

April 2024

## Transport

1. SEND transport – as you know, we published a SEND transport toolkit ([here](#)) and homes to school SEND policy paper ([here](#)) back in Nov. Two follow up things:
  - a. We hosted a very popular webinar (100+ people) in early March – including reps from both place and children’s services - to introduce the toolkit, plus 3 case studies (Norfolk, Dorset, Blaby DC). Happy to circulate the slides / recording of the event.
  - b. As a result of the ADEPT / ADCS letter sent to DfE and DfT Ministers, DfE officials got in touch and requested a meeting. Following that meeting, they have followed up and suggested establishing a small group to continue the next phase of SEND transport work, which is really positive.
2. We responded to the DfT consultation on *Street works: fines and lane rental surplus funds* ([here](#)). We are supporting DfT in its preparatory work for the next Spending Review (which will take place after the General Election). We will be responding to the DfT consultation on its draft Transport Adaptation Strategy ([here](#)). If you would like to contribute, please contact [Edward Shortridge](#), ADEPT transport policy officer. We are also refreshing the CCS Commuted Sums guidance – the intention is to publish at the Spring Conference (16<sup>th</sup> May).
3. The ADEPT transport & connectivity board has a new chair – Amy Harhoff, Corporate Director Regeneration Economy and Growth at Durham County Council. Amy takes over from Ann Carruthers, who will become ADEPT President on 16<sup>th</sup> May.

## **DfT organisational changes – for info**

- *Work on roads, motoring, and road freight including the decarbonisation of all road transport and active travel will be brought together in a new **Road Transport Group** which Emma Ward (DG) will lead. This will enable a stronger focus on EV infrastructure roll-out and create more bandwidth to think about the strategic challenges for road transport and our motoring agencies including new technology. This will include highways maintenance and active travel, which will be led by Rupert Furness at Deputy Director level and David Buttery will take over at Director level (from Stephen Fidler / Jessica Matthew). Emma Ward will continue to be lead DG on Network North (NN) coordination.*
- *Work on rail strategy and policy and on wider public transport including buses, our relationship with local government and devolution issues, will come together in a new **Public Transport and Local Group**, led by Conrad Bailey. This will enable him and his director team to build a group with a much stronger focus on integrated transport and place, with a more even balance between rail and other modes. Stephen Fidler / Jessica Matthew will join this Group and will continue to cover buses, local transport funding and strategy, CRSTS, LUF, TCF, accessibility and inclusion. John Hall’s Regions and Cities directorate also joins this Group.*
- *In **Decarbonisation Technology and Strategy Group (DTS)** led by Second Permanent Secretary Jo Shanmugalingam, we are creating a new Environmental Strategy team to build on the progress made in recent years on environment strategy to provide even more focussed leadership on the totality of environmental challenges for transport, reflecting the increasing attention across Whitehall as the environment act is implemented.*

*DfT has said to continue to engage with usual contacts; over the coming weeks they will update colleagues on any change of contact. A refreshed organisation chart should be available on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) shortly. Ministerial portfolios are unchanged.*

## **Devolution / Growth / Planning**

4. We worked with the 7 LAs being offered a Level 2 devo deal to develop some text to integrate climate & environmental objectives into the standard devo template. Defra was supportive. As you know, only three of those seven deals were announced in the Spring Budget (Bucks, Surrey, Warks). The text has been published - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/surrey-level-2-devolution-framework-agreement/surrey-level-2-devolution-framework-agreement#:~:text=Surrey%20and%20government%20have%20agreed,contribution%20to%20the%20UK%20economy>.
5. We responded to the DLUHC consultation on heat network zoning ([here](#)) and to the DLUHC consultation on Future Homes and Buildings Standards ([here](#)). We are also refreshing the ADEPT Housing Policy Position document.
6. Workforce activities:
  - a. ADEPT launched a LinkedIn EDI campaign on 1<sup>st</sup> February, which ran till 11<sup>th</sup> April (see [here](#)). We are also drafting an ADEPT EDI Charter.
  - b. Plans to roll out our Gen Z recruitment campaign pilot are developing well – there are 5 LAs involved (S Glos, Plymouth, Oxfordshire, Barnsley, Hounslow).
  - c. We are also looking to roll out a leadership pathways programme for middle managers, to complement the very successful ADEPT / Solace Leadership Development Programme.

## **Environment**

7. We are working with the Environment Agency to build capability in LAs to apply adaptation pathway approaches in flood and coastal erosion risk management. One of the early findings from the [Adaptation Pathways programme](#) is the importance of starting simple and building consensus around a pathway/ pathways before launching head long into technical assessment. We are working with consultancy *Climate Sense* to develop guidance for LAs on undertaking a Rapid Adaptation Pathways Assessment (RAPA), via three pilot projects. We will be hosting an introductory meeting pm 7<sup>th</sup> May – if you'd like to attend, please contact [Kylie Russell](#).
8. The Energy and Clean Growth Working Group have been discussing some of the challenges which have led to HUG2 struggling to deliver in terms of homes helped relative to funds allocated. The Home Upgrade Grant (HUG2) is a government grant scheme that funds energy-saving upgrades for eligible residents with off-gas heating systems. The grant provides energy efficiency upgrades and low carbon heating via local authority funding, to qualifying households in England. ADEPT collated the issues from across several local authorities and shared with the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ). Response [here](#). Meanwhile, we continue to work with iChoosr/Solar Together to ensure smooth running of the scheme in the future.
9. Membership of the [Woodland Creation Accelerator Forum](#) has been extended to officers in all county, unitary and metropolitan local authorities who are interested in sharing insights on woodland creation, to increase collaboration and information exchange.

## **Events / Other**

10. We are setting up meetings with shadow ministers - as part of that process, we are refining our more general set of manifesto asks (see [here](#)) for transport, climate change, economic growth, etc. We released a media comment on the Spring Budget ([here](#)).

11. Dates for your diary:
  - a. A webinar with Natural England - *Making space for green and blue in our changing climate: how can LNRS help deliver the places and nature we all need* – from 10-1130am on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> April. If you'd like to attend please get in touch with [Hannah Bartram](#).
  - b. The next Lunch & Learn – *Location based video analytics – understanding and managing population behaviour using computer vision* - is on Friday 26 April and is hosted by Virgin Media O2. You can register [here](#).
  - c. The Spring Conference and Annual Awards Dinner will be held in London on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2024. To book see [here](#).
  - d. Date & venue for your diary – the Autumn Conference will be held in Bristol on 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> November.
12. The 2024 PACE Programme has kicked off – this year focusing on the strategic theme of 'making a stronger case for place'. The summary report for Session 1 – *Advocating the case for place* – can be found [here](#).