

Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board – report from Cllr Martin Tett (Chairman)

Meetings and external events

1. I attended the TCPA & Crest Nicholson fringe event at the Conservative Party Conference in September 2018. I spoke on *Building Homes, Creating Communities*.

Transport

2. The LGA has provided written submissions to a number of Transport Committee inquiries. These inquiries include:
 - 2.1. **Health of the bus market inquiry.** This inquiry sought written evidence on the effectiveness and ambition of DfT's policies on buses; factors that affect bus use; the provision of services to isolated communities; and the viability and long-term sustainability of bus services, including funding and public grants.
 - 2.2. **Local roads funding and governance inquiry.** The focus of this inquiry was on the condition of local roads, adequacy of funding, including the societal and economic costs of not maintaining them properly and whether governance changes are required. The key points of our submission, are that councils take the maintenance of their roads and highways infrastructure very seriously. They spend approximately £3.6 billion a year maintaining nearly 185,000 miles of local roads, as well as footpaths, cycleways, bridges, tunnels, drainage, street lighting, traffic signals and street furniture.
 - 2.3. **The Active Travel inquiry.** This inquiry called for evidence on the benefits and risks of active travel, recent trends, the effectiveness of DfT in setting strategic objectives, and the balance of responsibilities between central and local bodies. The findings from our recent modal shift survey will be used to reinforce key issues relating to councils.

Modal Shift survey

3. Over the summer we have surveyed member authorities on their approach to modal shift and encouraging more sustainable transport. It revealed the overwhelming majority have introduced 20mph zones, provided secure cycle parking and/or changing facilities, promoted cycling and/or walking through schools and included sustainable travel within their Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
4. However, the survey reveals that the main barriers stopping councils from doing more to invest in sustainable travel were: lack of revenue funding (87 per cent for cycling/walking and 82 per cent for public transport); uncertainty over continued levels of funding (74 per cent for cycling/walking and 79 per cent for public transport); and lack of capital funding (68 per cent for cycling/walking and for public transport). The full results are available [here](#).
- 5.

12 October 2018

Housing

6. A campaign win, as the LGA responded to the announcement in the Prime Minister's Conference speech, that the housing revenue account borrowing cap will be scrapped. The response can be read [here](#).
7. In August, the LGA published *Speeding up delivery Learning from councils enabling timely build-out of high quality housing*. This report highlights some distinctive projects and innovative practices that are being used in a number of different development contexts. The report can be read [here](#).
8. The LGA welcomed the opportunity to respond to the MHCLG consultation on *Use of receipts from Right to Buy sales*. The response to the consultation at the October board.

Environment

9. A waste and recycling survey was sent out to every council in September 2018. Part of the survey focused on questions related to the impact of Chinese restrictions on waste imports. Of those councils which responded 49 per cent said they had felt a significant impact from the ban. However, a much smaller proportion of councils i.e. 13 per cent were able to provide specific estimates of the financial impact. Our survey indicated that there was a median income loss to the councils which responded of £371400 pa. There was also an increase in the cost of recycling of around £428600 pa.
10. Looking to the future China will be pre-inspecting all imported containers. There will be supervised loading and sealing of containers. Site operators are currently being given additional training about what waste is/isn't acceptable. China has reported a 64 per cent reduction in waste imports for restricted categories for Q1 2018. Imports of waste paper declined substantially in May compared to April (23 per cent). China will ban an additional 16 wastes from the end of 2018 including post-industrial plastics, and a further 16 wastes from the end of 2019. This reduces the permitted waste types from 66 in 2017 to 18 by the end of 2019.
11. The board is still interested in receiving receiving information from councils on the financial implications of the China ban, anyone member with information should email Sonika.Sidhu@local.gov.uk

Contact officer:	Eamon Lally
Position:	Principal Policy Adviser
Phone number:	0207 664 3132
E-mail:	eamon.lally@local.gov.uk