

Councillors' Forum

Agenda

Thursday 10 January 2013
12.30pm

The Westminster Suite (8th floor)
Local Government House
Smith Square
London
SW1P 3HZ

To: Members of the Councillors' Forum
cc: Named officers for briefing purposes

Guidance notes for visitors

Local Government House, Smith Square, London SW1P 3HZ

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Councillors' Forum

10 January 2013

The **Councillors' Forum** meeting will be held on **Thursday 10 January 2013** at **12.30pm** in the **Westminster Suite, 8th Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London SW1P 3HZ.**

Please note: The Political Group meetings will be held **prior** to this, as follows:

11.00am	Conservative	Westminster Suite (8 th floor)
11.00am	Labour	Smith Square Rooms 1 & 2 (Ground Floor)
11.00am	Liberal Democrat	Mezzanine Room (1 st Floor)
11.00am	Independent	Millbank Room (8 th Floor)

Lunch will be served in The Terrace Lounge (7th Floor) after the Councillors' Forum from 1.30pm and coffee / tea will be available at the Group meetings.

Apologies

Please notify your political group office (contact information below) if you are unable to attend this meeting, so that a substitute can be arranged and catering numbers adjusted, if necessary.

Conservative:	Luke Taylor: 020 7664 3264	email: luke.taylor@local.gov.uk
Labour:	Aicha Less: 020 7664 3263	email: aicha.less@local.gov.uk
Liberal Democrat:	Group Office: 020 7664 3235	email: libdem@local.gov.uk
Independent:	Group Office: 020 7664 3224	email: independent@local.gov.uk

Attendance Sheet

Please ensure that you sign the attendance register, which will be available in the meeting room. It is the only record of your presence at the meeting.

Location

A map showing the location of Local Government House is printed on the back cover.

Contact

Zoe Glacken (Tel: 020 7664 3236, Email: zoe.glacken@local.gov.uk)

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Carers' Allowance: As part of the LGA Members' Allowances Scheme a Carer's Allowance of up to £6.19 per hour is available to cover the cost of dependants (i.e. children, elderly people or people with disabilities) incurred as a result of attending this meeting.

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Councillors' Forum – 2012-2013

This Forum comprises a core group of around 100 members appointed by the LGA political groups in proportion to their political strength on the Association. However, all members are invited to attend meetings of the Forum.

Representative	Authority
Conservative (43)	
Sir Merrick Cockell (Chairman)	RB Kensington & Chelsea
Tony Ball	Basildon BC
Teresa O'Neill	Bexley Council
Paul Bettison	Bracknell Forest BC
Louise McKinlay	Brentwood BC
Geoffrey Theobald OBE	Brighton & Hove City Council
Martin Tett	Buckinghamshire CC
Shona Johnstone	Cambridgeshire CC
Richard Stay	Central Bedfordshire Council
Paul Findlow	Cheshire East Council
Mike Jones	Cheshire West & Chester Council
Kenneth Taylor OBE	Coventry City Council
Andrew Lewer	Derbyshire CC
Angus Campbell	Dorset CC
Doreen Stephenson	East Lindsey DC
Stephen Castle	Essex CC
Peter Martin MBE	Essex CC
Ken Thornber CBE	Hampshire CC
Roger Phillips	Herefordshire Council
Robert Gordon CBE DL	Hertfordshire CC
David Simmonds	Hillingdon LBC
David Pugh	Isle of Wight Council
Paul Carter	Kent CC
Robert Light	Kirklees MBC
Clare Whelan OBE	Lambeth LBC
Martin Hill OBE	Lincolnshire CC
Derrick Murphy	Norfolk CC
Gr. Uff. Marco Cereste OSSI OMRI	Peterborough City Council
Ken Hudson JP MBE	Preston City
Neil Clarke	Rushcliffe BC
Peter Fleming	Sevenoaks DC
Kate Wild	Solihull MBC
Gary Porter	South Holland DC
Jeff Milburn	South Tyneside MBC
Philip Atkins	Staffordshire CC
Sir William Lawrence Bt	Stratford-upon-Avon DC
Joanna Spicer	Suffolk CC
Mark Bee	Suffolk CC
Kay Hammond	Surrey CC
David Hodge	Surrey CC

Gordon Keymer CBE	Tandridge DC
Ravi Govindia	Wandsworth LB
Louise Goldsmith	West Sussex CC
Melvyn Caplan	Westminster City
Labour [36]	
Stephen Houghton CBE	Barnsley MBC
Eion Watts	Bolsover DC
Linda Thomas	Bolton Council
Helen Holland	Bristol City Council
Dave Wilcox OBE	Derbyshire CC
David Sparks OBE	Dudley MBC
Simon Henig	Durham
Ann Lucas	Coventry City Council
Colin Lloyd	Crawley BC
Mayor Jules Pipe	Hackney LBC
Sharon Taylor OBE	Hertfordshire City Council
Caitlin Bisknell	High Peak BC
Ruth Cadbury	Hounslow LBC
Catherine West	Islington LBC
Mehboob Khan	Kirklees MBC
Steve Reed	Lambeth LBC
Keith Wakefield	Leeds City Council
Mayor Sir Steve Bullock	Lewisham LBC
Tim Moore	Liverpool City Council
Sian Timoney	Luton BC
Sir Richard Leese CBE	Manchester City Council
Jim McMahon	Oldham MBC
Judi Billing	North Hertfordshire DC
Ian Swithenbank CBE	Northumberland Council
Graham Chapman	Nottingham City Council
John Merry CBE	Salford City Council
Bryony Rudkin	Suffolk CC
David Phillips	Swansea City and County Council
Paul Watson	Sunderland
Clyde Loakes	Waltham Forest LBC
Peter Box CBE	Wakefield MBC
Lord Peter Smith	Wigan MBC
Roger Lawrence	Wolverhampton City Council
James Alexander	York City Council
Substitutes	
Ian Ward	Birmingham City Council
Catharine Grundy	Birmingham City Council
Simon Blackburn	Blackpool Council
Mike Connolly	Bury MBC
Theo Blackwell	Camden LBC
Joe Hendry	Carlisle City Council
Chris Fegan	Chelmsford BC
Justin Madders	Cheshire West & Chester UA
John Mutton	Coventry City Council
Stewart Young	Cumbria CC

Paul Bayliss	Derby City Council
Anne Western	Derbyshire CC
Julie Young	Essex CC
Aaron Shotton	Flintshire CC
Michael Payne	Gedling BC
Tony McDermott MBE	Halton BC
Jagdish Sharma MBE JP MA	Hounslow LBC
Robert Khan	Islington LBC
Ron Round JP	Knowsley MBC
Judith Blake	Leeds City Council
Rory Palmer	Leicester City Council
Robert Parker	Lincolnshire CC
Mr Len Duvall	London Assembly
Hazel Simmons	Luton BC
Sue Murphy	Manchester City Council
Anne Schofield	Newcastle City Council
Sir Robin Wales	Newham LBC
Tudor Evans	Plymouth City Council
Roger Stone OBE	Rotherham MBC
Tony Page	Reading BC
Judith Blakeman	RB Kensington & Chelsea
Mike Roberts	Rushmoor BC
Steve Eling	Sandwell MBC
Richard Williams	Southampton City Council
Roger Hutchinson	South Gloucestershire Council
Iain Malcolm	South Tyneside MBC
Catherine McDonald	Southwark LBC
Marie Rimmer CBE	St Helens MBC
Barrie Grunewald	St Helens MBC
Mohammed Pervez	Stoke-on-Trent City Council
Brenda Warrington	Tameside MBC
David Edger	Tower Hamlets LBC
Tony Belton	Wandsworth LBC
Liberal Democrat (14)	
Roger Symonds	Bath & North East Somerset Council
Flick Rea	Camden LBC
Keith House	Eastleigh BC
Jeremy Hilton	Gloucestershire CC
David Neighbour	Hart DC
Abigail Bell	Hull City Council
Liz Green	Kingston upon Thames RBC
Kath Pinnock	Kirklees MBC
Duwayne Brooks	Lewisham LBC
Richard Kemp OBE	Liverpool City Council
Howard Sykes	Oldham MBC
Jill Shortland OBE	Somerset CC
Cathy Bakewell MBE	Somerset CC
Stan Collins	South Lakeland DC
Lord Graham Tope CBE	Sutton LBC

Substitutes	
Tim Bick	Cambridge City Council
Councillor Edward Lord OBE JP	City of London Corporation
Hilary Jones	Derby City Council
David Rogers OBE	East Sussex CC
Chris White	Hertfordshire CC
Terry Stacy MBE JP	Islington Council
Stephen Knight	Richmond upon Thames LBC
Alan Connett	Teignbridge DC
Mayor Dorothy Thornhill MBE	Watford BC
Liz Tucker	Worcester CC
Paul Tilsley MBE	Birmingham City Council
Independent [8]	
Peter Jones	Babergh DC
Julian German	Cornwall Council
Chris Townsend	Mole Valley/Surrey CC
Paul Cullen	Richmondshire DC
Pauline Dee	Shropshire Council
Christopher Newbury	Wiltshire CC
Norman Bradbury	Wigan MBC
Marianne Overton	Lincolnshire County Council
Bob Dutton OBE	Wrexham County Borough Council
Apu Bagchi	Bedford Council

Agenda

Councillors' Forum

Thursday 10 January 2013

12.30pm – 1.30pm

The Westminster Suite, Local Government House

Item	Page	Time
1. Whole Place Community Budgets Members are invited to discuss the LGA's next steps in supporting the Community Budget process. Darra Singh (Executive Director, Government & Public Sector Team, Ernst & Young) and Andrew Webster (Tri-borough Executive Director of Adult Social Care Services) will attend to present the findings of the Ernst & Young analysis.	3	12.30pm
2. Chairman's Update	9	1.20pm
3. LGA Board and Panel Chairs' Reports <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Children & Young People Board – Councillor David Simmonds b. Community Wellbeing Board – Councillor David Rogers OBE c. Culture, Tourism & Sport Board – Councillor Flick Rea d. Economy & Transport Board – Councillor Peter Box CBE e. Environment & Housing Board – Councillor Mike Jones f. European & International Board – Councillor Dave Wilcox OBE g. Improvement and Innovation Board – Councillor Peter Fleming h. Safer & Stronger Communities Board – Councillor Mehboob Khan i. Workforce Board – Mayor Sir Steve Bullock j. Finance Panel – Councillor Sharon Taylor OBE k. Resources Panel – Councillor Stephen Castle l. Audit Committee – Councillor Ian Swithenbank CBE 	13	1.25pm
4. Digest of Last Meeting	37	

Date of Next Meeting: 14 February 2013, 12:30pm, LGH, The Westminster Suite

Whole Place Community Budgets

Purpose of report

For discussion at the Councillors' Forum.

Summary

This note updates the Councillors' Forum on the whole place community budget pilots and invites a discussion on the sector's response.

Recommendation

Members are asked to discuss the proposed paper.

Action

LGA Officers to proceed as directed.

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Position: Head of Programmes
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Whole Place Community Budgets

Background

1. This note updates the Councillors' Forum on the whole place community budget pilots and invites a discussion on local government's response.
2. The whole place pilots (Essex, Greater Manchester, Tri-borough and West Cheshire) were announced in late 2011. This followed LGA lobbying for a serious examination of the potential of community budgets. We have long argued that place-based approaches to funding public services will deliver more efficient and better outcomes for local people.
3. The pilots were invited, with central Government departments and local partners, to co-design a whole place community budget proposing new ways of organising, funding and delivering public services. Over the last year they have been taking forward this experiment in local public service reform.

Whole place – where we are now?

4. Operational plans and business cases from the pilots (West Cheshire, Essex, Greater Manchester and the Tri-borough) were submitted to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) on 31 October.
5. There are several key issues for Government and the sector to settle:
 - 5.1 the response from Whitehall to the conditions necessary to unlock the pilots' proposals;
 - 5.2 the case that can be made to Whitehall to make those changes; and
 - 5.3 the extent and nature of the endorsement from Government Ministers.
6. There is also a crucial issue for the rest of local government and local partners – to what extent is there an appetite to follow or better the approaches to public service reform in the pilot areas adapting them to local conditions?

The pilots have made the case

7. The pilots have set out a hard-edged evidence base for what they could do. They are modelling significant service re-design and improvement in outcomes:
 - 7.1 all four have proposals on health and social care integration. Tri-borough can release £38 million by year five of net efficiencies in health and social care by reducing unplanned acute hospital and care admissions for the 100,000 people who are elderly and have complex needs;
 - 7.2 all four have proposals to promote growth, in particular improve people's skills, to raise productivity and reduce dependency on public services. Essex is proposing a local and employer led approach to vocational skills with a payments-by-results funding model creating 8,000 additional apprenticeships by 2020;

Item 1

- 7.3 both Cheshire West and Chester and Essex are proposing new integrated approach to reduce domestic abuse including new perpetrator programmes; and
- 7.4 all four have proposals for troubled families and Cheshire West and Chester and Greater Manchester have looked at intervening early to improve children's outcomes in later life. The troubled families programme in Greater Manchester will work with a larger number of families than those strictly falling within the Troubled Families Programme criteria with the potential to release much greater savings using new investment agreements to share costs across local partners.
- 8. The proposals on growth are essential to reducing dependency and improving resilience in communities. There is a virtuous circle of reducing demand, de-commissioning and re-investing in early intervention.
- 9. However, the pilots have done more than look at specific themes where the issues are complex, cross-cutting and high cost.
- 10. They have taken a whole system, whole place approach. There will be financial savings to specific new approaches and across the local public sector, for example:
 - 10.1 in Cheshire West and Chester, they are modelling a 5 year net financial benefit of £56 million across their plans of which £24 million accrues to the health service and £11 million to the local council; and
 - 10.2 in Essex, they are modelling £414 million of benefits across their plans of which £127 million are cashable savings.

Local partners cannot deliver this alone. Delivery depends on Whitehall changing.

- 11. The outcomes and savings depend however on Whitehall making a number of changes – in effect, agreeing to a potential public service reform contract. Taking just a few examples, the proposals depend on:
 - 11.1 the Department of Health agreeing to 3 year settlements for clinical commissioning groups (CCGs), variations to national tariffs and support for a new reimbursement funding model;
 - 11.2 the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) agreeing to local employer-led strategic direction over vocational skills budgets and new payment by result models that reward providers for the delivery of job outcomes in the local economy; and
 - 11.3 Investment from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and Department of Health (DH) to scale up pilot programmes to reduce reoffending and troubled families.
- 12. This is the basis of the potential deal with central Government. Councils and their partners can make savings that help them cope with reducing public budgets and increasing demand for services if Whitehall itself takes new approaches to funding services. What has been a theoretical debate now has an evidence base.

Item 1

Making the case

13. Against this background, the LGA is preparing with the pilots:

13.1 a guide to the pilots approaches – which has been referred to as a “cookbook”. At an earlier meeting between pilot leaders and cabinet Ministers, there was strong interest from ministers in the potential for the reforms proposed by the pilots to be extended nationally. Ministers suggested a guide to enable other areas to follow the pilots' approaches adapting to local circumstance. The LGA is producing this document (and a website) drawing on the pilots' work; and

13.2 the LGA has also commissioned with the pilots Ernst and Young to analyse the national financial impact of scaling up the pilots' proposals - they have built a robust methodology to aggregate the pilots proposals and are turning the pilots' business cases into an illustration of the potential financial impact of replicating what the pilots have done more widely.

14. Finally, meetings have been arranged to discuss the Government's response with Ministers. We expect the “cookbook” and results of the Ernst and Young analysis to be ready to publish early in the New Year if that is what members decide to do and will bring the Forum fully up to date at the meeting.

Chairman's update January 2013

Local Government Association (LGA) business

1. It has been a busy run up to the Christmas break with the **Autumn Statement** on 5 December followed by the **Local Government Finance Settlement** on the 19 December. Whilst it is pleasing our campaigning has resulted in councils being protected from additional cuts next year, as you know the extra two per cent cut in 2014-15 is unsustainable. The confirmation of a further reduction in funding for local services comes on top of the unprecedented cuts councils already have to implement. This is bad news for local services and undermines the role councils can play in promoting economic recovery. We will continue to make the case that the management of these cuts, through maximizing efficiencies and redesigning services, will be impossible to repeat; and that impact on the local frontline services that residents rely on and value are very likely.
2. At the November **Leadership Board** meeting we considered Local Government Finance and Police and Crime Commissioners following the elections held in mid-November. The following day at the **Executive** meeting, discussion focused on LGA work with the British Property Federation on growth in relation to Lord Heseltine's report.
3. At the December **Leadership Board** we discussed the impact of the Autumn Statement and our membership offer. At the **Executive** meeting we discussed the forthcoming Autumn statement further and considered the Draft Local Audit Bill.
4. In mid-November I provided evidence at the **London Finance Commission**. The Mayor of London has established the Commission to help him improve the tax and public spending arrangements for London in order to promote jobs and growth. I outlined that the LGA considers that the current system of funding for local government, and indeed for public services more generally, is far too centralised and set out the LGA view that all parts of the country could and should benefit from more localised funding arrangements and more freedom to invest in infrastructure.
5. Late November I attended the **County Councils Network (CCN)** annual conference. I spoke about how valuable our close work with CCN was in working towards our shared objectives and finding the solutions to the tough issues that we in local government face.
6. Alongside Group Leaders I was pleased to visit Belfast to attend a meeting of Leaders of the UK Associations – the Northern Ireland Local Government Association, the Welsh Local Government Association and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities. We held useful discussions reviewing priorities and identifying common issues.

Item 2

Ministerial/Parliamentary business

7. Throughout November and December I met the following:
- 7.1 **Rt Hon Danny Alexander MP**, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, with Group Leaders, to discuss the Autumn statement and Local Government Finance settlement. In particular, we considered Adult Social Care funding, the Local Government Pension Scheme, Capital Financing, Infrastructure and the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) Scrutiny Rate;
 - 7.2 **Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP** to explore issues further and to discuss Business Rates retention, Early Intervention Grant, Academies' central functions funding arrangements and Community Budgets;
 - 7.3 **Rt Hon Francis Maude MP**, Minister for the Cabinet Office, to discuss community budgets further along with public sector reform and commissioning;
 - 7.4 **Matthew Hancock MP**, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Education and Business Innovation and Skills to discuss how the local delivery of skills would provide a more effective basis for local economic growth;
 - 7.5 **Rt Hon Patrick McLoughlin MP**, Secretary of State for Transport - I raised the issue of growth further, setting out the LGA's position on growth and transport and opportunities for a more localist approach to transport delivery and for greater integration between bus, road and rail delivery at the local level;
 - 7.6 **Sajid Javid MP**, Economic Secretary to the Treasury and to discuss Capital Financing, Infrastructure and the PWLB Scrutiny Rate;
 - 7.7 **Mark Prisk MP**, Minister of State for Housing, to discuss the Growth and Infrastructure Bill and Universal Credit and housing and **Rt Hon David Laws MP**, Minister of State (schools), and raised with him the role of councils in school improvement and their intervention powers; and
 - 7.8 **Anna Soubry MP**, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Health, with Cllr David Rogers OBE to discuss the relationship between national organisations and local government in relation to new public health duties and responsibilities and Richard Fuller MP to discuss our funding outlook document further.

Meetings with other organisations and individuals

8. I met with **Jeremy Newman**, Chairman of the Audit Commission to discuss the latest position with regard to the abolition of the Audit Commission and the issues arising from the pre-legislative scrutiny process on the Draft Local Audit Bill.

Item 2

9. I spoke at the community budgets conference and discussed how, with government, we have made the case for doing things differently. How working together with local communities, service users, neighbourhoods, business, the voluntary sector and community groups to co-design new approaches to public service reform we can together deliver better services. I addressed the Fighting Fraud Locally conference, which promoted the significant achievements in countering fraud made by the sector since the launch of the Fighting Fraud Locally Strategy in April 2012.

Meetings with councillors and member councils

10. I was pleased to attend the **Kent Forum** and to speak on the subject of 'How Leaders can shape the future for Local Government'.
11. I held a useful meeting with Leader of **Suffolk County Council**, Cllr Mark Bee, and Chief Executive Deborah Cadman to discuss a range of issues.
12. I visited **Northampton Borough Council** to meet with the Leader, Cllr David Mackintosh to discuss future work. I also visited **Northamptonshire County Council** to meet with the Deputy Leader Cllr Joan Kirkbride and the Chief Executive Paul Blantern.
13. I visited **Oxfordshire County Council** and met with their new Leader, Cllr Ian Hudspeth and the Cabinet to discuss current LGA work.

Item 3(a)

Children and Young People Board – report from Cllr David Simmonds (Chairman)

Ofsted Annual Report

1. At the end of November we responded to Ofsted's Annual report, which showed that schools in England were improving, but criticised some councils, saying that the variations in performance of schools between different local authority areas was too wide. We highlighted the key role that councils play in improving standards in local schools but highlighted the bureaucratic obstacles put in the way of councils in using their intervention powers to turn around failing schools.

Child sexual exploitation

2. The release of the Children's Commissioner's inquiry into child sexual exploitation in gangs and groups on 21 November showed the appalling scale of these devastating crimes. The LGA and the Children's Improvement Board (CIB) are offering councils a range of practical support and we will continue to ensure that expertise on preventing child exploitation and tracking down perpetrators is shared across the country. We will work with the inquiry through its second phase and keep you updated with any developments. You can find further information on our work on child sexual exploitation on our website: www.local.gov.uk/cse.
3. On 18 December Councillor John Osman represented the LGA at a roundtable on this issue, chaired by Children's Minister Edward Timpson MP. The meeting brought together relevant stakeholders including government departments, local government and charities to take stock of progress and consider what more can be done. The importance of local political leadership was recognised and Councillor Osman reiterated the LGA's commitment to supporting councils to tackle this terrible crime.

The councils' role in tackling tobacco conference

4. On 3 December I chaired the morning session of the Joint Children and Young People Board and Community Wellbeing Board conference on "The councils' role in tackling tobacco". The Ministerial address was given by Anna Soubury MP, the conference was well attended and there were some lively discussions.
5. A joint Community Wellbeing and Children and Young People Board resource was launched, it contains key questions, policy information, ideas for success and case studies to help local authorities and their partners tackle tobacco related issues.

The council role in education and training: raising ambition, achieving potential conference

6. The following day on 4 December I chaired the LGA's "The council role in education and training: raising ambition, achieving potential" conference. We had a variety of speakers including the Rt. Hon. David Laws MP, the Schools Commissioner, Dr Elizabeth Sidwell and Rachel Wolf, Director of the New Schools Network. Attendees discussed a wide range of issues including new school places, the Hidden Talents campaign and Raising the Participation Age. The LGA will use these discussions to inform our work in the coming months.

Item 3(a)

Children's Improvement Board (CIB)

7. In a speech to the Institute of Public Policy Research on 16 November, the Rt. Hon. Michael Gove MP confirmed that CIB would receive funding for next year 2013-14. He re-affirmed his support for sector led improvement saying that "the best people to help lead improvements in children's services are those from local government who have outstanding track records in child protection."
8. The CIB has launched a programme of development demonstrators which are being supported to share learning as they respond to the Munro Review and work to narrow the gap in achievement at the early years stage. Each of the demonstrators will be offering ten learning events to colleagues in other councils between now and the end of March. The programme of events is underway and continues to develop. An up to date schedule can be found here: <http://bit.ly/SRimAw> .
9. The CIB has produced an A-Z guide to the activities it supports nationally and in regions. This snapshot of activity is available to download <http://bit.ly/UbYwOK> . Hard copies are available from info@local.gov.uk.

Political Leadership in Children's Services Leadership Academy

10. I led and facilitated the second and third 'Political Leadership in Children's Services Leadership Academy' on 24 and 25 November and 5 and 6 December. The programme has so far attracted a third of lead members for children's services in the country and feedback has been excellent. This development event for members is funded by the Children's Improvement Board and supports lead members to work through the key challenges they face in their authorities, in their statutory role and to share experiences and learning. A hot topic was the increased expectations and scrutiny placed on lead members by the new Ofsted inspection framework. I would like to thank Cllr Rob Stanton (Wokingham) and Cllr Claire Kober (Haringey) for their input into these events. I am looking forward to the final session in the programme for this financial year in February. Whilst final funding and programme details are yet to be formally approved, I hope that the Children's Improvement Board will continue to fund this programme of events in 2013/14.

Meeting with Children's Minister

11. On 12 December I met with Children's Minister Edward Timpson MP. A key focus of the discussion was the national shortage of adopters and how the current system of recruitment and assessment could be made more effective. The meeting also discussed briefly the forthcoming Children and Families Bill, particularly in relation to Special Educational Needs and holding health partners to account; tackling child exploitation and safeguarding; and the work underway to reform children's homes. The LGA is launching a project to support councils' strategic commissioning and market shaping role in relation to children's homes, so that the system can be improved.

Visits to councils

12. I visited West Sussex County Council on 7 December for a meeting to start a regional network for members involved with scrutiny and corporate parenting.

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E-mail: sally.burlington@local.gov.uk

Item 3(b)

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

Public health funding

1. The final announcement on public health funding allocations to local authorities, widely expected to coincide with the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) announcement on the Local Government Finance Settlement has been delayed until early 2013. The LGA publicly expressed our disappointment on the postponement of this important information, just three months away from one of the most significant changes in local government in a generation.
2. The reason given for the delay is that the Department of Health is exploring options for a longer-term settlement as this will provide councils with a greater level of certainty beyond next year. We have urged the Government to announce their plans as early as possible and let councils get on with the job of delivering a high quality public health service for their local population.

Evidence session to the Communities and Local Government (CLG) Select Committee

3. Councillor Steve Bedser gave oral evidence to the CLG Select Committee on the role of local authorities in health issues on 26 November. On a panel alongside representatives from the Royal College of Nursing, District Councils Network, the University of the West of England and the British Medical Association, Councillor Bedser outlined our position that local government has consistently supported the transfer of public health to councils and that the vast majority of local areas are on course for a successful transfer of public health by April 2013, but that local authorities need confirmation of their funding allocations as soon as possible in order to finalise public health arrangements.

NHS Health Check Learning network event

4. On 28 November, Cllr Doreen Huddart spoke on the future of NHS Health Check to an audience of public health commissioners and practitioners at the fifteenth NHS Health Check National Learning Network event in London. This was followed by a question and answer session with LGA and Department of Health officers for delegates.
5. This marks the beginning of LGA co-operation with NHS Diabetes and Kidney care to provide resources and information on NHS Health Check ahead of the transfer of responsibility for commissioning the risk assessment element of the NHS Health Check transfers to local authorities in April 2013, as part of their wider responsibilities for public health.

Tobacco Conference

6. On 3 December I chaired the afternoon session of the Joint Children and Young People (CYP) Board and Community Wellbeing (CWB) Board conference on 'The councils' role in tackling tobacco'. The Ministerial address was provided by Anna Soubry MP, the conference was well attended and there were some lively

Item 3(b)

discussions.

7. This event was the second in a series of public health conferences at which resource sheets for local authorities are being launched. Each resource sheet is available at www.local.gov.uk/publications and contains key questions, policy information; ideas for success and case studies to help local authorities and their partners tackle issues such as Tobacco, Obesity and Drugs.

Improving Population Health through Primary Care conference

8. On 27 November, I spoke to around 90 conference delegates from Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), local authorities, NHS managers and voluntary sector groups at an event organised by the Public Health England transition team. The aim of the conference was to begin to develop the shared understanding of the preventative role of primary care and how primary care can reduce health inequalities, and for primary care practitioners to understand the role of local government in tackling the wider determinants of health and the opportunities for joint action.

World Economic Forum (WEF) seminar on the financial sustainability of the UK health system

9. On 28 November, Cllr Louise Goldsmith, Deputy Chair of the Community Wellbeing board, attended on behalf of the LGA a WEF seminar on the future of the UK's health system, with a focus on sharing potential visions for the health system in 2040. The workshop discussions were followed by a plenary speech from the Secretary of State for Health and discussions on the long-term strategy necessary to achieve these aims.

Show us you care campaign

10. The festive season saw the launch of the LGA's Show Us You Care Advent calendar which illustrates why this crisis will dramatically affect the look of local areas, and consequently the wellbeing of those who live in them. In 2013 we will continue to campaign for a social care system that provides much-needed certainty, is stable and fit for purpose, as well as being properly funded.
11. We need your help to achieve the ambitions of our Show Us You Care social care campaign, so if your council has not already done so, please sign up at www.local.gov.uk/show-us-you-care.

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Item 3(c)

Culture, Tourism and Sport Board – report from Cllr Flick Rea (Chair)

Meeting with Ed Vaizey MP, Minister for Culture, Communications and Creative Industries

1. I met with Ed Vaizey MP, Culture Minister, on 19 December for the latest in our regular series of meetings. We discussed the importance of positioning public libraries as central to encouraging more people to get on-line and the implementation of Universal Credit. I also raised councils' serious concerns about the progress of the ultra-fast broadband programme and secured the Minister's agreement to work with us to resolve blockages and keep the programme on track. We also discussed the centrality of the arts to economic development and the visitor economy and agreed to work together on advocacy for the arts within government.

Visitor Economy

2. On 4 December Cllr Doreen Stephenson and I met the Chief Executive of Keep Britain Tidy (KBT) to discuss councils' serious concerns about changes to the Blue Flag Scheme, which could result in 30 per cent of beaches currently in the scheme losing the coveted status in 2013. We emphasised that councils are very concerned about the potential impact this may have on the visitor economy at a time when many local businesses and communities are facing economic hardship. We secured KBT's agreement to work more closely with the LGA on communicating the changes to councillors and supporting them to improve bathing water quality in partnership with the Environment Agency and water companies.

Heritage and growth

3. I was delighted to welcome Baroness Andrews, Chair of English Heritage, to the November Culture, Tourism and Sport Board meeting. We had a very positive discussion about how we can support councils to maximise the economic impact of their investment in heritage; UK heritage tourism accounts for £4.3 billion of GDP and creates employment for 113,000 people. We agreed a new partnership with English Heritage that will see us developing a leadership offer for portfolio holders and heritage champions, and sharing different and more efficient ways of delivering local historic environmental services.

Libraries

4. I spoke at the latest in a series of joint LGA / Arts Council leadership seminars for library portfolio holders on 12 December. Ten councillors attended and shared innovative delivery models. The seminar increased awareness of how members can re-design their libraries, alongside a better understanding of the tools and support available to help them from the LGA and Arts Council. We are on track to support nearly all library portfolio holders through seminars or peer support by the end of this financial year.

Item 3(c)

Sport

5. At the invitation of Meg Munn MP, a strong advocate for increasing participation in tennis, I met the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) and Tennis for Free (TFF) on 20 November to discuss strengthening local partnerships with councils. The number of people playing tennis at a grassroots level has been falling. I emphasised the importance of early engagement with councils who, despite budget pressures, are committed to supporting participation and key to strengthening local connectivity. We also agreed to share examples of councils who are signed-up to Tennis for Free and the outcomes it has achieved.

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Item 3(d)

Economy and Transport Board – report from Cllr Peter Box CBE (Chair)

Winter Weather

1. The winter is once again upon us and the nation's attention turns to the state of our roads and whether councils are prepared for the snow. The answer is a resounding "yes".
2. The LGA's annual [Winter Readiness Survey](#) shows that councils are as well prepared as they have ever been to cope with snow and ice. We have as much salt stockpiled this year as in any other year, we have lots of new equipment, wider-reaching community schemes and more communication outlets to keep people up-to-speed with the latest information.
3. Unfortunately, our survey also found that nearly one in six councils had road salt stolen last year. As well as pilfering stock from on-street grit bins and loading it into trucks, raiders also stole actual grit bins and their contents. Some councils lost as much as 20 tonnes. Local authorities are urging people to be on the lookout for thieves stealing grit and asking residents not to buy it from door-to-door sellers.

Streetworks

4. In December, I launched a report looking at the cost to councils and businesses of poor roadworks by utilities companies. The report was picked up by the BBC and national media. The report 'Holes in our pockets? – how utility streetworks damage local growth' was launched at the House of Commons last week. In conjunction with the Association of Convenience Stores, we surveyed hundreds of high street businesses across the country to assess the impact of nearby streetworks by utility companies. Key findings include:
 - 4.1 57 per cent of shops have had streetworks nearby over the past three years;
 - 4.2 72 per cent of these were negatively affected by streetworks, with issues including forced closure, delivery delays, reduced footfall and reduced sales;
 - 4.3 43 per cent were affected for at least a month, with nine per cent at least six months;
 - 4.4 31 per cent say streetworks reduced their footfall by at least a quarter with, at worst, some losing about 2,500 customers a week;
 - 4.5 Half say they lost at least 10 per cent of sales with, at worst, some losing about £7,500 a week;
 - 4.6 96 per cent would like to see councils given enough power to ensure roads are returned to the proper standard after streetworks; and
 - 4.7 79 per cent believe utility companies should help finance the resurfacing.
5. I did state at the launch with MPs in Parliament that this was not a declaration of war on the utilities but an offer to sit down with them and try and solve a big public problem that is a barrier

Item 3(d)

to economic growth and costs councils over £200k per year. Following the launch I have written to utility company chief executives to invite them to an LGA Summit in 2013 to discuss how we can work together to improve streetworks outcomes.

Institute of Economic Development

6. I spoke at the Institute of Economic Development's (IED) Annual Conference on 27 November. It was useful to share the LGA's Local Growth Campaign with businesses and delegates and as a result, colleagues at the IED are keen to work with us and form a greater partnership between the organisation and local government. We will follow this up in the coming months.

Post Offices

7. On 3 December I chaired a meeting with Jo Swinson MP, Minister for Postal Affairs and Paula Vennells, Managing Director Post Office Limited to discuss the strategic relationship between post offices and local government. There were representatives from Barnsley, Hammersmith and Fulham, Leeds, Maidstone, Northumberland, Oxfordshire, Ryedale and Sheffield councils. A report will be published in the New Year on the ways in which local government and the post office can work together.

City Deals

8. On 19 December, Cllr Tony Ball, Vice Chair of the Economy and Transport Board, chaired a joint LGA/Centre for Cities event on City Deals. We have commissioned the Centre for Cities to develop a discussion paper on what national economic levers could be devolved to all places through a City Deals core package offer as part of future waves of City Deals. The paper will be discussed at our next Board meeting.

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Item 3(e)

Environment and Housing Board – report from Cllr Mike Jones (Chairman)

Local Government Waste Review – Challenge group meeting

1. The Environment and Housing Board has commissioned a Local Government Waste Review to allow local government to proactively lead the future direction of waste policy. The Review will look into the issues and challenges councils face in delivering waste services in the context of spending cuts, increasing demands on waste management services and recycling and landfill targets.
2. A challenge group chaired by Cllr Clyde Loakes, Vice-Chairman of the Environment and Housing Board, and consisting of high level representation from local and central government and waste sector organisations will steer, develop and provide challenge to the Review. This met for the first time on 7 December.

Greg Barker MP, Minister of State, Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC)

3. Lead Members of the Board met with Greg Barker MP on 29 November to discuss a variety of issues where the Local Government Association (LGA) and DECC priorities coincide such as the Green Deal and Fuel Poverty. It was agreed that a strategic Memorandum of Understanding between the LGA and DECC would be developed to capture shared priorities and a clear programme of work.

Nick Boles MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Planning, Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)

4. I met with Nick Boles MP in mid-December to discuss the government's proposals in a number of areas. We held a frank and productive discussion on the following topics: Permitted Development Rights; Local Development Orders; the government proposals to remove decision making on major applications from 'poor performing' authorities; barriers to plan making; and the Community Infrastructure Levy.
5. The LGA has cross party agreement to oppose the government's proposals to extend - for a time limited period - the current permitted development planning rules for householder extensions. The Government has opened a consultation on this measure, and the LGA has written to the leaders of all councils to ask them to write to the Minister and to the local MP expressing local concerns. We have also produced a model motion for debate at full council meetings.

Housing Finance Conference

6. Our 'Housing the Nation' conference on 19 December brought together councillors, officers and housing sector partners to discuss how councils are supporting building new homes, and the barriers and opportunities they face, and was chaired by Cllr Keith House and myself.
7. The conference heard from Lorely Burt MP, Parliamentary Private Secretary to Danny Alexander, key figures from the housing sector, and from member councils from around the country on how they are working to support new development.

Item 3(e)

Housing and Planning All-Party Parliamentary Group breakfast meeting

8. Cllr Eddy Poll attended the All Party Parliamentary Group for Housing and Planning on 5 December to take part in a roundtable discussion on the Growth and Infrastructure Bill, along with Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), senior DCLG officials and the two parliamentary chairs of the group Clive Betts MP and Tim Yeo MP.

Green Deal Conference

9. The LGA Green Deal conference took place on 16 November and provided an opportunity for councils to explore the potential for the Green Deal to support economic growth and explored options for procuring and financing the Green Deal.
10. The conference heard from DECC Minister Baroness Verma. A series of workshops highlighted the important role that councils will play in the Green Deal, providing interesting examples of partnership working; the role of councils as community leaders; and innovative regional working.

Beds in Sheds and Criminal Landlords - Ministerial Working group

11. On 27 November, Cllr Frances Roden provided the LGA's view to the latest meeting of this working group which gave two new ministers an opportunity to ascertain the full complexity of the so-called 'beds in sheds' problem. Colleagues from around the country gave examples of the blight upon communities, and the impact on councils that can be generated by unlicensed and sub-standard Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs).

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Item 3(f)

European & International Board – report from Cllr Dave Wilcox OBE (Chair)

Commission Work Programme 2013

1. At the most recent meeting of the Board, colleagues and I agreed a new set of lobbying priorities from the **2013 EU work programme (Brussels equivalent of the Queens Speech)**, which was published in late October. Our priorities, which are determined by the potential impact of new EU laws on our member councils and therefore fit to LGA business plan priorities, include: economic development and regeneration; public procurement; environment laws; and initiatives affecting councils as employers.
2. Translating these priorities into tangible outcomes for councils and communities will require close cooperation between local government and the European Parliament to ensure EU proposals achieve their objectives in a way that is workable and cost-effective for councils who deal with new rules on a daily basis. I look forward to working with colleagues from across all the policy Boards to raise the profile, internally and externally, of the LGA's EU lobbying programme and **mainstream these cross-cutting priorities** throughout the work of the organisation.

EU Funding 2014 - 2020

3. As the debate on the overall EU budget size develops, we remain focused on ensuring that, whatever its overall size, **structural funds supporting local growth** efforts remain a priority for 2014 - 2020. EU funding remains a priority which we are actively lobbying on, as this funding is likely to become an increasingly valuable source of investment as other pots dry up.
4. Last month the LGA **met with Michael Fallon MP**, Minister of Business, to discuss the proposed delivery model for EU funds 2014 - 2020. The programmes represent around £8 billion in the current seven-year period, funding economic development and skills activity. It is proposed the Local Enterprise Partnership based EU Growth Programme will align three EU funds into a single 'nominal allocation' to different LEP areas for the seven years, which will design local investment plans.
5. Whilst I am happy to report that this represents a success for the LGA and councils, there is however a lot of detail missing that can have a profound impact on how local the model works in practice. With the formal consultation due in Spring 2013 and the new programmes likely to start mid-2014, we are now working to ensure that: all local partners in LEP areas can have genuine levers over spending; the model is flexible in how local authorities access and use investment; and that large proportions of the funds are not top-sliced into national programmes.
6. As part of this work, Board colleagues and I recently agreed a **draft position on the process for developing new funding programmes**. We agreed with the principles set out by the Heseltine Review, that EU funds should be integrated and devolved to local partnerships, such as LEPs, as a wider package for local growth. A short brief for local authorities and partners has been prepared, setting out some of the background to the issues driving these discussions, and making some recommendations for a way forward. If you are interested in finding out more, the

briefing is available at http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/eu-policy-and-lobbying/-/journal_content/56/10171/3784463/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE.

7. We have also **commissioned further research** looking into the issues facing local authorities as they prepare for the new programmes, to inform thinking on the future models for delivery. This research project, carried out by Shared Intelligence, will report early next year. We are looking for more local authorities to be involved, so please contact Nick Porter: nick.porter@local.gov.uk if your authority might be interested.
8. Additionally, on 22 January 2013, we are holding a **national conference** on the future 2014 - 2020 programmes. The event, '**EU funds for local growth**' is free for our member authorities to attend. Speakers at the event will include: Michael Fallon MP, BIS Minister, Derek Vaughan MEP and Councillor David Sparks. Less than a year away from the new EU programmes beginning, this event will provide local authorities and partners an opportunity to discuss and develop their ambitions and approaches for using future funds.

Peer Review of the UK

9. In 2013, the Council of Europe will undertake a review of local democracy in the UK. This is a routine, periodic review – the last was in 1998 – which will examine how the UK applies the Charter of Local Self Government. At our meeting on 9 November, the Board agreed to commission an **external evaluation of UK compliance** with the Charter, with specific reference to English local government. This report will help ensure that English **local government is given due consideration** in the Congress report and hopefully can be used as a lever for change in the relationship between local and central government. I look forward to sharing the outcomes of the review with you in due course.

African Peer Review Project

10. I am pleased to confirm that four of the five pilot African peer reviews, delivered in partnership with United Cities & Local Government Africa (UCLGA) and funded by the government of Luxembourg, have now been successfully delivered. Although the fifth and final pilot peer review in the Ivory Coast was not completed before the end of 2012 due to logistical challenges, UCLGA has made a formal request to the government of Luxembourg for a six month extension in order to complete the final peer review and project evaluation. I will keep you posted as the programme draws to a close.
11. We are already looking towards **maximising the learning from the programme**, disseminating the project's achievements, as well as the **design of future activities**. As part of this work, Cllr Richard Kemp CBE, Vice Chair of the European and International Board, recently represented the LGA at the Executive Bureau and World Council meetings of United Cities & Local Governments (UCLGA) and at the 6th Summit of Africities, a triennial gathering of local government leaders across the African continent. During the Africities conference, he spoke at a dissemination seminar for the African peer review project and supported African councillors in numerous discussions with aid agencies to gain resources to support the improvement of African local government through the peer review model.

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Improvement and Innovation Board – report from Cllr Peter Fleming (Chairman)

INNOVATION

Innovative thinking webinar, 28 November

1. 'Will this era of austerity force change?' was the question that I was asked to address in an innovative thinking webinar I recently took part in. Organised by the Local Government Chronicle and Civica, I was joined by fellow panellists: Sue Smith (the Chief Executive of Cherwell District and South Northamptonshire Councils); Paul Bradbury (the Group Business Development Director at Civica); and Sarah Gillinson (the Managing Partner of the Innovation Unit) in discussing whether austerity can stimulate innovation in local government. I was keen to highlight the innovative successes of the sector so far and argued that micro innovation at a local level, combined with providing a safe and controlled environment in which to test taking risks at a national level, will help develop and promote sustainable innovative practices. These were also themes which I touched upon as a panellist in the Smith Square debate on 'what councils of the future will look like'.

Smith Square Debate

2. On Wednesday 12 December, the LGA hosted the final in its autumn series of Smith Square debates on what the councils of the future may look like. As one of the panellists, I was pleased to be able to make the case for local government, which is already the most efficient part of the public sector. Along with my fellow panellists, Jack Dromey MP (Shadow Minister for Communities and Local Government); Melani Oliver (Director for Local Government Innovation, Nesta) and the Rt Hon Don Foster MP (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Department for Communities) we faced some insightful questioning and commentary, covering issues such as the role of councils in commissioning, democratic accountability and the tension between innovation and risk. It was great to see such a high turnout at the event, which reflects how important innovation is for the future of our sector.

Improving services together

3. This emphasis on innovation is reflected through the support we are providing to the sector, such as through the Knowledge Hub, LG Inform and other online tools. We are running six regional events between January and March 2013 to help councils learn how the LGA's suite of online tools can provide new ways to understand the services they provide, manage performance, target and understand service users, share learning, and save money. For more information and to reserve your place visit www.esd.org.uk/events.

IMPROVEMENT

Corporate Peer Challenge

4. We have had a really successful year in terms of supporting councils through peer challenge; to the end of December we have delivered 87 peer challenges, including 33 corporate peer challenges for councils and Fire and Rescue Services. Importantly, we've had very good feedback, with 100 per cent of Chief Executives indicating that they would recommend peer challenge to another council. We will be working hard to continue this excellent track record into 2013.
5. On 28 November we held a really successful event in Worcester where delegates had the opportunity to hear from the local authorities explaining how they are using the LGA's corporate

peer challenge to support sector-led improvement in challenging times for local authorities. For more information about peer challenge and how your council can get involved, please contact Andy Bates at andy.bates@local.gov.uk.

LEADERSHIP

National Graduate Development Programme (NGDP)

6. Applications for Cohort 15 of the NGDP are currently open until 14 January 2013. More Councils than ever before took part in last year's programme so don't miss the chance for your council to take advantage of this programme. For further details about participating in the scheme, please contact Ami Beeton on ami.beeton@local.gov.uk.

Leadership for Improvement

7. In a joint project with the District Councils' Network we are running two 24-hour events for council leaders and chief executives to explore the leadership challenge of improving their councils in terms of greater efficiency and better use of resources, shared procurement, shared services and other service innovations. The events are being held at the Warwick Conference Centre, Coventry on 15/16 January 2013 and 19/20 March 2013 and are free to councils that are members of the DCN. If you are interested in attending please contact Evelyn Mark at evelyn.mark@local.gov.uk.

PRODUCTIVITY

Social Value conference

8. Deputy-Chair of the Board, Cllr Ruth Cadbury, gave an opening plenary speech at the Social Value conference jointly hosted by Social Enterprise UK, the LGA and the NHS Confederation. The conference aimed to prepare commissioners and suppliers for the implementation of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012. Cllr Cadbury outlined the willingness of councils to explore the benefits of social value, shared examples of councils who are already using social value in their commissioning, and promoted the importance of political leadership.

Waste Innovation Programme

9. Monday 19 November saw the Launch of a new project in Shrewsbury as part of our Waste Innovation Programme. The research project, funded by the LGA, will investigate the impact of Food Waste Disposers (FWD) over a 12 month period. However, discussions are already underway with the wider water industry to continue this for longer. I look forward to sharing the results with you.

TRANSPARENCY

Consultation on Improving Local Government Transparency

10. At the end of December we responded to DCLG's consultation on Improving Local Government Transparency. Whilst DCLG proposes making the code of practice mandatory, the LGA recommends a voluntary approach for encouraging local transparency, based on local needs and demands that would therefore be meaningful to local citizens, communities and local business.
11. Alongside the response to the consultation, we published the result of a transparency survey of local authorities carried out in September 2012. The survey revealed that all authorities comply with the code of practice on transparency to varying degrees. I am happy to report that we've had overwhelmingly positive feedback from local authorities regarding the LGA's support in developing a local transparency policy, which we will continue to develop in the New Year.

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Item 3(h)

Safer & Stronger Communities Board – report from Councillor Mehboob Khan (Chairman)

Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs)

1. Following the election of police and crime commissioners in mid-November the Home Office organised a national briefing day for PCCs on 3 December. Along with briefings on national policing and security issues and meeting ministers, there was a partner session where a number of organisations were invited to set out their impressions of PCCs' first couple of weeks in office, including the Association of Chief Police Officers, the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, the College of Policing and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary. The LGA was also invited to speak as part of this session and I spoke both about the role of police and crime panels and the benefits of councils and PCCs working together. It was clear from PCCs' comments on the contributions made that they very much see their initial focus as being to deal with issues at a local level and to raise their profile with residents. I was able to meet some of the thirty nine PCCs in attendance at a drinks reception afterwards.
2. On the same day as the Home Office event, the LGA also hosted a meeting for PCCs' chief executives which was their first chance to meet collectively in their new roles after the election. I welcomed them to the LGA, and expressed the LGA's willingness to work with them to facilitate good working relationships between PCCs and councils.

Annual Safer Communities Conference

3. At the end of November over one hundred delegates attended the annual LGA Safer Communities Conference which was chaired by the Vice-Chair of the Board, Cllr Joanna Spicer. As Board's Chair, I gave one of the key note speeches. The other key note speech was provided by Vera Baird, the new PCC for Northumbria, who talked about her experiences of her first week in office, the issues she faced and how she would be looking to work with local authorities to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. The need for local government and PCCs to work together was echoed by other speakers during the course of the day.
4. Delegates also heard about integrated victims' services, and work to reduce re-offending, tackling gang and youth violence, the community trigger pilots for dealing with anti-social behaviour, and working with troubled families. There was also a particular emphasis on linking up the new structures in health services with policing and community safety, as well as the need for local authorities and PCCs to jointly commission services.
5. At this event, the LGA and the Public Fundraising Regulatory Association (PFRA) launched a joint national agreement to improve and maintain standards of face-to-face fundraising through voluntary agreements between councils and the PFRA. 'Making the Pledge' has been drawn up as a response to a survey conducted by the LGA that showed that three quarters of councils were concerned about the impact that the aggressive behaviour of some fundraisers could have on their residents and high streets. The launch was widely picked up by the media and Safer Communities board members and PFRA partners appeared in the Independent, Today programme, First magazine, DriveTime and over a dozen local and regional papers and radio stations. The document has also been welcomed by Government and referenced in discussion before the Public Accounts Select Committee and parliamentary debate.

Item 3(h)

European Forum for Urban Safety

6. On 14 December, I represented the Safer and Stronger Communities Board at the European Forum for Urban Safety's 'Security, Democracy and Cities: the Future of Prevention' conference at the Stade de France in Paris. Speaking alongside colleagues from Norway, South Africa, Portugal and Italy in a session entitled "The Police as Agent of Prevention: Local Police and Governance", I described the recent changes in police governance in the UK culminating in the recent Police and Crime Commissioner elections, and the importance of a strong relationship with local government.

The future of local regulation

7. At the time of writing, we are planning a workshop in early January to engage our members about what local regulation should look like in the future. This will be hosted by Councillor Paul Bettison and Councillor Nilgun Canver, as LGA Regulatory and Licensing Champions.

Fire

8. The Fire Minister attended the LGA's Fire Services Management Committee on 16 November and answered questions put by Members on his vision for the fire service, his future spending plans and the government's position on sprinklers. The questioning was robust and has led to ministerial discussions on sprinklers and building regulation reform.

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Item 3(i)

Workforce Board – report by Mayor Sir Steve Bullock (Chair)

Pensions

1. The Public Service Pensions Bill, which is intended to enable the implementation of all of the new public service schemes including the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) from 2014 and the Teachers' Pension Scheme from 2015, has now passed from the Commons and is making its way through the Lords.
2. There are aspects of the Bill which are a cause for concern in respect of the agreement we have reached with the trade unions for the LGPS. We are currently in the process of meeting with Lords in relation to a set of proposed amendments to the Bill. We are also continuing to meet with the Bill team to try and reach agreement on government sponsored amendments.
3. Discussions are also continuing with unions and the Treasury to try and reach agreement on future cost control methodology.

Local Government Services

4. As the National Employers set out in their initial response to the unions' pay claim in October, the Employers have, over the course of the summer, along with colleagues in the Regional Employer Organisations (REOs), been discussing with councils what approach they should take in negotiations with the unions.
5. Lead Members from both sides met on 29 Nov at a meeting of the Local Government Services National Joint Council Executive. The Employers explained that they still wished to avoid a fourth year of no pay offer; however, negotiations would be taking place against a backdrop of ongoing financial difficulty for the sector. The Employers acknowledged the unions' frustration at having had no pay offer for three years and were therefore giving consideration to making a pay offer in due course in the region of 1 per cent, in the context of also discussing terms and conditions.
6. The unions responded by saying that although they were pleased at the Employers' willingness to engage in negotiations, they were disappointed that a link was being proposed between a pay offer and changes to some terms and conditions. The meeting ended amicably with agreement to continue dialogue in the New Year.

Public Health Workforce Transition

7. Intensive negotiations are underway to finalise agreement on the last element of the core national transfer scheme for public health staff. The unions are seeking greater clarity on protection of terms and conditions post-transfer. This is probably less of an issue for local authorities who are used to doing this sort of thing than it is for some of the new national bodies emerging from NHS reform. It is important to retain a consistent national position whilst preserving flexibilities for councils.
8. We are close also to finalising the position on public health pensions with some important technical issues around definitions of staff covered by various clauses to be finalised. We have just run the last of a series of joint regional road shows on public health which have been very well-received.

Fire

9. We continue to urge DCLG to progress the request made by the National Employers to put in place Regulations that would provide fire authorities with the same flexibilities in respect of redundancy terms for all staff covered by the NJC for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services that are currently available to local authorities. The exception being control staff for which fire authorities already have the same flexibility. We understand that detailed proposals are now with the Fire Minister and, should he be content, the intention would be to shortly move to the consultation phase.

Item 3(i)

School Teachers

10. The School Teachers' Review Body's twenty first Report was published on 5 December. The recommendations are in respect of the following issues:

- 10.1 How the pay framework for teachers should best be made more market facing in local areas;
- 10.2 How the pay scales, including the main and upper pay scales, should be reformed to effectively link pay and performance, including arrangements for progression; and
- 10.3 What other reforms should be made to teachers' pay and conditions in order to raise the status of the profession and best support the recruitment and retention of high quality teachers in all schools

11. The Review Body has proposed to retain the four pay bands (inner and outer London, the fringe and the rest of England and Wales) and not to differentiate any further by geographical area. The key recommendation is for differentiated pay progression based upon performance. The National Employers' Organisation for School Teachers (NEOST) will submit a response to the consultation on the Report, which ends on 4 January 2013.

Social enterprise/mutuals

12. We are working with the LGA programme team to deliver four regional briefings on mutuals/social enterprises spinning out from local government. We will be involving key individuals from the case studies, published on the LGA website to give delegates practical insight into the pitfalls and opportunities associated with this process. We will be leading a session at each of the four events focussing on employee engagement.

Guide for elected members on pay

13. We have produced a draft of our guide for elected members on pay policy and practice; this guide will be published shortly and contains a model pay policy statement for use in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act. In addition, the guide contains a range of questions members will wish to consider in their role as the employer within their individual councils.

Workforce podcasts

- 14. The Workforce Strategy team have produced the first in a series of podcasts to discuss what impact a significant reduction in local authority funding and large-scale public sector reform could have on how we employ, organise and manage our staff.
- 15. Sarah Messenger, the Head of Workforce, looks at what the LGA and councils can do to ensure we have the right leadership skills, innovative approaches to talent management, robust workforce planning and recruitment and retention strategies, together with modern and flexible reward systems to manage this future workforce.
- 16. The final section of the podcast examines some of the legal issues surrounding the potential transfer of staff affected by the Universal Credit welfare reforms. The Workforce News podcast can be viewed on the LGA website.

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Item 3(j)

Finance Panel – report from Cllr Sharon Taylor OBE (Chair)

Autumn Statement and Local Government Finance Settlement

1. The Autumn Statement was announced on 5 December and the LGA circulated an on the day briefing to members. Key messages were that local government has borne the brunt of cuts to public spending so far and, while it is pleasing our campaigning has resulted in councils being protected from additional cuts next year, the extra two per cent cut in 2014-15 is unsustainable.
2. Local authorities already face a possible £1 billion cut to funding for 2013/14 on top of the 28 per cent reduction set out in the spending review and the further 2 per cent now announced for 2014-15. It is generally recognised that councils have managed the cuts so far by maximising efficiencies and redesigning services. With further cuts on the horizon, this will be impossible to repeat and impacts on the local frontline services that residents rely on and value are very likely.
3. The Local Government Finance Settlement on 19 December confirmed the key numbers for 2013-14 and 2014-15. On the bright side it confirmed that following intensive LGA lobbying the government had decided to take away £180 million less for the academies funding transfer and £220 million less to support the safety net. The amount for local council tax support grant also went up by £31 million. On the other hand, it confirmed the numbers for 2014-15 will include the additional 2 per cent cut so that there will be a total cut in funding for 2014-15 of 8.6 per cent.
4. The LGA issued a full on the day briefing. This can found at http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=040e5017-0ec4-49fe-8461-3a2c5b9cf9c6&groupId=10171
5. Two days before the settlement, on 17 December, I chaired a local government finance conference where we had speakers from the Treasury and the LGA as well as leading commentators such as Tony Travers and treasurers from authorities.

Pension fund investment in infrastructure

6. The LGA and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy held a roundtable on pension fund investment in infrastructure on 11 December, which was chaired by Cllr John Fuller. The roundtable brought together a range of parties with an interest in this issue, including representatives from Local Government Pension Scheme funds, finance officers, government departments, infrastructure specialists and capital finance experts. Two more roundtables are planned with a view to publishing a set of documents, intended to inform and provoke debate, in March on issues such as how infrastructure investment opportunities could be structured to provide a rate of return and risk profile that is attractive to pension funds.
7. The LGA's Local Government Pensions Committee also responded to DCLG consultation on two options for amending the the Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2009 to provide Funds greater flexibility to invest in infrastructure. The LGA's response supported a move to include a new infrastructure asset class with its own limit rather than extending an existing limit on a more general class. The consultation closed on 2 December.

Item 3(j)

Local Council Tax Support

8. The Finance Panel at its November meeting also considered a report on the implementation of local council tax support, where we talked about the lobbying in Parliament, detailed work on the forecasts which will determine grant funding and the implementation of schemes. Our research, which was conducted before councils had a chance to digest the implications of the announcement on transitional funding, indicated that 90% of councils propose to introduce a minimum payment for working age claimants. As councils finalise their schemes, before the deadline of 31 January, we will continue to monitor the situation carefully.
9. The LGA continues to have significant concerns about how the new council tax support arrangements will impact on collection rates for council tax, which historically have been maintained at very high levels.

Welfare Reform

10. We also took a report at the last Finance Panel on Welfare Reform. Members confirmed that they were happy with the work on the future role of councils in universal credit to continue on the lines it is at present. This is working with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), local authority experts and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA) and the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) to establish just what role councils will have in Universal Credit (UC), which will roll out gradually following October 2013. Further, a limited 'pathfinder' will begin within Greater Manchester in April 2013
11. The Task Force composed of officers from the Department for Work and Pensions, the WLGA, CoSLA and the LGA has been meeting. The Task Force's first phase of work has culminated in a draft document for Lord Freud's approval outlining what services need to be provided to support phase 1 of UC rollout and how these services will be funded. The LGA is currently working with the Department for Work and Pensions to finalise this document.
12. This is leading towards an announcement and consultation from Lord Freud in January. Key questions will be how a face-to-face UC service will operate and how this might be funded.
13. The local authority-led pilots for UC have been continuing their work. LGA officers are keeping in touch with the lessons which they are providing which we hope will feed into the national framework for face to face services. The first phase of evaluation will take place in January 2013.
14. On 19 December, along with Paul Raynes from the LGA, I gave evidence to the Communities and Local Government Select Committee Inquiry into the Implementation of Welfare Reform.

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Item 3(k)

Resources Panel – report from Cllr Stephen Castle (Chairman)

1. At its last meeting in November, the Resources Panel reviewed progress with the renegotiation of the Liberata contract for the LGA's back office services which is currently underway following the completion of an independent benchmarking review. A firm deadline of having a revised contract in place by April 2013 was set by the Panel.
2. The Panel finalised recommendations for LGA membership subscriptions for 2013/14. These proposals have now been agreed by the LGA's Leadership Board. The Panel has continued with the LGA's policy of the last six years of substantially reducing the overall level of subscriptions, this year taking into account of the impact of the 2012 Census data on the subscription calculations. A new loyalty discount for those members currently not on notice to withdraw will also be introduced from 2013/14.
3. The Panel reviewed a medium-term financial strategy for the LGA and initial proposals for the 2013/14 budget. Final recommendations on the LGA's budget for next year will be considered at the next meeting of the Panel in February prior to this being agreed by the LGA Executive in March along with the business plan. Members also reviewed the LGA's in-year financial performance.
4. A Pay Policy Statement for the LGA was agreed. Members also reviewed the performance of the LGA's treasury management function and noted that the LGA's cash balances were being managed in line with the agreed strategy.
5. This was Stephen Jones's last meeting as Director of Finance and Resources, before his retirement at the end of December. The Panel thanked Stephen for his commitment to the LGA and local government as a whole.

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Item 3(I)

**Audit Committee – Report from Cllr Ian Swithenbank CBE
(Chairman)**

1. The LGA's Audit and Scrutiny Panel has been superseded by a newly constituted Audit Committee, which will focus on external and internal audit, with responsibility for scrutiny being transferred to the LGA's Resources Panel.
2. At its first meeting of the new political cycle in November, the Committee focused on the report of the internal auditor, Parkhill, on the first phase of the internal audit programme for 2012/13. The internal auditor's findings were generally positive with "substantial assurance" opinions being given for Procurement and Human Resources, demonstrating that the policies and procedures in place for these areas are fit for purpose and that for the most part there is a high degree of compliance with them. An "adequate assurance" opinion was given for Income Generating Activities, and concerted action is now being taken to address the issues identified in this area.
3. At its next meeting the Audit Committee will receive the annual report from Parkhill, covering the internal audit programme for the full year, and also review the audited statutory accounts for the LGA and its associated companies before these are adopted by the General Assembly and the individual company boards.

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Digest of Meeting

Title:	Councillors' Forum
Date and time:	22 November 2012, 12.30pm
Venue:	The Westminster Suite, Local Government House

Item

Welcome and Introductions

Councillor Sir Merrick Cockell, Chairman of the LGA, welcomed members to the Forum meeting and introduced speaker Mark Prisk MP, Minister of State for Housing, Department for Communities and Local Government, to present to members about housing issues, providing an opportunity for members to raise any issues for local government.

1 Housing the Nation

Members received a talk from Mark Prisk MP in which he principally addressed housing issues but also spoke about local growth, regeneration, Local Enterprise Partnerships and high streets.

On the topic of the Government's approach in dealing with what has been a dysfunctional housing system for up to twenty years, Mr Prisk explained that the demand for housing has not been responded to sufficiently. To tackle this, Mr Prisk continued, the government is taking a comprehensive and collaborative approach, working in partnership with different sectors to supply housing for the demand.

Acknowledging that central and local government is operating in a constrained financial environment, and that this is not going to change, Mr Prisk emphasised the need for working collaboratively with the private sector to encourage inward investment in housing.

Mr Prisk gave several examples of how the government is focusing its approach, including through planning reform, drawing in private investment, building new affordable homes, reducing empty homes, getting public land back into use, and right to buy and self-build or custom-build schemes. Mr Prisk highlighted the potential of custom-build schemes as an additional tool in local government's armoury for tackling housing problems.

Members were told that local government's input and opinion was welcomed, particularly for non-city areas, and Mr Prisk praised the

Item 4

LGA for its work in this area. He invited members to contribute to the conversation surrounding the development of housing as such developments affect communities and this is a local issue.

The Chairman invited questions from the Forum and Members raised several issues which were addressed in turn.

Key issues raised in the discussion were as follows:

- The importance of providing quality of life alongside housing so ensuring there are jobs and services for new residents;
- The potential of expanding city deals to rural or county areas;
- Concerns that affordable housing is only affordable for the first buyer;
- The difficulties of tackling homelessness and links with welfare reform and localisation of council tax;
- Representation of district councils on Local Enterprise Partnerships;
- Commuter areas around London becoming unaffordable for many first time buyers;
- The possibility of rural areas unlocking potential for affordable housing; and
- The need for initiatives to be local and flexible.

The Chairman thanked Mark Prisk MP for attending the Forum and for providing councillors with the opportunity to discuss current housing issues.

2 Chairman's Update

Members noted and accepted the Chairman's report.

3 LGA Board and Panel Chairs' Reports

Members noted the updates from each of the LGA's Board Chairs.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 10 January, 12:30pm, The Westminster Suite, Local Government House

LGA location map

Local Government Association

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Public transport

Local Government House is well served by public transport. The nearest mainline stations are: Victoria and Waterloo: the local underground stations are **St James's Park** (Circle and District Lines), **Westminster** (Circle, District and Jubilee Lines), and **Pimlico** (Victoria Line) - all about 10 minutes walk away.

Buses 3 and 87 travel along Millbank, and the 507 between Victoria and Waterloo stops in Horseferry Road close to Dean Bradley Street.

Bus routes – Horseferry Road

- 507** Waterloo - Victoria
- C10** Canada Water - Pimlico - Victoria
- 88** Camden Town - Whitehall - Westminster - Pimlico - Clapham Common

Bus routes – Millbank

- 87** Wandsworth - Aldwych
- 3** Crystal Palace - Brixton - Oxford Circus

For further information, visit the Transport for London website at www.tfl.gov.uk

Cycling facilities

The nearest Barclays cycle hire racks are in Smith Square. Cycle racks are also available at Local Government House. Please telephone the LGA on 020 7664 3131.

Central London Congestion Charging Zone

Local Government House is located within the congestion charging zone.

For further details, please call 0845 900 1234 or visit the website at www.cclondon.com

Car parks

- Abingdon Street Car Park (off Great College Street)
- Horseferry Road Car Park
- Horseferry Road/Arneway Street. Visit the website at www.westminster.gov.uk/parking

