



People & Places Board

Agenda

Friday, 23 September 2022
2.00 pm

Hybrid Meeting - 18 Smith Square and
Online

There will be a meeting of the People & Places Board at **2.00 pm on Friday, 23 September 2022**
Hybrid Meeting - 18 Smith Square and Online.

LGA Hybrid Meetings

All of our meetings are available to join in person at [18 Smith Square](#) or remotely via videoconference as part of our hybrid approach. We will ask you to confirm in advance if you will be joining each meeting in person or remotely so we can plan accordingly, if you wish to attend the meeting in person, please also remember to confirm whether you have any dietary/accessibility requirements. 18 Smith Square is a Covid-19 secure venue and measures are in place to keep you safe when you attend a meeting or visit the building in person.

[Please see guidance for Members and Visitors to 18 Smith Square here](#)

Catering and Refreshments:

If the meeting is scheduled to take place at lunchtime, a sandwich lunch will be available.

Political Group meetings and pre-meetings for Lead Members:

Please contact your political group as outlined below for further details.

Apologies:

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

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

Attendance:

Your attendance, whether it be in person or virtual, will be noted by the clerk at the meeting.

LGA Contact:

David Pealing
david.pealing@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.

People & Places Board – Membership

[Click here for accessible information on membership](#)

Councillor	Authority
Conservative (12)	
Cllr Kevin Bentley (Chairman)	Essex County Council
Cllr Morris Bright MBE (Vice Chairman)	Hertsmere Borough Council
Cllr Lynne Doherty	West Berkshire Council
Cllr Marc Bayliss	Worcester City Council
Cllr Peter Butlin	Warwickshire County Council
Cllr Hilary Carrick	Cumbria County Council
Cllr Sam Chapman-Allen	Breckland Council
Cllr Jordan Meade	Gravesham Borough Council
Cllr Eddie Reeves	Oxfordshire County Council
Cllr Martin Tett	Buckinghamshire Council
Cllr Phillippa Williamson	Lancashire County Council
Cllr Barry Wood	Cherwell District Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Jane Evison	East Riding of Yorkshire Council
Cllr Shaun Gunner	Arun District Council
Cllr Colin Kemp	Woking Borough Council
Labour (4)	
Cllr Amanda Serjeant (Deputy Chair)	Chesterfield Borough Council
Cllr Judi Billing MBE	Hertfordshire County Council
Cllr Simon Henig CBE	Durham County Council
Cllr Damien Greenhalgh	High Peak Borough Council and Derbyshire County Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Alan Waters	Norwich City Council
Cllr Erica Lewis	Lancaster City Council
Liberal Democrat (3)	
Cllr Emily Smith (Vice-Chair)	Vale of White Horse District Council
Cllr Caroline Leaver	Devon County Council
Cllr Stan Collins	Cumbria County Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Michael Mullaney	Leicestershire County Council
Independent (3)	
Cllr Emily O'Brien (Deputy Chair)	Lewes District Council
Cllr Kevin Etheridge	Caerphilly County Borough Council
Cllr Sue Roberts	South Oxfordshire District Council

<i>Substitutes</i>	
Cllr Georgina Hill	Northumberland County Council
Cllr Julian Dean	Shropshire Council
Cllr Caroline Topping	Suffolk County Council

Agenda

People & Places Board

Friday, 23 September 2022

2.00 pm

Hybrid Meeting - 18 Smith Square and Online

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Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday, 8 November 2022, 10.30 am, Hybrid Meeting
- 18 Smith Square and Online

Note of last People & Places Board meeting

Title:	People & Places Board
Date:	Tuesday 7 June 2022
Venue:	Hybrid meeting (via Microsoft Teams OR Beecham Room, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ)

Attendance

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

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
1	<p>Welcome, Apologies and Substitutes, Declarations of Interest</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Members, officers and guests to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies had been received from Cllr Doina Cornell.</p> <p>Cllr Emily O'Brien declared an interest as she works for a national food charity on the Sustainable food places programme.</p>	
2	<p>Minutes of the last meeting</p> <p>A question was asked which related to retrofit. An officer confirmed that a report covering retrofitting would be submitted to the next Board meeting.</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2022 were agreed as an accurate record.</p>	
3	<p>Business in the Community update</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Lord Steve Bassam, Chair of the Business in the Community (BITC) Place Taskforce, and invited Esther Barrott, Adviser, to introduce the report.</p> <p>Esther introduced the report which provided Board Members with a brief overview of the BITC Place Taskforce and the Board's involvement to date to support a discussion with Lord Steve Bassam.</p> <p>Lord Bassam set out the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background information which related to the report and the work of the taskforce to date. • The need to emphasise the importance of business engagement to ensure that resources were allocated to achieve the targets set out in the 12 missions that government had established for levelling-up. • The 14 recommendations set out within the report, which focused 	

on:

- Collaboration
- Business leadership driving successful partnership and place-based
- The unique resources of each partner and the need for leveraging
- Government's approach to ensuring that businesses were involved in relation to levelling up.

Board Members made a number of comments and asked questions which related to the following points:

- Potential programmes to develop new skills, focused on the green skills agenda and retrofitting.
- Funding sources and the need for resources and targets to be brought together.
- The need for a business input that did not dominate the business agenda.
- Future collaboration with the LGA post-publication.
- The planning agenda and the need to make highstreets an attractive place to live, to allow businesses to thrive.

Lord Bassam responded to Board Members' comments, setting out the following points:

- There was a strong case from both the LGA and local authorities for much more place-based action in relation to climate change.
- The need to develop upskilling in place and drawing the talents of people within local communities in relation to the changing nature of local economies was emphasised.
- BITC continued to engage with government officials to encourage collaborative working to achieve targets, it was suggested that this be in concert with the LGA.
- The relationship between combined-authorities and government, and the need for a more equal distribution of funding was acknowledged.
- The need to create a more diverse workforce within economies was recognised.
- The importance of continuing to work in partnership with Councils, Councillors and the LGA in the future was emphasised.
- Joint representations would be made to government in terms of implementing the report.
- Planning shaped all communities and more thought needed to be given in the future in relation to reviving highstreets.

Lord Bassam thanked both the LGA for their continued help and support also Cllrs Abi Brown and Simon Henig, for their invaluable contributions to the report.

The Chair, on behalf of the Board, expressed thanks to Lord Bassam and other BITC colleagues for their hard work and also to Cllrs Abi Brown and Simon Henig.

Decision:

- Board Members noted the report.

Action:

- Officers to ensure that all LGA council leaders received a copy of the BITC report and that recommendations be addressed with BITC colleagues.

4 The role of councils in addressing the rising cost of living

The Chair welcomed Rose Doran, Senior Adviser in the Children, Welfare, Equality and Democracy (CWED) officer team, and invited Esther Barrott, Adviser, to introduce the report.

Esther introduced the report which provided an overview of the LGA's current work on support for low-income households, led by Rose and the Resources Board.

Rose set out the following points:

- Background information which related to the Resources Board and policy join-up.
- Council finances being impacted by the rising cost of living was being considered.
- Work in relation to addressing the rising cost of living had increased significantly as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and continued to increase post-pandemic.
- The need for a positive narrative was emphasised, as well as highlighting the challenges and the need for a properly resourced welfare system to ensure a sustainable approach to having greater resilience within communities.
- The need to better protect communities in the future was emphasised and would be a key theme at the LGA annual conference 2022.
- A workshop had been set up which focused on council's engagement with service users in relation to anti-poverty.
- At a recent Resources Board meeting, it was suggested that a steering group be set up to discuss the role of councils in addressing the rising cost of living. Input would be required from a representative from each Board.
- The steering group would deliver action learning and bring together key focuses and specific issues.

Board Members commented on the issues that the rising cost of living had brought, including:

- Fuel poverty.
- The need to retrofit properties.
- The need to promote and prioritise closer co-ordination with voluntary and community sectors.
- Access to public transport, employment opportunities and support services in rural and coastal areas.

- The Agricultural sector and food security.
- Planning and use of land.
- Heating oil costs.
- The lack of battery storage technology.
- Increased mortgage and interest rates.
- The need for rural proofing.
- Digital infrastructure.
- The lack of affordable housing.
- The need for planning permission regulations to change to ensure that more residential lets were available.

It was agreed by the Board that Cllr Emily O'Brien represent the Board on a cost-of-living steering group.

Rose noted all of the points raised by Board Members and confirmed that she'd continue to link in with other Boards in relation to the rising cost of living issues, and the Board's representative, Cllr Emily O'Brien.

Cllr Emily O'Brien thanked the Board for the endorsement.

Decision:

- Board Members noted the report.

Action:

- Officers to provide regular update/progress reports to future meetings of the Board.

5 Levelling Up Locally

The Chair invited Esther Barrott, Adviser, to introduce the report.

Esther introduced the report which provided a short update in relation to the Levelling Up Locally inquiry.

Board Members made the following comments:

- The importance of leadership and working together was emphasised.

Decision:

- Board Members noted the report.

Action:

- Officers to provide regular updates to Board Members regarding the development of the Inquiry.

6 Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill Update

The Chair invited Eleanor Law, Adviser, to introduce the report.

Eleanor introduced the report which provided an overview of provisions within the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill related to devolution and levelling up missions.

Board Members made a number of comments and asked questions which related to the following points:

- Equality in relation to powers between different devolution deal areas.
- Concerns in relation to powers transferred to combined authorities without consent and the exclusion of districts.
- Cllr Emily O'Brien asked that it be minuted that extensive discussions had recently taken place within the independent group in relation to a strong opposition to devolution powers being conditional on an elected mayor, and also, concerns about the move towards larger authorities.
- The importance of planning, green field sites, renewable energy and the nuclear programme was emphasised.
- Roles of parish and town councils and associated responsibilities.

Decision:

- Board Members noted the report.

Action:

- Officers to work with councils, government and parliamentarians to identify opportunities and challenges posed by the Bill.

7 People and Places Board Annual Report

The Chair invited Rebecca Cox, Principal Policy Adviser, to introduce the report.

Rebecca introduced the report which summarised the Board's activity over the past year. It set out key achievements in relation to the priorities for the People and Places Board in 2021/22 and looked forward to next year's priorities.

Board Members made a number of comments and asked questions which related to the following points:

- The importance of inclusiveness.
- The Chair suggested that the final report be circulated to all LGA council leaders to highlight the work of the Board, with a brief summary of the People and Places Board at the start of the report. The Chair asked that the final report be signed by all Members of the Board prior to being circulated.
- The importance of rural proofing.
- The importance of digital connectivity.
- Rural resilience in terms of networks.
- Green skills and retrofitting.

- Access to services in rural and coastal communities.

Rebecca confirmed that all LGA Boards produced an annual report of their own to be submitted to the Executive Advisory Board meeting in July. Once agreed by the Executive Advisory Board, officers would look to see whether a Member-friendly document could be circulated to LGA council leaders.

Decision:

- Board Members noted the report.

8 Forward look on employment and skills

Please refer to the confidential minutes document for more information related to this item.

9 The UK Shared Prosperity Fund and the Future of Growth Funding

Please refer to the confidential minutes document for more information related to this item.

Appendix A - Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority	
Chairman	Cllr Kevin Bentley	Essex County Council	
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Morris Bright MBE	Hertsmere Borough Council	
	Cllr Emily Smith	Vale of White Horse District Council	
	Cllr Simon Henig CBE	Durham County Council	
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Emily O'Brien	Lewes District Council	
Members	Cllr Rachel Bailey	Cheshire East Council	
	Cllr Marc Bayliss	Worcester City Council	
	Cllr Peter Butlin	Warwickshire County Council	
	Cllr Hilary Carrick	Cumbria County Council	
	Cllr Jordan Meade	Gravesham Borough Council	
	Cllr Eddie Reeves	Oxfordshire County Council	
	Cllr Martin Tett	Buckinghamshire Council	
	Cllr Phillippa Williamson	Lancashire County Council	
	Cllr Barry Wood	Cherwell District Council	
	Cllr Damien Greenhalgh	High Peak Borough Council and Derbyshire County Council	
		Cllr Caroline Leaver	Devon County Council
		Cllr Stan Collins	Cumbria County Council
		Cllr Kevin Etheridge	Caerphilly County Borough Council
	Cllr Sue Roberts	South Oxfordshire District Council	
Apologies	Cllr Doina Cornell	Stroud District Council	
In Attendance	Cllr Peter Heydon	Bracknell Forest Borough Council	
	Cllr Michael Mullaney	Leicestershire County Council	



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31 August 2021

Terms of reference

Purpose of report

For decision.

Summary

The People and Places Board provides a forum for local authorities that are not metropolitan to debate economic growth and public service transformation in their areas. Members are asked to review and agree the Board's terms of reference.

Lead members asked officers to look at how climate, environmental and sustainability issues were being handled across the LGA, and this paper includes some options for members' consideration.

Is this report confidential? Yes No

Recommendation/s

Members are asked to agree the People and Places Board's terms of reference.

Action/s

Member services officers to record and publish the agreed ToR.

Contact officer: Rebecca Cox
Position: Principal Policy Adviser
Phone no: 0207 187 7384
Email: rebecca.cox@local.gov.uk

Terms of reference

Summary

1. The People and Places Board provides a forum for local authorities that are not metropolitan to debate sustainable economic growth and public service transformation in their areas.

Remit

2. The People and Places Board brings together senior and authoritative elected members from non-metropolitan authorities (county, district/borough, and non-metropolitan unitary councils), and is reflective of those in Combined Authorities or seeking devolution deals. The role of the Board is to develop greater clarity on the role of non-metropolitan authorities in enabling sustainable economic growth for the long-term benefit of residents, and on how devolution and transformation of public services can enable that.
3. Its remit is to consider how planning and infrastructure provision, publicly-funded skills and employment programmes, digital connectivity and housing might be better-deployed in a non-metropolitan setting to drive sustainable growth leading to greater prosperity, with a particular focus on building capacity around the green economy. It will also consider how people services and health and care integration, together with greater use of pooled funding, might help to improve wellbeing and drive transformation in services.
4. The lead members asked officers to investigate whether there was anything in the way other LGA Boards were including climate, environment and sustainability issues that the People and Places Board might learn from. Other Boards have used the following language, and members are invited to comment on whether they would like to amend the language in paragraphs 2 and 3.
 - [The City Regions Board] will also consider the role of urban leaders in responding to the climate and ecological emergencies, working with the Economy, Environment, Housing and Transport Board
 - The [Culture, Tourism, and Sport] Board will support the culture, tourism and leisure sectors to understand and act on their contributions to carbon net zero aims and wider climate change issues.

Operational accountabilities

5. The Board will seek to involve councillors in supporting the delivery of these priorities (through Forums, policy grouping, Special Interest Groups (SIGs), regional networks and other means of wider engagement); essentially operating as the centre of a network connecting to all councils and drawing on the expertise of key advisors from the sector.
6. The People and Places Board will be responsible for:
 - Ensuring the priorities of councils are fed into the business planning process.
 - Developing a work programme to deliver their brief, covering lobbying, campaigns, research, improvement support and events and linking with other boards where appropriate.
 - Sharing good practice and ideas to stimulate innovation and improvement.
 - Representing and lobbying on behalf of the LGA, including making public statements on its areas of responsibility.
 - Building and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders.
 - Involving representatives from councils in its work, through task groups, Commissions, SIGs, regional networks and mechanisms.
 - Responding to specific issues referred to the Board by one or more member councils or groupings of councils.
7. The People and Places Board may:
 - Appoint members to relevant outside bodies in accordance with the Political Conventions.
 - Appoint member champion and spokespersons from the Board to lead on key issues.
8. Cllr Mark Hawthorne is the digital champion, reporting to the Board.

Work Programme

9. The Board to set its own work programme which is agreed at the start of each meeting cycle in early Autumn.

Quorum

10. One third of the members, provided that representatives of at least 2 political groups represented on the body are present.

Political Composition

11. The composition by political party is recalculated each year and reflects the political proportionality of the wider group of councils from which their membership is drawn.
12. The current composition is:
 - Conservative group: 12 members
 - Labour group: 4 members



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31 August 2021

- Independent group: 3 members
- Liberal Democrat group: 3 members

Substitute members from each political group may also be appointed.

Frequency per year

13. Meetings to be five time per annum.

Reporting Accountabilities

14. The LGA Executive provides oversight of the Board. The Board may report periodically to the LGA Executive as required, and will submit an annual report to the Executive's July meeting.



Meeting: -

Date: -

People and Places Board Work Programme

Purpose of report

For direction

Summary

This report sets out a work programme for the People and Places Board for members' formal agreement.

Is this report confidential?

Yes

Recommendation/s

Members are asked to comment on and agree the proposed work programme for the 2022/23 political cycle.

Contact details

Contact officer: Rebecca Cox

Position: Principal Policy Adviser

Phone no: 0207 187 7384

Email: rebecca.cox@local.gov.uk

People and Places Board Work Programme

Background

1. The People and Places Board has a wide remit, as set out in its terms of reference. This paper sets out a proposed framework for the Board's work in the forthcoming year. Within the broader framework will be opportunities for the Board to respond to new issues as they arise, and the Board is free to amend the framework during the year should the local or national policy context change.
2. This paper was written after the conclusion of the Conservative leadership election and the appointment of Liz Truss as Prime Minister. In discussing this paper, Members will want to reflect on any early indications of national policy direction. At the time of writing the Government has just announced its intention to hold a fiscal event on 23 September, where possible officers will report back on any announcements likely to be of interest to the Board.
3. The framework also contains several projects that were agreed in the previous Board cycle and will complete in the coming months. This gives the Board more flexibility when considering how it might like to use its resources in the second half of the cycle.
4. Following the LGA's annual conference and the publication of [Signals of the Future](#), which was commissioned from Ipsos MORI, the LGA will be taking a fresh look at the long term issues facing the country and what local government's role is in addressing them. This will also support our work to influence manifestos in the lead up to the next general election. The People and Places Board is already well positioned in this space, thanks to its foresight in commissioning the Levelling Up Locally Inquiry, the Work Local refresh and other projects. In their consideration of the work programme, members might wish to consider how the Board's findings and recommendations might feed into the LGA's wider work.
5. Members will want to ensure that the Board's work programme speaks to the cost-of-living crisis which is set to severely impact communities, businesses, and public services. Aspects of this are woven throughout our work programme, albeit with a stronger emphasis on long-term preventative work. The People and Places Board will also feed into the LGA's wider cost of living work through participating in the steering group. Any further views from members about how the Board should engage on this issue are welcome.

Proposal

6. Five themes for the Board's work programme are set out below. Where these are supported by briefing papers, these are mentioned in the text.
7. **Rural Proofing**

Having heard from the National Farmers Union in 2021/22, the Board will continue to explore the need for rural proofing and recognition of rural needs in policy.

DEFRA has published their [second report](#) on the progress of rural proofing and delivering across Rural England. The report sets out some of the challenges of levelling up in rural communities including rural productivity, connectivity, accessibility and rural hardship, as well as future publications and research they will undertake relating to rural priorities. In addition to this, the report sets out how government is intending to level up rural economies and communities, with particular focus on strengthening rural economy, connectivity by developing rural infrastructure, access to rural services and management of the natural environment, as well as how each of the 12 levelling up missions are contributing to rural levelling up. DEFRA Officials will be invited to a future Board meeting to discuss

Officers recently met with Britain's Leading Edge, a collaboration of twelve rural upper-tier local authorities without major cities who aim to shape national debate highlighting the contribution rural regions can make to a sustainable national economy. Britain's Leading Edge will attend the November Board meeting to discuss opportunities for future collaboration.

In the last year the People and Places Board has also worked to influence and inform the work of other LGA Boards with a view to addressing issues of rural importance. A paper to the first board considers the issue of nutrient neutrality, which is being led by the LGA's Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board. Members may wish to consider whether there are other issues which would benefit from similar scrutiny.

8. **Levelling Up**

Despite the uncertainty surrounding the future of the levelling up agenda in its current form, we are hopeful that the incoming government will continue to see reducing regional inequalities as a priority. In the last Board cycle, members commissioned a number of areas of work jointly with the City Regions Board to position councils at the heart of levelling up, which are set out in more detail in the accompanying paper:

- The Levelling Up Locally Inquiry, looking at funding and alignment, leadership, productivity and prosperity, and place and identity. Its initial roundtables have been completed and the inquiry will bring contributors together in October for two sense-making sessions. The final set of findings and recommendations will be brought to the November Board meeting.
- We will continue to lobby on the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, particularly with regard to the Missions.

- Our Work Local proposals for a more localised employment and skills system were launched in the summer. Officers are focusing on engaging stakeholders, especially businesses and employers, and laying the groundwork for engaging Parliamentarians from all parties and new Ministers in the autumn. In addition, we are continuing work agreed in the previous Board cycle to understand the role of councils and combined authorities in addressing inequalities in skills and employment (see accompanying paper).

9. **Digital Connectivity and Inclusion**

The Board has a good track record lobbying on digital connectivity and at the March board members agreed to expand the work programme to cover digital inclusion which will be crucial to addressing social and economic inequalities and levelling up every community. As such the Board will focus on four areas as part of the 2022/23 digital work programme led by Cllr Mark Hawthorne, the LGA's digital champion. These include continued policy work around digital connectivity and calls for digital champions, the implications of upgrading infrastructure with a focus on lobbying around the integration of the public switched telephone network, digital and the cost-of-living crisis, and a newly commissioned piece of work looking at the intersection between digital infrastructure and inclusion.

10. **Skills for the green economy**

At the last Board meeting, members identified the need for there to be a step change in retrofitting homes to support councils to deliver net zero commitments, tackle the cost-of-living crisis and fuel poverty and keep homes warm. Members directed officers to focus on ensuring there is the qualified workforce available to deliver the scale of retrofit needed, and that this needs to be developed at the local level. Local government has real ambition to deliver on its net zero commitments, and therefore needs a localised, place-based approach to deliver retrofit, which should include an integrated employment and skills offer that is tailored to local need. This would form the first part of a wider piece of work on the green economy.

The accompanying paper sets out activity to strengthen our relationships with stakeholders, including SMEs where there is less understanding of the role of local government, and to influence Government through the Green Jobs Delivery Group and other channels.

11. **Growth funding**

At the final board meeting of the last political cycle, members of the People and Places Board agreed to the preparation of a report for the LGA Executive proposing to consider the future of growth funding. There is already an immediate

focus on ensuring vital local services can keep pace with rising inflation and increased demand from residents, and in the longer term, a need to ensure councils have greater ability to boost productivity and strengthen sustainable and inclusive growth across the country. The accompanying paper sets out a proposal to commission some technical analysis to allow us to better make the case for the relative efficiency of local investment.

The Board also shares with the City Regions Board the responsibility for the LGA's work on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, and any issues arising from this over the course of the year will be brought to the Board under this heading.

Implications for Wales

12. Many policy areas are devolved, however where the topic allows we will work with the WLGA and other bodies to ensure issues relating to Welsh councils are properly represented.

Financial Implications

13. Work commitments can be met from the Board's policy budget.

Equalities Implications

14. We strive to reflect equality, diversity and inclusion issues throughout the work programme, whether through the focus of the project, the scope, design and research, or our engagement with stakeholders. More detail is included in the background papers.

Next steps

15. Members are asked to comment on:
 - The overall balance of the work programme
 - Any gaps or other issues that should be considered, particularly with regard to the rising cost of living
 - Any considerations arising from the new Prime Minister's policy priorities.
16. Officers will incorporate members' comments and, subject to the agreement of the Board, proceed with the work programme.

Digital connectivity and inclusion

Purpose of report

For discussion.

Summary

This paper provides an overview of recent policy and public affairs activity relating to digital connectivity and inclusion and proposes a digital work programme for the 2022/23 board cycle in this area, subject to approval from the Board.

Recommendations

Members are invited to:

- **Note** recent policy and public affairs activity in relation to digital connectivity and inclusion in the 2021/22 board cycle.
- **Discuss** the proposed 2022/23 work programme with Cllr Mark Hawthorne, the LGA's Digital Champion, including:
 - A joint digital champions event
 - Media and support work on the digital switchover
 - A future discussion about mobile and broadband affordability
 - Research and future activity on digital inclusion.

Action

- Following the discussion between Board Members and Cllr Hawthorne, officers will continue with the 2022/23 digital work programme as set out above.

Contact officer: Esther Barrott
Position: Adviser
Phone no: 07464652906
Email: esther.barrott@local.gov.uk

Digital connectivity and inclusion

Background

1. Through the 2021/22 board cycle officers took forward public affairs and policy work relating to digital connectivity and inclusion, working with the LGA's digital champion Cllr Mark Hawthorne.
2. In the 2021/22 board cycle the LGA [responded](#) to a Westminster Hall Debate on digital inclusion, responded to the National Infrastructure Commission's baseline report call for evidence, submitted evidence and subsequently [responded](#) to a Public Accounts Committee report into Project Gigabit which had [wide coverage from news outlets including the BBC](#), and met with the head of regional tech policy at DCMS. We also [responded](#) to the Levelling Up White Paper target for the UK to have nationwide gigabit-capable broadband and 4G coverage by 2030. We shared a [press response](#) to the Government's announcement of eight pilot areas to speed up 5G rollout and Cllr Hawthorne gave an interview at the end of February to the BBC about the gigabit capable broadband rollout. We also issued a [press release](#) in response to the Government's announcement of a change in the planning laws to increase the use of permitted development rights in relation to the size of mobile masts and responded to a Public Accounts Committee inquiry on the delayed broadband rollout and gambling reform. The LGA is well positioned to build on its media profile to be even more visible across the 2022/23 Board cycle.
3. On 7 September 2022 it was announced Julia Lopez would be appointed Minister of State at the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). Julia was previously Minister of State at the department between September 2021 and July 2022.
4. A well-attended session was held at the LGA's annual conference on 29 June 2022 exploring 'Levelling Up: The Role for Digital'. The session was chaired by Cllr Hawthorne and speakers included Selaine Saxby MP, Phil Swan from Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Helen Milner from Good Things Foundation and Aruj Haider from Westminster City Council.
5. Speakers highlighted the scale of the challenge of digital exclusion. For example, in Greater Manchester 450,000 people are digitally excluded and 700,000 are digitally marginalised in some way. Supporting everyone in the UK to be digitally included would bring 21 billion pounds to the UK economy. Initiatives to tackle digital exclusion were discussed such as Good Things Foundation's [three year strategy](#) and Westminster's community digital ambassadors, voucher schemes and accelerator programmes. Speakers highlighted the need to reach a point where every community has a place where local people can go to access help to use the internet, everyone has access to free or affordable devices and connectivity, and every citizen feels able and safe in the digital world.

6. The next section of this paper draws on discussions with Cllr Hawthorne to set out four proposed areas the Board might like focus on as part of the LGA's 2022/23 digital work programme. These areas include continued policy work around digital connectivity, the implications of upgrading infrastructure, digital and the cost-of-living crisis, and a new piece of commissioned work on digital exclusion.

Board cycle 2022/23

Digital Connectivity

7. The Board has a good track record lobbying on digital connectivity as demonstrated in the success of the Superfast Broadband Programme, where councils were the centre of delivery having committed £740 million to extending connectivity to the hardest-to-reach areas.
8. Rural areas face specific challenges. According to [Ofcom Connected Nations 2021 report](#) 83 per cent of rural areas in the UK have access to superfast broadband connection compared with 98 per cent of urban areas. 12 per cent of micro and small businesses in rural areas are unable to receive decent broadband from a fixed line compared with only 1 per cent of micro urban businesses and 3 per cent of small urban businesses. The 4G coverage of operators outside rural premises ranges from between 93 and 97 per cent whereas each operator serves more than 99 per cent of urban premises. At the same time rural data usage continues to grow more rapidly, up 42 per cent on the previous year.
9. Officers continue to keep a watching brief on issues around digital connectivity. The proposed changes to the electronic communications code (ECC) are laid out within the Product Security and Telecommunications Infrastructure Bill which is currently at report stage going through the House of Commons. Government recently [published the outcome](#) of a consultation into street manager and permit schemes.
10. Officers regularly attend the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport (ADEPT) digital connectivity working group meetings to ensure the LGA is aware of any concerns from the sector, and the LGA representatives sit on the [Digital Connectivity Forum](#) – the Government's primary advisory group on the provision of seamless digital connectivity (formerly known as the Broadband Stakeholder Group). The LGA's place on the forum is an opportunity for Cllr Hawthorne and officers to engage with a range of organisations including Virgin, BT, Tech UK, TalkTalk, Vodafone, Ofcom and DCMS on a regular basis.
11. The Board has long called for further funding from Government for digital connectivity champions to help co-ordinate delivery locally. Mobile UK, the membership body of UK mobile operators, now echoes these calls having recently published research calling on

Government to [fund local authority digital champions](#). The LGA partnered with Mobile UK in July 2022 to hold a webinar 'Building Mobile Britain: The Case for Local Authority Digital Champions'. In addition to this Cllr Hawthorne has attended a meeting with the ADEPT Digital Connectivity Officers Group to discuss the role of digital champions and has met with County Councils Network and District Councils Network to gather further support for the proposal. LGA officers have since met with Openreach to gain support from a broadband perspective, too.

12. It is proposed the LGA holds a joint event with CCN, DCN, Mobile UK and Openreach in the autumn to highlight calls for fully funded digital champions in every local authority and the importance of the role. This will be a key ask of the new minister, Julia Lopez, and officers are in contact with DCMS to ensure a representative from the department will attend the event.

Implications of upgrading infrastructure

13. The planned integration of all analogue lines (also called public switched telephone network or PSTN) to digital internet-based infrastructure will see operating analogue-based products completely phased out by 2025 and replaced with an all-digital network. Telecare devices such as personal alarms and fall detectors are largely analogue products putting the 1.7 million people who rely on technology enabled care at the most risk.
14. This continues to be cause for concern impacting on both council infrastructure as well as services for residents. Officers have been working with teams across the LGA to support councils with the switchover and lobby DCMS on the issue. The LGA recently published a [digital switchover hub](#) on its website providing background to the switchover, answering FAQs and sharing useful resources for councils. A [local government digital switchover working group](#) was formed in March 2022 and has representatives from each region of England to discuss challenges, hear from invited speakers and share good practice.
15. While the PSTN switchover is an industry-led process, the LGA is asking DCMS to coordinate the multiple bodies involved with the switchover. Coordination and accountability will be vital to align communications messaging and ensure sectors and consumers, including people who access care and support, are protected, and prepared for the upgrade process. The four areas the LGA believe DCMS should be better coordinated are safe data sharing, funding, communications support, and the central testing platform.
16. In a similar vein, an agreement between government and mobile network operators saw Vodafone, EE, O2 and Three UK agree a national plan to phase out all existing 2G and 3G services by 2033. Vodafone have announced they will be switching off their UK 3G network by the end of 2023, and EE and Three by 2024. 2G is still widely used in Smart Meters and other internet-connected devices (also know as 'Internet of Things' or IoT

devices) and remains a fallback for predominantly voice-only calling in rural areas. Where a customer only has access to an older 3G-only device Three have said they 'will work with customers to ensure they stay connected'. However, it is not clear how this will work in practice. It is concerning that the switch-off will impact disproportionately on older people as well as low-income households who are unable to afford smartphone technology.

17. Officers have commissioned a digital switchover readiness survey to assess how prepared councils are for the switchover. Once results from the survey have been collated, it is proposed they are used in three ways: to accompany a press release highlighting the scale of the challenge; to enable the LGA to provide better targeted support to councils; and to inform a meeting with the new minister highlighting the LGA's key asks as outlined in paragraph 11. We will be writing to Julia Lopez highlighting our concerns about the switchover and asking for a meeting with Cllr Hawthorne. Officers will also use the meeting to highlight concerns about the 2G/3G switch-off and lack of plan to support those most in need.

Cost of living crisis

18. The rising costs of fuel, food and other essentials are combining with existing disadvantage and vulnerability within communities to put many households at greater risk of both immediate hardship and reduced opportunity and wellbeing. Almost six million households are struggling to afford essential communication services such as mobile phone, broadband and landline as the cost-of-living crisis worsens.
19. Tackling digital poverty will provide vulnerable groups across society with better access to key services including housing provision, employment services and healthcare information, with World Health Organisation figures showing being cut off from the digital landscape is linked to poorer health and lower life expectancy. This, in turn, will improve the economic and social prosperity of communities. There are two main routes to do this: reducing VAT and introducing social tariffs.
20. VAT rates on broadband currently sit at 20 per cent compared with 5 per cent for other utilities. Additionally, all utilities other than broadband are included on the benefits system, despite it being hard for people to find work without online access. Which? has recently [urged Government to reduce VAT](#) on household telecoms bills to 5 per cent in line with other essentials. Research shows if the rate of VAT on broadband was reduced to the same 5 per cent as charged on other essential services it would amount to a difference of around £2.1 billion per year. Cutting VAT would result in an untargeted saving which would have little benefit to the wider digital inclusion agenda. Instead, a reduction could be replaced with a social levy to support households with equitable access to broadband and provide digital skills training.
21. In August, Government committed to encourage social tariffs to help reduce broadband bills for millions of low-income households. They [announced](#) a new service going live in

August 2022 and run by the DWP to allow internet service providers to verify whether consumers are in receipt of a relevant benefit and therefore eligible for extra financial support. Government has also called on all broadband providers to offer and promote social tariffs – discounted broadband and mobile deals for people on Universal Credit and other benefits – as only 1.2 per cent of those eligible have taken advantage of such package to date. Officers have met with the Shadow Secretary of State for digital, Lucy Powell's team, to understand Labour's views on digital and the cost of living.

22. There is an opportunity for the LGA to shape the debate around mobile and broadband affordability and social-tariffs and cuts to broadband VAT might be areas the board wishes to explore further over the upcoming cycle.

Digital inclusion

23. At the Board meeting in March 2022, members agreed for the Board to expand its work to cover digital inclusion which will be crucial to addressing social and economic inequalities and levelling up every community.
24. Rural areas face specific challenges associated with being excluded from accessing digital services and products. In 2019 Ofcom figures showed only 18 per cent of over-75s used smartphones compared with 95 per cent of 16- to 24-year-olds. Rural areas, which have an older-than-average population, feel this challenge most acutely. Due to poorer transport networks in rural areas and longer distances to delivery venues it can be more difficult and expensive for people to access outreach venues such as libraries and community venues. Additional challenges associated with disability, older age and low income are compounded in rural areas. Tinder Foundation's Rural Action Research found under represented groups living in rural areas are more likely to suffer from increased social isolation.
25. Following a steer from members, officers have commissioned a piece of work to help inform the LGA's lobbying positions related to the scale of the challenge of digital exclusion, its link to digital infrastructure, and the role of local government in supporting the agenda. First, the provider will explore the intersection between digital infrastructure and digital inclusion and examine the extent to which the Government's mobile and broadband rollouts have failed to address digital exclusion. Second, the provider might quantify the impact of the disadvantage looking at a few chosen areas. A final report will draw on the provider's research and will evidence the intersection between digital infrastructure and inclusion, the scale of the challenge for different communities, and recommendations for Government about how councils can be the link to make infrastructure rollouts more equitable and inclusive.
26. The commissioned work will run from October 2022 to January 2023 and will help strengthen the board's future lobbying around digital exclusion. Officers will keep board members updated with progress and invite the provider to a future board meeting to discuss the work with members.

Next steps

27. Members are invited to:

- **Note** recent policy and public affairs activity in relation to digital connectivity and inclusion in the 2021/22 board cycle.
- **Consider** the proposed 2022/23 work programme as outlined by Cllr Mark Hawthorne, the LGA's Digital Champion.

28. Subject to feedback from Board Members, officers will continue with the 2022/23 work programme.

Implications for Wales

29. Digital infrastructure policy is a devolved responsibility.

Financial Implications

30. The Board's activities are supported by budgets for policy development and improvement. The research will be funded from the Board's budget for policy development.



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23 September 2022

Retrofit Skills Discussion Paper

Purpose of report

For direction.

Summary

This report sets out the current context of retrofit and the skilled workforce needed to reduce energy usage and tackle climate change. Local government has ambitions to achieve net zero and reduce the external impact of energy prices, especially for the most vulnerable communities. This work is the first part of the Board's focus on developing wider green jobs and skills.

The report highlights the role of the Green Jobs Delivery Group and the intention for the LGA to develop partnerships with other sector bodies to influence government policy with the aspiration to develop a publication on progress on retrofit skills which has contributions from sector partners to influence future government thinking.

Summary

Is this report confidential? Yes No

Recommendations

The report recommends the Board develop a retrofit jobs report to understand the progress of national government ambitions to develop the retrofit skills workforce. This would be informed by discussion and potential collaboration with relevant partners.

Action/s

Members are asked to comment and agree the next step actions as summarised in paragraph 36.

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Retrofit Skills Discussion Paper

Background

1. At the last Board meeting, members identified the need for there to be a step change in retrofitting homes to support councils to deliver net zero commitments, tackle the cost-of-living crisis and fuel poverty and keep homes warm. Members directed officers to focus on ensuring there is the qualified workforce available to deliver the scale of retrofit needed, and that this needs to be developed at the local level. Local government has real ambition to deliver net zero, and therefore needs a localised, place-based approach to deliver retrofit, which should include an integrated employment and skills offer that is tailored to local need.
2. This paper provides an update to members on the urgency of the situation as well as the activity councils and the LGA are undertaking to develop the investment structure and skills collaboration needed to address the retrofit challenge. This is the first element of the wider work on green jobs.
3. It sets out proposed next steps in developing a set of roundtables building on the Green Jobs Delivery Group, a BEIS led group of partner organisations to look at developing green skills and jobs. This would enable the LGA to collaborate with wider partners to try and shape any future government retrofit skills initiative to be localised and place based. In the longer term, we can utilise the work of the roundtable partners to understand the progress of developing the retrofit workforce, what barriers remain and how any future government initiatives are faring. It could build on the success of the [LGA green jobs report](#).

The urgent need to address the retrofit challenge

4. With over 300 councils declaring a climate emergency, net zero has become a key priority for the sector, which is gaining more traction as the negative effects of climate change become apparent. As place leaders, councils have an influential role to support the reduction of carbon emissions, with the ability to impact on more than a third of emissions across villages, towns and cities in areas such as housing, transport and the natural environment.
5. Household energy bills have increased significantly with a 54 percent increase in the energy price cap in April 2022. This is expected to significantly increase energy bills in October to £3,250, moving an estimated 8.2 million households into fuel poverty¹.

¹ [8.2 million households could be in fuel poverty from October | NEA](#) Accessed 19/08/2023

6. This will have a significant impact on household budgets at a time where there are wider inflationary pressures on food, transport and other essential commodities. Consumer Price Inflation is at 9.9%², in the context that there has been 5.2% growth in regular pay³. The [cost-of-living crisis](#) will combine with existing disadvantage and vulnerability within our communities to put many households at greater risk of both immediate hardship and reduced opportunity and wellbeing.
7. To reduce energy consumption and tackle the rising energy costs in some of the most vulnerable households, there needs to be a step change in delivering retrofit measures. LGA research estimates there is the potential that over 1000 homes a day could be retrofitted⁴. This will help create the warm and comfortable homes that would reduce costs to the NHS by £1.9 billion and support almost 31,000 new, skilled jobs in the construction and retrofit industries.
8. A study by the Green Financing Institute and Bankers for Net Zero found that to achieve net zero by 2050, the retrofit industry will need to increase ten-fold⁵, therefore needing to ensure that there is a qualified and skilled workforce to deliver such change.

Local government leadership in addressing the retrofit challenge

9. The local government family has ambitions to retrofit their communities to support net zero and reduce fuel poverty. For example, combined authorities, such as Greater Manchester Combined Authority's (GMCA) Skills for Growth Programme, which awarded [£1.1 million of ESF monies to North West Skills Academy](#) to upskill in retrofit skills over 1000 people in construction and other relevant industries.
10. Councils, such as Devon County Council and Chesterfield Borough Council, have utilised the Community Renewal Fund and other funding sources to develop models to provide the skills and employment pipeline needed to address the retrofit and wider construction challenges. Using the Community Renewal Fund, Devon has developed lecturer training, sector specific qualifications/units and employment programmes. Through the Staveley Town Deal, Chesterfield and partners will develop a Constructions Skills Hub, which intends to offer training in retrofit and other green technologies⁶.

² <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/bulletins/consumerpriceinflation/august2022>
Accessed 14/09/2022

³

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/averageweeklyearningsingreatbritain/september2022> Accessed 14/09/2022

⁴ <https://www.local.gov.uk/delivering-local-net-zero>

⁵ [Tooling-up-the-Green-Homes-Industry_FINAL.pdf \(volans.com\)](#)

⁶ <https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/home/latest-news/staveley-town-deal-project-aims-to-build-skills-for-the-future.aspx> Accessed 14/09/2022

11. As part of their [Climate Emergency Action Plan](#), the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) developed a [Green Skills Report](#), which included local [Retrofit Skills Market Analysis](#) and [Green Skills Market Analysis](#) to understand the supply chain issues and skills needs to deliver on their local net zero ambitions, as well as positive examples of action, such as the [Green Futures Fund](#), to support the education of green skills in schools and other academic institutions.

The LGA's work to support local government address the retrofit challenge

12. The EEHT Board is commissioning two pieces of work. First, demonstrating the benefit of local leadership in decarbonising buildings and transport at the street or neighbourhood level. Second, the designing of an approach whereby local and national government work together to further enable decarbonisation of heat and buildings up to 2050, building on existing local strategies and bringing them together into a single national programme/framework.
13. The LGA is also providing significant improvement support for councils to step up to the retrofit challenge. Building on the [LGA green jobs report](#) (2020), [Leading and Learning sessions to create local green jobs](#) (2021) and [Building Housing Retrofit Skills Leadership](#) (2022), the Local Retrofit Action Planning programme will bring together retrofit leads from across local government, to deliver a package of training, resources and guidance, to support the development of localised action plans.

Government response to retrofit challenge

14. In 2020, the government launched a £3 billion funding stream to retrofit homes and public buildings across the UK. £1 billion of this was allocated to improving the energy efficiency of public buildings, such as schools and hospitals through the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund.
15. £2 billion of this was allocated to the Green Homes Grant Voucher Scheme. This offered homeowners the opportunity to apply for up to £5,000 funding (£10,000 for low-income households) to install energy efficiency improvements and low carbon heat measures in their homes. Homeowners were expected to identify a certified installer and apply for vouchers with the installer receiving the grant funding once they had fitted the measure.
16. However, the NAO has established that the Green Homes Grant Scheme has been underwhelming⁷. It showed the delivery and implementation of the scheme was rushed, reducing the intended benefits of the scheme. There was frustration for homeowners and installers with the scheme, and it had limited impact on longer term job creation. The fast-paced procurement process added with the short-term nature of the scheme made it harder for installers to mobilise to meet demand.

⁷ [Green Homes Grant Voucher Scheme - National Audit Office \(NAO\) Report](#)

17. The experience of the scheme demonstrated challenges of investing in a new market without developing a skills pipeline and the investment to support it. In addition, it shows the lack of a strategic, long-term approach in developing the workforce needed. The independent Committee for Climate Change has recently raised concerns about the progress of developing the skills pipeline to meet the challenges ahead. The lack of a Net Zero Skills Action Plan, the need for improved data on workforce in relevant operations and the need to build confidence in the business sector⁸.
18. The multiple pressures identified above could see a greater emphasis on investment in retrofit from the next Prime Minister and the new cabinet. The approaches that have previously undertaken so far show there has been a centralised, short-term approach to developing the skills needed for retrofit, and not bringing together the supply chain, workforce and systems are in place that are needed. This can only be achieved through the collaboration of national and local government, as well as business and the voluntary sector, which will need to come together as quickly as possible to develop the workforce needed to deliver this priority.

Challenges and opportunities in rolling out retrofit

19. Conversations with councils and stakeholders over the summer have supported the development of some draft policy positions the Board might wish to explore further. The topics listed below could also be included in the proposed roundtables as an opportunity to develop shared lines with partners.

Managing capacity to meet the retrofit challenge

20. There has been great movement towards place-based approaches led by local government to developing the workforce and supply chains needed to deliver retrofit and net zero ambitions. The York and North Yorkshire devolution deal includes a commitment to explore the potential benefits of and design options for a place-based approach to delivering retrofit measures, and we understand this will be likely included in other devolution deals. There is less clarity for non-devolved areas.
21. In a scenario where there is sudden investment in retrofitting homes from national government, it is likely that there will not be a large enough skilled workforce available to deliver the scale of investment, repeating the experience of the Green Voucher Scheme. This may undermine the local place-based model that local areas are keen to continue to develop.
22. The government should develop strategy and provide funding on a longer-term basis. This will enable local areas to use the current skilled workforce to prioritise those properties with the most vulnerable communities in the short term. But also have the time, space and resources needed to developing partnership, resourcing, private funding

⁸ <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/2022-progress-report-to-parliament/>

and careers pathways needed to develop the retrofit workforce for every household in their community.

Developing good jobs through retrofit career pathways

23. Developing retrofit skills provides an opportunity to develop clear career pathways that create employment routes into the sector and effectively reskill and upskill the current workforce. Current salaries in the sector show that there is an opportunity to develop highly skilled vocational roles which increase individual incomes above the average national salary⁹. These roles can help tackle the cost-of-living crisis and provide opportunities for individuals in communities that experience disadvantage and limited access to well paid jobs that are needed in the longer term to achieve net zero and support the delivery of levelling up aspirations.

Supporting the private sector to develop retrofit skills

24. In the UK, the market for retrofit mainly comprises of SMEs, which creates a fragmented market compared to other European countries¹⁰. Increasing the demand for retrofit could grow and investment in skills by companies will follow. With resource prices fluctuating and energy costs spiralling, the market is likely to concentrate on short-term issues.

25. Economic Growth teams and business support functions within local government could support local retrofit markets. The removal of funding silos between economic growth and skills and employment schemes will help as business support schemes that incentivises SMEs to upskill and develop workforce will support the supply chain issues. If the sector is developed using a place-based approach, economy, skills and employment departments will be able to support businesses to effectively pivot into the market.

Greening the workforce

26. In addition to the focus on retrofit, we are exploring the challenges to develop the local government workforce and skills needed to green local economies and places. This will cover a range of areas, including the development of the workforce for the natural environment, farming, and the planning function. Members may wish to explore the workforce needs to develop infrastructure to deliver net zero, as part of wider local infrastructure investment. For example, the investment in hydroelectric renewable energy as part of the development of free ports and how it can support job creation in coastal communities.

The Green Jobs Delivery Group

27. One avenue available to influence government policy is the BEIS led Green Jobs Delivery Group which explores the skills and training needs to achieve net zero. Local

⁹ [Salary: Retrofit Assessor \(August, 2022\) | Glassdoor](#)

¹⁰ [Tooling-up-the-Green-Homes-Industry_FINAL.pdf \(volans.com\)](#)

government is represented on the Green Jobs Delivery Group through the Chief Executive of Cornwall Council, Kate Kennally. The organisations that participate in the group represent professional institutions, environmental groups, energy companies, business organisations, employee groups and education and training providers.

28. The Group has recently agreed their workplan and the issue of retrofit skills and the local approaches needed will be the focus of its next meeting in October. The LGA is supporting Kate at these meetings, which is a great opportunity to land key messages, including:

28.1. Local government has a unique leadership role to join up the collective action of partners, businesses and communities as 230 councils declared a climate emergency, and two-thirds of England's councils aim to be carbon neutral by 2030.

28.2. The Government should bring forward a place-based package of targeted public investment to decarbonise / retrofit social housing and public buildings alongside skills and employment funding to make this happen.

28.3. All of local government can work shoulder-to-shoulder with Government to join up careers advice and guidance, employment, skills, apprenticeships, and business support services to create an integrated skills and employment system tailored to local needs, as outlined in Work Local.

29. A meeting will be taking place between local government representative and lead members from People & Places, City Regions and EEHT Boards to discuss the broader green jobs work programme and the need for greater representation of local government. This meeting will be held in advance of the next Delivery Group meeting in October.

Retrofit Workforce Cross Sector Roundtables

30. To take our work forward we are reaching out to the other partners of the group to expand our stakeholder network and explore collaboration opportunities. Throughout the summer, we have been strengthening connections with partners to take forward our aims. This includes Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment, the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education, the Green Alliance, MakeUK and Federation of Master Builders.

31. We are also keen to explore how we can collaborate and share thinking within and beyond the Green Jobs Delivery Group, including with SMEs, with the possibility of developing collective messages through a set of member-led roundtables.

32. The roundtables could then be used to be used to assess what progress is being made to address the retrofit skills challenge in the longer term in order to:

32.1. Shape any new national government scheme or policy to develop the retrofit workforce, so it meets the needs and demands of local places.

32.2. Identify areas that are not being addressed by any new national government scheme or policy.

32.3. Consider the challenges and opportunities discussed earlier in this paper.

33. This would provide an opportunity to gather further evidence to develop a document that leads on from the [LGA green jobs report](#) with a particular focus on retrofit skills with the attempt to influence government thinking and encourage longer term planning. It will enable the sector to identify systemic issues that the government needs to address in advance of winter 2023, as well as explore the type of retrofit jobs that are available and if they meet the aspirations of local places.

34. We would welcome members' steer on the membership, format, purpose or content of the retrofit skills roundtable model outlined above.

Next steps

35. Officers will

- 35.1. Provide an opportunity for lead members to raise issues through the local government representative on the Green Jobs Delivery Group
- 35.2. Develop a roundtable with relevant partners from the Green Jobs Delivery Group to explore collaboration in messaging to government.
- 35.3. Support the ongoing collaboration with the roundtable stakeholders which could include exploring developing outputs such as a retrofit jobs report.
- 35.4. Develop further policy lines incorporating any member feedback.

Implications for Wales

36. This report highlights the activity of the LGA in relation to retrofit skills in England. The LGA will be working closely with the WLGA, as well as NILGA and COSLA on approaches to retrofit.

Financial Implications

37. There are no additional financial implications as activity is funded through LGA work.

Equalities Implications

38. Low-income households and those communities which are more likely to experience poverty are more vulnerable to the increase in energy costs which could have knock on effects for health inequalities. The characteristics of the most vulnerable households will vary between local areas with different implications for households in both urban and rural areas.

39. Developing a skilled vocational career pathway in retrofit will provide additional opportunities for individuals in lower paid jobs to access stable, well-paid careers. This will in turn will help reduce inequalities.

40. Through this work, we will recognise that some communities are less likely to work in the relevant industries or take up relevant qualifications. Local areas know their communities



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best and will explore where there may be barriers to enter professions for certain groups. This is a key strand of the work programme of the Green Jobs Delivery Group.

The role of councils in supporting ‘economic inclusion’: Unlocking talent to level-up

Purpose of report

For direction.

Summary

This paper provides an overview of the current picture of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in employment and skills and key information for a discussion on the topic. Members are asked for a steer on LGA’s approach to this new area of work.

The aim of this piece of work is to examine the role of councils in supporting economic inclusion, and shine a light on the disparities, alongside the good practice that exist, to develop ‘what good looks like’.

Is this report confidential? Yes No

Recommendation/s

Members are asked to:

Consider this paper and provide a steer on the LGA’s approach to supporting the economic inclusion in employment and skills piece of work.

Agree the next steps to take this work forward (**para 18.0 -18.9**).

Action/s

Officers will use the discussion and members’ steer to progress our equality, diversity and inclusion work.

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The role of councils in supporting ‘economic inclusion’: Unlocking talent to level-up

Background

1. Recent analysis of the employment and skills landscape reveals that equality and diversity is not completely reflected in jobs, skills, and training opportunities – stark inequalities are prevalent in both people and places. Economic inclusion – ensuring everyone has equal access to well-paid employment - is vital for a local economy to flourish.
2. Many councils are already tackling these inequalities and are working hard at the vanguard of this agenda; however, there is merit in the context of LGA’s [Work Local](#) and [Levelling up](#) ambitions to explore how the role of councils in supporting equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in employment and skills could be advanced to help unlock talent and level up local area.
3. Two of the twelve levelling up missions specifically focus on these areas: Mission 1 relates to raising pay, employment, and productivity to close the gap between areas, and Mission 2 plans to increase high-quality skills in the lowest skilled areas.
4. This paper sets out how we intend to expand our employment and skills work to better understand and take account of EDI implications. A range of evidence highlighting inequalities and key issues are included and member approval on the suggested approach is sought.

A new focus of our employment and skills work

5. This focus on EDI in employment and skills aims to support our policy work relating to Work Local and levelling up. It will examine the inequalities such as access to sustainable employment or training opportunities and in-work progression. The project will:
 - 5.1. set out the evidence on most prevalent inequalities in employment and skills and reflect on the key protected characteristics (for example, gender, race, disability) and, where there is significant evidence, on other vulnerable groups as well;
 - 5.2. outline the challenges faced by specific cohorts and communities experiencing disadvantage (for example care leavers, white working class);
 - 5.3. provide opportunities for councils to learn and share knowledge and experience through discussions, roundtables, and case studies;
 - 5.4. identify and share best practice from the public sector, including innovative public/private sector collaborations;
 - 5.5. gather the knowledge from discussions, roundtables, and councils to compile a compendium of case studies to showcase ‘what good looks like’.

The importance of improving EDI in employment and skills

6. Recent events such as the COVID-19 pandemic have only exacerbated existing disparities and laid bare the entrenched inequalities in people and places, resulting in a social and economic imperative to tackle this issue. For many, this means equity

and inclusion in education, skills and employment provision. Recent [figures](#) show there are significant variations in skills achievements and in regions. While post COVID-19 pandemic apprenticeship figures show an upward trend in many areas, important gaps and downward trend remain in others, for example, in Cumbria there were 2040 apprenticeship achievements in academic year 2019/20 and 1880 in 2020/21 respectively.

7. Currently, employment and skills inequalities exist across many areas - age, disability, ethnicity, gender, and can be exacerbated by intersectionality, or different characteristics interacting to have a greater effect. Due to the availability of current data and to demonstrate the stark differences a range of measures are used to reveal the scale of the challenge. A few examples of inequalities are given below, however, this is not definitive or exhaustive.

7.1. Age

- In May 2022 the unemployment rate for 16-24 year olds was **10.4 per cent**¹, against **3.8 per cent** for the UK as a whole².
- The employment rate for people aged 50 to 64 has been steadily rising over the past twenty years, however, in December 2021 this stood at **70.9 per cent**, a drop of **1.8 per cent** from its peak of **72.7 per cent**³. The Centre for Ageing Better voiced concerns that this group is being left behind by the post-pandemic recovery and faces many barriers to re-employment. Its report also reveals large regional variation in how the pandemic has impacted older workers.

7.2. Disability

- The unemployment rate for disabled people was **8.4 per cent** in December 2020, almost double compared to an unemployment rate of **4.6 per cent** for people who are not disabled⁴.

7.3. Ethnicity

- May 2022 figures show that the unemployment rate among Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) workers has more than doubled that of White counterparts. Also, the gap has widened significantly since the start of the pandemic with the unemployment rate for BAME workers standing at **7.7 per cent** compared to **3.5 per cent** for White workers⁵.
- With post-16 outcomes, nearly all (**94 per cent**) pupils go into employment, education or training (EET), except for Gypsy, Roma (**68 per cent**), and Irish

¹ <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn05871/>

² <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/employmentintheuk/july2022>

³ <https://ageing-better.org.uk/work-state-ageing-2022>

⁴ <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-7540/#:~:text=The%20unemployment%20rate%20for%20disabled,people%20who%20are%20not%20disabled>

⁵ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/uklabourmarketmay202>

Traveller pupils (**74 per cent**)⁶. The outcomes are similar for mixed White/Black Caribbean pupils at **76 per cent** and **77 per cent** for Black Caribbean pupils respectively.

7.4. Gender

- The government's latest [gender pay gap](#) report shows that last year, women in the UK were paid **90p** for every **£1** earned by a man and demonstrate that even when women secure work inequalities continue to impact them in the workplace.
- Furthermore, according to recent research the employment rate of mothers is nearly **20 per cent lower (75.1 per cent)** compared to fathers, which stood at **92.6 per cent** in June 2019.⁷

7.5. Intersectionality between different characteristics

- These inequalities worsen when looking at intersectionality (how interconnected social characterisations can create independent systems of disadvantage or discrimination). In December 2021 the unemployment rate was highest for women from a Pakistani or Bangladeshi (**11.7 per cent**) and Black (**10.6 per cent**) ethnic background, compared to an overall female unemployment rate of **4.2 per cent**⁸.
- Also, among young people aged 16-24, unemployment rates were highest for people from a Black (**31 per cent**) ethnic background. This was nearly three times higher than young people from a White ethnic background which stood at **11 per cent**.⁹

8. These statistics paint a concerning picture and show that large proportions of our communities and more importantly potential workforce are not active in the labour market. From a social and economic point this is wrong and every effort must be made to put this right.

Local government's role in improving outcomes

9. Councils and combined authorities seek to ensure that individuals are equipped to achieve their full potential in education and employment, regardless of gender, age, disability, and ethnicity. They have been tackling inequalities as part of this role, including promoting the EDI agenda by creating job opportunities for all to benefit from; ensuring their workforce better reflects its local communities; and assisting businesses to provide training/skills opportunities.
10. In addition, councils have several statutory duties relating to youth participation; to ensure all young people up to the age of 18 (25 for those with learning difficulties) participate in education or training. Despite having these wide-ranging responsibilities

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/post-16-education-outcomes-by-ethnicity-in-england>

⁷ <https://www.businessleader.co.uk/employment-rate-of-mothers-has-dropped-20-lower-than-fathers/>

⁸ <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN06385/SN06385.pdf>

⁹ <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN06385/SN06385.pdf>

that demand close working with local providers, partners and employers, councils have very few formal levers over commissioning or co-ordination of provision to meet them.

11. As stated in the [Government's Levelling Up White Paper](#) '*not everyone shares equally in the UK's success. While talent is spread equally across our country, opportunity is not.*' In [Work Local](#) we set out our ambition to work with Government to unlock talent by spreading opportunity to all parts of the country. This is critical for the economy and local areas as significant [skills gap are predicted by 2030](#).

Promoting EDI in employment and skills provision: an overview

12. Councils know their communities including those experiencing disadvantage or those that are more difficult to reach and therefore are best placed to address the local inequalities. A few examples are provided below to illustrate the current picture and showcase some of the innovative work that is taking place in local areas, including on making their own workforces more inclusive, working with employers, and procurement.
13. Councils are committed to supporting both businesses and individual to access the skills needed:
- Tees Valley CA is developing the [Teesworks](#) site. As it is an area with low skills and high unemployment, the CA is working hard to ensure employers recruit local people with the right skills and launched its 'Teesworks Skills Academy.
 - Cambridgeshire & Peterborough CA used its AEB £12 million allocation to increase participation by nearly 10 per cent (2020/21), targeting low-skilled residents in deprived areas (Fenland and Peterborough), and introduced a £1,200 bursary for Care Leavers aged 19-22, fully funded English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).
 - Durham County Council is addressing its skills needs through apprenticeships. They have specifically linked the council's ambition for a thriving economy with more and better jobs to an [Apprenticeship Strategy](#).
 - Bristol City Council's [employment, skills and learning service](#) (ESL) brings together apprenticeships, adult community learning, post-16 and employment support and '[Bristol One City](#)' is a multi-agency co-designed approach to tackling emerging local issues – needs and gaps. These initiatives have helped some of most vulnerable and those experiencing disadvantaged.
 - Nottinghamshire County [Futures](#) localised support offer helps young people through transitions in their lives. Recent [figures](#) show that **97 per cent** of young people who have left Year 11 continued into further education, training or employment, leaving **2.8 per cent** as NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training), while **just 0.2 per cent** of Year 11 leavers' status as 'not known'. These figures demonstrate a targeted and localised support offer works better than national provision.
14. Working with employers:
- the LGA commissioned [Good Work report](#) sets out that diversity and inclusion are key aspects of 'good work' with case studies demonstrating how councils and combined authorities are supporting good work. For example, North of Tyne

Combined Authority developed a Good Work Pledge with businesses and other key stakeholders.

15. Councils recognise that a diverse and inclusive workforce is vital to designing and delivering services that meet the diverse needs of their communities:
- West Midlands Combined Authority's successful efforts have helped them to secure a coveted place on the list of [inclusive top 50 UK employers](#).
 - [Birmingham City Council](#) and [Herefordshire County Council](#) (2 of 18 councils) that are taking part in the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) project to have a [Workforce Race Equality Standard in social care](#), which aims to achieve workplace equality.
 - [Leeds Museums and Galleries](#) demonstrating the benefits of supporting those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
16. Public sector procurement is a useful tool to promote EDI in local areas and maximise local benefit:
- [Southwark Council 'Framing the future of diversity in architecture'](#) provides an insight into the lessons learnt from their award-winning Architect Design Services Framework and also addresses the overall lack of diversity in the workplace.
17. As outlined above, there are many tools and levers available to councils to enhance this agenda, which many councils are using. However, this piece of work aims to share learning across councils and help them progress this agenda further.

Next steps

18. Over the next few months, we will gather evidence to develop a better understanding of how councils are working with local partners to address employment and skills disparities. This will include work with the wider policy team as well as:
- 18.1. **local authorities equalities survey** that looks at EDI post COVID-19 across different areas and will incorporate employment and skills questions. This will be sent out to all councils in the Autumn;
 - 18.2. **regional roundtables** starting in the Autumn. The events will have a thematic focus on employment and skills;
 - 18.3. **a roundtable/webinar event with councils** to share knowledge and experiences on embedding EDI in employment and skills;
 - 18.4. The evidence from the project will be used to compile a **compendium of case studies** to showcase 'what good looks like';
 - 18.5. To conclude, we will examine the learning from the project, case studies, and roundtable with councils to develop **EDI principles** to guide the role of councils in supporting EDI in employment and skills.
 - 18.6. **Based on the evidence presented in this paper Members' steer and comments are welcome**, specifically
 - 18.7. on the approach for this piece of work (**para 18**);
 - 18.8. whether there are any local/regional specific issues that councils/CAs are dealing with
 - 18.9. whether there is anything else that members would like this work to explore.



[Click here to enter text.](#)

23 September 2022

Equalities Implications

19. This piece of work aims to focus on the inequalities in employment and skills faced by specific cohorts and communities. It will set out how a more localised and partnership approach can be more effective.

Implications for Wales

20. Employment and skills are largely devolved matters; however, the Local Government Association works closely with Welsh local authorities and the Welsh Local Government Association to share best practice and expertise on our programmes.

Financial Implications

21. Any financial implications arising from this work will be met from the board's core policy budget.

The Future of Growth Funding

Purpose of report

For direction.

Summary

This report summarises proposals in relation to work regarding the future of growth funding and recommends that report is taken to the LGA Executive for approval.

Is this report confidential? Yes No

Recommendation/s

Members are asked to consider and review the questions identified at paragraph 9.

Action/s

Based on this feedback and comments from the City Regions Board, a paper will be taken to the Executive Advisory Board for formal sign off.

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The Future of Growth Funding

Background

1. At the final board meeting of the last political cycle, members of the People and Places Board agreed to the preparation of a report for the LGA Executive proposing to consider the future of growth funding.
2. Since then, further evidence regarding the complexity of growth funding has emerged in correspondence between [the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities](#) and the [Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee](#), indicating both wider interest in this subject and the scale of the task at hand.
3. Notably, the levelling up agenda has also been impacted by the resignation of the previous Prime Minister and the deteriorating economy poses significant additional challenges for people, businesses, and public finances.
4. On 3 September 2022, DEFRA announced the [Rural England Prosperity Fund](#) worth £110 million as an addendum to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. It is a replacement for the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, which previously funded the LEADER programme.
5. The fund has been [allocated](#) to UKSPF lead authorities who qualify for the fund based upon a [specific methodology](#) identifying a baseline of rural coverage. Lead authorities are tasked to develop an addendum to their UKSPF local investment plan focusing on rural interventions, which will need to be submitted by the end of November 2022 and will run from 2023/24-2024/25.
6. It is positive that the particular needs of rural areas have been addressed. However, this late addition to the UKSPF will place further demand on the sector's capacity as they will have to quickly develop, with the support of local partners, an additional section of their local investment plans. We are concerned that this demonstrates a lack of a joined-up approach from government, recreating policy silos rather than ensuring a consideration of rural issues built in across Whitehall. We are seeking engagement with government to provide the sector with an opportunity to feedback any issues from this initial roll out.
7. With councils facing additional cost pressures of £2.4 billion in 2022/23 since they started to set their budgets in Autumn last year there is an immediate focus on ensuring vital local services can keep pace with rising inflation and increased demand from residents. [Recent press reports](#) have also suggested that allocations made under the various levelling up funding programmes are now likely to fall short, with a survey by the District Councils Network finding that 40 per cent of respondents would have to delay projects because of high inflation.

8. In the longer term, the only way to successfully navigate these headwinds is to boost productivity and strengthen growth across the country. The LGA believes that the best way to achieve this goal is to cut Whitehall bureaucracy and allow communities to take control through place leadership and devolution.
9. Given this context, it is proposed that this work proceed on basis that a case will likely have to be made where the relative efficiency of local investment is at least as important as the scale of the resource required to meet local needs. In recognition of the need for technical accuracy and independent credibility it is recommended that external support is sought to help complete this work.

Issues

10. In September 2020, the LGA [published research](#) which revealed that local government received at least 448 unique grants from central government between 2015/16 to 2018/19. This creates [huge silos of central bureaucracy in Whitehall](#) and creates [significant costs for councils](#) that are forced to use scarce resource to bid for much needed money.
11. The Government's Levelling Up White Paper recognised this issue and proposed to set out a plan for streamlining the funding landscape this year. It remains to be seen whether the new Government will continue with this proposal, either way it would seem prudent for councils to develop a clearer understanding of the issues at stake and the potential opportunities for reform.
12. To do this, it is proposed that the People and Places Board works jointly with the City Regions Board to commission a piece of technical analysis that considers the following clusters of questions:
 - 12.1. What is the total quantum of 'growth funding' currently available, how much of this is under the control of local authorities, how do current levels of funding compare to allocations under previous spending cycles, how much of this money is allocated as a grant, rather than a loan or other financial instrument?
 - 12.2. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the methodologies currently used to allocate resources from the centre to local projects, do competitively allocated pots engender better quality outcomes, how does capacity at the centre to review and approve expenditure impact on project delivery?
 - 12.3. How do other countries allocate investment to support growth at the local and subnational level, are there any lessons applicable to England within the context of the Government's levelling up agenda and the opportunities presented by devolution to better align resources with local outcomes and leadership?

- 12.4. What are the opportunities to better connect funding in support of greater growth with the proceeds and consequences of that growth?

Implications for Wales

13. Growth funding is largely a devolved matter; however the Local Government Association works closely with colleagues in Welsh local authorities and the Welsh Local Government Association to share best practice and expertise on UK Growth Funding programmes such as the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Financial Implications

14. Any financial implications arising from this work will be met from the boards core policy budget.

Next steps

15. Members are asked to consider and review the questions identified at paragraph 9. Based on this feedback and comments from the City Regions Members, a paper will be taken to the Executive Advisory Board for formal sign off.

Housing supply and nutrient/water neutrality

Purpose of report

For direction.

Summary

This paper introduces the Economy, Environment, Housing and Transport (EEHT) Board's policy inquiry into housing supply and nutrient/water neutrality. It asks members whether they would like to participate in the inquiry, and whether there are any non-metropolitan issues they would like raised.

Is this report confidential? Yes No

Recommendation/s

That the People and Places Board discuss this issue and agree how members can best engage with the inquiry.

Action/s

Officers to invite a speaker from the Environment Economy Housing and Transport team to join the Board meeting and engage with the inquiry as directed by members.

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Housing supply and nutrient/water neutrality

Background

1. Phosphates and nitrates are both types of nutrients that can damage wildlife at high levels. [Phosphates and nitrates mainly enter the water system through agricultural practices and water industry discharges](#) (e.g. wastewater treatment works). Patterns of nutrient pollution vary by region, depending on population density, extent and type of agriculture and habitats can be impacted by one or both of these nutrients.
2. In England, Natural England monitors the condition of special habitats and provides advice to local planning authorities. Special habitats are protected by international law, set out in the Habitats Directive, and where habitats are threatened by this nutrient pollution, local planning authorities are being directed to pause all planning decisions in affected areas. This advice is now impacting a significant number of councils, and research commissioned by the LGA, '[Nutrient and water neutrality: The impact of environmental protections on housing supply](#)', shows the scale of the issue and the seriousness of the planning moratoriums.
3. Ground water abstraction has also been linked to a decline in biodiversity in protected habitats due to low water levels, which can also lead to advice to pause planning decisions. A small number of councils in West Sussex are impacted by advice on water neutrality, but the challenges of dealing with this issue are significant and may become more prevalent due to the impact of climate change and other sources of water stress elsewhere in the country.
4. Councils are actively seeking solutions, but there is growing concern that the support offered so far is not going far enough. Long term action will require joint working through a preventative and whole system approach, involving water companies, the agricultural industry, housing developers, environmental organisations, the Environment Agency, Natural England and the government. Therefore, the LGA has launched a policy inquiry on housing supply and nutrient and water neutrality, inviting a variety of national stakeholders and councils to participate in creating solutions to this escalating issue.

Current scale of the issue

5. LGA analysis finds that over seven per cent of all of England's planned house building cannot go ahead due to new laws on river pollution, with further house building banned in other areas because of low water levels.
6. More than 70 local authority areas are currently affected by these moratoriums on planning, with 23 councils having more than 90 per cent of likely house building areas impacted by the bans.

7. Together around 20,000 new homes a year will not be built unless it is proved they produce no additional pollution, and with few quick fixes the numbers of homes lost could hit 100,000 in the coming years, placing national house building targets in doubt.
8. The Planning Advisory Service has [more information](#) on nutrient neutrality and the planning system, as well as areas currently affected.
9. Government has recently [announced plans](#) to take further action on nutrient neutrality, including a new statutory duty on water companies to reduce pollution in areas affected by Natural England determination and a new funded strategic mitigation scheme which will enable Natural England to provide mitigation options that developers can access via credits.
10. Resolving water neutrality issues requires water companies to secure an alternative, sustainable long-term water supply, and local authorities and developers will have to continue to make efficiencies to reduce water consumption on sites of development and offset water use elsewhere in the meantime.

LGA activity

11. The EEHT Board has launched a [policy inquiry](#) to respond to the immediate and significant pressures placed on councils through their role as local planning authorities. It is overseen by a cross-party group of councillors reporting into the EEHT Board: Cllr David Renard (Chairman of EEHT), Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts (leader of Somerset West and Taunton), Cllr Loic Rich (Deputy Chair EEHT), Cllr Alan Waters (PPB substitute member).
12. The inquiry will gather information from stakeholders through a survey and this will be followed by round table discussions to examine what can be done across the whole environment and water system to reduce the stresses on fragile habitats. It will publish a report in the autumn setting out key learning and recommendations for next steps.

Implications for Wales

13. This issue has affected councils in Wales in a similar way and it is a cross border issue. As in England, Welsh local authorities had no notice of the new advice on nutrient neutrality and are facing similar challenges through the sudden halt to development. 22. Policy in Wales is set by the Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales. While there are different lobbying routes, officers have spoken to the WLGA and agreed to share information and look for opportunities to bring Welsh and English councils together to share experiences. The WLGA noted concerns over the delivery of new social housing in rural areas.

Financial Implications

14. Work proposed can be carried out within current resources.

Equalities Implications

15. The implications will vary by councils. In general terms, the sudden stop to development has exacerbated housing supply problems. The break in the supply of affordable housing will leave people waiting longer in temporary accommodation or the private rented sector.
16. In the longer term, any costs that fall on developers may reduce the amount they can contribute to section 106 and community-based projects.
17. Further considerations may emerge as this is a relatively new issue.

Next steps

18. The inquiry will meet for a roundtable on water neutrality on 28th September and a roundtable on nutrient neutrality on 6th October, bringing together affected councils, government and non-governmental stakeholders such as regulators and representatives of the agricultural sector. The People and Places Board may wish to nominate a representative to attend these meetings.