

Executive Advisory Board

Agenda

Thursday, 11 March 2021
2.15 pm

Virtual meeting via Zoom

To: Members of the Executive Advisory Board
cc: Named officers for briefing purposes

LGA Executive
11 March 2021

There will be a meeting of the LGA Executive at: **2.15 pm on Thursday, 11 March 2021.**

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.

Apologies

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

Conservative:	Group Office: 020 7664 3223	email: lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk
Labour:	Group Office: 020 7664 3263	email: LABGP@lga.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

Amy Haldane
07867 514938 /amy.haldane@local.gov.uk

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.

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The twitter hashtag for this meeting is #lgaexec.

Executive Advisory Board – Membership 2020/2021

Councillor and Role	Authority
Conservative 9	
Cllr James Jamieson (Chairman)	Central Bedfordshire Council
Cllr Izzi Seccombe OBE (Vice Chairman)	Warwickshire County Council
Cllr John Fuller OBE (Deputy Chairman)	South Norfolk District Council
Cllr Robert Alden (Deputy Chairman)	Birmingham City Council
Cllr Teresa O'Neill OBE (Deputy Chairman)	Bexley Council
Cllr Peter Fleming OBE (Board Chair)	Sevenoaks District Council
Cllr Ian Hudspeth (Board Chair)	Oxfordshire County Council
Cllr David Renard (Board Chair)	Swindon Borough Council
Cllr Kevin Bentley (Board Chair)	Essex County Council
Labour 9	
Cllr Nick Forbes CBE (Senior Vice-Chair)	Newcastle upon Tyne City Council
Cllr Michael Payne (Deputy Chair)	Gedling Borough Council
Cllr Anntoinette Bramble (Deputy Chair)	Hackney London Borough Council
Cllr Tudor Evans OBE (Deputy Chair)	Plymouth City Council
Cllr Georgia Gould (Deputy Chair)	Camden Council
Sir Richard Leese CBE (Board Chair)	Manchester City Council and City Regions Board
Cllr Richard Watts (Board Chair)	Islington Council
Cllr Judith Blake CBE (Board Chair)	Leeds City Council
Cllr Nesil Caliskan (Board Chair)	Enfield Council
Liberal Democrat 5	
Cllr Howard Sykes MBE (Vice-Chair)	Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Ruth Dombey OBE (Deputy Chair)	Sutton London Borough Council
Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE (Board Chair)	Portsmouth City Council
Cllr Anita Lower (Balancing Member)	Newcastle upon Tyne City Council
Cllr Bridget Smith (Balancing	South Cambridgeshire District Council

Member)	
Independent 4	
Cllr Marianne Overton MBE (Vice-Chair)	Lincolnshire County Council
Cllr Clive Woodbridge (Deputy Chair)	Epsom and Ewell Borough Council
Cllr Paul Woodhead (Balancing Member)	Cannock Chase District Council
Cllr Rosemarie Harris (Balancing Member)	Powys County Council
Regional Representatives 9	
Cllr Robert Stewart	LAB Swansea City and County Council
Cllr Marc Bayliss	CON Worcester City Council
Cllr Simon Henig CBE	LAB Association of North East Councils
Cllr John Hart	CON South West Councils
Cllr Peter John OBE	LAB Southwark Council
Cllr Shabir Pandor	LAB Kirklees Metropolitan Council
Cllr Roy Perry	CON South East England Councils (SEEC)
Cllr Nicholas Rushton	CON East Midlands Councils
Cllr Linda Haysey	CON East Herts Council
Named Substitutes	
Cllr Ralph Bagge	CON South Bucks District Council

Non-voting Members of LGA Executive

Councillor	Representing
Sir Stephen Houghton CBE	LAB SIGOMA
Alderman Sir David Wootton	INDE Local Partnerships
Cllr David Williams	CON County Councils Network (CCN)

Agenda

Executive Advisory Board

Thursday 11 March 2021

2.15 pm

Online meeting via Zoom

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Date of Next Meeting: Thursday, 10 June 2021, 2.15 pm



Integration and innovation: working together to improve health and social care for all – update on LGA activity

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

This report updates Executive Advisory Board members on progress on government proposals on health and care integration since their last meeting on 21 January 2021.

Recommendation

The Board is requested to agree that, going forward, the Community Wellbeing Board leads the LGA response on the forthcoming Health and Care Bill.

Action

By the Community Wellbeing Board, as appropriate.

Contact officer:	Alyson Morley
Position:	Senior Policy Adviser
Phone no:	07554 765 130
Email:	Alyson.Morley@local.gov.uk

Integration and innovation: working together to improve health and social care for all – update on LGA activity

Background

1. On 21 January 2021, the EAB received an update report on the LGA's response to the NHS England publication consultation on measures to support the NHS Long Term Plan, in particular recommendations on the legal status, role and remit of integrated care systems (ICSs). The EAB also endorsed the LGA policy positions with on ICSs.
2. This is a dynamic policy area and there has been significant progress since the EAB last discussed this issue. On 11 February, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) [published the legislative proposals for a Health and Care Bill](#). The proposals in the white paper are a combination of:
 - 2.1. Proposals developed by NHS England (NHSE) to support the implementation of the NHS Long Term Plan (and which are the main focus of the document).
 - 2.2. Additional proposals that relate to public health, social care, and quality and safety matters, which require primary legislation
 - 2.3. The White Paper emphasises that the legislative proposals should be seen in the context of broader current and planned reforms to the NHS, social care, public health and mental health. It commits to bringing forward detailed proposals for reform on these key policy areas later this year.
3. On 16 February the LGA published a briefing summarising the proposals of most significance to local government and the LGA's initial response, which may evolve as the proposals continue to be refined and developed by government. The summary of key messages is included in paragraphs 4.1 – 4.10 below.

LGA response

4. The LGA's key messages on the proposals are as follows.
 - 4.1. The White Paper provides a promising base on which to build a more collaborative culture. It sets out a clear direction of travel for enabling NHS organisations to work more effectively together, and for the NHS to work as an equal partner with local government. The critical role of local government to the health and wellbeing of our communities has been a fundamental LGA lobbying and influencing message.
 - 4.2. We are therefore pleased that the Government has acted on local government's call for collaboration to achieve two linked but distinct objectives: integration within the NHS to join up care and support; and equal partnership between the NHS, local government and other partners to both address the wider determinants of health and deliver better and more coordinated health and care services for people.
 - 4.3. We will continue to work with Government to ensure there is clarity regarding the respective roles and responsibilities of the proposed ICS NHS Statutory Bodies and the ICS Health and Care Partnerships, including how they: relate to health and wellbeing boards and integrated activity at local level; and support local leaders in developing arrangements that work best for local areas. Any future accountability mechanisms will need to build on and enhance existing local democratic

accountability, not bypass or undermine it. It is imperative that local government remains directly accountable to our residents.

- 4.4. We welcome the renewed focus on the importance of the local government footprint, particularly:
 - 4.4.1. Recognition that this is the place at which real change happens
 - 4.4.2. The commitment that existing local partnerships and democratic structures should be based on local government place
 - 4.4.3. The expectation that integrated care systems (ICSs) will delegate functions to place-level partnerships.
- 4.5. We are keen to work with NHSE and DHSC to ensure that the principle of subsidiarity is put into practice and hard-wired into the way ICSs, NHSE, councils and DHSC work with places, building from the bottom up.
- 4.6. Since the transfer of public health to councils in 2013, local government has proved that public health is more effective and appropriate to local health challenges when it is locally led. Locally led public health teams have played a vital role in responding to the pandemic. Furthermore, local public health leaders have a crucial role to play in ensuring that local strategies for health and wellbeing have the promotion of health, wellbeing, independence and resilience at the core. We are concerned about the proposal to create a power for the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to require NHSE to discharge public health functions will undermine local leadership of prevention and promoting wellbeing. We will seek clear assurance from Government that this will not adversely impact on local government's public health responsibilities.
- 4.7. We note that many of the proposals about improvements in data flow relate to those between health and social care, and there is an absence of reference to local authorities' public health role. We would like to see a commitment to share data with Directors of Public Health and local public health teams as standard practice, to allow them to fulfil their statutory duties. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, local government has repeatedly had to make the case for Directors of Public Health to receive data about residents in their areas, and this should not be an afterthought.
- 4.8. Adult social care has continually demonstrated its value as an essential local public service in its own right over the last year and it is helpful that the white paper acknowledges the pressures facing social care and the need to address its long-term sustainability and reform. However, such acknowledgement only goes so far and it is disappointing that the Government's immediate priority for social care is to strengthen national oversight of care and support, rather than bring forward its long-awaited wider funding reforms to support people of all ages to live the life they want to lead.
- 4.9. The Government needs to publish a clear timetable for its wider reform agenda at the earliest opportunity to give reassurance to all those people who draw on and work in social care that there will be no further delays.
- 4.10. With regard to national oversight of adult social care, we recognise the need for more transparency. We will work with government to ensure that any national

arrangements build on existing best practice, are focused on the care and health system as a whole, and are genuinely co-designed with people with lived experience.

5. We received a positive and supportive response from member councils to our briefing, with a number of regional Health and Wellbeing Board and ICS Leaders Networks, NHS England networks and other professional networks requesting briefings from the LGA on our views of the proposals.
6. In addition to keeping our members informed and engaging the NHS, the LGA has been active in influencing Parliament and Ministers. On 2 March 2021, Sarah Pickup, LGA Deputy Chief Executive, gave evidence to the House of Commons Health and Social Care Committee inquiry on the White Paper. On 3 March 2021, the LGA Chairman, the Chairman of the LGA Community Wellbeing Board and the Lead Members of the CWB attended the first meeting of a new local government advisory group to discuss with the Care Minister, Helen Whately, adult social care issues, including proposals relating to the assurance and reporting of adult social care.

Implications for Wales

7. Health, public health and adult social care policy are all devolved functions. The proposals in the White Paper relate to England only and, therefore, there are no implication for Welsh local authorities.

Financial Implications

8. The proposals in the white paper are wide-ranging and not all are fully developed. There may well be financial implications for councils with adult social care and public health responsibilities. We will continue to work with councils, government departments and NHS England to identify all financial implications for local government and ensure that these are addressed by government.

Next steps

9. The Board is requested to agree that, going forward, the Community Wellbeing Board leads the LGA response on the forthcoming Health and Care Bill.
10. Action will be taken by the Community Wellbeing Board, as appropriate.

Climate Change: engaging with the COP26 UN climate change conference

Purpose of report

For direction.

Summary

The report sets out the opportunities to participate in the COP26 UN climate change conference. It also sets out the opportunities to showcase the work of councils and engage with Government in the run up to the November 2021 conference. In addition, the report updates Members on the LGA's wider climate change work.

Recommendations

That Members consider how best to:

provide strategic oversight to our engagement with Government in this COP26 year

discuss and provide direction on the opportunities to engage with COP 26 with the purpose of strengthening the role of local government as a significant partner in the drive to meet the national ambitions on climate change

Action

Actions will follow from the discussion

Contact officer:	Eamon Lally
Position:	Principal Policy Adviser
Phone no:	0207 664 3132
Email:	eamon.lally@local.gov.uk

LGA role in the UN climate conference COP26

Background

1. The UK is hosting, for the first time, the next UN international climate change conference in Glasgow from 1-12 November 2021 (COP26). The conference will bring together international delegations to agree on a process to accelerate progress towards the goal of the Paris agreement (to keep the rise in global temperature to within at least 2 degrees, although 1.5 is the current ambition).
2. At present, the Government is planning for a physical conference to take place but remaining flexible in the planning as uncertainties of Covid-19 continue. The LGA is mindful of the options for a physical, virtual or hybrid conference in our planning.
3. The conference itself, and the lead up to it this year, will have five broad themes: adaptation and resilience; nature; energy transition; clean road transport; and finance. The Government is positioning the UK as a global leader in responding to climate change, setting an ambitious new target to reduce carbon emissions by at least 68% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels. According to [PWC's Net-Zero Economy index 2020](#) the UK's average annual decline in carbon intensity between 2000 and 2019 has been faster than other G20 countries.
4. Local government has been active in addressing climate change for some years and the desire to do more was reflected in the many councils that have declared a climate emergency. The LGA also declared a climate emergency at its annual conference in 2019 and has been working through the EEHT and Improvement and Innovation Boards to engage with government and provide support to councils. In this COP26 year there is an opportunity to make sure that local government is recognised as central to the achievement of nation's climate change ambitions, through its leadership of place. To achieve this **the LGA will need strategic oversight of the engagement with Government, which complements the work of the Boards.**
5. This report will cover:
 - 5.1. The role that we should expect in Glasgow
 - 5.2. Opportunities to promote the work that local government is doing to address climate change
 - 5.3. Opportunities to discuss with Government the essential role of councils in addressing climate change
 - 5.4. An update on the LGA's climate work

Local government at COP 26

6. In the past, COP conferences have had local authority and cities days as part of the formal conference. These tend to involve global bodies. For example, the local government and cities day at COP 25, in Madrid in 2019, was undertaken as a partnership between ICLEI (Local Governments for sustainability); United Nations Climate Change Committee on Capacity Building and UN Habitat (which promotes transformative change in cities and towns). Under the overarching notion of 'enabling local action', different sessions in this thematic day were designed to boost capacities of individuals, institutions, and cities to take action. For COP 26 in Glasgow, we understand that there will be a dedicated day for local and regional government, themed as 'Cities and the Built Environment'. This is most likely to take place at the end of the two-week Conference. As yet we have little information on what the proposals are for the day but understand that the objectives for the day will be shaped in the coming months. The Cabinet Office's Expression of Interest process will help to shape the objectives, and it also may follow the pattern of local government days at previous COPs, with the involvement of international local government bodies. **It will be important for us to engage with Alok Sharma MP, as president of COP 26, and other Ministers to ensure that a local government day takes place. We can offer our support in designing the day and also engage on the role that UK local government can play in that day.**
7. Host cities have also been very active in holding events in parallel to the main conference. At COP 26 Glasgow City will have a Host City Hub. The city will be reaching out to other cities and sub-national groupings to sell itself 'as a world leader in the race to net zero carbon'. It will also use the Hub to provide a platform for the city's cultural sector and communities to exhibit their involvement in climate action.
8. The Conference will be delivered across two sites: the Scottish events Campus (SEC), referred to as the Blue Zone, and the Glasgow Science Centre, known as the Green Zone. The Blue Zone is managed by the United Nations (UN) and will host the negotiations. It will bring together delegations from 197 Parties and observer organisations who can hold panel discussions, exhibits and side events. **The LGA applied for observer status last year before COP26 was rescheduled. We will know by August whether the LGA's application to send observers to COP26 has been successful**
9. The Green Zone is managed by the UK Government and is the platform for the general public, youth groups, academia, business and civil society who can host events, exhibitions, workshops, creative installations and other activities.
10. The Cabinet Office has launched an Expression of Interest inviting proposals from a range of organisations, including councils, to participate in the opportunities noted above spanning the Blue and Green Zones. The LGA has submitted expressions of interest which are suitable for both the Blue and Green Zones. It has also submitted an expression of interest in partnership with COSLA, NILGA, WLGA, and a number of

international associations including Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI) (the deadline for proposals was 5 March 2021). The expressions of interest were agreed by EEHT Lead Members and the political group offices. It is important to note that these are initial expressions of interest and there will be ongoing engagement with the Cabinet office. The Cabinet Office expects the available space to be oversubscribed and is encouraging applications from partnerships of organisations. Further details of the opportunities presented by these zones are set out in appendix A.

11. If we get observer status, we will get automatic access to the Blue Zone. In the event that we get both observer status (or get allocated space in the Blue Zone through the Cabinet Office process) and access to the Green Zone, it is proposed that we take both opportunities. The types of activity we might engage in include:
 - 11.1. Event: to hold a panel discussion with the purpose of generating a debate about responsible leadership and stewardship of place. We would look to engage research institutions, think tanks, representative bodies such as SOLACE and regional and local leaders to form the panel discussion. Experts from the COP26 Presidency themes will also be identified to inform a holistic debate on the importance of stewardship of place to deliver on the UK's path to net zero. Guidance published by the Cabinet Office on the EOI process suggests audiences of up to 200 people for events.
 - 11.2. Exhibition space: to host a stand for 2 weeks modelled on the LGA Annual Conference Innovation Zone. The stand will promote local government and showcase good practice by councils on climate action. It could also provide opportunities for the public to engage in new experiences in low-carbon behaviours. The zone could be interactive and could consider using a number of creative channels, for example, film, live streaming, simulation, augmented and virtual reality. Showcasing will be themed around the five Presidency areas outlined above
12. **We would welcome suggestions on the type of activities Members would like the LGA to take forward.**
13. An additional option is that the LGA could host its own event running parallel to COP26 in another venue. This would allow the LGA full control of the content, branding and audience. There might be an opportunity to align a parallel event with a local government day if this is pursued by Government.

The local path to net-zero: role of local government in addressing climate change

14. Local government is already tackling the challenge of climate change. The [examples](#) that the LGA has gathered demonstrate the breadth and depth of that work. The run up to COP 26 provides an opportunity to showcase and build on that work. The table in Appendix B maps out our planned activity for this year against the five themes of the COP 26 conference and the national and international events that are also taking place

this year. This includes webinars on key themes, a series of think pieces from stakeholders, partners and think tanks, 'talking heads' (mini podcasts) with industry experts and case study videos showcasing good practice by councils. This is part of our [Local path to net zero work](#).

15. We have already published a practical guide to [financing green ambitions](#), which was commissioned from Local Partnerships and held a financing green ambitions webinar again with Local Partnerships. We have also done a substantial amount of work, with the University of Leeds, on [decarbonising transport](#); a set of briefings for councils on decarbonising transport has been published and a series of seven webinars covering aspects of decarbonising transport were held from September to December 2020. In both these cases we have been able to showcase the good work of local government and share that practice across the sector and with Government.
16. Throughout the remainder of the year we will be focusing our activity and events on nature-based solutions, adaptation and energy transition. We will be working with councils, other partners, think tanks and academia to showcase good practice and help support councils as they develop further their own climate change plans.
17. We also intend to bring all these themes together in a final podcast to coincide with the COP 26 event itself. **Members might want to use the work this year to underpin an offer to Government that we participate at one of the main conference sessions.**
18. **We would also welcome your suggestions for further activity throughout the year.**

Key issues for discussion with Government

19. The pandemic has pushed many other important policy issues into the shade. However, the LGA has continued to work behind the scenes to develop policy and support councils we have: undertaken research on green jobs, green finance and transport decarbonisation; engaged with Defra on adaptation at the EEHT Board; continued our work on ensuring that the Environment Bill and subsequent regulations will be fit for purpose; and developed and are implementing a substantial climate improvement programme.
20. With the prospect of recovery, and COP 26 happening at the end of the year, climate change is set to emerge as one of the key Government priorities. This presents the opportunity to reengage with Government. One of our key concerns has been the lack of a strategic framework and joined up approach across Whitehall (there are rumoured to be 40 separate groups of civil servants working on climate change). We have previously sought a Ministerial/local government task force to: consider the respective roles of national and local government; to consider a strategic framework and funding; and to support coordinated delivery. Some progress has been made. The Chairman is a member of a group of sub-national leaders, chaired by Alok Sharma, which is focused on COP 26 (the next meeting takes place on March 15 and will focus on one of the specific

campaigns that the Government is initiating this year). We are also involved in roundtables with officials in March. However, **political engagement and coordination is still needed and Members are asked to consider how best to achieve this.**

21. There are a number of issues that need to be addressed through political engagement in a task force including:

21.1. **Community leadership:** Throughout the pandemic local government has shown exceptional local leadership and this will be required as we emerge into recovery. [Research](#) commissioned by the LGA from BritainThinks has shown that communities want to get back to a pre-Covid normal. These findings suggest that 'the idea of the pandemic as an opportunity to do things differently is therefore not intuitive' and that the climate dividend could be short lived. Local leaders will need to be proactive agents of change and help communities to navigate these tensions.

21.2. **Green Jobs:** The pandemic has taken its toll on employment. As of December 2020 there were [2.6 million Jobseeker's Allowance and out of work Universal Credit claimants](#). As of 31 December 2020 (the latest data) there were [3.8 million employments furloughed](#). The economy is expected to grow by about 5% in 2021/22, but the future for jobs remains uncertain. The LGA's 'Work Local' proposals would help national and local government work more effectively to address the immediate challenges of those experiencing unemployment. However, in the medium to longer term we need to take advantage of the job opportunities associated with moving towards a greener economy. Work by the LGA on the future of [Local Green Jobs](#) has estimated that areas such as low carbon electricity and heat, alternative fuels; energy efficiency; and clean transport could generate nearly 700,000 jobs by 2030 and 1.2 million jobs by 2050. We need to work with Government on making this a reality and to ensure that jobs are in the right places to enable communities to transition.

21.3. **Siloed Government:** the responsibility for climate change is held across a number of Ministries and Government departments focused on meeting their own policy objectives with little coordination. Funding too is siloed as our [fragmented funding report](#) shows. We need to push for a more strategic approach, while acknowledging that it is only local government that can pull these various strands together and coordinate delivery at the local level.

21.4. **Community capacity building:** our ambitions for a net zero economy will only be achieved with our communities as partners; there are many examples of councils co-producing low carbon schemes with communities e.g. working with volunteers on tree planting schemes. Our behaviours as individuals and communities will be influential in determining climate outcomes and local government has an important role in supporting communities to build capacity to address these issues. The pandemic has highlighted the inequalities in our society, and it is probable that climate change and the transition to a cleaner economy will have a differential impact that could exacerbate these inequalities. Community capacity and cohesion

issues will arise, and it is only at the local level that these can be addressed. Local government will need to support communities to meet these challenges.

21.5. **Funding:** A strategic framework to address climate change must be accompanied by adequate funding. The transition costs will be substantial, and they will fall across both the public and private sectors. For example, work that the LGA has commissioned from Savills indicates that the cost of retrofitting councils' own housing stock will be nearly £30bn. To date the Government has set aside £3.5bn (only £50mil has been allocated for pilots). We need a better idea of the cost of addressing climate change, where these costs fall and how they will be paid for. This is an issue that the Task Force could begin to address.

21.6. **Capacity of councils:** Knowledge and action will be required across all council activities and services. In particular, building skills and capacity in key areas of council responsibility such as planning and housing, flooding and protection for nature and biodiversity will be necessary as these areas of work are set to grow and change in response to climate change, the Environment Bill and planning reform. These capacity issues for councils need to be recognised and discussed with Government as the climate agenda progresses.

The wider work of the LGA

22. Throughout this report we have highlighted a range of work that has been commissioned by the LGA to aid our discussions with Government and to provide information and support to councils as they plan and implement their own climate change responses, including transport decarbonisation, green finance and local green jobs. Through our survey work and engagement with councils we know that they have a range of continuing concerns including: retrofitting; low consumption behaviour change; and connections to the energy grid. We will continue to pick these issues up in our policy work.

23. The Environment Bill will continue its passage through the Lords early in the next session of parliament. It is still Defra's intention to consult on the detail of the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) scheme, and Deposit Return schemes in Spring 2021. These reforms are connected to climate change through the circular economy. We will want to ensure that we get the right EPR scheme, one that ensures producers cover the full cost of recycling.

Climate Change Improvement and Support Programme Update

24. The LGA has a significant [climate change improvement offer](#) for councils. Its aim is to help councils and residents to reach their local carbon reduction targets by adapting and mitigating the effects of climate change. Components of the programme include:

- 24.1. **[Net-Zero innovation Programme](#)** – The programme is delivered through a collaboration between the Local Government Association (LGA) and University College London (UCL). The Net Zero Innovation Network brings together local authorities, universities and other stakeholders to address climate challenges at the local level, and seeks routes to achieve council's net zero commitments.

- 24.2. **Councillor workbook** – we have commissioned CAG Consultants to produce self-guided learning materials for local authority councillors on the actions that councils can take to meet net zero targets and support a green economic recovery. This will be published in the Spring.

- 24.3. **Communications and behaviour change guides** – improvement colleagues have commissioned a supplier to create new guidance for councils on engaging with their communities, activists and Government on the issue of climate change. This is due to be published on 26 February 2021. The LGA has also written an online resource for councils to work with their communities on Behaviour change and the environment | Local Government Association

- 24.4. **Creating local green jobs** – following the [LGA green jobs report](#), the LGA is currently delivering action learning sets for both officers and Members. This will help to work through the issues of green economic recovery with local authorities in similar positions. The learnings will be made available to all councils.

- 24.5. **Measuring scope 3 emissions** – to accompany the [Greenhouse Gas Accounting \(GHG\) tool](#), colleagues in improvement are developing sector led guidance to measure scope 3 emissions. Sector specific guidance will help with providing clarity in interpretation of the GHG Protocol and support improved accuracy and robustness of reporting, which is currently inconsistent.

- 24.6. **Leadership essentials climate emergency** – the course has been successfully delivered to 60 councillors so far.

- 24.7. **Sustainable procurement guide** - the LGA is currently engaging on and writing guidance on sustainable procurement which will be available in April 2021.

- 24.8. **Webinars** – a series of webinars have recently been delivered on digital solutions to climate change, locking in positive behaviours and the co-benefits of a green recovery and, planting trees. Further climate change webinars on behaviour change techniques and community engagement are also scheduled.

- 24.9. **Design in the Public Sector Programme**: Our Design Programme is focused solely on climate change for 2020-21. We are currently working to equip councils with design skills and techniques to apply to their toughest challenges.



Implications for Wales

24. Councils in Wales are working with the Welsh Government on a net zero strategy for Wales. We are working with the Welsh LGA to identify opportunities for joint working.

Financial Implications

25. There are no immediate financial implications, but there will be a cost to having a physical presence at COP26.

Next steps

26. The next steps include:

- 26.1. Submission of our expressions of interest and continuing engagement with the Cabinet Office
- 26.2. Engagement with Ministers on establishing a Climate Change Ministerial Task Force
- 26.3. Developing our approach to COP 26 in more detail following direction from Members

Appendix A: Tiers of access**Table: Four tiers of activity during COP26 and opportunity to engage**

COP26 activity and location	Audience and access	Potential for LGA to engage
Closed spaces for the negotiations Location: Scottish events campus	Restricted to national delegations, media and observers Access and activities controlled by the UN	The LGA has applied for observer status. If approved this will provide access to the formal opportunities to observe the negotiations
Blue zone Scottish events campus	Controlled by the UN, with limited event spaces allocated by the Cabinet Office The UNFCCC will release space in the Blue Zone to their accredited parties and organisations in Summer 2021	LGA has applied for observer status. If approved this will provide limited access to the Blue zone. The Cabinet Office has space available in the Blue zone and is inviting expressions of interest to host events by 5 March 2021.
Green zone Glasgow Science Centre	Controlled by the UK Government This is a broader, public facing space. The green zone will showcase arts and culture activity exhibitions, with facilities to host gardens and an IMAX cinema	The Cabinet Office is inviting expressions of interest by 5 March for a range of activities including events and exhibition spaces
Host city activity Various venues	Volunteering, fringe events	Glasgow City Council

1. Submitting an expression of interest in UK Government Controlled spaces at COP26 could secure a presence in the Blue zone but it does not guarantee access to UN and UK senior influencers. Examples of potential LGA activities in UK Government controlled spaces include:

Appendix B; Calendar of pre-COP events and LGA activity

A LOCAL PATH TO NET ZERO				KEY											
COP26 Programme of Activity Nov 2020 - 2021				Timescale											
				In Progress											
				Complete											
LGA ACTIVITY	STATUS	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21
INTERNATIONAL/OTHER ACTIVITY						UN Environ. Assembly, Nairobi	NZ Cities Forum, Japan		COP16 Biodiversity, China	UN World Env Day, G7 Climate Summit, Cornwall			UN Youth Summit, Milan	UN Pre-COP Summit, Milan	COP26, Glasgow
Finance															
Publish practical guide to financing green ambitions								NAO report							
Financing Green Ambition webinar with Local Partnerships				Dec-02											
Publish think pieces						Feb-22									
Clean Transport															
Decarbonisation of transport webinars															
Publish think pieces						Feb-22									
Publish talking head						Feb-22									
Publish case study video						Feb-22									
Nature-based Solutions															
Publish think pieces									May 17						
Publish talking head									May 17						
Rewilding - nature based solutions (improvement)									May 28						
Publish case study video									May 17						
Biodiversity action learning sets									May 17						
Energy Transition															
DIPS energy webinar										Jun 16					
Publish think pieces										June 11					
Publish talking head										June 11					
Publish case study video										June 11					
Adaptation															
Green economic recovery webinar (improvement)													Sep 15		
Publish think pieces													Sept 30-Oct 2		
Publish talking head													Sept 30-Oct 2		
Publish case study video													Sept 30-Oct 2		
FINAL PODCAST															
Collation of all talking heads and case study videos															PRE-COP
OTHER MILESTONES															
UK100 Climate Change Summit										TBC					
London Climate Action Week										June 26 - July 4					
LGA annual conference											July 6-8				
Comprehensive Spending Review													TBC		

Local Government Finance update

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

This report provides a summary of the work by the LGA on funding and finance issues, since the previous meeting of the Board on 21 January, including COVID-19 finance issues, the Local Government Finance Settlement, and the 2021 Chancellor's Budget.

Recommendations

That Members of the Executive Advisory Board note this update.

Action

Officers will proceed with the delivery of the LGA's work on local government finance, including the Spending Review and the response to, and recovery from, COVID-19.

Contact officer:	Sarah Pickup
Position:	Deputy Chief Executive
Phone no:	020 7664 3141
Email:	sarah.pickup@local.gov.uk

Local Government Finance update

Introduction

1. This report provides a summary of the work by the LGA on funding and finance issues, since the previous meeting of the Board on 21 January, including work in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Local Government Finance Settlement, and the Chancellor's Budget.

Chancellor's Budget 2021

2. The Budget was delivered by the Chancellor on 3 March. A verbal update of the key announcements will be provided at the meeting. Our [submission](#) to the Budget focused on key topics affecting local government finance.
3. Officers produced an [on the day briefing](#) summarising the key announcements from the Budget.

Final 2021/22 Local Government Finance Settlement

4. On 4 February the Final Local Government Finance Settlement for 2021/22 was [published](#). There were no major changes compared to the provisional settlement published in December 2020, with the overall increase in Core Spending Power increasing from 4.5 to 4.6 per cent for 2021/22, due to updated data for the New Homes Bonus and a revised council tax referendum limit for the Greater London Authority. More than 85 per cent of the potential core spending power increase next year is dependent on councils increasing council tax by the maximum permitted without a referendum.
5. Allocations of the Public Health Grant for 2021/22 have not yet been announced.
6. The final settlement was debated in Parliament on 10 February. The LGA provided a [briefing](#) for parliamentarians to assist them in this debate.

New Homes Bonus consultation

7. Alongside the final settlement debate on 10 February, the Government launched a consultation on the [future of the New Homes Bonus](#) (NHB). The consultation sets out options for reform to be implemented from 2022/23 onwards and confirms that while legacy payments committed in previous years will be honoured, the concept will not be reintroduced. The deadline to submit views is 7 April 2021.
8. The consultation seeks views on the reform of existing elements of the NHB, including the Affordable Homes Premium, the 80/20 split between shire districts and county councils, and implementation of changes such as raising the baseline threshold, or

11 March 2021

setting a threshold relative to a local authority's own past performance in respect of housing growth.

9. In addition, the consultation is seeking views on proposed new conditions relating to Modern Methods of Construction, the new Infrastructure Levy, and councils' Local Plans, to incentivise further behaviours as part of the Bonus.
10. The LGA will be responding to the consultation and is engaging with the sector and key stakeholders to inform our response to the proposed reforms. Members of the Resources Board discussed the consultation at their meeting on 2 March.

Business Rates Review

11. On 19 February the Treasury [announced](#) that an interim report on their Review of Business Rates, along with a summary of consultation responses, would be published on 23 March with the final report delayed to Autumn 2021.

Capitalisation

12. On the day of the final settlement debate, the Government announced an extension of the flexibility to use capital receipts to fund transformation projects for a further three years from 2022; further details will be provided by the Government in due course.
13. Alongside the settlement, The Government also published [details](#) of capitalisation directions granted to four local authorities that have requested exceptional financial support during the COVID-19 pandemic. We understand other councils are in continuing discussion with MHCLG about similar arrangements.

COVID-19 funding

Financial impact

14. The MHCLG monthly financial monitoring returns continue to be a key instrument in representing the financial impact of COVID-19 on local government. According to the January returns, the total in-year financial pressure projected by councils in 2020/21 due to COVID-19 was estimated to be £10.2 billion (consisting of £7.3 billion of cost pressures and £2.9 billion of non-tax income losses), with a further £2.6 billion of business rates and council tax income losses – these tax losses will impact council budgets in 2021/22.
15. The Public Accounts Committee is [calling for evidence](#) on the evolving financial pressures on local government and support provided by central government in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The LGA will respond to this inquiry by the 11 March deadline.

2021/22 COVID-19 funding

16. Alongside the final settlement debate on 10 February, the Government published a [policy paper](#) on COVID-19 funding in 2021/22 following the [consultation](#) in December. The Government confirmed [allocations](#) of the £670 million of local council tax support will be the indicative amounts set out in the consultation in December, and the extension of the sales, fees, and charges compensation scheme will use 2020/21 budgeted income as a baseline.
17. The policy paper also confirmed how losses in council tax will be measured in the local tax income guarantee scheme for 2020/21, with further details on business rates losses to be made available at a later date. The COVID-19 financial management survey will also continue to be collected.
18. COVID-19 funding in 2021/22 also includes the £1.55 billion for cost pressures; [allocations](#) were published in December.

Business Grants

19. On 22 February BEIS wrote to billing authorities to confirm that the Local Restrictions Support Grant to support businesses that were required to close due to the national lockdown announced at the start of 2021 was being extended to 31 March. The top-up Closed Business Lockdown Payment, also announced at the start of January, will not be extended. On 24 February BEIS [published](#) details of grants distributed by billing authorities up to 18 January.

Financial sustainability

20. The Housing, Communities and Local Government Select Committee is carrying out an inquiry into [Local Authority Financial Sustainability and the Section 114 Regime](#). Resources Board Lead Members approved a [submission](#) to the inquiry and the Chair of the Resources Board gave oral [evidence](#) to the committee on 8 February alongside the Chief Executive of CIPFA.

Green Book

21. As part of its [review of the 2020 Spending Review](#), the Treasury Select Committee has issued a call for evidence on changes to HM Treasury's Green Book. Resources Board Lead members approved a submission of evidence to this inquiry.
22. While noting that the Green Book process remains centrally driven overall, we welcomed the intention to take a more rounded approach to reflecting on local policies, strategies, and plans. We highlighted that the Green Book should better account for the Government's decarbonisation and net zero ambitions, and the environmental impacts of climate change.

Next steps

- 23. Members are asked to note this update.
- 24. Officers will proceed with the delivery of the LGA's work following the Chancellor's Budget. Officers will continue to work on the response to, and recovery from, COVID-19 as well as wider local government finance matters.

Implications for Wales

- 25. We are in regular contact with the Welsh LGA and the other local government bodies in the devolved nations to exchange intelligence, ideas and consider joint work.

Financial Implications

- 26. The work related to COVID-19 has been added to the LGA's core programme of work. This unbudgeted spending will be managed within the overall LGA Group funding position which the LGA Board is monitoring.

