

20 March 2017

## **LGA future of community safety services review: summary and draft report**

### **Purpose**

For discussion and direction.

### **Summary**

This report updates the Board on the LGA's review of community safety services and seeks members' views on the draft report and next steps.

### **Recommendation**

That the Safer and Stronger Communities Board members approve a short report on review of community safety services and the next steps identified.

### **Action**

Officers to progress as directed.

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## **LGA future of community safety services review: summary and draft report**

### **Background**

1. At its meeting in June 2016, the Board agreed to proceed with proposals for a short review of local community safety services.
2. This paper seeks the Board's views on a draft report from the review and next steps. A copy of the draft report is attached.

### **Review objectives and activity undertaken**

3. The objectives for the review were to consider local government's role in delivering safer communities, including exploring how best councils and partners can work together in the new landscape, and consider options for the future of community safety services and community safety partnerships (CSPs)/county strategy groups (CSGs).
4. To deliver this review we:
  - 4.1. [Undertook a survey](#) of Community Safety Managers in England and Wales to explore the current picture.
  - 4.2. Drew on findings from the survey and previous research to develop a discussion paper setting out some of the key issues and questions for exploration with stakeholders.
  - 4.3. Ran two stakeholder workshops with representatives from a range of local authority departments and external partner agencies to seek their views on these issues, and invited additional written submissions from stakeholders in response to the discussion paper. Further discussions took place at meetings with Institute of Community Safety members and Core Cities community safety leads.

### **Key findings and proposed response**

5. The draft report sets out the key changes to, and challenges for, local community safety services over recent years, explores how local areas have responded to these and considers some options for further work.
6. As set out in the report, the key issues that emerged from the review were as follows:
  - 6.1. There is a clear role for local authorities in delivering community safety services, alongside their partners. As well as coordinating statutory duties for community safety partnerships, the role of local government has become even more important as local priorities for community safety focus increasingly on safeguarding and reducing risk and vulnerability.

- 6.2. Local areas have developed a number of delivery models to best suit local circumstances, with council community safety functions and partnerships operating very differently in different places. However, one key strength of the community safety function is its broad oversight across a number of related issues, facilitating links across partners and coordinating responses.
- 6.3. There is a mixed picture across local areas in levels of engagement with partners, including the police and crime commissioner (PCC), community safety partnership partners, and other statutory and non-statutory groups with links to the community safety agenda. However it is clear that mature relationships with others are key; not only in achieving positive outcomes and working effectively in a complex framework, but also in maximising the impact of reduced resources and capacity across agencies.
- 6.4. Flexibility is crucial for designing local models and responses to particular issues. Some issues may be best approached at a very local level, but for others, collaborating across two-tier structures, CSPs, or at force level will make more sense.
- 6.5. Devolution provides a backdrop for areas to consider more radical approaches. Several areas have pooled budgets around particular issues and some are exploring more fundamental reforms, such as a 'one public service' place-based model.
- 6.6. Strong and effective leadership are vital for responding to current and future challenges, and will be integral to driving forward further changes.

#### **LGA response and proposed next steps**

7. The draft report accepts the above findings and highlights the key issues of supporting collaboration around reducing risk, developing mature relationships and effective leadership.
8. During the review there were calls for further support for areas as they develop local arrangements. The report therefore proposes the following further work:
  - 8.1. explore whether existing LGA leadership programmes provide sufficient support to elected members, in particular around making links between community safety and related areas such as safeguarding and health and wellbeing.
  - 8.2. develop and publish the discussion paper used as part of this review, to help frame local discussions; this will include commissioning more detailed case studies of some of the examples cited in this report.
  - 8.3. look at how to offer further peer support to local areas.

9. Beyond the suggested next steps outlined above, other potential streams of work might include:
  - 9.1. lobbying to encourage increased levels of engagement from some partners.
  - 9.2. exploring the potential for local areas to bring together their safeguarding boards and CSP more closely into a single group for addressing vulnerability, where a local case is made (this approach would require greater flexibility in how community safety partnerships meet their statutory functions).
  - 9.3. exploring further lobbying opportunities around the provision of longer-term funding arrangements to support local services.
  - 9.4. developing further some models around the more substantial reforms outlined in the draft report, such as whole systems approaches. This might include exploring the potential for testing the one public service model outside of a combined authority area, possibly in a two-tier area, and would require additional funding.
10. Members are asked to review and comment on the draft report and suggestions for possible areas of further work, as set out in paragraphs 8 and 9 above.

### **Implications for Wales**

11. Since this review was commissioned, the Welsh Audit Office published a detailed review of community safety in Wales in October 2016, which included a number of recommendations. Following this, in February this year the Welsh Government announced a fundamental review of arrangements in Wales with an aim to develop a shared vision for safer communities across the country.
12. Development of further work as part of the LGA's review, as outlined under sections 8 and 9, may need to incorporate changes depending on the outcomes of the Welsh Government's review; this will be considered once the Welsh Government's review has been completed.

### **Financial implications**

13. The review is being supported through normal staff budgets. Further commissioned work will be funded through existing team budgets.