

Councillors' Forum

Agenda

Thursday, 25 January 2018
12.30 pm

Westminster Room, 8th Floor, 18 Smith
Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

To: Members of the Councillors' Forum
cc: Named officers for briefing purposes

www.local.gov.uk

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Councillors' Forum
25 January 2018

There will be a meeting of the Councillors' Forum at **12.30 pm on Thursday, 25 January 2018**
Westminster Room, 8th Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ.

Please note: *The Political Group meetings will be held prior to this, as follows:*

11.00am	Conservative	Westminster Suite (8 th floor)
11.00am	Labour	Smith Square Rooms 3 & 4 (Ground floor)
11.00am	Independent	Eaton-Cockell Room (7 th floor)
11.00am	Liberal Democrat	Smith Square Rooms 1 & 2 (Ground floor)

A sandwich lunch will be available at 1.15pm in the Victoria Room (8th Floor).

Attendance Sheet:

Please ensure that you sign the attendance register, which will be available in the meeting room. It is the only record of your presence at the meeting.

Political Group meetings:

The group meetings will take place in advance of the meeting. Please contact your political group as outlined below for further details.

Apologies:

Please notify your political group office (see contact telephone numbers below) if you are unable to attend this meeting.

Conservative:	Group Office: 020 7664 3223	email: lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk
Labour:	Group Office: 020 7664 3334	email: Labour.GroupLGA@local.gov.uk
Independent:	Group Office: 020 7664 3224	email: independent.grouplga@local.gov.uk
Liberal Democrat:	Group Office: 020 7664 3235	email: libdem@local.gov.uk

Location:

A map showing the location of 18 Smith Square is printed on the back cover.

LGA Contact:

Felicity Harris
020 7664 3231 / felicity.harris@local.gov.uk

Carers' Allowance

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Councillors' Forum – Membership 2017/2018

Councillor	Authority
Conservative (44)	
Lord Gary Porter CBE (Chairman)	South Holland District Council
Cllr David Simmonds CBE	Hillingdon London Borough Council
Cllr Sean Anstee	Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Paul Carter CBE	Kent County Council
Cllr Peter Fleming OBE	Sevenoaks District Council
Cllr Izzi Seccombe OBE	Warwickshire County Council
Cllr Nigel Ashton	North Somerset Council
Cllr Philip Atkins OBE	Staffordshire County Council
Cllr John Beesley	Bournemouth Borough Council
Cllr Kevin Bentley	Colchester Borough Council
Cllr Paul Bettison OBE	Bracknell Forest Borough Council
Cllr Morris Bright MBE	Hertsmere Borough Council
Cllr Gillian Brown	Arun District Council
Cllr Vanessa Churchman	Isle of Wight Council
Cllr Neil Clarke MBE	Rushcliffe Borough Council
Cllr Simon Cooke	Bradford Metropolitan District Council
Cllr Deborah Croney	Dorset County Council
Cllr Tom Fitzpatrick	North Norfolk District Council
Cllr John Fuller	South Norfolk District Council
Cllr Keith Glazier	East Sussex County Council
Cllr Peter Golds	Tower Hamlets Council
Cllr John Hart	Devon County Council
Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE	Gloucestershire County Council
Cllr Martin Hill OBE	Lincolnshire County Council
Cllr James Jamieson	Central Bedfordshire Council
Cllr Donna Jones JP	Portsmouth City Council
Cllr Rebecca Knox	Dorset County Council
Cllr Robert Light	Kirklees Metropolitan Council
Cllr Rory Love	Shepway District Council
Cllr Colin Noble	Suffolk County Council
Cllr Teresa O'Neill OBE	Bexley Council
Cllr Jonathan Owen	East Riding of Yorkshire Council
Cllr Stephen Parnaby OBE	East Riding of Yorkshire Council
Cllr Roy Perry	Hampshire County Council
Cllr Roger Phillips	Herefordshire Council
Cllr David Renard	Swindon Borough Council
Cllr Glen Sanderson JP	Northumberland Council
Cllr Martin Tett	Buckinghamshire County Council
Cllr Geoffrey Theobald OBE	Brighton & Hove City Council
Cllr Barry Lewis	Derbyshire County Council
Cllr Catherine Rankin	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Cllr Colin Riley	Castle Point Borough Council
Mayor Tim Bowles	West of England Combined Authority
Mayor James Palmer	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority
Labour (37)	
Cllr Nick Forbes (Senior Vice-Chair)	Newcastle upon Tyne City Council

Cllr Lib Peck	Lambeth London Borough Council
Cllr Michael Payne	Gedling Borough Council
Cllr Peter Box CBE	Wakefield Metropolitan District Council
Cllr Sue Murphy CBE	Manchester City Council
Sir Richard Leese CBE	Manchester City Council
Cllr Simon Blackburn	Blackpool Council
Cllr Claire Kober OBE	Haringey Council
Cllr Richard Watts	Islington Council
Cllr Simon Henig CBE	Durham County Council
Cllr Rishi Shori	Bury Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Alice Perry	Islington Council
Cllr Alan Rhodes	Nottinghamshire County Council
Cllr Clare Coghill	Waltham Forest London Borough Council
Cllr John Merry CBE	Salford City Council
Cllr Sabia Hussain	Slough Borough Council
Cllr Kate Haigh	Gloucester City Council
Cllr Aaron Shotton	Flintshire County Council
Cllr Sue Woodward	Staffordshire County Council
Cllr Timothy Swift	Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Sir Stephen Houghton CBE	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Graham Chapman	Nottingham City Council
Cllr Bryony Rudkin	Suffolk County Council
Cllr Helen Holland	Bristol City Council
Cllr Linda Thomas	Bolton Council
Cllr Anne Western CBE	Derbyshire County Council
Cllr Judith Blake CBE	Leeds City Council
Cllr Judi Billing MBE	North Hertfordshire District Council
Ms Fiona Twycross AM	London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA)
Cllr Roger Lawrence	Wolverhampton City Council
Cllr Vince Maple	Medway Council
Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe	Bradford Metropolitan District Council
Cllr Amy Cross	Blackpool Council
Cllr Debbie Wilcox	Newport City Council
Cllr Sharon Taylor OBE	Stevenage Borough Council
Cllr Tudor Evans OBE	Plymouth City Council
Cllr Barrie Grunewald	St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council
Independent (8)	
Cllr Marianne Overton MBE (Vice-Chair)	Lincolnshire County Council
Cllr Peter Reeve MBE	Huntingdonshire District Council
Cllr Colin Mann	Caerphilly County Borough Council
Cllr Alan Seldon	Herefordshire Council
Cllr Wayne Davies	Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council
Cllr Carolyn Rule	Cornwall Council
Cllr Chris Townsend	Surrey County Council
Cllr Robert Bucke	Tendring District Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Phelim MacCafferty	Brighton & Hove City Council
Cllr Geoff Knight	Lancaster City Council

Liberal Democrat (11)	
Cllr Howard Sykes MBE	Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE	Portsmouth City Council
Cllr Heather Kidd	Shropshire Council
Cllr Alan Connett	Devon County Council
Cllr Paul Tilsley CBE	Birmingham City Council
Cllr Richard Kemp CBE	Liverpool City Council
Cllr Claire Hudson	Mendip District Council
Cllr Abigail Bell	Hull City Council
Cllr Keith Aspden	North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service
Cllr Chris White	Hertfordshire County Council
Cllr Jon Hubbard	Wiltshire Council
<i>Substitutes</i>	
Cllr Lucy Nethsingha	Cambridgeshire County Council
Cllr David Neighbour	Hart District Council
Mayor Dave Hodgson MBE	Bedford Borough Council
Cllr Paul Smith	Colchester Borough Council

Agenda

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Date of Next Meeting: Thursday, 8 March 2018, 12.30 pm, Westminster
Room, 8th Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ



Rishi Sunak MP, Minister of State for Local Government

Purpose

As background to the discussion.

Summary

Rishi Sunak MP, Minister of State for Local Government, will join Councillors' Forum for this item. This session provides an opportunity for councillors to raise questions to the Minister.

This report covers a range of issues including the recent renaming of the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), local government priorities, adult social care and local government finance.

Recommendation

Members of Councillors' Forum are invited to note the background report and, following the Minister's speech, pose questions from a local government perspective.

Action

Officers will take forward actions identified.

Contact officers: Eleanor Reader-Moore
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Rishi Sunak MP, Minister of State for Local Government

Background

1. In January 2018, the Government confirmed a new name for the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) as part of the ministerial reshuffle. The new Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will work to create places to live and work, and to give more power to local people to shape what happens in their area. Responsibilities of the Ministry include: driving up housing supply, increasing home ownership, devolving powers and budgets to boost local growth in England and supporting strong communities with public services. The name change reflects the Government's promise to deliver more homes and build strong communities across England.
2. The Rt. Hon. Sajid Javid MP will continue as the Secretary of State. Mr Javid will also continue as the Ministerial Champion for the Midlands Engine.
3. Junior ministerial appointments and their responsibilities were confirmed by the Prime Minister on the 15 January. This included an addition of a further Parliamentary Under Secretary of State to the ministerial team to reflect the Government's renewed focus on housing issues. Below are details of the new ministerial team and their roles:
 - 3.1. **Dominic Raab MP** – Minister of State for Housing and Planning
 - 3.2. **Jake Berry MP** – Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Minister for the Northern Powerhouse and Local Growth
 - 3.3. **Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth** – Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Minister for Faith
 - 3.4. **Rishi Sunak MP** – Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Minister for Local Government
 - 3.5. **Heather Wheeler MP** – Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Minister for Housing and Homelessness

Minister for Local Government

4. Rishi Sunak MP was appointed as the Minister for Local Government on 9 January. This is his first ministerial role, the responsibilities for which include the following:
 - 4.1. Local government policy, including local government reform
 - 4.2. Local government finances, including local authority sustainability and business rates retention
 - 4.3. Adult social care
 - 4.4. Local government interventions policy and oversight of existing interventions

- 4.5. Local government pensions
- 4.6. Troubled families
- 4.7. Parks/green space
- 5. A biography for Rishi Sunak MP is attached at **Appendix A**.

Priorities for Local Government

Local government finance

- 6. The Local Government Finance Settlement was announced on 16 December 2017; consultation closed on 16 January 2018, the final settlement is expected around the beginning of February.
- 7. Almost no new money from central government has been included in the settlement, although the Government has increased the general council tax referendum limit from 1.99 per cent to 2.99 per cent for 2018/19 and 2019/20. The [LGA's settlement response](#) says that it is extremely disappointing that the Government has again chosen not to address the continuing funding gap for children's and adult social care. We have repeatedly warned of the serious consequences of funding pressures facing these services, for both the people that rely on them and the financial sustainability of other services councils provide. An injection of new money from central government is the only way to protect the vital services which protect children and support families and care for older and disabled people.
- 8. Local services are facing a £5.8 billion funding gap in 2019/20, as well as a £1.3 billion pressure to stabilise the adult social care provider market today. Whilst we estimate the welcome additional council tax flexibility to be worth up to £540 million in 2019/20 if all councils use it in both 2018/19 and 2019/20, it is nowhere near enough to meet the funding gap. The Government needs to provide new funding for all councils over the next few years so they can protect vital local services from further cutbacks.
- 9. Further business rates retention income could be used to meet the funding gap facing local government, and discussions will continue between Government officials, the LGA and councils on the introduction of further business rates retention for all in 2020/21. The Government has also confirmed that the Fair Funding Review will be completed in time for implementation in April 2020. We will continue to work with the Government on further business rates retention and the Fair Funding Review, including tackling the impact of business rates appeals on local authorities in time for the implementation of further business rates retention in 2020/21.
- 10. The four year deal runs out in March 2020. We remain concerned that there is no clarity over funding levels, for both the national pot and local allocations, and any council tax referendum limits, after that date. This hampers meaningful financial planning at a time when central government grant funding is the lowest it has been for decades and demand pressures are increasing.
- 11. The LGA will continue to work with the Government and councils on the stated priorities and will continue calls for an injection of new money from central government which is needed to address the funding gap and children's and adult social care.

Adult social care

12. Adult social care must be treated as a national priority. It is a vital public service which Local Government provides to support working age disabled adults and older people with often high levels of need. It also promotes the wider wellbeing and independence of many of our residents. An adequately funded social care and support system is also essential for supporting the sustainability of the NHS by helping to reduce the demand it faces.
13. The extra money for social care announced in the Spring Budget 2017 was a step in the right direction. However, it is only one-off funding which reduces each year and stops at the end of 2019/20. It is not a long-term solution. Even with this injection of funds adult social care faces a funding gap of £2.3 billion by 2020. This includes an immediate and annually recurring pressure of £1.3 billion, which is the difference between what providers say they need and what councils currently pay.
14. The consequences of long term underfunding means an ever more fragile provider market, growing unmet and under-met need, further strain on informal carers, less investment in prevention, continued pressure on an already overstretched care workforce, and a decreased ability of social care to help mitigate demand pressures on the NHS. This is having a significant impact on many of those supported by adult social care and support services.
15. It is extremely disappointing that the Government chose not to address the continuing funding gap for adult social care in the Autumn Budget, while announcing further investment in the NHS. Adult social care needs to be placed on an equal footing to the NHS. It is clear that the public understands this, as adult social care was a central talking point in the recent general election.
16. We welcome the recent announcement of a period of engagement and consultation ahead of a green paper on the future of care "by summer recess 2018". However, that process will only focus on older people, will take time and we simply cannot wait for its solutions to deliver a sustainable system. The pressures are immediate and people of all ages using services want action now.



Councillors' Forum

25 January 2018

Appendix A

Rishi Sunak MP

**Parliamentary Under Secretary of State,
Ministry of Housing, Communities and
Local Government**



Rishi Sunak MP was appointed as Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Minister for Local Government on 9 January 2018. This is Mr Sunak's first ministerial role, the responsibilities for which include: local government finances, interventions, pensions, and adult social care.

Mr Sunak was first elected as the Conservative MP for Richmond (Yorkshire) in 2015. Before becoming an MP, he worked as a banker and founded his own investment firm. In addition to this, Mr Sunak has been a school governor and a board member of a large youth club.

Mr Sunak was born in 1980, and has studied at Winchester College, Oxford University and Stanford University.

25 January 2018

Chairman's Update

This report covers the Chairman's activities in the period since the last Councillors' Forum: 19 October 2017 – 25 January 2018.

LGA and Ministerial/Parliamentary business

25 Oct	The Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP (Secretary of State, Department for Transport)
25 Oct	The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP (Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs)
26 Oct	David Lloyd (Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire; Chair of Association of Police Commissioners)
3 Nov	South West Councils meeting
7 Nov	John Penrose MP (Chair, All Party Parliamentary Group on Housing and Planning)
9 Nov	Cllr Nicholas Rushton (Leader), John Sinnott (CEO); Leicestershire County Council
13 Nov	Jason Ablewhite (Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire)
14 Nov	4 Association UK forum (LGA, COSLA, WLGA, NILGA)
15 Nov	Cllr Paul Carter (Chair, County Councils Network)
16 Nov	Building Safety Programme Ministerial Group
17 Nov	North East Regional Meeting
23 Nov	The Rt Hon Justine Greening MP (Secretary of State, Department for Education)
28 Nov	Cllr Mark Hawthorne (Chair, People and Places Board)
28 Nov	Clive Betts MP (Chair, Communities and Local Government Committee)
13 Dec	Sean Hanson (Chief Executive, Local Partnerships)
20 Dec	Building Safety Programme Ministerial Group
10 Jan	Public Service Leadership Academy Roundtable
10 Jan	Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP (Secretary of State, Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government)
12 Jan	Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire APPG meeting
12 Jan	Yorkshire & Humber regional meeting
25 Jan	Cllr Martin Tett (Chair, EEHT)

Meetings with organisations and individuals

23 Oct	Arshad Bhatti (CEO), Val Bagnall (MD) (Apex Housing Group)
26 Oct	Ólöf Jónsdóttir (Rockwool, Head of Public Affairs)
6 Nov	Paul Overall (Chief Executive, LABC)
29 Nov	Alex Challoner (MD, Cavendish Place Communications)
5 Dec	Mr Andrew Heyn OBE (HM Consul General to Hong Kong), Esther Blythe (Deputy Head of Mission)
5 Dec	Craig Morley (First Secretary & FCO Head, South China Regional Network)
14 Dec	Claire Curtis-Thomas (CEO, British Board of Agrément)
18 Dec	Lyn Taylor (Sales Director), Richard Lawrence (Director) - Deans Gate Group

25 January 2018

Events and speaking engagements

20 Oct	Westminster Foundation for Democracy
6 Nov	County All Party Parliamentary Group Autumn Parliamentary Reception
7 Nov	LGiU C'llr Achievement Awards 2017
14 Nov	John Montague (MD, The Big Issue Group)
14 Nov	All-Party Parliamentary Media Group Annual Reception
15 Nov	All-Party Parliamentary Fire Safety and Rescue Group Reception
15 Nov	LGA Conservative Vice Presidents lunch
20 Nov	County Councils Network conference
21 Nov	District Councils Network autumn assembly
24 Nov	LGA Independent Group conference
4/10 Dec	UCLG Executive Bureau and World Council
12 Dec	LGA staff conference
18 Dec	LGA 18 Smith Square opening
9 Jan	LGA finance conference
16 Jan	LGC100 2018 Launch

Children and Young People Board – report from Cllr Richard Watts (Chair)

Conferences, Meetings and Public Events

1. On 31 October, I attended the APPG for Families in the Early Years to give evidence on the role of children's centres and early years' provision in improving social mobility. The following day, I returned to Parliament to take part in a roundtable hosted by the Children's Society, where I outlined the financial challenges facing children's services ahead of the Autumn Budget.
2. I presented our children's services campaign, [Bright Futures](#), to the Westminster Education Forum on 16 November, before taking part in a panel session on responding to funding pressures in children's services.
3. I signed an [open letter to the Government](#) in November, joining Barnardo's, Action for Children, The Children's Society and National Children's Bureau in calling for urgent action to address the funding gap in children's services.
4. On 6 December, we hosted a conference with the National Youth Agency about youth services, with speakers from a range of local authorities alongside the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, the National Citizen Service Trust, the Royal Society for Public Health and others. At the conference, we launched our [Vision for Youth Services](#), part of our *Bright Futures* campaign, outlining our long-term vision for youth services and the role councils can play in delivering these.
5. I met with the Chief Executive of the NSPCC on 18 December to discuss our *Bright Futures* campaign and identify ways to work together next year. I also attended the Children's Inter-Agency Group to speak with a range of high-profile children's charities.

Board business

6. Recently I have written to the new Secretary of State for Education, Rt Hon Damian Hinds MP, to welcome him to his new role and to suggest an introductory meeting. I will report back on our discussions following the meeting.
7. At the Board's meeting on 10 January we considered interim findings on variations in local spending on children's services, as part of research we have commissioned from Newton Europe. Working with a sample of local authorities, we intend to develop a deeper, more complete picture of council spend on children's services while identifying areas of good practice and the underlying levers driving cost and performance. The output of this work will have a range of valuable practical applications, including informing a future children's services finance diagnostic offer to the sector, and more details will be available in due course when the research concludes.

Publications

8. On 8 January 2018 we published a report on [Enabling School Improvement](#). While the council role in education continues to evolve, one thing that has remained constant is the

vital role that councils play in driving school improvement to ensure that children, young people and their families all have access to a good school place. Bringing strategic clarity and coherence to local education systems, councils act as independent and impartial brokers and evaluators for school improvement support, resulting in stronger support for schools. In their efforts to drive up school standards, councils have taken a variety of different approaches to developing effective school improvement systems, responding differently to the challenges facing the education system.

9. On 8 December 2017, we published a report on [Working with schools to improve the health of school-aged children](#). While the health of older people gets lots of attention in the debate about the future of the NHS and the ageing population, there has been a host of warnings about the state of children's health too. This report showcases the work being done by schools and local authorities across the country to improve the health of children.

Press Releases and Statements

10. I have recently made public statements on the charity warning that [councils can only help children in crisis](#), [the announcement of no additional children's services funding in the 2017 Autumn Budget](#), [the number of child protection investigations carried out by councils](#), [Ofsted's Annual Report](#), [DfE's Social Mobility Action Plan](#), [DfE's announcement on boarding schools](#), [the CRIDE and National Deaf Children's Society report on specialist support](#), and [referral rates to children's services](#).

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City Regions Board – report from Sir Richard Leese CBE (Chair)

Industrial Strategy

1. The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) published the Industrial Strategy White Paper on Monday 27 November 2017. The White Paper is structured around five pillars: Ideas, People, Infrastructure, Business Environment and Place.
2. In order to establish how the Government's approach to place-based growth relates to the role of councils, LGA officers met with officials from BEIS, the Department for Education (DfE) and the Department for Communities and local Government (DCLG). Consequently, Alexandra Jones – Director of Industrial Strategy at BEIS - attended City Regions Board on 23 November 2017, providing an overview of the themes included in the White Paper to members and signalling a strong commitment to engage councils as the Strategy moves towards implementation.

Town and City Centre Management and Community Cohesion

3. Following discussion at the Board meeting in November, members steered LGA officers to take forward a wide-ranging programme of work on town and city centre management across four different work streams: a joint piece of work alongside Core Cities on city centre management enforcement powers available to local bodies; a deeper exploration into rough sleeping and aggressive begging, including examining best practice at councils in urban areas and feeding into the Government's development of its National Rough Sleeping Strategy; investigating holistic approaches to city centre management with a focus on making public spaces more vibrant and welcoming; and exploring the role of urban councils in fostering Community Cohesion once the Government publishes its response to the Casey Review.

Fiscal Devolution

4. In line with the Board's work programme, members agreed to commission two pieces of technical work in support of making an enhanced case for Fiscal Devolution. First, officers will proceed to commission a piece of messaging analysis, drawing on the expert advice of an external consultancy to identify how the LGA can shift stakeholders' perceptions and most compellingly present the case for fiscal devolution to key audiences, in particular HM Treasury.
5. Secondly, officers will commission econometric modelling support, to spell out in detail what a specific instance of fiscal devolution would look like in practice. Members of the City Regions Board have also agreed to establish a small steering group so that this work might be monitored and informed by Members.

Skills and Employment

6. Following on from the last forum, a meeting has been scheduled in January 2018 with the Rt. Hon. Anne Milton MP (Minister of State for Skills and Apprenticeships), myself and Cllr Brown of the People and Places Board. This meeting aims to discuss the valuable role councils can play in supporting the Department of Education to both join up existing and new elements of a careers support system more effectively across places, balancing national priorities with the

varying needs of local communities and businesses, including small and medium-sized enterprises. The meeting with the Minister will be an excellent opportunity to broaden and deepen our political and operational relationship with the Department of Education, so we can work together to deliver an effective skills system.

7. A Work Local campaign plan to step up engagement with decision makers and influencers, has been agreed by Lead Members of both Boards. The aim is to enable councils and combined authorities to be progressively at the heart of planning and commissioning employment and skills provision around local need.

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Community Wellbeing Board – from Cllr Izzi Seccombe (Chair)

Conferences, meetings and external events

1. On 24 October, Cllr Gillian Ford was an expert witness at the International Longevity Centre Commission on Music and Dementia at the House of Lords. She will attend the launch of the final report in January 2018.
2. On 1 November, I spoke at the UKactive National Summit on the theme 'Our Ageing Population: How can physical activity play a leading role in social and residential care'. The panel discussion before representatives from the physical activity sector discussed how the sector can support the NHS and local authorities to deliver its ambitions for a healthy, active nation.
3. On 13 November, I met Noel Gordon, Chair of NHS Digital, to discuss prevention and data security, as well as collecting and using data across the health and care sector. We also had a constructive discussion around how NHS Digital and local government can work closer together to support the sector – both around awareness raising with the sector of what NHS Digital can do for councils and ongoing engagement.
4. On 28 November, Mayor Kate Allsop chaired a New Care Models event as part of a programme of work to spread the learning from the new care models led in collaboration by the Local Government Association, NHS Providers, NHS Clinical Commissioners and the NHS Confederation. Mayor Allsop also participated in the panel discussion, along with Councillor Jonathon McShane, on the importance of system leadership and how experiences from the new models of care can be utilised in future integration programmes. The event was extremely well received and will be repeated in Birmingham on 31 January, where I will be taking part in the panel discussion.
5. Cllr Richard Kemp represented the LGA at a sector roundtable on the future of adult social care, hosted by the Alzheimer's Society on 28 November. Looking ahead to the promised green paper on care and support reform, the roundtable explored the state of social care and the issues a green paper should address, and discussed principles that should underpin reform, which could be supported cross-sector.
6. On 29 November, Cllr Doreen Huddart attended a Parliamentary Breakfast Roundtable on 'Understanding the Psychological Dimensions of Dementia to Improve Care' at the Houses of Parliament. The roundtable was hosted by Dr Lisa Cameron MP, Shadow Mental Health Spokesperson and Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Psychology.
7. On 30 November, Councillor Richard Kemp chaired the LGA's Prevention at Scale networking event. We have designed and are piloting support to help areas improve the scale and pace of some of their prevention initiatives. We are currently in the testing phase of this support with a small group of areas and will be sharing learning from these sites
8. On 4 December, Mayor Kate Allsop chaired and presented at an LGA event which gave over 40 councils the opportunity to shape the LGA's response to the Government's consultation on future funding of supported housing. Delegates welcomed the opportunity for greater local commissioning and emphasised the importance of adequate government funding to meet current and future demand for support housing.

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9. On 12 December, Cllr Jackie Meldrum attended a reception at the House of Lords – 'Healthy, Independent Ageing – the pivotal role of the home'. The event allowed speakers to share their views of the role of the home, particularly adaption of current homes, in the context of an ageing population.
10. On 10 January, Mayor Kate Allsop attended a meeting of the Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat Steering Group.
11. On 17 January, I met Duncan Selbie, Chief Executive at Public Health England to discuss progress of the NHS Healthcheck programme as it reaches the end of the first five years of operation in local government.

Publications and correspondence

12. Along with Cllr Claire Kober OBE (Chair of the Resources Board) and Margaret Wilcox OBE (President of ADASS), I wrote to ministers to request a meeting and highlight our continued significant concern about the ability of employers and individuals to fund back-payments and meet ongoing costs arising from changes to sleep-in payments.
13. In October 2017, the LGA published a document entitled '[Adult Social Care Funding: State of the Nation 2017](#)', which looked people's experience of existing care and support, and considered the consequences mounting funding pressures are having on the entire social care system and the support available to those in need.
14. On 13 December, a briefing written in partnership with Public Health England and the Association of Directors of Public Health titled '[Making obesity everybody's business](#)' was published. The briefing focuses on the 'Whole Systems Obesity' programme, which will provide local authorities with a different approach to tackling obesity.
15. On 13 January, we reissued the LGA publication '[Tackling poor oral health in children – a guide for local authorities](#)'. Tooth decay is the most common oral disease affecting children and young people in England, yet it is largely preventable. Local authorities have a statutory responsibility to provide or commission oral health improvement programmes to improve the health of the local population, to the extent that they consider appropriate in their areas.

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Culture, Tourism and Sport Board – report from Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE (Chair)

Tourism and the Visitor Economy

1. I met Denis Wormwell, Chairman of Visit England to discuss the tourism sector's bid for a deal under the industrial strategy, the Board's priorities relating to tourism, and ensuring our tourism industry continues to thrive after leaving the European Union. We also discussed whether Visit England was properly resourced to deliver high-profile marketing campaigns.
2. Cllr Peter Golds attended a parliamentary event held to launch the National Forest's new tourism plan, as part of the Board's wider investigation into extending the season for the domestic visitor economy.
3. I wrote to Greg Clark MP, Secretary of State for BEIS, and John Glen MP, Minister for Tourism, to outline our support in principle for the tourism sector's bid for a deal under the Industrial Strategy, but also our concern at the lack of recognition of the role of councils in supporting and promoting the visitor economy. This followed a presentation on the bid to the Board by Visit England and Tourism Alliance.

Sport and Physical Activity

4. Our first sport and physical activity conference took place on 5 December, with over 75 delegates. Lead Member Cllr Peter Golds chaired the conference, which included key note speakers such as Tracey Crouch MP, Minister for Sport and twice women's cricket World Cup winner, Lydia Greenway. The conference also launched our new [Active people, healthy places](#) publication, bringing together good practice and different models for delivering sport and physical activity services.
5. I met with Nick Bitel, Chair of Sport England and reinforced the very positive relationship between the LGA and Sport England, developed through our joint delivery of leadership essentials sport programmes and ongoing work in supporting Sport England to implement their sport strategy. This has included providing advice on the 'Local Delivery Pilots', which is providing £100 million to 12 areas across England to develop innovative ways to increase participation in sport and physical activity.
6. I also met with Ashley Brown of Supporters Direct to discuss the role of communities in running clubs or influencing their management boards.
7. Cllr Peter Golds attended a joint parliamentary event by the APPGs on Mental Health and Sport, exploring the role of sport in tackling mental health problems.

Parks

8. I represented the LGA at the first Government Parks Action Group, convened and chaired by Marcus Jones MP. The group has been established as part of the Government's response to the CLG select committee inquiry into public parks, which found that they were at the tipping point. The group brings together key funders such as the Heritage Lottery Fund, charities like Fields in Trust and Keep Britain Tidy, and representatives involved in practical management such as friends groups. The group has been allocated £500,000 to invest in solutions that will help place public parks on a sustainable footing.

Libraries

9. The LGA continues to act as co-accountable body, with DCMS, for the Leadership for Libraries Taskforce. I met with Kim Bromley-Derry CBE, the Taskforce's new Chairman and Chief Executive of London Borough of Newham, and Kathy Settle, the Chief Executive for the Taskforce. We discussed ensuring that the £500,000 per year investment in the Taskforce was providing the best value to hard pressed library services.
10. Cllr David Jeffels represented the Board at Creating the Library of the Future Roundtable event held by the APPG on Libraries. The event stressed the need for developing the scope of libraries to make them a more valued asset in the community, including acting as commercial hubs. Their roles in supporting Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SME's) and as places of life-long learning and re-skilling were also discussed in depth.

Heritage

11. Cllr Michelle Tanfield attended a parliamentary reception celebrating 70 Years of listing historic buildings. The event coincided with the announcement of the 2017 register on heritage at risk, as well as the more positive announcement of a further eight heritage action zones by Historic England. The new areas include Stoke-on-Trent, Rochdale and Grimsby.

Theatre

12. The Board has taken a particular interest in the role of theatres acting as anchor organisations for culture-led regeneration, following case studies from Cheshire West, Leicester, and Stevenage. As a result, I attended a UK Theatre Board meeting and held a follow-up meeting with their Chief Executive, Julian Bird, to discuss this role for theatres, and how they are taking steps to engage communities more widely.
13. Cllr Peter Golds spoke at UK Theatre's Business Resilience Conference to outline how they can engage with councils' key priorities and maximise their impact within a local community.
14. Cllr Michelle Tanfield has been appointed as the Board's representative to UK Theatre, and will be exploring these connections as part of our culture-led regeneration work.

Leadership Essentials Sport and Culture events

15. Lead Member Cllr Peter Golds spoke at the Leadership Essential Sports event in November and Leadership essentials Culture event in December 2017, where he outlined the landscape facing councils and the work that the LGA is undertaking to support councils. 20 portfolio holders attended these events and feedback from them was again very positive.

Media

16. The Board has issued the following media releases since my last report:

- [Response to the Museums Review](#)
- [Budget response to Cultural Development Fund](#)
- [Response to £100 million pilot investment to combat inactivity](#)
- [Response to City of Culture Announcement](#)
- [Christmas markets surge brings festive cheer to high streets](#)

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Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board – report from Cllr Martin Tett (Chairman)

Meetings and external events

1. I met with the National Joint Utilities Group and representatives of broadband providers. We discussed how councils and broadband providers could work together to ensure broadband is rolled out as quickly as possible with as little disruption to the highways network as possible. In particular there was discussion of how greater sharing of forward plans could benefit all sides.
2. I also met with Colin Matthews Chair of Highways England. We discussed how Highways England are managing their relationship with local authorities since the transition to being a government owned company. I made it clear that Highways England needs to engage with local authorities in particular transport authorities who manage the local network and its interactions with the strategic network. We were particularly keen for Highways England to engage closely with those authorities that are having problems with air quality where the strategic network is a major contributor to emissions.
3. I attended the annual Environmental Services Authority (ESA) lunch which brings together a number of local authority environment officers and key figures from the waste and recycling industry. It was a good opportunity to speak to the ESA Chairman and identify where our organisations have common lobbying territory.
4. The LGA's Chairman and I met with Rt. Hon. Chris Grayling MP, Secretary of State for Transport, on 25 October 2017. In a productive meeting there was a constructive discussion across a range of issues including the importance of continued central and local government investment in local transport infrastructure. There was also discussion on possible solutions to address the funding gap on local bus services.

Board Business

5. The board held a future transport seminar in December where experts from Government, the automotive sector and freight came to discuss trends in transport. We examined trends in automation, connectivity and electrification. We will be publishing a guide for members exploring some of the issues and how they are likely to impact councils, the opportunities they can represent as well as the risks that will have to be mitigated.
6. The EEHT Board discussed what our waste and recycling ambitions are after we leave the European Union. The discussion focussed around residual waste being considered as an alternative measure of effective waste management. Addressing carbon emissions were also discussed and members identified a need to look further at our approach to recycling plastics.

Housing

7. Cllr Nick Forbes gave evidence to a Treasury Select Committee on housing on 28 November, as part of the Committee's Autumn Budget Inquiry. He spoke about the need for councils to have the tools and resources to support housebuilding at scale, highlighting the need for the borrowing cap and other restrictions on council housing finance to be lifted.

8. Cllr Eburne gave evidence to the CLG committee on the Homelessness Reduction Act.
9. I wrote to MHCLG to request they delay the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act from its current proposed roll out of April 2018 to enable councils time to reform to implement the new duties.

Environment

10. Cllr David Simmonds gave evidence to the Environmental Audit Committee on Disposable Packaging: Coffee Cups and Plastic Bottles on 24 October. He highlighted the costs to councils of dealing with plastic packaging, which is often difficult to recycle. He gave evidence on the low amount of money that UK packaging companies contribute to recycling costs compared to other countries, and called for a revised producer responsibility scheme. We also [responded to the disposable coffee cup report](#).
11. The LGA recently submitted both written and oral evidence to two separate Parliamentary committees: Firstly, the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on air quality and Clean Air Zones, and secondly, the Joint select committee inquiry: Improving air quality. Cllr Adele Morris represented the LGA at both oral evidence sessions.

Transport

12. We responded welcoming the Government's draft accessibility action plan consultation. Our response stated that it was vitally important that as many transport options as possible are open to everyone and councils will do all they can to help meet the goals contained within the plan. [You can read our submission here](#).

Press Releases and Statements

13. In December I [responded to the Environmental Audit Committee's Inquiry into plastic bottles](#) and emphasised how crucial it is that local authorities are consulted on the introduction of any new plastic bottle deposit return scheme.
14. I made a public statement [responding the Local Government Ombudsman's report into homelessness](#) stressing that at the root of all of this homelessness crisis is our desperate need to supply more affordable homes in the long term, and to help people most at risk of homelessness immediately.

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Improvement and Innovation Board – report from Cllr Paul Bettison OBE (Chairman)

Improvement

1. I am pleased to announce a variety of successes this month, in particular the savings on audit fees we have been able to secure for councils through Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA). PSAA, a company established by the LGA, has successfully put in place national contracts to provide a cost effective and quality audit service for the sector as a whole. Fees for all councils opting in to the national scheme are now proposed to fall by 23 per cent next year, on top of the 55 per cent reduction already achieved since 2011/12. These savings are even greater than originally indicated and are testament to the joint work of LGA and PSAA colleagues, the benefits of which are being passed on to all councils and other bodies opting in to the scheme. By council type, a county will, on average, save £25,000, a district £12,000, a London borough £38,000 and a metropolitan district £35,000. Details are available on PSAA's website.
2. In addition Public Sector Audit Appointments, in line with its not-for-profit status, has recently distributed a dividend of £5.6 million to councils and related audited bodies (equivalent to approximately 15 per cent of current fees). On average a county council has received a one off re-imbursement of £16,000, a district council has received £8,000, a London borough £25,000 and a metropolitan district £23,000.

Leadership

3. We have set up a new Be a Councillor Women's Network, which aims to bring councillors and prospective councillors together to discuss issues and barriers to women entering (and staying in) politics, how we can work to address these, better support newcomers, provide individual support to women considering standing, share and create activity, resources, ideas and inspiration. The Be a Councillor Women's Network is one of the many ways we will be celebrating the centenary of the first women to get the vote.
4. Places are available for our first Commercial Skills masterclasses for councillors in Coventry on 22 February and 16 March 2018. The masterclasses are intended for councillors who are either already involved in delivering the commercial agenda of their council or in discussions as to how to take that agenda forward. Key topics on the agenda will include: the need for commercialisation; an overview of strategy development; business planning; budgeting and finance; risk analysis and management; your duties as a board member. Further details are available [here](#).
5. Cllr Peter Fleming presented to the latest intake of National Graduate Development Programme management trainees at their induction event on the 2 November 2017. He spoke about the reality of being a local councillor and leader, and shared tips on how to build effective relationships between officers and members.

Efficiency and Productivity

6. The Commissioning Academy for officers will run between January and May 2018. The Academy is a five-day development programme that equips senior commissioners with the insight, skills and networks required to transform outcomes for communities. Comprising

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masterclasses, workshops, expert speakers, site visits, peer challenge, practical action planning and membership of an extensive alumni network of 1,600 senior peers from across public services, the Academy brings current and future leaders from across public services together with the country's leading experts to improve outcomes for the people we serve. Participants gain expertise in outcome-based commissioning, whole-systems thinking, systems leadership, market engagement and development, alternative funding models, joint collaborative commissioning and new models of delivery.

7. The latest case studies from the LGA's Productivity Experts Programme, which relate to developing commercial thinking and skills in local authorities, have just been published and can be found [here](#).
8. Over the last year, public and private sector organisations have been subject to increasing numbers of cyber-attacks. With this in mind, the LGA has been developing tools that are readily available to use to help councils' cyber resilience activities. In particular, the National Cyber Security Centre has worked with councils and other public sector organisations to develop a free to use tool [Web Check](#), a website configuration and vulnerability scanning service that will highlight certificates that are out of date and other potential vulnerabilities. Over 120 councils have already signed up.

Accountability, transparency and sharing good practice

9. Next May the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) comes into effect, requiring all organisations to follow stricter data protection rules and impacting on almost every area of local government business. Our Research Team has been running some free events for councils, bringing together officers, councillors, regulators, data experts and support networks to consider all aspects of the preparations needed and the approaches being advised. Further information is available on our website.

Innovation

10. We are inviting councils and organisations to put their innovations forward by 26 January so that we can consider showcasing them in our Innovation Zone at the LGA Annual Conference and Exhibition from 3 to 5 July in Birmingham. Please visit our [website](#) if you are interested in showcasing your council's work.

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People & Places Board – report from Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE (Chairman)

Post Brexit England Commission

1. Since June 2016, Brexit has dominated the national political agenda and looks set to do so for at least the next five years. However, many of the critical issues facing the country, such as flat-lining productivity, are likely to continue to prove resistant to uniform interventions from the national level. While the last few years have seen national and local government take steps towards addressing these challenges through the decentralisation of funding and policy responsibility, there is now a strong sense that devolution is at risk of stalling with the attendant opportunities for reform lost in places outside the mayoral combined authorities, particularly non-metropolitan areas. In light of this, the People and Places Board agreed to establish a Post Brexit England Commission.
2. The Post Brexit England Commission will be resourced by the Local Government Association, supported by an external advisory panel and commissioned research. Lead Members have agreed to a broad timeline of the Commission, which includes a launch event in late February or early March 2018, the publication of an interim report at the LGA Annual Conference in July 2018, and the publication of a final report in early 2019. The Commission is also set to host regional roadshows across Britain, led by Members of the People and Places Board. Currently, LGA officers are planning for the upcoming launch event taking place in London.

Industrial Strategy

3. The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) published the Industrial Strategy White Paper on Monday 27 November 2017. The White Paper is structured around five pillars: Ideas, People, Infrastructure, Business Environment and Place.
4. In order to establish how the Government's approach to place-based growth relates to the role of councils, LGA officers met with officials from BEIS, the Department for Education (DfE) and the Department for Communities and local Government (CLG). Consequently, Joe Manning – Deputy Director of Industrial Strategy at BEIS - attended the People and Places Board on 28 November 2017, providing an overview of the themes included in the White Paper to members and signalling a strong commitment to engage councils as the Strategy moves towards implementation.
5. The White Paper places strong focus on "Place" as one of the foundations of productivity and the building block of local industrial strategies. Places in England with a Mayoral Combined Authority will have a single Local Industrial Strategy led by the mayor and supported by Local Enterprise Partnerships. For parts of the country without a mayor, the development of the Local Industrial Strategy will be led by the Local Enterprise Partnerships.
6. As a result, a joint national review of the Local Enterprise Partnerships is now underway, led by Jake Berry MP (Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy), Margot

James MP (Department for Communities and Local Government), and Andrew Jones MP (HM Treasury). Ahead of this review, myself, along with the Chairman of the Environment, Economy, Transport and Housing Board, requested a representative be included in this review, to ensure voices from non-metropolitan areas are heard. This request was accepted, and lead member Cllr Western represented the LGA and People and Places Board in this capacity, with the next meeting date scheduled for January 2018.

Digital Connectivity

7. The People and Places Board has helped establish local government as a credible and respected voice in the field of digital connectivity. While members are keen to build on this position and continue their focus on improving digital connectivity for residents in non-metropolitan and rural areas in all formats (including mobile phone connectivity), the wide-ranging scope of the People and Places Board's 2017/18 work programme means there is limited capacity to undertake further detailed work in this area within the structure of the current board cycle. As such, at the last Board on meeting 28 November 2017, members agreed to the establishment of a working group to allow members to continue to contribute to the LGA's work on digital connectivity outside of the board's formal work programme.
8. In light of resource constraints identified above discussions have taken place with the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport (ADEPT) on their capacity to undertake this role, which they have agreed to. A draft terms of reference has been seen by the Leading Members, which outlines how the group will agree its remit and resource its activities. Membership of the group is currently being finalised and the first meeting is expected within the next month.

Skills and Employment

9. Following on from the last forum, a meeting has been scheduled in January 2018 with the Rt. Hon. Anne Milton MP (Minister of State for Skills and Apprenticeships), with Leading Member Cllr. Brown, and Sir Richard Leese CBE, Chair of the City Regions Board. This meeting aims to discuss the valuable role councils can play in supporting the Department of Education to both join up existing and new elements of a careers support system more effectively across places, balancing national priorities with the varying needs of local communities and businesses, including small and medium-sized enterprises. The meeting with the Minister will be an excellent opportunity to broaden and deepen our political and operational relationship with the Department of Education, so we can work together to deliver an effective skills system.
10. A Work Local campaign plan to step up engagement with decision makers and influencers, has been agreed by Lead Members of both Boards. The aim is to enable councils and combined authorities to be progressively at the heart of planning and commissioning employment and skills provision around local need.

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Resources Board – report from Cllr Claire Kober OBE (Chair)

2018/19 Local Government Finance settlement

1. The Secretary of State announced the provisional Local Government Finance settlement for 2018/19 on 19 December 2017. The LGA produced its usual on the day briefing summarising the announcement. The provisional settlement included almost no new money from central government but the general council tax referendum limit was increased from 1.99 per cent to 2.99 per cent for 2018/19 and 2019/20. The consultation on the settlement closes on 16 January 2018. At the time of writing the LGA intends to submit its response following clearance with Group Leaders and the lead members of the Resources Board.
2. In October the LGA submitted a [response](#) to the Government technical consultation in advance of the 2018/19 Local Government Finance Settlement. This response was cleared by the Leadership Board, Executive, and Lead members of Resources Board. This included a call for the Government not to make further amendments to the New Homes Bonus mechanism, and pleased such changes were not implemented in the provisional settlement in December.

2017 Autumn Budget

3. The Chancellor announced his autumn Budget on 22 November 2017. This included no new funding for social care, but the Chancellor did lift the HRA borrowing cap for some councils to enable them to borrow to build new homes. The LGA produced its usual [on the day briefing](#) summarising and responding to the Chancellor's announcements that affect local government.

Business Rates Retention

4. Work on Business rates retention has continued and the joint MHCLG / LGA officer steering group held two meetings in the autumn, reviewing how further retention can be taken forward without primary legislation and planning further work to achieve this.
5. As part of the 2018/19 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement, the Government announced that it will proceed with introducing 75 per cent business rates retention from April 2020 by rolling in a number of specific grants. Following this switch, English councils will collectively keep 75 per cent of any future growth in business rate income. The Government also announced that 10 areas were successful in applying to pilot 100 per cent business rates retention in 2018/19, alongside the previous pilots which have been extended for another year. The London pilot has also been expanded to include London boroughs as well as the Greater London Authority. This means that in 2018/19 there will be 16 business rates retention pilots in operation. The Government has committed for the pilots process to continue in 2019/20.
6. We welcomed the Government's commitment to working with the sector to improve the way the local government finance system works, including tackling the impact of business rate appeals.
7. The LGA continues to hold the view that any resources from further retained business rates should be used to plug the funding gap of £5.8 billion facing councils in 2020.
8. The LGA also submitted written evidence to the business rates retention inquiry by the Communities and Local Government Select Committee. This will be published in due course.

Fair Funding Review

9. Alongside the provisional 2018/19 local government finance settlement, the Government confirmed that it is looking to implement the Fair Funding Review by April 2020. The results of the Review will be used to form the funding baselines as part of the move to 75 per cent business rates retention. Following our calls to inject further pace into the process of the Review to maintain its credibility with our members, the Government also published a [consultation](#) on the design of the relative needs assessment.
10. While the LGA's response is in the progress of being formulated (deadline 12 March 2018), it is notable that the Government has accepted the case made by stakeholders, and supported by the LGA, that the new needs assessment should aim to be simpler but without a disproportionate cost to fairness. The Business Rates Task and Finish Group will oversee the production of the draft LGA response, with LGA Leadership Board and Executive providing final clearance.
11. Officers are in the process of organising a series of regional workshops, co-delivered with MHCLG, to discuss the consultation and councils' views in the second half of February 2018. These workshops will follow the previous two series of workshops in spring and autumn of 2017, attended by approximately 500 delegates.

Spring Budget – business rates reliefs

12. The Government has published a list of billing authorities that have started rebilling on the basis of all of the three reliefs announced in the 2017 Spring Budget. We were successful in persuading Government to do this instead of 'naming and shaming' councils. As at end of December 2017 it was reported that there are 23 councils which need to implement one relief and five councils which need to implement two reliefs, all other councils have implemented all three reliefs.

MiFID (Markets in Financial Instruments Directive) II

13. Following on from the Financial Conduct Authority's policy statement in July, Resources Board lead members approved the publication of a [guidance note](#) for councils outlining the steps they need to take to comply with the directive for its implementation on 3 January 2018; the note included links to some standard documentation which was produced to help with the process. This note and documentation were produced following consultation with a range of colleagues in the local government and financial sectors.

Prudential Framework of Capital Finance: Local Authorities Investment Code and Minimum Revenue Provision Guidance

14. The Resources Board approved [a response](#) to the [MHCLG consultation](#) on the Local Authorities' investment code and Minimum Revenue Provision guidance. The aim of the guidance is to ensure that local authorities are prudent and undertake due diligence over their investments and do so in a transparent way that ensure members understand and approve overall investment activity. Local authorities have a strong record already in this area, successfully managing ongoing investments, and we called for this to be acknowledged in the framing of the guidance.

15. Many local authorities have successfully used investment income as an alternative funding source in order to protect local services. In our consultation response we made a strong call for there to be no new restrictions that would have a negative impact on council's ability to fund and deliver services locally. Local authority investments have had a relatively high profile in the press and the issue was discussed by the Vice Chair of the Resources Board on the BBC Radio 5 Live's Drive Time programme.

LGA Annual Local Government Finance Conference – Funding for the Future

16. At the time of writing the annual LGA Finance conference was due to take place on 9 January 2018 chaired by the Chair of Resources Board. The conference programmes includes a wide range of speakers including the Secretary of State and Shadow Secretary of State, as well as senior government officials from MHCLG, VOA and NHS England, and leading figures from local government finance. The event was at full capacity and was attended by over 100 delegates.

Workforce

17. As Chair of the Resources Board, I have filmed a segment for a launch video podcast for the online consultation on strategic workforce priorities, which will be launched in the coming weeks.

Insurance Mutual

18. The Resources Board has been tasked by the LGA to oversee the setup phase of a new local government mutual, which is planned to offer a financially beneficial alternative to the existing insurance market that is currently available to local authorities. In my capacity as Chair, I have been asked to chair meetings of the founding member authorities of the mutual. There are eighteen founding members, including the LGA, and we held our first meeting in December, with the second due to take place on 23 January 2018. The Councillors' Forum is to receive a presentation on the mutual in June 2018.

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Safer & Stronger Communities Board – report from Councillor Simon Blackburn (Chair)

Domestic Abuse

1. In October, I attended a meeting of the Home Office's National Oversight Group on domestic abuse, a group chaired by the Home Secretary to oversee improvements to police responses to domestic abuse. In November, I met again with Home Office officials to discuss the Government's outline proposals for new domestic violence and abuse legislation ahead of a formal consultation, to outline the potential implications for councils.

Safer communities

2. SSCB members have been speaking to councils about the findings from our recent work on the future of council community safety services. In October, Cllr Morris Bright spoke at an event on 'Delivering community safety through effective local policing', and Cllr Anita Lower presented at an event on 'Community safety and policing under the new government'. Cllr Lower also attended a community scrutiny day at Bath and North East Somerset Council to talk about the outcomes from the review.

Counter-extremism and Prevent

3. I co-chaired a third LGA leadership essentials course on countering extremism in Coventry in November, attended by 14 elected members from a range of authorities. A new leadership essentials programme on Prevent was also launched in the autumn; I co-chaired two courses running in Leeds and Crewe in November and December respectively, attended by a total of 31 councillors. All courses have been very well received and a third Prevent course is scheduled for March.
4. On 23 November, Cllr Colin Spence chaired the ministerial launch event for the Special Interest Group on Countering Extremism (SIGCE) at Smith Square. The SIGCE is a local authority led network co-chaired by Cllr Hazel Simmons (Leader of Luton Council) and Cllr Debra Coupar (Executive Member for Communities, Leeds City Council). The network will bring together councils in England and Wales to share learning and experience, and promote good practice on countering extremism beyond terrorism. The launch was very successful, attracting over 100 elected members and officers. Attendees heard from Baroness Williams, Minister of State for Countering Extremism, and Lord Bourne, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Minister for Faith.

Violent crime

5. Following concerns from some councils about increases in violent crime over recent years, Cllr Clive Woodbridge chaired a free LGA conference at Smith Square in November for local authorities to explore further recent trends and showcase practice from councils and local partners. Around 40 elected members and officers attended.

Taxi/PHV licensing

6. In November, Cllr Clive Woodbridge met with the Chairman of Gett, Geoffrey Reisel, to discuss the LGA's work to lobby for reform to taxi and PHV legislation. Gett were supportive of the LGA's ask around the need for drivers to operate in the area where they are licensed, and for

the introduction of national minimum standards in taxi/PHV licensing which retain local flexibility for licensing authorities.

Gambling

7. Following the launch of the Government's consultation on stakes and prizes, the All Party Parliamentary Group on Fixed-Odds Betting Terminals (FOBTs) held two events in November. Cllr Morris Bright MBE gave evidence to the APPG on the LGA's position on the Government's proposals, including our call for FOBT stakes to be reduced to £2. Cllr Anita Lower also attended a rally in Parliament to show the LGA's support for a £2 stake.

Trading standards

8. In December, Cllr Anita Lower and I met with Lord Harris, Chair of the National Trading Standards (NTS) Board. Lord Harris provided an update on NTS's work around consumer protection and outlined the key priorities for the organisation around door step crime and 'e-scams'. Lord Harris also noted that the reduced capacity in local authority teams is having a knock-on impact on the amount of intelligence coming through to NTS and is a continuing challenge.

Brexit and regulatory services

9. In November, Cllr Anita Lower and officers visited the London Gateway port to observe the port health functions undertaken by the City of London. The visit helped to inform our work to assess and highlighted the potential implications of different types of Brexit agreement on councils' regulatory services functions.

Health and safety enforcement

10. In January, LGA Chief Executive Mark Lloyd and I met with the Chairman and Chief Executive of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), along with Martin Esom, Chief Executive of the London Borough of Waltham Forest, and a member of the HSE's Board. The meeting discussed local health and safety enforcement in the context of austerity and Brexit.

Neighbourhood Watch and Citizens Advice

11. In November, I met with David Huse, the new Chair of Neighbourhood Watch, and Barbara Bowers, Market Development Manager for Citizens Advice. We discussed partnership working, prevention strategies and whole-place approaches to improving outcomes for residents.

Modern slavery

12. In October, I attended the Prime Minister's Taskforce on Modern Slavery to discuss the reform of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). The Government are looking to reform the NRM in a number of ways, including longer move on support for confirmed victims, government funded places of safety for adult victims to give them assistance prior to entering the NRM and a new digital system to support the NRM process. The role of local authorities in supporting victims as they transition out of NRM support was discussed at the meeting. The Home Office will be looking to work with local authorities to come up with best practice for victims to transition into a community and access local services. The Government's full announcement on NRM reform can be found on their [website](#).



Councillors' Forum

20 July 2017

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)

13. Cllr Ian Stephens, Chair of the Fire Services Management Committee, attended the HMICFRS introductory event in October. The event included presentations from HMICFRS and others, as well as time for delegates to discuss operational and governance issues, share practice and experiences, and offer views on HMICFRS's early proposals for an inspection regime of the fire and rescue service.

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Note of last Councillors' Forum meeting

Title:	Councillors' Forum
Date:	Thursday 19 October 2017
Venue:	5th Floor Conference Suite, 5th Floor (South side), Layden House, 76-86 Turnmill Street,. London, EC1M 5LG

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A** to this note

Item	Decisions and actions
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1	Welcome, apologies and declarations of Interest
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The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting. There were no declarations of interest.

2	Local government, migration and immigration - the Rt. Hon. Brandon Lewis, Minister of State for Immigration
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The Chairman welcomed the Rt. Hon. Brandon Lewis MP, Minister for Immigration, to the meeting and thanked him for agreeing to speak to members.

The Minister thanked Councillors for the work they had done so far in supporting refugees through the Syrian vulnerable person resettlement programme (VPR) and he emphasised the benefits of having strong local leadership, as well as a good working relationship between central and local government. He discussed Brexit and advised members that the Government was clear that it wanted EU nationals already living in the UK legally to be able to remain here, while also protecting British citizens living abroad. The Minister touched on the immigration system and the importance of ensuring it works best for the country, while also noting the need to carry out a detailed assessment of migration from the EU. He praised participating local authorities and said that the UK was on track to honour its commitment to resettling 20,000 refugees under this scheme by 2020, but also said that the Government was keen to see more support for the children's resettlement scheme.

The Minister thanked local authorities for their responses to the funding review and explained that the Home Office would do what it can to make additional resources available to help manage migration and integration within local communities. He emphasised that the UK remains committed to playing its part to support refugees via international aid and resettlement schemes, but noted the ongoing need to distinguish between economic migrants and refugees.

The Government was due to publish its integration strategy in autumn 2017 and the Minister was keen for councils to continue engaging with the Government on how to ensure resettlement offers work best for all.

The Minister was not able to stay after his speech so Cllr David Simmonds, Chair of the LGA's Asylum Refugee and Migration Task and Finish Group, led a brief discussion and assured members he would put any questions they had to the Minister at a meeting of the Task and Finish Group on 26 October.

The following points were made:

- Members welcomed the Minister's comments on dealing with homelessness and rough sleeping caused, in part, by a number of people having no recourse to public funds. Cllr Simmonds noted that a more detailed conversation about this particular issue would be had at the meeting of the Task and Finish Group.
- Concerns were raised about councils being unwilling to resettle children due to the cost of taking on private healthcare fees. Cllr Simmonds agreed with this and said that unfunded costs were the main reason councils had so far been reluctant to participate in the resettlement scheme.
- Members noted that many councils were having problems with HMOs being set up illegally and they emphasised the pressure this was causing to the population of effected areas. Concerns were raised about planning departments rejecting applications only to have their decisions overturned by the Planning Inspectorate. Cllr Simmonds said that legislation had been changed to allow councils to take more robust action against landlords housing people who were in the UK illegally but that the wider issue was the level of interaction between housing departments and the immigration system. He said that the contracts used by the Home Office to procure accommodation were effectively a race to the bottom and was leading to asylum seekers being placed in the cheapest available accommodation, which was often owned by slum landlords. The Minister said that these contracts were due to be re-procured around the end of November and Cllr Simmonds assured members that the Task and Finish Group would provide ample evidence to the Minister as to why contracts need to be procured to a much higher standard.

The Chairman thanked both the Minister and Cllr Simmonds, and the discussion was drawn to a close.

3 Chairman's Update

The Chairman introduced his Update and noted that he had attended a roundtable meeting with the Prime Minister that week on housing. He told members that the meeting was productive and that it was made clear during the meeting that the fault of the housing crisis did not lay with local government.

Members **noted** the Chairman's Update.

4 LGA Boards & Portfolio Chair's Reports

The Chairman listed the Chair's reports.

Chairman of the Community Wellbeing Board, Cllr Izzi Seccombe, noted that the

NCAS Conference had taken place the week prior to the Councillors' Forum and that many authorities had received communications from the Department of Health and the Department for Communities and Local Government. Cllr Seccombe spoke to members briefly about the view that the LGA should take a strong line on the Better Care Fund and she suggested that it would be helpful if authorities could provide information to help build a case for unilateral action to be taken by the health sector.

The Chairman of the Improvement and Innovation Board told members that 150 peer challenges had been booked for this year but that more could be arranged if members wanted them.

Members **noted** the Board Chairs'/Chairmen's reports.

5 Digest of the last meeting

Members noted that those who were not appointed members of the Councillors' Forum did not appear on the attendee list from the previous meeting.

Aside from the attendee list, members **agreed** the notes of the last meeting as an accurate summary of the discussion.

Appendix A -Attendance

*Please note that you must sign the attendance sheet at meetings in order for your attendance to be registered. If you have any queries about this, please contact the Member Services team: ms@local.gov.uk.

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Lord Gary Porter CBE	South Holland District Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Howard Sykes MBE	Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
	Cllr Marianne Overton MBE	Lincolnshire County Council
Members	Cllr David Simmonds CBE	Hillingdon London Borough Council
	Cllr Peter Fleming OBE	Sevenoaks District Council
	Cllr Izzi Seccombe OBE	Warwickshire County Council
	Cllr Philip Atkins OBE	Staffordshire County Council
	Cllr John Beesley	Bournemouth Borough Council
	Cllr Paul Bettison OBE	Bracknell Forest Borough Council
	Cllr Gillian Brown	Arun District Council
	Cllr Simon Cooke	Bradford Metropolitan District Council
	Cllr John Fuller	South Norfolk District Council
	Cllr Keith Glazier	East Sussex County Council
	Cllr Peter Golds	Tower Hamlets Council
	Cllr John Hart	Devon County Council
	Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE	Gloucestershire County Council
	Cllr James Jamieson	Central Bedfordshire Council
	Cllr Donna Jones JP	Portsmouth City Council
	Cllr Robert Light	Kirklees Metropolitan Council
	Cllr Roy Perry	Hampshire County Council
	Cllr Roger Phillips	Herefordshire Council
	Cllr David Renard	Swindon Borough Council
	Cllr Martin Tett	Buckinghamshire County Council
	Cllr Geoffrey Theobald OBE	Brighton & Hove City Council
	Cllr Michael Payne	Gedling Borough Council
	Cllr Peter Box CBE	Wakefield Metropolitan District Council
	Cllr Sue Murphy CBE	Manchester City Council
	Cllr Simon Blackburn	Blackpool Council
	Cllr Richard Watts	Islington Council
	Cllr Simon Henig CBE	Durham County Council
	Cllr Jon Clempner	Harlow District Council
	Cllr Alan Rhodes	Nottinghamshire County Council
	Cllr John Merry CBE	Salford City Council
	Cllr Sabia Hussain	Slough Borough Council
	Cllr Kate Haigh	Gloucester City Council
	Cllr Sue Woodward	Staffordshire County Council
	Cllr Helen Holland	Bristol City Council
	Cllr Linda Thomas	Bolton Council
	Cllr Judith Blake CBE	Leeds City Council
	Cllr Roger Lawrence	Wolverhampton City Council
	Cllr Vince Maple	Medway Council
	Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe	Bradford Metropolitan District Council
	Cllr Debbie Wilcox	Newport City Council

Councillors' Forum

25 January 2018

	<p>Cllr Heather Kidd Cllr Alan Connett Cllr Chris White Cllr Peter Reeve MBE Cllr Alan Seldon Cllr Wayne Davies Cllr Carolyn Rule Cllr Chris Townsend Cllr Lisa Duffy Cllr Robert Bucke</p>	<p>Shropshire Council Devon County Council Hertfordshire County Council Huntingdonshire District Council Herefordshire Council Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council Cornwall Council Surrey County Council Huntingdonshire District Council Tendring District Council</p>
Apologies	<p>Cllr Sean Anstee Cllr Paul Carter CBE Cllr Nigel Ashton Cllr Kevin Bentley Cllr Morris Bright MBE Cllr Tom Fitzpatrick Cllr Martin Hill OBE Cllr Rory Love Cllr Colin Noble Cllr Teresa O'Neill OBE Cllr Stephen Parnaby OBE Cllr Barry Lewis Cllr Catherine Rankin Cllr Colin Riley Mayor Tim Bowles Cllr Rishi Shori Cllr Alice Perry Cllr Aaron Shotton Cllr Timothy Swift Cllr Graham Chapman Cllr Anne Western CBE Ms Fiona Twycross AM</p> <p>Cllr Amy Cross Cllr Tudor Evans OBE Cllr Barrie Grunewald Cllr Paul Tilsley CBE Cllr Richard Kemp CBE Cllr Abigail Bell Cllr Keith Aspden</p>	<p>Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council Kent County Council North Somerset Council Colchester Borough Council Hertsmere Borough Council North Norfolk District Council Lincolnshire County Council Shepway District Council Suffolk County Council Bexley Council East Riding of Yorkshire Council Derbyshire County Council Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Castle Point Borough Council West of England Combined Authority Bury Metropolitan Borough Council Islington Council Flintshire County Council Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council Nottingham City Council Derbyshire County Council London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) Blackpool Council Plymouth City Council St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council Birmingham City Council Liverpool City Council Hull City Council North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service</p>
In attendance	<p>Cllr Mike Wilcox Cllr John Clarke Cllr Jo Beavis Cllr Beverley Egan Cllr Phelim MacCafferty Cllr Shabir Pandor Cllr Tom Beattie Cllr Liz Hazell Cllr Ruth Dombey OBE Cllr Paul Smith Cllr Geoff Knight</p>	<p>Lichfield District Council Gedling Borough Council Essex County Council Castle Point Council Brighton & Hove City Council Kirklees Metropolitan Council Corby Borough Council Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council Sutton London Borough Council Colchester Borough Council Lancaster City Council</p>

Cllr Lucy Nethsingha
Cllr Chris Saint
Cllr Stephen Parker
Cllr Terry O'Neill

Cambridgeshire County Council
Stratford-upon-Avon District Council
Hart District Council
Warrington Council

LGA location map

Local Government Association

18 Smith Square
London SW1P 3HZ

Tel: 020 7664 3131

Fax: 020 7664 3030

Email: info@local.gov.uk

Website: www.local.gov.uk

Public transport

18 Smith Square is well served by public transport. The nearest mainline stations are: Victoria and Waterloo: the local underground stations are

St James's Park (Circle and District Lines), **Westminster** (Circle, District and Jubilee Lines), and **Pimlico** (Victoria Line) - all about 10 minutes walk away.

Buses 3 and 87 travel along Millbank, and the 507 between Victoria and Waterloo stops in Horseferry Road close to Dean Bradley Street.

Bus routes – Horseferry Road

507 Waterloo - Victoria

C10 Canada Water - Pimlico - Victoria

88 Camden Town - Whitehall - Westminster - Pimlico - Clapham Common

Bus routes – Millbank

87 Wandsworth - Aldwych

3 Crystal Palace - Brixton - Oxford Circus

For further information, visit the Transport for London website at www.tfl.gov.uk

Cycling facilities

The nearest Barclays cycle hire racks are in Smith Square. Cycle racks are also available at 18 Smith Square. Please telephone the LGA on 020 7664 3131.

Central London Congestion Charging Zone

18 Smith Square is located within the congestion charging zone.

For further details, please call 0845 900 1234 or visit the website at www.cclondon.com

Car parks

Abingdon Street Car Park (off Great College Street)

Horseferry Road Car Park
Horseferry Road/Arneway Street. Visit the website at www.westminster.gov.uk/parking

