

Community Wellbeing Portfolio – from Cllr Izzi Seccombe (Chair)

Spending Review

1. The Spending Review has obviously dominated the last month. I was interviewed by Radio 4's Today Programme on 26 November to discuss the council tax precept for social care. And later that morning I spoke at an Age UK and International Longevity Centre UK panel debate on the implications of the Spending Review for older people and adult social care.

Meeting with Secretary of State for Community and Social Care

2. On 2 December I met with the Minister for Community and Social Care, Alistair Burt MP. This was a helpful opportunity to discuss the Spending Review soon after its publication.

EU Covenant on Demographic Change

3. On 7 December 2015 I spoke in Brussels at the launch of the EU Covenant on Demographic Change regarding the LGA work on ageing and its publication "Ageing: the silver lining". The Covenant on Demographic Change aims to gather all local, regional and national authorities, and other stakeholders, that commit to cooperate and implement evidence-based solutions to support active and healthy ageing as a comprehensive answer to Europe's demographic challenge.

Syrian Refugees

4. The Minister for resettlement thanked local Government for welcoming 1000 Syrian refugees before Christmas, and his statement can be found [here](#). LGA members and officers are working with government and other partners on the next stage of the scheme, including funding arrangements for both authorities and regions. We are also supporting a number of events to explore next steps at a regional level and regional contacts and more information are on the LGA webpage at www.local.gov.uk/refugees

APPGs on Housing and Care for Older People and Ageing

5. On 30 November 2015 Cllr Gillian Ford, lead member for the Community Wellbeing Portfolio, spoke at an APPG on Housing and Care for Older People and on 7 December Cllr Rachel Eden, member of the Community Wellbeing Portfolio, spoke at an APPG on Ageing.

First Magazine Articles

6. In December 2015 First Magazine published an article on Children's Mental Health, fronted by Cllr Gillian Ford, lead member for the Community Wellbeing Forum. In January 2016 First Magazine published an article on the armed forces community covenant.

Response to Care Sector Letter

7. The Association of Directors of Adult Social Care, NHS Confederation, Care Provider Alliance and the Care and Support Alliance wrote to George Osborne, Jeremy Hunt and Greg Clarke in December calling for urgent talks with the Treasury and other Whitehall Departments on the crisis in adult social care in the care of older and disabled people. In my response I highlighted that the Government had listened to our concerns about the urgent need to address our social care funding crisis by allowing councils with adult social care responsibilities to raise extra money through council tax to offset some of the pressures on social care. I also welcomed the additional funding for social care in the Better Care Fund, rising to £1.5 billion by 2019/20, announced in the Spending Review. However, whilst this will go part of the way to helping the social care funding gap, there is concern that there is no new Better Care Fund money next year, with very little money the following year, meaning that the full benefit will not be seen until the end of the decade, despite care for the elderly and vulnerable being at breaking point. Councils, the NHS, care providers and the voluntary sector are united in calling for full funding for adult social care as this is vital to protecting care services and easing pressure on the NHS. If social care remains inadequately funded, the support which helps to keep people out of hospital and in their own homes will suffer, which will increase the pressure on the NHS.

Community Wellbeing Portfolio

8. As members will be aware, the Portfolio's priorities for the forthcoming year have been split into four Policy Groups: the future vision for health and care systems; the funding and support for adult social care; the role of councils in promoting health and wellbeing; and vulnerable people and older people. Each of the groups is led by one of the lead members of the Portfolio, and each has recently met to discuss their particular areas of focus and how they will continue to deliver the Portfolio's work programme.

Joint Meeting between Community Wellbeing and NHS Clinical Commissioners

9. Following two meetings in 2015, lead members of the Portfolio will attend a further joint meeting with NHS Clinical Commissioners Board Members on 28 January. The previous meetings have been very productive as a way to continue to improve Health and Wellbeing Boards, and it is anticipated that lead members will continue to attend regular joint meetings with colleagues at NHS CC in the future.

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