning that might be made available for the design of the forthcoming UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Freeports

6. East Midlands Airport, Felixstowe & Harwich, Humber, Liverpool City Region, Plymouth and South Devon, Solent, Teesside and Thames have been successful in the Freeports bidding process for England. We have called on Government to remain alive to the risk of economic displacement of UK domestic businesses as it progresses with winning areas. There were over 30 bids for Freeport status from across the country evidencing a high-level interest from local areas. We have asked Government to continue to consider how it can best work with the unsuccessful areas as part of its wider ambition to 'level up' the country and ensure no area is left behind.

Programme of work and priorities

7. Future areas of work and priorities include:

7.1 We will seek to ensure the Government's plans for economic recovery account for the interests and challenges of non-metropolitan places and lobby for them to have the powers and resources to lead a successful and sustainable recovery and drive improved outcomes in their communities.

7.2 We will continue to work to ensure that the Government puts councils at the heart of its Levelling Up Agenda.

7.3 We will continue to take forward the LGA's lobbying work on skills, making the case for the Work Local model and continuing to engage with key stakeholders.

7.4 We will continue to seek feedback on the UK Community Renewal Fund process to help the development of the design of the forthcoming UK Shared Prosperity Fund, and ensure that councils play a key role in managing growth funding through the Levelling Up Fund and UKSPF.

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Resources Board – Report from Cllr Sharon Taylor OBE (Chair)

Local Government Finance

Spending Review

1. Details on the 2021 Spending Review, including how many years it will cover and the date it will be published, have not yet been announced.
2. The LGA has begun preparatory work on a Spending Review representation, including engaging with key stakeholders and work to refresh the financial pressures facing the sector.

Business Rates

3. On 29 June the Government [published](#) a consultation document on more frequent revaluations proposing moving to three-year revaluations and certain reforms to the system for informing the Valuation Office Agency and councils about ratepayer circumstances as well as streamlining the appeals system. Many of the proposals are changes we have lobbied for. The closing date for the consultation is 24 August.
4. Following [legislation](#) to rule out claims for material change of circumstance due to COVID-19 and associated measures, a [£1.5 billion relief](#) will be distributed once the legislation has Royal Assent – expected in Autumn 2021. We have issued a [briefing for MPs](#) supporting the Bill and [the LGA's deputy Chief Executive gave evidence](#) to the Bill Committee on 6 July.

COVID-19

5. The LGA continues to receive access to data from the monthly returns submitted to MHCLG, which track the ongoing financial challenges arising from COVID-19. Based on the latest data from May, councils project £2.8 billion of in-year pressures for the first half of 2021/22 (cost pressures and non-tax income losses). There is a further £0.7 billion of local tax income losses projected for the first half of 2021/22, impacting budgets in 2022/23. This is prior to considering mitigating factors and Government support provided so far.
6. Councils have continued to distribute grants to businesses affected by COVID-19 measures. To date councils have now paid out getting on for £21 billion to businesses for all grants.

Audit Issues

7. Lead Members cleared [a response](#) to the Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy's [consultation on proposals for a major overhaul of the UK audit regime](#). In our response we highlighted the need for the proposals to include a higher profile of the problems faced by local audit and the need to resolve them.

LGA Annual Conference

8. At the LGA annual virtual conference we held a session on the [2021 Spending Review and local government](#). The Chair of the Resources Board spoke at the session, which was chaired by the CCLA, and also had speakers from the Institute for Fiscal Studies.

Workforce

Youth and community workers: pay 2021

9. The Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) Youth and Community Staff Side has submitted its [pay and conditions claim for 2021](#). The headline element is for a ten per cent increase. The National Employers will shortly undertake a consultation on this.

Teachers' Pay 2021 (England)

10. The LGA will consult councils on the draft School Teachers Pay and Conditions (STPCD) and the School Teachers' Review Body's (STRB) report as soon as it is published.
11. We held a webinar on 13 July for the sector on school staff pay with contributions from LGA officers and the Department for Education (DfE) pay lead. All relevant information is available via our [National Employers Organisation for School Teachers \(NEOST\) webpage](#)

NJC for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services

12. The National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services covers uniformed employees ranging from firefighters to middle managers across the UK. The 2021 pay award for this group has now been agreed. An increase of 1.5 per cent will be applied to [all pay rates](#) and [continual professional development payments](#) with effect from 1 July.

NJC for Brigade Managers

13. This UK-wide negotiating body covers senior fire service managers such as chief fire officers, deputy chief fire officers and assistant chief fire officers. The 2021 pay award for this group has now been agreed. [An increase of 1.5 per cent will be applied to basic pay rates](#)

Queen's Platinum Jubilee – additional bank holiday (Fire)

14. Following Government decisions, an additional bank holiday on Friday 3 June 2022 to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee was announced across the UK. There's no automatic entitlement to such a bank holiday on this day under the terms of the NJC Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book). At its most recent meeting, the [NJC agreed to award the bank holiday](#) and that it be treated in the same way as other such holidays in the Grey Book for leave and pay purposes.

Gender pay gap – LGA research summary report

15. Gender Pay Gap Service data for English and Welsh authorities has been updated. LG Inform allows you to download tailored reports for benchmarking and compare authorities. Councils have been given an extension until 5 October for 2020/21 gender pay submissions, after which it will be revised. [LGA Research Summary Report – Gender Pay Gap | LG Inform \(local.gov.uk\)](#)

Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

16. We have launched "[Diverse by Design](#)", a comprehensive EDI guide advising on key practical steps to assist councils to remove barriers to workforce diversity and embed inclusive practices and behaviours. This is a core element of our new workforce EDI web hub and will be supported by existing and planned resources and projects across the LGA, e.g. gender pay gap reporting analysis for the sector with LGA Research, EDI focussed webinars in partnership with ACAS etc.

Workforce Wellbeing

17. We developed and published new resources on our website as part of our ongoing programme of work to provide information and advice to councils to support the good management of wellbeing and mental health of staff, especially where wellbeing issues connect with equality issues.

18. We have also provided advice to councils on managing long-COVID as part of ongoing programme of support to councils on good management of wellbeing post-COVID.
19. The LGA Workforce Team continue to be part of the National Strategic Wellbeing Group for Social Care co-ordinated by Skills for Care and DHSC, meeting every second month. As part of the group we are working with CHiP workforce colleagues to raise awareness of key wellbeing resources and share workforce wellbeing good practice, through good practice stories, practical guidance, and ideas.

Workforce Transformation Support – hybrid working

20. We delivered 3 hybrid working roundtable workshops during April and May, attracting 135 councils to participate in a research project to understand and share good practice and lessons learned on new ways of working arising out of COVID19 restrictions. We are developing future work and support for councils arising from this research.
21. You can find out more about hybrid working as well as an overview of some of the key considerations of developing a hybrid working organisation [on the LGA's website](#). Head of Workforce Naomi Cooke has [written a blog post on the future of Hybrid working](#), while there was also an [editorial on hybrid working](#) in May's edition of First magazine.

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Safer and Stronger Communities Board – Report from Cllr Caliskan (Chair)

Modern slavery

1. In July, the Board's tackling modern slavery champion Cllr Alan Rhodes met with the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner Dame Sara Thornton DBE QPM to discuss councils' work relating to modern slavery. The Commissioner is particularly interested in the work councils are doing to eradicate modern slavery from their supply chains; the newly launched pilots to devolve decision making on suspected cases of modern slavery among children from the Single Competent Authority to local authorities and their partners; and councils' responsibilities to victims of modern slavery experiencing homelessness. Cllr Rhodes and the Commissioner agreed that the LGA and Commissioner's office would continue to work together on these issues.
2. Also in July, Cllr Rhodes hosted an awareness raising webinar on modern slavery. Attracting more than 250 delegates, the session heard about: what modern slavery is and councils' role in tackling it; leading practice from councils on this agenda; how councils can strengthen their supply chains to prevent against modern slavery; and from the Commissioner herself.

Unauthorised Encampments Webinar

3. In June, the Vice-Chair of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board, Cllr Katrina Woods chaired an [LGA webinar on unauthorised encampments](#). The aim of the session was to provide an opportunity to discuss the response to unauthorised encampments and share the approaches that work well and examples of best practice from across local government. The month of June 2021 is also Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month, to help raise awareness of these communities and their contributions to society, and to offset negative stereotyping and prejudices. The webinar was well-attended by officers and elected members.

Anti-social Behaviour

4. The LGA has published a series of [case studies](#) on tackling anti-social behaviour. With thanks to the councils and their partners who have shared their experiences, and best practice in addressing and preventing anti-social behaviour. We have also sign-posted to [guidance](#) on the Community Trigger process and helpful resources and support from [ASB Help](#).

Building Safety

5. We will be responding to the Home Office [consultation on Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans](#) before the deadline on 19 July.

Protect Duty

6. In July we submitted [our response to the Government's consultation on a new Protect duty](#). In our response we supported an approach that explicitly assesses the risks of terrorism, but that these risks should be assessed as part of a wider approach that looks at a range of health and safety risks, and alongside existing measures and structures to keep communities safe from terrorism. We also agreed with the core principle of taking a proportionate approach to a new duty, but proposed that rather than applying a capacity-based approach to determine who is covered by the duty, this should enable consideration of the local context and the precise level of risk for a particular event/venue. We argued that the duty must not unduly impact on the use and enjoyment of places and spaces that might fall within scope, and should not apply to public spaces unless they are being used for a specific event. We also stressed the need to consider the significant resource and capacity issues that would be needed for successful implementation.

Fire Governance & Leadership Workshops

7. In July, the LGA is hosting two half-day workshops focusing on governance and leadership in the fire and rescue sector. In the context of the [government's recent findings from part one of the Police and Crime Commissioners \(PCC\) Review](#) and the upcoming White Paper on Fire Reform, experienced facilitators will deliver a range of interactive learning and development activities that aim to:
 - 7.1 Provide FRA members with a comprehensive overview of their role within the fire and rescue authorities and best practice for good governance, and;
 - 7.2 Strengthen knowledge and understanding of various leadership approaches, including a focus on the practical scrutiny skills required to support effective executive decision-making.
8. The workshops were open to all Fire and Rescue Authority Members and are in response to the need for targeted learning and development options that focus on governance and leadership. A final workshop is scheduled for Tuesday, 7 September.

Licensing

9. In July, Cllr Caliskan wrote to Local Government Minister Luke Hall about the regulations which will extend temporary pavement licence provisions to 30 September 2022. The letter highlighted our concerns with the regulations and stressed the importance of new burdens funding and the need to avoid a last-minute surge in applications in September when the current regulations are due to expire. Cllr Caliskan also called on Government to work with the LGA and councils on a reformed pavement licensing system which blends the best of the old and new systems.

Police & Crime Panels

10. The LGA held a webinar for Police and Crime Panel's on 13 July. The Home Office spoke about its priorities as well as the PCC Review. There were also presentations from the National Association of Police, Fire and Crime Panels, the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners and the Association of Policing and Crime Chief Executives.

Water safety

11. In July, Cllr Dawson and Cllr Iyengar, the LGA's water safety champions, attended a Ministerial roundtable to discuss what more can be done to prevent drownings, how the UK should implement the aims of the UN drowning prevention resolution and how best to raise awareness of these issues ahead of the inaugural World Drowning Prevention Day on 25 July 2021. The LGA will be refreshing its water safety toolkit ahead of the Drowning Prevention Day.

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Digest of last Councillors' Forum meeting

Title:	Councillors' Forum
Date:	Thursday 10 June 2021
Venue:	Online via Zoom

Attendance

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

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
1	Chairman's Welcome	
	Cllr James Jamieson (The Chairman) welcomed members to the meeting and gave a brief reminder best practice in remote meetings.	
2	Presentation on the Councillor's Climate Workbook	
	The Chairman invited Cllr Liz Green (Chair, IIB Climate Change Working Group) to presentation on the workbook. Liz noted the following points:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Workbook was developed by the Climate Change Working Group which was established following the LGA's declaration of a climate emergency in 2019. - Liz emphasised that local government has a vital and leading role to play in tackling climate change. The Workbook provides advice and objectives to elected members at all levels. - The COVID pandemic had outlined the importance of publicly accessible open spaces for everyone, particularly important in urban areas with high population densities. - Though individual local authority activities account for a small fraction of carbon emissions in a locality, councils have a critical role in providing leadership for local residents and businesses. - The LGA created specialised Leadership Essentials training which had been delivered to 75 senior officers and members nationwide. Further training was being planned. - A Greenhouse Gas accounting tool was being provided by the LGA to all local authorities which provide baseline emissions figures and comparative analysis versus other councils. - Net-Zero Innovation Programme sought to establish partnerships between councils and universities to drive innovation. - Liz noted that the COP15 Biodiversity Conference in October 2021 would be another important chance for learning and engagement. 	

- Liz encouraged members to share instances of good practice and innovation with the LGA that could be learnt from and promoted.

The Chairman invited Cllr Izzi Seccombe (Co-Chair) and Cllr Nick Forbes (Co-Chair) to discuss the the Climate Change Task Group:

- Izzi noted that the Task Group crosses the remit of the Improvement & Innovation and Economy, Environment, Housing & Transport Boards.
- The Group has a specific focus on local government's aims and objectives for COP26 in Glasgow.
- Ministerial engagement was regular with Alok Sharma MP (President, COP26) and departmental climate change leads.
- Nick emphasised the important leadership role of local government on long term challenges such as climate change as a driver of innovation and opinion change.

In the subsequent discussion, members raised the following points:

- A member outlined the specific challenges facing coastal communities with a range of locally led innovation underway, such as a £2 million project to plant sea grass and create a marine park in the South West. Liz agreed that coastal communities needed careful consideration and noted that local government needs freedom to lead on major projects.
- The Workbook's appreciation of biodiversity was welcomed.
- Several examples were raised of public opposition to a range of environmental measures such as reducing grass cutting to improve biodiversity and establishing clean air zones. Nick noted that local leadership was vital in these cases to lead opinion change.
- It was suggested that regional mapping was needed to monitor and display local climate linked projects. Liz asked officers to look into this proposal.
- A short discussion took place on sustainable investments from the Local Government Pension Scheme funds. It was suggested that given support and freedom to act the collective £300 billion held in LPGA funds could have a significant impact. The Chairman requested a technical response from officers on existing guidance on climate linked investments from LPGA funds.

Chairman summarised the debate. Local authorities have a vital place in delivering place-based leadership on to deliver effective climate change policies in their communities. He thanked members and officers for their work and innovation.

Decision

The members of the Councillor's Forum noted the presentation.

3 Chairman's Update

The Chairman presented the update, noting it summarised his activity since the previous meeting. Subject to the planned Stage Four lockdown easing on 21/6/21, the next meeting of the Forum on 22/7/21 would be in a hybrid format.

Decision

The members of the Councillor's Forum noted the report.

4 LGA Board Chair Reports

The Chairman invited the following Board Chair's to discuss their written reports;

a. City Regions Board – Cllr Sir Richard Leese CBE

In his update Sir Richard noted the following points:

- Concerns were expressed on the progress of work around devolution with continued poor communications from the Government to local authorities.
- Richard also noted that the Levelling Up Fund was taking a Parliamentary constituency-based approach rather than one focused on communities & local authority boundaries. He emphasised it was important to support the effective work taking place at a local level. He also outlined concerns with the centralised bidding processes on UKSPF trial.

Decision

The members of the Councillor's Forum noted the report.

b. Culture, Tourism & Sport Board – Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE

In his update Gerald noted the following points:

- The Board had been considering post-pandemic planning for large events with Sports England and the Arts Council.
- Gerald expressed concerns that the end of the Furlough Scheme would have a major impact on arts, hospitality and leisure facilities. He felt the risk of closure was facing many venues was very high.
- A meeting had been organised with the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (Oliver Dowden MP) to discuss the relationship with local government.

Decision

The members of the Councillor's Forum noted the report.

c. Improvement & Innovation Board – Cllr Peter Fleming

In his update Peter noted the following points:

- Noted the agreement of the Improvement Grant for 2021/22.
- Welcomed the work of LGA officers and members on delivering more than 300 peer improvement programmes.
- Urged members to attend the cyber security webinar on 16/6/21.

In response to the update, a view was expressed on the importance of raising awareness among local authorities of effective cyber security arrangements given the emergent global risks.

Decision

The members of the Councillor's Forum noted the report.

d. Resources Board – Cllr Sharon Taylor OBE

In her update Sharon noted the following points:

- Recorded thanks to Richard Watts as the previous Chair of the Resources Board for his work on behalf of the LGA and the local government sector.
- Major areas of work for 2021/22 included the 2021/22 Spending Review and Business Rates.
- On Workforce the 2021/22 Local Government Pay negotiations were underway.
- The Environmental Health and Social Work Together programmes had provided a key recruitment resource for member authorities.
- A new Exit Payment consultation was expected from the Government in coming months.
- Cllr Nick Chard (Kent County Council) gave a brief update on Fire Pay negotiations with a 1.5% offer accepted by the Unions.

Decision

The members of the Councillor's Forum noted the report.

e. Safer & Stronger Communities Board – Cllr Nesil Caliskan

In her update Nesil noted the following points:

- Evidence had been presented to the House of Commons committee on the Police, Crime, Sentencing & Courts Bill, calling for a public health focus on tackling the causes of crime.
- The Board had engaged with the Unauthorised Encampments & Offensive Weapons review.
- Evidence had been given to the APPG on Domestic Abuse

following the passage of the Domestic Abuse Act.

- The Fire Commission held a special meeting to discuss the White Paper to pass fire governance to Police & Crime Commissioners.

In the subsequent discussion members raised the following points:

- A view was expressed on the benefits of combining the role of Fire Authorities with Police & Crime Commissioners in the delivery of blue light services.
- An update on coterminosity on fire services where local authority and PCC boundaries do not match exactly. Nesil explained that this was still under review.
- A question was raised on the protection of women and girls in public spaces and progress on work with the Police. Nesil explained that the LGA made specific asks on culture change to deliver greater protections.
- Concerns were noted on the OFSTED report into sexual harassment and sexualisation of girls in schools. It was suggested that the LGA could have an important input to this discussion across a range of Boards. Nesil agreed that the LGA should have input to this matter and suggested it could link into other work on exploitation and human trafficking.

Decision

The members of the Councillor's Forum noted the report.

f. Children & Young People Board – Cllr Antoinette Bramble

In her update Antoinette noted the following points:

- Recorded thanks to Baroness Blake as the previous Chair of the Children & Young People Board for her work on behalf of the LGA and the local government sector.
- The Board has been considering new priorities for the 2021/22 meeting cycle and diversifying the National Curriculum. It also heard from Dame Rachel De Souza (Children's Commissioner for England) on The Big Ask survey of children's feelings about potential barriers to the future outcomes.
- Noted that the Lead Members from the Children & Young People and Community Wellbeing Boards would be meeting with Andrea Leadsom MP on Early Years Healthy Development Review.

Decision

The members of the Councillor's Forum noted the report.

5 Digest of the last meeting held on 11th March 2021

Decision

The digest of the meeting on 11th March 2021 was accepted as accurate.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman Vice-Chairman	Cllr James Jamieson	Central Bedfordshire Council
	Cllr Izzi Seccombe OBE	Warwickshire County Council
	Cllr Howard Sykes MBE	Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
	Cllr Marianne Overton MBE	North Kesteven District Council
Members	Cllr Louise Gittins	Cheshire West and Chester Council
	Cllr Robert Alden	Birmingham City Council
	Cllr John Fuller OBE	South Norfolk District Council
	Cllr Teresa O'Neill OBE	Bexley Council
	Cllr Philip Atkins OBE	Staffordshire County Council
	Cllr Kevin Bentley	Essex County Council
	Cllr Morris Bright MBE	Hertsmere Borough Council
	Cllr Nick Chard	Kent County Council
	Cllr Steve Count	Cambridgeshire County Council
	Cllr Peter Fleming OBE	Sevenoaks District Council
	Cllr Peter Golds CBE	Tower Hamlets Council
	Cllr John Hart	Devon County Council
	Cllr Teresa Heritage	Hertfordshire County Council
	Cllr Rory Love OBE	Kent County Council
	Cllr Paul Middlebrough	Worcestershire County Council
	Cllr William Nunn	Breckland Council
	Cllr Tim Oliver	Surrey County Council
	Cllr Roger Phillips	Herefordshire Council
	Lord Gary Porter CBE	South Holland District Council
	Cllr David Renard	Swindon Borough Council
	Cllr Linda Robinson	Wychavon District Council
	Cllr Glen Sanderson JP	Northumberland Council
	Cllr Linda Taylor	Cornwall Council
	Cllr Michael Wilcox	Lichfield District Council
	Cllr Katrina Wood	Buckinghamshire Council
	Cllr Nick Forbes CBE	Newcastle upon Tyne City Council
	Cllr Nesil Caliskan	Enfield Council
	Cllr Judi Billing MBE	Hertfordshire County Council
	Cllr Anntoinette Bramble	Hackney London Borough Council
	Cllr Amy Cross	Blackpool Council
	Cllr James Dawson	Erewash Borough Council
	Cllr Tudor Evans OBE	Plymouth City Council
Cllr Paulette Hamilton	Birmingham City Council	
Cllr Richard Henry	Stevenage Borough Council	
Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe	Bradford Metropolitan District Council	
Cllr Simon Henig CBE	Durham County Council	
Cllr Helen Holland	Bristol City Council	
Sir Stephen Houghton CBE	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council	
Cllr Anthony Hunt	Torfaen County Borough Council	
Sir Richard Leese CBE	Manchester City Council	
Cllr John Merry CBE	Salford City Council	
Cllr Dhanisha Patel	Bridgend County Borough Council	
Cllr Oliver Ryan	Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council	

Cllr Shama Tatler	Brent Council
Cllr Sharon Taylor OBE	Stevenage Borough Council
Cllr Leigh Redman	Somerset County Council
Cllr Darren Rodwell	Barking and Dagenham London Borough Council
Cllr Andrew Western	Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Alan Rhodes	Bassetlaw District Council
Cllr Liz Green	Kingston upon Thames Royal Borough Council
Cllr Heather Kidd	Shropshire Council
Cllr Adele Morris	Southwark Council
Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE	Portsmouth City Council
Cllr Sue Baxter	Bromsgrove District Council
Cllr Colin Mann	Caerphilly County Borough Council
Cllr Sarah Rouse	Malvern Hills District Council
Cllr Paul Woodhead	Cannock Chase District Council
Cllr David Fothergill	

