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SW ADEPT AI Notes – please check for accuracy

Date: 30th September 2025

Time: 14:00 – 15:00

Location: MS Teams

Present:	
Mickey Green – North Somerset Council	Kylie Russell – ADEPT
Ben Rhodes, CBI	Mike Garrity – Dorset Council
Jan Britton – Dorset Council	Jack Wiltshire – Dorset Council
Gemma Clinton – Dorset Council	Robert Richards – Devon County Council
Katherine Burt – Environment Agency	Miranda Housden – ICE
Christopher Watkins – National Highways	Hannah Shrimpton – Peninsula Transport
Andy Sharp – Plymouth City Council	Paul Hickson – Somerset Council
Jon Severs – South Glos Council	Andy Whitehead – South Glos Council
Jay Judge – Swindon Borough Council	David Bullock – Wiltshire Council

Guest Speaker	Sonika Sidhu - LGA
Guest Speaker	Greg McClymont - NISTA

Welcome and introduction – Mickey Green – Chair

- Mickey Green chaired his first meeting as Southwest Chair.
- He introduced himself as Director of Environment, Assets and Transport Services at North Somerset Council.
- Encouraged nominations for Vice Chair to support agenda setting and meeting coverage.
- Emphasised tailoring future meetings to regional needs.
- Mentioned intention to meet attendees one-to-one over the coming months.

Actions:

- Circulate call for Vice Chair nominations.
- Schedule one-to-one catch-ups with members.

LGA Update

Speaker: Sonika Sidhu, Assistant Director of Policy – Place, LGA

Focus areas:

- Devolution Bill: governance concerns, climate and culture competencies.

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- Councillor pensions announcement (mini win).
- Strategic planning and skills discussions with combined authorities.
- Climate duty: supported if funded; legal implications under review.
- “Force for Growth” initiative to highlight councils’ role in economic development.
- Awaiting housing and homelessness strategies.
- Waste: concerns over industry influence on EPR; awaiting further detail on simpler recycling.
- Budget submission aligned with government missions, awaiting fair funding review response.
- Positive engagement with new ministers and Labour front bench.

Actions:

- Consider future agenda item on fair funding implications for the South West.
- Consider future agenda item on climate duty and devolution impacts.

Presentation from NISTA: 10-Year Infrastructure Strategy

Speaker: Greg McClymont, Head of Infrastructure Spatial Planning, NISTA

Notes:

- NISTA is a new Treasury sub-department focused on infrastructure strategy and delivery.
- Strategy include £765bn investment over 10 years across economic, housing and social infrastructure.
- Emphasis on spatial planning, infrastructure pipeline (777 projects) and enabling private finance.
- Introduced a national infrastructure spatial tool for cross-sector analysis.
- Strategy aims for support placed-based planning and improve delivery pace.

Actions:

- Share link to infrastructure pipeline dashboard and spatial tool (when available).
- Explore opportunities for local authorities to access and use the spatial tool.
- Provide feedback to NISTA on tool accuracy and local relevance.

Presentation from Somerset Council: Gravity/Agratas Project

Speaker: Paul Hickson, Service Director for Economic Development, Skills and Climate, Somerset Council

Notes:

- Gravity site near Bridgwater is a major brownfield redevelopment.
- Agratas (Tata Group) investing in batter manufacturing for clean mobility.

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- First building (150,000 sqm) underway; full site to host 3 buildings and ~4000 jobs.
- Strong infrastructure: M5 access, rail head, energy grid, water.
- Local Development Order (LDO) enabled fast-track planning and investor confidence.
- Lessons learned from Hinkley Point C applied to skills, housing and community engagement.

Discussion on Presentations

Notes:

- Miranda Housden (ICE) highlighted need for cross-over collaboration.
- SW Infrastructure Partnership (SWIP) offers support and upcoming workshop (27 November in Taunton).
- Discussion on rail infrastructure gaps and delivery pace.
- Interest in integrating spatial development strategies with infrastructure planning.

Actions:

- Share SWIP workshop details and encourage sign-up.
- Consider dedicated workshop or roundtable with SWIP.
- Explore rail infrastructure opportunities for future agenda.

ADEPT Update

Speaker: Kylie Russell, Deputy CEO, ADEPT

Transport / Infrastructure

1. **Carbon Leadership Programme:** There's been significant interest in the [programme](#) since we launched it in June, and places are limited for the remainder of the 2025/26 programme. Created in partnership with Proving Services and supported by the Department for Transport, the programme is designed to support local highway authorities measure and identify ways to reduce their carbon emissions. Rather than each authority investing considerable time and resources into developing its own carbon baselining tool and working in isolation with limited visibility of comparative performance, the programme offers a coordinated approach.
2. **Live Labs 2:** As part of the programme we commissioned the Behavioural Insights Team to explore the behavioural changes needed to run alongside technological change (see the report [here](#)). We have launched a pledge that invites stakeholders to drive meaningful decarbonisation across all aspects of the UK's road network and rethink how the highways infrastructure reduces carbon – for more information and to sign the pledge, see [here](#). The latest Live Labs 2 blog focuses on the Devon A382 project ([here](#)).

3. The 7th **National Traffic Managers Conference** is now being held online on Weds 8th Oct (it was meant to be held in Birmingham). The programme, and registration link, can be seen [here](#).

Devolution / Growth / Planning

4. **LGR & Devo webinars:** Our programme of support for members on Devo and LGR issues has now completed. We delivered 6 webinars: 1) becoming a unitary council 2) becoming a combined / statutory authority plus issue-specific webinars on Environment & Climate Change, Highways & Transport, Planning and Waste & Recycling. If you would to see any of the recordings & slides, please get in touch with [Hannah Bartram](#).
5. **Workforce issues:** Our Gen Z 'Find Your Path' campaign has been shortlisted for an award in the CN Workforce Awards 2025. The campaign was designed to inspire the Gen Z generation to explore careers in local government, directly addressing our urgent skills shortage. We've just published the debrief report, that captures key learnings from the campaign – read the report [here](#).
6. We have published a policy position paper on the **Devolution Bill** ([here](#)). Whilst the association welcomed the introduction of the Bill, and the opportunity it presents for strengthening local leadership and place-based service delivery, we are very disappointed that the Bill does not propose to transfer or introduce new statutory environmental or climate-related functions to Strategic Authorities.

Environment / Climate

7. In the most recent **climate change blog**, ADEPT policy officer David Dale discusses recent developments in some local authority climate policies and the implications these changes may have (see [here](#)).
8. **PACE Programme 2025:** The outputs from session one are now available, including a [summary](#), [video](#) and [blog](#). The first session: '*Translating global trends into local place leadership: opportunities and challenges*', explored four critical megatrends reshaping place outcomes: climate volatility, spatial inequality, erosion of trust and demographic and digital shifts. The session summary brings together the key learnings and discussion points from the day. The video provides an overview of the session's key themes and insights from the expert speakers. We've also published a blog from Matt O'Neill, Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council.
9. We held a joint webinar with the Environment Agency on the **Living with Change: Coastal Communities and Climate Resilience with over 45 attendees**. To receive the slides and recording please email kylie.russell@eastsussex.gov.uk.

Events/Other

10. In the 2nd of our ADEPT/Environment Agency webinar series we will be focusing on lowland resilience. This webinar will focus on the unique Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) challenges faced by lowland catchments through innovative and sustainable approaches. The webinar takes

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place on 1Wednesday 12th November 16:00-17:00. For an invite, please contact kylie.russell@eastsussex.gov.uk.

11. The second ADEPT / Colas / Equans roundtable – this time focusing on ‘Embedding Resilience in Place-Based Infrastructure’ – will be held in Manchester on 6th November. This session will explore how highways, place, environment, and infrastructure professionals can lead on climate adaptation, integrating resilience into planning, delivery, and investment while aligning with doughnut economics principles and local authority KPIs. Register interest here: <https://forms.office.com/e/1Pa62siL03>
12. **Dates for your diary** – for more detail please visit the Events page on the website ([here](#)):
 - i. National Traffic Managers Conference, 8th October, **now online** – booking site now live ([here](#))
 - ii. ADEPT will be at Highways UK (15&16 October) – Andrew Cook, 1st VP will be speaking and there are several Live Labs 2 presentations. To register for this free event, see [here](#).
 - iii. Webinar on highways run off and water quality - Friday 14th November 14:00-15:30. To register interest and receive an appointment please email kylie.russell@eastsussex.gov.uk
 - iv. ADEPT Autumn Conference, 20 & 21 November, Manchester – booking site now live ([here](#)) - **Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester is confirmed as keynote speaker.**

AOB & Discussion on Future Agenda Items

Notes:

- Proposed theme for next meeting: Rail Infrastructure, with guest speaker Bogdan Lupu (Network Rail).
- Mickey to circulate prompts for future agenda suggestions.

Actions:

- Confirm interest in rail-themed agenda.
- Send out prompts for future agenda items.
- Package and circulate meeting materials, presentations and links.

Date of next meeting: **27 November at 4pm**