

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

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## Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board

Thursday, 23 June 2022

Online via Teams

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### Attendance

An attendance list is attached as [Appendix A](#)

Item	Decisions and actions
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#### 1 Welcome, Apologies and Substitutes, Declarations of Interest

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

No declarations of interest were made.

#### 2 Active Travel England

The Chairman introduced Chris Boardman, the interim National Commissioner for Active Travel England (ATE) who briefly outlined the role and aims of ATE.

Members made the following comments:

- Members raised that there had been local backlash to schemes introduced from emergency active travel funding an
- Further concerns were raised over consultations as there seemed to be a “silent majority” who were largely supportive of schemes but had not been accounted for
- It was queried how the LGA could support ATE

In response, Chris Boardman made the following comments:

- Of the Emergency Active Travel schemes introduced in the pandemic, those that were most well received were those that had been part of a long-term plan and then accelerated
- The LGA could help by supporting the training of staff at councils which would help them secure bids to fund schemes
- Whilst Electric Vehicles were recognised as one way to produce less emissions, they would not be sufficient to replace all vehicles and there needed to be a focus on active travel too.

The Chairman thanked Chris Boardman for his attendance

**Decision:**

- Members noted the report and presentation.

### **3 Building Safety Update**

The Chairman invited Charles Loft, Senior Adviser to present the report which outlined the progress on building safety since the last Board meeting. This included progress on the Building Safety Bill, Fire Safety Act and Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans.

**Decision:**

Members noted the update.

The Chairman brought forward agenda item 5 – End of Year Report 2021-22, item 6 – Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Update / Other Board Business, and item 7 – Minutes of the previous meeting.

### **4 End of Year Report 2021-2022**

The Chairman invited Members to comment on the End of Year Report 2021-2022 which provided an overview of the work of the Board between September 2021 and August 2022 as well as areas of focus to consider in the coming year.

**Decision:**

Members noted the report.

### **5 EEHT Update**

The Chairman invited Members to comment on the report which outlined updates with the Board's remit.

Following a query, Members were advised of progress on the work to lobby for more powers to issue Fixed Penalty Notices as requested by Thurrock Council and consortium of Essex Council. Surveys had been trialled with a number of councils which would shortly go out to all local authorities.

**Decision:**

Members noted the report.

### **6 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2022 were agreed as an accurate record.

### **7 Energy efficiency in fuel poor households**

The Chairman introduced Nick Porter, Senior Adviser, who presented the report which outlined a proposal to make to government and partners on accelerating improvements in the energy efficiency of homes to reduce energy waste from fuel poor households.

Members made the following comments:

- Decarbonising listed and rural buildings would be a challenge
- It was raised that currently planning permission was being granted for properties that would need to be retrofitted shortly after being built
- Standing charges on energy bills had been increasing which would impact those in poverty even in energy efficient households
- It was suggested that EPC C may not be ambitious enough to help achieve net zero goals.
- Consideration should be given to funding options and creating investible propositions.

**Action:**

That a member working group be formed to assist in the next steps as set out in the report.

**Decision:**

Members noted the report.

## **8 Planning reform**

The Chairman welcomed Simon Gallagher, Director of Planning for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) who gave a summary of aims of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill which included:

- Moving towards a plan led system and away from a speculative development led system which would make it easier for local authorities to be in control.
- Working with communities and incentivising them to want development.
- Modernising the planning service through better digital services.
- Maintaining a regular system of communication to engage with local authorities.

Members made the following comments:

- The proposals were welcomed compared to previous years.
- It was queried when councils would be able to have access to infrastructure levy funding.
- National policy seemed to continue to take precedence over local policy which sometimes did not fit local circumstances.
- Permitted development rights had been impeding on local communities and local authorities' ability to have a say and be strategic in developments.

- It was queried what the benefits of a legal requirement for councils to produce design codes.
- There were concerns at implementing the Biodiversity Net Gain and if £4 million of funding to support councils would be enough to resource this.
- The nutrient and neutrality issues which were preventing development of housing seemed to clash with the planning reforms.

In response, Simon Gallagher made the following comments:

- The need to receive the infrastructure levy funding early was recognised as an integral part of development.
- It was hoped that national development management policies would reflect what was already in local plans which would enable local authorities to focus on local concerns and this would be communicated further.
- Permitted development rights were in place to prevent having to wait for long term regeneration schemes and allow quick adaptation.
- Design codes were introduced as many councils were producing their own supplementary plans which had no legal force, under the reforms there would be legally binding design codes Design codes.
- Not just generalist skills of core planning officers were important, but specialists in environment were an important part of the process.
- DLUHC were aware of the problem with nutrients and neutrality for development and had been working collaboratively with Natural England.

The Chairman thanked Simon Gallagher for his attendance.

**Decision:**

Members noted the report.

**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 Pippa Heylings	South Cambridgeshire District Council
	Cllr Loic Rich	Cornwall Council
Members	Cllr Kelham Cooke	South Kesteven District Council
	Cllr Mark Crane	Selby District Council
	Cllr Daniel Humphreys	Worthing Borough Council
	Cllr Paul Marshall	West Sussex County Council
	Cllr Patrick Nicholson	Plymouth City Council
	Cllr Linda Taylor	Cornwall Council

Cllr Martin Gannon  
Mayor Philip Glanville  
Cllr Ed Turner  
Cllr Cathy Mitchell  
Cllr Emily Darlington  
Cllr Vikki Slade

Cllr David Beaman

In Attendance

Cllr James Jamieson  
Chris Boardman  
Martin Key  
Simon Gallagher

LGA Officers

Jo Allchurch  
Calum Davidson  
Charli Fudge  
Katharine Goodger  
Eamon Lally  
Charles Loft  
Kamal Panchal  
Emilia Peters  
Nick Porter  
Hilary Tanner

Gateshead Council  
Hackney London Borough Council  
Oxford City Council  
Warrington Borough Council  
Milton Keynes Council  
Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole  
Council  
Waverley Borough Council