

# POLICY INFORM: REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT

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## **Policy Inform: April 2016**

The Directorate Policy briefings will provide an overview of ongoing and recent national legislation, bills presented to Parliament, emerging policies and upcoming consultations. The Directorate Policy briefing will be produced specifically to inform Portfolio Holders and Elected Members and will be taken to Policy & Performance Committees for discussion.

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# Introduction

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The policy briefing paper is intended to provide Members of the Policy and Performance Committee with the latest position on emerging policy and legislative developments to support the committees work programme and future scrutiny work.

The following table outlines the timetable for the preparation and reporting of policy briefing papers:

<b>Policy &amp; Performance Committee Briefings</b>	
<b>July 2015</b>	The first policy briefing will focus predominately on the Queen's Speech, which will establish the Government's legislative programme for the parliamentary year ahead.
<b>September 2015</b>	The second policy briefing will be produced in September and will focus on the Chancellor's July 2015 Budget Statement. The policy briefing will provide an update on policy and legislation and will consider relevant implications for Wirral.
<b>January 2016</b>	The third policy briefing will focus on the Autumn Statement and the Spending Review which sets out how Government money will be allocated. The policy briefing will provide an update on policy and legislation and will consider relevant implications for Wirral.
<b>April 2016</b>	The fourth policy briefing will focus upon the 2016 Chancellor of Exchequers Budget. The policy briefing will provide an update on policy and legislation and will consider relevant implications for Wirral.

The April policy briefing outlines the key features of the Chancellor of Exchequers Budget Statement, which was announced on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2016. The policy briefing also alludes to any potential implications that have been highlighted by relevant Officers for Wirral Council, and elaborates on any legislation or policy updates that have been implemented or developed since the last policy briefing in September.

The Committee may wish to identify specific policy areas to focus upon which are in line with the Committee's work programme. Detailed briefing papers can be prepared for these subject matters at the request of the Committee which would be in addition to the regular policy briefing papers outlined above.

# Chancellors Budget – 16<sup>th</sup> March 2016

This year the deficit will have been cut by almost two thirds from its peak. Commitment to a further £3.5 billion of savings from departmental spending in 2019-20 was announced to help the government achieve a surplus by 2020. The key announcements outlined in the Budget have been divided into themes and are displayed below:

## Local Councils and Public Sector

- The Chancellor has not announced any further cuts to local government in this budget.
- However, the government will find a further £3.5 billion of savings from public spending in 2019-20. The Chief Secretary to the Treasury, with the support of the Paymaster General, will lead an efficiency review, which will report in 2018.
- The government will consult on new rules requiring local authorities to be transparent about the cost of the in-house services they provide, and whether there could be savings from using competitive external providers.
- There will be increases to contributions from public sector employers for public service pensions.

## Devolution

- Agreements have been reached to create combined authorities headed up by elected mayors for East Anglia, the west of England and Greater Lincolnshire.
- A further devolution deal has been agreed with Greater Manchester, including a commitment to work towards the devolution of criminal justice powers.
- Greater Manchester and Liverpool City Region will pilot 100% business rates retention.
- The share of business rates retained in London will be increased and responsibility for funding TfL's capital projects will be transferred.
- The government will explore, with London, options for moving to 100% business rates retention ahead of the full roll-out.
- Previously agreed mayoral devolution deals will each receive un-ringfenced single pots of funding to spend on local priorities, worth £2.86 billion in total.

## Housing and Planning

- From April 2017 a new 'life time ISA' will enable under-40s to save up to £4,000 a year with the Government contributing £1 for every £4 saved. Funds can be used to buy a first home, and can be withdrawn from age 60 for use in retirement.
- The government has announced the delivery of 13,000 affordable homes two years early by bringing forward £250 million of capital spending to 2017-18 and 2018-19.
- Launch of the Starter Homes Land Fund prospectus, inviting local authorities to access £1.2 billion of funding to remediate brownfield land to be used for housing, to deliver at least 30,000 Starter Homes
- The date from which new or renewed tenancies in the social sector will be subject to the cap on Housing Benefit will be deferred for supported accommodation from April 2016 to April 2017.

## Transport and Infrastructure

- £300m will be provided to fund High Speed 3 between Leeds and Manchester and improve northern transport connectivity.
- £80m will be provided to help fund the development of Crossrail 2.
- £230m for road improvements in the north of England, including upgrading parts of the M62.
- There will be a 0.5% increase in insurance premium tax to fund an extra £700m by 2020-21 to be spent on new flood defences in areas including Leeds, York, Calder Valley, Carlisle and wider Cumbria, and for maintenance of existing defences.
- Fuel duty will be frozen again in 2016-17.

## Families and Wellbeing

- £100m will be provided to deliver low-cost 'second stage' accommodation to help rough sleepers and domestic abuse victims and their families move on from emergency hostels and refuges.
- £10m will be available to support schemes to prevent and reduce rough sleeping.
- Funding for the Rough Sleeping Social Impact Bond will be doubled from £5 million to £10 million.
- £1.7m will be provided to charities to reduce violence against women and girls.
- From April 2017, 4,000 Armed Forces veterans will be able to keep payments from their war pensions if they need social care.

## Digital Government

- The Government will deliver a 5G strategy in 2017, based on an assessment by the National Infrastructure Commission of how the UK can become a world leader in 5G.
- The Government will establish a new Broadband Investment Fund, in partnership with private sector investors, to support the growth of alternative broadband networks by providing greater access to finance.
- By 2022 local authority business rates systems will be linked to HMRC digital tax accounts.

## Businesses

- From April 2017 Small Business Rate Relief (SBRR) will be doubled from 50 per cent to 100 per cent, meaning that small businesses that occupy property with a rateable value of £12,000 or less will pay no business rates. Properties with a rateable value between £12,000 and £15,000 will receive tapered relief.
- The threshold for the standard business rates multiplier will be increased to a rateable value of £51,000 in April 2017.
- From April 2020, the annual indexation of business rates will switch from the Retail Price Index (RPI) to the Consumer Price Index (CPI).
- Corporation tax will be cut to 17% in 2020.
- Relief on interest payments will now be capped at 30% of UK earnings, with exceptions for groups with legitimately high interest payments.
- Over the next 5 years, the government will raise nearly £8 billion from large companies and multinationals through changes to the rules on interest and other measures, including:
  - Introducing rules to prevent multinational companies avoid paying tax in any of the countries they do business in.
  - Taxing outbound royalty payments better.
  - Making sure offshore property developers are taxed on their UK profits.
- Employers will pay National Insurance on pay-offs above £30,000 from April 2018.
- From 17 March 2016 the new rates and tax bands for stamp duty for commercial property will be 0% for the portion of the transaction value up to £150,000; 2% between £150,001 and £250,000, and 5% above £250,000. A new 2% stamp duty will be introduced on leasehold rent transactions with a net value over £5 million.

## Schools and Apprenticeships

- All schools are to become academies by 2020, or to have an academy order in place to convert by 2022.
- A new sugar tax will be imposed on sugary drinks from April 2018. This will apply to drinks with total sugar content above 5 grams per 100 millilitres, with a higher rate for more than 8 grams per 100 millilitres.
- £500 million of additional core funding will be awarded to schools over the course of this spending review to speed up the introduction of the national funding formula. It is the government's aim that 90 per cent of schools who are to gain additional funding, to receive the full amount they are due by 2020.
- Up to £285 million a year will be provided to give 25 per cent of secondary schools the opportunity to extend their school day, to offer more extra-curricular activities.
- £10 million of funding a year will be provided to expand breakfast clubs in up to 1,600 schools from September 2017.
- £20 million a year will be invested in a Northern Powerhouse Schools Strategy.
- From April 2017, employers will receive a 10 per cent top-up to their monthly levy contributions in England, to spend on apprenticeship training through their digital account.

## Taxation

- The Personal Allowance will be increased to £11,500 in April 2017 and the higher rate threshold will rise to £45,000.
- The higher rate of Capital Gains Tax to be cut from 28% to 20% and the basic rate from 18% to 10% from April 2016. Residential property will still be taxed at current rates
- Class 2 National Insurance contributions for self-employed people will be abolished from April 2018. From April 2018, self-employed people will only need to pay Class 4 National Insurance contributions on their profits.
- From April 2017 there will be two new tax-free £1,000 allowances – one for individuals selling goods or providing services, and one for income from properties owned.
- Tax support worth £1 billion for the oil and gas industry; this includes effectively abolishing Petroleum Revenue Tax from 35% to 0% and reducing the supplementary charge on oil and gas extraction from 20% to 10%.
- Duty rates on beer, whisky, spirits and most ciders will be frozen this year. However duty rates on wine will rise with inflation.

# Further Analysis

## Public Sector

- Though it is not yet clear where the £3.5bn extra in public sector cuts will fall, it is expected that they will hit local government either directly or through the knock on effect of cuts to welfare benefits.
- The increase in employer contributions for public service pensions is anticipated to reduce expenditure by £2bn.

## Devolution

- All councils need greater freedom from central government to take decisions over vital services in their area in order to build desperately-needed homes, create jobs, provide dignified care for our elderly and boost economic growth. Devolution deals agreed in this budget are good news for councils and rightly recognise the economic potential of England's county and rural areas.
- The radical devolution of justice responsibilities will enable Greater Manchester to offer seamless interventions for offenders as they transition between prisons and the community, and to join up public services to tackle the root causes of crime and prevent reoffending.
- The 'single pot' announcement for mayoral devolution deals will allow areas to take more control over strategic investment and bring together previously fragmented funding streams to boost jobs and growth in their area.
- The pilot authorities of 100% business rates retention announced are an important first step and should be used to inform the development of the wider system that will be introduced to all authorities by 2020. However, it will be important to avoid a knock-on financial impact on other councils, and local government will rightly need to play a lead role in making sure any new national system works effectively and fairly.

## Businesses

- The reform to the SBRR will mean that 600,000 small businesses will pay no rates. An additional 50,000 businesses will benefit from tapered relief.
- Changes to the threshold for the standard business rates multiplier will take 250,000 smaller properties out of the higher rate.
- The switch from RPI to CPI represents a business rates cut every year from 2020, worth £370m to businesses in one year alone. This will lead to a reduction in income to councils at a time when they will be more dependent than ever on this income.
- The government has provided assurance that local government will be compensated for their reduced income as a result of the changes to business rates and the impact will be considered as part of the government's consultation on the implementation of 100 per cent business rates retention in summer 2016. However, this reduction in the amounts of money available will undoubtedly complicate the policy consequences and transfers of resources to different areas.
- New anti-tax avoidance and evasion measures are expected to raise £12bn by 2020.

## Wellbeing

- The announcement that the war disablement pension for veterans will no longer be taken into account when calculating the amount they must pay towards their care costs is a positive one. However, this will create a new burden on councils. The LGA have argued that adult social care budgets are already under enormous strain and should not be expected to absorb further costs resulting from government policy changes.

## Schools

- Ofsted has rated 82 per cent of council maintained schools as 'good' or 'outstanding', whilst identifying that the improvement in many secondary school academies has stalled. This defies reason that councils are being portrayed as barriers to improvement.
- The LGA say it is vital that it is the quality of education and a school's ability to deliver the best results for children in each area that is the priority, rather than the legal status of a school.
- Forcing schools to become academies strips parents, teachers and faith groups of any local choice. Giving significant powers relating to education to unelected civil servants means parents and residents will be unable to hold them to account at the ballot box.
- Councils have spent millions of pounds to cover the cost of schools becoming academies in recent years, while the Department for Education spent an additional estimated £1 billion in 2012. With mixed evidence about academisation improving standards, and when public spending is facing significant cuts, the LGA argue that imposing academisation on schools is not an appropriate use of public money.
- The new sugar tax is expected to raise £520m in the first year. Revenues raised will help fund more sport in primary schools.
- Introducing a new national funding formula will inevitably create losers so it is essential that it is introduced in a phased way to protect those schools facing a relative reduction in budgets.

## Housing

- The £100 million invested in low-cost 'second stage' accommodation will provide 2,000 places to enable independent living for vulnerable households and individuals, whilst freeing up hostels and refuges for those in most acute need.
- It is crucial that councils, as local planning authorities, are able to determine the mix of housing tenure on sites in order to respond to local community need and that this authority is not undermined by national determinations to build starter homes at the expense of other tenures.

## Flooding

- The additional funding for flood defences will enable local authorities and their communities to recover from recent extreme weather. The LGA has recommended that this funding should be devolved to local areas so that council can work with communities and businesses to ensure money is directed towards projects that best reflect local needs.
- The LGA has also said that councils will almost certainly need more financial help from the government as the full cost of the winter's horrendous flooding damage emerges.

# Queen's Speech 2015- Designation to Policy and Performance Committees

On Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2015, the Queen unveiled the Government's legislative plans for the year ahead. Below is a list of each individual Bill which will have implications for local government that were announced during the speech. The list identifies the Policy and Performance committee with whose remit the legislation most closely aligns:

Legislative Plans	Policy and Performance Committee
National Insurance Contributions Bill/ Finance Bill	Transformation and Resources
Welfare Reform and Work Bill	All Policy and Performance Committees
Trade Union Bill	Transformation and Resources
Housing and Planning Bill	Regeneration and Environment
Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill	Regeneration and Environment
Buses Bill	Regeneration and Environment
High Speed Rail Bill	Regeneration and Environment
Childcare Bill	Families and Wellbeing
Energy Bill	Regeneration and Environment
Education and Adoption Bill	Families and Wellbeing
Enterprise Bill	Regeneration and Environment
Policing and Crime Bill	Families and Wellbeing Transformation and Resources
Draft Public Service Ombudsman Bill	Transformation and Resources
Psychoactive Substances Bill	Families and Wellbeing
Investigatory Powers Bill	Transformation and Resources

Additional bills that have been announced are outlined below. These will be monitored in relation to any emerging implications for Local Government and reported to the relevant Policy and Performance Committee as appropriate.

Additional Legislative Plans
EU Referendum Bill
Scotland Bill
Immigration Bill
Extremism Bill
Charities Bill
Armed Forces Bill
Bank of England Bill
Northern Ireland (Stormont House Agreement) Bill



Wales Bill
Votes for Life Bill

The bills relevant to the Families and Wellbeing Committee are discussed in further detail in this paper. The information provided has been sourced predominately from the LGiU, as well as SOLACE and the LGC and therefore solely represents a fact-based introduction to the bills.

# Queen's Speech 2015- Developments and Implications

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## Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### **Synopsis:**

- The Act will provide for the devolution of powers to cities with elected metro mayor, continuing the government's commitment to building a 'northern powerhouse'.

#### **Key Points:**

- To provide new primary legislative powers to fulfill the Government's manifesto commitments.
- Together with existing powers under the Localism Act 2011, the Act will also enable the Government to empower towns and counties, building on the programme of Growth Deals which the Government implemented in the last Parliament.

#### **The provisions in the Act are generic (to be applied by order to specified combined authorities and their areas) and will enable:**

- An elected mayor for the combined authority's area who would exercise specified functions and chair the authority.
- The mayor to undertake the functions of Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for the area.
- Where a mayor is to have PCC functions, allow the current PCC term of office to be extended until the mayor is in place.
- Remove the current statutory limitation on its functions (currently these are limited to those on economic development, regeneration, and transport).
- Enable local authority governance to be streamlined as agreed by councils.

### Further Developments:

- Following agreement by both Houses the Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill received Royal Assent on 28 January 2016. The bill is now an Act of Parliament.
- The Cities and Local Government Devolution Act paves the way for the establishment of metro mayors, and for delivery of 'devolution agreements' concluded during 2014-15. It also provides the legislative basis for finalising negotiations on other devolution propositions submitted to government in September 2015.

### Further Developments Continued:

**One the day of Royal Assent Local Government Secretary Greg Clark said:**

- “Today’s new laws pave the way to devolve powers from the heart of Westminster to local areas and local people across the country.
- “It underpins radical devolution deals already in place, but also opens the door for others to follow the example and come forward with their own proposals for having a far greater say over how their area develops over the coming years.”
- Talks are currently underway with local areas right across the country about what powers might be devolved to them.

### Wirral Implications:

- Wirral continues to play a key role with Liverpool City Region partners in working up our devolution asks.
- Since we submitted our initial devolution proposals to Government on 4th September 2015, City Region partners have continued to negotiate the detail of the asks with Central Government.
- This culminated in the successful agreement of a Phase 1 deal, which was signed off in November 2015.
- The deal will see almost £1 billion of its additional funding for the City Region over the next 30 years, together with an increase in local decision-making and funding control over the key priority areas of economic development, housing, transport, and skills.
- As part of the deal, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority will adopt a model of a directly elected City Region Mayor over the Combined Authority's area with the first election in May 2017.
- Detailed implementation plans for Phase 1 of the deal are currently being developed. At the same time work is underway to agree the detail of Phase 2, including a specific focus on health, wellbeing and social care.
- Detailed proposals about future City Region governance and delivery arrangements will be considered at the AMG of the Combined Authority in June 2016.
- Cabinet/SLT are currently considering the implications of the emerging devolution deal, and what this this means for Wirral, particularly in terms of delivery of the Wirral Plan; 20 pledges and emerging strategies; new delivery models; and spatial footprints for delivery.

## Housing and Planning Bill

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### **Synopsis:**

- This legislation will give housing association tenants the chance to own their own home. It also aims to increase housing supply and access to home ownership.

#### **Key Points:**

The main elements of the Bill can be separated into two sections:

#### **Home Ownership-**

- To enable the extension of Right to Buy levels of discount to housing association tenants.
- To require local authorities to dispose of high-value vacant council houses, to help fund the Right to Buy extension discounts and the building of more affordable homes in the area.
- To provide the necessary statutory framework to support the delivery of Starter Homes.
- To take forward the Right to Build, requiring local planning authorities to support custom and self-builders registered in their area in identifying suitable plots of land to build or commission their own home.

#### **Housing Supply-**

- To introduce a statutory register for brownfield land, to help achieve the target of getting Local Development Orders in place on 90% of suitable brownfield sites by 2020.
- To simplify and speed up the neighbourhood planning system, to support communities that seek to meet local housing and other development needs through neighbourhood planning.
- To give effect to other changes to housing and planning legislation that would support housing growth.

### Further Developments:

- The Housing and Planning Bill entered Committee Stage on 9 February 2016. Line by line examination of the bill concluded on the ninth day of committee stage on 23 March. Report stage commenced on 11 April.
- On 5 January 2016 nearly £6.3 million was distributed to Housing Zones around the country to help revive brownfield sites and deliver thousands of homes for hard-working families and first-time buyers. This funding will be used to speed up work, enabling homes to be delivered quickly.
- From 25 January housing association tenants became the first in the country to be able to apply to the new Voluntary Right to Buy scheme as part of a pilot that is being run by 5 housing associations ahead of the national rollout later this year.
- The pilot will help inform the design and implementation of the scheme before it is rolled out across the country following the passage of the Housing and Planning Bill.

## Further Developments Continued:

- Housing Minister Brandon Lewis said that more than 270,000 families have been helped into homeownership through government-backed schemes since 2010, while the number of new homes is up 25% over the last year.
- The Right to Buy scheme has boosted the aspirations of social housing tenants with those expecting to buy their current home rising from 35% in 2010-11 to 42% in 2014-15.
- The English Housing Survey reported that following a decade-long decline, starting in 2003, the number of people owning their home has been turned around with more than 14 million owner occupiers in the country last year. Lending to first-time buyers is also at its highest since 2007.

## Wirral Implications:

- **Extend Right to Buy-** On 25th January 2016, the Government commenced a pilot scheme to extend the Right to Buy, ahead of the national roll out of the extension later on this year. Riverside Housing Association are participating in the pilot scheme in relation to their properties in the Merseyside area, including Wirral. With a housing stock in Wirral of over 2500 properties, this means that residents of these properties may have the opportunity to become home owners, but also reducing the availability of social housing stock in the area. It is likely this would be seen more so in the more attractive residential areas thereby reducing provision in these. The extent of the take up is difficult to forecast as levels of discounts, individual's financial circumstances and the ability of people to secure mortgages would need to be taken into account.
- The impacts of this would need to be mitigated in part by increased provision of even further new build social housing stock. However whilst the aim of the Government is for income received from sales to be reinvested into new affordable housing provision, it is unlikely that the sale of higher value local authority housing assets will fund this and it is anticipated that any future provision will have to be subsidised. The Institute for Fiscal Studies have identified that under the existing Right to Buy initiative only one in ten homes have been replaced, this is likely to cause an increased pressure on the supply available to meet housing needs via the Allocations System.
- There could also be issues around the charitable status of RPs and their standing as being outside of the public sector borrowing and the use of assets to cover loans which RPs have to enable development and investment. Any shortfall to be covered by RPs will result in less being able to be invested back into replacement affordable housing and also services.
- **Brownfield Land-** The Government has pledged to encourage the provision of housing on previously developed (brownfield) sites. The Council could be required to maintain a register of all brownfield sites available and ensure that 90 per cent of suitable brownfield sites have planning permission for housing by 2020 through local development orders. The provision of local development orders on such a scale could represent a significant use of limited Council resources, particularly when planning permission can still be granted on sites, irrespective of whether a local development order is in place. This initiative has previously been subject to public consultation to which the Council submitted an officer-level response, which forms the basis of these comments.

## Wirral Implications Continued

•**Starter Homes-** The detail on how this will be achieved in a balanced way to ensure the Borough is able to at least take a pro-rata share (which would be equivalent to 1,300 homes) is unknown at present. The pledge to build 200,000 Starter Homes is supported by an exception site policy which directs Starter Homes to under-used or nonviable industrial and commercial land that has not been currently identified for housing. This could put pressure on employment sites in Wirral that have been identified for employment use to support sustainable communities. It could have the unintended consequence of site owners resisting future employment uses and removing existing employment uses where higher land values could be accrued for Starter Homes sites. The Starter Homes policy could also undermine the provision of alternative forms of affordable housing, in areas where it is needed. In stronger market areas, a 20 per cent discount on open market value may still price out many first time buyers. Furthermore, the CIH (Chartered Institute of Housing) have indicated that these developments would be exempt from section 106 agreements, meaning no new affordable housing could be sought within these developments. A consultation on Starter Homes Regulations was released in March 2016, seeking views on the details for the regulations to be made under powers contained in the Housing and Planning Bill including options for Starter Homes requirement on reasonably sized sites.

•**Right to Build-** The new Right to Build (once enacted) will require the Council to establish a local register of custom builders who wish to acquire a suitable land to build their own home and to have regard to the demand on their local register when developing its Local Plan and determining planning applications. The Right could require the Council to offer registered custom builders suitable plots of land (with some form of planning permission and servicing), which would have resource implications for planning and housing. The Right could have an impact on the future capital receipts from the sale of Council-owned land for self-build plots, if plots are to be provided at a discounted rate. This form of development is also driven by the demand and capability and ability of individuals to be able to build or commission new build. There have been very few expressions of interest from community organisations on this in the Wirral area as part of the approach to looking at Custom Build when this has been promoted as part of the HCA programme.

## Energy Bill

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### **Synopsis:**

- The aim of this Bill is to improve energy security. It gives new powers to the Oil and Gas Authority (OGA) to maximise the economic recovery of oil and gas from UK waters and changes the law to give local communities a greater say in planning applications for wind farms.

#### **Key Points:**

- Ensuring local planning authorities have consenting powers for all onshore wind farms.
- The Bill would make legislative changes to remove the need for the Secretary of State's consent for any large onshore wind farms (over 50MW)
- This, in effect, would devolve powers out of Whitehall by transferring the existing consenting powers, in relation to onshore wind, to local planning authorities.
- This will mean that in future the primary decision maker for onshore wind consents in England and Wales will be the local planning authority. These changes will be supported by changes to the national planning policy framework to give effect to the manifesto commitment that local communities should have the final say on planning applications for wind farms.
- These changes would not impact on the planning regime in Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- The commitment to end new subsidy for onshore wind farms will be delivered separately, and DECC will be announcing measures to deliver this soon.

### Further Developments:

- The Energy Bill was considered at Report Stage, Legislative Grand Committee and Third Reading on 14 March 2016. The House of Lords considered the Commons amendments to the Bill on 12 April. Outstanding issues on the Bill were returned to the Commons for consideration.
- The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has recommended that the government ensures that the new Oil and Gas Authority (OGA) takes account of any risks to competition created by the provisions of the Energy Bill and of the impact of its actions on competition in markets.
- The CMA has highlighted potential competition risks; for example, the work of the OGA helps to create an environment where companies might form anti-competitive agreements or exchange sensitive information on future pricing intentions.

### Wirral Implications:

- There are no recorded implications for Wirral at this time. This policy will be kept under review by the relevant officers with any future implications reported in future policy papers to Elected Members.

## High Speed Rail Bill

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### **Synopsis:**

- The aim of this Bill is to provide the Government with the legal powers to construct and operate phase 1 of the High Speed 2 (HS2) railway.

#### **Key Points:**

- Give the Government deemed planning permission for the railway between London and the West Midlands.
- Give the Government compulsory purchase powers and the power to temporarily take possession of land required to construct and operate the railway.
- Help rebalance the UK economy and free up space on the UK rail network, improving connections between London, the Midlands, the North and Scotland.

### Further Developments:

- The High Speed Rail Bill completed Public Bill Committee stages on 8 March 2016. The bill passed its Report Stage and Third Reading on 23 March.
- In the Autumn 2015 Spending Review the government confirmed their commitment to the HS2 scheme.
- Good progress is being made with HS2 Phase One (London to Birmingham) and it is hoped that the hybrid Bill for this part of the railway will achieve Royal Assent by the end of 2016, so that construction can begin in 2017.
- The section of HS2 from Fradley in the West Midlands to Crewe (Phase 2a), will be accelerated so that it opens 6 years earlier than planned, in 2027. This will bring more capacity and faster HS2 services to the north-west of England and Scotland much sooner than originally planned.
- Powers to build this section will be sought through a separate hybrid Bill which the Government hopes to deposit in parliament in 2017.
- The Spending Review 2015 confirmed an overall budget of £55.7 billion for HS2 in 2015 prices. This is consistent with the £50.1 billion (in 2011 prices) set in 2013.
- HS2 Ltd's headquarters in Birmingham were officially opened by the Transport Secretary Patrick McLoughlin on 4 February 2016. Up to 1,000 staff will be employed at the offices, from engineers to procurement specialists.
- Phase One of HS2 between London and the West Midlands is estimated to support up to 14,600 construction jobs, 2,200 permanent operations and maintenance jobs, and 30,300 jobs supported by development around HS2 stations in Euston, Old Oak Common, Birmingham Interchange and Birmingham Curzon Street.
- The HS2 Commons Select Committee has heard almost 2,600 petitions, many of which have led to changes to the bill. This will ensure that HS2 is designed in the best way possible.
- The Select Committee published their second special report on 22 February 2016; setting out their directions and recommendations for 'modifications, assurances, undertakings or mitigation to address petitioners' concerns'.



### Further Developments Continued:

- The issues covered include: a longer Chilterns bored tunnel, alternative plans for Euston, a HS12-HS1 link, and a possible link to Heathrow. The Committee make a number of other recommendations to address specific local concerns and a number of route-wide issues.
- HS2 Ltd, has launched two consultations on its Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) scope and methodology reports for construction and operation of the Phase 2a section of the line.
- The consultations will seek views of statutory and expert bodies on the scope, methodology and overall approach of the assessments. The consultations run until 13 May 2016.
- In the recent Budget in March 2016, George Osborne announced further plans to improve Northern strategic transport, including plans for an HS3 rail scheme between Manchester and Leeds, the widening of the M62 between Leeds and Manchester, and improved road links in the North Pennines. He also said the government will develop the case for a new tunnel road from Manchester to Sheffield.

### Wirral Implications:

- The confirmation of the HS2 project budget, and the Chancellor's stated commitment to the Transport for the North programme appear to have positive implications for Wirral, as part of the wider Liverpool City Region, and it aims to achieve full high speed rail connectivity. Investment in HS2 could help Wirral - and the wider City Region - to accelerate economic growth.

## The Enterprise Bill

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### **Synopsis:**

- This bill will include measures to reduce regulation on small businesses in a bid to boost job creation.

#### **Key Points:**

- Seek to cut red tape for British business by at least £10bn and, for the first time, require independent regulators to contribute to that target.
- Proposes to create a new Small Business Conciliation Service, to help settle disputes between small and large businesses, especially over late payment practices.
- To improve the business rates system ahead of the 2017 revaluation, including by modernising the appeals system
- To introduce a cap on public sector redundancy payments to six figures for the highest earners

### Further Developments:

- The Enterprise Bill passed Third Reading in the House of Commons on Wednesday 9 March 2016. The bill was returned from the Commons for consideration of Commons amendments. The House of Lords will consider the Commons amendments on 19 April.
- On 2 February 2016 Business Secretary Sajid Javid announced that high streets and city centres are set to benefit from government plans to devolve Sunday trading laws as part of the Enterprise Bill.
- New powers will allow councils to “zone” any relaxation so they will be able to prioritise high streets and city centres, and help drive footfall to struggling high streets by allowing them to open longer.
- The measures also include greater freedoms for shop workers to “opt-out” of working Sundays if they choose to, for example because they object on religious grounds or for family reasons.
- Shop workers will now be able to give just 1 month’s notice to large shops that they no longer want to work Sundays, down from the previous 3 months, and will have a new right to opt-out of working additional hours. The government will also strengthen the duty on employers to notify employees of their rights about working on Sundays.
- Figures published on 9 March show that extended Sunday trading hours would benefit the UK economy by an estimated £1.5 billion over 10 years. This could be even higher, depending on the decisions made by local authorities once the powers have been devolved.
- The saving from being able to increase the use of existing large stores is also expected to benefit consumers as a result of competitive pressure.

### Wirral Implications:

- There are no recorded implications at this time. This policy will be kept under review with any future implications reported in future policy papers.

## Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### **Synopsis:**

- The overriding aim of the Act is to reduce expenditure and “help to achieve a more sustainable welfare system.” A related aim is to support efforts to increase employment and “support the policy of rewarding hard work while increasing fairness with working households.”

#### **Key Points:**

- It is essentially an Act of three parts. First, it will introduce a duty to report to Parliament on:
  - Progress towards achieving full employment.
  - Progress towards achieving 3 million apprenticeships in England.
  - Progress with the Troubled Families programme (England).
- Second, it will repeal almost all of the Child Poverty Act 2010 and introduce a new duty for the Secretary of State to report annually on “life chances”: children living in workless households and educational attainment at age 16, in England.
- Finally, the Act allows for the introduction of extensive changes to welfare benefits, tax credits and social housing rent levels. These will account for around 70% of the £12-13 billion in welfare savings identified in the Summer Budget 2015. The welfare/housing measures include:
  - Lowering the benefit cap threshold by removing the link between the level of the cap and average earnings.
  - Legislative changes to Housing Benefit following the Budget Announcement.
  - A four year freeze in the uprating of most working age benefits.
  - Limiting support through Child Tax Credits/Universal Credit.
  - The abolition of Employment and Support Allowance Work-Related Activity Component.
  - Changes to conditionality for responsible carers under Universal Credit
  - Replacing Support for Mortgage Interest with Loans for Mortgage Interest.
  - Reducing social housing rent levels by 1% in each year for four years from 2016-17.

### Further Developments:

- Outstanding issues on the bill were resolved on 7 March 2016. Following agreement by both Houses the Bill received Royal Assent on 16 March. The bill is now an Act of Parliament.

### Wirral Implications:

- Freeze Working Age Benefits**- This will impact on household disposable income, not previously frozen albeit uprating has been nominal 2013/14. This will

## Wirral Implications Continued:

potentially increase the strain on Wirral's Council Tax Support, Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP), Local Welfare Assistance (LWA) schemes, as more people apply; more people become entitled to support. With consequential harder to collect charges, key revenue streams such as Council Tax, charges in respect of adult social care, Benefits overpayments will be detrimentally affected. Rent arrears locally are expected to increase as with all cuts and will continue at least whilst (social) landlords maintain rent levels and annual increases in lieu on the 12% target reduction by 2020-21. This will increase pressure on LA Housing Benefit services from Social Landlords which is evident already via the rent shortfall in Bedroom Tax and insufficient DHP.

- **Local Housing Allowance Rate Frozen**- Effective from April 2016, the private sector may see a freezing of Local Housing Allowance rates which will give private sector landlords further issue with taking on tenants who rely on HB. This is likely to have a consequential impact on the levels of people being threatened with homelessness in the Borough.

- **Cutting Household Benefit Cap**- This will certainly impact locally, regrettably we cannot yet identify precisely how many within present caseload will be affected, nor by how much in monetary terms on a weekly basis, as DWP consider circumstances of household benefits in payment that LA are unable to identify from records held. However the cut is expected to result in many more people being affected. The Percentage reduction to the total maximum in Benefits that can be paid are relatively high, with the maximum for couples and those with children, reducing from £26k per annum to £20k and for a single claimants reducing from £18,200 p.a to £13,400. The LA's HB service administers the Cap not the DWP who advise us of each situation. There are currently 52 cases live with the number affected since the original DWP scan of 131 generally reducing. The change, bringing more people into the threshold of being affected by the Cap will have a direct impact on operational resource both at customer contact point and the operational service delivery teams. Through joint working currently ongoing between the Benefits service and DWP/JC+ colleagues it is increasingly evident that the impact on resource will be significant. Those affected would have an increased reliance on other means of support, financial, Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP – annual cash limited budget) or the Local Welfare Assistance potentially (LW – finite residual budget as scheme no longer nationally funded). Likely impact will see increased problems for those in temporary accommodation with large families and again, the homeless or those at risk etc. will become reliant on the limited discretionary schemes (DHP).

- **General Issues for Wirral/Benefits Service** - As a consequence of these changes, as impacts emerge, which will be ongoing, there will be a need to make provision for the continued review of local schemes and policies with an increased reliance on any discretion the authority can, within its local policies and resources, exercise (again for example its LWA/DHP fund). The definition of 'vulnerable' may need review given the ratio of those reasonably deemed to be vulnerable which are those financially at risk, including dispossession. This will impact on key grant limited local schemes such as Council Tax Support Scheme which currently awards £27m pa in respect of 35,230 recipients. This will provide a significant challenge for officers reviewing the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2016/17 onwards and will see collection issues increase as more people face difficulty paying, coupled with more strain on the scheme impacting on its capacity and ultimately having

## Wirral Implications Continued:

their national benefits reduced at source to pay Council Tax. Many people will be affected by more than one of the reforms outlined, which will present complexities, uncertainty and increased need for advocacy and advice, particularly if we are to ensure that their income, often translating to the Wirral Pound, is to be maximised. Broadly we can expect from these changes increased contact to service, both front facing public contact and back of house processing (including the Welfare Right Unit) and decision making services with an increased need and reliance on knowledgeable, experienced, skilled resources, ensuring accessibility, thereby supporting where at all possible anti-poverty measures.

- **Remove Housing Benefit from Young People**- From April 2017 it is planned to remove Housing Benefit from 18-21 year olds. This will see more young people remain at home where it may not be appropriate to do so which will see issues for the house owner receiving Housing Benefits as non dependant charges are applied and rent increases (as adults are meant to contribute as resident). These cases which will increase provide issues for the LA with collection of information and provision of evidence of household occupants. There is also a risk of young people going missing from benefit records, with difficulties operationally in determining their primary place of residence which will be key given the increasing drive of the DWP to reduce level of error and fraud within Welfare Benefits.
- **Reduce Social Rents**- The Government have legislated for a 1% reduction for social tenants per annum, effectively from April 2016, for the next four years. Supported Housing will be exempt for one year. Although this will reduce housing costs for those tenants, its main impact will be upon the ability of Registered Providers (RPs) to finance new-build housing along with other work such as ongoing improvements to housing stock. RPs with stock in Wirral are currently revisiting their growth plans and it is likely their new-build commitments, especially for affordable rented housing, will be scaled-back and refocused to align with the Government's shift towards home ownership and increasing the private rented sector.

# Useful Sources

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## Chancellors Budget Statement

[Budget 2016: George Osborne's speech, Government website, 16<sup>th</sup> March 2016](#) – Full speech

[Budget 2016: some of the things we've announced, Government website, 16<sup>th</sup> March 2016](#) – A summary of the key announcements

[Briefing: Budget 2016, LGiU, 16<sup>th</sup> March 2016](#) – Key announcements emerging from the Budget

[Budget 2016: On the Day Briefing, LGA, 16<sup>th</sup> March 2016](#) – Outlines the impacts of the key announcements of the Budget

[LGA responds to Budget 2016, Lord Porter, Chairman of the Local Government Association, 16<sup>th</sup> March 2016](#) – LGA response to the Budget Announcement

[Andrew Jones, Budget 2016: Analysis, LGiU, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2016](#) – Analysis of some of the key announcements

[LGA responds to academy school reports about plans to convert all schools to academy status, Cllr Roy Perry, Chairman of the LGA's Children and Young People Board, 15<sup>th</sup> March 2016](#) – LGA response to plans to convert all schools to academies

## Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill

[Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill, Government website](#) – Brief outline and key points of the Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill

[Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill, Parliamentary website](#) - Previous debates on all stages of the Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill and any latest updates

[Government Press Release: Radical shake-up of power puts communities in control, 28<sup>th</sup> January 2016](#) – Outlines the bill on the day of Royal Assent

[David Marlow, Cities and devolution update February 2016, 15<sup>th</sup> February 2016](#) – Overview of the final act and its potential implications

## Housing and Planning Bill

[Housing and Planning Bill, Parliamentary website](#) - Previous debates on all stages of the Housing and Planning Bill and any latest updates

[Government Press release: Historic Housing and Planning Bill will transform generation rent into generation buy, 13<sup>th</sup> October 2015](#) – *Outline of the bill and the changes it will bring*

[Government Press Release: Tens of thousands of homes supported by Housing Zone funding, 5<sup>th</sup> January 2016](#) – *Details new funding for Housing Zones*

[Government Press Release: Housing association tenants take first step to homeownership, 25<sup>th</sup> January 2016](#) – *Outlines the pilot for the Right to Buy Scheme*

[Government Press Release: Brandon Lewis: We are turning around the housing market, 18<sup>th</sup> February 2016](#) – *New figures that show the success of government initiatives*

[Sheila Camp and Andrew Ross, Housing and Planning Bill update, 4<sup>th</sup> February 2016](#) – *Outlines changes made by the Commons to the original draft of the bill*

## Energy Bill

[Energy Bill, Government website](#) – *Brief outline and key points of the Energy Bill*

[Energy Bill, Parliamentary website](#) - *Previous debates on all stages of the Energy Bill and any latest updates*

[Government News Story: CMA uses new power to highlight competition issues on Energy Bill, 4<sup>th</sup> December 2015](#) - *Potential competition risks highlighted by the CMA*

## High Speed Rail Bill

[High Speed Rail Bill, Parliamentary Website](#) - *Brief analysis of the High Speed Rail Bill*

[Written statement to Parliament: HS2 and the Northern Powerhouse, 30<sup>th</sup> November 2015](#) – *Overview of the progress on HS2*

[Government News Story: HS2 moves closer to construction as Transport Secretary officially opens Birmingham headquarters, 4<sup>th</sup> February 2016](#) – *Details opening of HS2 headquarters*

[Government Press Release: HS2 Ltd launches two consultations as part of preparations for next phase of UK's new high speed rail network, 11<sup>th</sup> March 2016](#) – *Details two consultations launched by HS2*

[Ruth Bradshaw, High Speed Rail update – Spring 2016, LGiU, 21<sup>st</sup> March 2016](#) – *Overview of the latest updates surrounding the High Speed Rail Bill*



## Enterprise Bill

[Enterprise Bill, Government website](#) – Brief outline and key points of the Enterprise Bill

[Enterprise Bill, Parliamentary website](#) - Previous debates on all stages of the Enterprise Bill and any latest updates

[Government Press Release: High streets and city centres to benefit from Sunday trading devolution, 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2016](#) – Outlines the benefits of devolving Sunday Trading laws

[Government Press Release: Sunday trading set to benefit economy to the tune of £1.5 billion, 9<sup>th</sup> March 2016](#) – Details the benefits of extended Sunday trading hours

## Welfare Reform and Work Bill

[Welfare Reform and Work Bill, Parliamentary website](#) - Previous debates on all stages of the Welfare Reform and Work Bill and any latest updates

[House of Commons, Briefing Paper- Welfare Reform and Work Bill, 16<sup>th</sup> July 2015](#) – Brief analysis of the Welfare Reform and Work Bill

[Andrew Jones, Welfare Reform Update: January 2016, 27<sup>th</sup> January 2016](#) – Overview of the latest updates related to the Welfare Reform

# Policy Developments

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## Briefing: From Ebb to Flow: how entrepreneurs can turn the tide for Britain's seaside towns

'From Ebb to Flow: how entrepreneurs can turn the tide for Britain's seaside towns' published by the Centre for Entrepreneurs makes the case that to succeed, seaside towns must nurture local entrepreneurs and attract new enterprise.

The report's engaging case studies bring to life Scarborough's experiment in renewable energy, Hastings' re-branding as host for piano competitions and art-deco skate parks, Bournemouth's meteoric rise as digital hub, Littlehampton's architectural take-off, and Portrush's food empire in Northern Ireland.

Its recommendations on how to enable an entrepreneur-led revival focus on:

- Making sea towns attractive by forging new identities based on specialisations
- Improving education through 'Seaside Challenge', Teach First and Academies
- Government funding physical/digital infrastructure and devolving power
- Local government coordinating information on assets and opportunities.

**Source:** [Andrea Davies, Briefing: From Ebb to Flow: how entrepreneurs can turn the tide for Britain's seaside towns, LGiU, 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2015.](#)

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## Briefing: Impact on private rented sector of significant changes in government policy in respect of buy to let

In the Summer Budget 2015 the Chancellor announced the first phase of new measures to dampen the 'Buy To Let' market. These included:

- removal of landlords' 10 per cent 'wear and tear' allowance;
- restriction of tax relief on mortgage repayments.

Significant further changes were announced in the Spending Review and Autumn Statement 2015. These included:

- a 3 per cent Stamp Duty Land Tax surcharge on the purchase of all second homes;
- accelerated Capital Gains Tax payments for sellers of second homes.

Market analysts have predicted that the chancellor will succeed in shrinking the 'Buy To Let' market, and hence the total Private Rented Sector. The reduced supply could force up rents.

Many councils are heavily reliant on the Private Rented Sector to make up the shortfall in availability of Social Rented Sector accommodation. If predictions about reduced supply and increased rents are accurate, the impact upon these councils and other relevant organisations will be hard.

**Source:** [David Bartholomew, Briefing: Impact on private rented sector of significant changes in government policy in respect of buy to let, LGiU, 12<sup>th</sup> January 2016](#)

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### **Briefing: Bus Reform**

The Government is expected to publish a Buses Bill in the next few months which will give English local authorities outside London new options for improving bus services in their area. In preparation for this, the Department for Transport has been running a series of bus reform workshops designed to help shape the Bill.

The Department for Transport (DfT) has stated that the main aims of this Bill are to:

- Enable local authorities in England, outside London, to franchise their bus networks where they have agreement from the Government;
- Preserve the commercial and innovative strengths of private sector operators; and
- Ensure there is a good package of measures to improve local bus services in areas that may not wish or feel able to move to franchising.

The briefing provides an overview of the guidance that was published in advance of these workshops and the report that DfT published on the outcomes from the workshops. The guidance sets out initial ideas on the proposed changes to be introduced, other associated changes to the existing legislative framework and updates on a number of wider bus policies.

**Source:** [Ruth Bradshaw, Briefing: Bus Reform, LGiU, 4<sup>th</sup> February 2016](#)

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### **Briefing: Environmental implications of Heathrow expansion - a report by the Environmental Audit Committee**

In December, the Environmental Audit Committee (EAC) published the report of its inquiry into the Government's willingness to address the environmental implications of the Airports Commission's recommendation to expand Heathrow. The inquiry looked particularly at carbon emissions, air quality and noise.

The EAC believe that the Government will need to demonstrate a step change in their approach to mitigating the environmental impact, if it decides to proceed Heathrow expansion.

The report highlights major concerns about the Commission's theoretical approach on carbon emissions and emphasises the importance of not allowing any further deterioration in air quality around Heathrow. The EAC also strongly support the Commission's proposed ban on night flights.

This briefing provides an overview of the EAC's report.

**Source:** [Ruth Bradshaw, Briefing: Environmental implications of Heathrow expansion – a report by the Environmental Audit Committee, 16<sup>th</sup> February 2016](#)

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### **Briefing: One Public Estate**

The One Public Estate (OPE) Programme is a joint LGA and Cabinet Office Government Property Unit (GPU) programme to encourage better economic use of public land and property held by local authorities and public sector partners.

Since its launch in 2013, over 100 councils in 24 partnerships are now part of the programme, and are joining together to use their assets more effectively to deliver programmes of major service transformation and local economic growth. Each partnership has received an amount of funding from the Cabinet Office to get their projects off the ground.

The aim of the programme is to encourage local and central government to work together with local partners on land and property initiatives to deliver four key objectives:

1. create economic growth
2. more integrated and customer-focused services
3. generate capital receipts
4. reduce running costs

**Source:** [Mark Barrow, Briefing: One Public Estate, LGiU, 25<sup>th</sup> February 2016](#)

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### **Briefing: Housing Associations and the Right to Buy**

On 3 February 2016, the Communities and Local Government Select Committee published the conclusions of its inquiry into the viability and sustainability of housing associations, taking account of the government's commitment to extend Right to Buy (RTB) to housing association tenants. Earlier, the Select Committee commissioned the Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research at Sheffield Hallam University to review the operation of the existing RTB and its likely impact on housing associations.

The Sheffield Hallam report was published last October and has informed the Select Committee's conclusions, as has the Housing and Planning Bill, as amended during its passage through the House of Commons.

The briefing sets out the main findings of the Sheffield Hallam report and outlines the conclusions of the Communities and Local Government Select Committee inquiry.

**Source:** [Sheila Camp, Briefing: Housing Associations and the Right to Buy, LGiU, 8<sup>th</sup> March 2016](#)

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### **Briefing: What happened at COP-21 and what happens next: implementing the world's first global climate change agreement**

The 21st United Nations Climate Change Convention (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP) ended in December 2015 with a long anticipated global agreement to mitigate and adapt to climate change; regularly cited as the greatest challenge of our time.

The agreement is significant for local authorities, as much of the implementation of this agreement relates to local authority functions and powers. An increasing focus internationally is being placed on the imperative of ensuring urban centres are at the forefront of the climate change response.

This briefing provides an overview of what happened at COP-21.

**Source:** [Steven Bland, Briefing: What happened at COP-21 and what happens next: implementing the world's first global climate change agreement, LGiU, 10<sup>th</sup> March 2016](#)

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### **Briefing: The 2016 IFS Green Budget**

The Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) has produced a 'Green Budget' for the past 34 years, usually published about a month before the Chancellor's Budget Statement (scheduled this year for 16 March). It is meant to provide a detailed and independent analysis of the public finances and Budget policy options.

The 2016 Green Budget has a wide scope; coverage in this briefing is necessarily selective, and focuses on the key issues of public finances and taxation. In anticipation of the Budget, there is a summary of the analysis conducted by the IFS of the effects of the Chancellor's fiscal targets and of the risks associated with meeting them. Also dealt with is an analysis of recent changes to Universal Credit. Shorter treatment is given to prospects for infrastructure spending, excise duties, tax evasion, and a new system of accounting called the Whole of Government Accounts (WGA).

**Source:** [Andrew Jones, Briefing: The 2016 IFS Green Budget, 12<sup>th</sup> March 2016](#)

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### **Briefing: Devolution: the next five years and beyond: CLG Select Committee**

The Cities and Local Government Act 2016 gained Royal Assent on 28 January 2016. The Select Committee published its report 'Devolution & the next five years and beyond' on 25 January.

The Committee launched its inquiry in July 2015 and set out to examine the Cities and Local Government Bill, focusing on what lessons could be learnt from City Deals and in particular whether Greater Manchester’s devolution deal is a suitable model for other areas. As the inquiry progressed the scope widened to also review the way in which devolution in England is proceeding.

In a general sense the Committee strongly supports the principle of devolution. The Committee criticised Government for not having any measurable objectives for devolution and for rushing the process at the expense of wider public engagement and possibly introducing policy risks.

The Committee also suggested that the approach “lacked rigour as to process” and that there are “no clear and measurable objectives”.

In terms of strengthening accountability the Committee recommend that scrutiny arrangements need to be developed and noted that whilst there is formal monitoring of health organisations performance there is none for local government.

**Source:** [Mark Barrow, Briefing: Devolution: the next five years and beyond: CLG Select Committee, LGiU, 17<sup>th</sup> March 2016](#)

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