

Chief Executive's Report – July 2019

Purpose

For discussion and direction.

Summary

The LGA business plan for 2018/19 centres on seven external priorities:

- Funding for local government;
- Adult social care and health;
- Children, education and schools;
- Housing;
- Inclusive growth, jobs and devolution;
- Britain's exit from the EU; 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 July 2019.

Action

As directed by members.

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Chief Executive's Report – July 2019

Achievements against our external priorities

Priority 1 – Funding for local government

- 1.1 **Business Rates:** we gave evidence to the Treasury Select Committee on the impact of Business Rates on business, following our written submission. Cllr Richard Watts, chair of our Resources Board, joined a panel of witnesses including the Mayor of the West Midlands Combined Authority, Andy Street, to discuss a wide range of issues. This included the importance of Business Rates as a source of income for local government, the impact of online retailing and out of town developments, the need for flexibility around reliefs, and the need to tackle the effect of appeals as well as Business Rates avoidance.
- 1.2 **Business Rates Retention and the Fair Funding Review** are covered separately on the Leadership Board agenda.
- 1.3 **2019 Spending Review:** we are continuing our work on preparing for the forthcoming 2019 Spending Review by building the case for local government and reviewing evidence of how local government is a 'good investment' by generating savings in public spending. We used the publication launched at the LGA's Annual Conference to set the scene for our Spending Review submission later in the year, building on the 2019 Spending Review #CouncilsCan campaign.
- 1.4 Lord Porter gave evidence to the Housing, Communities and Local Government Select Committee on the Spending Review and local government finance. He stressed the urgent need for certainty to help councils plan appropriately, and highlighted the funding gap facing local services. He was joined at the panel by representatives from the District Councils' Network, County Councils Network and SIGOMA. You can read our written evidence on the Select Committee's website. The Chief Secretary to the Treasury has said that it is unlikely that the Spending Review will be launched before Parliament's summer recess.
- 1.5 The 2019 Spending Review is covered in more detail elsewhere on the Leadership Board agenda.
- 1.6 **Council finances:** we unveiled new research that showed that one-third of councils fear they will run out of funding to provide their statutory services by 2022. In addition, almost one-fifth of councils do not think they will meet their savings targets because of issues like rising demand for adult social care, children's services and homelessness. Councils need the certainty of knowing what funding they will have if they are to plan delivery of these, and other, vital services.
- 1.7 New research by the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) supports many of the messages on council funding we have been promoting to Government ahead of the Spending Review. In our response we highlighted the pressure faced by councils in children's services, adult social care and efforts to tackle homelessness, and the impact this has on councils' ability to deliver other services. The IFS goes on to state that local government faces big choices on funding levels and how councils raise and distribute money.
- 1.8 **Council reserves:** BBC analysis of Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) data that showed eleven councils would have fully exhausted reserves within four years unless they worked to replenish them. The CIPFA data showed that as of March 2018, 152 councils in England had £400 million less in reserve than in 2015. We commented that this is a result of systemic underfunding and that councils face a choice between using reserves to plug funding gaps or to cut service back to balance the books.
- 1.9 **Shared services:** councils up and down the country have made some £1.34 billion in efficiency savings for the taxpayer through shared services. Our latest Shared Services Map shows there are

626 arrangements between councils. 2018/19 alone has seen councils make efficiency savings of £200 million, cementing our reputation as the most efficient part of the public sector. We welcomed this news and praised councils' collaboration and sharing of ideas to help protect vital local services amid ongoing funding pressures.

- 1.10 **Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally Board:** the Board met and agreed to work on refreshing and expanding its strategy, aimed at launching in 2020. The Board is supported by the LGA and is now seeking input from across the sector to help with developing the strategy.
- 1.11 **Ernst and Young Audit issue:** an issue has arisen with audit in 19 councils in East of England and East Midlands that are audited by Ernst and Young. The Chairman of the Resources Board, Cllr Richard Watts, has written to Public Sector Audit and Appointments (PSAA) and the Minister for Local Government to raise concerns. The issue was also discussed at the IDEA Board and officers are continuing to liaise with PSAA on the issue. Subsequently, at the LGA Annual Conference, the Secretary of State announced a review of the audit framework.
- 1.12 **Revaluations Bill:** currently in Parliament, this Bill sets the date for the next business rates revaluation at April 2021 and then every three years following that. On 25 June Cllr Richard Watts, Chair of the Resources Board, gave evidence at a Bill Committee on behalf of the LGA. He particularly highlighted the issue of the draft lists being published three months as opposed to six months before the new list comes into force and the possible effect on the local government finance settlement.
- 1.13 **Review of local government audit:** in his speech to our Annual Conference last week, James Brokenshire MP, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, announced a review of the Audit framework for councils. This was formally announced in a Written Ministerial Statement and Terms of Reference in which he confirmed that the review will be led by Sir Tony Redmond, former council chief executive, local government ombudsman and local government boundary commissioner. The review will look at the effectiveness of current audit arrangements and the transparency of reporting. It will also ask if auditors are making full use of reporting powers and the gap between taxpayers' expectations and what auditing delivers.

Priority 2 – Adult social care and health

- 2.1 **Social care:** to the mark the first anniversary of the publication of our Social Care Green Paper, we circulated an updated report which calls on Government to publish their own Green Paper by the time Parliament rises for the autumn party conferences in September. Our report also found that the extra funding needed to close the £3.6 billion funding gap adult social care faces by 2025 is similar to the 3.4 per cent annual real terms increase given to the NHS in the Long Term Plan.
- 2.2 **Social care funding:** the House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee published a report entitled *Social care funding: time to end a national scandal*. The report notes that adult social care in England is inadequately funded, with rising levels of unmet need and the numbers of older people and working-age adults requiring care is increasing rapidly. The report recommends that the Government should avoid further delay and produce a White Paper with clear policy proposals for social care rather than a Green Paper and for £8 billion a year in additional funding for adult social care to improve current quality and access. Our response stated that local government stands ready to facilitate cross-party talks to ensure a way forward, so that people can continue to receive essential care and support. Responding to our demanding for action within 10 weeks of assuming office, both candidates to become our next PM promised a priority focus on social care.
- 2.3 **Delayed Transfers of Care (DTOC):** April's DTOC figures have been published and show the average number of DTOC days attributed to social care has fallen to its lowest proportion since March 2015. The figure for social care now stands at 27.4 per cent compared to 63.4 per cent for the NHS. It's further evidence of how councils effectively turn investment in our services into tangible benefits for residents.

- 2.4 **Mental health:** the Prime Minister, Theresa May, announced extra funding to strengthen and deliver local suicide prevention plans. We welcomed this endorsement of councils' locally-driven approach to prevention and early intervention. The announcement included £600,000 for ourselves and the Association of Directors of Public Health to jointly develop a new suicide prevention sector-led improvement offer for councils. The funding will enable us to take forward the findings from a new independent analysis of local suicide prevention plans by the Samaritans and University of Essex. Commissioned by LGA and ADPH and supported by Public Health England, the analysis is based upon a survey completed by 150 out of 152 councils with public health responsibilities, and shows many excellent initiatives delivered in partnership to help drive down suicide rates.
- 2.5 **Public Health:** we were pleased to welcome the Secretary of State for Health & Social Care, Matt Hancock MP, to our Councillors' Forum on 6 June. There he announced that public health services will remain with local government following our "comprehensive, compelling and clear" submission to the Department which showed how councils have delivered on public health. In our media response, we welcomed this news and highlighted the hard work councils have put in to provide and commission the likes of sexual health clinics, drug and alcohol treatment services and health visitors.
- 2.6 **Public Health funding:** the King's Fund and Health Foundation have echoed our calls for public health funding cuts to be reversed in order to help people live longer, healthier and happier lives. These cuts amount to £700 million in real terms between 2015/16 and 2019/20. We commented that cuts to these budgets suggest Government does not view prevention services as essential. As part of our #CouncilsCan campaign ahead of the Spending Review, we are pressing Government to recognise the vital work councils do to tackle teen pregnancies, air quality, child obesity, sexually transmitted infections and substance misuse.
- 2.7 **Sexual health report:** the Health and Social Care Committee has launched its report into sexual health services. The report agrees with our evidence and calls for a new national sexual health strategy, ensuring the services are sufficiently funded in the Spending Review and that responsibility for commissioning should remain at a local level and not revert to the NHS. In our response we called on Government to ensure the upcoming green paper on prevention contains measures to address access to contraception and to tackle the growing threat of sexually transmitted infections.
- 2.8 **Sexual health statistics:** we responded to the latest figures from Public Health England that showed visits to clinics for sexual health reasons reached 3.5 million in 2018, a rise of 21 per cent since 2013. This is putting a severe strain on council resources and it is a challenge to maintain services at the current level. Although it is positive to see people taking their sexual health seriously, without appropriate funding levels, waiting times could increase and patient experience deteriorate.
- 2.9 **Prevention:** our calls for prevention to form the bedrock of a healthier, more equal and prosperous society have been echoed in a new report from the Institute for Public Policy Research. We welcomed this, highlighting the connection between early intervention and prevention and the country's wider economic health.
- 2.10 **NHS Long Term Plan:** a new report on the NHS Long Term Plan from the House of Commons Health and Social Care Committee made several recommendations reflecting our evidence to the Committee on your behalf. We are pleased with the report's recognition that Health and Wellbeing Boards have a crucial role to play in developing fully integrated health and care systems, as part of a new health and care landscape outlined in the NHS Long Term Plan. In our response, we highlighted the recommendation that Government must give greater consideration to the role of councils and not just focus on NHS England. We are keen to ensure any legal changes do not undermine the good collaborative work that goes on between the NHS and local government.
- 2.11 **Carers:** Government has announced a £5 million Carers Innovation Fund as part of its Carers Action Plan. This aims to invest in innovative ways of supporting unpaid carers, outside of mainstream health and care services. and help build more carer-friendly communities. In our response, we highlighted the

amazing work unpaid carers provide for thousands of people every day and welcomed this new money. We also called for more to be done, however, as with around 6.7 million unpaid carers across the UK saving the country about £132 billion a year, this falls short of what is required.

- 2.12 **Health and Wellbeing Boards:** our latest research into Health and Wellbeing Boards has found that they are making a huge difference to people's lives through reducing hospital admissions, helping smokers quit and reducing unemployment. We also highlighted that the collaboration that goes on between councils, the NHS and the community and voluntary sectors is vital in making progress on improving health and wellbeing.
- 2.13 **ADASS budget survey:** the latest annual ADASS budget survey shows that increasing demand and insufficient funding continues to have negative consequences on people needing care, their families and those providing services. The survey rightly acknowledges the brilliant efforts of the workforce but notes the fragility of the provider market; more than 7,000 people have been affected by providers handing back contracts or closing altogether in the last six months alone. The survey calls for certainty of funding in the short-term in respect of several funding streams that are due to end in March 2020. The valuable evidence from ADASS aligns entirely with our key messages on the importance of resolving the future of adult social care funding.
- 2.14 **Refugee resettlement:** the Government has written to council leaders announcing that the refugee resettlement scheme will continue after 2020. This came ahead of an announcement in Parliament which recognised the hard work of councils in supporting those resettling in new communities. We called on the Government to ensure funding for this important scheme, and other programmes for asylum seekers and refugees that councils support. The Chief Executive and Home Office Group met to agree an approach for more equitable and sustainably funded asylum dispersal and discussed joint solutions to current pressures in local areas. Our LGA Asylum, Refugee and Migration Task Group met with Caroline Nokes MP, the Immigration Minister, on 8 July to discuss these and the need for ongoing engagement in the development of any future programmes.
- 2.15 **Evidence:** Deputy Chair of the LGA Community Wellbeing Board, Cllr Richard Kemp, gave evidence to the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Adult Social Care. Cllr Kemp highlighted pressures councils face in commissioning adult social care services and called for a long-term strategy to allow communities to plan for the future.
- 2.16 Sally Burlington, LGA Head of Policy, gave evidence to the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Social Care. The session focused on the social care workforce and the recruitment and retention challenges facing the sector. Ms Burlington highlighted our Green Paper recommendation that the Government should launch an awareness campaign on the value of social care and its workforce.

Priority 3 – Children, education and schools

- 3.1 **Children's services:** new data from Ofsted has shown the proportion of council children's services rated good or outstanding has increased. This is despite the challenges facing councils with regards to the funding of children's services. These were also highlighted in a new report from the All Party Parliamentary Group on Childcare and Early Education that found nurseries in poorer areas face closure. As we said in our responses to both, it is vital that these services are properly funded to allow delivery of the high quality children's services that residents and communities rely on.
- 3.2 **Childhood obesity:** Bradford, Blackburn with Darwen, Nottinghamshire, Lewisham and Birmingham councils will receive £100,000 per year over the next three years as part of our Childhood Obesity Trailblazers programme. This funding and support is aimed at developing and implementing innovative ideas to tackle childhood obesity, and to share their findings. In our response we restated the importance of this work to help the next generation, particularly those from the most deprived areas, where children are twice as likely to be obese.
- 3.3 **Children in Need Review:** Education Secretary, Damian Hinds MP, gave a speech outlining the

Government's Children in Need Review. This found that more needs to be done to improve educational outcomes for children in need. In our media statement, we welcomed the Government's commitment to looking at how to improve education for disadvantaged children. We recommended that it could support and incentivise mainstream schools to improve inclusion, with Ofsted holding schools to account for this. We also called for the Spending Review to ensure councils and schools have the funding needed to provide all children with the support they need to succeed.

- 3.4 **Child health:** tougher regulations are needed to improve child oral and physical health according to a new report from the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health. We said that councils were best-placed to tackle childhood obesity given their links with local health, community and voluntary services, as well as schools. We also called on Government to reverse the cuts that public health has faced over the past five years. This money would enable councils to intervene earlier and develop schemes aimed at improving access to sporting activities, weight management services and oral health education.
- 3.5 **Children and young people's mental health:** the LGA has commissioned Isos to research and map out the local government role in children and young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing. Over the summer we will be meeting with councils to gain an understanding of their financial investment in these services and also any blockages and opportunities for providing better mental health support for our young people. We will be reporting in November 2019.
- 3.6 **Sure Start:** new Institute for Fiscal Studies research has found that the Sure Start programme has had major health benefits for children in poorer neighbourhoods. We responded that children's centres are a lifeline, providing advice on physical and mental health, caring for babies and a place for children to play and interact. Councils have done excellent work adapting how they provide these services in light of funding cuts.
- 3.7 **Childcare and early education:** the APPG for Childcare and Early Education has launched its report on the financial sustainability of childcare providers, which we gave evidence to earlier this year. The report echoes our concerns over funding and recruitment and retention in the sector, and our response also highlighted the important role of early education in improving outcomes for disadvantaged children.
- 3.8 **SEND pressures:** latest figures have shown that last year more than 130 extra children and young people aged 0-25 with special needs are being supported by councils every day, equating to 48,900 new Education, Health and Care Plans. This is at a time when councils in England face a possible SEND funding gap of up to £1.6 billion by 2021. In our response, we stated that councils take this process extremely seriously but that rising demand pressures mean Government must ensure these services are properly funded.
- 3.9 **Speech and language:** a new report from the Children's Commissioner warns that many vulnerable children are not getting the speech and language therapy they need to be ready for school. In our response we drew attention to the financial pressures councils face as a result of the £700 million cut to public health budgets and the £1.6 billion funding gap facing special needs funding by 2021. We also highlighted the excellent work councils are doing to work with local early education and childcare providers and clinical commissioning groups to ensure children are ready to start school.
- 3.10 **Nursery workers:** new research from the National Day Nurseries Association has found the number of qualified nursery workers has fallen in the last four years, from 83 per cent of the early years workforce to 52 per cent. This echoes our recent survey which found more than three-quarters of councils were concerned about the training and retention of Level 3 practitioners working in early years settings. We highlighted the importance of ensuring that early years providers are properly funded. This will allow them to provide sufficient numbers of qualified staff who are able to deliver the high quality childcare that families want for their children.
- 3.11 **Education funding:** we briefed MPs for a debate on education funding. Our briefing highlighted the well documented pressures on school funding and the need for the Government to address this, in

particular the pressures on SEND funding.

3.12 **Free schools:** we issued a briefing ahead of a debate on free schools. Our briefing highlighted councils' key roles in improving schools and our recent analysis that council-maintained schools receive better Ofsted ratings, and improve more quickly, than other types of schools.

Priority 4 – Housing

4.1 **Housebuilding:** following the publication of a report from the Public Accounts Committee that found the Government's housebuilding target of 300,000 homes a year is in "jeopardy", we called on Ministers to use the Spending Review to enable councils to retain 100 per cent of Right to Buy receipts. We also said the planning system is not a barrier to housebuilding, with councils approving nine in 10 applications. We also responded to a new report from the Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee, emphasising that it was good that the Committee recognises the role councils can play in solving our housing crisis. The last time we achieved this figure was in the 1970s, when councils contributed some 40 per cent of them.

4.2 **Housing delivery:** in partnership with the National Housing Federation, we are hosting a half-day roundtable that will explore how better collaboration between housing associations and councils can deliver more new homes. Issues that will be tackled include barriers and challenges to closer collaboration, examples of innovative partnerships and developing new initiatives to promote closer working.

4.3 **Understanding local housing markets:** we published a report that provides local authorities with advice and guidance on how to best understand the various complexities within their local housing markets in order to inform their decision making. It also includes access to data reports and maps for individual local authorities. The report warns that many young people face renting until retirement, and that young people are half as likely to own their home as they were 20 years ago. We are calling for councils to be given powers and funding to fix Britain's "broken" housing ladder by building new social rented homes which enable people to save for a deposit. As we mark the centenary of the Addison Act, which began the first great wave in council house building, it is fitting we seek to start another housing revolution with councils at its heart.

4.4 **Planning:** new planning proposals that will form part of an Accelerated Planning Green Paper, designed to speed up the process, were unveiled by the Prime Minister. We welcomed recognition that council planning departments needed more resources in our media statement but pressed Government to ensure its Green Paper includes measures that allow councils to set their own planning fees. Our #CouncilsCan campaign is making the case for this ahead of the upcoming Spending Review.

4.5 **Permitted development:** in light of the extension to permitted development rules, we called for an independent review on their impact on residents and businesses, as well as the capacity of local planning departments. Council resources are stretched as a result of increased workloads and loss of income, while the impact of extensions cannot be fully explored without going through the full planning process. Permitted development rules have resulted in the potential loss of thousands of affordable homes through councils' inability to require provision of affordable homes through section 106 agreements. It is also taking away local communities' rights to shape the area they live in.

4.6 **Building Better, Building Beautiful commission:** we submitted a response to the Building Better, Building Beautiful commission which focused on ensuring that councils have the right level of oversight and influence in shaping places through a properly resourced, local plan-led system. This included our calls to scrap permitted development rights and a need for renewed national leadership on standards for new homes.

4.7 **Garden cities:** government has announced that it will seek to create an extra 19 garden villages across

the country, aimed at delivering over 73,000 new homes. These developments will be supported with £2.85 million of funding, with each of the 19 receiving £150,000 to pay for specialist reports and planning applications. The plans include a dementia-friendly settlement in Rutland, allowing sufferers to live with the support and facilities they need.

- 4.8 **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):** the Government has now laid regulations which will make a number of changes to the way CIL is implemented by local authorities. In particular, they will remove the section 106 pooling restrictions for all councils, something the LGA has been advocating for some time, and streamline consultation requirements for the introduction and revision of a CIL.
- 4.9 **Social housing:** we welcomed the Prime Minister's call for new design standards to ensure high-quality homes and more social housing as part of an ongoing "housing revolution". We will be working to make sure these standards provide homes that are accessible for all, meet the needs of our ageing population and are environmentally sustainable.
- 4.10 **Accessible homes:** the Housing Association, Habinteg, has published research that has found that by 2030 less than a quarter of homes built outside London will be suitable for older or disabled people. In our response, we called on Government to ensure proper incentivisation for the building of accessible homes. We also said it was crucial that work is encouraged to adapt existing homes as people's needs change.
- 4.11 **Homelessness:** a new report from the Local Government Homelessness Commission has echoed our calls for councils to be given the powers they need to carry out their duties to help prevent homelessness. We said in our press release this could include enabling councils to invest in genuinely affordable homes by allowing councils to keep 100 per cent of Right to Buy receipts. Government should also use its upcoming Spending Review to sustainably fund councils to prevent homelessness, and to adapt welfare reforms to protect families at risk of homelessness.
- 4.12 We responded to new Government figures that showed a five per cent year-on-year rise in homelessness to 83,700 households in December 2018. These highlight councils' difficulties in coping with rising homelessness and finding suitable accommodation for those in need. These services face a £110 million funding gap in 2019/20, rising to £421 million by 2024/25 and we are calling on Government to provide sustainable funding for councils to prevent homelessness.
- 4.13 **Vagrancy Act:** Crisis has launched a campaign to repeal the Vagrancy Act 1824, which makes rough sleeping and begging illegal in England and Wales. We responded that councils want to help people living on the streets and will always consider how using their powers might affect vulnerable people.
- 4.14 **Building safety:** the Government has announced a new consultation on reforms to building safety following the Grenfell Tower fire. We welcomed many of the proposals, which include the extension of the new regulatory framework to residential buildings over 18 metres in height, which we had called for. This framework will be overseen by a new building safety regulator. We are also calling for a consistent approach to all buildings and clear duties for designers, developers, product manufacturers and building owners in regards building safety.
- 4.15 **Cladding:** MHCLG has written to building owners asking them to register their intent to apply for part of the £200 million funding announced back in May. This will be used to replace unsafe aluminium composite material (ACM) cladding from private high-rise buildings. Councils with private high-rise buildings with ACM should have also received a briefing about what the funding will cover. We also produced a briefing for a debate in the House of Commons ahead of the two-year anniversary of the Grenfell Tower Fire. The briefing highlighted the work done to date by councils to remove dangerous ACM cladding from social housing and set out our views on where further progress needed to be made to ensure the safety of residents living in blocks that are covered in cladding.
- 4.16 **Building regulations:** on 8 July, Lord Porter gave evidence to the Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee on the Independent Review of building regulations. The Committee was taking evidence from a range of experts, as well as survivors of the Grenfell Tower fire. They asked

about whether enough progress had been made since the fire and whether the Governments current proposals go far enough. Lord Porter highlighted that making sure that residents are safe is a priority for councils, who have acted quickly to remove ACM cladding from their residential blocks.

Priority 5 – Inclusive growth, jobs and devolution

- 5.1 **Local roads funding and maintenance:** we responded to a report by the Transport Select Committee on local roads funding and maintenance. The report rightly recognises the significant funding pressures councils are under and the detrimental impact this is having on local services such as roads maintenance. Councils are fixing a pothole every 17 seconds but need long-term government investment in the Spending Review in local road maintenance to address the nation's £9.3 billion roads repair backlog. We stated that it is not right that the Government spends 43 times more per mile on maintaining our national roads – which make up just 3 per cent of all roads – than on local roads, which are controlled by councils and make up 97 per cent of England's road network. We also stated that whilst the extra one-off £420 million funding announced in last year's Budget has helped, we need government to follow with a long-term funding plan in this year's Spending Review.
- 5.2 **Tourism sector deal:** the Government announced a new Sector Deal with the tourism industry, which offers five places the chance to become tourism zones, receiving additional support to help grow tourism in the zone. As we said in our response, this is a positive step towards tackling some of the challenges faced by our tourism sector and we are pleased the Government has recognised points made by our Culture, Tourism and Sport Board. To be successful this should include ensuring local economies have a skilled workforce, a challenge highlighted by our latest research. We continue to push for councils to be equipped with the tools to coordinate skills and employment investment decisions, through our Work Local campaign, and for the Government to provide councils with the resources to create a thriving tourism sector.
- 5.3 **Apprenticeships:** Damian Hinds MP, Secretary of State for Education, announced that Government will not hit its target of three million apprenticeship starts by 2020 and we repeated our calls for further reform. Councils feel they are being held back where apprenticeship standards are still in development, such as in adult care, early years, and building control. We want Government to realise there is more councils can do to boost apprenticeships if they could collaborate with employers more easily and make better use of apprenticeship levy funds, as outlined in our letter to the Secretary of State in April.
- 5.4 **Organised crime:** in response to a new National Audit Office report that found shortcomings in the Government's approach to tackling serious and organised crime, we highlighted the need for investment in local services that protect and support young people, and keep them from a life of crime. We have been pressing Government on approaches such as Youth Offending Teams, which have done such good work but are under huge pressure due to funding cuts. We'll continue to push Government to make more money available as part of the Spending Review.
- 5.5 **Serious violent crime:** a broader multi-agency approach is required in order to tackle serious violent crime, taking in Government departments, councils, health, education, social services, charities, youth services and practitioners. This is the main recommendation in our response to Government's consultation on tackling and preventing serious violent crime. In it we also agreed with the World Health Organisation's public health approach which aims to consider the underlying causes and risk factors, as well as highlighting the funding pressures councils are under.
- 5.6 **Domestic abuse:** the Joint Committee on the Draft Domestic Abuse Bill has reported and made a number of recommendations. It makes specific mention of the role of healthcare professionals and teachers in prevention and early intervention. This is something we have called for to ensure the bill is fit for purpose. In our response, we also said councils' ability to provide services for victims is limited due to budgetary constraints and that often it is vital earlier support services and prevention schemes that are affected. Cllr Simon Blackburn had given evidence to the Committee the month prior on the

impact of the Draft Bill on councils and was quoted several times in the final report.

- 5.7 **Work Local:** our latest Work Local report, *Making our vision a reality*, was launched, recommending that Government commits to enabling you to work with partners to test devolved and integrated approaches to employment and skills. Working with local pathfinders will better enable you to address the unique skills and labour market challenges faced by your area. It also sets out key findings from the LGA Skills Taskforce which brought together industry experts and stakeholders.
- 5.8 **UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF):** we've made the case that Government should publish its consultation on the UKSPF, which replaces the European Structural Investment Fund from December 2020. As we outlined in our report into Brexit last year, local areas use current funding to create jobs, improve infrastructure and deliver growth in their communities, but Brexit represents an opportunity to improve the system. Government should empower communities to make their own decisions on funding. With £5.3 billion available for local areas between 2014 and 2020, we'll keep pressing Government to ensure councils are consulted and can transition to UKSPF in good time. Members of our Brexit Task Group met with Keir Starmer, the Shadow Brexit Secretary in Bournemouth.
- 5.9 **Post-Brexit England Commission:** published its final report on the future of non-metropolitan England at LGA Annual Conference 2019. It provides an in depth focus on the role councils in rural and coastal areas can play: growing more productive and inclusive economies, shaping future investment in rural areas; and creating better connected places. The report was launched at a Conference plenary session on the future of local leadership.
- 5.10 **Local Industrial Strategy:** working closely with the Cities and Local Growth Unit, the LGA commissioned a comprehensive improvement support offer to councils looking to instigate or further their contribution to Local Industrial Strategy development. Two reports capturing the learning from this offer have now been published and focus on the key components of LIS development and the role of councils in contributing to this process.
- 5.11 **High streets:** Government has launched a new task force aimed at revitalising our high streets and town centres. This High Streets Task Force will bring together experts who can provide guidance and advice to councils who want to ensure their town centres remain a vibrant place at the heart of our communities. This announcement comes as part of the Great British High Street Week and links with the Great British High Street Awards, which will celebrate the importance of high streets and share best practice.
- 5.12 **Veterans:** with more than two million veterans in England and Wales, we have warned that two-thirds of councils are not receiving funding from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust to help them support serving personnel and veterans. We know how useful the Trust has been in helping councils get projects off the ground that support their forces communities. We are calling on the Government to address the funding challenges the Fund faces to ensure the armed forces community, who often face significant challenges in accessing services, receive the support they need.
- 5.13 **Armed Forces Covenant:** we have published new research on councils' understanding of the presence and needs of the Armed Forces Community, and the actions being taken to meet those needs. This comes as marked the 75th anniversary of the D-Day landings. It is full of good practice and the steps councils are taking to ensure the fair treatment of members of the Armed Forces Community and that they are not disadvantaged as a result of their service. There are some key lessons for councils, Government and the Covenant Fund Trust as well, such as the need to invest in places that have not yet benefited from dedicated Covenant funding.
- 5.14 **Connectivity:** fast and reliable connectivity is widely considered as "the fourth utility" on a par with water and electricity. In line with the LGA's series of councillor handbooks, a guide has been produced for councillors who want to expand their technical and policy knowledge of digital connectivity and infrastructure. It provides a range of case studies outlining how councillors have played an instrumental role within their communities advocating for better connectivity to be provided to their residents. This will be available on the LGA website by the end of July.

- 5.15 **Bus franchising powers:** we welcomed news about the first use of bus franchising powers through the Bus Services Act 2017. Alongside city region areas and others, we have called for this long overdue reform for local areas to take control of local bus services to address poor existing provision and provide modern public transport. We hope the Government will support other areas to come forward with their own proposals. We have continued to call for funding to be reformed alongside legislative reform, and are pushing for the forthcoming Spending Review to address the £650 million funding gap for administering the concessionary fares scheme.
- 5.16 **Telephone boxes:** new Government regulations came into force at the end of May that remove both the permitted development right for telephone kiosks and the associated advertising deemed consent. This follows our concerns and those of a number of councils that the rights were being exploited to use telephone kiosks to advertise in towns and cities. The proliferation of these advertising boards disguised as phone boxes has been a personal pet gripe and has impacted upon councils' economic growth ambitions and pedestrians' experience. Planning permission will now be required for new kiosks and any associated advertising, which will enable councils to consider the need for such kiosks and their appropriateness in a given location.
- 5.17 **Waste efficiency:** Local Partnerships, which aims to help the public sector deliver local services and infrastructure and is jointly owned by Treasury, the Welsh Government and the LGA, has published a new report on waste efficiency in the south-east. It found that estimated savings and avoided costs of those who took part in the review totalled £21 million, reflecting good practice that is being delivered across the region.
- 5.18 **Recycling:** we gave oral evidence to the HCLG select committee on the impact of DEFRA's waste and recycling proposals on local government. Our evidence highlighted the need for local flexibility in service delivery, and for retailers and packaging producers to pay the full costs of recycling.
- 5.19 **Sustainable development:** during our General Assembly we passed a motion confirming our support for the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The motion was moved by Mayor Marvin Rees of Bristol, who spoke on the importance of the SDGs and how they will help us pass on a better world to the next generation.
- 5.20 **Food safety:** a National Audit Office (NAO) review of food safety and standards has called on Government to develop a coherent view on a sustainable funding model for food regulation. The NAO audit found that the level of funding councils allocate to food controls has been declining for a number of years as a result of significant funding pressures and increased demand for services. Our response highlighted the work that councils have done to target limited resources most effectively, and reinforced the need for proper funding for regulatory services.
- 5.21 **Fire and rescue services:** we responded to a new report that found that fire and rescue services are good at responding to emergencies. The report also raised concerns, however, about the variation in response standards, risk identification and defining high risk premises. We pointed to the continued dedication of staff at a time when finances are constrained. With nearly half of services relying on old or unreliable equipment, investment to modernise will need to be made available soon if they are to continue to protect the public.

Priority 6 – Britain's exit from the EU

- 6.1 We are continuing to work with the nine regional chief executives acting as communications links in the central and local government Brexit work, who met with senior officials at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on 20 June to ensure preparation is underway for the various October scenarios. They shone a bright light on the need for more work across central and local government to understand and mitigate the economic consequences of the different ways of leaving the EU.

Priority 7 – Supporting Councils

7.1 LGA Annual Conference 2019: from 2-4 July, we held our annual conference in Bournemouth. We welcomed more than 1,500 delegates and offered over 100 sessions. James Brokenshire MP, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government joined us and talked about the important role councils play in our everyday lives. Matt Hancock MP, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care reassured us that Government understands the challenges faced around adult social care, and that the Green Paper on it will be published as soon as possible. We were joined by Liberal Democrat deputy leader (and leadership candidate) Jo Swinson MP, who highlighted all the excellent work councils do on issues ranging from air quality to housebuilding. Unison General Secretary, Dave Prentis, spoke passionately on behalf of local government workers and we heard from Cllr Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party. Our plenary panellists - Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe, Leader of Bradford MBC, Ann Limb, LEP Ambassador, Sarah McMonagle from the Federation of Master Builders, Dianne Grannell, Principal of Bournemouth and Poole College and Tej Parikh from the Institute of Directors – held a lively discussion on the skills challenge, facilitated by Broadcaster Samira Ahmed. At the plenary session on leading people and places with Marvin Rees, Mayor of Bristol, Aldís Hafsteinsdóttir from the Association of Local Authorities in Iceland and Emily Norton from Savills, we launched our report into the future of non-metropolitan England. We were also joined by Mark Carney, the Governor of the Bank of England, and Caroline Nokes MP, Minister of State for Immigration.

7.2 Councils Can: we set out the major themes of our Annual Conference in a new report, #CouncilsCan, which calls for a new settlement for local government. This includes a long term sustainable funding solution and a new localism bill that will empower councils to take on greater responsibilities for their places. This call to arms will form the basis of our campaigning as we engage with the new Prime Minister and his Cabinet. The paper has had an almost immediate impact, having been quoted already in the House of Lords by Government and Opposition Ministers and peers.

7.3 Sector led improvement: the programme of improvement support work, funded through a £19.2 million Improvement Grant, has now been formally agreed with MHCLG. Our agreement with MHCLG, which can be found on our website, reflects those priorities councils identified during consultation including political leadership, peer challenge, productivity, efficiency support and housing. This is alongside separately funded support for adult social care, children's services and integration of care and health.

7.4 Sector led improvement report: we launched a report on the lessons from sector-led improvement in local government, following interviews with council leaders and chief executives who have benefited from Corporate Peer Challenges or received sustained improvement support from the LGA. These interviews provided examples of the impact this support has had on their councils, including boosting a council's ambitions, challenging the council to grasp particular issues, and strengthening a council's leadership. The review shows that sector-led improvement has been a success.

7.5 LGA in Parliament: we held our annual event in Parliament to highlight local government's work with MPs and Peers. The Local Government Minister, Rishi Sunak MP, and Shadow Leader of the House of Lords, Baroness Smith, both spoke about the amazing work being done by councils across the country. We launched our LGA in Parliament 2018/19 report at the event highlighting our work with MPs and Peers, including influencing legislation, giving evidence to Select Committees and raising questions in the Houses of Parliament.

7.6 Transformation and Innovation Exchange: we have launched a beta version of our Transformation and Innovation Exchange, which aims to bring together guidance, case studies and other resources that councils might find useful. We hope councils will be able to identify further innovation opportunities and take advantage of the support as they continue on their improvement journey.

7.7 NHS Trusts: we are working closely with the 45 councils being taken to court by seventeen NHS Trusts, who are arguing they should receive the same business rates discounts as private hospitals. In our view, as these trusts are not charities, they are not eligible for business rate relief and we will be making

this case at a preliminary hearing on 4 November. If the Trusts are successful in their court action, it could cost councils and Government around £2.4 billion in backdated rebates.

7.8 Public Sector exit payments: the LGA has responded to the HMT consultation on capping exit payments together with the executive summary. We continue to engage with HM Treasury, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and others.

7.9 Pensions: on 27 June the Supreme Court denied the Government's request for an appeal in the McCloud and Sargeant case in respect of age discrimination and pension protection. The case will now be referred back to the Employment Tribunal for remedy, the nature, cost and timing of which are uncertain. We are liaising closely with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to determine the potential impact on councils.

7.10 Workforce survey: our Workforce and Research teams have just released our latest Workforce Survey report, which covers data on key issues such as sickness absence, training spend, pay and recruitment. We received input from 174 councils. The report is useful as a benchmarking tool for councils.

7.11 Workforce Data: due to demands for more contemporaneous HR data we have started a quarterly workforce bench-marking club. We will collect data on five core issues: sickness, turnover and vacancy rates, top 5 per cent earners and training budgets. The club launched this month, collecting data for April to June 2019, there will also be an opportunity to upload data for 2018/19.

7.12 Gender pay gap: LGA analysis shows that the 2019 mean gender pay gap in local government is 6.1 per cent; the median is 4.0 per cent. We have updated LG Inform's gender pay gap report for authorities to effectively benchmark against a comparison group of choice as well as last year's data to show how your gender pay gap has changed since last year.

7.13 NHS workforce: the NHS has launched an interim people plan, focusing on immediate issues around leadership and nursing recruitment. We will be sending representatives on behalf of councils to the board that is being established to take the plan forward. Growing integration of health and care workforce development at a local level is vital for healthy communities. We are keen to demonstrate the many excellent examples of council work on this in our discussions with NHS colleagues.

7.14 The Employment Deal Diagnostic (TEDD) tool: the LGA has been supporting councils to transform their workforce by providing new insights into how to improve workplace culture. Using the LGA's TEDD tool the LGA provided analysis to show where managers were effectively managing performance and culture change and where the organisation needed to focus more effort. The LGA has helped Norfolk County Council, Cardiff City Council, Solihull MBC and Coventry City Council this period.

7.15 Apprenticeship Levy: the LGA has secured further funding from the Education and Skills Funding Agency to help councils get the most from their Apprenticeship Levy. The support programme aims to help up to a further 40 councils take a more strategic approach to using the apprenticeship levy and provides practical help to plan and deliver more apprenticeship starts. Last year's programme helped over 35 councils create effective workforce plans and use the levy to address recruitment, development and retention challenges in areas such as adult social care, IT and town planning. So far this year we have over 30 councils who have applied for support.

7.16 Councillor intimidation: the LGA has launched its guide for councillors on handling intimidation, threats and personal safety. The LGA has also written to MHCLG, the Cabinet Office and the Committee on Standards in Public Life regarding the issue of intimidation of councillors, the increasingly toxic nature of public discourse and the review of the councillor code of conduct.

7.17 Markets and modelling project: this aims to support councils to better manage their social care provider market and to develop the next generation of market position statements. 82 councils across six regions have submitted data for the national learning disability dataset exceeding our target of 60%. Pilot versions of the two developed market analysis tools are now being demonstrated to councils with positive

reviews.

7.18 Induction session: an induction for new political and clinical leaders in health and care was held on June 26. The session considered current policy issues, leadership challenges and related to leaders' local contexts. This is the first in the annual series of national leadership events including three Leadership Essentials programmes and culminating in the Annual Summit in March 2020.

7.19 Design in the Public Sector: we are partnering with the Design Council on Design in the Public Sector, which supports work to explore the challenges affecting local communities and identify opportunities to deliver change. The programme provides workshops and coaching sessions for project teams.

7.20 Museums: a handbook for councillors: produced with Arts Council England, this handbook shares innovative case studies and advice for council-run museums, including operating models, partnership working and how museums can contribute to wider local priorities. It responds to findings by the Government's Mendoza review of museums that public museums were struggling when compared to the rest of the museum sector, and significantly less successful at securing grants or generating commercial income.

7.21 Library peer challenges: we have delivered 9 library peer challenges on behalf of Arts Council England, in addition to the regular 3 cultural peer challenges. The challenges have been well received and discussions are underway with ACE about continuing the offer in the future.

7.22 New powers and duties: our annual review of legislation, performed with the help of Kent County Council's legal team, is now complete. As a result, we have updated the legal Powers and Duties of local authorities and requirements for Records Retention to take account of changes over the last year. New pieces of legislation with provisions which came into force or were changed during 2018 include the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the Digital Economy Act 2017 and the Housing and Planning Act 2016.

Internal Priority – A single voice for local government

LGA Membership

1. All LGA member councils will remain in LGA membership for the forthcoming year.
2. Four councils are currently on notice to leave the LGA on 31 March 2020. They are:
 - East Staffordshire Borough Council
 - Hastings Borough Council
 - Leicestershire County Council
 - Lincolnshire County Council
3. The Broads Authority National Park is on notice to leave LGA associate membership.
4. Chippenham Town Council have joined associate membership via our corporate scheme with NALC.
5. Four councils remain out of membership – the London Boroughs of Bromley, Wandsworth and Barnet and Gosport Borough Council.

LGA properties

6. 18 Smith Square: the lease for the third floor tenancy is due to be signed in the next few days, with work on fit out scheduled to begin shortly after that. Agents Cushman and Wakefield continue to report positive feedback on the second floor and remain confident of securing a tenant in due course. An item on the transfer of the building to the LGA is included separately on the agenda.
7. The Stills/Layden House: there is significant interest in all floors of the building, with some offers already received. These will be reported under the Layden House update item at the end of the agenda.

Membership engagement by the Strategic Management Team

Chief Executive	
13-14 June	ACCE Spring Seminar, Nottingham
18 June	North East Lincolnshire Council, Chief Executive
2-4 July	LGA Annual Conference, Bournemouth
<i>Forward look</i>	
2 August	Cambridge City Council
7 August	Leicester City Council, Chief Executive
13 August	Calderdale Council, Chief Executive
5 September	DCN Chief Executive Meeting
6 September	East of England Chief Executive Forum
10 September	Kent Chief Executive Meeting

Media

Funding for local government
Lord Porter was interviewed on BBC News at 6 and 10 about our Annual Conference press release on future funding for councils (BBC Online, Independent Online, Mirror Online, the Telegraph, Times, i paper, Mail, FT, Guardian, BBC Radio 2, BBC Radio 4 The World Tonight, BBC Radio 4 Six O'clock News, LBC Radio and TalkRadio (twice))
A column by former Chairman, Lord Porter, about his time as LGA Chairman and his call for more funding (Times Red Box)
Bank of England Governor Mark Carney's spoke about the challenges facing local government at our Annual Conference (Times, Independent, Mail, Guardian Online)
Resources Board Chair Cllr Richard Watts warned about the £8 billion funding gap facing councils in England by 2025, in a story on council tax collection rates (Mail Online)
We responded to a national review that will look at the rates councils pay for social care to prevent more homes going bust (Mirror)
Our response to a Transport Select Committee report which said that councils should be given a five-year funding settlement to tackle the "national scandal" of potholes on England's local roads (ITV Online, the Times)
The Federation of Small Businesses' magazine reported Chair of our Resources Board, Cllr Richard Watts', column on business rates (First Voice magazine)
Our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities funding analysis (Mirror, Sun, Guardian Online, Mirror Online)
Our lines that bus routes could be cut amid funding cuts (Mirror)
Our homelessness funding analysis in a piece that said the number of homeless camps removed by councils across the UK has more than trebled in five years (Guardian)
Our lines on council funding cuts and the recovery of missed council tax payments (BBC Radio 5 Live, Observer)
Our funding analysis in an article about UK recycling rates (Telegraph, Mail Online)
Our lines on reserves and how councils need them to manage growing financial risks to local services (Star)
Adult social care and health
Community Wellbeing Board Chairman, Cllr Ian Hudspeth, was interviewed live about our response to a Lords committee report on social care funding and our call for government to publish its long-delayed green paper in the next 10 weeks (BBC News channel (twice) BBC Radio 4 Today, BBC Radio 4 World at One, Telegraph, Guardian Online)
Cllr Ian Hudspeth, Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, talked about the health risk from smoking at our Annual Conference (Guardian Online)
The Health Secretary, Matt Hancock's spoke at the LGA Conference yesterday (Mail Online)
Our Annual Conference press release , calling on government to publish its much-delayed social care green paper in the next 10 weeks before party conference season starts, has been sent to all media (BBC Radio 2, BBC Radio 4's Six O'clock News, Talk Radio, Express)
We responded to the Healthwatch England report that found people with dementia are being denied vital care because councils are struggling to meet basic legal standards (Mail Online, the i paper)
Our adult social care funding gap analysis in a piece about tax promises made by the remaining runners in the Conservative leadership race (Telegraph Online, Telegraph and Express)
We warned about the adult social care funding crisis following Jeremy Hunt's admission in a BBC debate that social care funding may have been cut too much (Mirror Online)
Our response to a Royal Society for Public Health report on illegal tattooists (Guardian).
Our funding analysis was reported in an opinion piece on young carers (Independent Online)
Children, education and schools
Cllr David Simmonds, Deputy Chairman, was interviewed about our press release highlighting that councils are seeing more than 560 cases of children with mental health disorders every day, up more than 50 per cent in three year (BBC Radio 4's Today programme, Independent and Mirror)

We <u>responded</u> to the Children’s Commissioner’s report on vulnerable children. Commissioner Anne Longfield also cited our figures in live interviews (BBC Radio 5 Live, BBC News channel, Independent Online, Times)
We responded to Education Secretary, Damian Hinds, statement on the Children in Need review (Guardian Online, Mirror Online)
Our lines in response to the Supreme Court judgement that has ruled councils can be sued if they fail to protect vulnerable young people and children who are considered to be at risk (Independent Online, BBC Radio 4’s You and Yours (twice))
Our lines on childhood obesity in response to proposals for crisps, sweets and fizzy drinks to be sold under cigarette-style plain packaging (Independent, Mail Online, Sun Online, Mirror)
Housing
Former Chairman, Lord Porter, was interviewed live on Sky News and pre-recorded and interview with Channel 4 News to discuss progress on fire safety regulations on the second anniversary of the Grenfell Tower fire. Our lines about councils being forced to delay the replacement of thousands of faulty fire doors (Channel 4 News, Sky News, Huffington Post)
Former Chairman, Lord Porter, featured in a piece about an investigation which revealed that many homeowners across the UK are living in buildings wrapped in non-ACM materials that may be just as combustible as those on Grenfell Tower (Sunday Times)
Our <u>press release</u> revealing that young people today are half as likely to own a home as they were 20 years ago (Mail Online, Huffington Post, Independent Online, the Express, Sun and Mirror)
We <u>responded</u> to a Commons Public Accounts Committee report warning that the Government’s target of delivering 300,000 new homes a year is “way off track” due to problems with the planning system (Independent, BBC Online, Mail, BBC Radio 4 Today programme, BBC Radio 2)
Our lines in response to Shelter’s proposal to introduce a new consumer regulator for social housing tenants (Mirror Online)
We <u>responded</u> to the publication of the Government consultation on building safety reforms following the Grenfell Tower fire and subsequent Hackitt Review (FT)
Inclusive growth, jobs and devolution
Supporting councils
The election of the new LGA Chairman, Cllr James Jamieson, was reported (Guardian Online)
Former Chairman, Lord Porter featured in an exclusive interview ahead of Annual Conference about why he is backing Boris Johnson for Conservative leader (Telegraph)
Our lines on roadside verges (BBC Online)
Our lines in response to <u>Confused.com</u> research on council parking charges were reported (Mail)
Our <u>research</u> which found that online retailers are making illegal sales of knives to under-18s (Mail Online)
We <u>called</u> for children to be taught about cold water shock (Mail Online, Huffington Post, LBC Radio, BBC Breakfast, BBC News channel, Sky News and in the Mirror, Sunday Times, and i paper)
We <u>responded</u> to a report by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), that said the Home Office, National Fire Chiefs Council and the LGA should establish a programme of work to make fire service inspections consistent (ITV Online)
Our response to a National Audit Office report which found that regulation to ensure food safety in the UK is showing “signs of strain” because of spending reductions on food hygiene (Mail Online, Mirror Online and ITV Online)
Our <u>press-release</u> warned that fraudsters are contacting residents by text, email and phone to con them out of money and access personal bank details (Mail)
Our response to a trial of alcohol-tracking ankle tags that will be voluntarily worn by vulnerable addicts (The Sunday Telegraph)
Our previous lines on the dangers of counterfeit make-up were reported in a story on police warning social media influencers to stop wearing fake make-up in online tutorials (Independent Online)
We responded to the Royal London report that shows UK cremation fees have increased since 2004 (BBC Radio 4 You and Yours)
A single voice for local government
Chairman, Cllr James Jamieson’s, call to give councils more powers at our Annual Conference

(The Guardian)
Our concerns over the impact of FOBTs on poorer communities were referenced (BBC Radio 4's PM programme)
We responded to a Children's Society report on 'county lines.' (Sky News Online, LBC Online and BBC Breakfast)
We featured in coverage of the Fawcett Society research that found that just 34 per cent of councillors in England were women (Huffington Post)
Our response to a study, commissioned by the RAC Foundation, which found that council are set to make £1 billion from parking charges in 2019/20 (ITV Online, BBC Online, iNews, Huffington Post, TalkRadio, Absolute Radio, LBC Radio, BBC Radio 4, BBC Radio 2 and the Telegraph and Express)
Our lines on the work local authorities are doing to tackle substance misuse (The Times and Sunday Times)
PM candidates Boris Johnson and Jeremy Hunt visited 18 Smith Square to address Conservative councillors (Mail Online, Guardian Online and the Telegraph)
Our <u>response</u> to calls for Ministers to repeal the Vagrancy Act, which makes rough sleeping and begging illegal in England (Independent Online)
We <u>responded</u> to the Refugee Resettlement Scheme announcement (Independent)
Our statement in <u>response</u> to the Government's announcement to extend the Blue Badge scheme to people with non-physical disabilities and carry out a review of fraudulent use (BBC Online, ITV Online, LBC Online, BBC Radio 3 Counties, TalkRadio, Independent Online, Metro Online, Star Online, i paper, and the Telegraph, Mail and Guardian, Express Online, Mirror Online)
Our drug and alcohol treatment and prevention lines (Independent Online)
Our press-release warning that fraudsters are contacting residents by text, email and phone to con them out of money and access personal bank details (ITV Online, Independent Online, Express Online, Mail, Sun on Sunday, Mirror and i paper)
Brexit
Cllr Kevin Bentley, Chairman of our Brexit Taskforce, was interviewed live on Sky News' All Out Politics programme about our Annual Conference press release, calling for the Government to begin its consultation into the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Cllr Bentley's comment piece about it has featured on Telegraph Online (Guardian Online, Independent Online and Express Online)
Our concerns over the Government's delayed announcement to replace EU regional cash for important social, employment and infrastructure funds (Guardian Online)