

LCSC meeting minutes - 17 September 2025

Attendees:

Ashok Sinha (Chair)	Clover Hogan	Syed Ahmed
Alyssa Gilbert	David Mooney	Tayshan Hayden-Smith
Antonia Jennings	Jacob Heitland	Venus Galarza-Mullins
Ben Smith	Julia Lamb	
Brendan Curran	Leonie Cooper AM	Secretariat:
Calum Handforth	Maria Adebowale-	Nusrat Yousuf
Charlie Wood	Schwarte	Jon Emmett
Cllr Jo Blackman	Martha Grekos	

Agreed:

The LCSC will take forward three work programmes as below:

1. Communications

- Chair: Alyssa Gilbert
- Likely focus areas: Convening and empowering communities to get more involved. Visibility and stewardship / ambassadors. Misinformation; inaccessible language; how to hold honest, transparent, civil conversations. Trust and community cohesion. Culture sector engagement.

2. Sustainable Growth

- Chair: Calum Handforth
- Likely focus areas: Strengthening sustainability in London Growth Plan delivery. Green finance, including via a potential seat on the GF Taskforce. Input to public consultation on the Inclusive Talent Strategy (the Mayor's forthcoming skills strategy for London). All jobs greener / green jobs and skills. All businesses greener.

3. Planning and housing

- Chair: Martha Grekos
- Embedding environment priorities in planning policy through London Plan engagement. Catalyse more sustainable housing, so new and existing homes are low-carbon, resilient (especially to heat), affordable to occupy and heat, healthy.

We will adopt the following principles across all areas of our work:

- Include community voices, for example using community-based research and co-design of solutions.
- Just transition: solutions will prioritise the most marginalised.
- Seek maximum impact where we can have influence.

- Use green finance principles to unlock funding for delivery.

Actions:

- All Commissioners: Volunteer to join a subgroup. (Please indicate your 1st and 2nd preference, so we can match you to your preferred group. We expect most commissioners to participate in just one subgroup, but please indicate if you're keen to join more than one.)
- Jon: Share commissioners' contact details
- Jon: Produce briefing for each subgroup to outline context - existing work underway, Mayoral priorities and strategies, etc.
- Jon: set up initial scoping meetings with each subgroup via their chairs.

Initial feedback from breakout discussions

Growth:

Antonia, Callum, Syed, Julia

- How can LCSC influence London Growth Plan it to strengthen its approach to sustainability?
- Green jobs – not defined or siloed. Need to make all jobs greener.
- Young people are struggling to find jobs.
- Inclusive Talent Strategy: LCSC should respond
- Green jobs initiatives must address mid and late career workers, not just youth.
- Harness pension fund investment (traditionally cautious)
- Need more targeted measures on net zero, with more relatable comms on everyday impacts, and challenging anti-NZ narrative.
- Local elections in 2026
- Create safe space for NZ leadership
- Proposed focus: Inclusive talent / green jobs and local economic development. Justify climate interventions using growth narrative.

Climate adaptation

Charlie, Ben, Jon

- Focus on themes is creating siloes
- Need to deliver interventions once – e.g. combine retrofits
- Don't need more evidence.

- Funding is siloed.
- Can NZ funding seed cross-benefits
- Heat exposure for frontline workers, e.g lost teaching time in schools.
- Don't start completely new work where there are current gaps – be more effective by going to where there is already momentum but strategy / delivery is disconnected.
- Proposed focus:
- Convene multiple funding and deliver bodies to deliver across mitigation and adaptation – in funding and implementation. E.g. embedding adaptation better in retrofits.
- Make a political and public case where there are quality-of-life benefits.

Green finance

Brendan, Jacob, Leonie, Nusrat

- Challenges still exist that were identified in the LSDC's green finance report, e.g. the development pipeline, and borough resourcing and skills.
- Risk of privatising benefits and socialising costs. Avoid Teesside situation of selling public assets to private investors.
- We lack funding for early development work (devex).
- Proposals:
- Build on the Mayor's Zero Carbon Accelerator to fill the devex gap. E.g. Bristol City LEAP, portfolio of NZ projects around UK – had lots of ERDF funding to de-risk before bringing private finance. Need to do something similar to fill that gap and build on MEEF and NEEF.
- Black box of skills needed to develop the pipeline
- Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV): investors don't want to invest into (complex) local authorities, but would be more willing to invest in a SPV, as they ringfence funds and are tax efficient. However, councillors need support in understanding, setting up and delivering SPVs, as well as bringing in 'nice' investors.
- Need to ensure council voices are on the GF taskforce.

Housing and planning

Martha, Maria, Venus

- House-building is a UK and GLA priority but hasn't been an LCSC focus in recent years except in the London Plan consultation.
- How to retain and strengthen environmental policies in housing delivery.

- Need to push back against the un-evidenced narrative that environment policies are hindering delivery. What's the evidence?
- Need to demonstrate benefits – health, quality of life, etc.
- Convene stakeholders to understand hurdles and conduct research in order to then advocate.
- Input to London Plan revision.
- Need to ensure build and existing homes to ensure liveability – e.g. nature, renewables, resilience.

Communication

Alyssa, Jo, Clover

Context:

- Misinformation, inaccessible language, conflation of multiple political views, elitist language, who is discussing / ownership; relevance to people's daily lives.
- Lack of trust (in politicians)
- How are we having discussions – increasingly hard to have honest, open, civil conversations.

Proposals for action:

- Research: Be honest – e.g. about costs and distribution. Research on comms about how to communicate effectively – need to collate that best practice. Stakeholder map of who's discussing this.
- Convening and empowering communities to get more involved. E.g. extending Green Roots Fund to be access be smaller communities. Visibility of what people can get involved in.
- Stewardship / ambassador programme for people to get involved in.
- LCAW: produce toolkit of how to have open, honest conversations. And demonstration of how to do one.
- Culture: messaging about how to have conversations.
- Toolkit of actions to better build community cohesion.

Green infrastructure

David, Tayshan, Ashok

- How to address our disconnection from nature?
- Amplify existing work – e.g. 'Natural Health Service' to change the narrative.
- There is wide political plurality among stakeholder groups in the nature debate, including traditionalists and progressives. How to build on this, and the resulting wide range of funding available?

- Emerging narratives of environmental and social justice. How to engage everyone in a politically neutral way.
- Need to distinguish between people's ability to access nature ('I can get there') vs connection ('I feel attachment to it').

Discussion on prioritisation

Comms:

- We don't need new data – we need to communicate it better. Though we're not doing so on a level playing field.
- Education and awareness. Urgency.
- Visibility and stats of action many individual households are already doing.
- Community cohesion.
- Culture – what is LCSC's role, e.g. giving permission
- You can't be what you can't see.
- Research on 'social tipping points'.
- Bring out London focus of the agenda. But also address local / global connection.
- Could be challenging to deliver:
 - Do we have capacity to do it ourselves? Are we too small to make a dent in global juggernaut of anti-climate narrative? Who can we influence to deliver it?
 - Who's the target audience?

Housing

- Housing is a priority for UK / HMG and London / GLA. Lots of national 1.5m housing target will be in London.
- It covers many cross-cutting issues – cost of living, growth, resilience etc- which could be an effective way for LCSC to influence across policy siloes.

Climate adaptation:

- LCSC has limited leverage.
- Keep pressuring GLA on delivering on Resilience Review.

Green finance

- Key to unlocking delivery.
- Feasibility study – e.g. £x million is needed to deliver y
- Local to global – mayors from EBRD.

Growth:

- How we drive city agenda. International growth agenda is important.
- How to strengthen green growth, jobs.