

20 March 2017

Update paper

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

The report outlines issues of interest to the Board not covered under the other items on the agenda.

Recommendation

That the Safer and Stronger Communities Board members note the update.

Action

Officers to progress as appropriate.

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Update paper

Counter Extremism

1. We held our first leadership essentials course on counter-extremism in February. The two-day event, co-facilitated by Councillor Blackburn and attended by 12 elected members including Councillor Allen, featured input from the Home Office's Office for Counter Extremism, case studies from three local authorities (Luton, Bristol and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea), and workshops on scrutiny and communications. Feedback from the event was very positive and, subject to securing funding, we hope to run further courses in the future.
2. Academics from the Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations at Coventry University have been commissioned to provide an update to the LGA's Managing Far-Right Activity Toolkit published in 2013. The refreshed toolkit will include a report on recent developments in the far right and anti-minority activist scene, and case studies capturing a range of strategic responses from local authorities to new and emerging challenges. A seminar on their findings will also be delivered as part of the programme of work being taken forward by the Specialist Interest Group on Counter Extremism.
3. Further work has been commissioned to produce guidance for councils on Understanding Islam in Britain. This work will produce a brief explanatory publication to raise awareness and enhance basic literacy around the subject of Islam in Britain, and help develop an understanding of the lived practice of Islam and social reality for Muslims in this country. The work also aims to raise awareness of local authorities' key role in promoting understanding, cohesion and preventing extremism at the local level.

Prevent Champions Network

4. The Prevent Champions Network of elected members was established by the Home Office, in consultation with the LGA, at a round table with Ben Wallace, Minister of State for Security, on 23 January. The network will work with the Home Office to stimulate local leadership of Prevent, including supporting and advising other elected members on Prevent, championing Prevent in local communications and leading sessions in a series of regional events for elected members organised by the Home Office. Following your recent meeting with Home Office officers, the Home Office will arrange regional workshops for councillors and the champions will have a leading role in this.
5. The full list of Prevent Champions is:

Joanne Beavis	Conservative	Braintree
Eric Carter	Conservative	Telford
Kay Hammond	Conservative	Surrey
Robert Light	Conservative	Kirklees
Michael Rye	Conservative	Enfield

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Joy Allen	Labour	Durham
Simon Blackburn	Labour	Blackpool
Janet Daby	Labour	Lewisham
Mehboob Khan	Labour	Greenwich
Hazel Simmons	Labour	Luton
Waseem Zafar	Labour	Birmingham
Clive Woodbridge	Residents' Association	Epsom & Ewell
Paul Hinge	Welsh Liberal Democrats	Ceredigion
Anita Lower	Liberal Democrats	Newcastle upon Tyne
David Simmonds	Conservative	Hillingdon
Mike James	Labour	Neath Port Talbot

Water Safety

6. In February, LGA policy and research officers met National Water Safety Forum (NWSF) representatives to coordinate our lobbying of the Home Office to make better data more easily available and improve the Water Incident Database (WAID). We intend to discuss the inclusion of water safety in swimming lessons and national curriculum requirements with the LGA's Children and Young People team.
7. Unfortunately, there is not currently space in the LGA conference programme for the session we proposed on water safety. We are therefore exploring the possibility of having a workshop in the innovation zone.
8. LGA communications team colleagues met Ross Macleod of the Royal National Lifeboats Institution (RNLI) to discuss how we can support the RNLI's Respect the Water campaign. We are still hoping to organise some regional workshops with NWSF for councils, but they not as yet got back to us with suggested content.
9. We have put a water safety page on our website. We hope to add to it.
http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/community-safety/-/journal_content/56/10180/8214412/ARTICLE.

Modern Slavery

10. The Modern Slavery Act 2015 (Transparency in Supply Chains) Bill was introduced in the House of Lords by Baroness Young of Hornsey, a crossbench peer, as a private members bill. The bill would extend the provisions of section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act so that public bodies, including councils, would have to include a statement on what they are doing to address human trafficking and slavery in their supply chains in their annual report and accounts. The bill would also require councils to exclude any businesses from their procurement procedures where the business had not published a statement on addressing human trafficking and modern slavery if it was required to do so by s54.

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11. With the transfer of the Bill to the House of Commons a briefing session on the Bill was held in Parliament, which Councillor Blackburn attended on behalf of the Board. At the meeting Councillor Blackburn explained that councils take the issue of modern slavery serious, are taking action to address it, and that the s54 provisions already apply to a number of the larger contractors used by councils such as Capita, Veolia and IBM as they have a turnover greater than £36 million a year. Councillor Blackburn went on to point out there would be financial and other resource implications to councils of extending the provisions of s54 to local authorities, and asked if it was the intention to apply the provisions of s54 to small and medium sized businesses with turnovers of under £36 million as this is what the practical effect of the Bill would be.
12. The voluntary sector bodies at the meeting seemed keen to extend the provisions in the Modern Slavery Act to small and medium sized businesses and argued that councils should be going through a due diligence process to ensure compliance with the provisions of the legislation, such as reviewing the policies of businesses they are considering commissioning, rather than relying on what they had been told by the businesses about compliance. It appears that the Bill will not receive enough parliamentary time to become law, but the voluntary sector bodies pushing for greater transparency in supply chains are likely to continue to argue for greater action in this area by public bodies. We will continue to monitor what is happening in this area, while the LGA will be producing revised guidance on procurement over the next year, which will include a section on addressing modern slavery.
13. Following the presentation by the independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner to the Board in January we have been in discussion with his office about publishing guidance for councils about modern slavery. The possible content for this guidance and how it might be produced are currently being considered, and the Board will be updated when further there is more progress to report.

National Surveillance Camera Strategy

14. Last year the Surveillance Camera Commissioner sought views about his proposal to draft a National Surveillance Camera Strategy with the aim of using it to raise standards in CCTV use in England and Wales, while also increasing compliance with the surveillance camera Code of Practice. The Commissioner also took the view that given the number of cameras in use in the UK, the estimated £2 billion turnover in the UK of the surveillance camera industry and continuing technological developments, there was a need for a strategy that underpins use of surveillance cameras by the range of current users, and improves collaboration and maximises the potential for efficiencies. The Strategy will be accompanied by business plans related to specific sectors, with one for local authorities. This plan will aim to reassure the public that council are proportionate in their use of surveillance camera systems. The Commissioner is in the process of finalising the Strategy, and its publication is expected in the very near future.
15. Big Brother Watch, who regularly publish reports on the use of CCTV systems, published a report into councils' use of body worn video last month. The report highlighted the increasing number of councils that are issuing body worn cameras to staff, including to protect them from verbal or physical abuse. Big Brother Watch however argued that the use of body worn video to tackle littering, dog fouling, parking

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infringements or recycling was a disproportionate use of surveillance capabilities and amounted to a potential breach of individual privacy. The Surveillance Camera Commissioner worked with the South Essex Parking Partnership to develop good practice on council use of body worn video and details are available on his website. The Commissioner is also clear that the use of body worn video must comply with the Code of Practice, so councils should be consulting with local residents before using body worn video and its use must be proportionate to the problem it is being used to solve.

National FGM Centre

16. The LGA started working on female genital mutilation (FGM) three years ago, when the Safer and Stronger Communities Board decided to set up a joint Task and Finish Group with the Community Wellbeing Board and Children and Young People Board to understand the issue of FGM in greater depth and support councils. The task and finish group heard from a range of third sector organisations, councils and other partners regarding their work on FGM and found that while there were pockets of good practice, it was not universal. Information was not being shared and there were concerns around referrals to social services from health and the police.
17. The task and finish group decided a partnership response was necessary and the LGA started to work with Barnardo's on this issue. Both organisations entered into a partnership to create the National FGM Centre, which was funded through the Department for Education's (DfE) children's social care innovation fund until the end of this month.
18. Over the last two years the Centre has worked to improve the social care response to FGM referrals through four elements of support, including: social work services, where social workers are placed directly into a local authorities multi-agency safeguarding team to providing advice, guidance and work with families and girls affected by FGM; community outreach has been delivered through the Centre's project workers providing one on one support as well as working with men, boys and faith leaders and in schools; training and tools for professionals; and a knowledge hub which is an interactive library of information available to all professionals.
19. The Centre has been working with six pilot local authorities in the East of England (Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk, Southend, Suffolk and Thurrock) receiving referrals from over 145 families with a high level of need identified in more than a third of these cases. These cases have generated five FGM Protection Orders (FGMPOs), making up 7 per cent of all FGMPOs granted nationally despite the Centre working in low prevalence areas. They have trained over 900 professionals from social care and health amongst others, with 100 per cent of those who have attended recommending the training. They have also produced a risk management tool to help social services assess the risk when an FGM referral is passed through to them. This has been piloted to make sure that it is fit for purpose and feedback has been positive.
20. However while the pilot councils recognise the benefits that the Centre provides and are willing to part-fund elements of its work locally, the current funding climate in which councils operate has meant the Centre has struggled to attract wider interest amongst

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councils in its social work offer. Barnardo's and the LGA have therefore been making the case to central government for funding at a national level while also applying for funding from a range of programmes and sources including raising the issue with Sarah Newton MP, the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Vulnerability, Safeguarding and Counter Extremism at the Home Office, applying for funding from the Department of Education's Innovation Programme as well as other government funding for services aimed at protecting women. So far no funding has been obtained and the LGA and Barnardo's will be meeting ahead of the Board to discuss options for the future of the Centre. A verbal update will be provided at the Board.

Annual Taxi Licensing Conference

21. We held our annual LGA licensing conference at the start of February. Over eighty delegates heard from a range of expert speakers about the future of the Licensing Act 2003, using health data in licensing, taxi licensing (in particular accessibility and safeguarding) and managing the night time economy. Afternoon workshops focused on the use of risk assessments and local area profiles which was led by the Gambling Commission, the digitalisation of licensing, and the role of councillors on licensing committees.

NW taxi event

22. We held the last in a series of events on taxi licensing in February 2017. The event in Preston was attended by forty Members and officers and provided support to councils around oversight and scrutiny of licensing and the role of the licensing committee. It also outlined best practice in tackling specialist issues like the role of licensing in preventing child sexual exploitation and supporting disabled access.

Licensing policy update

23. A number of legislative changes will commence on 6 April, following Royal Assent of the Immigration Act (2016) and Policing and Crime Act (2017). The Home Office has updated guidance under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 to support councils with the implementation of new responsibilities. Changes brought in by the Immigration Act include that; applicants for a premises and personal licence will need to prove entitlement to work in the UK and that the immigration enforcement will now be a responsible authority with the ability to enter licensed premises to investigate immigration offences. Several of the technical changes in the Policing and Crime Act are also due to come into effect in April.

24. The Department for Transport have published [statutory guidance](#) on the carriage of wheelchair users in taxis and PHVs. The guidance document provides advice for councils on maintaining lists of vehicles designated as 'wheelchair accessible', handling applications from drivers for exemption from the requirements, and on transitioning from existing arrangements to those covered by the Equality Act. The DfT is in the process of developing regulations to set out the form of the exemption notices that should be displayed by drivers that have been exempted from the new duties on medical grounds.