

Company Number 11177145

Update Paper

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

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

Recommendation

That members of the Board note and comment on the update.

Action

Officers to action any matters arising from the discussion as appropriate.

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Update Paper

Serious Violence

New legal duty to tackle serious violence

1. In July, the Government published its [response](#) to its recent consultation, announcing that it is creating a new legal duty to support multi-agency action to tackle serious violence. The LGA's [response](#) noted that we support a public health approach to tackling serious violence crime, but emphasised the need to ensure key services including youth services, youth offending teams and public health, are properly funded to support this.

Funding for Violence Reduction Units

2. In August, the Policing Minister Kit Malthouse MP confirmed the Government has awarded £35 million for 18 Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to set up Violence Reduction Units. The Violence Reduction Units will bring together different organisations, including the police, local government, health, community leaders and other key partners to tackle violent crime by understanding its root causes. The new units will be responsible for identifying what is driving violent crime in the area and coming up with a co-ordinated response.
3. The LGA is holding a conference on taking a public health approach to tackling serious violent crime. Further details are [available here](#).

Serious Violence Taskforce

4. Cllr Simon Blackburn, Chair of the LGA's Safer and Stronger Communities Board, attended the Home Office's Serious Violence Taskforce. The meeting focused on the Government's recent announcement of new funding for local Violence Reduction Units and the plans for the Youth Endowment Fund. LGA officers continue to liaise with the Home Office on this important issue.

Tackling serious violence and county lines

5. At the LGA Annual Conference, Cllr Simon Blackburn chaired a workshop session on 'taking a public health approach to tackling serious violent crime and county lines'. We had some excellent speakers from the Children's Society, the National County Lines Co-ordination Centre and the Violence and Vulnerability Unit. The panel discussed the importance of strong multi-agency partnerships to tackle serious violent crime and highlighted the valuable role that councils play in tackling this important issue.

Meeting with Sophie Linden, Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime

6. Cllr Simon Blackburn met with the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, Sophie Linden, to discuss local government priorities to tackle serious violent crime and county line issues. Both Cllr Blackburn and Sophie Linden agreed the Serious Violence Taskforce should continue, and there should be stronger cross-departmental collaboration to make more progress on tackling serious violent crime.

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Offensive Weapons Act 2019

7. Further to the Government's Serious Violence Strategy, the Offensive Weapons Act 2019 introduced Knife Crime Prevention Orders (KCPOs). These preventative civil orders will be an additional tool that the police can use to help steer young people away from knife crime and serious violence. The Government published two consultations asking for views on its [draft guidance for the operation of KCPOs](#) and on [the statutory guidance for the Offensive Weapons Act 2019](#).

Ben Kinsella Trust – Nottingham site

8. Following the presentation from Patrick Green, CEO of the Ben Kinsella Trust, at our previous Safer and Stronger Communities Board meeting, LGA members and officers visited the launch of the new site in Nottingham. The new site has been opened to help teach younger people about the detrimental effects of carrying a knife, in a bid to raise awareness about this important issue.

Domestic abuse

Government response to the Draft Domestic Abuse Bill consultation

9. In June, the Joint Committee on the Draft Domestic Abuse Bill published its [final report](#). The committee supported the LGA's calls for a greater focus on prevention and early intervention work to tackle the root causes of domestic abuse, including help from teachers and healthcare professionals. We are pleased that the committee has asked the Government to provide clarity on how non-accommodation based support services will be provided and funded, which Cllr Simon Blackburn called for in his [oral evidence](#) to the committee.

Domestic Abuse Bill

10. Subsequently, the Government published its [response](#) to the report by the Joint Committee on the Draft Domestic Abuse Bill and introduced the [Domestic Abuse Bill](#) into the House of Commons for its First Reading. In our media [response](#), we highlighted the ability of councils to fund services for victims is limited by significant pressures on their budgets, with local authorities increasingly being forced to prioritise spending for those at immediate risk of harm. If you would like further information about the Bill, please contact Rachel Phelps (Rachel.Phelps@local.gov.uk).

National Oversight Group on Domestic Abuse

11. Cllr Anita Lower attended the National Oversight Group on Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Harassment meeting in June, chaired by the Minister Victoria Atkins MP. The meeting focused on the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Bill into Parliament and new stalking offences. Cllr Lower welcomed the new Bill and highlighted the importance of investing in effective perpetrator programmes, to help prevent domestic abuse from occurring in the first place.

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MHCLG's consultation on domestic abuse accommodation and support services

12. The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government recently launched a [consultation](#) on domestic abuse accommodation and associated support services. The LGA responded to the consultation in August. Our full response is [available here](#).

Reducing re-offending

Prison leavers working level group

13. The Cabinet Office has convened a prison leavers working level group to identify some of the barriers to social inclusion, with a view to identifying how to better support offenders when they leave prison. LGA's Deputy Chief Executive Sarah Pickup will visit HMP Wandsworth for an insight into how prisons and their staff operate. She will meet with current and ex-offenders to learn about their experience in prison and afterwards. LGA officers will continue to update the Safer and Stronger Communities Board on the group's progress.

Female Offender Strategy – National Conference

14. In June, the Ministry of Justice convened a National Conference to discuss the progress made since the introduction of the Female Offender Strategy last year. The Strategy focuses on providing more community-based support to female offenders, and moving away from short custodial sentences, which often result in higher re-offending rates. An LGA officer gave a presentation at the conference and highlighted the important role that local government plays in providing community-based support for ex-offenders.

Police and Crime Panels Annual Workshop

15. In July, the LGA held the Police and Crime Panels Annual Workshop and launched updated [guidance](#) for chairs, members and officers of Police and Crime Panels. There were speakers from the Home Office, the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, PCP scrutiny officers and wider discussions about serious violent crime and current community safety issues.

LGA Conference: Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour (15 October 2019)

16. Tackling anti-social behaviour continues to be a high priority for local authorities and their partners across the country. 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. Register for the [event here](#).

Counter-terrorism and counter-extremism

17. Cllr Anita Lower chaired a session on counter-terrorism and counter-extremism at the LGA's annual conference in July. The session included inputs from the Home Office; and from Cllr Hazel Simmons, Leader of Luton Council, and Cllr Debra Coupar, Deputy Leader of Leeds City Council, co-Chairs of the Special Interest Group on Countering Extremism. It explored

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the nature and evolution of the threats from terrorism and extremism and the challenges they pose for local authorities and partners in response.

Prevent review

18. The Government has announced the appointment of Lord Carlile as the Independent Reviewer of the Prevent programme. The terms of reference for the review are due to be published shortly, with an expectation that the review will report to Parliament by August 2020.

Councillors' guide to handling intimidation

19. The LGA recently published a new [online resource](#) for councils on handling intimidation, in recognition of a growing need for support for elected members. The resource includes practical steps that both elected members and councils can take to protect councillors, and includes topics such as how to handle abuse, both face-to-face, letters or online; and the legal and practical remedies available.

Licensing

Licensing Act Handbook and case studies

20. In July, we published a new [handbook](#) for councillors on the Licensing Act that gives an overview of licensing legislation and examples of best practice. To accompany the handbook we published a set of [case studies](#) on approaches to managing the night time economy which bring together examples of initiatives driven by councils and their partners which have sought to address the issues they have faced locally.

Taxi licensing

21. In July Baroness Vere was appointed as the new responsible Minister for taxis. Cllr Blackburn and Cllr Renard wrote a joint letter to Baroness Vere urging government to publish new statutory guidance for councils and bring forward new legislation as soon as possible.

Officers also attended workshops convened by the Department for Transport (DfT) to discuss initial proposals that have been developed to address cross-border hiring issues. The workshops were an opportunity for DfT to outline the options they have developed and for the trade and local authority representatives to share views about how these could work in practice.

Gambling research

22. GambleAware have published the [interim findings](#) of the research they commissioned into the effects of gambling marketing and advertising on children, young people and vulnerable adults. The key findings include the increasing volume and spend on gambling marketing and advertising with lotteries and bookmakers among the top spenders. Sport has been identified as an important channel for advertising gambling, and advertising spending often increases around key sporting events.

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23. They have also published new [research](#) on the link between gambling and suicide. The research, which was based on analysis of the Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey (2007), suggests that problem gamblers are more likely than others to have suicidal thoughts, attempt suicide and to harm themselves. As the research was based on a small sample a key recommendation was that more research and data need to be collected to better understand the link between gambling and suicide.

Water safety

RNLI visit

24. Cllr James Dawson visited the headquarters of the RNLI in Poole in July. The visit was an opportunity to hear from staff about the work the RNLI are doing around drowning prevention including the Respect the Water campaign as well as the support they offer to water safety partnerships across the country.
25. The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) has published a [guide](#) for managing beach safety. The guide is designed to assist coastal Local Authorities, and others who are in effective control of the beach, promote safety by assessing risks and preventing incidents.

Health and Safety Executive (HSE) - Statement of Commitment

26. The HSE have published a new [Statement of the Commitment](#) for councils / HSE which has been endorsed by the LGA, WLGA and the Society of Chief Officers of Environmental Health in Scotland (SoCOEHS). This sets out a shared vision for the local authority / HSE co-regulatory partnership. As well as reminding councils of their legal duty as enforcers of workplace health and safety, the statement also sets out benefits to the local community of health and safety management.