

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

Members of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board to note the update.

Action

Officers to progress as appropriate.

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Update Paper

Serious Violence

Serious Violence Taskforce

1. In April, Cllr Simon Blackburn attended the Serious Violence Taskforce, which focused on the actions that social media companies could take to address violent material online, particularly videos or posts that seek to incite violence. In May, Vice-Chair of the LGA's Safer and Stronger Communities Board, Cllr Morris Bright also attended the Taskforce. He informed the Taskforce that local government stands ready to work in partnership to tackle serious violent crime, and we welcome further information on the new Violence Reduction Units.

National County Lines Coordination Centre Conference

2. In April, Cllr Anita Lower, Vice-Chair of the LGA's Safer and Stronger Communities Board, spoke at the National County Lines Coordination Centre Conference, hosted by the National Crime Agency. Cllr Lower emphasised the importance of working in partnership to help tackle serious violence and county lines activity. She called for greater investment in prevention and early intervention services to help break the cycle of youth violence.
3. In April, Cllr Richard Watts and Cllr Ian Hudspeth attended private ministerial roundtables on education and healthcare as part of the Prime Minister's Serious Violence Summit. Following the Summit, the Prime Minister has convened an inter-ministerial taskforce to tackle serious violence. As a member of the Home Office's Serious Violence Taskforce, we have agreed to share best practice and learning across local government on this important issue.

APPG on Knife Crime analysis

4. The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Knife Crime published [analysis](#) of council youth service budgets and knife crime data since 2014 and found areas suffering the largest cuts to spending on young people have seen bigger increases in knife crime. These findings were quoted at PMQs and during the Home Affairs Committee evidence session on serious violence. The LGA issued its response to the analysis [here](#).

Serious Violence public health duty consultation

5. In April, the Government launched its [consultation](#) on a new legal duty to support a multi-agency approach to preventing and tackling serious violence. The LGA submitted its response to the consultation on 28 May 2019. Our full response is [available here](#).

Serious and Organised Crime

6. In May, the National Crime Agency published the 2019 National Strategic Assessment of serious and organised crime (SOC). At the launch event, the Director General Lynne Owens said that a £2.7billion investment in law enforcement is needed to combat SOC over the next

three years. LGA officers are working with the Home Office to refresh our Serious and Organised Crime guidance, following the recent Government strategy refresh.
Timpson Review

7. In May, the Department for Education published the [Timpson Review](#) and the [Government's response](#). The review explored how head teachers use exclusion, and why pupils with particular characteristics are more likely to be excluded from school. The LGA will be considering the recommendations and working with the department and councils on this issue.

Domestic Abuse/ Violence Against Women and Girls

Joint Committee on the Draft Domestic Abuse Bill

8. In May, Cllr Simon Blackburn gave [oral evidence](#) to the Joint Committee on the Draft Domestic Abuse Bill, as part of the Committee's pre-legislative scrutiny process. We support the introduction of the Bill, as it has the potential to help address domestic abuse through the creation of a statutory definition and the appointment of a Commissioner. However, we think the Bill needs to look beyond crisis interventions and criminal justice measures, and particularly focus on early intervention and prevention.

MHCLG domestic abuse consultation

9. The Government has announced that councils will be subject to a legal duty to deliver support to survivors of domestic abuse through accommodation-based services. A [consultation](#) has been launched to seek views on how this could work. Our [response](#) highlighted the importance of multi-agency working to tackle domestic abuse and the need to ensure councils are supported to implement the duty, while emphasising the need to focus on early intervention and prevention schemes that stop domestic abuse occurring in the first place.

Behavioural Insights event

10. In May, the LGA Behavioural Insights (BI) team held a best practice and learning event with local government colleagues to highlight Kent County Council's domestic abuse project. Our BI team worked with Kent CC, Kent Police and Victim Support Services to help design an intervention which would increase the number of domestic abuse victims seeking and accessing support. The project was successful in Kent and this event focused on sharing information with other councils, with the view to trialling the intervention in other local areas.

Anti-Social Behaviour

Victim's Commissioner's report

11. Baroness Newlove, the Victims' Commissioner for England and Wales, published her final [report](#) which looked at the impact of anti-social behaviour (ASB) on local communities. In the report, she calls for residents to be able to more easily access the Community Trigger mechanism. The LGA [responded](#) that residents' complaints are taken extremely seriously by councils and ensure that where action is required this happens quickly and effectively. For

further details of the Community Trigger process, the Home Office [guidance](#) provides a useful overview of how it works and how residents can access it. LGA officers met with the Victim's Commissioner's office to discuss how best practice can be shared.

Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour Conference

12. The LGA will be hosting an event on tackling anti-social behaviour on Tuesday 15 October 2019, at our LGA offices in Westminster. This event will be an opportunity to share some examples of best practice and discuss how the 2014 ASB powers can be used to tackle instances of anti-social behaviour. Further details are available on the LGA [events page here](#).

Community safety

Surveillance Camera Commissioner

13. The Surveillance Camera Commissioner has written to the LGA to confirm plans for a National Surveillance Camera Day, due to be held on Thursday 20 June 2019. The purpose of the day is to raise public awareness about the provision and operation of surveillance cameras in England and Wales and demystify how surveillance cameras are used.

Police and Crime Panels – Annual Workshop

14. On Thursday 11 July 2019, the LGA will be hosting the annual Police and Crime Panels workshop at our offices in Smith Square, Westminster. The workshop will provide an opportunity for panel members and support officers to discuss a range of current issues and network with panels from across the country. [Register for the event here](#).

Reducing offending

15. The LGA would like to speak to local government colleagues who work with the probation services to provide ex-offender support. If you have experiences in providing ex-offender support, please could you contact Rachel.Phelps@local.gov.uk.

Modern Slavery

16. The [Independent Review of the Modern Slavery Act](#) led by Frank Field MP, Maria Miller MP and Baroness Butler-Sloss reported at the end of May. The report described the legislation as world-leading, but said that this was just the beginning, with implementation as important as legislation. Of particular note for councils, the review recommended that the Act's provisions on transparency in supply chains should be extended to the public sector, which would mean that councils with a budget in excess of £36 million would be required to comply with current requirements around eradicating modern slavery from supply chains.

Licensing and Regulation

Security Industry Authority (SIA) licensing requirements

17. Earlier this year the Security Industry Authority (SIA) sent out a communication advising that any local authority providing security services under contract to a third party should ensure that all elected members have 'non-front line' licences. Councils have raised concerns about the cost and feasibility of meeting these requirements. The LGA has been supporting councils with this issue and we have commissioned joint advice from counsel. We have also been engaging with the SIA to understand their position on this. We will continue to support authorities on this.

Licensing Act Handbook and case studies

18. We will shortly be publishing a handbook for councillors which we hope will be a helpful tool for licensing authorities in carrying out their functions under the Licensing Act. This will be complemented by a series of case studies focusing on managing the night-time economy. The case studies show how councils have worked with a wide range of partners in innovative and cost-effective ways to tackle the various issues they have faced from street drinking and poor public perception to identifying child sexual exploitation and managing vulnerability.

Department for Transport (DfT) consultation on new statutory guidance for taxi licensing

19. In April we issued our response to the DfT's consultation on new statutory guidance for authorities on taxi licensing. Overall we were supportive of the new guidance which once adopted will support licensing authorities to safeguard the public. The government's response to the consultation will be published alongside the new guidance later this year.

National Audit Office review of food safety and standards

20. The National Audit Office have undertaken a 'value for money' study around food safety and standards. In particular the study has looked at the role of local authorities in food enforcement, the Food Standards Agency's Regulating our Future (RoF) programme and the impact of Brexit. The report is due to be published in June.

Friends Against Scams

21. The number of Friends Against Scams has now risen to over 213,000 and the National Trading Standards Scams Team are developing an accessible version of the e-learning tool for adults with learning disabilities which should be available in the summer. Action Fraud have also set up a new reporting mechanism for reporting any scam emails, which is via www.actionfraud.police.uk and selecting the "report" button.

Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) investigation into the funerals and cremations market

22. The CMA has launched a full market investigation into the funerals and cremations market. The main areas of focus will include: customer vulnerability; transparency through the

purchasing process; justification for price increases or differentials between providers; accommodation for different social, economic, faith-related or cultural circumstances; competition between private and local authority crematoria; and any factors which impede development of new crematoria, including planning.

23. Suggested remedies if adverse effects on competition are found within the market include limiting the ability to set prices significantly above the cost of provision; regulating the quality of service; requiring operators to 'unbundle' elements of their service package to allow flexibility to buy in products or services from elsewhere; and reforming the planning regime to support the building of more crematoria.
24. As the majority of local authority crematoria are more affordable than private providers, price setting remedies are likely to have less of an effect on them than private providers. However, plans to reform the planning regulations for crematoria to increase the density of available facilities could have a significant effect on local authorities' ability to provide low cost funeral and crematoria provision.