



Economy, Planning and Housing Board

Terms of Reference – August 2026

Background

The Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning & Transport (ADEPT) is the voice of local authority place directors and their teams. Our members manage vital local services - from highways, waste, recycling and planning - while also preparing for the challenges and opportunities of the future.

ADEPT is a membership based, voluntary organisation with members across England. We bring together directors from county, unitary, metropolitan and combined authorities, along with sub-national transport bodies and corporate partners. Collectively, our members provide services for more than 42 million people, manage 164,000 miles of road and handle around 65% of all recycled waste in England.

ADEPT members develop long term strategies, investment and infrastructure needed to make their places resilient, sustainable, inclusive and prosperous. They drive clean, sustainable growth, delivering the programmes that are fundamental to creating more resilient communities, economies and infrastructure. These services include housing, environmental and regulatory services, planning, economic development, culture and highways and transport. Find out more at: www.adeptnet.org.uk

Economy, Planning and Housing Board

The Board will provide a space for Place directors, senior planners, economic development leads and housing directors to come together and tackle the big issues facing places across the country. Whether it is planning reform, housing delivery, or driving local economic resilience, the Board will support members in navigating complex challenges and shaping effective, place-based responses. The new structure allows for greater integration across disciplines while retaining the flexibility to establish sub-groups for specific work areas as needed.

The Board will also provide a safe and constructive space for government departments and agencies, including MHCLG, to engage with the sector, test ideas, and share consultations. It will support the integration of planning and wider place-making, including co-design with communities.

Board Remit

The Board's remit covers the following areas:

- Economic and sustainable growth and regeneration
- Planning
- Housing
- Place-shaping through planning and growth
- Digital connectivity

The Board will also consider cross-cutting issues such as climate change devolution, local government reform (LGR), and future trends including the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in growth and planning.

The Board oversees the Digital Connectivity Working Group.

The Board will:

1. Consider matters which fall within its remit and act or make recommendations to the Leadership Team of ADEPT as appropriate.
2. Meet bi-monthly for 1.5 hours on MS Teams.
3. Produce a work programme and review/update as necessary.
4. Establish Standing Panels or Task Groups in specific areas if required.
5. Contribute to the development of policy, and publish policy positions, in the areas within its remit.
6. Engage with government ministers and officials to promote the interests of ADEPT members on matters within its remit.
7. Respond to relevant government or other consultations and inquiries within its remit.
8. Seek to support members in their roles in their organisations including keeping up to date with current issues.
9. Promote knowledge sharing and best practice among members.
10. Prepare or commission guidance documents or other materials of interest to members.
11. Work with other ADEPT Subject Boards, especially Climate Change, Environment, and Transport & Connectivity, on matters of common interest, while avoiding duplication of effort.
12. Nominate representatives to external bodies within its remit.
13. Hold joint meetings with other ADEPT Subject Boards on issues of cross-cutting interest.
14. Identify and articulate key strategic priorities and policy asks of government (e.g. 5–10 key issues) to inform engagement and advocacy.
15. Contribute to the delivery of the ADEPT Strategic Plan and periodically review progress against its priorities.

Membership

The Board's membership is voluntary and is drawn from Directors and Heads of Service at member local authorities. It also includes representatives from:

- partner bodies including the Institute of Economic Development (IED), Planning Advisory Service (PAS), Planning Officers Society (POS), Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI), Chief Economic Development Officers Society (CEDOS), Local Government Association (LGA), Environment Agency (EA), Town and County Planning Association (TCPA) and Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH).
- MHCLG, and its delivery bodies including Homes England and the Planning Inspectorate.

Key posts and appointees are as follows:

- Board Chair: Chris Henning, Derbyshire County Council
(chris.henning@derbyshire.gov.uk)
- Deputy Chair: Wayne Bexton (Nottinghamshire County Council)
- Planning lead: Sarah McLaughlin (Luton Council)
- Secretary: Sarah Moller, Derbyshire County Council

Meetings and other activities

Virtual meetings for 1.5 hours bi-monthly; with additional meetings as and when required. Invited speakers will include Government officials and organisations/individuals with a valuable perspective.

The Board will also encourage members to raise emerging or urgent issues for discussion and will allocate time for horizon scanning and identifying future challenges and opportunities.