

ENVIRONMENT, ECONOMY, HOUSING & TRANSPORT BOARD – Report from Cllr David Renard (Chairman)

Housing, Planning and Homelessness

Leadership Essentials – Housing

1. The second [Leadership Essentials](#) course on housing ran over two days on 16-17 September. Speakers included representatives from Homes England, One Public Estate, Cotswold District Council, Doncaster Council, Runnymede Borough Council, and Tower Hamlets Council. This year's course helped participants develop their leading role in shaping the local housing market, covering a wide range of topics such as delivering with affordable housing with partners, and delivering net zero housing solutions. Councillor Darren Rodwell, Deputy Chair of the EEHT Board, gave a keynote speech at the dinner attended by all delegates.

Keynote speech at Westminster Social Policy Forum

2. On 11 October I gave a keynote speech at the [Westminster Social Policy Forum](#) on the local government perspective on council housebuilding, locally-led planning and sustainable communities. The half day conference entitled 'Next steps for house building in England' included speakers such as Housing Minister Chris Pincher and was attended by a wide range of delegates including MPs, councillors, London Assembly Members, academics, civil servants, local government officials, and representatives from the private and third sectors. The Minister of State for Housing, Chris Pincher, also spoke at the event.

New evidence supporting our campaign for 100,000 new social homes

3. To support the evidence base for our [Spending Review](#) submission, we published a new report by Pragmatix Advisory. This was commissioned jointly with the National Federation of ALMOs (NFA) and the Association of Retained Council Housing (ARCH). The report demonstrates how building 100,000 social homes would improve the public finances over thirty years by the equivalent of £24.3 billion. This builds on the LGA's ['Building post-pandemic prosperity' report](#) commissioned late last year. The new report also looks at how building 100,000 social homes will support: economic recovery from COVID-19, the government's levelling-up ambitions, the construction sector to deliver low carbon homes, and action to address the climate emergency. New data from the report has been included in our submission to this year's Spending Review.

Rough Sleeper Peer Support Programme Report and Webinar

4. At the end of last year, the LGA and the former MHCLG, now DLUHC, worked together to develop the Rough Sleeping Peer Support programme in order to share learning and best practice during the "Everyone In" policy. This involved facilitating a programme of 28 Delivery and Impact Panels involving 222 councils, the findings from which have fed into a report which was published on

9th September. The report highlighted some best practise as well as challenges within the sector and opportunities for positive change. The report was launched with a webinar which was attended by around 120 councils with speakers from DLUHC and Leeds City Council amongst others.

Out of Area Placement Protocol

5. Previous work commissioned by the LGA investigated issues relating to out of area moves in order to improve our understanding and find ways the LGA could help to mitigate some of the concerns. This was with a view to improving the position for both councils and the households being moved away from their home area.
6. The outcome report presented several options for sector-led improvement. This resulted in the appointment of an independent expert and the establishment of a working group that developed a set of sector-led guidelines, with an accompanying communication and dispute resolution process. The out of area placements protocol has now been drafted and is open for consultation with homelessness and children's services until October 19th

Kerslake Commission

7. LGA hosted the final report release for the Kerslake commission report on homelessness and rough sleeping on 23rd September in Bevin Hall. Speakers at the event included author Bob Kerslake as well as politicians from across the spectrum, colleagues in health and people with lived experience.
8. The report's recommendations include: the Government developing a longer term rough sleeping strategy built on the success of their Everyone In policy; the maintenance of the £20 Universal Credit uplift; increased joint working by all organisations involved in homelessness by extending the Homelessness Reduction Act's Duty to Refer, to make it a Duty to Collaborate; introducing a Quality Assurance framework for those providing homelessness accommodation; establishing a clear policy position that limiting access to benefits for non UK nationals should stop short of causing destitution; reducing the reliance on communal shelters through improving planning in relation to extreme cold or severe heat.

Social housing management peer challenge

9. The LGA is working with partners to develop a Social Housing Management Peer Challenge in light of the Social Housing White Paper, which maps out the future for social housing regulation and focuses on consumer protection and redress. Through this, councils across the country will be able to access independent external expertise within the sector to provide robust assurance and improvement for social housing management. This year there will be a small number of pilots to inform proposals for 2022/23.

Housing Advisers Programme 2021/22

10. The [Housing Advisers Programme \(HAP\)](#) has returned for a fifth year and is open for applications for 2021/22. The programme will continue to fund the provision of bespoke expert support to councils – or groups of councils – wanting to transform the delivery of homes and places, the quality and security of existing homes and/or to prevent and reduce homelessness. HAP will award up to £20,000 to successful applicants for the purpose of securing expert advice in transforming how a service or

partnership meets the housing need of communities. This year there is emphasis on strategic housing projects that will support local authority housing delivery.

Building Safety

11. On 9 September, Cllr Renard gave evidence to the committee stage of the Building Safety Bill, reiterating the points made in our written submission.

Transport

The Transport Decarbonisation Plan

12. The key item at the last EEHT Board was on the Government's Transport Decarbonisation Plan and the potential implications for councils and priorities for further work for the LGA. Professor Greg Marsden, University of Leeds, and Konstanze Scharring, from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) were invited to lead and provide expert input into the debate. Items for discussion included EV charging infrastructure, the role of councils and the challenges of incentivising modal shift.

Electric Vehicle charging

13. As mentioned in the last report, we have now published a report undertaken by Local Partnerships on the LGA's behalf on scoping the role of local authorities in the provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure. This report can be found [here](#). We will use the findings to help ensure that councils receive the right amount of support and resources to help them play an effective transition to electric vehicles.
14. In relation to this work, the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) are consulting on whether there should be a statutory obligation on councils to plan for and deliver a charging infrastructure. The deadline for responses is 22nd November and the LGA intend to respond. We would welcome any member councils that want to share and inform the LGA's response to do so with Simon Jeffrey simon.jeffrey@local.gov.uk.

Climate Change

COP26

15. We will be able to send delegates to the formal negotiations at COP26, in the blue zone with equivalent observer status. Priority days for the LGA will be the 10th and 11th November, which are the transport and cities, regions and built environment days. We have proposed to hold events inside the blue zone on these days and have been successful in our expression of interest to the UN. We await confirmation and further clarification on our other proposed events. The LGA has also successfully secured an exhibition space in the public-facing green zone, in partnership with NILGA. This will take place on 11 November and will showcase the leading work of councils to tackle climate change.

Climate Change Task Group

16. A priority area of focus for the Task Group is to develop strategic relationships with key partner organisations and engage Ministers across Whitehall about how national and local government can work in partnership to address key climate challenges. We have met with partner organisations, such as UK100 and the Local Governments for

Sustainability (ICLEI) and Ministers from different government departments. These have included from DLUHC, DfT and the COP26 Presidency team.

Permanent Secretaries/Local Government Chief Executives roundtable

17. In September, a roundtable took place between a number of Permanent Secretaries and UK local government chief executives to discuss local government's role in climate change. Representatives from all the four UK local government associations were present. Permanent Secretaries from DLUHC, DfT, DEFRA, BEIS, DfE and Treasury attended.

This marks the beginning of a new collaborative arrangement across Government and local authorities on delivering net zero and adaptation.

Low carbon infrastructure policy research

18. We are preparing to launch this research before COP26 alongside a press release and social media threads. Focusing on buildings and transport, it will set out the strategic and economic case for the local delivery of low carbon infrastructure and initial findings were presented to the EEHT Board in July. It will contribute to the development of a robust evidence base that strengthens our lobbying on climate change.

Environment

Water

19. On 29 September the Local Government Association [responded to Defra consultation: the Government's strategic priorities for Ofwat](#) welcoming the updated statement of priorities.

Waste and recycling

20. On 2 August, Cllr David Renard, Chairman - Economy, Environment, Housing and Transport Board Local Government Association (LGA), co-signed a letter to the sentencing council calling on them to consider tougher fines and sentences for fly tipping offenders. Currently, sentences handed down do not always match the severity of the offence committed or fairly reflect the costs incurred by the public purse. This means that punishment for the offence of fly tipping does not act as a suitable deterrent. The letter was signed by 158 local authorities and 10 professional bodies.

Trees

21. On 16 July Cllr Linda Gillham chaired an LGA webinar about Tree Management & Woodland Creation. We had speakers from The Tree Council talking about why tree management matters, speakers from Defra and the Forestry Commission talking about new opportunities including the England Woodland Creation Offer and Local Authority Treescape Fund and a presentation on the Queen's Green Canopy initiative. [The presentations are available on the LGA website](#)

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