
Community Well-being Board

14 November 2007

Local Government House, Smith Square, London

Chair: Cllr D Rogers OBE (East Sussex CC/Lewes DC)

Vice-Chair: Cllr G Barnard (Bracknell Forest)

Deputy Chair: Cllr David Beechey (Bridgnorth DC)

Deputy Chair: Cllr R Grant (Warwickshire)

Members: Cllr M Aspinall (Plymouth), Cllr D Cousins (Isle of Wight), Cllr K Glazier (East Sussex CC), Cllr B Hood (Monmouthshire), Cllr Z Patrick (Oxfordshire CC), Cllr S Ritchie (RB Kensington & Chelsea)

Substitutes: Cllr R McLaughlin (substitute) (LB Hammersmith & Fulham), Cllr S Whitaker (Norfolk CC) (for Cllr Lawrence), Cllr P Banks (for Cllr J Couchman),

Apologies: Cllr J Couchman (Oxfordshire), Cllr R Lawrence (Wolverhampton UA), Cllr R Martins (Watford BC), Cllr S Woodward (Staffordshire CC)

1. Update on Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 (CSR07) (Anne McDonald, Programme Director, LGA)

Anne McDonald, Programme Director, LGA, introduced the paper. The LGA's view was that the CSR07 settlement was a particularly tough settlement with the 1 per cent increase announced so far falling short of the minimum increase called for by the LGA. However, the announcement by the Government of a Green Paper on the long-term funding for social care was positive and the LGA needed to play a part in shaping this.

Members then made the following comments:

- It was unlikely any funding changes coming out of the green paper would be implemented until 2010; therefore it was important to focus on the current settlement and how to support authorities delivering social care in this period.*
- The CSCI had called for services to improve further and it was difficult to see how this would be achieved when councils would be receiving less funding.*
- It was important to learn from best practice- there were a number of councils which delivered outstanding social care on limited resources. Local government needed to share its knowledge.*
- There was concern that there would be varied capacity across the system with significantly different services being offered in different parts of the country. The Board needed to identify authorities and areas at risk because of the CSR settlement and work with them to provide support and best practice. It was likely that many councils would stop providing some services as limited resources would make these unsafe.*
- It was important to take part in the debate on the Green Paper, and to ensure the issues of a changing population were taken on board.*

Decision: *The Board noted the report and the LGA's response to the CSR07 settlement, particularly in relation to social care.*

2. Feedback from Board Spokespeople's Awayday (oral update, Cllr David Rogers OBE, Chair of the CWB Board)

Cllr David Rogers OBE, Chair, CWB Board, updated members on the board spokespeople's awayday which took place on 11 October. Board spokespeople and Programme Directors attended from each board to share priorities with each other and the Chairman of the LGA, and to discuss future priorities for the LGA. A report on the outcomes of the day had gone to the LGA Executive in October.

Decision: Members received the update and requested that a copy of the report to the LGA Executive be circulated. **(CS to circulate)**

3. Other Business Report

The Board considered the Other Business report as set out below:

Representation on Outside Bodies

Decisions

The Board agreed the following outstanding appointments:

- (i) **Better Government for Older People-** Cllr Jan Taylor to continue and to be asked to give regular reports to the Board.*
- (ii) **European and International Affairs Working Group** – Cllr Zoe Patrick to represent the Board, with Cllr Gareth Barnard as substitute and Cllr Mary Aspinall to provide cover for both councillors if requested.*
- (iii) **Equalities and Social Inclusion representative** – Cllr David Rogers OBE to represent the Board, with Cllr Rabi Martins as substitute.*

(Action: CS/PO)

LGA Asylum and Refugee Task Group

Decisions:

The Board:

- (i) approved the amended terms of reference of the task group as set out in the report*
- (ii) requested that Cllr Lawrence, Chair of the Task Group, update the next meeting of the Board on the work of the task group*
- (iii) requested that the task group undertakes to look at the issue of counting and exact numbers of migrants. This was a sensitive issue but it was necessary for robust figures to be available to help the LGA's case of lobbying for £250million extra funding.*

(Action: LGA secretariat)

National Children's and Adults Services Conference- Feedback

Members felt that the conference had gone well this year, but commented that it was important to ensure rooms were big enough for breakout sessions and requested that the Board be given a more prominent role in the conference by holding a session during the core conference hours which more members would be able to attend, rather than a breakfast meeting as had been held this year.

(Action: LGA Secretariat to feed comments back)

IDeA Update

Susan Biddle, Joint Head of Programme, Healthy Communities, IDeA, updated the Board on the IDeA's work on Healthy Communities including its 'Must knows for Lead Members to be published in March 08 and informed the Board that there would be a report on Healthy Communities work at the January meeting. Members asked that the use of the word 'lead' be reconsidered when contacting members, as many were cabinet/executive members with responsibility for social care, but may not have the word 'lead' in their title and could then miss out on receiving information.

(Action: IDeA Officers)

Social Work at its best

It was requested that there be an item on the next Board agenda to discuss the report. It was advised that it had been planned that this would be the case.

(action: AM/VC)

Feedback from board members on outside meetings attended

Clr David Beechey had attended a regional workshop in early November on Later Life and Socially Excluded Adults PSAs and recommended other members attend the workshops taking place in their regions.

Clr David Rogers OBE had attended a conference in Birmingham on the Year of Equal Opportunities which had been run by the Department of Work and Pensions and the LGA.

Clr Gareth Barnard had attended a policy working group on healthcare and social care and how children and adults support was managed, particularly in terms of the preventive agenda in mental health.

Decision: *the Board received the report with the decisions and actions as set out above.*

4. King's Fund Report "Our Future Health Secured? A Review of NHS Funding and Performance" by Sir Derek Wanless, John Appleby, Anthony Harrison and Darshan Patel (Professor John Appleby, Chief Economist, King's Fund)

Professor John Appleby, Chief Economist, King's Fund, gave a detailed presentation on the recently published report Our Future Health Secured? He outlined the reasons for undertaking the review as well as the key recommendations of the 2002 and 2004 reviews and the aims of the 2007 review which included questions about use of funding, use of resources, effectiveness, policy framework and future reviews.

The review had concluded that more money had helped deliver notable improvements in the NHS; that the policy direction was right (as far as could be assessed) although efforts to devolve power to the frontline had been slow and evaluation of major policy initiatives was essential; that productivity had decreased; that there had been undesirable increases in emergency and A&E activity; that some determinants of health were moving in the wrong direction, particularly obesity; and that without improvements in productivity and greater efforts to tackle the causes of ill health, even higher levels of investment in the NHS would be required than envisaged by the fully engaged or solid progress scenario.

Members thanked Professor Appleby for his presentation and made the following comments:

- It was important that initiatives around public health were developed, as they were often overlooked. There also needed to be closer working between LAA partners and GPs.
- There were concerns around levels of productivity coupled with rising expectations of the population and the ever-changing demographics of the population.
- Was there a realistic understanding of health rationing by both public and government?
- It was suggested that a definition of good health should be introduced rather than concentrating solely on the definition of ill health.
- It was questioned what impact a lack of increase in productivity would have on services experienced by the public.
- The recent European Directive on working hours would have an impact on productivity.

Decision: The board noted the presentation.

Actions:

- (i) LGA officers to incorporate the Board's comments into a response to the Review. **(AM)**
- (ii) An electronic copy of the presentation to be circulated to the board **(CS)**

5. Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) (Dave Shields, Southampton City Council)

Mr Dave Shields, Strategic Services Manager, Southampton City Council, gave a presentation to the Board on Getting Ready for LINKs, and outlined the work Southampton City Council was undertaking in this area. He drew the board's attention to Southampton's Stronger Local Voice group; its Project Board; the issues of democratic engagement; wider public and patient involvement and wider networks. Key learning points for Southampton had been the need for earlier engagement and support for elected members; stronger involvement within the LSP and LAA processes; clearer and earlier exposition of how a LINK would look; exploration of a strategic fit with NHS Foundation trusts and community governance arrangements.

Members thanked Dave Shields for his presentation and made the following points:

- The fact that neither PPIFs nor LINKs currently resonated with the public was a real concern. It was also crucial to secure engagement of the voluntary sector to make LINKs work.
- Setting up successful LINKs with the funding allocated would be a big challenge.
- It was not immediately clear from the legislation what the added value of LINKs would be.
- It was important to get rid of the red tape surrounding LINKs in order for people to start engaging with them.
- The role of elected members was crucial in providing expertise and democratic accountability to LINKs, and this did not just apply to scrutiny members but to all elected members.

Decision: The Board received the presentation.

6. Foresight: Tackling Obesities (Jon Parke and Jane Mardell, Foresight Programme: Tackling Obesities)

Jon Parke, Team Leader, Foresight Programme: Tackling Obesities, gave a presentation to the Board which detailed the work of the Foresight Programme on designing a project to tackle obesity. The aim of the project was to produce a long term vision of how to deliver a sustainable response to obesity over the next 40 years. The Foresight project had developed a systems map with seven major sub systems which could contribute to obesity in society. Most adults in the UK are already overweight with modern living ensuring that every generation is heavier than the last. Preventing obesity is a societal challenge requiring partnership between the government, business, science and civil society. Core principles for tackling obesities were set out and included higher priority for the prevention of health problems and long-term, sustained interventions.

In terms of what this meant for the LGA, there would be further opportunities for local leadership as well as the need to engage all interested organisations; the need to build on LSPs; the need to align and integrate with existing initiatives and develop an overarching strategy, as well as understanding the scale of the problem and contributing to ongoing evidence gathering.

Members thanked Jon Parke and Jane Mardell for attending and in the course of discussion made the following points.

- The obesity agenda was extremely wide-ranging and cross-cutting, linking up with many other areas of local government in addition to public health and wellbeing, such as crime, education and housing and it was important all areas of local government worked together on this.*
- It was important not to be too prescriptive when dealing with public health as people reacted against being told what to do by the government and other agencies.*
- It was important to afford opportunities for change- for example in the Isle of Wight the council had undertaken to provide free swimming classes for young people.*
- Exercising was expensive for adults as well, and gyms tended to be used by those who were better off, which contributed to health inequalities. There needed to be subsidies available.*
- Where people felt safe in their communities they would be more likely to take walks and let their children play outside and in local parks, therefore, the reduction of crime and fear of crime was essential in helping to combat obesities.*
- School meals needed to be healthy but they also needed to be attractive to children or they would refuse to eat them.*
- Susan Biddle, IDeA, advised that the Healthy Communities programme had been set up to support capacity in local government regarding obesities and health inequalities. More examples of best practice were needed.*
- There was a need for more work to be done to support teenage and young mothers and provide them with information about diet, nutrition and exercise.*

Decision: The Board received the presentation.

7. Notes of last meeting (12 September 2007)

The Board agreed the notes of its last meeting.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 16th January 2008