

## ADEPT: Parliamentary monitoring November 2019

This document is tailored to provide a monthly overview of key activity, debates, questions, reports, PMQs, speeches and bills relevant to the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport.

### Key dates

12 December: General Election

17 December: Parliament returns (TBC)

31 January: Date UK due to leave the EU

No further recess dates announced

### Planning – Housing

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
06/11/19	Ministerial update	MHCLG	<b>MHCLG Update</b> The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has published a written ministerial statement on MHCLG update: <a href="http://bit.ly/33o5JVJ">http://bit.ly/33o5JVJ</a>
14/11/19	Press Release	Royal Institute of British Architects	<b>'Fight climate change, tackle the housing crisis and ensure buildings are safe' - RIBA urges next Government to step up.</b> <a href="#">Read here.</a>
27/11/19	Press Release	WMCA	<b>House building doubles in eight years across the West Midlands</b> Nearly 17,000 homes were built in the West Midlands last year, meaning the number of homes constructed in the region has more than doubled in the last eight years... <a href="#">(read here)</a>

### Industrial Strategy & Local Industrial Strategies

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
12/11/19	Press Release	Make UK	<b>General Election 2019: Industry publishes business manifesto for post Brexit economy</b> Parties urged to set out economic vision with focus on growth and a skilled digital economy. <a href="#">Read here.</a>

### NPPF – Land value capture

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
31/10/19	Press release	Treasury select committee	<b>Government must examine alternatives to broken Business Rates system.</b> <a href="#">Read here.</a>

05/11/19	Written Q&A	HM Treasury	<p><b>Small Businesses: Tax Allowances:</b> Written question - 8231</p> <p>Asked by <a href="#">Caroline Lucas</a> To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make it his policy to increase the (a) small business rates relief threshold and (b) taper thresholds for that relief; and if he will make a statement.</p> <p>Answered by: <a href="#">Jesse Norman</a> The Government has taken repeated action to reduce business rates for all ratepayers including small businesses. Reforms and reliefs announced since Budget 2016 are saving businesses more than £13 billion over the next five years. This includes making 100 per cent Small Business Rate Relief permanent, doubling the rateable value (RV) threshold for 100% relief to £12,000, and raising the taper for properties with a RV up to £15,000. This means more than 675,000 of the smallest businesses do not pay business rates at all, which is over one-third of non-domestic properties in England.</p>
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### Energy – Local authority projects

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
30/10/19	Written Q&A	BEIS	<p><b>Renewable Energy: Feed-in Tariffs:</b> Written question - <a href="#">HL355</a></p> <p><b>Q</b> Asked by <a href="#">Lord Foulkes of Cumnock</a> To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Smart Export Guarantee Tariff per kilowatt hour as proposed will be the same for (1) small commercial, (2) household, and (3) community-owned generators.</p> <p>Answered by: <a href="#">Lord Duncan of Springbank</a> The Smart Export Guarantee will be a market-based mechanism, with suppliers free to set prices, in line with</p>

			<p>government's objective to move towards market pricing. The level of tariffs will be for relevant suppliers to determine, other than a requirement for them to provide a remuneration for exported electricity that is greater than zero at all times of export.</p>
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### Digital – Broadband & mobile

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
			No updates

### Economy – Fair funding review

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
11/11/19	Press Release	Institute of Fiscal Studies	<p><b>The outlook for councils' funding: is austerity over?</b></p> <p>The government has forecast that what it terms councils' core spending power could increase by 4.3% in real terms in 2020–21 compared with this year. In part this reflects a £1.1 billion increase in grant funding mostly labelled as being for social care services, but which can in fact be spent as councils wish. It also accounts for increases in business rates revenues in line with inflation, and assumes all councils increase council tax by the maximum allowed without a referendum (2% plus a further 2% for adult social care services). <a href="#">Read here.</a></p>
13/11/19	Press Release	Institute of Fiscal Studies	<p><b>English local government funding: trends and challenges in 2019 and beyond</b></p> <p>The 2010s have been a decade of major financial change for English local government. Not only have funding levels – and hence what councils can spend on local services – fallen significantly; major reforms to the funding system have seen an increasing emphasis on using funding to provide financial incentives for development via initiatives such as the Business Rates Retention Scheme</p>

			(BRRS) and the New Homes Bonus (NHB). <a href="#">Read here.</a>
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### Transport – Investment strategy

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
31/10/19	Written ministerial statement	DfT	<b>DfT: Departmental Update.</b> <a href="#">Read here.</a>
20/11/19	Press Release	Centre for Cities	<b>General Election 2019: Transport priorities for the next Government.</b> <a href="#">Read here.</a>
21/11/19	Press Release	RAC	<b>Half of drivers say condition of local roads has got worse.</b> <a href="#">Read here.</a>

### Transport – Major road network

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
			No updates

### Transport – Sub-national Transport Boards (STBs) – (TfN, TfSE)

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
			No updates

### Transport – Automated electric vehicle bill

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
			No updates

### Transport – rail

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
31/10/19	Q&A	DfT	<p><b>To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans are in place to support Northern Rail in retiring all Pacer trains by the revised dates of May 2020? Written question - <a href="#">6388</a></b></p> <p>Asked by <a href="#">Dan Jarvis (Barnsley Central)</a> : To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans are in place to support Northern Rail in retiring all Pacer trains by the revised date of May 2020. [6388]</p> <p>Answered by <a href="#">Chris Heaton-Harris (Daventry)</a> :Northern's Franchise Agreement stipulates that Pacers and other older types of trains cannot be removed until they can be replaced</p>

			<p>by another train into passenger service. This is to protect the stability of the rail timetable. Unfortunately, manufacturing delays with the new fleet have meant a small number of pacers will remain in service into 2020.</p> <p>We will work alongside Northern to progress all options to remove Pacers as soon as possible however our top priority is to ensure a stable service for passengers.</p>
31/10/19	Debate	HoL	<p><b>Railways (Safety, Access, Management and Interoperability) (Miscellaneous Amendments and Transitional Provision) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019.</b> <a href="#">Read here.</a></p>
31/10/19	Written Q&A	DfT	<p><b>Northern: Rolling Stock:</b> Written question - <a href="#">6388</a></p> <p>Asked by <a href="#">Dan Jarvis</a></p> <p>To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans are in place to support Northern Rail in retiring all Pacer trains by the revised date of May 2020.</p> <p>Answered by: <a href="#">Chris Heaton-Harris</a></p> <p>Northern's Franchise Agreement stipulates that Pacers and other older types of trains cannot be removed until they can be replaced by another train into passenger service. This is to protect the stability of the rail timetable. Unfortunately, manufacturing delays with the new fleet have meant a small number of pacers will remain in service into 2020. We will work alongside Northern to progress all options to remove Pacers as soon as possible however our top priority is to ensure a stable service for passengers.</p>
31/10/19	Written Q&A	DfT	<p><b>Railways: Tickets:</b> Written question - <a href="#">4332</a></p> <p>Asked by <a href="#">Andy McDonald</a></p> <p>To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the letter</p>

			<p>of 11 October 2019 from the Minister of State for Transport to the Rail industry on smart ticketing, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of (a) the levers available to train operators to bring forward smart ticketing and (b) the role of Government in delivering that agenda.</p> <p>Answered by: <a href="#">Chris Heaton-Harris</a>  We want train companies to deliver a modern, convenient, accessible and integrated smart ticketing system for their passengers. In recent years, the Government has worked jointly with the rail industry, including investing a further £80m in smart ticketing, to ensure that passengers have the choice of travelling without a paper ticket across almost all of the rail network.  We are now encouraging operators to build on the recent promotion campaign, encourage smart ticketing at the point of ticket purchase, and ensure that they deliver an excellent user experience.</p>
01/11/19	Oral Answers	Public Accounts Commission	<p><b>HS2: National Audit Office Progress Review.</b> 31 October 2019  Volume <a href="#">667</a>  <a href="#">Dame Cheryl Gillan (Chesham and Amersham) (Con)</a>  5. What the timeframe is for the publication of the National Audit Office's progress review on High Speed Two. [900273]  <a href="#">Sir Edward Leigh (Gainsborough)</a></p> <p>Before I answer that question, Mr Speaker, I would like to thank you for your friendship over the years. I do not always agree with you, but in this place, John, friendship is more important than agreement, so thank you very much.  The NAO expects to publish its progress review on High Speed 2 in early 2020. The NAO expects to examine progress since its last value-</p>

			<p>for-money study in 2016, the reasons for cost and schedule increases, and the risk to value for money that remain.</p> <p><a href="#">Dame Cheryl Gillan</a></p> <p>In his bombshell report, Allan Cook, the chairman of HS2, admitted publicly that HS2 was billions of pounds over budget and years behind schedule. Quite frankly, given HS2's poor corporate governance and the rapid turnover of not only senior staff but Ministers, who are supposed to have oversight of this project, may I encourage the NAO to provide an in-depth report into the financial operations and probity of HS2, and can this report be made available to Douglas Oakervee, who is carrying out the Oakervee review of HS2? That review should not report until it has had the advantage of the NAO analysis, and I hope that this project will then be cancelled or radically changed.</p> <p><a href="#">Sir Edward Leigh</a></p> <p>Of course the NAO will not get involved in the political argument about whether the programme is wise, but it has already reported three times on HS2. It found that the cost and benefit estimates underpinning the business case were uncertain, and addressed the weaknesses in the business case and in the estimate of the cost of land. I assure my right hon. Friend that the NAO will leave no stone unturned to ensure we get value for money from this project, if it proceeds.</p>
05/11/19	Written Q&A	DfT	<p>Written question - <a href="#">HL465</a></p> <p>Asked by <a href="#">Lord Krebs</a> To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Vere of Norbiton on 28 October (HL39), what assessment they have made of the impact of clearance of trackside vegetation by</p>

			<p>Network Rail on the UK's carbon budget.</p> <p>Answered by: <a href="#">Baroness Vere of Norbiton</a></p> <p>The Government expects Network Rail to achieve no net loss in biodiversity by 2024, and net gain by 2040 as the primary environmental objective of its lineside vegetation management. Network Rail does not currently calculate the carbon impact of vegetation clearance. As a responsible landowner Network Rail must effectively manage the national environment on its estate, whilst ensuring the safety and performance of the railway.</p> <p>The Government believes that the railway should make a significant contribution to achieving our objective of net zero greenhouse gas emissions across the economy by 2050.</p>
05/11/19	Written Q&A	DfT	<p><b>Trains: Diesel Fuel:</b> Written question - <a href="#">7729</a></p> <p>Asked by <a href="#">Andy McDonald</a></p> <p>To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the Government's policy is on the use of diesel trains on the UK rail network beyond 2040.</p> <p>Answered by: <a href="#">Chris Heaton-Harris</a></p> <p>The Government has set an ambitious, legally binding target to reach net-zero greenhouse gas emissions from the UK by 2050. Rail must make a significant contribution towards achieving this target as part of our Transport Decarbonisation Plan. We are working with Network Rail to develop a costed decarbonisation network strategy which will inform decisions on the scale and pace of rail decarbonisation. This work will consider the full range of available technologies and identify which is most appropriate for each part of the rail network.</p>

			Decisions on rolling stock will be taken as part of this wider strategy, alongside decisions on infrastructure. We will reduce use of diesel trains as we electrify a greater proportion of the network and as new technologies such as battery and hydrogen become more mature.
07/11/19	Statistics	ORR	<b>Rail infrastructure and assets: 2018 to 2019</b> The Office of Rail and Road has published statistics on rail infrastructure and assets (including stations and rolling stock) in Great Britain with the latest data covering April 2018 to March 2019. The statistics can be found here: <a href="http://bit.ly/33pTzM1">http://bit.ly/33pTzM1</a>
08/11/19	Press Release	RIA	<b>New programme Rail Matters explores the future direction of the rail network.</b> <a href="#">Read here.</a>
13/11/19	Press Release	Railway Industry Association	<b>Railway Industry Association launches RAIL 2050 Manifesto</b> The Railway Industry Association (RIA), the voice of the UK rail supply community, has launched its RAIL 2050 Manifesto, setting out the industry's key asks as the UK heads towards a General Election. The Manifesto, which looks at how we can develop a long-term, sustainable rail industry over the next 30 years, calls for the political parties to provide...( <a href="#">Read here</a> )
13/11/19	Press Release	Govia	<b>Commuters can now travel smart across the South East rail network</b> <a href="#">Read here.</a>
18/11/19	Press Release	TfL	<b>TfL confirms 'pay as you go' fares for bus and Tube frozen for 2020.</b> Read here. <a href="#">Read here.</a>

### Devolution deals

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
19/11/19	Press Release	IPPR	<b>Revealed: England becomes more centralised as local government sees cut of £9.5 billion.</b> <a href="#">Read here.</a>

### Environment – 25 year environment plan

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
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			No updates
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## Environment – Waste

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
31/10/19	Written Q&A	DEFRA	<p><b>Domestic Waste: Waste Disposal:</b> Written question - <a href="#">3718</a></p> <p>Asked by <a href="#">Douglas Chapman</a> To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps she is taking with the devolved Administrations to provide for a consistent household recycling and waste collection process throughout the UK.</p> <p>Answered by: <a href="#">Rebecca Pow</a> Environment policy is devolved. However, Northern Ireland wants similar arrangements to England which is why it has clauses in the Environment Bill which was introduced in Parliament on 15 October <a href="https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/2019-2020/0003/20003.pdf">https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/2019-2020/0003/20003.pdf</a>. The measures in the Bill mean that all the UK nations will have similar requirements for the collection of recycling materials. This will help the UK as a whole move to higher levels of recycling and less waste to landfill.</p>
01/11/19	Oral Answer	DEFRA	<p><b>Waste Crime</b> <b>Answered on: Thursday 31 October 2019</b> <b>Craig Tracey (Con) (North Warwickshire) :</b> What plans her Department has to tackle waste crime. [900252]</p> <p>Full answer <a href="#">here</a>.</p>

## Environment – Air Quality

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
01/11/19	Q&A	DEFRA	<p><a href="#">Ruth Cadbury (Brentford and Isleworth) (Lab)</a> <b>Air Pollution:</b> What recent steps she has taken to support local authorities in reducing air pollution. [900245]</p> <p>Read full answer here: <a href="https://bit.ly/2NQFAZo">https://bit.ly/2NQFAZo</a></p>
01/11/19	Q&A	DEFRA	<p><b>Air quality:</b> Oral question - <a href="#">900247</a></p>

			<p>Asked by <b>Tim Loughton (Con) (East Worthing and Shoreham)</b> : What recent steps her Department has taken to improve air quality . [900247]</p> <p>Read full answer here:  <a href="https://bit.ly/2WWddwX">https://bit.ly/2WWddwX</a></p>
05/11/19	Written Q&A	DfT	<p><b>Heathrow Airport: Greenhouse Gas Emissions:</b>  Written question - 7117</p> <p>Asked by <b>Caroline Lucas</b>  To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the oral contribution of the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs of 28 October 2019, Official Report column 83, whether it is the Government's policy that the expansion programme at Heathrow will be required to comply with new requirements on greenhouse gas emissions reductions introduced by the Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019; and what plans the Government has to undertake a review of the airports National Planning Statement to assess compatibility of Heathrow expansion with new (a) air pollution and (b) climate targets.</p> <p>Answered by: <b>Paul Maynard</b>  It is the Government's policy, via the Airports National Policy Statement, that any applicant for development consent for a Northwest runway at Heathrow Airport will have to comply with the new requirements on greenhouse gas emissions reductions introduced by the Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019. The Airports National Policy Statement is clear that an applicant will need to demonstrate that any increase in carbon emissions from the scheme will have no material impact on the ability of the Government to meet the carbon targets in force at the date that that application is determined.  We have received several requests for review of the Airports National Policy Statement which raise the matters of air quality and climate change, and the Secretary of State will consider carefully whether it is appropriate to review the Airports National Policy</p>

			Statement in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act 2008.
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### Brexit – BEIS, Defra, HCLG, DExEU & committees

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
05/11/19	Oral Answer	HoL	<p><b>Brexit: Environmental Regulation – Hansard</b></p> <p>Baroness McIntosh of Pickering  To ask Her Majesty's Government what will be the arrangements for environmental protection and upholding environmental standards between the date of the United Kingdom leaving the European Union and the establishment of any new environmental regulation regime.</p> <p><a href="#">Read here.</a></p>