

Note of last Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board meeting

Title:	Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board
Date:	Thursday 23 September 2021
Venue:	Hybrid / Beecham Room, 7th Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as [Appendix A](#) to this note.

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
1	Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest Cllr David Renard (Chairman) welcomed new and returning Members and reminded colleagues of best practice during hybrid meetings. Apologies were noted. There were no declarations of interest.	
2	Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board 2021/22: Terms of Reference, Membership and Appointments to Outside Bodies It was noted that previous Board member, Cllr Peter Thornton currently represents the Board on the Canal & River Trust Council. Members agreed that Cllr Thornton should continue as representative for the final year of the 4-year term. Colleagues were reminded that the Equalities advocate for the Board for 2020-21 had been Cllr Renard. Cllr Linda Taylor kindly volunteered to take forward representation for the current year. Members noted the report and agreed the change of Equalities advocate for 2021-22.	
3	Transport Decarbonisation Plan Speakers: Professor Greg Marsden, Institute of Transport Studies, University of Leeds and Konstanze Scharring, Director of Policy, Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) Cllr Renard welcomed Professor Greg Marsden (Institute of Transport Studies, University of Leeds) and Konstanze Scharring (Director of Policy, Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders - SMMT) to the meeting. Eamon Lally, (LGA Principal Policy Adviser) outlined the report.	

Members received a presentation on the Transport decarbonisation plan outlining carbon budgets and trajectories implied, together with expectations for local government delivery.

Members noted an ambition to reduce urban traffic and details of the expectation for local authorities to meet much of the range of savings expected.

Mr Marsden noted comparisons between surface transport emissions over time and issues needing to be resolved in order to achieve decarbonisation.

He made the following points:

- DfT needs to develop partnerships between LAs and Regional Bodies.
- Local areas will have to demonstrate how they are reducing emissions over a portfolio of transport investments through LPTs.
- There is a lack of clarity in how travel will be paid for, what will happen in rural areas and there is a big expectation on behaviour.

Cllr Renard then introduced Konstanze Scharring, who provided a presentation on the challenges around transformation and manufacturer commitments within the motor industry.

The speaker made several points, including:

- Industry and local authorities need to work together in order to take forward a massive change. Significant transformation has already happened in the type of vehicles that people are using.
- Product availability is increasing in zero-emission capable vehicles and this is expected to double by 2025. The change is driven by tougher regulations and consumer demand.
- There has been a significant increase in registrations of battery and plug-in hybrid vehicles.
- Shared mobility is a critical part and is an opportunity for local authorities to work with employers.
- There are challenges around heavy goods vehicles and diversity in their application, which makes decarbonisation more complicated. Discussion is needed with government to look at technology roadmaps, regulations and infrastructure.
- There are key factors around reluctance for change and these need to be considered in order to be able to deliver the targets required. Discussion with government, customers and industry is ongoing.
- Other countries are using incentives to encourage change and in this country preservation of the plug-in car grant and consumer VAT exemption could increase uptake by almost two thirds within 5 years.

- Proper infrastructure is vital in order to address the challenges in transforming the UK market and delivery of accessible charge-points needs to ensure that no socio-economic groups are disadvantaged.

In the subsequent discussion, members raised the following points:

- What should the LGA do in terms of lobbying? Investment seems to be in the wrong areas and there is a deficit for road maintenance.
- Investment in travel is vital and has been impacted further by the Pandemic.
- The aim should be for reduction in the use of cars and not simply a transition to electric and there needs to be a debate, particularly around scrappage schemes.
- There is a lot of common cause between Local Authorities and questions around the decarbonisation strategy and the role of LAs only highlight the scale of challenges ahead.
- It should be easier for industries to decarbonise as they are regulated around the world.
- Infrastructure around charging points and range of cost and brand depends upon who the charging operator is. There are also issues around getting services for installation.
- One of the biggest challenges for rural authorities is the EV charging infrastructure.
- The cost of electric vehicles and e-bikes is out of reach for many households. There is also the added issue around a lack of suitable locations for charge-points, such as driveways.
- Since the Pandemic, the use and income from concessionaries has fallen substantially. Public transport integration is vital and planning laws and parking need to be addressed – particularly in rural areas.
- Aims need to be specified as zero carbon not reduction and alternatives such as hydrogen need to be considered.

Both speakers acknowledged the issues raised and agreed that a regulatory body - with standardisation as key - will be vital.

Members agreed to work together with industry in taking this forward. All manufacturers are in different positions and will have a different stance and all aspects need to be addressed and dialogue needs to take place with Government about enabling communities.

The Chairman thanked speakers for an informative and thought-provoking presentation.

The Board was invited to feedback on reflection and inform Kamal

Panchal (LGA Senior Adviser) of any further points.

Decision: Members noted the report.

Action: Officers to take forward suggestions.

4 Climate change and the UN COP26 conference

The Chair welcomed Nick Porter (LGA Senior Adviser) and invited him to introduce the report on Climate Change and the UN COP26 conference.

Mr Porter updated colleagues on current actions:

- Planning is underway for an LGA presence at the conference with 10 delegates.
- Connections are being made with other partners who will also be in attendance.
- Work is being done to bring together officials from key departments and Chief Executives to ensure a lock-in chapter and make a clear case for local government in delivering targets.

Members noted reference to the Levelling Up Agenda and the work of the LGA in ensuring that Govt recognise the role of LAs.

Colleagues were asked for a steer on the paper and also to let the LGA know if they will also be attending the conference.

In discussion, members made the following points:

- Have the right alliances been made with consideration of different local authorities and their different needs?
- Need to get powers and funding to local councils in order to enable them to influence policy decisions.
- Councils have ambitious plans for sustainable housing and retrofit schemes and these should be key points to raise at COP and in other lobbying.
- LGA's presence at COP26 needs to be obvious and so does what we are saying.

Members requested a GRID showing who else will in attendance at the conference and what will be said. They felt that it is important to have a very strong voice from communities. There were some concerns about what exactly we want from government and Mr Lally confirmed that our asks of government, to date, were set out in the LGA's spending review submission.

Mr Porter assured members that the range of needs across key and core cities and rural areas will be considered

Members noted that the outcome of the Spending Review will be key to what can be achieved.

Decision: Members noted the report.

Actions:

Officers to take forward Members' suggestions:

- Coordinate and capture the presence at COP26 and feedback to members.
- Provide an A4 sized briefing on the substance of LGA's stand and circulate to colleagues.
- Arrange an hour's adhoc virtual meeting of the Board to discuss in advance of the conference.

5 Housing Planning and Homelessness Update

Members noted that the LGA had led on a response last year, but that the new Secretary of State has said that he is pausing and reflecting before going forward.

The Chairman introduced Charli Fudge (LGA Adviser).

Members received an update on the Afghan refugee situation and were told that information on demographics was soon to be released. Extra funding will be available, and prevention of homelessness is key.

Members made several comments:

- Michael Gove MP (Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) should be invited to attend a future meeting so that he understands the issues LGA faces around the White Paper.
- There is a gap between the Home Office hotel model and the point at which councils take over – need to advocate access to allow them more than just existence and interactions
- They noted the national effort of councils to welcome refugees and felt that local authorities should have more opportunity to input to decisions.
- A coordination of national ideas around hotels would be useful from the LGA.
- They would like an update on the effect of homelessness and the impact of increased energy costs / £20 decrease in UC and other issues.

Officers noted comments and informed members that work was underway to get the SoS to attend the LGA's Councillors' Forum at some point.

Decision: Members noted the report.

Action: Officers to take forward members' comments.

For information: LGA response to the planning white paper: <https://www.local.gov.uk/parliament/briefings-and-responses/lga-submission-ministry-housing-communities-and-local-2>

6 2021/22 Priorities & Work Programme

Members noted the report and raised the following:

- Need to think about relationships with LEPs and the economy going forward.
- Skills is key to economy growth and there are challenges in accessing skilled workers particularly in rural areas. Re-skilling the workforce is important and needs to be addressed.
- We need to build on relationships with businesses and prioritise on high-streets and what is needed within that space in order to recover.
- Resilience and adaptation, in terms of transport must be central to what we are doing.

Decision: The work programme was noted.

Action: Officers to take forward suggestions as agreed by the Board.

Documents that members may wish to refer to:

<https://www.local.gov.uk/local-economic-recovery-planning>

7 Minutes of the previous meeting

Decision: The Board noted the minutes from the previous meeting.

The minutes were agreed by those Members in attendance at that time.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr David Renard	Swindon Borough Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Darren Rodwell	Barking and Dagenham London Borough Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Pippa Heylings Cllr Loic Rich	South Cambridgeshire District Council Cornwall Council
Members	Cllr Kelham Cooke Cllr Mark Crane Cllr Daniel Humphreys Cllr Paul Marshall Cllr Linda Taylor Cllr Martin Gannon Mayor Philip Glanville Cllr Claire Holland Cllr Cathy Mitchell Cllr Emily Darlington Cllr Vikki Slade Cllr David Beaman	South Kesteven District Council Selby District Council Worthing Borough Council West Sussex County Council Cornwall Council Gateshead Council Hackney London Borough Council Lambeth London Borough Council Warrington Borough Council Milton Keynes Council Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council Waverley Borough Council
Apologies	Cllr Patrick Nicholson Cllr Ed Turner	Plymouth City Council Oxford City Council
In Attendance	Professor Greg Marsden Konstanze Scharring,	Institute of Transport Studies, University of Leeds Director of Policy, Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT)
LGA Officers	Eamon Lally Jo Allchurch Kamal Panchal Hilary Tanner Christina Kaiser Nick Porter Bethany Vella Andrew Richmond Simon Jeffrey Jonah Munn Charles Loft Charli Fudge Katherine Mitchell Fatima de Abreu	LGA Member Services