



# **Local Infrastructure and Net Zero Board**

Agenda

Thursday, 1 February 2024  
11.00 am

Hybrid Meeting - 18 Smith Square and  
Online

There will be a meeting of the Local Infrastructure and Net Zero Board at **11.00 am on Thursday, 1 February 2024** 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.

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

### **Attendance:**

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

### **LGA Contact:**

[MemberServices@local.gov.uk](mailto:MemberServices@local.gov.uk)

### **Carers' Allowance**

As part of the LGA Members' Allowances Scheme, a Carer's Allowance of National Living Wage and/or 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.

## Local Infrastructure and Net Zero Board – Membership 2023/24

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

| <b>Councillor</b>               | <b>Authority</b>                            |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>Labour ( 7 )</b>             |   |
| Cllr Darren Rodwell (Chair)     | Barking and Dagenham London Borough Council |
| Cllr Vince Maple                | Medway Council                              |
| Mayor Paul Dennett              | Salford City Council                        |
| Cllr Claire Holland             | Lambeth London Borough                      |
| Cllr Philip Bialyk              | Exeter City Council                         |
| Cllr Sharon Thompson            | Birmingham City Council                     |
| Cllr Karen Shore                | Cheshire West and Cheshire Council          |
| <b>Substitutes</b>              |   |
| Cllr Ian Snowdon                | South Oxfordshire District Council          |
| Cllr Richard Morris             | Worcestershire County Council               |
| Cllr Cafer Munur                | Bexley London Borough                       |
| <b>Liberal Democrat ( 3 )</b>   |   |
| Cllr Vikki Slade (Deputy Chair) | Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council |
| Cllr Victor Chamberlain         | Southwark London Borough                    |
| Cllr Paula Widdowson            | City of York Council                        |
| <b>Substitutes</b>              |   |
| Cllr Roger Hayes                | Kingston upon Thames Royal Borough          |
| <b>Independent ( 2 )</b>        |   |
| Cllr Loic Rich (Deputy Chair)   | Cornwall Council                            |
| Cllr Diana Moore                | Exeter City Council                         |
| <b>Substitutes</b>              |   |
| Cllr Ed Gemmell                 | Buckinghamshire Council                     |
| Cllr Paul Hilliard              | Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council |
| Cllr Phil Jordan                | Isle of Wight Council                       |
| Cllr Caroline Topping           | Suffolk County Council                      |
| Cllr John Evans                 | Uttlesford District Council                 |
| Cllr Jonathan Essex             | Surrey County Council                       |

## Agenda

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### Local Infrastructure and Net Zero Board

Thursday, 1 February 2024

11.00 am

Hybrid Meeting - 18 Smith Square and Online

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| 1. Welcome, apologies, declarations of interest                                     |         |
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**Date of Next Meeting:** Monday, 18 March 2024, 3.00 pm, Hybrid Meeting - 18 Smith Square and Online

## Regional Energy Strategic Planner

### Purpose of Report

For information.

**Is this report confidential? No**

### Summary

On 15 November Ofgem announced it will create energy planning roles across Great Britain to improve local energy planning and speed up the transition to net zero. The [Regional Energy Strategic Planners \(RESPs\)](#) will work with organisations at a local level including local government and gas and electricity networks, to improve understanding of the infrastructure needed in different parts of the country.

This is important to councils as place makers and service providers to ensure local economic growth, drive down the cost of living and enable councils to facilitate and even invest in local renewable energy generation.

Marzia Zafar, Deputy Director for Digitalisation and Decentralisation, will present the role of the Regional Energy Strategic Planners (RESPs) and how she expects them to work with councils to ensure that the RESPs support, complement and enhance the hard work of councils.

**LGA Plan Theme:** Championing climate change and local environments

### Recommendation(s)

#### That the Board

Consider the presentation and advise on ongoing engagement.

### Contact details

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## Regional Energy Strategic Planner

### Proposal

1. Regional Energy Strategic Planners will be responsible for the development of strategic energy plans at the regional level, providing critical planning assumptions to inform system and network needs. Regional plans will aggregate top-down national targets and scenarios with local and regional insights. The RESPs will be responsible for enabling effective participation and oversight via a democratically aligned governance mechanism.
2. Ofgem, as the Energy Regulator, is tasked with undertaking the detailed design of the RESPs prior to National Grid the Future System Operator (FSO) taking on the implementation. This phase of the RESPs development provides an opportunity for members to assert the importance of councils as spatial planners, housing and infrastructure providers, and increasingly creators of Local Area Energy Plans, as being integral in the establishment and ongoing implementation of the RESPs.
3. Councils are also democratically accountable and could hold the RESPs to account if the governance structures established facilitate this. Democratic accountability has been repeatedly emphasised as a key design consideration needed from the outset for the RESPs and councils with the responsibility for broader spatial planning can provide this.
4. Today you will hear from Marzia Zafar, Deputy Director for Digitalisation and Decentralisation, on the role of the Regional Energy Strategic Planners (RESPs) and how she expects them to work with councils to ensure that the RESPs support, complement and enhance the hard work of councils.
5. The Regional Energy Strategic Planner is a new role currently going through a detailed design phase, making this an ideal opportunity to share how councils can help shape the output of the RESPs, what councils need from the RESPs and what councils can do to support the work of the RESPs.
6. Ofgem are proposing that there will be between 8 and 10 RESPs for England. The proposed RESP solution for England is that they could replicate the Sub-national Transport Body (STB) boundaries (Peninsula Transport, Western Gateway, Transport East, England's Economic Heartland, Transport for the South, Greater London, Midlands Connect and transport for the North) with the option to split Transport for the North and Midlands Connect regions in two, or alternatively for these two RESPs to produce two separate regional strategic plans.

7. The challenge with the proposed RESP boundaries in England is that in most cases, the boundaries do not align with the local government boundaries or with the Distribution Network Operator (DNO) boundaries. RESPs will therefore need to engage with multiple councils and consider multiple local plans for their strategic plan area, as well as engage with multiple DNO's.
8. Given this disparity in area, there is an opportunity for the RESP to take a lead role in coordinating the engagement across councils and DNOs to ensure plans meet the needs of councils and the transmission and distribution networks are both able to deliver on local needs in a timely manner.
9. There is also a question on the role of Local Area Energy Plans (LAEP). Where undertaken, LAEPs have been useful for councils in planning infrastructure needs to meet growth and identifying areas suitable for renewable energy generation. Existing LAEPs will also be useful to RESPs when they first start to consider their strategic planning function. However, where councils have not started on that journey, the RESP may either make that need redundant, or consider that joint investment in the production of a LAEP for a specific area is better value for money.
10. Key points/issues to consider/discuss;
  - How will 8 - 10 RESPs engage meaningfully with 317 councils?
  - Will RESPs look to convene councils and DNO collectively to plan effectively for an energy system designed from the bottom up and the top down?
  - Will the RESPs be sufficiently resourced to undertake such a convening role?
  - What will happen to Local Area Energy Plans that councils have produced?
  - How will the RESPs be democratically accountable?

## Background

11. For the UK to meet its 2050 Net Zero target, every property on the gas grid network (domestic and commercial) will need to be switched over to electric heating, predominantly a heat pump, all passenger transport (personal and public) to transition from petrol and diesel to electric and all commercial transport to transition to a low carbon fuel source. This change is expected to see demand for electricity double (300TWh to 600TWh) and require electricity generated from renewables to increase fivefold.
12. This increase in demand for electricity will require a significant increase in infrastructure including renewable energy generation, solar and wind predominantly, and both electricity transmission and local distribution

infrastructure. Each of these will have an impact on councils in terms of spatial planning, housing and economic growth.

13. Since November 2022, the LINZ board has undertaken a programme of work exploring the barriers and opportunities for an increasingly electrified energy system that will be required to achieve net zero at lowest cost. In November 2022, National Grid DNO presented to the board on the work they were undertaking to re-enforce and an expand their local distribution network to accommodate growth, increase of electric vehicles, increases in electric heating and growth in local renewable energy generation requiring connections to the grid.
14. On 16 March, we held a Smith Square Debate – Climate Change: How to translate climate ambition into local action with Cllr Pippa Heylings chairing and speakers including Lord Deben, Chair of the Climate Change Committee, Jack Richardson - Head of Climate and Energy, Onward, Terri Wills – Urban Strategy Lead, ARUP and Luke Murphy – Associate Director for Energy, Climate, Housing and Infrastructure, IPPR. Topics discussed included - How well are we turning climate ambition into climate action in places? and, What must we do to accelerate climate action locally and nationally up to 2050?
15. On 16 May 2023 Councillor Pippa Heylings chaired our in person Future Local Electricity Networks seminar. Panellists included representatives from the Distribution Network Operators (DNO) in England, National Grid ESO, Ofgem, community energy associations, Energy UK, Energy Systems Catapult and councils to discuss the challenges and opportunities each sector faces and agree a way forward. Discussions were had on how DNOs and Councils can work proactively together, what the role of the Regional System Planner is likely to be, how that supports councils spatial planning and place making responsibilities and how energy system planning can be undertaken at best value.
16. In addition to our in-person meetings, we have responded to a series of consultations on heat networks, onshore wind and regulatory matters including Ofgem’s consultation on Future energy institutions and governance.
17. The future energy institutions and governance consultation sought views on the establishment of Regional System Planners (later to be renamed as Regional Energy Strategic Planners). The response focused on the pivotal role councils need to play in effective energy system planning and operation at the sub national level as they are democratically elected strategic planners and place makers. <https://www.local.gov.uk/parliament/briefings-and-responses/lga-submission-ofgems-consultation-future-local-energy>
18. Following on from this consultation, on 15 November 2023 Ofgem announced it will create energy planning roles across Great Britain to improve local energy



planning and speed up the transition to net zero. The [Regional Energy Strategic Planners \(RESPs\)](#) will work with organisations at a local level including local government and gas and electricity networks, to improve understanding of the infrastructure needed in different parts of the country.

19. The transition to net zero requires radical changes across the energy system. Changes in how we heat our homes, power our vehicles, and generate electricity for electrified heat and transport are underway, but also require significantly more change to our energy system.
20. National Grid the Electricity Network Operator (ENO) is to become the Future Systems Operator (FSO) and become a public body. For the FSO to effectively plan the energy systems of the future, it will establish the Regional Energy Strategic Planners across Great Britain with one in Wales, one or two in Scotland and between 8 and 10 in England, and be the delivery body for RESPs.
21. Other changes happening now include the establishment of Heat Network Zones' with a preference for councils to become Heat Network Zone Coordinators, and a consultation on the Future Homes and Buildings Standards. Officers will be drafting a response to the current consultations on Heat Network Zoning, and The Future Homes and Buildings Standard and both draft responses will be shared with Lead Members for sign off in February.

### Implications for Wales

22. Ofgem proposal is for Wales to have one Regional Energy Strategic Planner covering all the Welsh Local Government area. Officers are engaging with the WLGA to identify opportunities to collaborate on this topic.

### Financial Implications

23. There are no direct financial implications for councils following the establishment of RESPs. Engagement between councils and RESPs is key to the effectiveness of the RESP but most of that cost should sit with the RESPs or National Grid FSO. There is a potential for the establishment of RESPs to save councils money should they negate the need to produce Local Area Energy Plans or invest in LAEPs being produced by councils.

### Equalities implications

24. The equalities implications of society moving to heating most of our homes from heat pumps and phasing out petrol and diesel road vehicles is ensuring the transition is just and fair. Officers are currently working on a report that will

government phasing on how we ensure the net zero transition is just and fair and does not disadvantage sections of our society.

### **Next steps**

25. Officers will continue to engage with Ofgem and National Grid FSO on the detailed design of the RESPs and their implementation. This will include responding to consultations and representing member councils at meetings and events.

## Support for care leavers

### Purpose of Report

For discussion

**Is this report confidential? No**

### Summary

The Chair of the Local Government Association (LGA), Councillor Shaun Davies, has announced that one of his priorities for 2023-24 is corporate parenting, in particular support for care leavers. Recognising that all councillors are corporate parents to children in care and care leavers, all policy boards are being asked to share their own ideas for this priority area, to shape the LGA's work in relation to supporting care leavers. This report outlines current ideas for this programme and next steps, and is an opportunity for Board members to put forward their own ideas and good practice. These will feed into the overall work programme for the Children and Young People Board.

**LGA Plan Theme:** Putting people first

### Recommendation(s)

**That the Board comments on the current plans for this programme of work and suggest any additional ideas as to how the LGA can promote positive outcomes for care leavers, including those based on their own councils' work.**

### Contact details

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## Support for care leavers

### Background

1. The Chair of the LGA, Councillor Shaun Davies, announced at the LGA Annual Conference that one of his priorities for 2023-24 is corporate parenting, and in particular how the LGA can support improved outcomes for care leavers and others with care experience. This was also discussed at Executive Advisory Board on 20 July 2023.
2. The Children and Young People Board will lead on this work, with regular updates also going to Informal Group Leaders and the Executive Advisory Board for organisation-wide oversight and join-up.
3. All policy boards at the LGA are being asked to consider how services within their remit could improve outcomes for care leavers, including potential policy positions and sharing of good practice. This reflects the fact that all councillors and council officers are corporate parents to children in care and care leavers.
4. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 outlines the following corporate parenting principles that all local authorities must have regard to when carrying out functions in relation to children in care and care leavers:
  - 4.1. To act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing, of those children and young people;
  - 4.2. To encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings;
  - 4.3. To take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people;
  - 4.4. To help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners;
  - 4.5. To promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people;
  - 4.6. For those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their homes lives, relationships and education or work;
  - 4.7. To prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

### Outcomes for those with care experience

5. Many people with care experience leave care and go on to happy, fulfilling lives. Care experienced people told the Independent Review of Children's Social Care

that it was important to recognise that, while a lot of policy and media attention is given to the disproportionate numbers of care experienced people who experience negative outcomes, such outcomes are not inevitable and care can be a “positive, transformational and lifesaving experience”<sup>1</sup>. For example, there is [evidence](#) that longer-term care can be a protective factor in children’s educational outcomes. One of the aims of the LGA’s campaign is to emphasise a more positive narrative around those with care experience.

6. However, by understanding where those with care experience are more likely to experience negative outcomes than their peers, it is possible to identify opportunities to address these issues. The Care Review highlights several key areas where government, business and society can play a role in supporting care experienced people:
  - 6.1. An estimated 26 per cent of the homeless population have care experience.
  - 6.2. Almost a quarter (24 per cent) of the prison population in England have spent time in care.
  - 6.3. Four in ten (41 per cent) of care leavers aged 19-21 are not in education, employment or training (NEET) compared to 12 per cent of all other young people of the same age.
  - 6.4. Adults who spent time in care between 1971-2001 were 70 per cent more likely to die prematurely than those who did not.
  - 6.5. Six per cent of care leavers report having no-one at all to provide emotional support, and nearly one in ten only had support from their leaving care worker.

### Current work programme

7. Colleagues across policy, improvement, leadership and communications have been working to develop a programme of work to support the Chair’s priority.
8. Partner organisations are being engaged in this work, including Spectra which runs the Care Leaver Covenant, Become (the national charity for children in care and care leavers) and the National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum (NLCBF) which connects local authority leaving care teams.
9. Ensuring that the voices of those with care experience directly influence this work is vital to ensure the impact and relevance of the programme. Become and the NLCBF have provided advice on engaging those with care experience, as well as evidence from their own work with care experienced people on key priorities.

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<sup>1</sup> [Independent Review of Children’s Social Care 2022](#)

10. Work is being considered across three strands:

- 10.1. The LGA as an employer: including training for all staff, guaranteed interviews where minimum criteria are met for roles (subject to legal advice) and ring-fenced apprenticeship positions.
- 10.2. The LGA as a convener: working with the Care Leaver Covenant to promote their work and encourage sign ups; communications campaign to raise awareness; Work with LAMIT (Local Authorities' Mutual Investment Trust) and CCLA (Churches, Charities and Local Authorities Investment Management) to publicise their work to support care leavers.
- 10.3. The LGA's work to support and improve local government: dedicated outreach and support for care experienced graduates applying to the National Graduate Development Scheme; guidance and case studies for councils; lobbying government in relation to funding for children's social care and to support care leavers who were formerly unaccompanied asylum-seeking children; training for councillors and officers on corporate parenting, including across the 'corporate core'.

### What care leavers say is important to them

11. The following list has been compiled from a variety of organisations (including the [National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum](#), the [Care Leavers National Movement](#), [Barnardo's](#) and the [Children's Commissioner](#)) that have worked with care leavers to identify key support that they would like to see, noting that young people would like to see support offered to all care leavers, including those who are living outside of their local authority area.

| Issue and asks from care leavers  | Examples of good practice  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Finance:</b> support managing household bills; cold weather allowance; council tax exemptions; savings; higher rate of universal credit for under 25s</p> | <p><a href="#">Winter fuel payments in Gateshead</a>; <a href="#">paying council tax for those living out of authority in Doncaster</a></p>  |
| <p><b>Housing:</b> priority access to housing; Staying Put and Staying Close; access to a 'handyman' service and a maintenance fund.</p>                        | <p>Rent guarantor schemes (e.g. in <a href="#">Devon</a>); <a href="#">home improvements via EQUANS</a></p>  |
| <p><b>Travel:</b> support with the cost of getting to appointments, work and staying connected with family and friends; driving lessons.</p>                    | <p><a href="#">Greater Manchester free bus travel</a>; <a href="#">Cornwall free bus travel</a>; <a href="#">free driving lessons and paid for licenses in Medway</a>; <a href="#">bicycle packages in Reading</a></p> |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Health:</b> timely access to mental health services; access to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services until 25 where necessary to avoid moving into adult support too early; paid-for prescriptions; NHS dentists; optician appointments.</p>            | <p><a href="#">Dedicated mental health worker in Lincolnshire</a>; <a href="#">paid prescriptions in Oldham</a>;</p>   |
| <p><b>Digital connection:</b> devices and access to WiFi and data to connect with health services, apply for jobs and stay connected to friends and family.</p>   | <p><a href="#">TalkTalk free broadband and data for active job seekers</a>; <a href="#">Greater Manchester free data, devices and digital skills training</a></p>  |
| <p><b>Leisure:</b> gym passes, including for a friend to go with them; funds for leisure activities.</p>  | <p><a href="#">Cornwall Culture Card</a>; <a href="#">free activities in leisure centres in Dudley</a>; <a href="#">Christmas/festival allowance in Cheshire West and Chester</a></p>  |
| <p><b>Education, employment and training:</b> guaranteed interviews for apprenticeship roles; “work wardrobes”; financial support until a first pay check clears; education bursaries up to the age of 25 (these are currently available for those aged 16-19).</p> | <p><a href="#">Year-round accommodation at the University of Kent</a>; <a href="#">interview clothing through Smart Works</a> or <a href="#">Suited and Booted</a>; <a href="#">financial support between benefits ending and first wage payment in Cheshire West and Chester</a>;</p> |
| <p><b>Practical support:</b> starter packs for new homes or going to university; mentoring or buddying schemes; clothing allowance; passports.</p>  | <p><a href="#">Clothing allowances in Kent</a>; <a href="#">setting up home start packs and TV licences in Northamptonshire</a>; <a href="#">coaching for care leavers in Southwark</a></p>  |
| <p><b>Offers for specific groups of care leavers:</b> including care experienced parents, former unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, young people with additional needs, those involved with the criminal justice system and the LGBTQ+ community</p>            | <p><a href="#">Support for care experienced parents in Hertfordshire</a>; <a href="#">building community for former unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in Leeds</a>;</p>  |
| <p><b>Accessing records:</b> including support through the process.</p>   | <p><a href="#">Access to Records training by the Rees Foundation</a></p>   |
| <p><b>Post 25 support:</b> to avoid a ‘cliff edge’ or support.</p>  | <p><a href="#">“Always here” support for those with care experience beyond 25 in North Yorkshire</a></p>   |

## Issues for the Local Infrastructure and Net Zero Board to consider

12. Councils have a range of responsibilities to support care leavers to transition to independent living and avoid homelessness. Effective joint working between housing authorities and children's services authorities can better ensure that as a corporate parent, the appropriate accommodation and support is available to care leavers.
13. There are challenges for care leavers accessing suitable, affordable accommodation due to ongoing pressures in the social and private rented sector (PRS). Care leavers can face challenges renting in the PRS because of the need for large upfront deposits, rent payments or guarantors. Meanwhile, due to a shortage of one-bed social homes, care leavers can be subject to the under-occupancy charge, which can compound their financial vulnerability. According to a recent [National Youth Advocacy Service and Generation Rent report](#) approximately 40 per cent of councils will, in principle, act as rent guarantors for care leavers (although this is not a statutory duty), with many also providing rent deposit schemes, enabling them to seek housing in the private rented sector.
14. A [survey by the National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum in December 2022](#) found that 31 percent of care leavers they surveyed were at risk of homelessness due to financial hardship. An estimated 26 per cent of people experiencing homelessness have care experience.
15. As already identified in the table above, many councils and transport authorities offer a range of transport support for care leavers. In terms of support for bus travel, most transport authorities operating under mayoral combined authorities offer discounted or free travel for young care leavers. The LGA continues to call for long-term devolved funding for local public transport, including devolution of all bus subsidies, such as Bus Services Operators Grant (BSOG). This would enable councils to take a more targeted approach to provision of more affordable travel. The LGA have also called for changes in the Bus Services Act 2017 to enable more powers for councils in the provision of bus services.
16. Councils are also leading local climate action. Councils are increasingly developing just transition strategies and approaches to ensure everyone in the community, including care leavers, are able to benefit from the opportunities of action to reduce emissions, and build resilience to the impacts of climate change.
17. The national Care Leaver Covenant highlights a range of support offers from other organisations relevant to the Board's terms of reference, including offers of [home repairs](#) and painting and decorating, support for care leavers at risk of [homelessness](#) and [installing free energy saving devices](#) in homes.



18. Board members may wish to highlight activity they have in place locally to support care leavers, or indeed any ideas they would like to see the LGA take forward as part of its care leaver work programme.

### **Implications for Wales**

19. Children's social care is devolved in Wales however learning from the programme can be shared with the Welsh Local Government Association.

### **Financial Implications**

20. This programme will be delivered within existing budgets.

### **Equalities implications**

21. This programme is focussed on reducing inequalities for those with care experience.
22. Around one quarter of care leavers are former unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. Specific consideration will be given to how the specific needs of this group are recognised in the programme of work.

### **Next steps**

23. Feedback from the Board today will be taken forward by LGA officers and reported to the Children and Young People Board as part of ongoing oversight of the programme.



## Right to Buy – Position Statement

### Purpose of Report

For information.

**Is this report confidential? No**

### Summary

Following discussion at the November Board, it was agreed that the LGA would update its position with regards to our policy asks on the Right to Buy. This report contains that Position Statement and our next steps.

**LGA Plan Theme:** Supporting local people and places

### Recommendation(s)

#### That the Board

1. Notes the Position Statement at Annex 1.

### Contact details

Contact officer: Georgina Brightwell

Position: Adviser (Housing and Planning)

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Email: [georgina.brightwell@local.gov.uk](mailto:georgina.brightwell@local.gov.uk)

## Right to Buy – Position Statement

### Background

1. The Right to Buy scheme allows most council tenants the opportunity to buy their council home at a discount. The scheme has helped countless families to get on the housing ladder, and [more than 2 million sales to tenants](#) have occurred since the scheme's commencement.
2. Whilst the Right to Buy can and has delivered home ownership for many, the current scheme is in need of reform so that councils can replace the properties sold on a one for one basis. The LGA remains concerned that rising discounts alongside other measures that restrict the use of Right to Buy receipts mean that one household's home ownership is increasingly being prioritised over another's access to secure, safe, social housing.
3. Included with this report at Annex 1 is the LGA's Position Statement on Right to Buy, following discussion at the November meeting of the Local Infrastructure and Net Zero Board.

### Proposal

4. We published our [six-point plan for social housing in Summer 2023](#), which taken together would enable local authorities to properly resume their historic role as a major housebuilder of affordable homes. In it, the LGA calls for further reform to the Right to Buy scheme.
5. The Position Statement attached as Annex 1 details those policy asks, updates our stance on the scheme and renews long-held asks for reforms to the Right to Buy. We believe these asks would give local authorities the power, control and flexibility over the receipts and delivery of the scheme for the benefit of all.

### Implications for Wales

6. None. This report applies to England only.

### Financial Implications

7. There are no financial implications.

### Equalities implications

8. The Board's work will continue to consider the impact of national policies relating to social housing on tenants with protected characteristics and will lobby Government as appropriate to ensure that emerging policies meet the needs of all social tenants in England.

### Next steps

9. LGA officers to publish the Position Statement and collect case studies / examples from local authorities. This work will feed into our Spring Budget submission, the Local Government White Paper and will be used in ongoing lobbying work and wider stakeholder engagement.



## Right to Buy position statement

### Our call on Government to make the scheme work for everyone.

The Right to Buy scheme allows most council tenants the opportunity to buy their council home at a discount. The scheme has helped countless families to get on the housing ladder, and [more than 2 million sales to tenants](#) have occurred since the scheme's commencement.

Whilst the Right to Buy can and has delivered home ownership for many, we do not believe the system in its current format works for local authorities and those in need of social housing.

The Government has made numerous changes to the scheme over the 40 years since its implementation. In particular, we are concerned that rising discounts alongside other measures that restrict councils use of Right to Buy receipts mean that one household's home ownership is increasingly being prioritised over another's access to secure, safe, social housing. Councils are also unable to replace the properties sold on a one for one basis.

With more than one million people on council housing waiting lists and [106,000 households living in temporary accommodation](#) at an estimated cost of £1.74 billion in 2022/23 alone, we are calling on the Government to take action, giving councils:

- **Control** over how and when monies raised through the scheme should be used on the development, delivery or acquisition of new homes.
- **Power** to protect a council's financial investment in both existing and new social housing stock from a loss-making transaction.
- **Flexibility** for councils to shape the scheme locally so it works best for their local area, housing market and people.

This Position Statement sets out our asks which would help make the scheme work for everyone whilst protecting our stock of social homes.

### The history of the Right to Buy scheme

The Right to Buy scheme was introduced more than 40 years ago by the Housing Act 1980. It is estimated that [more than 2 million sales to tenants](#) have occurred through the scheme since 1980. [Sales have slowly decreased over the years](#), with nearly 1 million homes sold in the first decade of the scheme alone, to a low of just 2,340 in 2009/2010.

When the Right was first introduced it extended to those tenants who had lived in their property for three or more years with a minimum discount of 33% (which could not exceed £50,000). If a property were sold within five years of purchase from the local authority, the discount had to be paid back to the council.

The scheme evolved further over the 1980's and 1990's to increase uptake and amend eligibility, including discounts for flats and reducing the tenure requirement to two years. From 1997, the government of the time took steps to reduce incentives to purchase by reducing and varying the discounts available as well as increasing the tenure requirement back to five years.

In 2012, the government made changes to re-incentivise purchases from the scheme by once again increasing discounts and reducing the qualifying period for tenures. At this time, they also made [a commitment to replace properties sold on a one-for-one basis at a national scale](#), noting that receipts would not be large enough in all areas to fund such replacements.

The 2012 commitment to replacing homes sold on a one-to-one basis nationally has not been achieved, [with over 110,000 homes sold and only 44,000 replaced in that period](#). [Our research predicts](#) that a further 100,000 homes will be sold up to 2030, with only 43,000 replaced – a net loss of 3.61% of stock over that period alone.

Following devolution of housing powers, Scotland and Wales both abolished Right to Buy through The Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 and The Abolition of the Right to Buy and Associated Rights (Wales) Act 2018 respectively. The scheme ended for housing association tenants in Northern Ireland in August 2022 following the Housing (Amendment) Act (Northern Ireland) 2020.

### **LGA’s position on Right to Buy**

The LGA has long argued for changes to the Right to Buy scheme on behalf of our member local authorities, challenging the Government on the schemes reforms and seeking to ensure the scheme works best for everyone.

We believe that the scheme has contributed to the housing challenges in this country, with the sales of homes and demolitions coupled with a significantly reduced council housebuilding programme resulting in an [annual net loss of 24,000 social homes since 1991](#).

As the housing challenges deepens with more than one million people on council housing waiting lists and 106,000 households living in temporary accommodation, it is not fathomable for the scheme to exist in its current guise culminating in the net loss of our much-needed social housing stock year on year.

Now more than ever local authorities need to be given the control, power and flexibilities to build more social homes and use receipt monies in a way that works best for their local areas.

### **Our asks of Government**

| <b>Our asks</b>   | <b>How this would help</b>  |
|---|---|
| <b>The control over how and when monies raised through the scheme should be used on the development, delivery or acquisition of new homes</b> |   |
| <b>Retain 100% of receipts permanently</b>  | <p>In March 2023, the Government announced that councils would be able to retain 100% of their receipts from Right to Buy sales for two years (2022/23 and 2023/24).</p> <p>Prior to, and (subject to any further announcements) following this period, councils must return a portion of the sales receipts to HM Treasury, as determined individually in the self-financing agreements in 2012.</p> |



| Our asks   | How this would help   |
|--|---|
|  | <p>The <a href="#">average annual receipt</a> in 2022/23 was £102,000 in England, though this ranged greatly from £48,000 in the North East to £205,000 in London. Retaining 100% of receipts would put councils in a greater position to fund the delivery or acquisition of new social homes.</p>   |
| <p><b>Combine receipts with grants or other funding pots</b></p> | <p>Flexibility should be built into the scheme so that Right to Buy receipts can be combined with other government grants or funding such as the Affordable Homes Programme to deliver new, acquire existing and regenerate social homes.</p> <p>This would particularly help in relation to bringing forward brownfield redevelopment or other sites with exceptional costs ie cost of remediation or general viability issues. It would also simply increase the number of homes that a council are able to build each year.</p>  |
| <p><b>Restriction on % of new homes funded by receipts</b></p>   | <p>The Government currently stipulates that only 40% of a replacement home can be funded using Right to Buy receipts, with 60% of costs needed to be found from other sources such as borrowing or within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).</p> <p>Removing this restriction would help to make housing schemes viable in certain areas as receipts may be the most common and flexible funding source. Direct funding from within HRA's is progressively difficult and complex owing to an increasingly burdensome regulatory environment and competing financial pressures, such as fire safety and retrofit.</p>  |
| <p><b>Remove time limit on spending money</b></p>                | <p>Local authorities have five years to spend receipts on replacement dwellings. Once that time has passed, authorities must return their receipts to HM Treasury.</p> <p>Given the significant financial challenges such as increased borrowing rates, inflationary and interest rate pressures, as well as the other restrictions which Government have imposed on the spending on receipts, reinvesting receipts within five years is proving increasingly challenging.</p> <p>Further, for more complex sites, land assembly, design and planning may delay the use of receipts.</p> <p>Allowing councils to retain the receipts they receive from sales indefinitely would help assure future development and prevent risk of both the finances of</p> |

| Our asks  | How this would help  |
|---|--|
|   | future schemes as well as the risk of non-delivery of homes.   |
| <b>The power to protect a council's financial investment in both existing and new social housing stock from a loss-making transaction.</b>  |  |
| <b>Increase the tenancy requirement from 3 years to 15 years</b>  | <p>Tenants in social homes can purchase their properties after a qualifying period of three years.</p> <p>We believe this should be increased to 15 years, with local authorities given discretion on the discount available to account for the increase of years in which rents have been paid.</p>   |
| <p>For the <b>cost floor to be an indefinite protection</b> for properties purchased through Right to Buy, and <b>allowing the cost floor to be increased by inflation</b> – specifically an index based on construction cost inflation</p> | <p>The cost floor protection limits the discount on Right to Buy properties to ensure that the purchase price of the property does not fall below what has been spent on building, buying, repairing or maintaining it over a certain period of time. That period of time is currently 15 years.</p> <p>To act as a proper incentive to local authorities, we believe that the cost floor protection should be indefinite.</p> <p>Given that the existence of the cost floor mechanism is to ensure costs are recovered, and in the case of new build units, to (in theory) enable the further replacement of the sold unit, there would seem to be a strong case for allowing the cost floor to be increased by inflation, specifically an index based on construction cost inflation, in order to ensure that this mechanism still serves its purpose.</p> <p>Such an approach would enhance the capability to achieve increased replacement of properties built within the last 15 years, and would seem to be a straightforward and appropriate reform that may also assist authorities in deciding, positively, to develop new council housing.</p> |
| <b>Consideration of a complete exemption for new build properties, and those which have been retrofit or improved</b>   | <p>In many areas of the country, the existence of the Right to Buy scheme is a disincentive to developing new council properties, particularly in these uncertain economic times.</p> <p>Councils run the risk of not only losing the stock of homes in which they have invested heavily, but also making a financial loss.</p> <p>This is also true of properties which have been either retrofit or improved to the highest standards, where councils stand to make a loss on their investment.</p>  |

| Our asks   | How this would help   |
|--|---|
|  | <p>We believe that all new build properties, should be exempt from the Right to Buy. In order for this to be fully accounted for in local authority housebuilding programmes and planning, this should apply to all properties which commence delivery from 1 April 2025.</p> <p>We propose to undertake an assessment as to how properties which have been retrofit or improved should be considered financially through the scheme.</p>   |
| <p><b>The flexibility for councils to shape the scheme locally so it works best for their local area, housing market and people.</b></p> |   |
| <p><b>For local authorities to set the discount levels at which homes can be purchased</b></p>   | <p>The Government sets the size of discounts – though a precedent has been set by altering the discount rate on a regional level for councils in London.</p> <p>Allowing councils to set their own discount could include setting the discount at 0%, removing the economic advantage of tenants purchasing a social home in their area.</p> <p>Whilst this may create different scenarios in neighbouring councils, local authorities are best placed to make decisions for their localities to reflect the economic circumstances of their area.</p>  |
| <p><b>Remove the cap on the number of homes which can be acquired using receipts</b></p>   | <p>The Government wishes to encourage new supply, and so favours the delivery of new homes over acquisitions of houses. In March 2023, councils were informed that the cap set on the use of receipts for acquiring properties, which is set as a percentage of the number of homes that a local authority starts or acquires each year, would be frozen at 50% for two years. The <a href="#">Government had previously announced</a> that the cap would be phased in, from 50% in 2022/23 to 30% in 2024/25 and onwards.</p> <p>The first 20 units of delivery in each year are excluded from the cap for all local authorities. Councils are not prevented from acquiring properties above the cap but will not be able to use Right to Buy receipts to do so.</p> <p>For some local authorities, particularly in areas with a high number of vacant or empty properties or an over-supply of housing, acquisition of properties may be a faster or more cost-effective approach to delivering replacement social homes.</p> |

### **Our next steps**

To supplement this Position Statement, research will be undertaken which will provide recommendations on the following:

- How properties which have been subject to retrofit or improvements should be considered.
- If new build properties should be exempt from Right to Buy, and for how long.
- If an alternative to the Right to Buy, such as a “help to buy / invest / own / rent” could be devised which works better for local authorities.

We will also continually add case studies from local authorities around the country showcasing how these asks could bring about new social homes for rent.

## Building Safety update

### Purpose of Report

For information.

Is this report confidential? No

### Summary

This report aims to update members on the LGA's building safety-related work since the last Board meeting.

LGA Plan Theme: **Championing climate change and local environments**

### Recommendation

That the Board note and comment on the LGA's building safety related work.

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## Building Safety update

### Background

1. Since the last meeting of the Board, the LGA has continued to support action associated with the remediation of high-rise residential with dangerous cladding systems and has been engaged in the implementation of the new building safety regime created by the Fire Safety and Building Safety Acts.

### Update

#### Overall Remediation

2. On November 16, The Minister of State, Lee Rowley MP published a [written ministerial statement](#) on the progress of remediation.
3. [The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities' \(DLUHC\) Building Safety Programme Monthly Data Release](#) provides data related to its Building Safety Programme. From October 2023 this data release has included new additional data on the overall progress made so far on Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) remediation, Building Safety Fund (BSF), Cladding Safety Scheme (CCS), Developer remediation, and Social Housing Sector, and Enforcement.
4. The January 2024 release gives the following relevant figures:
  - 4.1. There are 3,839 residential buildings 11 metres and over in height identified with unsafe cladding whose remediation progression is being reported on in the release.
  - 4.2. Overall, 1,608 buildings (42%) have either started or completed remediation works.
  - 4.3. A breakdown can be seen below of these:
    - 4.3.1. 797 buildings (21%) have completed remediation, including those awaiting building control sign off
    - 4.3.2. 811 building (21%) have started remediation
    - 4.3.3. 2,231 buildings (58%) have not started remediation
5. It should be noted that the total number of buildings set out above does not sum to the total number of buildings reported in the sections below which are also taken from the data release due to crossover between schemes.

#### ACM Cladding Remediation

6. The January 2024 release gives the following relevant figures:

- 6.1. of the 496 high-rise (18 metres and over in height) residential and publicly owned buildings with ACM cladding systems unlikely to meet Building Regulations, 476 (96%) have either started or completed remediation works.
- 6.2. of these, 425 buildings (86%) have completed ACM remediation, including those awaiting building control sign-off.
- 6.3. there are 20 buildings yet to start ACM remediation (4% of all buildings). Two buildings are vacant and so do not pose a risk to resident safety, 14 buildings have forecast start dates and three without a start forecast have had local authority enforcement action taken against them.

### **Building Safety Fund (BSF) – other cladding systems**

- 7. On 28 July 2022, the government's £4.5 billion Building Safety Fund reopened for new applications and remains open. Buildings over 18m with cladding issues are eligible to apply for the fund with guidance for applicants available here. More information for leaseholders about the Building Safety Fund and what it covers can be accessed [here](#). Leaseholders can check if they qualify for the cost protections under the Building Safety Act using the government's new Leaseholder Protections Checker with further guidance available.
- 8. As of 31 December 2023, of the 950 buildings proceeding with an application, 255 buildings (27%) have started remediation works and 231 buildings (24%) have completed remediation.
- 9. £2.139 billion has been approved for the remediation of unsafe non-ACM cladding, of which £2.067 billion is for private sector remediation, and £214 million for social sector remediation. At the end of December, the Building Safety Fund's total expenditure was £1.375 billion.

### **Cladding Safety Scheme (CCS)**

- 10. As of the end of December 2023, 534 buildings 11 metres and over in height have live applications with the Cladding Safety Scheme, and a further 104 buildings have already been assessed as eligible. There are an additional 900 buildings in the pipeline that are being investigated.

### **Developer Remediation**

- 11. 1,345 buildings have been identified with life-critical fire safety risks that will be remediated by developers. Of these 262 are reported to have completed remediation, 473 are reported to have started remediation, and 506 have plans in place for remediation but work has not yet started.

### **Waking Watch Relief and Replacement Funds**

12. On 25 May 2023 the government reopened its [Waking Watch Replacement Fund](#) with expanded scope and funding.
13. The Fund has an additional £27 million available to cover all capital costs of replacing waking watches with a common alarm system, in accordance with the National Fire Chief Council's guidance on buildings that have changed from a 'Stay Put' to a 'Simultaneous Evacuation' fire safety strategy. As of December £2.4 million of funding had been approved related to 25 applications. The number of approved applications and amount of funding remains unchanged from August 2023.
14. The Fund builds on the £35 million Waking Watch Relief Fund (WWRF) which focused on high-rise residential buildings and those with fire safety defects. The Relief Fund has allocated £27.3 million covering 329 applications, of which 212 have been approved and cover 320 buildings. The number of approved applications and amount of funding remains unchanged from August 2023.

### **Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) survey**

15. On November 16 2023, The RSH published [findings](#) from the Fire Safety Remediation Survey (FRS) for buildings 11 metres and over in height, which opened to all landlords on 23 August 2023 and closed on 15 September 2023.
16. A summary of the findings is below:
- 16.1. Response rate: 88% response rate to the survey. 32% (426) of all landlords that responded identified themselves as being the responsible entity for at least one 11-metre-plus building, the majority of whom are large landlords. In total landlords reported 15,405 buildings over 11 metres in height. The majority of these, 11,230 are 11-18 metre buildings, with the remaining 4,175 buildings measuring 18 metres or more in height.
  - 16.2. Building defects: Of the buildings assessed, there were 1,608 affected buildings identified in their most recent assessment. Work is complete on 7% of these buildings and is underway on a further 31%. Work is due to commence on an additional 37% of buildings by September 2024. 11-18 metre buildings account for 57% and 18 metre plus buildings account for 43% of buildings with EWS related LCFS defects.
  - 16.3. Building stock: Fire risk assessments have been undertaken on 98% of all buildings reported, with plans to assess a further 1% of buildings in the next six months. For buildings measuring 11–18 metre in height, 97%



have a fire risk assessment and of the buildings measuring 18 metre plus, 99.6% have a fire risk assessment.

16.4. Remediation status: Landlords report that work is complete on 7% of buildings with a LCFS defect related to EWS.

17. The survey also collected information about non-EWS defects and the costs of remediation. This data is subject to further cleansing and analysis.

18. A second survey opened on 1 December 2023, with registered providers required to submit their data by 31 December 2023 (with data reported as of 30 November 2023). The findings have not yet been published. In the [written ministerial statement](#) on 16 November, the Minister set out that registered providers will be expected to provide quarterly updates on progress on Fire Safety Remediation for all 11 metre plus buildings (including those over 18 metres). The Minister also stated that further publications by DLUHC will include data on a provider-by-provider basis.

19. The returns by local authority registered providers are currently on a voluntary basis with no associated new burdens funding.

### **Joint Inspection Team (JIT)**

20. Ensuring dangerous external wall systems are remediated will remain a multi-agency activity with councils and Fire and Rescue Authorities at the forefront for buildings between 11-18m in height. The government expects councils to investigate suspected flammable cladding under the Housing Act 2004. In order to support councils, the remit of the Joint Inspection Team has been expanded following negotiations with DLUHC so it can inspect buildings between 11-18m in height, as well as those over 18m, and provide training on the use of the tools and powers in the Building Safety Act in particular Remediation Orders. The definition of the external wall systems the team can work on has also been aligned with definitions in the Building Safety Act. The team has so far inspected around 100 buildings out of the 293 inspections conducted by local authorities to the end of December 2023.

### **London councils fire safety group for private sector housing**

21. After discussions with councils in London the LGA set up and continues to run and organise this group which shares good practice around enforcement activity by councils under the Housing Act and Building Safety Act against building owners who are not remediating dangerous external wall systems on residential buildings. At its most recent meeting earlier the group heard from the London

Borough of Lambeth about their successful use of a remediation order in conjunction with leaseholders in the relevant block (which had been inspected by the JIT) to enforce remediation work.

22. The group also heard about the successful prosecution brought by Newham Council against a building owner for failing to remove combustible cladding. Following an inspection by the JIT of the Lumiere building Newham served an improvement notice requiring dangerous cladding to be removed by 31 March 2021. Work did not start on removing the cladding until March 2021, and was not completed until February 2022.

### **Building Safety Act 2022 (BSA)**

23. Work continues to put in place all the elements needed to ensure the new building safety regime in the Building Safety Act is in place for commencement. The duties under the Act on accountable people to manage building safety risk in their buildings came in to force on 16 January 2024. The Building Safety Regulator (BSR) will be instructing accountable people to apply for building assessment certificates for each building they own which comes under the legislation from April.
24. The BSR published its strategic plan for 2023-26, which sets out how the BSR will: improve standards in building control; drive improvements in the built environment; regulate the planning, design and construction of new higher-risk buildings (HRBs); and ensure building owners manages the fire and structural safety risks in existing HRBs. Fire and Rescue Authorities will work alongside the BSR under the Building Safety Act on the design and construction of new HRBs and ensuring existing HRBs are safe. The strategic plan also hints at how the BSR will prioritise buildings – height and number of dwellings will be important so the tallest buildings with the most number of dwellings will be assessed earlier. Any buildings with un-remediated ACM cladding will be assessed in the first year irrespective of height and number of dwellings.
25. Local Authority Building Control (LABC) and the National Fire Chiefs Council continues to work closely with the BSR to ensure building control and Fire and Rescue Authorities can play their part when the new regime comes into force in April 2024. This work includes consideration of how those HRBs registered with the BSR will be allocated across the five year programme to assess their safety cases and issue building assessment certificates, and how the work will be allocated to services.

26. DLUHC has published guidance on the use of remediation orders, which were introduced as part of the Building Safety Act 2022. The orders were designed to make it easier for councils and other parties to take enforcement action against building owners where the progress with remediating dangerous external wall systems has not been as fast as it should be.

27. The King's Speech included the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Bill, which will seek to extend the measures protecting leaseholders in the Building Safety Act to ensure the provisions in the Building Safety Act work as intended.

### **Building Safety Register**

28. On 12 April 2023, the Building Safety Regulator (BSR) opened registrations for high-rise residential buildings in England that are: 18 metres tall or higher, at least 7 storeys tall, with two or more residential units.

29. Each building must be registered by a [Principal Accountable Person \(PAP\)](#).

30. The deadline for registering high-rise residential buildings with the BSR was 1 October 2023. Failure to register buildings is a criminal offence. The BSR is currently working through the registrations they have received and this will be used to inform the building safety assessment certificate process, which starts in April 2024. The number of buildings registered with the BSR is expected to be in line with the government's estimate of approximately 12,000 buildings across the private and public sector.

### **Building Control Regulation**

31. Under the Building Safety Act, the BSR has a role overseeing building control bodies (councils and approved inspectors) and the building control profession. This oversight role covers the performance of building control bodies, and the competence of professionals working in those bodies.

32. In order to work as a building inspector individuals are required to register with the BSR from April 2024 under one of four classes of building inspectors. Alongside the register the BSR has introduced the building inspector competence framework (BICoF) to provide a framework for demonstrating competence for the whole profession. As building control bodies councils have to ensure their staff are registered in the appropriate class. Going forward building inspectors will have to show they are undertaking continuous professional development to continue to be registered.

33. Around a quarter of local authority building control staff are over 55, with nearly all the remainder between 24-55 years old. Anecdotally there have been indications some of these staff have suggested they will retire rather than go through an assessment process to register in one of the four classes or they will only apply for one of the lower classes rather than one that reflects their experience and skills.
34. Council chief executives have raised with DLUHC officials the number of building control vacancies they are carrying, with difficulties in recruitment and gaps going forward due to the new competency requirements leaving them struggling to fill positions. The 2022 LGA Workforce Survey showed 43 per cent of councils with a building control function reporting difficulties in recruitment and 21 per cent saying they have retention problems. This pressure is being made worse by private sector building control bodies (approved inspectors) continuing to offer substantial salary increases to attract staff from councils.
35. LABC has received capacity building funding from DLUHC to support the implementation of the Building Safety Act to bring new trainees into the profession. LABC is investing £500,000 a year in a new LABC Academy to keep this initiative going.

### **Large Panel System (LPS) Buildings**

36. The LGA has commissioned six case studies on management strategies for LPS Buildings. These have now been completed and are now on the LGA's website.
37. On November 14, Bristol City Council made the decision to decant the LPS tower block Barton House and evacuate 400 residents. There was concern that the tower block could be damaged in the event of a fire, explosion or large impact which posed a risk to the structure of the building as it was thought some structural ties connecting the floors and walls could potentially be missing, and the concrete cover protecting the building's metal reinforcements may have been too thin. Subsequent investigation has revealed the structural ties were in place and in good order, and that the concrete's thickness was generally found to be good. However work is being undertaken to ensure the building is structurally sound and fire safe.

## Implications for Wales

38. The Fire Safety Act came into force in Wales in [October 2021](#). The new regulations passed under the FSO only apply in England. Building regulations and fire and rescue services are devolved responsibilities of the Welsh Assembly.

## Financial Implications

39. Although the LGA has set up the Joint Inspection Team, the cost of doing so is being met by DLUHC. The Joint Inspection Team has secured funding for the next two years which will see it expand significantly.

## Equalities implications

40. The group of people affected by building safety issues will be broad and include a wide variety of potential equalities issues, with social landlords for example having responsibilities to consider the need for personal emergency evacuation plans for people who are unable to self-evacuate from high-rise residential buildings.

## Next steps

41. Officers are to continue to support the sector's work to keep residents safe and reform the building safety system, as directed by members.



## Local Infrastructure and Net Zero Work Programme Update and Other Board Business

### Purpose of Report

For information.

**Is this report confidential? No**

### Summary

This paper provides updates on a range of issues within the remit of the Board that have not already been covered in other Board agenda items. The report is split into two sections. The first section includes items that relate to Government announcements and other external activity. The second section sets out LGA activity, which includes references to LGA wins and other activity that relates to the Board's work programme.

The report is for discussion and information.

**LGA Plan Theme:** Championing climate change and local environments

### Recommendation

**That the Board discusses and notes the update**

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Local Infrastructure and Net Zero Board

23 November 2023



## Local Infrastructure and Net Zero Work Programme Update and Other Board Business

### Government and other external activity

#### Housing, planning and homelessness

1. **Awaab's Law:** The government has recently launched the [consultation](#) on timescales for repairs in the social rented sector. This consultation aims set the timeframes that landlords will be required to investigate and fix reported health hazards within. The LGA will be responding to the consultation and is hosting a discussion session on Tuesday 6 February with councils to understand their views on the proposals and shape the LGA's response.
2. **Street vote development orders:** The government has launched a [consultation](#) which seeks views on the detailed operation of street vote development orders, which will inform the content of regulations using new powers in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023. We have previously raised concerns that the introduction of street vote development orders risks undermining the concept of a local, plan-led system. We will be responding to the consultation.
3. **Building Safety Levy:** The government has launched a second technical [consultation](#) which seeks views on the design and implementation of the levy. We have [previously raised concerns](#) that the levy collection will be highly inefficient and burdensome for local authorities and suggested that a more streamlined, cost-efficient approach to raising the additional funds for building safety remediation, which would benefit both central and local government, would be to expand the scope of the Residential Property Developer Tax (RPDT). We will be responding to the consultation.

#### Waste and environment

1. **Food waste.** Defra has confirmed the allocation of transitional capital funding to individual waste collection authorities towards the cost of implementing mandatory, weekly food waste collections in 2026. Some councils have raised concerns over allocations and are encouraged to speak with Defra about these. Work continues to understand the on going cost of mandatory food waste services, including transitional and ongoing revenue costs.
2. **Waste electricals.** Defra has launched a new [consultation](#) on reforming the UK wide producer responsibility scheme for waste electrical and electronic equipment. The consultation proposes that producers should fund the cost of collecting small electrical items from the kerbside, and invites views on whether this should be provided by local authorities or an alternative model of delivery. The consultation also proposes an obligation on internet sellers and retailers to offer a free collection on delivery service for

larger electrical items (such as washing machines). A section on vapes proposes that they become a standalone category rather than falling into a broad category of toys and other leisure equipment.

3. **‘DIY’ Waste:** Regulations have been laid to restrict the power for councils to charge for “DIY” type waste at household waste and recycling centres from 1 January 2024. It is disappointing that Government did not consider new burdens funding for this change to regulations.
4. **Nutrient neutrality.** Government has confirmed that they are not putting forward a legislative solution to the challenge of nutrient neutrality. The first tranche of the Local Nutrient Mitigation Fund has been allocated to lead local planning authorities (£57 million) and DLUHC is starting conversations with affected catchment areas about the next tranche of funding.
5. **Biodiversity Net Gain.** Biodiversity net gain will become mandatory in new planning permissions for large developments from 12 February and for smaller sites from 2 April 2024. There is now a greater level of guidance on how BNG will operate, there are still some unknowns that we are pressing on, such as the new burdens funding councils will receive.
6. **Local Nature Recovery Strategies.** Lead local authorities are currently working with partners locally in developing Local Nature Recovery Strategies. The LGA has been having conversations with Natural England and others about how to ensure LNRSs can influence the delivery of projects protecting and growing nature and biodiversity.

### Climate Change

7. **Local Net Zero Accelerator programme.** Government announced the launch of the Local Net Zero Accelerator Programme. [Councils pilot net zero projects with £19 million government backing - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) The Pilots will help combined authorities deliver green initiatives such as retrofitting homes and installing solar panels. The three combined authorities are Greater Manchester, West Midlands and York and North Yorkshire.
8. **New report seeks to foster closer collaboration between energy networks and local authorities.** Energy Networks Association (ENA), in partnership with Regen, has published a report focused on how electricity and gas network operators can work more closely with local authorities to develop and deliver net zero plans. More than 30 local authorities fed into the [Collaborating for Local Net Zero Planning and Delivery report](#) which sets out how local authorities and energy networks currently work together to plan and deliver decarbonisation and outlines potential next steps to foster further collaboration.
9. **Social Housing Decarbonisation.** Government has announced over **£1.7bn of further funding** has been made available for to local authorities, providers of social housing,

and charities to support low-income households in England to tackle fuel poverty and to progress Net Zero 2050 targets. Grant funding for Wave 3 of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (£1.253bn) and the new local authority retrofit scheme (£500m) will be split across 3 years from 2025-2028. DESNZ are also developing proposals for 'strategic partnerships' developing larger retrofit programmes to access funding and technical assistance support <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/families-business-and-industry-to-get-energy-efficiency-support>

**10. Future Homes Standard and Written Ministerial Statement on energy efficiency.**

The government published the consultation on The Future Homes and Buildings Standards [The Future Homes and Buildings Standards: 2023 consultation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/the-future-homes-and-buildings-standards-2023-consultation). Officers are discussing issues with councils and developing a response. The new standards would require all new homes to be 'zero carbon ready', for instance in sourcing space and water heating from either a heat network or heat pump. Alongside this a [Written Ministerial Statement](#) on local energy efficiency standards will restrict councils from introducing local energy efficiency standards that are higher than the national model.

**11. Heat Network zoning.** The Government has published [Proposals for heat network zoning 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposals-for-heat-network-zoning-2023). This will give councils the opportunity to take up a role in designating areas for heat network development, where new homes will be required to connect but existing homes and buildings will not. LGA officers are drafting a response, we will be highlighting the importance of funding councils sufficiently to undertake the zone coordinator role and leaving the options open for zone delivery models. The heat network zoning consultation forms part of a wider DESNZ programme for creating heat networks.

**12. Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA).** Government [has published updated guidance](#) to help local authorities in England with their 2023 reporting requirements, supporting the delivery of energy efficiency improvements to residential properties within their area and asking local authorities to publish a report by 29 February 2024.

## Transport

**13. Consultation: Street works - fines and lane rental surplus funds.** The DfT have launched a [consultation](#) on a series of reforms to street works regulations, which include:

- requiring at least 50% of any surplus lane rental funds to be spent on repairing potholes
- raising the level of fixed penalty notices that can be issued for 5 street works offences
- allowing overrun charges to apply at weekends and bank holidays.

14. LGA officers will discuss these changes with experts from the sector with a view to submitting a response from the LGA in consultation with LINZ Board lead members. We will also encourage councils to respond and ask that they share their submissions with

the LGA. It would help if Board members could share with Kamal Panchal [kamal.panchal@local.gov.uk](mailto:kamal.panchal@local.gov.uk) and Simon Jeffrey [simon.jeffrey@local.gov.uk](mailto:simon.jeffrey@local.gov.uk).

**15. Highways maintenance allocations.** On 4 October 2023, the government announced £8.3 billion of additional highways maintenance funding over the period 2023 to 2024 and the next 10 years for local road resurfacing and wider maintenance activity on the local highway network. This consists of:

- £3.3 billion for local authorities (LAs) in the North West, North East, and Yorkshire and the Humber
- £2.2 billion for LAs in the West Midlands and East Midlands
- £2.8 billion for LAs in the East of England, South East, South West and London

16. The DfT have now confirmed and [published](#) the funding levels for 2023 to 2024 and 2024 to 2025, and the indicative minimum additional funding allocations between 2023 to 2024 and 2033 to 2034 inclusive. This new money is additional to the existing [Highways Maintenance Block \(HMB\) and Pothole Fund](#). At England level, the additional funding is £150 million for the 23/24 and £150 million for 24/25. The minimum additional overall uplift between 2024-25 and 2033-34 will be £6.9 billion, and £1.245 billion is to be allocated at a future date. The LGA have consistently called for a greater funding to help tackle the £14 billion backlog of road repairs and that future funding should come with long-term year-on-year certainty to help councils prioritise long-term preventative improvements, rather than more expensive reactive pot-hole repairs.

## LGA Activity

### Housing, planning and homelessness

- 1. Council housebuilding.** We have commissioned Pragmatix Advisory to undertake a research project to assess the economic, social and environmental benefits of 5-year local housing deals to support our [six-point plan](#) to support a generational step-change in council housebuilding . The final report will be published in Spring 2024.
- 2. Planning fees.** Following long-standing calls from the LGA, legislative amendments to increase planning application fees took effect on 6 December 2023. Application fees have increased by 25 per cent across the board, rising to 35 per cent for major schemes.
- 3. Renters Reform Bill.** We have [briefed](#) parliamentarians for Committee Stage welcoming the long-awaited Bill, but highlighting our concerns about the delay in ending Section 21 'no fault' eviction notices. We continue to engage with stakeholders and government as the Bill progresses and as we await a date for Report Stage. Mayor Dennett (Salford City Council) gave oral evidence to the Renters Reform Bill Committee on 14 November.
- 4. The Criminal Justice Bill.** We have highlighted our concerns about the measure related to rough sleeping, particularly the risks that councils will be expected to enforce measures that criminalise rough sleeping and that, instead, there should be a prevention-first approach. Cllr Sue Wooley gave oral evidence to the Criminal Justice Bill Committee on 14 December.
- 5. Streamlined asylum cessations.** The Home Office previously updated its processes for asylum support cessations. Previously, this included sending an application decision followed by a notification to discontinue support in 28 days to the refugee. The new process combines the application decision and discontinuation of support notices, resulting in shorter eviction and support timeframes. We lobbied hard for the Home Office to maximise notice and ensure wider support is available to mitigate homelessness and other risks and they have subsequently reverted back to the 28 day notice.
- 6. Local Housing Allowance Rates.** Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates govern the maximum amount of Housing Benefit that low-income tenants of private landlords can receive. In the Autumn Statement the Chancellor announced that the private sector Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate would be restored to the 30th percentile of market rents in April 2024 – a long-term campaigning ask from the LGA - before being re-frozen in April 2025, at a cost of £1.2bn. However, the LHA rate for Temporary Accommodation (TA) is set separately from the rate in the private rented sector and has been frozen since 2011. This has meant that councils have seen an ever-widening gap in the subsidy that they receive from the DWP. This was not addressed in the Autumn Statement. We are

procuring research to review councils' TA subsidy loss for 2022/23 (and mid-year estimates for 2023/24) and compare this to the likely impact of allowing the TA rate to rise in line with rents.

7. **Rough Sleeping Advisory Panel: Prevention sub-group.** As a member of the Government's Rough Sleeping Advisory Panel, set up to scrutinise its 'Ending Rough Sleeping for Good Strategy', the LGA and St Basils led a sub-group over summer to specifically scrutinise progress and gaps on rough sleeping prevention. This is in addition to two other sub-groups focussing on intervention and recovery, and transparent and joined up systems. All sub-groups subsequently developed reports and these are published on the LGA's [website](#).
8. **Rural rough sleeping.** The LGA has worked with English Rural to run a series of workshops throughout May, July and October with a small selection of rural councils to determine practice needed to develop effective action in rural communities. We have developed this into a report which was published on 29 January along with a good practice webinar chaired by Cllr Loic Rich.
9. **Empty Homes:** The LGA has worked in partnership with the Empty Homes Network on a research project exploring the role that councils can play in encouraging more homes to be proactively brought back into use. The report: '[A practical approach for councils on dealing with empty homes](#)' was published in November 2023.
10. **Provision of Information to Tenants:** The LGA has responded to DLUHC's 'Provision of information to tenants: Direction to the Social Housing Regulator on tenants' rights and complaints' consultation. The [LGA response](#) supported the principle that all registered providers of social housing should ensure that their tenants are clearly informed about their rights as a tenant whilst also continuing to highlight the significant financial income and expenditure pressures on individual Housing Revenue Accounts (HRAs). DLUHC's [response to the consultation](#) has now been published, with the department's approach remaining that where Local Authorities hold an HRA, costs relating to social housing should be funded by social rents and therefore not eligible for New Burdens funding.
11. **Press releases:** We have issued a proactive release on [Empty Homes](#) and a reactive press release on the [Housing Secretary's speech on planning and housing](#).

## Waste

12. **Simpler recycling reforms.** Defra set out the next steps on the [implementation of simpler recycling reforms](#) on 21 October. This confirmed that councils will have local flexibility in the design of collection systems, a change that the LGA has long argued for. The LGA responded to two consultations that followed the announcement, asking for clarity on the funding and implementation plan for the challenging dates set out by Defra including the start of mandatory weekly food waste collections from 1 April 2026.

- 13. Extended Producer Responsibility.** The LGA has had regular engagement with Defra on the development of the reform of producer payments for packaging used by households. A key concern is securing the funding and timeframes for delivery, and ensuring influence for local government in the scheme administration that will run the scheme. The LGA is working with the local government associations in the devolved nations and the professional waste networks to prepare for the first meeting of the national Scheme Administrator steering group in early February. Defra invited the LGA to take up the single seat allocated to local government in England.
- 14. Carbon emissions arising from energy from waste.** Government has been looking at expanding the carbon emissions trading scheme to include energy from waste. From 2028, emissions from burning waste derived from fossil material would have to be offset by purchasing credits from the national trading scheme. With a new consultation expected shortly, the LGA has been working with councils and trade bodies to understand the financial implications, arguing for a whole systems approach that places responsibility for carbon emissions with those with the power to switch away from fossil material, rather than councils as the collectors of waste.
- 15. Waste polling.** The LGA and Yougov polling shows significant public trust in council waste services and in councils continuing to take decisions on the future of waste services, support for calls on producers to reduce packaging waste in the first place and to bear the costs associated with this. The polling overall reinforces our position on waste reforms, and will be published shortly.
- 16. Commercial waste.** The LGA is working with SLR on a project investigating the opportunities for councils in developing commercial waste services and the policy asks on Government to reduce non-household waste. This will also usefully explore the opportunities following Government's decision to extend waste duties on businesses including micro-firms from 2027.
- 17. Flytipping.** The latest annual statistics came out on 17 January showing a decline in the number of incidents. The LGA's [media response](#) was widely reported.

### Climate Change

- 18. Local Net Zero Forum.** The second ministerial level Local Net Zero Forum meeting was held on 21 November with Lord Callanan representing government. LGA member reps welcomed the progression to date whilst making it clear that the work of the forum was far from completed and now needed to enter a period of acceleration. There has also been an officer level forum, building on the work of the task and finish groups.
- 19. Energy Security and Net Zero Committee.** Cllr Paula Widdowson gave evidence on behalf of the LGA Local Infrastructure and Net Zero Board at their **heating our homes inquiry**. Cllr Widdowson delivered the LGA lines on Local Climate Action being more cost effective than national action. [Parliamentlive.tv - Energy Security and Net Zero Committee](#)

- 20. Renewable Energy Good Practice webinar.** On 21 November the LGA hosted a webinar with Local Partnerships and Net Zero Go to present the updated version of the "[Renewable Energy Good Practice Guidance](#)" originally published in September 2020 and highlight how Net Zero Go can support councils implementing renewable energy and net zero programmes. [Presentations are available to view online.](#)
- 21. Back Local Climate Action.** On 24 November, the LGA along with DCN, CCN and London Councils [wrote to Claire Coutinho MP](#), and hosted a parliamentary event to promote our Back Local Climate Action campaign. The event was well attended with at least eleven MP's and Peers attending and discussing with members and officers why local climate action can achieve net zero at half the cost of national action and deliver three times the financial returns and wider benefits.
- 22. Opinion Poll.** New YouGov polling commissioned by the LGA shows that just 5 per cent of the public feel prepared for the impacts of climate change. Polling also showed that the public trust their council the most to lead the effort to prepare for the impacts. Also found 63% are worried about climate change, with storms, flooding, and heatwaves being the top 3 impacts. It generated press coverage across national media outlets.
- 23. Solar taskforce subgroups.** Officers have been representing member councils on the Solar Taskforce Subgroups for Rooftop Solar and Communications. Through the communications subgroup, Solar Energy UK (SEUK) have been preparing guidance on community benefits and engagement for ground mounted solar farms that are increasingly exceeding 50GW and being considered Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP). Officers have seen and commented on the community engagement guidance, labouring that engagement with communities should start at project inception. Draft community benefits guidance is due to be shared with officers shortly.
- 24. International learning on the governance of national and local collaboration on climate action** ARUP has submitted the first draft of the international learning on the governance of national and local collaboration on climate action report. The five example countries they have explored are Netherlands, Norway, South Korea, New Zealand and United States. Early indications are that there are some lessons that could be learned from each of the case study countries
- 25. Just Transition.** Officers have been working on a report on what a Just Transition to net zero should be which will include recommendation for government. We held a roundtable with representatives from Citizens Advice, Young Foundation, Think NPC, Institute for Community Studies, Womens Environmental Network, Heat Trust and member councils including Newham and Cheshire East to help inform the report which will be finalised spring 2024.

## Environment



- 26. Biodiversity Net Gain.** The LGA are continuing to work with Defra and the Planning Advisory Service on the implementation of BNG, including a practitioner network of 800 local authority officers. The LGA is working with PAS and the Future Homes Hub to advise Defra and DLUHC on implementation, including clarity on new burden funding for councils and support on gaps in ecological expertise.
- 27. Nature recovery:** Councils are now preparing (LNRSs), the LGA has pressed on the importance of government providing clarity for supporting authorities on their role, as many are council planning authorities that must have regard to the LNRS. We are also pushing for the LNRS to have more role in the wider funding in order to deliver projects that protect and grow the natural environment. The LGA's Chief Executive met the senior team at Natural England in January with LNRS featuring on the agenda. The Planning Advisory Service is providing support to local authorities on nature recovery with a new member of the team coming on board to provide support on protected site strategies.
- 28. Office for Environmental Protection:** On 8 November the LGA hosted an online session for local authorities to meet the investigations team at the Office for Environmental Protection and find out about their roles and powers to investigate breaches of environmental law. The informal session included an opportunity for questions and answers.

### Transport and Economy

- 29. Transport Accessibility.** On 22<sup>nd</sup> November Cllr Linda Taylor gave oral evidence to the [Transport Committee inquiry on Accessible Transport](#). A variety of legal obligations to ensure accessibility apply to transport operators and local licensing authorities across different modes of transport - the Transport Committee is conducting an inquiry into these legal obligations and whether they are being met.
- 30.** Cllr Taylor's evidence included issues in relation to pavement clutter and pavement parking, reiterating the LGA's support for banning pavement parking. The challenges facing home-to school transport were also discussed, including the deficit and the exemptions from PSVAR which expire in 2026, as well the inability for councils to enforce against taxi's registered in other areas but operating in their area.
- 31. Parking fine levels.** The LGA have co-signed a joint letter from Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London (PATROL), the Local Government Association and the British Parking Association to the transport minister, shadow transport ministers and relevant DLUHC minister. The letter shares the result of research undertaken by PATROL into how the current levels of parking penalty charges are impacting and impeding local authority members across England and Wales in managing and enforcing their road networks, together with recommendations. Further information will be shared in due course and following a response from ministers.

**32. Commissioned work:** Three projects in support of the LINZ Board work programme were commissioned in January 2024 covering transport and high streets. These include:

- A project exploring traffic demand management tools available to councils, setting out the relative pros and cons for elected members to reflect on when considering such schemes.
- A project assessing the current distribution of decision-making powers between local and national government in the realm of local transport.
- A project exploring the implications of recent and forthcoming changes to planning, including the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act, and their impact on high street strategies.

**33.** The projects will include a mix of desk-based research as well as engagement with councils. Findings will be shared with the Board in due course.

## Membership of Outside Bodies – Canal and River Trust Council

### Purpose of Report

#### For decision

Is this report confidential? No

### Summary

Canals and rivers managed by British Waterways in England and Wales, transferred to a charitable trust - now named Canal & River Trust - in April 2012. Within the governance structure of the Trust, the Council has a remit to safeguard the long-term values and purposes of the Trust. The Council helps to shape policy, raise and debate issues, and provide guidance, perspective and a sounding board for Trustees.

The Trust are seeking a LGA councillor nomination to replace Cllr Peter Thornton who's 4-year term comes to an end on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024. The nomination has previously been decided by the EEHT Board and it is proposed that this Board does the same as its successor.

LGA Plan Theme: **Championing climate change and local environments**

### Recommendation(s)

That the Board invites nominations and puts forward a single nomination for the Trust Council.

Contact officer: Kamal Panchal

Position: Senior Adviser

Phone no: 0771 7572640

Email: [kamal.panchal@local.gov.uk](mailto:kamal.panchal@local.gov.uk)

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### Purpose

1. The Canal and River Trust Council are seeking a LGA councillor nomination to replace Cllr Peter Thornton who's 4-year term comes to an end on 1st March 2024. The nomination has previously been decided by the EEHT Board and it is proposed that this Board does the same as its successor.

### Background

#### Canal and River Trust Council

2. The Council is made up of up to 50 members and includes a mix of elected and independently nominated individuals together with the six Regional Advisory Board chairs, who are ex officio members.
3. Council members reflect the wide appeal of the waterways - from boating and angling through to walking and conservation. The Council is chaired by the chair of the Trust Board, David Orr CBE. Further details and a list of existing members can be found [here](#).
4. Council members are expected to serve for a period of four years.
5. The Council is responsible for the appointment of trustees. It debates important points of principle to provide guidance and perspective from different stakeholders, suggesting issues of concern for the Trustees to pursue, and acts as a sounding board for the Trustees in relation to the development of proposals and strategy.
6. Council meetings are usually held twice a year, in March and September. The September meeting is the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The first meeting will be on 20<sup>th</sup> March.
7. The LGA does not normally provide a brief for this role.

### Implications for Wales

8. The Canal and Rivers Trust covers canals and rivers in England and Wales

### Financial Implications

9. There are no immediate financial implications.

### Equalities implications

10. The Trust is [committed](#) to inclusion and diversity values.

### Next steps

- The Board is requested to invite nominations and agree the LGA nomination.



- LGA officers will subsequently inform the Trust of the LGA's decision.



## Note of last Local Infrastructure and Net Zero Board meeting

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|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| <b>Title:</b> | Local Infrastructure and Net Zero Board     |
| <b>Date:</b>  | Thursday 23 November 2023                   |
| <b>Venue:</b> | Hybrid Meeting - 18 Smith Square and Online |

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### Attendance

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

| Item     | Decisions and actions  | Action |
|----------|--|--------|
| <b>1</b> | <p><b>Welcome, apologies, declarations of interest</b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed members to the Local Infrastructure and Net Zero Board meeting.</p> <p>No declarations of interest were made.</p>   |        |
| <b>2</b> | <p><b>Right to Buy</b></p> <p>The report was introduced by Georgina Brightwell, Adviser, before Members discussed the paper raising the following comments on a right to buy position for the LGA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thanks was given to the officers for producing the report and it formed a good foundation for a discussion amongst Members.</li> <li>• The system in its current format does not work for local authorities nor those in need of social housing.</li> <li>• The policy was causing a net loss of homes for Councils and disincentivising replacement.</li> <li>• The choice should be for Councils to decide what is right for their place.</li> <li>• 100% receipt retention should be made permanent.</li> <li>• Extending the new build protection for additional years would protect Councils investments.</li> <li>• The housing association picture should not be lost in this work.</li> <li>• Consideration should be given to developing proposals for complimentary schemes to help to buy, rent, own and/or invest.</li> <li>• Acquisition caps should be raised so that Councils who best approach to providing social homes through purchasing replacements can benefit from receipt use.</li> </ul> <p>Members asked officers to produce a further position statement to be developed based on the discussion to be brought to the next meeting of the Board for decision.</p> <p><b>Decision:</b></p> <p>The report and subsequent discussion were noted.</p> |        |

### 3 Transport Update

The paper was introduced by Kamal Panchal, Senior Adviser, who summarised a number of recent announcements in transport policy. Members raised the following points:

- Members would be contributing to an article, produced cross-party, about the impact of the £8.3bn announcement arising from the cancellation of parts of the HS2 scheme.
- There were a number of Councils that would have seen direct impacts from HS2 that were especially disappointed in its cancellation north of Birmingham.
- Permitted development could raise challenges for Councils in ensuring safe and useful EV charging provision.
- Lane rental has proved to be a great success in many areas.
- Anti-idling campaigns could be effective, along with other enforcement areas but were not currently adequately resourced.
- There was a shortage of trained engineers affecting many infrastructure projects.
- Children were reported to have challenges travelling to secondary schools as they did not feel safe enough.
- 5-year planning statements at a national level were welcomed, but the ability to plan long term at a local level was needed.
- New burdens funding would be critical to help enforcement.

#### **Decision:**

The Board noted the developments and potential impacts on councils outlined in the report.

### 4 Local Government White Paper

Sonika Sidhu, Principal Policy Adviser, introduced the report on the White Paper before taking comments from Members on the content:

- Local authorities were best placed to deliver on prevention and statutory duties around, for example, net zero.
- 5-year transport plans should sit alongside 5-year housing deals to reduce silo-working.
- Complex care and out-of-borough placements should be included in the children's travel piece.

#### **Decision:**

The Board noted the report and subsequent discussion.

### 5 Local Infrastructure and Net Zero Board Update Report

The Chair invited Eamon Lally to present the report which outlined updates within the Board's remit. Members highlighted the following:

- Many Afghan families were leaving Home Office Hotels, which was having an impact on homelessness levels.
- The LGA launched its Make It Local campaign focusing on how



we reshape and reset public policy, including “Acting on Climate Change”

- The LGA and Urban Transport Group published a joint report reviewing the Bus Services Act 2017 to empower local areas.

**Decision:**

Members noted the update.

**6 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

