UK GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL

In association with

CORE CITIES

SUSTAINABLE CITIES LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

SUMMARY OF OUTPUTS AND NEXT STEPS

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CAMPAIGN FOR A SUSTAINABLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

INTRODUCTION TO THE SUMMIT AND THE CURRENT CONTEXT

BACKGROUND

On the 23rd January 2017, UK-GBC, in association with Core Cities UK, brought together senior decision-makers from city authorities and the built environment sector for the Sustainable Cities Leadership Summit in Leeds. The purpose of the event was to accelerate action on sustainable cities, by asking the question:

"How can policy-makers and the private sector work in partnership to deliver environmentally sustainable places to live and work, which support both quality of life and economic growth?"

The Summit objectives were, in summary:

1. Demonstrate a shared vision and commitment to sustainability in the built environment
2. Share strategic insights on how to turn vision into reality
3. Help define and shape the opportunities presented by the current political context

THE CHALLENGE FACING UK CITIES – A SNAPSHOT

- We effectively have to decarbonise our cities by 2050
- We need to adapt to climate change impacts, with peak rainfall 10% heavier by 2030, and regular summer heatwaves approaching 40 degrees
- 40,000 people die prematurely every year because of air pollution and 39 urban areas in the UK breach safe levels
- The population aged over 65 will grow by 33% by 2030. Compared to the number under 65, which will grow by just 3%
- By 2030 the UK population as a whole will have topped 70 million
- New technology is changing our skills needs – it could further polarise the labour market
- The life expectancy gap between rich and poor is widening for first time in 150 years
- 10% of households are fuel poor
- We need to build 250,000 new homes a year to keep up with demand
- By 2030, almost 40% of all under-40s are forecast to be living back at home with their parents, up from around 14% today

Our buildings and infrastructure can reinforce and add to these problems or it can help address these problems and be part of the solution.

Cllr Helen Holland,
Cabinet Member for Place,
Bristol City Council

THE POLITICAL CONTEXT

The following are extracts from a speech by Cllr Judith Blake, the Chair of Core Cities UK, which was delivered on the day by Cllr Lucinda Yeadon, Deputy Leader of Leeds City Council and Executive Member for Environment.

Brexit and the current political vacuum may provide a window of opportunity for local authorities across the UK, and particularly the regionally significant Core Cities to demonstrate how innovation in public policy is still possible, despite the ongoing challenge of providing vital services with reduced resources.

It is cities that drive growth for nations not the other way around, and we need to stop just talking about nation to nation relationships, and understand our future international relationships will be through cities, as hubs for flows of trade, labour and commerce. And it is cities that deliver on pan-national projects like sustainability.

I didn't hear anyone saying they want power devolved from one parliament to another in the referendum, I heard people saying they want more say locally. Devolution is not a panacea, but it is a big part of the solution. With the city deals and devolution deals we are negotiating we are already reforming public services, improving outcomes, saving money. Devolution can be important for sustainability too.

We in the public sector need to provide the environment where partnerships for innovation can flourish and provide solutions to the challenge of delivering sustainable places. The Industrial Strategy should understand the relationship between business and place, and seek to link the two more closely – a place-based approach, building on local assets and strengths to create jobs, with low carbon innovation at its core.

The Industrial Strategy should also put people into the equation – industries are not abstract ideas, they are collections of working people, and they rely on local labour markets. We need a fit for purpose skills system to strengthen labour markets and help more people into jobs. And it should link to policies to improve the most deprived neighbourhoods so they reflect a sense of aspiration, putting regeneration back on the agenda, something the UK Green Building Council could really help with.

THE NEED FOR VISION

In advance of the Summit, UK-GBC asked delegates "what does a sustainable city mean to you?" in order to begin to build a sense of a shared, common vision for sustainable place-making. Encouragingly, there was a high degree of consistency between responses, from across public and private sector. Responses included:

In the Summit's first panel session, speakers addressed the concept of a shared vision, and tackled issues around respective leadership roles and trust between public and private sector. The following represent selected highlights.

Cllr Helen Holland, Cabinet Member for Place, Bristol City Council

"For cities to deliver positive outcomes for citizens and for the planet, we need to find a way to make genuinely sustainable place-making the norm not the exception. This will require us to reshape the relationship between city leaders and private sector leaders, based on a shared and ambitious vision of sustainable places, where green, healthy and liveable communities support the attraction of talent and investment and a strong local green economy, resilient over the long term.

"Success for our cities is delivering this vision. Our Mayor said recently 'We are not just building houses, we are trying to build communities where people feel they belong.' And this goes to the heart of what not only Bristol, but all our Core Cities are trying to achieve – positive outcomes for our communities and our planet. We need to transform local visions into place-based investment plans, mobilising resources across the public and private sectors, with councils acting as lead and enabler, in partnership with local industry, community support and national agencies."

Cllr Lisa Trickett, Cabinet Member for Sustainability, Birmingham City Council

"I think there is a shared understanding of the challenges we face, but actually we need to agree the level of change required, and how fundamental that needs to be. We are at risk of simply taking 'business as usual' and rebranding it as the 'sustainable city', unless we build on our shared understanding of the challenge and accept what this means for wider scale change.

"We as politicians are also members of the public and stakeholders of the city. We understand our local areas. Local government needs to show leadership and devolution is a huge opportunity. But we know there is a risk if there is a lack of consistency and lack of certainty for investors, which can slow things down."

Bill Hughes, Head of Real Assets, Legal & General Investment Management

"We have a fiduciary responsibility to our investors, and are custodians of their capital. But we can take a long term view on their behalf, focusing on responsible investment. We need to think about where people live and work, where they are educated. It is the long-term, large-scale, mixed-use investments that will enable us to unlock potential and regenerate our cities. Banks have retrenched from investing in the built environment, so the importance of private capital is growing.

"City leadership should enable private capital to support city-making. I think the future is bright, as long as cities can work with private capital and vice versa. We need to find a way of overcoming political instability and change, so long term capital is not put off. But let's be clear about the sense of urgency – we need to change, and do so quickly."

David Partridge, Managing Partner, Argent LLP

"It's very important we remember who we're doing this for. We – industry and government – spend a lot of time talking to each other, but what about the communities themselves? It's ultimately the community that we're looking to provide sustainable cities for. People want places to be safe, clean and with job opportunities. So we need a bottom up approach.

"We also need to make sure that partnerships are actually deliverable. We should be thinking about place-based solutions to place-specific problems. We may need some sort of methodology or metric for the value that can be created by sustainable approaches, both social sustainability and conventional green, which we can add to the financial value. We need to be far more sophisticated about the 'value targets' we're trying to achieve, and make sure these are factored in at the start of a project to aid decision-making."

CASE STUDIES AND INSIGHTS

It's important to recognise that we are not starting from square one. Both industry and policy-makers – often in partnership – are demonstrating leadership and delivering sustainable places. We explored a number of case studies of both policy and practice, to understand the key success factors and generate insights on how to turn a common vision into reality.

CASE STUDIES

At their ***Elephant & Castle*** development in south London, ***Lendlease*** have brought economic, social, and environmental initiatives together in an attempt to genuinely regenerate, rather than gentrify, the area. The development will be carbon neutral, with fully integrated green infrastructure and high quality buildings. The project also provides 6,000 jobs, 700 of them from the local Borough of Southwark and an onsite not-for-profit training centre to upskill the local community (including ex-offenders). This will enable local people to move into longer term employment, in line with the project's 15-20 year timescale.

In response to the scrapping of the Code for Sustainable Homes, ***Cambridge City Council*** has produced its own ***Housing Design Guide*** for new housing on council land. They are making it freely available for anyone to use. The guide sets out principles for climate, community, character, connectivity, post-construction monitoring, and maintenance, as well as some minimum standards for energy, waste, water, space.

The ***UK100*** is a network of UK cities committed to transitioning to 100% clean energy by 2050, formed as a response to the Paris Agreement. Participating cities support each other during the transition, collaborate and share knowledge. Over 70 cities have signed the commitment, including **Birmingham, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, Nottingham, Manchester, Newcastle and Sheffield.**

Marking its 50th year, ***Milton Keynes*** set up a Futures Commission to create a long term vision for the city, and ensure its continued success. Made up of a mixture of local people as well as national and international experts, they asked 'What makes Milton Keynes great?' and 'What would make it better?'. The wide-ranging review proposed six 'Big Projects' designed to deliver on the vision, covering a diverse array of cross-cutting issues, including IT, mobility, culture and learning.

At the ***Trent Basin Regeneration*** in Nottingham, a consortium, that includes specialist regeneration developer, Blueprint, is planning to reduce energy costs and carbon emissions by generating, storing and distributing energy at a neighbourhood level. Partners include the University of Nottingham and Nottingham City Council. The team is implementing a range of renewable energy generation and storage solutions to deliver an exemplar for sustainable community energy. The key ambition is to demonstrate to companies looking to invest in community energy projects how financial returns can be made both for the benefit of investors and also the community served by the project.

INSIGHTS

Understanding social value could hold the key

When sustainable place-making is done well, it can reduce public sector spending in the long term by improving a community's employment opportunities, supporting health and wellbeing, and fostering social cohesion. Far-sighted local authorities recognise this, which can incentivise developers who are able to deliver it. But we don't yet fully understand how to measure the social return on investment or factor this in to financial decision-making.

Community engagement must be meaningful

Community engagement can be notoriously challenging, and headlines tend to focus on negative rather than positive stories. However, where policy-makers, private sector and the local community can come together around a shared vision of 'place', trust is built up and better outcomes follow. Typically, people from all stakeholder groups respond well to the challenge of being ambitious, and want to contribute to a better future.

A long-term horizon helps

At present planning, design and procurement are too often about process rather than imagination or innovation, and short term politics can get in the way of doing things differently. A long-term perspective can enable a more constructive approach to risk, which can result in innovative investment for low carbon infrastructure, and collaborative commercial models. However, local authorities need to be clear on their plans. Patchwork frameworks do not attract investment, and policy certainty is needed over political cycles.

Local leadership can catalyse partnerships

In the current political context, cities are forging their own identities, despite funding challenges, and many are showing real ambition on sustainability with stretching targets. Leading developers and investors will respond positively to a bold vision and innovative partnerships can help deliver against that ambition. There is no monopoly on expertise – public sector, private sector, universities and community groups all have a role to play.

Cities offer scale

Successful approaches to sustainable construction and place-making can make use of the scale that characterises cities. For instance, cities can offer a pipeline of energy efficiency projects large enough to be interesting to funders, and can provide a level of standardisation across the projects to measure benefits and provide a reliable return on investment. Also, public procurement is still a major driver of the construction industry, and city-led procurement could be a vehicle for innovation, creativity and the right kind of risk-taking.

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Over round-table discussions, delegates addressed the key actions needed, from different stakeholders, to progress sustainable place-making. Proposed actions have been grouped by audience and broad theme.

PRIVATE SECTOR

Vision and message

- Better articulate what 'good' looks like and celebrate success
- Be vocal in support of smart, strong regulation and advocate for ambitious policy
- Think as long term as possible and communicate clearly about approach to investment

Partnerships and delivery mechanisms

- Pro-actively engage with local government to explore common interests and potential partnerships
- Engage more meaningfully with local communities by pursuing the most innovative engagement techniques and processes
- Invest in local skills and supply chains

Leading by example

- Back exemplar projects and don't wait to be asked to be innovative
- Seek out existing good examples of sustainable value creation and learn lessons in order to replicate
- Be prepared to take on more risk and recognise each deal is different

UK-GBC AND PARTNERS

Partnerships and delivery mechanisms

- Help pricing in of full costs – gather evidence of e.g. cost to NHS of air pollution, cold homes, etc
- UK-GBC should act as independent sounding board to private sector, through assessment panels, and develop feedback loops
- Help develop skills, including building capacity of LAs to make good decisions and recognise added value through sustainability
- UK-GBC should act as a trusted partner, non partisan, a safe space for honest conversations

Vision and message

- Change the language from 'green' and 'decarbonise' to 'healthy', 'jobs', 'affordable heat', etc
- Help to articulate the evidence to government

Leading by example

- Share knowledge, promote best practice and how to reach it
- Help develop standards
- UK-GBC should hold members to account on outcomes

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND CITY LEADERS

Vision and message

- Encourage consistent approach to sustainability, and coordination across different departments, projects and locations
- Set an outcome-oriented city vision – what success looks like – and a spatial plan to help with delivery. Make sure both are evidence-based (recognising the urgency of climate change) and that both have teeth
- Ensure a local plan is designed to evolve over time (like the London Plan)

Partnerships and delivery mechanisms

- Collaborate and share learning with other local authorities
- Be imaginative in partnerships to share risk and take advantage of available capital
- Consider functional geographical boundaries rather than outdated administrative ones
- Work together to plan how to retain/control more from revenue raising
- Empower other key stakeholders, such as universities and anchor tenants to play a key role in delivery
- Build sustainability skills and knowledge across all relevant disciplines, including planning departments, and amongst political leaders
- Work together with other nearby cities to unlock development, through intercity trade deals on things such as electric vehicle charging infrastructure, transport, etc

Leading by example

- Seek out demonstrator projects to act as trailblazers, and recognise and reward exemplary projects
- Lead by example on local authority owned land, and social housing
- Encourage innovation and leadership through procurement

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

Partnerships and delivery mechanisms

- Use Industrial Strategy to catalyse higher standards in development
- Extend Social Value Act to new build
- Explore new form of land value uplift capture to fund key social and physical infrastructure
- Explore powers available to local authorities if a developer doesn't meet expectations
- Give more freedom to cities: including standards and powers alongside routes for collaboration

Vision and message

- Show leadership – articulate a national vision for sustainable place-making
- Set clear and consistent policy that generates cross-party consensus and spans election cycles.
- Legislate for consistent approach to standards and take accountability for sub-standard homes
- Help to deal with issues of disparity through targeted funding for cities

Leading by example

- Reward good practice by local authorities
- Amend procurement legislation to better encourage innovation
- Reconsider process of competitive bidding to eradicate race-to-the bottom approach
- Establish a National Commitment Framework for all cities to adhere to – a long term rolling programme, that encourages consistency and stretch in setting standards for development

NEXT STEPS & COMMITMENTS

UK-GBC and Core Cities UK are committed to collaborating on the following priorities, and invite other expressions of interest in partnership:

Standards in new homes

We will deliver a project that brings together city policy-makers and the built environment industry, to build consensus on standards in new homes. Designed to draw on existing policy initiatives by local authorities and existing industry initiatives, the intention is to encourage consistency in standard setting and provide mutual confidence. The outputs could be used to support policy-making, voluntary action or other means of incentivising industry leadership on raising standards in new homes.

Measuring social value

We will take forward a piece of work on measuring the social value generated by high quality development, which encourages a consistent approach between policy-makers and developers and could help incentivise sustainable place-making by supporting the business case. This would explicitly build on existing work, rather than reinvent the wheel.

Industrial Strategy & retrofit-led regeneration

We will work together to maximise the opportunities presented by the Industrial Strategy and to mutually reinforce our respective key messages. We believe that the green economy, sustainable skills and innovation can be at the heart of a place-based strategy, and that there is a particular opportunity to use the Industrial Strategy to unlock barriers to retrofit-led regeneration at scale, in some of our most deprived communities.

Sustainability leadership & capacity building

We will work together to integrate local authorities into UK-GBC's wide programme of education, training and leadership coaching, with particular focus on the potential for local authority participation on our Future Leaders programme.

To be able to deliver our ambitious programme of work, we rely on the generosity and commitment of members, through donations of time and financial support. For further information about opportunities to act as strategic partners on our cities programme, please get in touch.

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In addition, as part of a new three-year strategy, UK-GBC will roll out an increasing number of regional activities, and invites members and other prospective partners to help shape these activities and share responsibility for delivery. These include but are not limited to:

Mayoral engagement

We will offer policy support and advice to the new Mayors when they take their positions in the spring, bringing together members in respective regions to inform and influence built environment strategy.

Major development sounding boards

We will continue to build up our offer to members and to planning authorities to act as an independent sounding board on major developments, convening and facilitating cutting edge views from across our membership to inform policy and design.

Development site tours

We will provide opportunities for members to visit upcoming development opportunities, and in so doing, strengthen relationships between local authorities and our members, and encourage the best possible outcomes on key development sites.

Member-driven research projects

We will work with members on regionally-specific and/or city-scale research opportunities on topics that align with the core components of our vision:

- Climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Waste and resource efficiency
- Natural environment and biodiversity
- Health and wellbeing
- Social value and quality of life

Discussion and networking events

We will encourage members to propose and help deliver a greater number of UK-GBC events in cities across the country, including round-tables and networking events. Wherever possible we will seek to do this in partnership with active local networks and trade bodies, so as not to duplicate effort.

DELEGATES

Cllr. Derek Antrobus, Lead Member for Planning & Sustainable Development, Salford City Council

Mark Atherton, Director of Environment, Association of Greater Manchester Authorities

Pete Bailey, Associate, Northern Housing Consortium

Michael Barlow, Partner, Burges Salmon

Cllr. Ged Bell, Cabinet Member for Investment & Development, Newcastle City Council

Polly Billington, Director, UK100

Cllr. Judith Blake, Leader, Leeds City Council & Chair of Core Cities UK

David Bloy, Planning Director, British Land

Charles Bradshaw-Smith, CEO, SmartKlub

Chris Brown, Executive Chairman, Igloo Regeneration

Euan Burns, Chief Engineer, Carillion plc

Dr. Sarah Cary, Head of Sustainable Places, British Land

Cllr. Adam Clarke, Assistant City Mayor - Energy & Sustainability, Leicester City Council

Dr. Tony Cocker, CEO, E.ON UK

Mike Cook, Chairman, BuroHappold Engineering

Cllr. Debra Coupar, Executive Board Member for Communities, Leeds City Council

Richard Cowell, Asst Director Development, Planning & Regeneration, Birmingham City Council

Cathy Crawley, Director, Strategic Advisory Services, BRE

Christine Darbyshire, Senior Development Manager (Environment), Liverpool City Council

Emma Davies, Senior Sustainability Officer, Cambridge City Council

John Early, Founding Partner, Genr8 Developments LLP

Nick Ebbs, Chief Executive (Blueprint), Igloo Regeneration

Bill Edrich, Director of Energy, Bristol City Council

Gavin Elliott, Director of Architecture, BDP

Cllr. Gavin Elsey, Cabinet Member for Waste & Street Scene, Peterborough City Council

Jonathan Emery, Managing Director Property, Lendlease

Neil Evans, Director of Environment & Housing, Leeds City Council

Dr. Steven Fawkes, Senior Advisor, Investor Confidence Project

Patrick Feehily, Assistant Director – Environment, GLA

Peter Fisher, Director, Bennetts Associates

Robin Froggatt-Smith, Infrastructure Finance Lead, Cities & Local Growth Unit, BEIS

Jerome Frost OBE, Global Planning & Cities Leader, Arup

Dr. Andrew Gould, UK-GBC Chairman & Partner, Genr8 Developments

Stephanie Hilborne OBE, Chief Executive, The Wildlife Trusts

Dr. Jackie Homan, Head of Sustainability, Birmingham City Council

Bill Hughes, Head of Real Assets, Legal & General Property Ltd

Gerry Hughes, Chief Executive, GVA

Mark Hurley, Head of Environment and Energy, WSP | Parsons Brinckerhoff

Andy Hyde, Commercial Director, Saint-Gobain

Chris Ireland, UK CEO, JLL

Tom Jarman, Sustainability Co-ordinator, YHN, Newcastle City Council

David Johnston, Partner, RPC

Cllr. Malcolm Kennedy, Deputy Lord Mayor & Cabinet Member, Liverpool City Council

Paul King, MD Sustainability & External Affairs, Europe, Lendlease

Graham Lambert, Regional Director, Linkcity

Peter Leighton-Jones, Project Manager (Energy), Leeds City Council

Jim Lightfoot, Managing Director B2M, E.ON UK

Jon Lovell, Director, Hillbreak

Clive Maxwell, Director General, Energy Efficiency and Heat, BEIS

Hannah Milne, Head of Regional Portfolio, The Crown Estate

Chris Murray, Director, Core Cities UK

Dave Newton, Consulting Leader for North West & Yorkshire, Arup

Andy Nolan, Director of Estates, University of Nottingham

David Partridge, Managing Partner, Argent (Property Development) Services LLP

Iain Patton, Chief Executive, Environmental Association for Universities & Colleges

Sunand Prasad, Partner, Penoyre & Prasad

Catherine Ramsden, Director, Useful Studio

Rt Hon Nick Raynsford, President, TCPA

Mike Roberts, Managing Director, HAB Housing

Cllr. Tim Sadler, Executive Director for Community Services, Oxford City Council

Mark Saunders, UK Projects Director, Centre of Excellence for Cities, Ferrovial Agroman

Paul Seddon, Chief Planner, Nottingham City Council

Ben Smith, Director, Sustainable Development, Buildings & Places, AECOM

Mike Smith, Partner, Genr8 Developments

Geoff Snelson, Director of Strategy & Futures, Milton Keynes Council

Cllr. Alex Sobel, Deputy Executive Member for Sustainability and Climate Change, Leeds City Council

Cllr. John Tanner, Board Member for a Clean & Green Oxford, Oxford City Council

Nigel Tonks, Director, Arup

Cllr. Lisa Trickett, Cabinet Member for Sustainability, Birmingham City Council

Cllr. Jane Urquhart, Portfolio Holder for Planning & Housing, Nottingham City Council

Tom Walker, Director, Cities & Local Growth Unit, BEIS

Mark Whitworth, Head of Service - Strategic Housing & Regeneration, Sheffield City Council

Alex Willey, Head of Regeneration Projects, Clarion Housing Group

Cllr. Lucinda Yeadon, Executive Member for Environment, Leeds City Council

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