

Other Business Report

Summary

This report provides a summary of other business relevant to the Board and also deals with issues relating to Community Wellbeing representation on LGA groups. Members are also asked to feed back on meetings attended since the last Community Wellbeing Board meeting.

Recommendations

- To note the update.
- Feed back from meetings attended since the last Board meeting.

Action

Secretariat to take necessary action.

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Other Business Report

Older People and Housing

In April 2009, the Executive of the LGA discussed a report on strategic housing issues and identified the need for a joint meeting of Members from the Community Wellbeing and Environment Boards to discuss how we can integrate and coordinate policy development and lobbying around older people and housing.

On 9 December the Community Wellbeing and Environment Boards held a joint meeting to discuss housing and older people's issues which identified possible future work priorities for the LGA Group in this policy area.

Stephen Burke, Chief Executive of Counsel and Care and Amy Campbell from the Housing Care and Support Programme of CLG gave presentations outlining the key the policy context for this important area of work. They highlighted a number of areas on which the LGA was well placed to have an influence on the development of national policy.

- The care and support Green Paper does not give much consideration to the contribution of appropriate, accessible and flexible housing to the care and support of older people.
- The *Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods* strategy is a strong starting point for this work and identifies a leading role for councils in the planning and provision of homes and communities that are safe, accessible and future-proofed to change with the needs of an ageing population.
- Loneliness and social isolation is a common problem for many older people living in the community. Coordination of housing, social care and support services is vital to ensure that older people are supported to reduce social isolation. There are many examples of communities' assets such as pubs and community centres being used to deliver community-based services to older people and the LGA Group has an important role in disseminating good practice.
- Housing need and spatial planning should be included in Joint Strategic Needs Assessment in order to join up with social care and support to meet current and future needs.

Cllr Keith Glazier reported how East Sussex County Council had reviewed their housing support service to ensure that it met the needs of all older people. He underlined the importance of working in partnership with district councils and with the communities themselves to identify challenges and solutions and to agree on an improved service. The East Sussex Housing and Social Care Strategy has been

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agreed by the county and district councils and is focused on meeting the needs of all older people. It has resulted in increased access to housing support by people with all housing tenures, increased efficiencies and improved quality of advice, information and signposting to other services.

The Members had a useful discussion on a range of issues relating to housing and older people. It was agreed to:

- provide a report back to the Executive summarising current activity, the joint board discussion and future LGA Group activity;
- arrange a further joint meeting of the Community Wellbeing and Environment Boards following the General Election to discuss progress and any new policy developments;
- consider producing a paper outlining the LGA's position on housing and older people
- discuss how the LGA Group 'mainstream' older people's issues into the housing and planning agenda, and to give a higher profile to housing issues in LGA activity on care and support.

Age Equality

The Equalities Bill, that is currently before Parliament (at the time of writing) unifies and streamlines existing legislation on discrimination. In particular it:

- creates a new general equalities duty on public bodies and other carrying out public functions;
- bans age discrimination against adults in the provision of services and exercise of public functions.

In April 2009 the then Secretary of State for Health asked Sir Ian Carruthers OBE and Jan Ormondroyd to prepare a report on achieving age equality in health and social care, recognising that there would be particular challenges for commissioners and providers of health and social care in implementing the equality duty. The report, published in October 2009, makes a number of recommendations that DH, the NHS and social care organisations should take in order to prepare for the implementation of the public sector single equality duty and the ban on age discrimination. The LGA and ADASS submitted joint evidence to the review and were both represented on the Advisory Group to the review.

The DH is seeking comments on the review's non-legislative recommendations to feed into the DH's response to the review which will be published in spring 2010. The deadline for comments is 15 February 2010. Officers are currently working with ADASS to prepare a joint response. In order to fit in with the consultation timetable it

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will be sent to Lead Members of the Community Wellbeing Board for comment and clearance in early February.

Green Paper and the future of adult social care

On 3 December LGA Vice Chairman Cllr Sir Jeremy Beecham gave evidence to the Health Select Committee as part of its inquiry into the future of social care services. The Committee's questions covered a number of areas including: funding; the Care and Support Green Paper; personalisation; free personal care; quality; and brokerage, advice and advocacy.

Sir Jeremy gave evidence alongside Jenny Owen, President of ADASS, and together provided a powerful and persuasive presence from the sector. All of our points were made and the Committee took all of our key messages.

A full transcript of the evidence is available at:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmselect/cmhealth/uc22-iii/uc2202.htm>

Free Personal Care

The Personal Care at Home Bill received its Second Reading in the House of Commons on 14 December 2009. This is a two-clause Bill that would enable regulations to be made requiring personal care to be provided free to persons with the highest needs in their own homes.

The LGA prepared a detailed briefing paper for MPs of all parties setting out the Association's concerns and those of member councils. This included: the government's estimated demand for free personal care; funding the initiative; and the proposed system of eligibility.

A copy of the LGA briefing is available at: <http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/aio/6564595>

Many of the LGA's arguments were raised by MPs during the debate, including Andrew Lansley, Norman Lamb and Stephen O'Brien.

Eligibility for adult social care

The Department of Health published a response to the consultation on revised guidance for eligibility of adult social care on 16 December 2009. The DH report is a summary of the consultation responses.

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The final, revised guidance on eligibility will be published by February 2010 and will replace the 2003 Fair Access to Care Services guidance. DH see revised guidance as a bridge to the wider reform as set out in the Care and Support Green Paper. It will aim to support fair and transparent implementation of eligibility criteria within the policy contexts of personalisation and prevention as set out in Putting People First.

The DH report is available at:

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Responsestoconsultations/DH_110137

Valuing health: business case literature review

The Healthy Communities programme has created a project to develop the business case for health improvement, aimed at raising awareness of the additional business benefits of health improvement activity for local authorities and their partners. This project is based on the intuitive theory that preventative health activity must create additional business benefits (efficiency savings and improved service outcomes) for local authorities, as well as the improvement in health of their community.

We have produced a literature review of existing research, and have published this in a document Valuing Health (www.idea.gov.uk/valuinghealth), which covers 17 themes including health topics such as obesity and mental health and service related themes such as older people, built environment and crime and disorder.

The document supports our project's hypothesis and also highlights the need for further research to fully understand the direct and indirect benefits that can be realised as a result of health improvement work. This document will be used to raise awareness of this business case argument amongst senior local authority officers and members, and to recruit pilot authorities and partnerships who we will work with to test out this theory in practice.

Expressions of interest in being involved in this project are being requested by 19th February. This fieldwork phase will help us to develop practical approaches to capturing, measuring and costing these wider additional direct and indirect benefits and will lead to tools and guidance being created to support the sector further.

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Implementing the Recommendations Of The Social Work Task Force In Adult Social Care

Tuesday, 2 February 2010, Local Government House, Smith Square, London SW1P 3HZ

Earlier this month, the Social Work Task Force, chaired by Moira Gibb, launched their final report, Building a safe, confident future, containing 15 recommendations for improving and reforming social work.

To give you the opportunity to hear directly from Moira, and discuss the report's implications for adult social care with her, as well as colleagues, and other central and local government representatives, the LGA will be hosting a workshop in London on 2 February 2010.

The Task Force is especially keen to hear from lead members in adult social care, as much of the focus has so far been on the children's social care workforce.

This is a free event, and is scheduled to run from 10:00 – 15:00.

To confirm your attendance, please contact Marinda Oosthuizen, Project Support Officer, by Friday 22 January 2010, on 020 7664 3078 or marinda.oosthuizen@lga.gov.uk.