

SEDEPT Board Meeting Notes – 5th September 2024

At the most recent SEDEPT meeting on the 5th September we heard a presentation by Lee Dance from Water Resources South East relating to their regional plan – and particularly the role local authorities can play in helping deliver the water resources we all need to support economic growth.

We also had a brief discussion about how Southern Water are planning to work with local authorities to deliver improvements to their assets that would improve drainage capacity and help reduce flood risk. The approach is highly collaborative with local authorities and looks to break new ground in terms of delivery models.

ADEPT Update:

Transport

1. We have produced our 'elevator pitch' setting out our top transport asks ([here](#)). These are 1) Move to multi-year integrated transport funding settlements to allow local areas to plan for the medium term to allocate resources according to local priorities 2) Rapidly accelerate the decarbonisation of the transport sector and 3) Invest in a skilled workforce. We will use the briefing note in meetings with Ministers and MPs.
2. Adaptation and highways is a hot topic at the moment. Having consulted on the draft Transport Adaptation Strategy, DfT officials are waiting for a steer from the new ministerial team. Meanwhile the ADEPT Engineering Board has set up a working group to develop a highways adaptation guide. Others are also planning work. We are talking to DfT about how best to co-ordinate.
3. Highways UK takes place at Birmingham NEC on 16 & 17 October. ADEPT President Ann Carruthers is taking part in a panel discussion on 17th Oct on "Optimising local transport: Connectivity, investment, and public accessibility"; there are several sessions involving presentations from the Live Labs 2 programme leads over the two days too. HUK is free to attend – to register see [here](#).

Devolution / Growth / Planning

4. We have refreshed the Housing Policy Position ([here](#)) and produced a summary briefing note ([here](#)). Our housing priorities 1) Building more new homes 2) A planning system that delivers great places 3) Improving the quality and safety of existing homes 4) Delivering homes for health and wellbeing 5) Working towards zero carbon and climate resilient homes and 6) Access, affordability and security. We have sent these to Matthew Pennycook, the Housing Minister and requested a meeting. Housing is also the focus for one of the Autumn Conference plenaries.
5. In the run up to summer recess, the government published its consultation on changes to the National Planning Policy Framework ([here](#)). The deadline for responses is 24 Sept. The planning working group is drafting the ADEPT response.
6. The final session of the ADEPT thought leadership programme (PACE) will take a masterclass approach, testing a draft 'Stronger Places Assessment Tool' in Nuneaton. The session will bring together all that's been covered over the programme. The outcomes will be shared in a plenary at the Autumn Conference; in addition, we will be publishing the assessment tool for all ADEPT members to use. The summary document from session two is available [here](#).

Environment

7. Also in the run up to summer recess, the government announced a rapid review of the Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP - [here](#)) to be completed by the end of the year. Unlike the NPPF changes there is no formal consultation document or deadline for responses, but

Defra will engage with local authorities and other stakeholders in a series of conversations during September and October, details will be reported via the Environment Board.

8. *What's next for local climate action* is a network of umbrella organisations set up by LGA in February 2024. Membership includes ADEPT, Local Partnerships, Solace, CCN, DCN, London Councils, Core Cities, UK100, APSE. It provides the opportunity to reflect on current challenges and opportunities in respect of local climate action, to share partners' current and future project plans, and to explore potential to collaborate around positions/asks on key strategic priorities. After the recent general election the LGA commissioned Local Partnerships to work on developing the 'ask' of Government to allow local government to support them in the delivery of their manifesto. LP has been gathering the views the views of LAs over the summer via a number of workshops with CEOs and senior officers.
9. The Blueprint Coalition (of which ADEPT is a member) is hosting a webinar on *How can devolution deliver on environmental ambition?* Speakers include: Peter Moore, Co-chair of the Blueprint Coalition and member of the ADEPT Climate Change Board; Cllr Tom Ross, Greater Manchester Combined Authority Green City Lead; Cllr Marissa Heath, Cabinet Member for Environment at Surrey County Council; Dr Matthew Lane, University of Edinburgh; and Victoria Marsom, Head of England team, Friends of the Earth. This is being held 10:00-11:00am, 11th September 2024 – link to register is <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZModOCrqt0rGNUotOwH7JJ15rZRq2TtEB4l#/registration>. The Coalition has also refreshed its priority asks – these will be published on 11 September.
10. We have refreshed the Resources & Waste policy position and our priority asks ([here](#)) – a big thanks to Steve Palfrey, Wendy Barratt and the Waste Group for taking the lead on this.

Events/Other

11. Review of Corporate Partner membership offer – Hannah email to Board and WG Chairs 28th August – ideas for subjects for roundtable seminars and potential projects
12. We have launched a Leadership Pathway Programme ([here](#)). Developed in partnership with Solace, the programme has been designed to meet the needs of those who are earlier on in their career and looking to move into a more senior leadership role. It is the precursor to ADEPT's highly regarded Leadership Development Programme. For further information click [here](#) and to download an expression of interest form click [here](#). Please note the deadline for EoI is midnight, Friday 20 September.
13. Dates for your diary:
 - Lunch & Learn – WSP: maturity assessment for highways asset management – 27th September 12.00-12.45
 - ADEPT / NE webinar – building healthier communities – 20th September 10.30-12.00 (If you'd like to attend, please email hannah.bartram@eastsussex.gov.uk)
 - ADEPT / EA webinar – coastal risk and resilience – 10th October 10.00-11.00 (If you have not received an invitation, please contact kylie.russell@eastsussex.gov.uk)
 - Booking is now open for the Autumn Conference, which is being held in Bristol on 21st & 22nd November. We have managed to keep the cost the same as 2023 and introduced a multi-booking discount for local authorities. To book see [here](#).
 - Booking for the 6th National Traffic Managers Conference is now open – taking place in Derby on 9th October. [Book your free place here](#) - open to members and non-members.

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