

Item 3b

Community Wellbeing Programme Board – report from Cllr David Rogers OBE (Chair)

The House of Commons Health Select Committee

1. The House of Commons Health Committee met on 8 November, and I gave evidence as the LGA representative, on the topic of social care. The quality and value-for-money of care services provided by local authorities, as well as monitoring/safeguarding methods emerged as key themes. On the proposed new structures such as the Health and Wellbeing Boards, I highlighted the LGA's belief that there is enormous potential to drive integration. The importance of dignity in care and societal attitudes to the elderly was also highlighted during the session.
2. Questioned on the Dilnot Commission's outcome I explained that the LGA sees the recommendations as an element of the jigsaw that needs to be put into place in order to bring about reform. An emerging political consensus agrees that a way forward needs to be found, however key details of future funding levels are as yet unclear. I also urged those present to view the services that local authorities provide, across a whole range of different areas, as being part of the care and support that individuals have within their communities to keep them living in their homes where that is possible.

Meeting with the Public Health Minister

3. I met the Public Health Minister, Anne Milton, on 7 December to raise the LGA's concerns on two key issues: public health funding and the proposed new duty on local authorities to appoint medical examiners to oversee the death certification process. We are pressing hard to ensure that forthcoming public health grant is adequate to meet our responsibilities and that the allocation formula is equitable, transparent and robust.
4. The Health and Social Care Bill places a new duty on local authorities to appoint medical examiners to oversee the death certification process and we are keen to work with the Department of Health (DH) and our advisers from local authorities to minimise any risks to local government arising from the new duty and to improve the quality and independence of death statistics.

Joint Public Health and GP Stakeholder Roundtable

5. The DH and GP stakeholder meeting scheduled for 13 December was postponed until the New Year, and a date has now been arranged in February. This decision was taken because the current public health environment had not moved on sufficiently since our last meeting in October.

6. Having taken on the role of chairing the group following Richard Kemp's retirement, I think there is great value in using the group to help build relationships at a national level and the meetings as an opportunity to share views, concerns and relevant information with one another.

Healthy Communities – Building on the past, shaping the future together

7. On 25 November 2011 I attended the 'Building on the past, shaping the future together' conference, which was jointly organised by the LGA's Healthy Communities programme and NHS South West. It marked the completion of the Healthy Communities Programme in its current form.

Future of Adult Social Care Roundtable

8. On 14 November the LGA hosted an exclusive roundtable session at Local Government House to discuss the future of adult social care and support. The event took place with the government's 'Caring for Our Future' engagement exercise in progress. It thus provided an opportunity for senior local government figures to feed in directly to the DH on a range of issues surrounding the reform debate, including their views on integration, personalisation and prevention.
9. A range of very valuable points were made by attendees, covering issues from the importance of local freedom in designing the specifics of a future model to the absolute necessity of keeping this debate at the top of the political agenda. Leaders, Chief Executives and other senior Members and officers also heard from Ministers Paul Burstow MP and Baroness Hanham; David Behan from the Department of Health; Frances Patterson QC from the Law Commission and Lord Norman Warner from the Commission on Funding of Care and Support.

Councils' efforts to help veterans 'hampered by a lack of information'

10. In early November, the LGA issued a release outlining that more than 4 million veterans could be missing out on the support they are entitled to because of a lack of government information and published a map showing the concentrations of ex-servicemen and women across England and Wales based on those limited records.
11. This new map is a step forward in helping councils ensure that veterans suffer no disadvantage as a result of their service to our country. Council efforts to support to our Armed Forces community will continue to be hampered unless we have more accurate information on where they live. The story was covered widely by the national media plus more than 100 regional and local papers.

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