

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

Title: Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board
Date: Wednesday 18 March 2015
Venue: Smith Square 1&2, Ground Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

Attendance

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

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
1	Declarations of Interest No declarations of interest were made.	
2	Chair's Report The Chair introduced the report, which was for information, without further comment. The report summarised work which had been undertaken by the Chair, Lead Members and the Board since the previous meeting. Decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none">The Board noted the report.	
3	Waste and Recycling Opportunities The Vice-Chair introduced the report and highlighted that the LGA had an opportunity to influence the agenda on the future of waste and recycling in relation to two developments; the first concerned meeting the existing EU recycling target, which the UK was not currently on course to achieve, and the second was to influence the next set of EU legislation which was currently being revised following the recent withdrawal of European Commission proposals. The Vice-Chair commented that the LGA was working with WRAP to support and improve councils in meeting recycling targets, but there should be a whole system approach to reduction. The Board discussed the report and in particular the following points: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Councils which already were achieving a high level of recycling could be penalised if the UK did not meet waste and recycling targets.The Government and EU colleagues should be lobbied to explain that councils should be able to decide to collect waste in whichever way was most appropriate for their area, and that there should be an emphasis on outcomes rather than operational detail.	

- A redistribution of Landfill Tax back to Councils would be welcomed, as would revision of requirements on packaging, and there should be increased local and national communications on these issues.
- Councils should be given greater incentives for reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill and improving recycling rates.
- Councils should be encouraged to use new technologies to deal with waste.
- There should be a reduction in the amount of waste which was exported from the UK.

Decision:

- The Board agreed that the approach proposed in the report to influence the agenda on the future of waste and recycling services should be progressed.
- It was also agreed that a delegation of Members and officers from the Board meet with colleagues at the European Commission to discuss waste matters. Cllrs Mike Jones and Tim Moore would attend as representatives of the Board.

Action:

- Meeting to be arranged with colleagues in Brussels to discuss the waste agenda.

4 Transport Update

The Chair introduced the report which provided an update on key transport related developments in relation to the Board's work programme, specifically regarding the Highways Agency and the Infrastructure Bill, highways maintenance, and parking.

Kamal Panchal, Senior Advisor, explained that the Infrastructure Bill had become an Act on 12 February and, following LGA lobbying, included a requirement for Highways England (HE), the successor Government owned company to the Highways Agency, to produce route strategies on which to base future investment plans. This would effectively lock-in council engagement on future discussions on route strategies and subsequent HE investment plans. Members noted that the LGA would be able to influence Highways England through a new Stakeholder Advisory Panel. A further update to the Board on what form this panel would take would be provided in due course.

Regarding highways maintenance it was highlighted that the Government had announced in January the allocations that each highways authority could receive for maintenance. The LGA had lobbied to provide councils greater certainty of this funding, and as a result had ensured that 80% of funding would be allocated on a needs based formula basis, and 10% would be subject to competitive bidding (rather than 25% which was originally proposed). A further 10% was top-sliced for council commitment to efficiency and good asset management principles.

The Deregulation Bill had recently passed its third reading in the House of

Lords and was expected to receive Royal Assent shortly. The Government had now published draft secondary legislation on parking which would come into effect when the Bill became an Act, which would enable the ban on CCTV for issuing automated fines except in no-parking areas around schools, bus stops, bus lanes and red routes from April 2015. Further lobbying of the Government and discussions with partners on these matters would continue.

In the discussion which followed the following points were raised:

- The maintenance of strategic roads was the responsibility of the Government and not Councils, but Councils were still required to collect litter. There was an argument that the authority responsible for highway maintenance of a road should also be responsible for collecting litter on the road.
- Government announcements on parking, specifically related to a supposed Council 'war on motorists', were unhelpful and did not reflect public opinion.
- The fact that Councils would be consulted by Highways England in the planning of route strategies was welcomed.
- Highways England should be invited to a future meeting of the Board to discuss how they would work with Councils individually and the LGA.

Decision:

- Representatives of Highways England should be invited to a future meeting to discuss how they would engage with Councils and the LGA.

Actions:

- Further information on the Stakeholder Advisory Panel, and detail on who should sit on the Panel and its remit, should be provided for consideration at a future meeting.
- Highways England to be invited to a future meeting.

5 Task and Finish Group Updates

The Chair introduced a report which provided the Board with updates on developments related to the work of the four EEHT Task and Finish Groups on Active Travel, Community Transport, Energy, and Apprenticeships for Young People.

The Chair of the Task and Finish Group on Active Travel explained that the Group had met on 26 February and considered the results of a survey on living streets undertaken by Surrey County Council, and had also met with representatives of Sustrans and Living Streets. The survey would be important to identify barriers to the promotion of cycling and walking, and what councils could do to overcome these. Further updates would be provided for the Board in due course.

The Chair of the Task and Finish Group on Energy explained that the Group was at an earlier stage. The work was being undertaken jointly with

the Improvement Board and was looking at revenue generation from energy, increased resilience and reductions on environmental impact.

Decision:

- Members noted the report and agreed that updates on the various Task and Finish Groups should be included in future Chair's reports to the Councillors' Forum.

Action:

- Further updates on Task and Finish Groups to be reported to the next meeting of the Board in June 2015.

6 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Members agreed the notes of the meeting held on 2 December 2014 as correct.

Decision:

- Members agreed that a Minister from a relevant Government department be invited to the next meeting of the Board in June 2015 following the General Election.

Action:

- Lead Members to discuss possible topics for the next Board meeting and to decide which Minister would be appropriate to invite.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Peter Box CBE	Wakefield Metropolitan District Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Mike Jones	Cheshire West and Chester Council
Deputy-Chairman	Cllr John Northcott	Mole Valley District Council
Members	Cllr / Dr Joan Dixon	Derbyshire County Council
	Cllr Tony Newman	Croydon Council
	Cllr Ed Turner	Oxford City Council
	Cllr Jim Harker OBE	Northamptonshire County Council
	Cllr Steve Count	Cambridgeshire County Council
	Cllr Martin Tett	Buckinghamshire County Council
	Cllr Geoffrey Theobald OBE	Brighton & Hove City Council
	Cllr Roger Symonds	Bath & North East Somerset Council
	Cllr Julian German	Cornwall Council
Apologies	Cllr Brenda Arthur	Norwich City Council
	Cllr James Lewis	Leeds City Council
	Cllr Timothy Moore	Liverpool City Council
	Cllr Deborah Croney	North Dorset District Council
	Cllr Ann Steward	Breckland Council
	Cllr Keith House	Hampshire County Council
In Attendance		
LGA Officers		
Ian Hughes		
Helen Murray		
Caroline Green		
Kamal Panchal		
Dan McCartney		
Paul Goodchild		