

Chief Executive's Report – March 2018

Purpose

For discussion and direction.

Summary

The LGA business plan for 2017/18 centres on six external priorities:

- Britain's exit from the EU;
- Devolution and funding for local government;
- Inclusive growth, jobs and housing;
- Children, education and schools;
- Adult social care and health; and
- Supporting councils.

Part 1 of the six-weekly Chief Executive's report sets out the LGA's main achievements against those priorities. Part two focusses on our internal priority – *a single voice for local government* - including membership and our media outreach activities.

Recommendation

That the LGA Leadership Board notes the Chief Executive's report for March 2018.

Action

As directed by members.

Contact officer: Mark Lloyd
Position: Chief Executive
Phone no: 020 7664 3213
Email: mark.lloyd@local.gov.uk

Chief Executive's Report – March 2018

Achievements against our external priorities

Priority 1 – Britain's exit from the EU

- 1.1 **Quarterly Ministerial Meeting:** on Thursday 1st February leaders of the four regional associations met with DExEU Ministers. Issues discussed included the future of EU funding, devolution post-Brexit and skills.
- 1.2 **DCN Conference:** on Friday 9th February Cllr Kevin Bentley spoke to the District Council Network Annual Conference provide an update on the LGA's Brexit work programme and issues of relevance to District Councils.
- 1.3 **Call for information on the place based impacts of Brexit:** we have released a [new call for information](#) covering local economies, workforce, funding and legislation. The call is open ended and the information provided is used to shape both our and Whitehall's agenda, in order to create a proactive, forward looking vision of local government post-Brexit.
- 1.4 **EU (Withdrawal) Bill:** the Bill has progressed through the House of Lords. We briefed Peers ahead of the Second Reading debate, emphasising that local government must retain its advisory role in law-making, Brexit must lead to greater devolution for councils, and to call for funding to local areas to be fully replaced from 2021.

Priority 2 – Devolution and funding for Local Government

- 2.1 Our Chairman Lord Porter, and representatives from our four political groups, met with the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP, and the Minister of State, Rishi Sunak MP, to discuss our key priorities for the final Local Government Finance Settlement for 2018/19. Lord Porter and Cllr Nick Forbes also met with the Shadow Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Andrew Gwynne MP to discuss this.
- 2.2 The Secretary of State announced the 2018/19 **final local government finance settlement** on 6 February 2018. In addition to the announcements made in the provisional settlement around council tax flexibilities, the Government has allocated a £150 million one-off adult social care support grant and increased the value of the rural services delivery grant to £81 million in 2018/19. We circulated a media statement in response to the settlement, and LGA spokespeople appeared widely across the radio and TV to warn that extra council tax income this year will not be enough to plug the growing funding gaps facing councils.
- 2.3 In our **Parliamentary briefing** for the debate on the final settlement we pointed out that local services are facing a funding gap in excess of £5 billion in 2019/20, as well as a £1.3 billion pressure to stabilise the adult social care provider market. Whilst the additional council tax flexibility is welcome it is nowhere near enough to meet the funding gap. Further business rates retention income could be used to help fund pressures facing local government. The LGA was directly mentioned 8 times in the Chamber during the debate on the settlement, in addition to a number of MPs referring to our analysis of the funding pressures facing local government.
- 2.4 **Business rates retention:** Vice-Chairman Cllr David Simmonds gave evidence to the Communities and Local Government Committee's inquiry on business rates retention. This inquiry focuses on the delay in implementation of further business rates retention, the Fair Funding Review, and councils' financial planning.
- 2.5 **Business rates reliefs** the Government continues to publish and update [a list of billing authorities](#) that have rebelled on the basis of all of the three business rates reliefs announced in the 2017 Spring Budget. As at 13 February 2018 it was reported that there are four councils which need to implement one relief and two councils which need to implement two reliefs. All other councils have implemented

all three reliefs.

- 2.6 Following on from the Financial Conduct Authority's policy statement **Markets in Financial Instruments Directive II** in July 2017, the deadline for compliance with the directive in terms of opting up as professional investor was 3 January 2018. The LGPS Scheme Advisory Board (SAB), working with the LGA and Investment Managers produced a standard opt up process and the LGA agreed a more general guidance note for councils for their Treasury Management activities following consultation with a range of colleagues in the local government and financial sectors. All LGPS Pension funds have confirmed that they have successfully opted up to professional status as an investor under the MiFID II directive by the 3 January 2018 deadline.
- 2.7 In February the Government published updated statutory guidance on capital finance (on [local government investments](#) and on [minimum revenue provision](#)). The Government also published its [response](#) to the consultation on the proposed changes to this guidance. Resources Board submitted a response to the consultation, and the revised guidance takes account of a number of the points made, particularly with regard to the implementation date of the minimum revenue provisions guidance. We have produced a short [briefing](#) on the main features of the new guidance to help councils understand the implications.
- 2.8 **Mayoral Forum:** Cllr Nick Forbes, our Senior Vice Chair, chaired a Mayoral Forum event on 20 February at the University of Birmingham. The event was well received by attendees who included five of the metro mayors, the six MCA chief executives and senior civil servants from seven government departments.
- 2.9 **Combined Authority Finance Directors Network:** the most recent meeting focused on the combined authority budget setting process for the year ahead. Another agenda item introduced a provider appointed by the LGA to research and write a report on combined authority financial freedoms.
- 2.10 **Leading Places programme:** the second phase of the programme is drawing to a close in the fifteen partnership areas and officers are working with the national delivery partners to design the programme for the second national event on 28 March. An evaluation of Phase 2 is currently being carried out and findings will be presented at the national event.
- 2.11 **Devolution research:** we have appointed providers to deliver two pieces of research into devolution. The first research piece, commissioned by the City Regions Board, will entail detailed modelling of two instances of fiscal devolution identified by the Board, specifically the creation of a local tourism tax and the localisation of all or part of income tax. The second research piece, commissioned by the City Regions and People and Places Boards, will entail the delivery of a number of focus groups looking at messaging around fiscal devolution and non-metropolitan devolution respectively.

Priority 3 – Inclusive Growth, Jobs and Housing

- 3.1 **HRA borrowing cap:** our campaigning for the Treasury to lift the housing borrowing cap was supported by the [the influential cross-party Treasury Committee](#). As they said, the Government's target of 300,000 additional homes a year is unlikely to be met without a significant increase in supply by councils.
- 3.2 **Right to Buy:** our analysis of official Government figures reveals that almost £3.5 billion in Right to Buy (RTB) receipts has been handed out to council tenants over the past six years. As a result of the Government increasing the size of discounts in 2012, the average discount has increased by 132 per cent to more than £60,000 in 2016/17 – selling properties at almost half price. We are warning the current scheme is unsustainable as councils have only been able to replace around a fifth of homes sold since 2011/12. With this in mind we have stepped up our campaign [calling on the Government](#) to allow councils to set RTB discounts locally and keep 100 per cent of sale receipts to replace homes.

- 3.3 **Homelessness Reduction Act:** the Government has announced that the Homelessness Reduction Act will come into force on 3 April 2018. The announcement was made in the form of [regulations](#) laid before Parliament. During the Act's passage we worked with the Government to shape the legislation into something that was more deliverable and secured £72.7 million in new burdens funding, and we continue to express concerns over the level of funding and the timetable for implementation.
- 3.4 **Planning permissions:** we have [published figures](#) which show that more than 423,000 homes have been given planning permission but are still waiting to be built, and that developers are taking longer to build new homes. It now takes 40 months, on average, from schemes receiving planning permission to building work being completed – eight months longer than in 2013/14. This analysis shows that planning is not a barrier to building, and underlines the need for councils to be given greater powers to take action on unbuilt land which has planning permission. We are working with the Government, and engaging with [Sir Oliver Letwin's Review of build out](#), to make local government's case.
- 3.5 **Consultation on homeless referrals:** we have [launched a consultation](#) to seek views on the draft amendments to the voluntary guidelines for local authorities on the procedures for referrals of homeless applicants to another local authority. The main purpose of the guidelines is to seek to avoid legal disputes between local housing authorities in relation to whether the conditions for local connection referral are met.
- 3.6 **Working in partnership with parish and town councils:** in partnership with the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), we have commissioned The Campaign Company (TCC) to author a new guide on how principal authorities and town and parish councils can work together more collaboratively to best serve their communities.
- 3.7 **Tenant Fees Bill:** Cllr Tony Newman, a member of our Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board, gave evidence to the Communities and Local Government Committee's inquiry into the private rented sector and the draft Tenant Fees Bill.
- 3.8 **Parliamentary activity:** we submitted written evidence to the Communities and Local Government Committee's inquiry into land value capture, briefed MPs on our housebuilding asks ahead of a debate on housing, planning and the green belt, briefed MPs ahead of the Westminster Hall debate on skills devolution in England to promote the key recommendations of our Work Local initiative and briefed ahead of the Second Reading of Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation and Liability for Housing Standards) Bill in the House of Commons.
- 3.9 **25-year environmental plan:** we submitted written evidence to the Environmental Audit Committee's inquiry into the Government's 25-year environmental plan. We also briefed Peers ahead of a debate on the same issue.

Priority 4 – Children, education and schools

- 4.1 **Bright Futures:** as part of #ChildrensMentalHealthWeek, we launched the second part of our [Bright Futures campaign](#), calling on the Government to prioritise children's mental health and wellbeing. We are calling on the Government to release the promised £1.7 billion to ensure adequate and sustainable funding, improve standards and make sure funding is spent wisely, and prioritise prevention and early intervention. Our latter recommendation includes an [ask of central government](#) to provide funding for independent counselling in every secondary school.
- 4.2 Cllr Izzi Seccombe, Chairman of our Community Wellbeing Board, and Cllr Richard Watts, Chair of our Children and Young People Board, wrote to parliamentarians to promote the key recommendations in the second part of our Bright Futures campaign, which calls on the Government to prioritise child and adolescent mental health and wellbeing.
- 4.3 **Domestic violence and children in need:** we have [warned](#) that half of children who are assessed as "in need of extra help" by council child protection teams have experienced or witnessed domestic

violence. With this in mind, we have called on the Government's comprehensive package of reform around domestic violence, announced in the Queen's Speech, to be delivered soon, and centre on a shift from dealing with the aftermath of abuse to focusing on early intervention.

- 4.4 We submitted written evidence to the **joint Health and Education Committee inquiry** into transforming children and young people's mental health.

Priority 5 – Adult Social Care and health

- 5.1 **Delayed Transfers of Care (DToC):** DToC from hospitals fell again in December and councils have played a significant role in this improvement. We have supported councils and currently have a programme to provide intensive support for the 10 most challenged places and universal support for all other councils.
- 5.2 **Four Seasons Home Care:** we have been working closely with the Care Quality Commission and the Department for Health and Social Care in the oversight of Four Seasons Home Care, who provide 12,000 care beds, to support councils during a challenging take-over period and to avert possible business failure.
- 5.3 **Innovation:** we are working with 40 councils to deliver innovation and change in social care. 20 councils are looking at how to use assistive technologies to deliver person centred care and a further 20 are looking at how to up-scale prevention work.
- 5.4 **NHS England's Shared Planning Guidance for 2018/19:** [was published in February](#). Included in the guidance was reference to a change in the name of the selected leading STP areas from Accountable Care Systems (ACS) to Integrated Care Systems (ICS). We have been told this is to avoid confusion with Accountable Care Organisations (ACO), which are more formal organisational bodies that would be contracted and accountable for the delivery of a whole range of services across a given area. We have asked for greater clarity on the NHS England definition of an ICS and the criteria for selection.
- 5.5 **Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships:** we submitted written evidence to the Health Committee's inquiry into Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships. Cllr Jonathan McShane, a member of our Community Wellbeing Board, provided oral evidence to this inquiry.
- 5.6 We briefed Peers on our priorities for integration and the **Better Care Fund** and the **NHS Winter Crisis**.
- 5.7 We provided written evidence to the **Ageing and Older People APPG** session, discussing the human rights of older people.
- 5.8 **Parliamentary Activity:** we briefed MPs ahead of the Second Reading of the Licensing of Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles Bill, submitted written evidence to Public Accounts Committee's inquiry into reducing modern slavery and submitted written evidence to the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee's inquiry into the social impact of participation in culture and sport.

Priority 6 – Supporting Councils

- 6.1 **Carillion:** we have been supporting councils at risk because of the failure of Carillion. Whilst overall numbers with Carillion contracts is relatively small their contingency plans have proved to be robust and there has been very little disruption to service delivery. However, we are aware that some councils had experienced difficulties getting information and data from the Official Receiver, to enable the transfer of contracts to other providers and we continue to push for clarity on additional charges for the continuation of services. We held an event with the sector to explore what we can learn from the Carillion collapse in the event of the future failure of a major supplier and are implementing these lessons into our business planning process.

- 6.2 **Truck Cartel:** we have continued to encourage member councils to join a fully funded, collective legal action against the European Truck Cartel that has historically over-charged councils. We now have 220 authorities signed up to proceed with their claims.
- 6.3 **NNDR Claims by NHS Foundation Trusts:** we have been informed that a law firm acting on behalf of 20 NHS foundation trusts had issued proceedings in the High Court against 49 billing authorities, over their applications for national non-domestic rate relief on the grounds of being charities. We have written to all councils named in the claim to offer our full support and all 49 councils have responded that they would like to proceed as part of our 'collective' legal action.
- 6.4 **New Burdens:** we have received some positive news from central government with regards additional new burdens reimbursement. This is to cover the costs incurred by councils relating to claims brought against them by property search companies. We can now confirm that the overall final payment will bring the total amount of new burdens monies that we have successfully secured for our member councils on this matter to just under £54 million.
- 6.5 **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR):** GDPR comes into effect in May, 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 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.
- 6.6 **LG Inform and LG Inform Plus:** we have launched our new My Local Metrics service, which lets LG Inform Plus subscribers add their local data to LG Inform, LG Inform Plus or the direct data feed. This can be data relevant to a range of geographies, such as local authority, ward and defined neighbourhood levels. Subscribers' data is held in a secure environment and, depending on the geography chosen, and can be shared with selected users of those tools.
- 6.7 **Polling on resident satisfaction with local councils:** amongst the findings of our latest polling, the eighteenth set of results in our regular series, 82 per cent of respondents were satisfied overall with their local area as a place to live – a strong level of satisfaction sustained across all 18 polls. 65 per cent of respondents were satisfied overall with the way their local council runs things – a similar level to those observed earlier in 2017. 67 per cent of respondents said they trusted their council either 'a great deal' or 'a fair amount' – a significantly higher proportion than 14 previous polls.
- 6.8 **Councillor Commercial Skills Training:** our first free Commercial Skills masterclasses for Councillors was held in Coventry on 22 February. A second masterclass will take place on 16 March. Further details are available from jamie.osowski@local.gov.uk.
- 6.9 **Productivity Experts Programme:** we have launched a [film](#) to encourage councils to apply for support from one of the LGA's 'pool' of productivity experts.
- 6.10 **Top team support:** we are seeing a steady and increasing demand for top team support which can arise for a variety of reasons – changes in key personnel, member/officer relationships, challenges raised through a Corporate Peer Challenge. We anticipate that demand will continue following the local elections.
- 6.11 **Cyber security:** we are continuing to work with councils, the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC), Cabinet Office and MHCLG to raise the importance of cyber security as well as signpost councils to where they can get advice, find guidance and good practice to support their own work on cyber resilience. The NSCS's free [Web Check](#), has been developed with councils and other public sector organisations to help identify out of date certificates or systems that need patching, reducing councils' risk of a cyber-attack.
- 6.12 We briefed Peers on encouraging more women to enter politics, ahead of the debate on the role of **women in public life**.

Internal Priority – A single voice for local government

LGA Membership

7. The total number of councils on notice remains at eight. These are;
- West Sussex County Council
 - East Staffordshire Borough Council
 - London Borough of Richmond
 - Hartlepool Borough Council
 - Leicestershire County Council
 - Essex County Council
 - Lincolnshire County Council
 - Southend Borough Council
8. Four councils remain out of membership – the London Boroughs of Bromley, Wandsworth and Barnet and Gosport Borough Council.

Membership engagement by the Strategic Management Team

24 January – 7 March 2018

Chief Executive	
25 January	Association of County Council Chief Executives
29 January	Essex County Council
30 January	Bradford MBC
2 February	South West Chief Executives
6 February	London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
7 February	Stockton on Tees BC
8-9 February	DCN National Conference
23 February	Cambridgeshire & Peterborough
1 March	DCN Chief Executives
<i>Forward plan</i>	
16 March	London Borough of Southwark
20 March	Liverpool City Council
23 March	Society of Metropolitan Chief Executives
27 March	Combined Authorities Network
Deputy Chief Executive	
31 January	Women in Local Government Conference
13 February	Cyber Security Stakeholder Group
Director of Communications	
8 February	Stevenage Council
6 March	London Borough of Hackney
Head of Policy – Place	
20 February	Mayoral Forum

27 February

Tees Valley Combine Authority

Media

Britain's Exit from the EU

Greater clarity about government plans to replace EU regeneration funding after Brexit (Guardian).

Devolution and funding for local government

Resources Board Vice Chairman Cllr John Fuller on BBC Radio 4's Today programme about LGA research revealing that 147 out of 152 social care authorities are set to charge a social care precept in 2018/19 (Sun, Guardian, Telegraph, Mirror, Mail, Metro)

Lord Porter and Vice Chairman Cllr Marianne Overton Fuller were interviewed on the BBC News channel and Resources Board Vice Chairman Cllr John Fuller was on the BBC Victoria Derbyshire Show, Talk Radio and LBC about how extra council tax income will not be enough to plug growing funding gaps (BBC Daily Politics, BBC Any Questions?, Good Morning Britain, Sky News, BBC Radio 5 Live, BBC Online, FT, Mirror, Guardian, Mail, Express, Telegraph Online, Times Online, Mail Online, Express Online, Independent Online, Sun Online, Huffington Post, BBC local news bulletins)

Lord Porter appeared live on the BBC Daily Politics to give councils' reaction to the final Local Government Finance Settlement (Guardian Online, BBC Radio 5 Live, BBC local radio)

LGA Vice Chairman Cllr David Simmonds featured on Sky News Radio, LBC and Talk Radio about national roads receiving 52 times more government funding per mile than local roads maintained by councils (Times, Sun, Mail Online)

Call for the Local Government Finance Settlement to provide new funding for all councils (BBC Radio 4 news bulletins, Guardian Online)

Resources Board Vice Chair Cllr John Fuller was interviewed on BBC Radio 4's You and Yours about call for government to address property taxation imbalance between businesses on the high street compared to out-of-town retail parks and online businesses.

Lord Porter's comment piece about the upcoming final Local Government Finance Settlement featured on Telegraph Online and also on Express Online and LBC news bulletins.

LGA response to the Government's Devolution Annual Report (Mirror Online)

Inclusive growth, jobs and housing

EEHT Vice Chair Cllr Judith Blake was interviewed on BBC Radio 5 Live and LBC about new LGA research showing more than 423,000 homes in England and Wales are still waiting to be built after being given planning permission (BBC Breakfast, BBC Radio 4's Today programme, Talk Radio, Sky News Radio, LBC, Independent, Telegraph, Times, Sun, i paper, Mirror Online, Mail Online, ITV Online, Sky News Online, LBC Online, BBC Radio 2). EEHT Cllr Ed Turner was also interviewed on LBC.

EEHT Board Chairman Cllr Martin Tett was interviewed on Sky News Radio and LBC calling for rogue landlords who commit housing offences to be fined a minimum of £30,000 by magistrates (Sun, Mail Online, Mirror Online, Sky News' Sunrise).

Cllr Ed Turner interviewed live on BBC Radio 4's Today programme and LBC about new LGA analysis which shows a total of £3.5 billion has been awarded in Right to Buy discounts in six years (Guardian, Independent, Mirror, BBC Radio 2, BBC Radio 4 news bulletins, BBC local radio). EEHT member Cllr Ed Turner appeared on Channel 4 News and LGA Deputy Chairman Cllr Peter Fleming was also interviewed on Sky News.

EEHT Chairman Cllr Martin Tett was interviewed on BBC Radio 4's Today programme about new LGA analysis which showed nearly one in 10 new homes was converted from an office in the last two years under permitted development rules (BBC Radio 2, Times, Telegraph, BBC Online, Guardian Online, BBC local radio news bulletins)
LGA Senior Vice Chair Cllr Nick Forbes on BBC Radio 4's Money Box about Right to Buy
Call for borrowing cap to be removed to enable councils to build more homes (BBC Online, ITV Online, FT, Telegraph, Guardian, Metro Online)
Response to withdrawal of fire safety tests for insulation used on Grenfell Tower (Times, Sky News Online, LBC Online)
Councils should be given powers and funding to adapt welfare reforms and begin building affordable homes (Mirror, i player online)
Councils prepared for the winter weather with 1.5 million tonnes of salt stockpiled (BBC Online, Telegraph Online)
Interim report of Hackitt Review into building regulations (Guardian)
Tackling rogue landlords (BBC Radio 5 Live)
Children, education and schools
Children and Young People Board Chair Cllr Richard Watts on BBC Radio 5 Live about new LGA figures showing that a child was referred to social services every 49 seconds, with a total of 1,770 referrals per day (Channel 4 News, Channel 4 News Online, Times, Independent, Mail, Mirror, Sun, ITV Online, LBC, Talk Radio, Talk Sport, Sky News Radio). LGA Vice Chairman Cllr David Simmonds also appeared on Good Morning Britain and Sky News.
Safer and Stronger Communities Board Chair Cllr Simon Blackburn on Sky News Radio about half of the children in need of extra care in council protection have experienced or witnessed domestic violence (Mirror, Guardian, Independent, Mail Online, Talk Radio, LBC, BBC Radio 2)
Asylum, Refugee and Migration Task Group Chairman Cllr David Simmonds was interviewed on BBC Daily Politics on what further impact there will be on councils as the country is asked to take on more unaccompanied asylum seeking children.
Compulsory independent mental health counselling needed in all secondary schools (Mail, BBC Online, Sky News Radio, LBC)
Response to Prince's Trust research about half of young people fear that there will be fewer jobs in the future, impacting their happiness and confidence levels, and call for apprenticeships and funding to be devolved to local areas (Mail Online, Mirror Online, Sky News Online, LBC Online)
Need for government to fund creation of new school places and give councils powers to open new schools (Sun, Mail Online)
Call for government to strengthen laws on how information on children missing from education is collected and recorded, including a duty on parents to register home educated children (Sunday Telegraph)
£2 billion funding gap facing children's services (BBC Andrew Marr Show, BBC Question Time, BBC Radio 5 Live)
Unprecedented rise in SEND support and £2 billion funding gap facing children's services (Observer)

Action for Children report on children's centres vulnerable to closure due to Ofsted inspections suspended (BBC Online)
Adult social care and health
LGA Vice Chairman Cllr Marianne Overton featured on BBC Radio 5 Live, Sky News Radio and BBC regional radio calling for traffic light labelling on food and drink to become mandatory after Brexit (Times, Sun, Mirror, Independent Online, Mail Online, i paper online).
LGA Deputy Chairman Cllr Peter Fleming on BBC News channel, Sky News and ITV News revealing that there were 170 operations a day to remove teeth in under-18s last year and call for urgent action to tackle sugar consumption (BBC Breakfast, BBC News channel, LBC, Sky News Radio, Sky News Online, BBC Online, Independent, i paper, Express, Mail, Mirror, Telegraph, Guardian, Times, Sun, ITV Online, LBC Online)
Response to NAO report that Department of Health and Social Care not doing enough to support sustainable social care funding (Express, BBC Online, Mail Online, i paper online)
Red Cross report on frail and elderly people in cycle of going in and out of hospitals (BBC Online, Mail Online, i paper online)
LGA letter calling for government to fund historic, current and future sleep-in payments (Observer)
APPG on Hunger report, on malnutrition in older people (Independent, Guardian Online, Mail Online, Express Online)
Call for more support from central government to tackle drug-related deaths (Sunday People)
Reductions to public health funding affecting councils' stop smoking services (Times, Mail Online)
Increase in public health funerals in last five years (Metro)
Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health report on state of child health (BBC Online)
Sense report on care of disabled people and call for adequate and sustainable social care funding (Mail Online)
Operation Limelight, police crackdown on FGM and cooperation with National FGM Centre (Independent)
Supporting councils
Safer and Stronger Communities Board Chair Cllr Simon Blackburn on Sky News Radio and Talk Radio with call for introduction of legal register of taxi drivers who have been banned or refused a licence (BBC Online, Independent, Sky News Radio, Talk Radio)
Call for reforms to tackle drivers violating moving traffic offences (Mail, Star, Express Online, Sun Online)
EEHT Chairman Cllr Martin Tett on Sky News, Sky News Radio and BBC Breakfast calling for councils to be given powers to control the installation of telephone boxes being used for advertising purposes (Times, Telegraph, Sky News Online, ITV Online, LBC Online, BBC Radio 2, LBC)
Cllr Simon Blackburn was interviewed on Sky News Radio and LGA Deputy Chairman Cllr Peter Fleming was on Sky News and ITV News calling for a national register of electrical products which have been recalled and a central body to support local trading standards to be established (LBC, Independent, Sun Online).

Cllr Blackburn was on Sky News Radio and LBC responding to the creation of a new agency to help tackle companies selling dangerous goods (Sky News Radio, LBC, Mail on Sunday, Independent Online)

Increase of almost half in referrals of modern slavery (Guardian, BBC Online, Sky News, BBC Radio 5 Live, TalkSport)

Response to collapse of construction firm Carillion (Guardian, BBC Online, Sky News, BBC Radio 5 Live)

Raising with government of concerns of some councils about being charged substantial increases in contract fees for services provided by Carillion, and advice to councils to speedily move to new arrangements (Huffington Post)

Blue Badge thefts risen by 14 per cent over past year (Telegraph, Guardian, Mail, Mirror, Mirror Online, Sun, BBC Online, Independent Online)

Improvement and Innovation Board Chairman Cllr Paul Bettison on BBC Radio 5 Live about tackling plastic waste (FT)