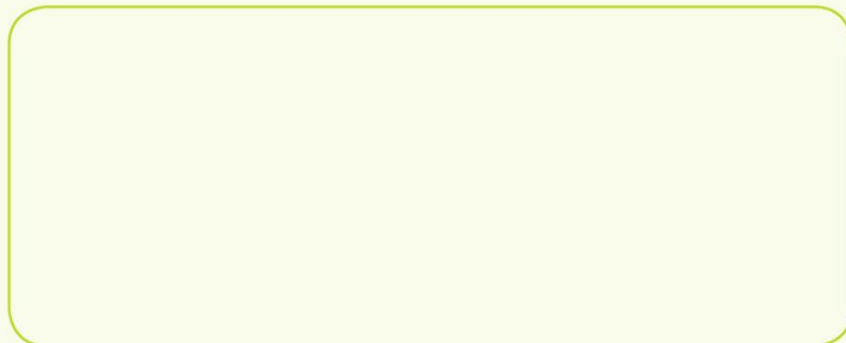


# Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board

Agenda

Thursday, 20 May 2021  
12.00 pm



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

Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board  
20 May 2021

---

There will be a meeting of the Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board at **12.00 pm on Thursday, 20 May 2021**.

**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.

<b>Conservative:</b>	Group Office: 020 7664 3223	email: <a href="mailto:lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk">lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk</a>
<b>Labour:</b>	Group Office: 020 7664 3263	email: <a href="mailto:LABGP@lga.gov.uk">LABGP@lga.gov.uk</a>
<b>Independent:</b>	Group Office: 020 7664 3224	email: <a href="mailto:independent.grouplga@local.gov.uk">independent.grouplga@local.gov.uk</a>
<b>Liberal Democrat:</b>	Group Office: 020 7664 3235	email: <a href="mailto:libdem@local.gov.uk">libdem@local.gov.uk</a>

**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.

## Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board – Membership 2020/2021

Councillor	Authority
<b>Conservative ( 7 )</b>	
Cllr David Renard (Chairman)	Swindon Borough Council
Cllr Peter Butlin	Warwickshire County Council
Cllr Mark Crane	Selby District Council
Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE	Gloucestershire County Council
Cllr Patrick Nicholson	Plymouth City Council
Cllr Linda Taylor	Cornwall Council
Vacancy	
<b>Substitutes</b>	
Cllr Richard Burton	East Riding of Yorkshire Council
<b>Labour ( 7 )</b>	
Cllr Darren Rodwell (Vice-Chair)	Barking and Dagenham London Borough Council
Cllr Asher Craig	Bristol City Council
Mayor Philip Glanville	Hackney London Borough Council
Cllr Ed Turner	Oxford City Council
Cllr Rachel Blake	Tower Hamlets Council
Cllr Christopher Hammond	Southampton City Council
Vacancy	Labour Group
<b>Substitutes</b>	
Cllr Peter Mason	Ealing Council
Cllr Claire Holland	Lambeth London Borough Council
<b>Liberal Democrat ( 2 )</b>	
Cllr Adele Morris (Deputy Chair)	Southwark Council
Cllr Peter Thornton	Cumbria County Council
<b>Substitutes</b>	
Cllr Stewart Golton	Leeds City Council
<b>Independent ( 2 )</b>	
Cllr Linda Gillham (Deputy Chair)	Runnymede Borough Council
Cllr David Beaman	Waverley Borough Council
<b>Substitutes</b>	
Cllr Loic Rich	Cornwall Council
Cllr Diana Moore	Exeter City Council
Cllr Tim Hodgson	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Jamie Osborn	Norwich City Council

## Agenda

---

### Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board

Thursday 20 May 2021

12.00 pm

---

Item	Page	Time
1. <b>Declarations of Interest</b>		
2. <b>Homes England</b>	1 - 2	
Guest speakers Peter Freeman, Paul Kitson, Debbie Ward		
3. <b>Local area energy planning and EV charging infrastructure</b>	3 - 8	
Guest speaker Jo Wall, Local Partnerships		
4. <b>Update paper on other board business</b>	9 - 56	
5. <b>Minutes of the previous meeting</b>	57 - 66	

**Date of Next Meeting:** Thursday, 1 July 2021, 12.00 pm,

## Homes England

### Purpose of report

For discussion.

### Summary

This paper introduces the item on the role of Homes England. Peter Freeman, Chair of Homes England, Paul Kitson, Interim Executive Director of Markets, Partners and Places and Debbie Ward, Director of Local Government Capacity Centre will be attending.

### Recommendation

The item is for update and discussion.

### Action

As directed by the Board

**Contact officer:** Jo Allchurch  
**Position:** Senior Adviser  
**Phone no:** 07900 931045  
**Email:** jo.allchurch@local.gov.uk

## Homes England

### Key issues

1. Homes England, the government's housing accelerator, is a critical partner for councils wanting to build homes and communities – its role and purpose are set out in the [Homes England Strategic Plan 2018-23](#).
2. Following the EEHT Board meeting in February where members discussed council housebuilding, Peter Freeman, Chairman of Homes England is attending the EEHT Board to discuss how Homes England and councils can work together to deliver more homes and communities.
3. Peter will be joined by Paul Kitson, interim Executive Director of Markets, Partners and Places and Debbie Ward, Director of Local Government Capacity Centre.
4. Homes England has recently opened its competitive [bidding round](#) for its latest intake of strategic partnerships (deadline 18 May). Strategic partners are able to enter into a multi-year grant agreement with Homes England to deliver affordable housing, rather than access funding on a scheme-by-scheme basis. For the first time local authorities are able to bid via this route.
5. A new £11.5 billion Affordable Homes Programme will be delivered over 5 years from 2021-26, with nearly £7.5 billion being delivered outside London by Homes England. The remainder will be delivered via the Greater London Authority.

### Equalities Impact

6. A significant part of the work of Homes England is the responsibility for the Affordable Homes Programme. The programme's aim is to provide housing for sale or rent 'for those whose needs are not met by the market' and as such is intended to reduce inequalities. For councils delivering affordable homes programmes, equalities is central to their ambitions and councils are continually seeking to improve their approach. For example, Manchester City Council is 'considering whether individual EIAs are required on specific schemes to replace the original approach of an overarching EIA for the strategy'. It would be helpful to see an equalities impact assessment for the Government's full 2021-26 Affordable Homes Programme.

### Implications for Wales

7. Housing is a devolved responsibility. We will liaise with colleagues at the Welsh LGA on sharing good practice.

### Financial implications

8. There are no immediate financial implications.

## **Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure – the role for local government**

### **Purpose of report**

### **For discussion and direction**

### **Summary**

There are a range of roles that councils already play in supporting the roll out of electric vehicles and the Government have made resources available to help with local investment and know-how. However, the Government have set ambitious targets for the transition to a zero-emission fleet and looking ahead councils are unclear what they need to prioritise and what the Government sees as local government's key functions. In order to help with its work to influence future Government policy and support for councils the LGA is working with Local Partnerships to provide clarity and also help address issues of capacity, capability and expert support that councils will need, in particular for on-street charging provision. This will help influence future Government strategy as well as future Government spending decisions. This is an early opportunity for the Board to feed into this work. Jo Wall from Local Partnerships will help facilitate a discussion with the Board.

### **Recommendation**

The item is for update and discussion.

### **Action**

As directed by the Board

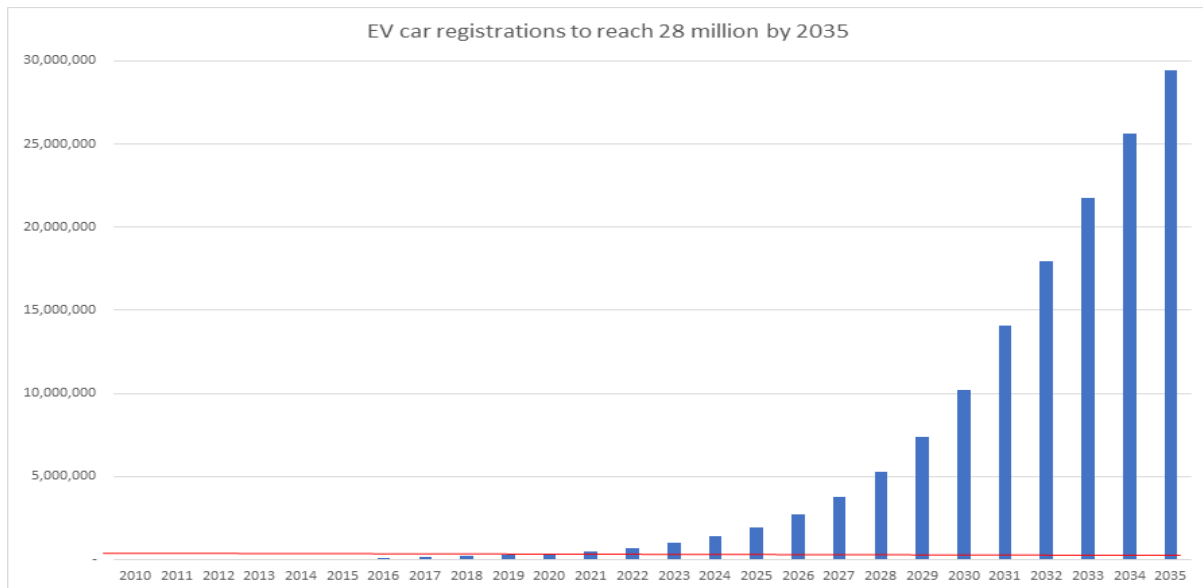
**Contact officer:** Kamal Panchal  
**Position:** Senior Adviser  
**Phone no:** 0771 7572640  
**Email:** kamal.panchal@local.gov.uk

## **Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure – the role for local government**

### **Background**

1. In July 2018, the Government set out their long-term ambition that by 2050 they want almost every car and van to be zero emission. As a steppingstone in reaching that goal, in November 2020, the Government also committed to bringing forward the date when sales of new petrol and diesel cars will end to 2030 (and hybrids by 2035).
2. To underpin that move, a network of electric vehicle (EV) charging points will be required. There are a range of roles that councils already play in supporting the roll out of EVs and the Government have made resources available to help with local investment and know-how. However, councils are unclear what they need to prioritise and what the Government sees as the key role for local government. Capacity and capability for councils to support the roll out of EV charging infrastructure also varies, as does existing funding for on-street charging.
3. On April 21<sup>st</sup> the Government laid down legislation to set the 6<sup>th</sup> carbon budget at the level recommended by the climate change commission, which is a significant increase in the cut in greenhouse gas emissions - by 78% by 2035.
4. At the same time the Government published a comprehensive impact assessment, which says:
5. “In the transport sector, there are major barriers of all types. Encouraging take up of electric vehicles is a major challenge, with particular difficulties around current higher vehicle costs, and charging practice and times. Most car and van technologies are mature, whilst many alternative technologies for HGVs, hydrogen trains, advanced biofuels, sustainable aviation fuels and low-carbon shipping are in development or need to be demonstrated before they can be deployed at scale. Significant cost reductions and / or government intervention will be required to enable widespread deployment of these technologies and achieve any necessary behaviour change by businesses and consumers. Production will need to scale up very significantly, especially for charging infrastructure, alternative fuel infrastructure and batteries, with the latter depending on scarce resources.”
6. Modelling in the impact assessment estimates that if the Government was to follow its preferred pathway to achieving the 78% reduction this will require up to 28 million cars and vans to be electric by 2035. The graph below illustrates the scale of the challenge.





Source: DfT, Table VEH0130 - Licensed ultra low emission vehicles (ULEVs)

The red line shows current registrations at 2021. The bars from 2022 onwards illustrate what a smooth projection in growth looks like to achieve the 28 million cars and vans total as set out in the impact assessment.

- To help the LGA influence future Government investment in local authorities and local infrastructure the LGA is working with Local Partnerships to research the needs and aspirations of member councils. This work will build on existing LGA work on decarbonisation of transport and [electric vehicles](#). Jo Wall from Local Partnerships will help facilitate a discussion with the Board.

**Issues**

- One third of homes have no off-street parking to enable convenient charging of EVs. EV owners without off-street parking rely on destination charging such as shops, cinemas and workplaces, or dedicated fast charging stations where available.
- On-street home charging infrastructure is intended to encourage the increase in uptake of EVs and places the lowest burden on the electricity grid.
- Councils play a number of different hard and soft roles in the roll out of on-street charging infrastructure – including: determining demand and where to locate, responding to market failure, directly providing charge points (whether on their own or in partnership with the private sector), from a special planning and planning management perspective, through managing and coordinating relevant roadworks, etc.
- The Government provides funding for councils towards delivery of on-street charging infrastructure; £20 million this year through DfT’s ‘On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme’ (ORCS). Councils are often unfairly criticised for not taking up this funding fully.

Since 2017, ORCS has supported applications from 140 local authorities across UK, and nearly 4,000 charge points.

12. Councils say there are many barriers to taking up such capital funding which many find highly restricted. These include: insufficient in-house resources and access to expertise; a confusing marketplace and commercial models; lack of clarity from central government as to the role of councils; funding schemes that appear small, short-term and not designed with the pressures on council revenues in mind.
13. There are also issues relating to the quality and reliability of chargepoints; such as chargepoints being an eyesore and instances where people turn up to charge with a low battery but the unit is not working. This can undermine public confidence in EVs and from a commercial perspective the question is whether early schemes will generate enough revenue to pay for ongoing maintenance and repairs.
14. OZEV are in the early stages of updating their on-street EV infrastructure strategy to encourage greater take-up of ORCS funding. Both councils and OZEV feel that they could work together much more effectively to increase the pace of roll-out.
15. LGA is seeking to identify the role that councils would like to play and to identify barriers that prevent them undertaking that role and doing more to deliver the charging infrastructure suited to local circumstances and demand.
16. The delivery of EV infrastructure is a discretionary function for local authorities (they are currently not responsible for providing petrol stations). In addition, the commercial market and political ambition for providing on-street charging infrastructure varies widely across the country. It is important that support and policy are of relevance and use to all councils.
17. There are other issues emerging which will require local solutions and policies to deal with. For example, there is emerging evidence of people charging their EVs on roads through running charging cables across the public footpath to use their domestic electricity supply. Whilst also posing health and safety risks and liability issues for the homeowner, it has recently come to LGA officers attention that the trailing of cables in isolation appears also to be illegal and subject to a fine under [Section 162 of The Highways Act 1980](#). Some councils have experimented with digging trenches to support the safe implementation of this practice. This potentially opens up new areas of service for councils – similar to that of dealing with requests for dropped kerbs.
18. There is a social justice and equalities element in making EV car use accessible to all communities and the availability of (affordable) EV charging infrastructure will be important – especially for those areas which do not have an alternative means of mobility or private charging facilities. EV car owners may well trade off between the cost of charging using their domestic supply versus the costs of any kerb-side provision. For councils considering commercial partnering for on-street provision there are viability/ risk issues to consider and potentially issues of fair pricing and avoiding the creation of monopolies.

19. Some councils have decided not to install any on-street charge points and are awaiting the outcome and evaluation of trial projects elsewhere before making any further decisions on the provision of on-street charging. For example, Suffolk County Council's [website](#) say:

*“We need to consider how we successfully balance the needs of all road users, especially pedestrians and those reliant on a safe and accessible network of footways, the type of chargers needed and who is going to fund and maintain them once installed.*

*As energy-storing solutions for electric vehicles is a rapidly changing technological area, there is significant potential for installed new infrastructure to soon become outdated and potentially redundant.*

*Apart from short-term parking locations where vehicles would be expected to come and go regularly, it is also not appropriate for specific sections of the highway to be reserved for specific individuals (for vehicle charging or otherwise).”*

20. Councils will therefore need access to good expert advice and sufficient in-house capacity to assess, design and deliver their EV charging objectives. The view at the moment is that in-house expertise exists only in relatively few councils and that national resources for supporting local authorities may be insufficient to meet anticipated increase in the role of councils.
21. Current support for local authorities is provided through the Energy Savings Trust which includes a series of [guides](#) and also a [Local Government Support Programme](#) which “can provide tailored support to help local authorities improve local air quality and reduce carbon dioxide emissions. We can offer impartial advice on chargepoint procurement, planning policies and can facilitate a team workshop or independently review your draft plans.”
22. It would be helpful for the work that Local Partnerships and LGA are doing for Board members to feedback their views based on experiences and ambitions from their own local authorities. Reflections on the following would be particularly useful:
- 22.1. The ambition, plans and roles, if any, for supporting EV charging infrastructure, especially for on-street
  - 22.2. The demand and commercial market that operates locally; the risk appetite for council investment and thoughts about fairness.
  - 22.3. Is there an appetite to address the strategic charging infrastructure on major trunk roads as well – ie where there is not access to an affordable connection does there need to be a role for local authorities to step in (where technically feasible)?
  - 22.4. The capacity and capability of the council to support the roll out of EV infrastructure and adequacy of existing support, such as from EST and other organisations
  - 22.5. Are there any areas where standardisation of processes and standards would help councils?
  - 22.6. The quantum and nature of any future Government funding.

22.7. Are there any areas of EV charging infrastructure delivery where you think councils should not be involved with?

### **Implications for Wales**

23. The Department for Transport is developing a Transport Decarbonisation Plan, which will set out actions for government, business and society to deliver the significant emissions reduction needed across transport. The Wales Transport Strategy sets the framework for decarbonisation of the transport sector as a whole as applicable to Wales. OZEV grant schemes are available UK-wide.

### **Financial Implications**

24. No financial implications

### **Equalities, diversity and inclusivity**

25. At the moment EVs are relatively expensive compared to more conventional petrol, diesel and also hybrid vehicles (on average £10,000 more) and even with Government grants are not affordable for most people. There are also a limited number of models. This is starting to change and as more manufacturers switch production to EVs the price of EV cars is set to reduce over time.

26. As for EV chargepoints they are much more convenient to install for those people with private driveways. Across the UK only 51 per cent of terraced houses have on-street parking.

27. Some places have provided EVs with free or subsidised parking, or subsidised electricity during parking, and other places have allowed EVs to access bus lanes. However, there is no strong carbon case for either of these types of measures. Indeed, there are risks that privileging EVs in this way will damage attempts to shift more trips to active travel and public transport – an important step in councils' decarbonisation plans.

28. In considering the implementation of EV charging point policies some councils have noted that the siting of EV charging points could create additional barriers for people who are wheelchair users and pose an increased risk for people who have a visual impairment

29. The Government has not made an exhaustive assessment of the equalities implications of achieving net zero, but it has stated that: 'In transitioning to net zero and bringing forward policies in future, government will need to consider ways to ensure it is representative of people with protected characteristics, while minimising any potential negative impacts'.

### **Next steps**

30. The Board is invited to note the report and provide feedback to Local Partnership's work and LGA's future lobbying on this issue.

## **EEHT Update paper**

### **Purpose of report**

For information.

### **Summary**

This paper provides updates on a range of issue within the remit of the Board

#### **Recommendation**

That the Board note the update

#### **Actions**

Officers will take action as directed

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

## **EEHT Update Paper**

### **Queen's Speech**

1. The Queen set out the Government's agenda for the next Parliamentary session on the 11 May 2020. The Speech contained many measures that will be of relevance to councils. The LGA's On the Day briefing is appended to this update paper.

### **Environment and Climate Change**

#### *Climate Change Task Group*

2. Following discussions at the Executive Advisory Board, it was decided that an open-ended Climate Change Task Group was to be established to steer the strategic engagement with Government on climate change matters in this COP 26 year and beyond. The first meeting was held in April where we invited Yunus Arian, Director of Global Advocacy at Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI). He provided an update about the progress of their political negotiations and opportunities to work with ICLEI and other local government bodies. The second meeting took place on 17 May.

#### *Low carbon infrastructure business case*

3. The LGA has 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. We believe it will contribute to the development of a robust evidence base that strengthens our lobbying on climate change and a green recovery. The work is expected to be completed in the summer.

#### *Green finance*

4. In December 2020, Local Partnerships produced the guide '[Financing Green Ambitions](#)' on behalf of the LGA which was supported with a webinar. Since its launch, Government policy in relation to green finance has evolved, particularly in regard to the remit and role of the Infrastructure Bank and a number of sources of grant funding. The LGA is seeking to update the report and deliver another webinar.

### **Housing, Planning and Homelessness**

#### *Right to Buy*

5. Following many years of lobbying and recent intensive discussions with MHCLG and Treasury, the government announced in March a series of right to buy reforms to give councils increased flexibilities to build more homes. This included: extending the time councils have to spend Right to Buy receipts from three to five years; an increased cap in the percentage cost of new homes councils can fund from Right to Buy receipts, raised from 30% to 40%; and allowing receipts to be used for shared ownership, First Homes, as well as affordable and social housing. Alongside this, the government also introduced a cap on the use of Right to Buy receipts for acquisitions. We will be working

closely with councils to monitor the impact of the reforms, including the acquisitions cap, on the delivery of new homes.

*First Homes*

6. The LGA and DCN organised a joint session with MHCLG and Homes England on 13 April at which they discussed the [First Homes scheme](#). At the session MHCLG and Homes England outlined to over 150 local authority attendees how First Homes will be delivered through the planning system, how the 1,500 unit pathfinder programme will work and how the First Homes scheme will operate. The LGA [responded to the First Homes consultation last year](#).

*Right to regenerate: reform of the Right to Contest*

7. We [responded](#) to the government's 'Right to regenerate' [consultation](#). In our response we made clear that any reforms need to ensure that councils can continue to take a strategic approach to re-use and release of assets that they own. We opposed proposals that would allow the government to order sales of land where temporary uses cannot be identified for unused land which has an intended future use. We await the government's response to the consultation responses.

*Affordable housing small sites threshold*

8. The government has [confirmed](#) that it will not, at this stage, be introducing a proposed measure to temporarily lift the small sites threshold below which developers do not need to contribute to affordable housing, to up to 40 or 50 units. We strongly lobbied against this measure, including this [analysis](#) of the potential impact, which we press released in October. We raised that councils must have sustainable funding streams, resources and flexibilities under local leadership to decarbonise buildings.

*Future Building Standards consultation*

9. We [responded](#) to the government's consultation on the Future Buildings Standard. It builds on the Future Homes Standard, which [we also responded to](#), by setting out energy and ventilation standards for non-domestic buildings, existing homes and includes proposals to mitigate against overheating in residential buildings. We welcomed the government's second stage of proposals for non-domestic and domestic standards that will support achieving the UK's commitment to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. We also said that councils must have sustainable funding streams, resources and flexibilities under local leadership to decarbonise buildings.

*Government inquiry on Local Government and the path to net zero*

10. We responded to the HCLG Committee's [inquiry on Local Government and the path to net zero](#). The inquiry will scrutinise the Government's plans to make all new homes "zero carbon ready" by 2025 through the introduction of the Future Homes Standards, and to explore how local government can help achieve net zero by 2050. We responded that local government plays a leading role in accelerating the shift towards achieving net zero carbon and that council staff and local areas will need to have the capacity and skills to be able to deliver on this work.



*Planning consultations and inquiries*

11. The Government sought views on [draft revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\) and draft National Model Design Code \(NMDC\)](#) as part of the planning reforms. The NMDC is meant to provide a clear framework for local authorities to follow to produce their own local codes and guides. The NPPF clarifies that all areas should produce their own codes or guides, based on the principles set out in the NMDC. [We responded that](#) whilst we support an increased focus on design, we continue to have concerns that fast-tracking development deemed ‘beautiful’ may not lead to quality homes and places communities. We said that introducing the NMDC and updating the NPPF is premature because the Government has not yet responded to the Planning White Paper consultation responses.
12. The HCLG Committee [held an inquiry to examine the Government’s recent and proposed changes to Permitted Development Rights \(PDR\)](#) which closed on 30 April. In our submission we raised our ongoing concerns that PDR remove the ability of councils and local communities to shape the area they live in and ensure homes are built to a high standard with the necessary infrastructure in place. We also reiterated that [Government’s own research revealed that](#) removing the locally-led process leads to poorer quality homes and places.

*Scrutinising the local response to homelessness*

13. The LGA has published a written [guide](#) for elected members which will support them to effectively perform their role in shaping and scrutinising the local response to homelessness. The guide was launched at a training event on the 11 May 2021.
14. We also ran a joint workshop with the National Housing Federation on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2021 on partnership working around homelessness during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a focus on identifying lessons learned and actions for the future. The outputs from the workshop will be fed into the [Kerslake Commission on Homelessness and Rough Sleeping](#), of which our Chairman is a member.

*Research on interactions between local plan making and neighbourhood plans*

15. The Planning Advisory Service (PAS) on behalf of the LGA commissioned DAC Planning to [research](#) the interactions between local plan making and neighbourhood plan making. The research identifies practices that are occurring across the country as local plans and neighbourhood plans are progressed. The research also identifies where there may be a need for further support, research or identification of best practice to enable local planning authorities (LPAs) to effectively support neighbourhood planning in the future.

*Parliamentary debates*

16. We have briefed MPs for parliamentary debates on the following: [the Archbishops’ Commission on Housing, Church and Community report Coming Home and the case for setting out a long-term housing strategy](#)



*Press releases and statements*

17. We have issued proactive press releases on the following: [Over 1.1 million homes with planning permission waiting to be built](#). We have also made public statements on the following: [response to new planning rules coming into force](#); [response to launch of new independent rough sleeping commission](#); [response to Public Accounts Committee report on rough sleeping](#); [response to vaccine prioritisation](#); [response to further extension of bailiff enforced eviction ban](#); [response to rough sleeping figures](#).

**Economic Recovery**

18. Since the last board meeting, two good practice guides were published by the LGA to support councils in their work on local economic recovery. These include a guide on [Local Economic Recovery Planning](#) (A playbook for action) and on Microbusinesses ([How well do you know your Microbusinesses](#))

**National Bus Strategy**

19. The LGA [welcomed](#) the Government's National Bus Strategy, [Bus Back Better](#), which was published on 15th March. The strategy marks a significant shift in national policy and the role of local government and includes a number of LGA 'wins' such as greater oversight powers (via enhanced partnerships or franchising) and access to ongoing recovery support and funding for transforming services as well as capacity support. There is also a commitment to review BSOG and the restrictions on councils being able to form their own bus companies. A [virtual briefing session](#) with DfT officials and Buses Minister has been organised for all LGA member councils on 21<sup>st</sup> May.

**Building Safety Update**

**Remediation**

*Progress*

20. [MHCLG statistics](#) show that by 31 March 2021, 92% (431) of all identified high-rise residential and publicly owned buildings in England had either completed or started remediation work to remove and replace unsafe Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding (95% of buildings identified in December 2019).
21. The pace of ACM remediation continues to be slow 9 buildings and over 160 residential buildings with ACM on have not yet completed work. One of these, New Providence Wharf, experienced a serious fire on 7 May. The investigation into the fire has yet to bear fruit but the failure of the interim measures in place is a cause of concern.
22. [Registrations for the Building Safety Fund](#), which funds the remediation of non-ACM dangerous cladding on private blocks (and potentially covers the cost to leaseholders of remediation is social blocks) are also proceeding slowly. Around a third of the £1bn funding announced in the 2020 budget has been allocated. Of nearly 3,000 registrations only 668 have been approved to apply for funding and only 70 full applications have been approved. Over 800 registrations have either been rejected or withdrawn.

23. The above means that the £3.5bn additional funding for cladding remediation over 18m announced in February is not yet being spent. We have yet to hear the details of how it will be allocated. The loan scheme for buildings 11-18m has also yet to be fleshed out.
24. The Waking Watch Relief Fund roll out has completed with applications in London closing at the end of April. Analysis of the figures for London has not been undertaken. Outside of London we are not aware of any applications that could not be funded.

*Joint Inspection Team*

25. The Joint Inspection Team's funding has been approved for 2020-21 and signed off by the LGA Board. The Indemnity has not yet been finalised but it has been agreed that the remit will cover non-ACM cladding and we do not anticipate any difficulties in completing the process. The 2020-21 programme of work will include significant training for councils. This should help to maximise its impact.

*Fire Protection Board*

26. The Building Risk Review programme overseen by the Board, remains ahead of its target schedule to ensure all residential buildings over 18m have been assessed or inspected by the end of 2021.
27. The LGA has raised the need to ensure liaison between council housing enforcement and fire and rescue service enforcement. This has resulted in some work to adapt the protocol attached to the LACORS fire safety guide to cover liaison over high rise residential buildings. This is being carried out under the Fire Protection Board.

**Reform**

28. Although MHCLG was due to respond to some of the PAC recommendations by the end of January. It has still not done so.
29. The HCLG committee published its report on cladding remediation on 29 April. The LGA gave evidence to this inquiry. Recommendations include a call for a Comprehensive Building Safety Fund for full remediation works of affected buildings that:
- 32.1. applies to all high-risk buildings of any height, irrespective of tenure;
  - 32.2. covers all fire safety defects, including combustible insulation; and
  - 32.3. covers all associated costs.
30. The report goes on to say that the 'Comprehensive Building Safety Fund should be fully funded by Government and industry, and the Government should establish clear principles regarding how the costs should be split between the two. Total contributions should not be capped. Social housing providers should have full and equal access to government funds for remediation'.

*Building Safety Bill*

31. The Government has yet to respond to the HCLG Select Committee's pre-legislative scrutiny of the Bill. This was supposed to be done in January. The Bill was included in the Queen's Speech (see Annex One) but no new detail was provided.

*Gateway One*

32. Gateway One, which takes place at the planning stage and requires developers to produce a fire statement in relation to high risk buildings, is to be introduced via amendments to planning regulations and will take effect in August, a month or two later than we had hoped. Annex Two is the text of an email we received announcing this on the day this paper was written.
33. We raised with MHCLG concerns about the shortcomings of regulations introduced over the Christmas period that apply where a developer wants to use a Permitted Development Right (PDR) to extend a block of flats upwards to create new flats.

*Product safety*

34. On 21 April the government announced the lead reviewers conducting the Independent review of the system for testing construction products and published the Terms of Reference.
35. The review will answer the question: ‘How should the UK system for testing the safety of construction products and the use of data from the system be strengthened, to inspire confidence that those products are safe and perform as labelled and marketed when incorporated into construction work?’
36. It will do this by:
- 39.1. Mapping the system for testing, certifying, marketing, selling, re-testing and recalling construction products, including the legal framework under which this happens.
  - 39.2. Considering evidence from a variety of sources and assess what does/ could go wrong within this system.
  - 39.3. Recommending how this system should be strengthened, taking into account wider government and industry reforms and any economic or practical implications of implementing the recommendations
37. The independent review will be led by a panel comprising Paul Morrell OBE (Chair of the review) and Anneliese Day QC, supported by MHCLG and OPSS officials. It is to report in the summer and the Government will publish the review and its response (as soon as practicable). LGA officers are drafting a letter to the review

*Fire Safety Bill*

38. The Bill finally received Royal Assent at the last possible moment after the House of Lords backed down and abandoned amendments designed to protect leaseholders from remediation costs. Work on everything else seemed to grind to a halt at the Home office in the last weeks of the Bill’s passage and as a result we have yet to see the outcome of its latest work on the risk based guidance that must accompany the Bill. The Act’s commencement – slated for June – is further complicated by the fact that there is no current guidance on completing fire risk assessments (see below).

*Fire Safety in Purpose-Built Blocks of Flats*

39. This guide was commissioned from fire safety experts by the LGA at the Government's request in 2011. The LGA is no longer hosting this guide as changes in government policy and regulation mean that it is now out of date and the LGA does not have the inhouse expertise to amend the document. The LGA warned the government in 2019 that this might happen and has not taken the decision lightly. We cannot however host advice to our members that could leave us or then open to legal challenge. More detail is in the attached letter to fire and rescue authorities
40. The Government is currently producing a new version which we anticipate will be available later this year. Until this guidance appears, or the Government provides interim guidance it will be difficult to complete the fire risk assessments envisaged in the Fire Safety Act. Article 50 of the Fire Safety Order 2005 requires the Secretary of State to ensure that guidance is available to responsible persons on their duties under the Order.

*Fire Safety Consultation*

41. The Government published its [response to the Fire Safety Consultation](#) on 17 March. This covered proposals designed to:
- 44.1. strengthen the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the FSO) and improve compliance in all regulated premises;
  - 44.2. implement the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 Report recommendations that require a change in the law; and,
  - 44.3. improve the effectiveness of consultation between Building Control Bodies (BCBs) and Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) on planning for building work and the arrangements for the handover of fire safety information.
42. The response says the Government's will introduce measures that include:
- 45.1. improved competence requirements for fire risk assessors;
  - 45.2. a requirement that all Responsible Persons under the FSO (RPs) must record their completed fire risk assessment; their contact information, including a UK based address, cooperate with other RPs in the building and ensure they pass information on to new RPs;
  - 47.1. increased fines for various offences under the Order;
  - 47.2. improvements to the coordination of fire and building control
  - 47.3. delivery of the recommendations from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 recommendations that require legislation through regulations introduced under Article 24 of the FSO before the second anniversary of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase One Report (this timetable may have slipped following the delay to the Fire Safety Bill and we think September is the new target). The recommendations on Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) and fire door inspections will subject to further consultation, before then. The regulations will impose new requirements in relation to signage, Premises Information Boxes and lift inspections, as well as PEEPs, fire door inspections and evacuation more widely.

43. Further work will be carried out to develop policy in relation to fees and charges, false fire alarms, maintenance, the provision of information to residents and higher-risk workplace buildings.

**Annex one Queen’s Speech – Supporting document text on the Building Safety Bill**

“My Ministers will establish in law a new Building Safety Regulator to ensure that the tragedies of the past are never repeated.”

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- Make substantial reforms to the UK’s building safety regime by establishing the Building Safety Regulator to deliver a new approach to regulating the built environment.
- Implement the recommendations made in the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety, led by Dame Judith Hackitt.

The main benefits of the Bill would be:

- Changing the regulations and standards for the construction of high-risk buildings to ensure accountability and responsibility by making fundamental changes to the regulatory framework for higher-risk buildings and ensuring that products used in the construction of buildings will be held to rigorous safety standards.
- Putting in place measures that ensure homeowners can have a clearer path to redress and giving residents a stronger voice in the system.
- Ensuring the lessons from the Grenfell Tower tragedy are learnt and that residents are safe and feel safe in their homes.

The main elements of the Bill are:

- Establishing the Building Safety Regulator and updating existing building safety regulation, including a new stringent regime for buildings 18 metres or more, or 7 storeys or more, and introducing a system of Accountable Persons and Dutyholders – who will be responsible for making and keeping a building safe.

- Establishing a new framework to provide national oversight of construction products, and strengthening the powers of the Office for Product Safety and Standards in this area.
- Establishing a new homes ombudsman and simplifying the process to log complaints to the Housing Ombudsman for social housing tenants.
- Making provisions to support the removal of unsafe cladding, including through a financing scheme to pay for costs and a levy to ensure the development industry pays its fair share of the costs of remediating unsafe cladding.

#### Territorial extent and application

- The Bill will extend and apply to the whole of the UK. Its substantive provisions would apply in the main to England, with some provisions applying to England and Wales and provisions related to the Construction Products Regulator applying to the whole of the UK.

#### Key facts

- Over 13,000 buildings will fall into the higher risk regime established by the Bill, with an estimated 400 additional buildings coming into scope each year.
- We are supporting the removal of all unsafe cladding from buildings between 11-18m [NB this must be a typo, they mean over 18m] through a £5 billion investment fund which will fully cover these costs.

We have also announced a generous financing scheme for the removal of unsafe cladding from buildings between 11 and 18 metres. A new tax on the residential property development sector will raise at least £2 billion to help cover the costs of the Government's remediation programme. We are also providing £30 million to pay for the cost of common alarm systems, to help end costly waking watch measures in buildings waiting for remediation.

- We are clear that the responsibility for building safety still lies with the building

owner and that the Government has stepped in only as a last resort.

- The Government published a draft bill in July 2020 for pre-legislative scrutiny by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Select Committee.

We will respond to their considerations shortly



## **Annex 2 Text of email on Gateway One**

As this email arrived on the day of the Queen's Speech it has not been possible to analyse or condense its contents.

Yesterday (10/05/2021) MHCLG published information on planning gateway one to support stakeholders and industry (including planning applicants and local planning authorities) to prepare for its implementation in the summer, and as you know JRG have contributed to the planning gateway one policy and policy design trials over the last year.

Government is committed to transforming the regulatory framework for fire safety in response to the Grenfell Tower fire, bringing about the biggest change in building safety for a generation, and will be introducing our Building Safety Bill this year which will establish a new building safety regime in England.

As a first step, a number of new requirements (referred to as planning gateway one) are to be introduced into the planning system by making amendments to The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), and an associated instrument. The purpose of the new requirements is to ensure fire safety matters as they relate to land use planning are incorporated at the planning application stage for schemes involving a relevant high-rise residential building. Subject to parliamentary scrutiny we propose to bring the changes into effect from 1 August 2021. The draft statutory provisions have been published and will:

- involve the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) becoming a statutory consultee before permission is granted for development which involves or is likely to involve a high-rise residential building in certain circumstances;
- require relevant applications for planning permission to include a fire statement (on a form published by the Secretary of State, or one to substantially the same effect) to ensure applicants have considered fire safety issues as they relate to land use planning matters (e.g. layout and access) ; and
- help inform effective decision-making by local planning authorities (or the Secretary of State as the case may be), so that those decisions and the actions that flow from them properly reflect and respond to the needs of the local community.

Planning gateway one information can be viewed at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/building-safety-planning-gateway-one>



By e-mail

23 April 2021

Dear FRA Chair,

I am writing to let you know that the LGA has decided to remove the Fire Safety in Purpose Built Blocks of Flats Guide from its website and you may wish to consider taking similar action if you host a copy on your website.

The Fire Safety in Purpose Built Blocks of Flats Guide was produced at the request of the Government in 2011 and written by external fire safety experts. It was a summary of the law and guidance at the time.

In 2019 the LGA raised the need for an updated version of this Guide with the Government, at whose request we continued to host the existing version. We did so with a number of caveats to explain that it was no longer comprehensive, given the changes that had been made and were planned.

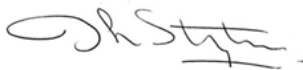
The Government response to the fire safety consultation this year, combined with the withdrawal of PAS 79, indicated a change in policy from the advice in the Guide. The LGA does not consider it appropriate to continue to host advice for its members that could lead them to pursue a course which might prove to be at odds with the law within a year or two and which could potentially be subject to legal challenge now.

We do not possess the inhouse fire-safety expertise necessary to amend the Guide.

The Government is currently producing a new version which we anticipate will be available later this year.

We will continue to discuss with Government and the NFCC how best to provide advice to responsible persons about their duties under the FSO and will inform you of any development. In the meantime, our advice is that it be removed from FRA websites.

With all good wishes,



Cllr Ian Stephens – Chair of the LGA Fire Services Management Committee



# Local Government Association

## Queen's Speech

### On the Day Briefing

11 May 2021



#### Introduction

The Queen has today set out the Government's agenda for the next Parliamentary session. The Speech contained many measures that will be of relevance to councils and this paper provides details on the key proposals affecting local government and the LGA's initial response to them. Full details of today's Queen's Speech can [be found on the Government's website](#). You can also read about our work engaging with Parliament in [our LGA in Parliament 2020/21 report](#).

The LGA has circulated a [collection of media statements](#) responding to today's announcement.

#### Key messages

- The Government has announced a wide range of measures, including in respect of planning, jobs, health and care reform, environment, climate change and building safety. Councils are committed to working with Government and parliamentarians to help shape and deliver the proposals so that local communities are empowered to deliver meaningful and positive change.
- **Levelling up:** Councils know their local areas best and will be central to efforts to address the stark inequalities that have been exposed further by the pandemic. One of the main lessons from the COVID-19 crisis is that councils can innovate well and help create and deliver new services from scratch and at speed. All councils can support the drive for economic recovery, new infrastructure investment, build more homes where needed, join up public services and provide greater access to jobs and prosperity. We will also be discussing with Government its stated ambition for English Devolution, the plans for a White Paper and how this aligns to work on the levelling-up agenda.
- **Planning:** Councils are granting permission for 9 in 10 planning applications and are not a barrier to development, yet over 1.1 million homes given planning permission in the past decade are still to be built. Councils want to work with Government to reform and strengthen our planning system, ensuring it is locally-led and delivers sustainable development so that communities can shape their local areas and ensure that the right infrastructure (such as schools and roads) is in place. To meet the Government's target of building 300,000 new homes a year, councils need to be given the powers to get building homes not seen on a scale since the 1970s. This is backed by Parliamentarians with eight in 10 MPs (80 per cent) we surveyed saying councils should have more financial freedoms and powers to build homes in their area."
- **Skills:** Many in our local communities will need to reskill for new jobs and it is good that the Queen's Speech has included plans to address this. Councils are uniquely placed to bring together partners in local places to address these challenges. With adequate resourcing and powers, councils can bring together

# Briefing

For more information, please contact:  
Lee Bruce, Head of Public Affairs and Stakeholder Engagement  
[Lee.Bruce@local.gov.uk](mailto:Lee.Bruce@local.gov.uk) / 0207 664 3097

diverse national schemes to ensure delivery on the ground is more effective, keeping people in work and businesses recruiting.

- **Environment:** Councils welcome the reintroduction of the Environment Bill. The Bill points to a new relationship between local and national government on the environment and while councils are best placed to take the lead on this agenda, they will need adequate funding and access to skills to deliver on our shared ambitions. It is difficult to predict the full impact of new legislation and costs associated, but we know that the pandemic has further increased the financial pressure on councils, any new duties must be fully funded in the long-term.
- **Adult social care:** Whilst we are pleased that the Government will bring forward proposals on social care reform, councils urgently need a clear timeline. Councils will also want to see concrete funding proposals that will provide sustainable support to people of all ages across the country who draw on social care to live the life they want to lead. We are keen to work with the Government and other stakeholders on a cross-party basis to achieve this. LGA commissioned polling of MPs shows that an overwhelming majority (83 per cent) are in favour of additional funding for councils' social care budgets to tackle the funding gap.
- **Health and care reform:** Councils support an equal partnership approach to improving health and wellbeing, health and care services and ensuring the best use of resources, through the Integrated Care Board and an Integrated Care System (ICS) Health and Care Partnership. There should be local flexibility, with health and local government leaders working as equal partners, to establish the Health and Care Partnership in a way that works for each area and builds on existing effective partnerships. Wherever possible, the ICS footprint should match that of councils with adult social care responsibilities. We urge government to resolve any problematic ICS footprints at the earliest opportunity through a transparent process involving all relevant councils and NHS organisations. ICSs will also need support to ensure decisions are taken at the most appropriate level, based on existing place-based partnerships, in particular Health and Wellbeing Boards.
- **Building safety:** People have a right to be safe and to feel safe in their own homes. The construction industry and those with legal duties now need to step up and deliver the remediation work required by the Building Safety Bill. It is also important that innocent people should not have to pay the costs of fixing problems to make their homes safe. Action should be taken to force the construction industry to meet the costs they have imposed on the country through decades of failure on an industrial scale and prevent wider economic damage that could result if the cladding scandal continues to impact the housing market.
- **Online safety:** Councils support the measures in the Online Safety Bill to manage online safety. We support the appointment of Ofcom as an online safety regulator and we hope the Bill will go some way to reducing online harms, including of children and vulnerable adults. Councils also support calls for the Bill to also include consideration of financial harms through scams as well as other types of harm. Long-term, sustainable funding for councils' trading

standards teams would allow them to support the Government's ambitions to tackle a greater number of cases however, online platforms must ultimately take responsibility for activity on their sites.

- **Online and hybrid meetings:** It is disappointing that the Speech did not announce a Bill to allow councils to hold online and hybrid meetings, following the High Court Judgement which confirmed that primary legislation is needed to give councils similar powers to those granted by the Coronavirus Act. The flexibility has been paramount in allowing access for both councillors and the public to council meetings. Councils want the flexibility to meet in this way and continue their business, especially in times of emergency such as when flooding occurs or if there is significant traffic disruption due to weather conditions.

### **Legislation:**

For further information on any of these Bills, please contact the [LGA public affairs team](#).

### **Planning Bill**

*Laws to modernise the planning system will be brought forward, so that more homes can be built.*

#### **The main elements of the Bill are:**

- Changing local plans so that they provide more certainty over the type, scale and design of development permitted on different categories of land.
- Significantly decrease the time it takes for developments to go through the planning system.
- Replacing the existing systems for funding affordable housing and infrastructure from development with a new more predictable and more transparent levy.
- Reforming the framework for locally led development corporations to ensure local areas have access to appropriate delivery vehicles to support growth and regeneration.

#### **LGA view**

- Certainty in planning through Local Plans is critical to signal to communities and developers what development will happen in an area. This builds flexibility into the system, allowing local authorities to respond to changing circumstances.
- Local authorities will need the appropriate resources to lead on the transition and implementation to a more streamlined approach. Democratic input must be retained as part of the local decision-making process to ensure local people can have a say.

- We support a framework that will enable locally led sustainable development, driving growth and regeneration, revitalising communities and creating the right mix of homes. However, any new infrastructure levy is unlikely to be able to fund all necessary infrastructure and will require trade-off decisions to be made.
- The delivery of the right infrastructure is critical to supporting the high-quality homes and places communities need. It is vital that new occupants of homes and wider communities get the infrastructure they need, and that councils can access sufficient funding for this infrastructure in line with Local Plan ambitions.
- Councils also need powers to incentivise developers to build and ensure there is a mix of homes – to rent and buy – that are available and affordable to people that need them.
- We support measures to enhance public participation by using digital technology rather than out-of-date notices in local newspapers. A more digital service will make the planning system more accessible and efficient, alongside other forms of engagement to ensure that all residents can engage in the planning process.

## **Environment Bill**

*My Government will invest in new green industries to create jobs, while protecting the environment... Legislation will set binding environmental targets.*

### **The main elements of the Bill are:**

- Placing a duty on Ministers to ensure environmental considerations are central to policy development; setting legally-binding targets; producing a long-term environmental improvement plan; and setting up the independent Office for Environmental Protection.
- Extended producer responsibility, product labelling powers, introducing a consistent approach to recycling across local authorities in England, introducing a deposit return scheme for drinks containers, providing for more effective litter enforcement and provide the powers to introduce charges for single use plastic items.
- Improving air quality.
- Managing water sustainably.
- Protecting nature by mandating 'biodiversity net gain' in the planning system and through Local Nature Recovery Strategies.
- Putting forward amendments to reduce the harm from storm overflows to our rivers, waterways and coastlines and new duties on the Government to publish a plan to reduce sewage discharges from storm overflows.

### **LGA view**



- We welcome the reintroduction of the Environment Bill. The legacy of the COVID-19 pandemic must be that we, as a nation, grasp the opportunity to protect and enhance our natural environment, and tackle the climate emergency.
- We welcome the Bill's intention to strengthen local powers in relation to air quality enforcement. Existing mechanisms are decades old, misaligned with one another and need to be reformed to fit with modern sources of emissions. Additional resources will need to be available for councils to deal effectively with environmental protection and to fund local solutions.
- The Bill points to a new environmental relationship between local and national government, with potentially greater responsibility sitting with councils. The impact of this is that councils will have a new environmental improvement role within their localities.
- Local government is well placed to take the lead on this agenda but to deliver on these ambitious plans they will need to have appropriately skilled staff and adequate resources.
- At this stage it is difficult to predict the impact of the legislation and the costs for local authorities in meeting their new statutory duties. We therefore recommend the Bill is amended to ensure an assessment is made of how the new duties are operating into the future and ensuring local authorities are sufficiently funded.

### **Skills and Post-16 Education Bill**

*Legislation will support a lifetime skills guarantee to enable flexible access to high quality education and training throughout people's lives.*

#### **The main elements of the Bill are:**

- Offer adults across the country the opportunity to retrain in later life through the Lifetime Skills Guarantee, helping them to gain in-demand skills and open up further job opportunities. (Page 50)
- Put employers at the heart of the post-16 skills system through the Skills Accelerator, by enabling employers and providers to collaborate to develop skills plans aimed at ensuring local skills provision meets local needs. (Page 50)

#### **LGA view**

- The focus on adult training, the Further Education Skills for Jobs White Paper and the introduction of Skills and Further Education Bill are important. The long-term impact of the pandemic has changed our labour market and it is already clear many adults will need to upskill and reskill for new jobs.
- Adult training must be delivered by strong local providers including colleges, independent training providers, and [council run adult education centres](#), who can work together. There should be the offer a clear pathway to further

learning and work, with support for those who need to increase their basic skills and go on to further learning and work.

- The spatial and funding scope of the Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIP) is yet to be defined. It will be important this they are informed by the new DfE trailblazers. Employers should rightly inform local further education (FE) provision and the new LSIPs but they should also work with well-established local partnerships. Councils and Mayoral Combined Authorities provide strong local strategic and democratic oversight to the delivery of post 16 and adult skills provision. Local government involvement will be critical to the success of LSIPs.
- The Lifetime Skills Guarantee for adults to pursue their first Level 3 in-demand qualification is welcome. Courses must respond to the evolving needs of different local areas and employers and councils, combined authorities and colleges will play an important role in such planning. Allowing local flexibility would ensure the guarantee reaches those already qualified to Level 3 but who have been furloughed, need to retrain or are out of work.
- There are many adults who will not be able to access Level 3 as they lack a Level 2 qualification, leaving them vulnerable to job losses and finding it harder to secure work. The Adult Education Budget has been vital in providing support to improve skills levels but more funding for Level 2 would enable upskilling.

## **Health and Care Bill**

*My Ministers will bring forward legislation to empower the NHS to innovate and embrace technology. Patients will receive more tailored and preventative care, closer to home.*

### **The purpose of the Bill is to:**

- Lay the foundations for a more integrated, efficient and accountable health and care system - one which allows staff to get on with their jobs and provide the best possible treatment and care for their patients.
- Give the NHS and local authorities the tools they need to level up health and care outcomes across the country, enabling healthier, longer and more independent lives.

### **LGA view**

- We support Integrated Care Systems (ICS) as a strong driver for integrating health services in a system through the Integrated Care Board and an ICS Health and Care Partnership. We will want to ensure that there is provision in the Bill to ensure parity of esteem between the Integrated Care Board and an ICS Health and Care Partnership.
- ICSs will need to work closely with public health in local government, education, early years services and the private and voluntary sector to ensure that the health and wellbeing of children and young people is a priority, alongside the care and support of older people and working age adults who need support. Getting support

right from pregnancy and early childhood will have lifelong impacts and needs a far higher priority because of its long-term benefits.

- Wherever possible the ICS footprint must be coterminous with the local government. We urge the Government to resolve any problematic ICS footprints at the earliest opportunity through a transparent transition process that involves all relevant councils and NHS organisations.
- ICSs will need to ensure that decisions will be taken at the most local level. ICS structures need to build on existing place-based partnerships, in particular health and wellbeing boards. ICSs should not lead to unnecessary additional layers of bureaucracy, more rules, reporting and processes.
- For our more detailed commentary on the Health and Care White Paper, please read our recently published [position paper](#).

### **Building Safety Bill**

*A Bill to establish in law a new Building Safety Regulator to ensure that the tragedies of the past are never repeated.*

#### **The main elements of the Bill are:**

- Create the Building Safety Regulator, with a duty on council regulators and fire and rescue authorities to cooperate with it.
- Introduce new duties for those responsible for residential buildings over 18 metres or seven storeys, including stock-holding councils.
- Establishing a new framework to provide national oversight of construction products and strengthen the powers of the Office for Product Safety and Standards in this area.
- Establishing a new homes ombudsman and simplifying the process to log complaints to the Housing Ombudsman for social housing tenants.
- Making provisions for a levy on developers.

#### **LGA view:**

- This Bill cannot come soon enough as our broken building safety system needs reforms to be enshrined in tough new legislation. Residents have a right to be safe and to feel safe in their own homes, and the construction industry and those with legal duties now need to step up and deliver the cladding remediation work required.
- The Government has yet to respond to the points raised by the Housing, Communities and Local Government Select Committee's scrutiny of the draft Bill or to provide adequate funding to protect leaseholders. No leaseholder should have to pay the costs of making their home safe. Action should be taken to force developers and product manufacturers to meet the costs they have imposed on the country through decades of failure and prevent wider economic

damage that could result if the cladding scandal continues to impact the housing market.

- Social housing providers will also need to be protected from these costs if they are to provide the housing the nation needs and improve the existing housing to the standards Government wants.
- Building safety is not only an issue for buildings over 18 metres which is why a risk-based approach, which considers the vulnerabilities of residents, is required.
- Councils and fire services will have a vital role to play in delivering the new regime. The government needs to ensure this role is fully funded.

### **Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill**

*My Government will introduce measures to increase the safety and security of its citizens. Legislation will increase sentences for the most serious and violent offenders and ensure the timely administration of justice.*

#### **The main elements of the Bill are:**

- Introducing tougher sentences for offences such as rape, manslaughter and wounding with intent to cause Grievous Bodily Harm by ending the automatic release at the halfway point for serious sexual and violent offenders sentenced to a standard determinate sentence of between 4 and 7 years. This will bring their release point in line with serious violent and sexual offenders sentenced to seven years or more, following the secondary legislation we introduced in April last year.
- Increasing the maximum prison sentence for assaulting an emergency worker from 12 months to two years and creating a statutory requirement for the Home Secretary to report annually on progress made against the Police Covenant.
- Strengthening community sentences to cut crime by providing appropriate punishment addressing drivers of offending.
- Placing a duty on local authorities, the police, criminal justice agencies, health and fire and rescue services to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence, and the introduction of Serious Violence Reduction Orders. These will be used to prevent serious violence by equipping the police with new powers to stop and search those convicted of knife and offensive weapons offences.
- Reforming pre-charge bail so that bail conditions, such as prohibiting contact, are used more effectively to better protect victims and witnesses.
- Extending the scope of offences in the Sexual Offences Act 2003 relating to the abuse of positions of trust legislation to capture additional roles, such as sport coaches and religious leaders.
- Balancing the rights of protesters with the rights of others to go about their business unhindered, by enabling the police to better manage highly disruptive

protests.

- A new criminal offence to target trespassers using vehicles to reside on land who are causing significant damage or significant disruption to local communities. Creating the necessary basis in legislation for the providers of Secure Schools to operate this new form of youth custodial institution that is designed to place education at the heart of youth custody in order to cut crime.

### **LGA view**

- The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts (PCSC) Bill covers a broad range of community safety issues and seeks to introduce measures which aim to have an impact on victims of crime, those who perpetrate crimes, and wider community safety.
- Councils will continue to play their important role, alongside the police and other partners, in protecting our communities and ensuring they are safe places to live.
- We would like to see further formal consultation on several measures in the Bill, particularly the Offensive Weapons Homicide Reviews, imposing conditions on public protests, and the youth justice measures.
- The Bill seeks to place a new statutory duty on local authorities and wider partners to collaborate and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence. We support taking a public health approach to tackling serious violent crime and emphasise the importance of investing in early intervention and prevention measures. Any new duties in the Bill must be fully funded. We are also calling on the Government to extend funding and support for Violence Reduction Units (VRUs) to all areas.
- Effectively tackling unauthorised encampments will require a multi-agency response and the resources to support this. It is important the Government moves quickly to bring forward the good practice guidance it has committed to publish as this will support councils in dealing with unauthorised encampments.
- It will be important for this Bill to complement the measures outlined in the Domestic Abuse Act, the forthcoming Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy, the Draft Victim's Bill, as well as wider legislation and guidance, to ensure that simultaneous changes to the local government community safety landscape are considered collectively and carefully.

### **Product Security and Telecommunications Infrastructure Bill**

*Proposals will be taken forward... to extend 5G mobile coverage and gigabit capable broadband.*

#### **The main elements of the Bill are:**

- Reform the Electronic Communications Code to support faster and more collaborative negotiations for the use of private and public land for telecommunications deployment

### **LGA view**

- Access to fast and reliable digital connectivity is a necessity for all communities, something they have rightfully come to expect and essential to keeping pace with developments across the globe.
- Positive progress has been made in extending connectivity across local areas, yet some communities, many in rural areas, are unable to maintain a consistent mobile signal throughout the day.
- Councils recognise the important role they must play to ensure local policies are streamlined and conducive to the commercial roll out of mobile infrastructure.
- At the same time, any move to weaken planning control and increase permitted development rights takes away the ability of residents, businesses and councillors to contribute in a meaningful way to the deployment of new or upgraded masts, sites and infrastructure.
- We look forward to working with the Government and Industry to ensure genuine collaboration that respects the needs of local communities and meets the growing demand for high quality digital connectivity.

### **Subsidy Control Bill**

*Government will take forward a Subsidy Control Bill that will implement a domestic UK subsidy control regime that reflects our strategic interests and national circumstances.*

#### **The main elements of the Bill are:**

- Creating a consistent set of UK-wide principles that public authorities must follow when granting subsidies.
- Exempting categories of subsidies from certain obligations of the regime or leaving out of scope entirely.
- Prohibiting and placing conditions on certain types of subsidies which are at a particularly high risk of distorting markets.
- Obligating public authorities to upload information on subsidies to a new UK-wide, publicly accessible transparency database.
- Establishing an independent subsidy control body to oversee the UK's bespoke, modern subsidy control system.
- Providing for judicial oversight and enforcement of the granting of subsidies.

### **LGA view**

- The UK's new subsidy control regime must give a green light to the ambitions of local areas. Addressing the needs of local areas through specific financial

support to businesses and local organisations must become a stated objective for the regime. This will ensure changes in the law deliver real benefits on the ground. The regime must be based on local government's experience of what is needed and what works.

- Simplification and local flexibility should be the foundation of the regime as this will help ensure a wide range of local ambitions can be delivered, including:
  - COVID recovery: supporting businesses and individuals,
  - local economic growth and job creation to deliver 'levelling up',
  - environmental, climate, and energy improvements,
  - waste, housing, and transport improvements,
  - high speed digital infrastructure for all,
  - improved social and public health services,
  - safer and stronger communities,
  - promoting employment and skills,
  - promoting the arts, culture, heritage, and sports.
- Grant and loan schemes to deliver these ambitions must continue to be allowed when in line with certain principles. Arrangements must be set out in legislation for legal certainty, be at least as flexible as the previous regime, and designed in conjunction with local government.
- The system must be simplified for those awarding aid, easier to understand, and new reporting requirements must be light touch. A new approach to low-value support of a 'purely local nature' is also needed to ensure local initiatives can go ahead which benefit communities.

## **Procurement Bill**

*Laws will simplify procurement in the public sector.*

### **The main elements of the Bill are:**

- Enshrining in law the principles of public procurement such as: value for money, public benefit, transparency, integrity, fair treatment of suppliers and non-discrimination.
- Overhauling the complex and inflexible procurement procedures and replacing them with three simple, modern procedures. This will allow the public sector more scope to negotiate with potential suppliers to deliver innovative new solutions.
- Requiring buyers to have regard to the Government's strategic priorities for public procurement as set out in a new National Procurement Policy Statement.
- Introducing procurement processes that allow contracting authorities to buy at pace, for serious situations that are declared a crisis, with strengthened safeguards for transparency.
- Establishing a single data platform for supplier registration that ensures suppliers only have to submit their data once to qualify for any public sector procurement.

- Tackling unacceptable behaviour such as supplier fraud through new exclusion rules and giving buyers the tools to properly take account of a bidder's past performance.
- Reforming the process for challenging procurement decisions to speed up the review system and make it more accessible and capping the level of damages available to bidders in order to reduce the attractiveness of speculative claims.

### **LGA view**

- The LGA welcomes the ambition to transform public procurement as set out in the Transforming Public Procurement Green paper (2020) including the move to simplify and reduce the number of procurement procedures from seven to three. We support the removal of the Light Touch Regime (LTR) from procurement legislation and the proposal to supersede it with the new flexible procedure although there are some concerns around how the procedure might work in practice.
- The LGA has been working with Government on the new regime to ensure councils' needs are considered in relation to the proposed national procurement policy statement. New priorities set out in relation to social value, pipelines and benchmarking capabilities are all things we have been promoting in the LGA's National Procurement Strategy since 2018.
- There are concerns that the proposed single supplier registration system will add complexity. The LGA and councils look forward to working with the Government to ensure the new system is a success.
- The area of tackling unacceptable behaviour and supplier fraud needs to be strengthened and fairly applied. There are additional behaviours to be included under grounds for exclusion beyond what is proposed, such as tax evasion, data protection, equalities, modern slavery, and professional misconduct.
- The proposal to cap the level of damages awarded to aggrieved suppliers is welcome. It will reduce large and speculative damages claims and delivers on the objective of making proper use of public funds and be more proportionate.
- We are concerned that the changes to the current procurement rules for the NHS might lead to an uneven playing field between local government and the NHS. Any measures to reduce procurement requirements on the NHS must not, inadvertently, create barriers to joint commissioning or local authority-led commissioning.

### **Armed Forces Bill**

*Honour and strengthen the Armed Forces Covenant, placing it in law.*

**The main elements of the Bill are to:**



- Renew the Armed Forces Act 2006, which would otherwise expire at the end of 2021 and there would be no legislative basis for our Armed Forces.
- Introduce a new duty to require relevant public bodies across the UK, when exercising specified public functions in the education, healthcare and housing sectors to have due regard to the three principles of the Armed Forces Covenant:
  - Recognising the unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the Armed Forces.
  - That it is desirable to remove disadvantages arising for Service people from membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces.
  - That special provision for Service people may be justified by the effect on such people of membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces.

### **LGA view**

- Armed Forces serving personnel, veterans, reservists and their families are valued members of our communities. All councils have signed the voluntary Armed Forces Covenant and are fully committed to honouring their obligations to those who have served their country.
- We fully support the aim of the Bill to help ensure armed forces personnel, veterans and their families are not disadvantaged by their service when accessing key public services. We will continue to work positively with government to further embed the Covenant locally, building upon what has already been achieved.
- We are concerned that clause 8 of the Bill, which sets out the proposed statutory duty for all UK public authorities to have due regard to the principles of the Covenant, lacks detail. This means it is difficult to fully understand the implications for councils across housing, education and healthcare services. It is important that potential new burdens are fully funded by national government and kept under review so that councils can continue to deliver high quality services to their armed forces community. We look forward to seeing guidance which will set out what is expected of councils in greater detail.

### **Animal Welfare Plan and Legislation**

*Legislation will also be brought forward to ensure the United Kingdom has, and promotes, the highest standards of animal welfare.*

#### **The main elements of the plan and legislation are:**

- Deliver on the Government's commitment to the highest standards of animal welfare by creating an Action Plan for Animal Welfare and legislation.
- Recognise animal sentience in law through the Animal Welfare (Sentience) Bill.
- Increase protections for pets, sporting animals, and farm animals by ending the export of live animals for slaughter, banning the keeping of primates as pets,

improving standards in zoos and cracking down on puppy smuggling, and enhancing conservation through a Kept Animals Bill.

- Ban the import of hunting trophies from endangered animals abroad and end the advertising for sale of low welfare experiences abroad through an Animals Abroad Bill, as well as considering steps to limit the trade and sale of foie gras.
- Introduce mandatory cat microchipping and review current microchip databases.

### **LGA view**

- We support the objective of increasing animal welfare standards and eradicating cruel practices both domestically and internationally. However, the Government should balance the need to educate consumers alongside the need for enforcement, particularly in terms of poor welfare overseas, and it must ensure councils can practicably take action in response to new regulations.
- The elements outlined in the announcement are likely to mean a significant amount of additional work for councils' regulatory services which are already under significant pressure. New responsibilities will need adequate resourcing in order to deliver the Government's ambitions.
- The cross-government regulatory services task and finish group is already considering the challenges facing local regulatory services. These new responsibilities around animal welfare demonstrate the importance of the group's work to secure sustainable funding for regulatory services and a long term cross-government view of the demands being placed on them.

### **Dormant Assets Bill**

*Legislation will support the voluntary sector by reducing unnecessary bureaucracy and releasing additional funds for good causes.*

#### **The main elements of the Bill are:**

- Expanding the Scheme into new asset classes and improving consumer protection in reuniting people with forgotten money.
- Aligning the model for how dormant assets funding is allocated in England with that used in the devolved administrations. This will enable Ministers to set, through secondary legislation, more specific purposes for the allocation of funding within the general "social or environmental purpose".
- Improving the Scheme's operation, for example by allowing the Scheme's administrator, Reclaim Fund Ltd, to only accept transfers from participants who have undertaken appropriate efforts to trace, verify and reunite the asset with its rightful owner.
- Naming Reclaim Fund Ltd as the Scheme's authorised reclaim fund.

### **LGA view**

- Voluntary and community sector organisations are vital partners for councils across a wide range of issues. COVID-19 has led to a significant increase in demand for support from the voluntary and community sector and had an impact on major income streams from retail units and fund-raising activities.
- We look forward to understanding more about how the Bill will support the voluntary sector to tackle social and environmental challenges facing local areas, and what over support Government will offer to ensure the sustainability of the voluntary and community sector.

### **Professional Qualifications Bill**

*Create a new framework to recognise professional qualifications from across the world to ensure the UK can access professionals in areas of a workforce shortage. This will replace the interim system that gives preference to professional qualifications from the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein.*

*Enable the Government to provide UK regulators with a consistent set of powers to enter into agreements with regulators overseas to recognise professional qualifications.*

### **LGA view**

- The initial impact of the proposals for local government will be around social workers because that is the only regulated profession on the current shortage occupation list for which councils are the main employer and may wish to recruit more widely overseas. The LGA will seek clarification on the impact for other professions where the sector experiences recruitment difficulties. The emphasis will be on professional regulatory bodies making reciprocal arrangements with their overseas equivalents.
- It will also be important to ensure any process for recognising qualifications from EU and non-EU citizens is easy to understand for all employers, including councils.

### **Draft Online Safety Bill**

*Introduce ground-breaking laws to keep people safe online whilst ensuring that users' rights, including freedom of expression, are protected online.*

### **The main elements of the Bill are to:**

- Place a duty of care on companies to improve the safety of their users online. This will require them to tackle illegal content on their services and to protect children from harmful content and activity online. They must seriously consider the risks their services pose to users and take action to protect them.

- Require major platforms to set out clearly in their terms and conditions what legal content is unacceptable on their platform and enforce these consistently and transparently.
- Requiring platforms to have effective and accessible user reporting and redress mechanisms to report concerns about harmful content, and challenge infringement of rights (such as wrongful takedown).
- Designating Ofcom as the independent online safety regulator and giving it a suite of robust enforcement powers to uphold the regulation. This will include very large fines of up to £18 million or 10 per cent of annual global turnover - whichever is greater - as well as business disruption measures. The Government expects Ofcom to prioritise enforcement action where children's safety has been compromised.
- Boosting public resilience to disinformation through media literacy and supporting research on misinformation and disinformation.

### **LGA view**

- Abuse online or offline should not be tolerated. We look forward to working with government to build a thriving digital economy that is trusted by and protects everyone in the UK while ensuring users' rights, including freedom of expression.
- Appointing Ofcom as an online safety regulator is a step in the right direction. We hope it will go some way to reducing online harms, including of children and vulnerable adults.
- We are concerned about the increasing spread of mis- and disinformation, and incidents of intimidation and abuse of elected representatives. Both pose significant threats to local democracy, as well as public health and community safety, and we welcome measures to tackle these issues.
- We are pleased that the Bill requires platforms to take responsibility for what is on their website and those who use it. In addition, we support calls for the Bill to include consideration of financial harms through scams, as well as other types of harm.
- Councils' trading standards teams play a vital role in tackling fraud, including online, and additional funding would allow councils to support the Government's ambitions to tackle a greater number of online scam cases. In addition, it is vital that online platforms take responsibility for fraudulent activity taking place on their sites.

### **Draft Victims Bill**

*Proposals will be brought forward to...support victims.*

**The main elements of the Bill are:**

- Enshrining the 12 key rights in the new Victims' Code into law. Those key rights include being:
  - Kept informed at key stages of the case.
  - Provided with regular updates on the progress of their case.
  - Referred to organisations supporting victims of crime.
  - Given the opportunity to make a Victim Personal Statement and be informed how it was used in court.
  - Informed when an offender is released, where eligible under the Victim Contact Scheme.

### **LGA view**

- We welcome the Government's commitment to enshrine victims' rights into law, as this will help to ensure victims are more consistently supported and thereby enable them to deal with and recover from the impacts of crime. The proposals should also improve victims' experiences within the criminal justice process.
- It will be important for the Bill to recognise that 'victims of crime' will apply to a broad range of crimes – including those where the victim is also a perpetrator, such as in cases of child criminal exploitation – and there will be different prosecuting authorities involved in these cases. Listening to and engaging with victims of crime, and understanding more about their lived experience, will be vital in helping to achieve meaningful change and reform. We are also keen to work with the Government to ensure child victims of crime receive suitable support.
- The LGA has long called for greater investment in domestic abuse community-based support services, as well as early intervention and prevention services, and perpetrator programmes. It is therefore positive to see the Government has committed to consult on the provision of community-based domestic abuse services and will set expectations for the standard and availability of victim support for victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence.
- Current funding for victim support services is short-term and piecemeal. This does not allow for long-term strategic planning, nor provide any consistency for much-needed specialist support services and the victims that need to access these services. There needs to be greater collaboration across Government departments on this important issue, as well as comprehensive, multi-year funding provided to commissioners.
- To accompany this Bill, we would also like to see a greater focus on tackling perpetrators of crime, and a clear ministerial lead focusing on this important issue. There needs to be an integrated approach to identifying and responding to perpetrators, to help change their behaviour and address the risks posed by them.
- This new Victims' Bill should align and complement the provisions outlined in the Domestic Abuse Act, the Police Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, the forthcoming Domestic Abuse Strategy, and the forthcoming Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy, as well as wider guidance and legislation.

**White Papers, Green Papers and policy measures**

**Levelling Up White Paper**

*My Government's priority is to deliver a national recovery from the pandemic that makes the United Kingdom stronger, healthier and more prosperous than before. To achieve this, my Government will level up opportunities across all parts of the United Kingdom, supporting jobs, businesses and economic growth and addressing the impact of the pandemic on public services.*

**The main elements of the proposals around levelling up are:**

- The Government will bring forward a Levelling Up White Paper later this year, building on actions the Government is already taking to level up across the UK.
- This will set out bold new policy interventions to improve livelihoods and opportunities in all parts of the UK. It looks to improve living standards, grow the private sector, improve health, education and policing, strengthen communities and local leadership and restoring pride in place.
- It defines levelling up in terms of creating good jobs, skills and productivity in places that have seen economic decline and enabling more people to grasp the opportunities of Brexit and get on in life without feeling they have to leave their local area.

**LGA view**

- The LGA and councils look forward to working closely with the Government to help deliver on its commitment to level up and invest in local areas across all parts of the country.
- Bringing greater resources and powers closer to communities is the best way to ensure a recovery that works for everyone. A unity of effort will be needed between local businesses, public services and communities to address the full range of opportunities and challenges across the country.
- Councils are crucial partners to achieving a recovery that works for all. With the right funding, freedoms and devolved powers, councils can work with partners to drive improvements in public health, boost local economic growth, revive town and city centres, build more homes, improve our roads and equip people with the skills they need to succeed so no one is left behind.
- We will be discussing with Government its stated ambition for English Devolution, the plans for a White Paper and how this aligns to work on the levelling-up agenda.

**Adult social care reform**

*Proposals on social care reform will be brought forward.*

**Key issues the Government will address**

- Do more to ensure that everyone receives high-quality, joined-up care.

- Through the Health and Social Care Bill, improve the oversight of how social care is commissioned and delivered, and facilitate greater integration between health and care services by placing Integrated Care Systems on a statutory footing across the UK and putting more power and autonomy in the hands of local systems.
- Support the development of the adult social care workforce and engage with staff about how best to support them
- Work with local and national partners to ensure the Government's approach to reform is informed by diverse perspectives, including those with lived experience of the care sector.

### **LGA view**

- We are pleased that proposals on social care reform will be brought forward, but urgently need a clear timeline. It is vital that this is also urgently converted into concrete funding proposals to provide sustainable support to people of all ages across the country who draw on social care to live the life they want to lead. We are keen to work with the Government and other stakeholders on a cross-party basis to achieve this. Councils and their communities need to see action as soon as possible.
- In our recent [letter](#) to Government on adult social care reform, we called for sustainable funding, defined in three broad ways. First, investment on an ongoing basis to fully move from a historical model of wellbeing based on care homes and hospitalisation to one of prevention, reablement, more appropriate accommodation, and community care and support that puts people first and acts on their knowledge of lived experience. This is what will deliver the necessary transition to a broader model of care that achieves better outcomes for people and, in turn, strengthens our local communities
- We must end the approach of additional one-off grants and, in particular, the adult social care precept to fund social care. While welcome, these measures are only ever sticking plaster solutions that are unsustainable and harm longer-term planning. Care and support to help people live their best life is a national entitlement and dependence on council tax to fund it is not the solution.
- As important as it is to protect people from having to sell their home to pay for care, this will carry a significant cost. Alongside any reforms of this type, we need a solution for bringing more money into social care that matches the level of ambition we have for social care as a key way in which people are supported to lead their best and most fulfilling lives. We have previously stated, and still believe, that the case should be made for increases in national taxation and/or a social care premium based on the core principle of universal risk-pooling. It is therefore helpful that the Queen's Speech recognises that the risk of people's future care costs is not shared equally across society. It is also helpful that the document recognises the vital role played by our care workforce and the need to support them. The LGA looks forward to extensive engagement across the whole sector, including employers and commissioners, about all aspects of workforce development including reward and career structures as well as skills and wellbeing.

- Our view on the social care elements of the Health and Social Care White Paper are set out in detail in our recently published [position paper](#).

### **Skills: COVID-19 Recovery and the Skills for Jobs White Paper**

*Incentivising new apprenticeship hires.*

#### **LGA view**

- Extending the duration and the value of the apprenticeship incentives to September 2021 will make apprenticeships more attractive to many employers. The Government has listened to employers including local government and we are suggesting the Government should extend incentives to at least March 2022 so that employers can take full advantage once current restrictions are lifted.

### **Climate Change, Net Zero and COP26**

*My Government will invest in new green industries to create jobs, while protecting the environment. The United Kingdom is committed to achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and will continue to lead the way internationally by hosting the COP26 Summit in Glasgow.*

#### **The main elements are:**

- Legislation to set Carbon Budget six at the level recommended by the Climate Change Committee.
- A Ten Point Plan for a green industrial revolution which will mobilise £12 billion of investment and create thousands of highly-skilled green jobs.
- The Energy White Paper which sets out the transformation of the UK's energy system.
- The Industrial Decarbonisation Strategy which sets out an ambitious blueprint to deliver the world's first low-carbon industrial sector.
- Forthcoming sector strategies, including Heat and Buildings, the Transport Decarbonisation Plan, and the comprehensive Net Zero Strategy.
- The UK hosting the COP26 negotiations in November.

#### **LGA view**

- The LGA supports the UK's commitment to achieving net zero by 2050. We declared a climate emergency alongside at least 230 councils, where nearly two thirds of councils in England aim to be carbon neutral earlier than the national target.



- Net-zero can only be achieved with decarbonisation happening in every place across the country – that’s every household, community and local economy. This will require local leadership. Councils share the ambition for a green revolution and want to work with government and businesses to establish a national fiscal and policy framework for addressing the climate emergency, supported with long term funding.
- Councils can play a significant role in delivering a green recovery, which includes supporting national government to create green jobs. Councils can use their role as local leaders to bring together the skills and low carbon agendas to unlock growth in their areas. Renewable energy infrastructure can also provide significant opportunities in the green growth sector and job creation.
- COP26 provides an opportunity to highlight councils as essential local partners in translating international and national ambitions into transformative local action. Councils are already leading the way and the Glasgow Summit offers an opportunity to promote British councils’ work and innovation.
- The LGA welcomes the previous announcement to cut carbon emissions by 78 per cent by 2035, compared to 1990 emissions levels which was recommended by the Government’s independent advisors, the Climate Change Committee. We await more detail on how a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions will be delivered and the role of councils through the forthcoming sector strategies and comprehensive Net Zero Strategy.

## **Bus Reform**

*Proposals will be taken forward to transform connectivity by rail and bus.*

### **The main elements of the Reform are:**

- Our National Bus Strategy for England, we will deliver better bus services for passengers across England outside London, through ambitious and far-reaching reform of how services are planned and delivered.
- The National Bus Strategy outlined how we will spend the £3 billion announced by the Prime Minister to transform buses outside London. In order to access that transformational funding, local authorities and operators will be required to work together to improve services.
- These reforms will be one of our major acts of levelling up by ensuring there are more frequent, cheaper and more reliable bus services across the country which are easier to understand and use with integrated services and ticketing.
- £120 million will be spent in the 2021-22 Financial Year on supporting the Government’s commitment to introduce 4,000 zero-emission buses, building on the recent award of £50 million to Coventry from the All-Electric Bus Towns and Cities competition.

## **LGA View**

- We are pleased the Government is investing in improving local bus services, and it is good the National Bus Strategy recognises the important role of

councils.

- Councils want to work with government to make sure every community is able to access a local bus service. We would urge government to also plug the £700 million annual funding gap councils faced before the pandemic in providing the concessionary fares scheme, which would help to protect local routes and reverse the decline in bus services.

## **Beating COVID and backing the NHS**

*My Government will protect the health of the nation, continuing the vaccination programme.*

### **LGA View**

- Local government has successfully supported the national effort to tackle the COVID-19 emergency. The LGA notes that the Government has significantly increased the financial commitment to the NHS to address the ongoing impact of the pandemic. Local government services have been vital in supporting and protecting people during the pandemic including assisting in the delivery of the vaccination programme, establishing local contact tracing partnerships and conducting surge testing, supporting care providers to prevent COVID infections in care settings, helping the clinically extremely vulnerable needing to shield and those having to self-isolate, as well as ensuring compliance with social distancing requirements.
- Councils have worked with social care providers to increase their fee levels and ensure providers have had support with the additional costs posed by Covid-19, such as higher staff sickness and absence rates and higher administration and PPE costs. Councils have also supported providers with cash flow, such as by paying on plan in advance. All of these efforts have been part of councils' wider efforts to best support people who draw on care and support. We are disappointed therefore that there is no equivalent recognition of the need for additional resources for adult social care and public health.

## **Prevention**

*Measures will be brought forward to support the health and wellbeing of the nation, including to tackle obesity.*

### **LGA view**

- Everyone agrees that prevention is better than cure. Additional measures to help make our residents happier and healthier would be welcome and councils look forward to working with the government to bring forward efforts to improve the health and wellbeing of the nation in our recovery from Covid-19.

- Local government is at the heart of local work to improve the public's health. It provides the leadership, expertise, partnership-working and access to local resources that are fundamental to strong place-based coordination.
- Health inequalities between the most and least deprived communities have been exposed and deepened over the past 12 months, while we have yet to see the long-term physical and mental impact of the pandemic and what it means for our future health and wellbeing. Councils should be at the centre of efforts to reduce inequalities and improve people's lives. This includes making greater use of combined resources at local, system and national level. Encouraging behaviour change, such as through healthy weight programmes, stop smoking campaigns, tackling vaccine hesitancy and promoting positive mental health, will also see people across the country have longer, healthier and happier lives.
- Every pound invested by government in council-run services such as public health helps to relieve pressure on other services like the NHS and the criminal justice system, while also proving to be [three to four times more cost-effective in improving people's health](#) than money spent in the NHS. Councils have seen a £700 million real terms reduction in public health funding between 2014/15 and 2020/21 – a fall of almost a quarter (23.5 per cent) per person. If the Government's prevention agenda is to succeed then this must be re-evaluated in future spending rounds.
- We support proposals to strengthen front-of-pack nutrition labelling and calorie labelling on alcohol. We believe a single system will help people make informed choices. We also welcome plans to ban adverts of products high in fat, sugar or salt from TV before 9pm. It is disappointing that the white paper did not give councils powers to ban junk food advertising near schools.

## **Mental Health Act Reform**

*Measures will be brought forward to support the health and wellbeing of the nation, including to...improve mental health.*

### **The main elements of reform are to:**

- Bring the Mental Health Act into the 21st century and give people greater control over their treatment and receive the dignity and respect they deserve.
- Reform the process for detention, improve care and treatment whilst someone is detained, and give them better support to challenge detention if they wish, shifting the balance to give the patient more say.
- Change the law around how people with a learning disability or autistic people are treated under the Act to prevent prolonged detentions.
- Address the disproportionate number of people from black and minority ethnic groups detained under the Act.
- The Government remains committed to its ambitions in the NHS Long Term Plan to expand and transform mental health services in England.

- The Government has also set out its Mental Health Recovery Action Plan as part of the commitment to build back better.

### **LGA view**

- The LGA supports reforming the Mental Health Act. We welcome the ambition to achieve meaningful change for people living with severe mental illness, including addressing the disproportionate number of people from black and minority ethnic groups detained under the Act, changing the law around how learning disabled and autistic people are treated, and a stronger focus on upholding people's human rights.
- The Act will have significant resource implications for councils' already stretched statutory children's and adults' mental health services, which central government will need to fully fund in line with recent investment in NHS mental health services.
- Achieving a reduction in detentions is not solely about legislative change. There needs to be a fully funded system-wide shift in policy and resources away from medicalisation and treating mental ill health, to early intervention, prevention, and support for pandemic recovery through integrated community-based mental health services that are jointly commissioned by councils and the NHS.
- It is positive that the Mental Health Recovery Action Plan makes available additional one-off funding to help national and local services from all sectors to meet new demand for mental health and wellbeing support arising from the Covid-19 pandemic. Going forward, local statutory children's and adult's mental health services, and wider public mental health services, need long-term parity of funding with NHS mental health services, to support mental health recovery and help the whole population to be mentally well.

### **Education recovery plan**

*As we build back from the pandemic, we are putting in place a package of measures to ensure no child is left behind as a result of the education and extracurricular activities they may have missed out on. We are working with the Education Recovery Commissioner – Sir Kevan Collins – to develop an ambitious, long-term plan that builds back a better and fairer education system in England and delivers significant reforms to address the scale of this challenge.*

*As a first step, over the past year we have already provided over £2 billion to schools, colleges and early years settings to support pupils' academic and wider progress. This includes £1.7 billion in funding to support education recovery and over £400 million is being invested to support access to remote education including securing 1.3 million laptops and tablets.*

### **LGA view**

- Education recovery is a long-term endeavour and must go beyond academic achievement to include measures to support children and young people's socialisation, communication and mental health and well-being. While recovery support should be made available to all children and young people, it is vital

that vulnerable children, who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, are the focus of this programme of work.

- Councils are ideally placed, in their role as leaders/convenors of local education systems (a role that has been emphasised during the pandemic) to bring together early years providers, schools, academies, Multi Academy Trusts and the further education sector, to join up local efforts to promote education and wellbeing recovery for children and young people, working towards a number of education recovery objectives that have been set nationally.
- Additional funding to support education will be essential and to maximise the effective use of this funding locally, councils should have flexibility to pool the various funding streams to best meet the need of children and young people.

### **Wider Education Reform**

*We are investing an additional £730 million into high needs in 2021/22, building on the additional £780 million in 2020/21.*

*We have launched an independent review of children's social care, looking at the needs, experiences, and outcomes of the children it supports. We are also continuing our work on the Review of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), which aims to ensure the SEND system is consistent, high quality, and integrated across education, health and care.*

### **LGA view**

- We welcome the Government's review into support for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). It is imperative that the findings of the review are published as a matter of urgency and that they address the rising demand and cost pressures facing councils and their partners in delivering SEND support. We are supportive of a reformed, sustainable system which puts families at its heart and gives children and young people with SEND support at the earliest opportunity, so they can live healthy and fulfilled lives. Reform of the system will also help to clearly align responsibilities and powers amongst councils and their partners to ensure there is effectively delivery.
- Councils continue to face major financial challenges in supporting children with SEND and we are pleased that the Department for Education (DfE) has recognised this, with £1.5 billion in additional high needs funding allocated to councils for 2020/21 and 2021/22.
- Irrespective of the shape of a reformed SEND system, we are clear that significant legacy costs are already 'baked in' to the existing system, largely due to the extension of duties to support children and young people and the expectation of an education placement to the age of 25. We are keen to work with the DfE to model the long-term financial impacts of the 2014 Children and Families Act to aid understanding of how we collectively deal with legacy issues, which will require different arrangements of support than those that may be in place as a result of the SEND Review.
- Every child deserves a safe and happy childhood in which they are loved and supported to reach their full potential. Some children will need help from children's social care services for that to happen, and this review gives the

entire system the opportunity to make sure services work as well as they should.

- The review will need to look at the experiences of children in the round, considering not only the work of children's social care departments, but partners including schools and healthcare services who have a vital role to play in supporting children and their families. Demand for support has increased dramatically over the last decade, and it is important that we understand why this is and whether services are adequately resourced to give children the right help at the right time.
- We have consistently called for additional funding to meet increased demand across the entirety of children's services.

### **Criminal Justice Catch-up and Recovery Plan**

*Legislation will...ensure the timely administration of justice.*

#### **The main elements of the Plan are:**

- To put the running of the coronial system on the same footing as other courts and tribunals, with efficiency increased through virtual hearings, the holding of inquests without a hearing in non-contentious cases, discontinuing investigations where the cause of death is natural without first requiring a post mortem, and allowing coroner areas to merge across local authority boundaries.
- By ensuring the coroners' jurisdiction is in line with other courts and tribunals, delays in progressing cases will be reduced and will therefore reduce the distress of bereaved families.

#### **LGA view**

- Councils are keen to ensure that coronial inquests minimise the distress to bereaved families, and welcome measures that allow coroners' courts to operate more effectively by working in the same way as other courts and tribunals.
- The ability to rationalise coroner areas will assist councils in making coroners' services operate more efficiently. Government should fully fund the costs associated with these proposals as councils may need to invest in new technology and systems to deliver these new ways of working.
- As part of the plan, the Government should also review whether coroners' courts should continue to be a locally managed service, or whether it would be better for the coronial service to be run, managed and funded by central government.

### **Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy**

*Proposals will be brought forward to address violence, including against women and girls.*

**The main elements of the Strategy are to:**

- Tackle crime and this includes tackling violence against women and girls.
- Take action to toughen sentences, protect the public and improve support for victims and investing in support for victims.
- Publish a new VAWG Strategy and increase the ability to tackle emerging crime types such as 'upskirting' and revenge porn.
- Conduct an end-to-end review of the criminal justice response to rape, due this summer, looking at how every stage of the criminal justice system handles rape cases, from police report to the final outcome at court.
- Also to publish a Domestic Abuse Strategy focusing on prevention, accompanied by £25 million of investment which will more than double the amount being spent on programmes to work with perpetrators.

**LGA view**

- Councils are determined to help tackle Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG), working alongside the police and criminal justice services, Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs), health and education services, the voluntary and community sector and wider support services, to help ensure women and girls are protected from all forms of abuse.
- It is right the Government's VAWG strategy (2021 – 2024) should focus on all forms of violence against women and girls, including rape and sexual violence, domestic abuse, forced marriage, so called 'honour-based' abuse, female genital mutilation (and other culturally specific forms of abuse), stalking, sharing of personal intimate images without consent and online harassment, which have devastating consequences.
- We welcome the new strategy's ambition to drive forward improvements in the effort to target perpetrators; to respond to the changing nature of these crimes; and, to place victims and survivors at the heart of the approach. It is particularly important that the Government's strategy captures the lived experience of those affected by VAWG, to help improve the response to these crimes. We also welcome the Government's commitment to carrying out an end-to-end Rape Review.
- Increased investment in the Safer Streets Fund is positive, but it will not, on its own, address systemic VAWG issues. There needs to be a comprehensive and long-term approach focused on achieving culture change and preventing VAWG issues arising in the first place, spanning across education, health, housing, families, and communities through to policing and criminal justice measures.
- This approach must be accompanied by comprehensive, multi-year funding made available to local commissioners to allow for long-term strategic planning and delivery of VAWG services. This should include Government funding the National Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Centre. There also needs to be greater co-ordination across Government departments, to make this a cross-

departmental work-stream that focuses on both support for victims and tackling and preventing perpetrators' violent or abusive behaviour.

### **New Plan for Immigration Legislation**

*This supports the delivery of the [New Plan for Immigration](#) with a range of measures that include a new system of asylum support and accommodation.*

#### **The main elements are to:**

- Move towards a reception centre model while claims for asylum are processed, with routes to the UK having an impact on both the decision making process and eventual status of those claiming asylum, including changes in access to councils' support at the end of the process
- Clarify government's role in both tackling trafficking networks and supporting victims of modern slavery.

#### **LGA view**

- Councils are keen to build on their strong track record of supporting those resettling in new communities.
- Future developments for asylum support and accommodation should include joint priorities agreed between local and central government. It needs to shift to a more place-based, equitable and sustainably funded system that provides effective support for asylum seeking children, adults and families.
- Local experiences and learning should inform the development of a reception centre model, particularly to ensure early engagement of councils and local partners.
- Local government is keen work through changes to councils' responsibilities for supporting those at the end of the process to ensure a full understanding of the potential impacts for councils, communities and on a wide range of adults and families.
- Modern slavery is a heinous crime and councils want to play their part in both working to eradicate it and supporting victims to recover but need the resources to enable them to do so.

### **Early Years Healthy Development Review**

*Measures will be brought forward to ensure that children have the best start in life, prioritising their early years.*

#### **Measures will include:**

- Encouraging all local authorities to publish a clear Start for Life offer for parents and carers, showing families what support they can expect to receive during the 1,001 critical days from conception to age two.



- Building on the Government's commitment to champion 'Family Hubs', encouraging local authorities to make them a place for families to access Start for Life services.
- Working across the system to hold local services to account, including through proportionate inspections, and to improve data, evaluation and outcomes of health services.
- Encouraging local areas to nominate a leader and ensuring the delivery of the Review is overseen at a national level.

#### **LGA view**

- It is positive that the Early Years Healthy Development Review conducted by Andrea Leadsom MP recognises the crucial support provided by councils to improve outcomes for children aged zero to two.
- We will work with the Review team to ensure the 'Start for Life' and Family Hubs vision builds on the positive programmes already in place locally.
- For the vision to be realised it will need to be properly resourced. To develop 'excellence' in the early years, the Government will need to reverse the reductions to the public health and early intervention grants and ensure local authorities have the resources they need to commission effective preventative services.
- Local authorities are already accountable for improving outcomes in the early years sector and have established leadership. The Review should remain flexible and support local arrangements.
- The creation of Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) provides an excellent opportunity to improve the health and wellbeing of children and to tackle health inequalities. To do this effectively local government leaders need to be at the heart of ICS leadership to ensure a joined-up approach across the wider system.

#### **Enterprise and jobs**

*As part of our drive to net zero, creating 250,000 highly skilled green jobs across the UK.... Supporting and creating jobs across the UK through our Plan for Jobs, which will particularly help areas at risk of unemployment.*

#### **LGA view**

- [LGA analysis projects that the low carbon sector could require and create 700,000 jobs across England by 2030](#) and almost 1.2 million jobs by 2050. These jobs will respond to regional and local economic specialities.
- One of the main lessons from the COVID-19 crisis is that councils can innovate well and help deliver and at speed. The Plan for Jobs will require all private, public and voluntary partners to work together at a local level. Councils have proved that they have the legitimacy to provide the local leadership needed to

bring together partners to ensure delivery is effective and at speed.

### **UK Community Renewal Fund and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)**

*The £220 million UK-wide Community Renewal Fund will provide funding for local areas across the UK in 2021-22 to help them prepare for the introduction of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, in addition to the continued high level of funding from EU structural funds.*

#### **LGA view**

- The LGA recognises that the UK Community Renewal Fund is an important way to help councils invest in their areas. It is good that councils have been placed at the heart of the delivery.
- We are looking forward to working with the Government to help design the UK Shared Prosperity Fund in advance of its introduction in 2022/23 through a Task Force. We look forward to further announcements on the UKSPF, including confirmation of the total quantum of the funding (based on commitment from ministers).

### **Regulatory reform**

*The Prime Minister has established a Better Regulation Cabinet Committee, chaired by the Chancellor, to ensure the Government is driving an ambitious programme of regulatory reform that enables and supports growth and innovation.*

#### **LGA view**

- COVID-19 has highlighted the important and versatile role of councils' frontline regulatory services teams in protecting the public and supporting businesses.
- It will be important to ensure any short-term regulatory easements introduced in relation to the pandemic are fully consulted on before they are made permanent, and that councils are not impacted financially by them.
- The LGA and councils have previously put forward a series of proposals for streamlining and improving our outdated licensing frameworks. We would welcome the opportunity to take forward these proposals with Government as part of this programme of work.

### **The Electoral Integrity Bill**

*My Government will strengthen and renew democracy and the constitution. Legislations will be introduced to ensure the integrity of elections.*

#### **The main elements of the Bill are:**

- Improving the absent ballot process by increasing protection on postal and proxy voting, including banning postal vote 'harvesting'.
- Strengthening the laws on intimidation and undue influence.

- Requiring identification to vote in a polling station, as already required in Northern Ireland.
- Extending the 'imprint' requirement to digital political campaigning, and introducing measures to prevent foreign interference in elections. Improving access to voting for electors with disabilities.
- Removing the 15-year limit on the voting rights of British expats and making it easier to cast their vote.

### **LGA view**

- We welcome the commitment to legislate to protect those standing for public office and their campaigners from intimidation and abuse and to clarify the existing offence of Undue influence. The LGA supported the Government's proposals in the 'Protect the debate' consultation to develop new electoral legislation to tackle intimidation and continues to call the creation of a specific offence to protect elected members while in office.
- The commitment to introduce imprints for digital campaign material to ensure transparency for voters, campaigners and regulators is also positive. We would be keen to understand how this can be achieved while maintaining a level playing-field for all candidates.
- Councils are hugely experienced at running elections and working to support communities to participate in the democratic process effectively. The recent double year of elections, run in the extremely challenging context of the pandemic, have run smoothly and are testament to their incredible hard work and expertise.
- Councils fully support proposals to ensure disabled people can cast their vote. New duties on councils will of course need to be fully funded to help ensure they work effectively and their intention to increase voter participation is realised.
- Councils will want to understand more about how the proposals for voter identification, extension of the rights of overseas voters and changes to the postal and proxy voting systems might work in practice. Local government will also want to be assured that proper impact assessments have been completed to understand and mitigate the potential impact on protected groups and that councils are not adversely affected by the implementation or cost of complying with new duties or processes.

### **Integrated Review**

*My Ministers will implement the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy.*

### **LGA view**

- The Government's commitment to taking forward its recent Integrated Review is positive. It will include looking at the role of Local Resilience Forums (LRFs) in preparing for and responding to emergencies.

- It will be important for the review to take into account the learning from councils' and LRFs' experiences of responding to the pandemic, as well as considering the steps necessary to taking a whole society approach to building resilience.

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

---

<b>Title:</b>	Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board
<b>Date:</b>	Thursday 18 February 2021
<b>Venue:</b>	Westminster Room, 8th Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

---

### Attendance

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

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
------	-----------------------	--------

### 1 Declarations of Interest

The Chairman welcomed and introduced members to the Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board meeting.

Apologies were received from Cllr Peter Butlin and Cllr Peter Thornton, Cllr Rankin and Cllr Stewart Golton were in attendance as substitutes.

No declarations of interest were made.

### 2 House Building Report

The Chairman invited Ellen Vernon, Programme Director of One Public Estate (OPE) to discuss how the OPE programme was supporting councils to unlock surplus public land and property to support housing delivery.

Ellen introduced her presentation and explained that OPE focused on efficient use of surplus public land to rationalise and re-purpose the public estate and provided technical and practical support and advice to councils, to deliver property-focused programmes in collaboration with central government and other public sector partners. The OPE programme had been going since 2013 with funding from Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and Cabinet Office - Office of Government Property (OGP) with all activities and programme work delivered by the Local Government Association (LGA) in partnership with OGP.

Currently, OPE have and were funding over 600 projects with 96% of councils in England involved in an OPE partnership, transforming their local communities and public services. To date the OPE programme had £384m in capital receipts back to central/local government partners, £77m in reduced running costs and surplus land released enabling 15,500 homes.

Ellen explained that OPE offer provided the following:

- Funding at early stage to help partners with feasibility studies, business

- cases and master plans.
- Professional support
  - Access to central/local government
  - Neutral brokering
  - Sharing best practice

- Ellen also commented that the following partner benefits included:
- Release of surplus public land for homes, jobs and regeneration schemes
  - Efficiency savings (capital receipts and revenue savings)
  - Better integrated public services

In 2018 OPE delivered the Land Release Fund (LRF), a cross-government initiative between MHCLG which awarded £45m in capital funding to over 70 councils-led projects, releasing land for 6,000 affordable homes. Specifically aimed at supporting local authorities to move brown field sites through to housing delivery, often these sites may come with significant abnormal costs, constraints and infrastructure requirements. The LRF was able bridge the viability gap and provide funding for demolition, remediation, highways access and flood works.

Following the discussion, Members made the following comments:

- Members raised that land was critical in delivering public infrastructure but the over inflated land value and hesitancy from government departments to collaborate over long-term caused perverse short-term decisions that impacted delivery of local public infrastructure and council and social housing. Ellen responded that OPE is aware of the pressures that vary across the country and focused on helping localities address challenges and opportunities through scrutinising viability assessments. Additionally, OPE was working on exploring how institutional investment may help complex projects.
- Members commented that the district valuer had a role in determining the valuation of land based on current use, which may be a higher value than that for a housing scheme. The programme could consider this in the future with government as it would make it easier to deliver in local authority areas. Ellen responded that there was a shift away from a full reliance on land values in terms of calculating benefit cost ratios that sit behind some of the assessments, looking at moving to include social value benefits in assessment and non-monetised benefits.
- Members mentioned that for skills and capacity (paragraph 10.4) it was important to look at the bigger picture about working with partnerships, as some areas did not have the skills available. It would be beneficial to work closely with further education to make provisions around the skills in demand. Ellen responded that there were a few bodies that were currently trying to link up skills shortages in local authorities to ensure a pipeline of skills.

Members made the following comments on the wider report:

- Members commented on the disparity between the government and survey figures. Highlighting that it was important to address wider challenges around skills shortage and parts of the UK without a Housing Revenue Account. Numbers needed to capture council

- construction from all models not just one particular model.
- Members raised that for funding for retrofitting
  - Members also raised that shorthold tenancies should be reconsidered.
  - Members highlighted that more analysis was needed on local authorities with HRA capacity underused as there was a risk of Ministers raising concerns over why housing demand was not being met.
  - Members pointed out the delay in Right to Buy receipts was significant as it was a major rate-limiting factor and would be useful to hear from others on how this was affecting them.

**Actions:**

- Officers to consider comments made by Board Members on the key areas for lobbying outlined in paragraphs 10.1 to 10.6.
- Officers to consider comments made by Board Members on the set of proposed actions (paragraph 23).

**Decision:**

The Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board noted the House Building Report and agreed on the proposed recommendations in the report.

### **3 Building Safety Update and Samuel Garside Fire Report**

The Chairman introduced Cllr Rodwell to present to the Board. Cllr Rodwell informed the Board that in June 2019 a major fire in a privately owned four-storey block of flats in Barking and Dagenham destroyed eight flats and ripped through the balconies within six minutes. Over 50 families were safely evacuated and within two hours support and accommodation was set up. Due to complications over the property being on private land, support for residents who raised concerns previously could not be provided by the local authority. Considering the concerns raised the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham commission an independent review.

Cllr Rodwell invited Sir Steve Bullock and Diarmaid Ward to present the Samuel Garside Independent Review highlighting their findings and aftermath of the fire.

Steve explained that the review highlighted four key emerging findings which needed to be addressed:

- The context in which any housing emergency situation is dealt with has changed and in future residents must be better informed and more engaged with what happens in the building where their homes are located.
- Complex ownership arrangements have become more common and this puts a premium on giving all residents clarity about roles and responsibilities, including what happens in an emergency.
- Local authorities are well placed to provide leadership in an emergency situation but need the resources and powers to meet the expectations of their residents.
- Making distinctions based on arbitrary height limits about the rules and regulations relevant to particular buildings may be a short-term

necessity but, for the peace of mind of those who live in buildings with multiple self-contained housing units, a common approach is needed as soon as possible.

Diarmaid informed the Board that thankfully no lives were lost in the fire but, it was a very traumatic experience for the residents who lost their possessions and pets. To gather an understanding of the resident's feelings an online survey and a series of video and audio calls were rolled out.

Diarmaid highlighted some of the main issues that arose from the conversations with residents were:

- Complex ownership and management structure of the building causing communication issues, which residents felt that owners and managers were not taking responsibility.
- Arranging temporary accommodation was a difficult process.
- Process of returning to their homes as some residents felt unhappy about being asked to return earlier than they felt comfortable to do so.

Steve commented that recommendations set out in the review ensured that in the future there was a clearer understanding of all parties involved as to what needs to happen in the event of a fire. Including, the responsibilities of everyone, including the resident needs to be properly understood so events like these can be avoided.

Cllr Rodwell thanked Sir Steve Bullock and Diarmaid Ward for presenting their findings in the review to the Board.

Following the discussion, Members made the following comments:

- Members commented that the non-cladding related fire safety issues had not been addressed and were not satisfactory, which were numerous across new build properties.
- Members raised the complex ownership and management structures were an industry wide problem.
- Members expressed that the recommendations were incredibly important and highlighted key areas of concern that needed to be addressed.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Rodwell, Sir Steve Bullock and Diarmaid Ward for their contributions and comprehensive independent review.

The Chairman introduced Charles Loft, Senior Policy Adviser, who updated the Board that Lord Porter had seen the independent review and concluded that the LGA should support and promote the recommendations.

**Actions:**

- Officers to invite Lord Porter to a future Board meeting.
- Officers to continue to update Board Members on the progress of the recommendations in the Samuel Garside Fire Independent Review



**Decision:**

The Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board noted the Building Safety Update, Building Safety Announcement Update paper, Samuel Garside Fire Report and agreed the recommendations.

**4 Flooding**

The Chairman introduced the report which reviews the current policy lines on flooding and the consultation on changes to the Flood Re Insurance scheme, ensuring that affordable flood insurance was available to all households in high risk flood areas.

Hilary Tanner, Senior Adviser informed the Board that the report provides an update of several reviews on flooding over the past few months and was subject to parliamentary scrutiny.

Hilary highlighted that key areas of focus in the report which required feedback which were; issues over planning permissions being granted for housing in flood risk areas, capital funding to be devolved to local areas, the Bellwin Scheme's shortfall in funding for flood emergencies and current arrangements for managing the risk from surface water flooding.

Andrew Richmond, Adviser informed the Board that following the devastating flooding event in Doncaster in 2019, Government commissioned Amanda Blanc, CEO of Aviva, to undertake an Independent Review of Flood Insurance as many of those affected did not have insurance cover. The Government has proposed to take forward all 12 recommendations set out in the review.

Andrew also commented that DEFRA have recommended the following key points they wish to implement in collaboration with local authorities:

- Landlord Notification: Landlords of properties in high flood risk areas should provide their tenants with details of the building's insurance cover in place, including the support that would be provided by the insurer to the tenant in the event of a flood.
- Landlord Buildings Insurance: Government should consider the broader case for legislating to require landlords to have buildings insurance that protects tenants in the event that the property is uninhabitable for an extended period.
- Local Authority Tenant Awareness: Local Authorities should ensure that tenants in high flood risk areas are given guidance on i) the range of risks they face in the event of a flood and ii) ways in which they can protect themselves with adequate insurance cover.
- Flood Re Low Income Affordability: Government should consider more direct ways to increase the take-up of contents cover for tenants in high flood risk areas. As well as promoting awareness, this should include reviewing the impact of the Flood Re premium for contents-only cover on the affordability of contents insurance for low-income households.

Following the discussion, Members made the following comments:

- Members commented that local authorities were better at delivering flood schemes and arguing for government to devolve more power to local authorities was one strongly supported by the Board.
- Members mentioned that inviting Environment Agency to a future Board meeting would be beneficial to understand what they do on a national level.
- Members raised that the Bellwin Scheme was out of date and the government should be pressed for alternative ideas.
- Members commented that flooding on a local level cannot be prevented due to climate changes, but the focus should be around land abandonment and how to support those who may need to move.
- Members stated that they would like to see the LGA lobby government to ensure that revenue support to local authorities follows capital investment.
- Members expressed that insurance needed to capture affordability and permitted/minor development under 250sqm as it continues to be allowed in the flood plain.

**Action:**

- Officers to consider comments made by Board Members on recommendations to the report.

**Decision:**

The Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board noted and approved the update.

## **5 Climate Change Update**

The Chairman introduced the report which provided a reflection of the issues that were raised during the last Board meeting and next steps.

Following the brief discussion, the following comments were made:

- Members commented that tracking of climate emergency response and LGA declaration was not clear and required a high-level response.
- Members raised the that a coherent offer from all local authorities to put forward to the COP26 summit required careful stakeholder engagement.

**Decision:**

The Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board noted and agreed the update.

## **6 Equalities and Diversity EEHT board work**

The Chairman introduced the report which sets out key commitments in equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) principles, a selection of key information sources, and EDI-related work in the EEHT area.

Tamsin Hewett, Adviser informed the Board that the report summarised where there may be Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion issues and a starting point for any issues identified within areas of particular concern or groups that may be affected by issues in those policy areas.

Following the brief discussion, the following comments were made:

- Members commented that it was important to embed best practice and voice how climate change and access to high quality public transport impacted different communities.
- Members expressed it was important that Members had the appropriate tools for training and resources needed.
- Members acknowledged the recommendations in the report and the analysis on each of the topic areas but, highlighted the scale of the issues raised should not be underestimated.

**Action:**

- Officers to reach out to Councillors who have expressed support they are willing to provide on behalf of the Board.

**Decision:**

The Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board noted the update.

## **7 Other Board Update**

The Chairman introduced the report which provides updates on a range of issues within the remit of the Board.

Following the brief discussion, the following comments were made:

- Members raised that the Decent Homes Standard update work was welcomed as it coincided with council house building and climate change work.
- Members commented that from an LGA perspective it was important to make clear how many opportunities there may be already to deliver on the objectives for Right to Regenerate: reform of the Right to Contest.

**Action:**

- Officers to consider comments made by Board Members

**Decision:**

The Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board noted the update.

## **8 Minutes of the previous meeting**

Minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 9 December 2020 were agreed by the Board.

**Appendix A -Attendance**

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr David Renard	Swindon Borough Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Darren Rodwell	Barking and Dagenham London Borough Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Adele Morris Cllr Linda Gillham	Southwark Council Runnymede Borough Council
Members	Cllr Mark Crane Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE Cllr Patrick Nicholson Cllr Nicholas Rushton Cllr Linda Taylor Cllr Asher Craig Mayor Philip Glanville Cllr Ed Turner Cllr Rachel Blake Cllr Michael Mordey Cllr Christopher Hammond Cllr David Beaman	Selby District Council Gloucestershire County Council Plymouth City Council Leicestershire County Council Cornwall Council Bristol City Council Hackney London Borough Council Oxford City Council Tower Hamlets Council Sunderland City Council Southampton City Council Waverley Borough Council
Apologies	Cllr Peter Butlin Cllr Peter Thornton	Warwickshire County Council Cumbria County Council
In Attendance	Ellen Vernon Sir Steve Bullock Diarmaid Ward  Matilda Gross Nick Atkinson Simon Jeffery Alex Ariyadasa-Saez  Jessica Hill	One Public Estate One Public Estate  MHCLG      MHCLG MHCLG      MHCLG MHCLG      MHCLG MHCLG      MHCLG  Press
LGA Officers	Eamon Lally Jo Allchurch Hillary Tanner Charles Loft Amelia Sutton Bethany Vella Amy Fleming Christina Kaiser Andrew Richmond Tamsin Hewett	

David Mills  
Joe Difford  
Nick Sutton  
Tahmina Akther

