

## **Safer & Stronger Communities Board – report from Cllr Mehboob Khan (Chairman)**

### **Transition to Police and Crime Commissioners**

1. Board members continued to be involved in the Home Office's police and crime commissioner transition projects. Cllr Goronwy Edwards, Deputy Chair of the Board, attended the project group meeting looking at elections. The issue of support for candidates in getting their message out to voters has been raised previously but the Government has indicated that there will be no free-post delivery of election material due to cost. Instead, there will be an internet based alternative where details of the candidates will be provided, and a number which people can call to ask for the information to be put in the post to them.

### **Enhanced CRB checks for taxi drivers**

2. As a result of significant pressure from the LGA and key partners, the Government has announced that taxi drivers and mini cab drivers will once again be entitled to enhanced CRB checks and councils can take the additional step of checking whether a driver has been barred from working with children or young people.
3. This decision will mean that anyone getting into a taxi or private hire vehicle can do so safe in the knowledge that they can rely on their council to have fully checked the background of the driver before giving them a licence. It will enable council support and promote a positive image of our taxi industry by ensuring that the licensing process cannot be exploited by those looking to target vulnerable passengers.

### **LGA Licensing Conference**

4. The success of the LGA Licensing Conference harnessed the hard work being done by councils on alcohol and event licensing. It also reflected the concern amongst councils that Government proposals to deregulate events with less than 5000 attendees would create unmanageable nuisance and safety issues. While there was strong support amongst the audience to reduce red tape for event organisers, there was clear concerns that deregulation on the scale proposed would remove the opportunity for communities to influence the nature of events taking place in their area.

### **Dangerous dogs**

5. Cllr Nilgun Canver, as Licensing Champion for the LGA, spoke at a parliamentary reception aimed at highlighting the need for Government to work

with councils, the police and charities to develop policy and practical tools for addressing issues associated with dangerous dogs. Cllr Canver stressed that any approach should link to wider work on community safety and must be sustainable.

### **Fire National Framework**

6. The LGA, working with the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA), has successfully lobbied Government for a leaner and more localist National Framework which broadly reflects the views of fire authorities and which builds on their best practice and existing activities.

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