

Councillors' Forum

Agenda

Thursday 18 July 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

Welcome!

Please read these notes for your own safety and that of all visitors, staff and tenants.

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Councillors' Forum
18 July 2013

The **Councillors' Forum** meeting will be held on **Thursday 18 July 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 3 & 4 (Ground floor)
11.00am	Liberal Democrat	Smith Square Rooms 1 & 2 (Ground floor)
11.00am	Independent	Rathbone 1 & 2 (7 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

Jonathan Yeates (Tel: 020 7664 3236, Email: jonathan.yeates@local.gov.uk)

Guest WiFi in Local Government House

This is available in Local Government House for visitors. It can be accessed by enabling Wireless Network Connection on your computer and connecting to LGH-guest, the password is Welcome2010LG.

Carers' Allowance

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Councillors' Forum 2012-2013

Updated 04.06.13

This Forum comprises a core group of 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)	Kensington and Chelsea Royal Borough Council
Tony Ball	Basildon Borough Council
Teresa O'Neill	Bexley Council
Paul Bettison	Bracknell Forest Borough Council
Louise McKinlay	Brentwood Borough Council
Geoffrey Theobald OBE	Brighton & Hove City Council
Martin Tett	Buckinghamshire County Council
Richard Stay	Central Bedfordshire Council
Paul Findlow	Cheshire East Council
Mike Jones	Cheshire West and Chester Council
Ken Taylor OBE	Coventry City Council
Andrew Lewer	Derbyshire County Council
Ken Thornber CBE	Hampshire County Council
Roger Phillips	Herefordshire Council
Robert Gordon CBE DL	Hertfordshire County Council
David Simmonds	Hillingdon London Borough Council
Paul Carter	Kent County Council
Robert Light	Kirklees Metropolitan Council
Clare Whelan OBE	Lambeth London Borough Council
Martin Hill OBE	Lincolnshire County Council
Bill Borrett	Norfolk County Council
Marco Cereste	Peterborough City Council
Ken Hudson JP MBE	Preston City Council
Neil Clarke	Rushcliffe Borough Council
Peter Fleming	Sevenoaks District Council
Kate Wild	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Gary Porter	South Holland District Council
Jeff Milburn	South Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council
Philip Atkins	Staffordshire County Council
Sir William Lawrence Bt	Stratford-on-Avon District Council
Joanna Spicer	Suffolk County Council
Mark Bee	Suffolk County Council
Kay Hammond	Surrey County Council
David Hodge	Surrey County Council
Gordon Keymer CBE	Tandridge District Council
Ravi Govindia	Wandsworth London Borough Council
Louise Goldsmith	West Sussex County Council
Melvyn Caplan	Westminster City Council

Labour [36] <i>(plus sub pool)</i>	
Sharon Taylor OBE	Stevenage Borough Council
Bryony Rudkin	Suffolk County Council
Judi Billing	North Hertfordshire District Council
Sian Timoney	Luton Borough Council
Caitlin Bisknell	High Peak Borough Council
David Wilcox OBE	Derbyshire County Council
Graham Chapman	Nottingham City Council
Eion Watts	Bolsover District Council
Clyde Loakes	Waltham Forest London Borough Council
Ruth Cadbury	Hounslow London Borough Council
Sir Steve Bullock	Lewisham London Borough Council
Jules Pipe	Hackney London Borough Council
Catherine West	Islington Council
Paul Watson	Sunderland City Council
Simon Henig	Durham County Council
Ian Swithenbank CBE	Northumberland Council
Tim Moore	Liverpool City Council
Jim McMahon	Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
John Merry	Salford City Council
Linda Thomas	Bolton Council
Richard Leese CBE	Manchester City Council
Lord Peter Smith	Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council
Colin Lloyd	Crawley Borough Council
Helen Holland	Bristol City Council
David Phillips	Swansea City and County Council
David Sparks OBE	Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Ann Lucas	Coventry City Council
Roger Lawrence	Wolverhampton City Council
James Alexander	City of York Council
Keith Wakefield	Leeds City Council
Peter Box CBE	Wakefield Metropolitan District Council
Mehboob Khan	Kirklees Metropolitan Council
Sir Stephen Houghton CBE	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Mike Roberts	Rushmoor Borough Council
<i>Kate Hollern</i>	<i>Darwen Borough Council</i>
<i>Hazel Simmons</i>	<i>Luton Borough Council</i>
<i>Julie Young</i>	<i>Essex County Council</i>
<i>Chris Fegan</i>	<i>Chelmsford City Council</i>
<i>Michael Payne</i>	<i>Gedling Borough Council</i>
<i>Anne Western</i>	<i>Derbyshire County Council</i>
<i>Paul Bayliss</i>	<i>Derby City Council</i>
<i>Rory Palmer</i>	<i>Leicester City Council</i>
<i>Robert Parker</i>	<i>Lincolnshire County Council</i>
<i>Tony Belton</i>	<i>Wandsworth London Borough Council</i>
<i>Sir Robin Wales</i>	<i>Newham London Borough Council</i>
<i>Theo Blackwell</i>	<i>Camden Council</i>
<i>Jagdish Sharma MBE JP MA</i>	<i>Hounslow London Borough Council</i>
<i>Robert Khan</i>	<i>Islington Council</i>
	<i>Kensington and Chelsea Royal Borough Council</i>
<i>Judith Blakeman</i>	<i>Council</i>
<i>Catherine McDonald</i>	<i>Southwark Council</i>
<i>David Edger</i>	<i>Tower Hamlets Council</i>

<i>Len Duvall</i>	<i>Greater London Authority</i>
<i>Iain Malcolm</i>	<i>South Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council</i>
<i>Anne Schofield</i>	<i>Newcastle upon Tyne City Council</i>
<i>Mike Connolly</i>	<i>Bury Metropolitan Borough Council</i>
<i>Ronnie Round JP</i>	<i>Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council</i>
<i>Tony McDermott MBE</i>	<i>Halton Borough Council</i>
<i>Marie Rimmer CBE</i>	<i>St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council</i>
<i>Sue Murphy</i>	<i>Manchester City Council</i>
<i>Brenda Warrington</i>	<i>Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council</i>
<i>Ian Stockdale</i>	<i>Cumbria County Council</i>
<i>Simon Blackburn</i>	<i>Blackpool Council</i>
<i>Justin Madders</i>	<i>Cheshire West and Chester Council</i>
<i>Tony Page</i>	<i>Reading Borough Council</i>
<i>Roger Hutchinson</i>	<i>South Gloucestershire</i>
<i>Tudor Evans</i>	<i>Plymouth City Council</i>
<i>Aaron Shotton</i>	<i>Flintshire County Council</i>
<i>John Mutton</i>	<i>Coventry City Council</i>
<i>Steve Eling</i>	<i>Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council</i>
<i>Catharine Grundy</i>	<i>Birmingham City Council</i>
<i>Ian Ward</i>	<i>Birmingham City Council</i>
<i>Mohammed Pervez</i>	<i>Stoke-on-Trent City Council</i>
<i>Roger Stone OBE</i>	<i>Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council</i>
<i>Judith Blake</i>	<i>Leeds City Council</i>
Liberal Democrat (14)	
Roger Symonds	Cambridge City Council
Flick Rea MBE	Camden Council
Keith House	Eastleigh Borough Council
Jeremy Hilton	Gloucestershire County Council
David Neighbour	Hart District Council
Liz Green	Kingston upon Thames Royal Borough Council
Kath Pinnock	Kirklees Metropolitan Council
Duwayne Brooks	Lewisham London Borough Council
Richard Kemp CBE	Liverpool City Council
Howard Sykes	Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
Jill Shortland OBE	Somerset County Council
Cathy Bakewell MBE	Somerset County Council
Stan Collins	South Lakeland District Council
Lord Graham Tope CBE	Sutton London Borough Council
Additional Member:	
Paul Tilsley MBE	Birmingham City Council
<i>Substitutes</i>	
Tim Bick	Cambridge City Council
Edward Lord OBE JP	City of London Corporation
Hilary Jones	Derby City Council
Chris White	Hertfordshire County Council

Abigail Bell	Hull City Council
Terry Stacy MBE JP	Islington Council
Stephen Knight	Richmond upon Thames London Borough Council
Alan Connett	Teignbridge District Council
Mayor Dorothy Thornhill MBE	Watford Borough Council
Liz Tucker	Worcestershire County Council
Independent [7]	
Peter Jones	Babergh District Council
Julian German	Cornwall Council
Chris Townsend	Mole Valley District Council
Paul Cullen	Richmondshire District Council
Pauline Dee	Shropshire Council
Christopher Newbury	Wiltshire County Council
Norman Bradbury	Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council
Marianne Overton	Lincolnshire County Council
Bob Dutton OBE	Wrexham County Borough Council
Apu Bagchi	Bedford Council

Agenda

Councillors' Forum

Thursday 18 July 2013

12.30pm – 1.30pm

The Westminster Suite, Local Government House

	Item	Page	Time
1.	Serious and Organised Crime Charles Farr, Director General of the Office of Security and Counter Terrorism at the Home Office will speak to Councillors' Forum about serious and organised crime issues and the government's reworking of the organised crime strategy 'Local to Global: Reducing the Risk from Organised Crime'.	3	12.30pm
2.	Chairman's Update	7	1.20pm
3.	LGA Board and Panel Chairs' Reports <ul 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 MBE 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. Bonds Task & Finish Group – Councilman Edward Lord OBE JP l. Audit Committee – Cllr Ian Swithenbank CBE m. Resources Panel – Cllr David Neighbour 	9	1.25pm
4.	Digest of Last Meeting	39	

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 12th September 2013, 12:30pm, LGH, Westminster Suite

Serious and Organised Crime

Purpose of report

For information and discussion.

Summary

Charles Farr, Director General of the Office of Security and Counter Terrorism at the Home Office will speak to Councillors' Forum about serious and organised crime issues and the government's reworking of the organised crime strategy 'Local to Global: Reducing the Risk from Organised Crime'. It is an opportunity for members to raise any issues for local government.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the presentation and discuss issues for local government.

Action

Officers to action as appropriate.

Contact officer: Helen Murray
Position: Head of Programmes, LGA
Phone no: 020 7664 3266
E-mail: helen.murray@local.gov.uk

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Serious and Organised Crime

Background

1. Organised crime has a national dimension but it also causes harm locally. It is felt across neighbourhoods – both urban and rural – through a wide range of activities including illegal drugs and bootleg alcohol supply, violence, illegal gun possession, gangs and internet fraud. Because organised crime transcends boundaries, it must be tackled by local policing, strongly grounded in communities, but also by police forces and other agencies working collaboratively across force and institutional boundaries.
2. The overall cost to the UK from organised crime is estimated as between £20 billion to £40 billion a year. It involves around 38,000 individuals operating as part of around 6,000 criminal gangs, about half of which are involved in the illegal drugs trade.
3. Organised crime poses a particular threat through its scale and organisation, international connections, willingness to use violence and intimidation, the corruption that often results from it, and its links with legitimate businesses often as a means of laundering money. Organised crime groups operating in the UK involved in drugs trafficking, supply and use of firearms, cyber-crime, fraud, people trafficking, money laundering, organised acquisitive crime (such as metal theft) and child sexual exploitation. As a result organised crime will now be treated as a national security risk.
4. The Government's Strategic Policing Requirement sets out the national threats that the police must address in strategic terms and all forces in England and Wales and Police and Crime Commissioners must have regard to this when drawing up their Police and Crime Plan. Subject to the passage of the Crime and Courts Bill, the new National Crime Agency will be fully operational by December 2013 and will tackle organised crime; strengthen our borders; fight fraud and cyber crime; protect children and young people. It will build on the work of the Serious Organised Crime Agency, the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre and will incorporate some of the functions of the National Policing Improvement Agency.
5. In May, the Home Secretary transferred responsibility for serious and organised crime within the Home Office to the Office of Security and Counter Terrorism (OSCT). At the same time OSCT were asked to rework the government's organised crime strategy 'Local to Global: Reducing the Risk from Organised Crime', which was last updated in 2011. As well as proposing the establishment of the National Crime Agency, this earlier document placed an emphasis on preventative work alongside a focus on enforcement activity, and a section on improving intelligence gathering and enhanced international co-operation.

The review of the Strategy

6. OSCT's aim is to develop a strategy to tackle organised crime that is clear, practical and effective. They are looking to bring central and local government together with law enforcement and security agencies, the private sector and communities. The counter-terrorism strategy (CONTEST) will provide a model for the structure of the new strategy in setting out the threats serious and organised crime pose to the country.
7. In developing the strategy OSCT want to include initiatives and programmes that meet the needs of organisations and bodies at the forefront of the work against organised crime. Senior Officials are therefore keen to hear from a wide range of partners about

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what the new strategy should contain so that there is a clearly defined set of objectives and programmes.

The role of local government

8. OSCT feels that the relationships they have built up with local authorities as part of their work under CONTEST has been one of the reasons for success in delivery of this strategy. The impact of organised crime on councils and the communities they serve is more widespread, so the OSCT would like to explore how they can work with councils, how any good practice can be identified and circulated, and what can be done to assist councils in their work that relates to tackling organised crime.

Biography

9. Charles Farr took up his post as Director General of the Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism (OSCT) in July 2007. Charles joined the diplomatic service in 1985 and has served at British embassies in South Africa and Jordan. Since 2003, he has held a number of senior posts in Whitehall dealing with security and counter-terrorism.

Chairman's Update - June 2013

LGA Business

1. Over the course of June, I attended all five of **LGA Vice Presidents Lunches** with our President Lord Best. Kindly hosted by Clive Betts MP on the parliamentary estate, the lunches focused on **sustainable funding**, economic **growth**, the future of **social care**, **welfare reform** and the new **independent model for local government** respectively. The lunches were well received with **cross-party attendance** from over **40 MPs and Peers**.
2. It was a pleasure to see the recognition many councillors received in **HM The Queen's Birthday Honours list** this year. They were richly **deserved for services to local government** and the communities our members serve.
3. With May's ministerial meetings on the latest **Spending Round** behind us, our message continued to spread far and wide, reaching several media outlets in the run up to the **Chancellor's Statement**. Between College Green, the Millbank studios and various ISDN lines, I discussed our response to the Spending Round on **5Live, BBC Breakfast, Daily Politics, World at One, Channel 5 News** and **Sky News Live**. In print, interviews with the **Sunday Telegraph's** Rob Watts, Mike Sergeant of the **BBC** and the **LGC's Mark Sumalian** continued to spread our message yet further in the days that followed the announcement.
4. In brief, June's **Leadership Board** focussed on the Future Funding Model, Community Cohesion and mapping the impacts of Welfare reform while in **LGA Executive** we welcomed **Jon Rouse**, the DG for Social Care, Local Government and Care Partnerships from the Department of Health to report on Integrated Care. A number of items including **Council Tax Referendums and Levying Bodies** were also discussed. Understandably, **Community Cohesion** was also on the Exec agenda following the disturbing events in Woolwich.
5. More importantly, at the end of the month I was able to speak to several member authorities (in excess of 35) during the **second Chairman's phone-in**. Questions focused on the affordability of **council tax freezes**, public sector **pay progression** and the reaction to a **further 10% cut** in year 2015-16.

Ministerial/Parliamentary business

6. Our on-going contact with the Department of Health manifested in a meeting with Health Minister, **Anna Soubry MP**, to discuss the Death Certification fee. The **National Association of Funeral Directors** and the **National Society of Allied & Independent Funeral Directors** were represented at the meeting.

In June I also met:

7. **Rt Hon Ed Balls MP**, Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer, to promote the need for our **new model for local government** as part of the Labour Party policy review process. Discussions also touched on **financial sustainability in the sector**, Community Budgets and social care.

8. Alongside **Chloe Smith MP**, Minister for Political and Constitutional Reform, I was hosted by Cllr David Hodge, **Leader of Surrey County Council (SCC)** in Guildford to **co-launch the One Public Estate pilots** with the Cabinet Office. We visited a recently acquired property of SCC, before stopping at Guildford Fire Station for the official launch.
9. **Lord Green of Hustlerpoint**, Minister of State for Trade and Investment, to discuss a closer, more **strategic relationship with the LGA and UK Trade and Investment**. Discussions focused on the role local government can play in supporting and attracting UK inward investment and exports.
10. In the first week of July at **LGA Annual Conference** in Manchester, I also met with **Lord Heseltine**, Communities Secretary **Eric Pickles**, Secretary of State for Health **Jeremy Hunt** and Shadow Cabinet Ministers **Hilary Benn MP** and **Andy Burnham MP**. Discussions were informal and in good spirit despite initial Whitehall reaction to the launch of *Rewiring Public Services*.

Meetings with other organisations and individuals

11. Following a mandate from the Communities Secretary, the **Information Commissioner Christopher Graham** and David Evans visited Local Government House to discuss **data protection compliance** in local government.
12. After joining our Smith Square Debates panel alongside **Martin McTague**, Chairman of the **Federation of Small Businesses**, we met again in June, this time to discuss SMEs and growth for the sector.
13. I also had a number of informal evening engagements and speaking events, including the Evolve Dinner and addressing guests at the annual MJ awards.

Meetings with councillors and member councils

14. In the first week of June, I spent 5 days participating in the **Darlington Corporate Peer Challenge**, a thoroughly worthwhile exercise for all participants.
15. While in **Reading**, I met with Cllr Andrew Cumpsty and spoke to senior business players about infrastructure and development. My speech focused on local government's role in delivering **sustainable growth for the UK economy**.
16. Following May's elections I was invited to meet with new **Leader of Essex County Council**, Cllr David Finch. I look forward to further meetings with newly elected councillors in the coming months.
17. With members of the LGA Corporate Leadership team, myself and Carolyn attended **Ashridge Business School** in Berkhamstead to take part in an intensive 24 hour session to finalise the LGA's new model for local government. The hard work of the organisation and contributions from across England and Wales are reflected in the strength of our recently launched publications around **Rewiring Public Services**.

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

Corporate Parenting

1. In early June I spoke at a joint meeting of the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for children and the APPG for children in care and care leavers. I was part of a panel alongside the Children's Minister, Edward Timpson MP, Councillor Andrew Harper, lead member in Barnet and a number of young people in care, talking about councils' important role in corporate parenting. I was pleased to see that a large number of looked after children attended the session and were able to ask questions and raise issues important to them.

Children's centres

2. This month I wrote an article for First magazine about early years education and used the opportunity to launch our publication 'Bright futures: Local children, local approaches'. This report includes a plethora of good practice case studies which show how councils up and down the country are using children's centres to help deliver early intervention through integrated health provision and getting children school-ready, along with delivering wider community outcomes such as helping parents back into work and tackling domestic violence.

Prosecution of child abuse cases

3. I met this month with the Crown Prosecution Service to discuss how to improve the prosecution of child abuse cases, including how to encourage more effective working between the different parts of the system and improve the process for vulnerable victims. I highlighted the importance of looking at the whole experience for victims, not just the court part of the process. This is related to the LGA's wider work on tackling child sexual exploitation.

LGA helps councils claw back £94 million from Department for Education

4. On 5 June the Government announced the return of £94 million in schools funding which was incorrectly taken from them in 2012/13. 101 authorities will get to share a £94.16m refund from the Department for Education in recognition of unfair cuts made to the money councils received in 2012/13 to deliver school support services. The LACSEG (Local Authority Central Services Equivalent Grant) refunds for 12-13 are the final payment which follows the legal action taken by 31 authorities. This means that of the original £265m top-slice around 35% will have been repaid – that follows repayment of £58m of the top slice of £148m for 11-12 – around 39%. This is a great victory for mums, dads and their school-age children and I am proud that the LGA was able to lend a helping hand in getting this money returned.

Housing support for teenagers

5. On 21st June I appeared on BBC Breakfast and BBC Radio 5 Live to discuss a report by Homeless Link on housing support for 16 to 17-year-olds. I defended councils over the report which claimed teenagers are being placed in unsuitable accommodation by their councils. The report was wrong to suggest that young adults are being failed by their

council unless they receive an immediate social services referral. Teenagers request housing for a variety of reasons whether this be family breakdown, young people already in the care system who are now seeking greater independence or teenagers coming in with their mums and dads to find out what housing support may be available to them. The council will quite rightly assess the situations and seek the solution that best fits their needs, which includes working with them and their parents to resolve any issues before making a formal social services assessment.

Overhaul of children's residential care

6. This month the Government announced an overhaul of children's residential care. These reforms it is claimed will lead to higher quality in children's homes with a focus on transparency. I spoke to the press to discuss the LGA's response to the reforms. Councils want to see a range of high-quality residential homes as part of a package of opportunities to give children a fresh start when things have gone wrong at home. The biggest concern for councils is the welfare of the children they care for, and the flexibility to place children away from the area where abuse or neglect has brought them into the care system can give them a new beginning away from these problems. It is vital that these care home providers are more transparent and Councils have confidence that the care homes in which they place children will provide the best quality of care for them.

Hidden Talents Conference

7. On 5 June I chaired the Hidden Talents conference at Local Government House. The conference brought councillors from across the country together to discuss the LGA campaign for a more devolved approach to tackling youth disengagement from work and learning.

Meeting with Baroness Steadman-Scott

8. Engaging with marginalised young people is a becoming an increasing issue. Young people outside of employment or training risk complete alienation from society. Therefore I held meeting with Baroness Steadman-Scott to take forward discussions on how to engage these young people in work.

National Children's Bureau

9. Met with NCB to discuss future working with the Department for Education voluntary sector partners

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Position: Head of Programmes
Phone no: 020 7664 3172
E-mail: Helen.johnston@local.gov.uk

Community Wellbeing Board – report from Cllr Zoe Patrick (Chair)

Spending Round 2015-16

1. Despite a very difficult settlement for local government overall, there was positive news in relation to funding for adult social care and health. The Government has listened to the LGA's concerns regarding the importance of providing sustainable funding for adult social care.
2. The Spending Round announced a "£3.8 billion pooled budget for health and social care services, shared between the NHS and local authorities to deliver better outcomes and greater efficiencies through more integrated services for older and disabled people". This followed weeks of negotiations between the LGA and colleagues from NHS England (NHSE) and Whitehall departments. We welcome the continuation of the existing NHS transfer to adult social care as set out in the 2010 Spending Review, and the additional funding of over £2 billion to "join up local health social care services to deliver better, more efficient care". However, this transfer does not disguise the fact that council funding will have been cut by the equivalent of four times this amount across the life of this Parliament. Our 'On the day briefing' is available at: <http://tinyurl.com/ogyeko2>.

Working for adult social care reform and sustainable funding

3. The Community Wellbeing Board has been active representing the sector's views in the media and at a number of parliamentary and third sector events. LGA Director Andrew Webster provided oral evidence to the Health Select Committee inquiry on Health and Social Care Act implementation and I took part in two Guardian Online debates on the future of adult social care. I also attended the LGA's lunch for its parliamentary vice-presidents hosted by Clive Betts MP and Lord Best.
4. Cllr Gillian Ford discussed how to make the Government's Dilnot-inspired cost cap work at a Parliamentary reception hosted by Lord Lipsey and Partnership. Board Members also attended the launch of the King's Fund forthcoming review of the current health and social care settlement; spoke at the Dementia Action Alliance's Quarterly meeting hosted at Local Government House, and at the LGA Rural Commission Cllr Colin Noble outlined the Board's positions on the future of social care.

Sector led improvement

5. Cllr Louise Goldsmith and Cllr Linda Thomas participated in the Health and Wellbeing Leadership: Delivering Improved Outcomes for Local Communities events held in Leeds and London as part of our new joint Health and Wellbeing System Improvement Programme, which is funded by the Department of Health. The programme encompasses health and wellbeing boards, public health and Healthwatch.

New duty to appoint medical examiners to oversee the death certification process

6. On 10 June, the LGA Chairman met Health Minister, Anna Soubry MP and representatives of funeral directors to discuss the implementation of the new duty for upper-tier local government to appoint medical examiners to oversee the death certification process. The costs of the new services, likely to be implemented in October 2014, will be met through a new fee for death certification. The Minister

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endorsed the LGA's pragmatic approach to develop a voluntary national agreement between local authorities and funeral directors, allowing funeral directors to opt-in to collect the death certification fee on behalf of local government. A further meeting has been arranged to make progress on the agreement.

Children and Young People's Health

7. The Children's Health and Wellbeing Partnership (CHWP) met on 19 June for its first official meeting. The LGA sits on this partnership in addition to representatives from key bodies from the Department for Education, the health sector and local councils. The Partnership has begun work on effective commissioning, early Intervention, Identification and Prevention, and integrated care and support for children and young people.
8. The Community Wellbeing Board continues to work to ensure a safe and sustainable transfer of commissioning responsibilities for 0-5 year olds to local government in 2015. A joint teleconference between Lead Members of the Community Wellbeing Board and the Children and Young People's Board will also consider key developments within the children's health agenda and in particular the Health Visitor Implementation plan, which is a core Prime Ministerial priority.
9. On 18 June Cllr Ken Taylor attended a Department of Health & NSPCC Ministerial roundtable on Perinatal Mental Illness on behalf of the Board. Attendees expressed concern that some areas have a specialist perinatal mental health team whilst in others no support exists. MPs noted closer cooperation between the public and voluntary sector was also needed to avoid duplication of work. Cllr Taylor emphasised that local government welcomed its new responsibilities for 0-5 years' health from 2015, but highlighted the requirement for appropriate funding to come with the new responsibilities. Enhanced training for Midwives, Health visitors and GPs who in many cases have a very limited knowledge of perinatal mental health problems will enable preventative action and the associated emotional, health, and economic benefits.

Dignity in Care

10. On 12 June I and my fellow Dignity in Care Partnership Co-Chairs in Age UK and NHS England met with the Secretary of State for Health, following a productive meeting of a cross sector steering group at which we discussed the work programme for the year. Both meetings discussed proposals for funding for a professional facing campaign on compassionate care following the Francis report, with discussions with the DH and others on-going.

Public Health Leadership

11. On 11 June the LGA Chief Executive attended the inaugural meeting of the Senior Oversight Group to oversee the NHS contribution to the new public health system. The Group, chaired by Public Health England, oversees the contribution of the NHS to public health, both nationally and locally. The Group is a key component of the governance and accountability framework for the new health and care system.

Community Wellbeing Board at the LGA Conference

12. Cllr Andrew Gravells, Cllr Steve Bedser and I took part in well-attended sessions on social care and public health at the LGA conference, in addition to conference receiving a keynote speech from the Secretary of State for Health. There was also participation from the CQC, Alzheimer's Society, the Fabian Society and ADASS.

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

Spending Review

1. Within the context of another very tough spending round, we were delighted that the LGA's year-long focus on the link between investment in the arts and economic growth paved the way for Arts Council England (ACE) and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to secure the Treasury's support and limit the reduction in arts funding to five per cent, compared to a eight per cent average for DCMS. This is good news for councils because so many organisations are co-funded and less pressure from the ACE side means less knock-on pressure on councils.
2. Thanks to the plethora of case studies that councils shared with us, we were able to develop a compelling narrative that showed how councils up and down the country are investing in the arts to boost visitor numbers, attract businesses, create jobs, revitalise places and develop the artistic talent of the future. Ed Vaizey, Arts Minister, and Sir Peter Bazalgette, Chair of ACE, publicly endorsed our campaign at the LGA's Culture Conference in Chester in March, and Maria Miller's recent keynote speech on the arts reinforced further the arguments we first made a year ago. Of course councils still face very difficult decisions, but the spending review outcome for the arts is a positive example of how we can influence and protect local investment that drives growth.

The visitor economy

3. I chaired a full capacity workshop on the visitor economy at the LGA Annual Conference on 2 July. VisitEngland's Chief Executive, James Berresford, shared an overview of the visitor economy landscape and highlighted where the opportunities and challenges lie for us to increase tourism revenue. Cllr Wendy Simon, Liverpool City Council, and Cllr Ann Steward, Breckland District Council, shared their local experiences of how their councils are galvanising the visitor economy in different ways to help drive local growth.
4. This session was the culmination of the CTS Board's year-long focus on the visitor economy, which has raised the profile of councils' leadership role, and I was pleased to launch a new publication which shares good practice case studies illustrating how councils up and down the country are using their visitor economy as a catalyst for growth.

The arts and culture

5. I addressed the Theatres Trust Annual Conference on 11 June. This was an opportunity to highlight the LGA's work on the arts and growth and to encourage theatres to work in partnership with councils to help to achieve local growth priorities.
6. On 13 June I met Diane Lees, Chair of the National Museums Directors' Council, and Director General of the Imperial War Museum. I highlighted the importance of regional and national museums sharing learning and expertise with smaller museums. We also discussed the First World War commemorations and I emphasised the many ways councils are planning to involve communities in local commemorations.

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7. Councillor Andrew Lewer and I attended the Society of Chief Librarians' Annual Conference on 20 June. We both chaired extremely interesting workshops on the opportunities and challenges facing public libraries. The impact of Universal Credit on public libraries was a key issue throughout the conference and we are looking forward to discussing this further with the Culture and Welfare Reform Ministers.
8. I represented the LGA at the launch of The Reading Agency / Society of Chief Librarians Reading Well Books on Prescription theme on 4 June, which is also highly relevant to the Community Wellbeing Board. The scheme enables adults to borrow GP-approved books from public libraries to self-help with a range of conditions and there has been excellent take-up from public libraries.
9. The Books on Prescription project was one of the issues discussed at a roundtable on 26 June hosted by Ed Vaizey MP, Culture Minister, about the valuable contribution of public libraries to improving health outcomes. Anna Soubry MP, Public Health Minister, and Janene Cox, President of the Society of Chief Librarians, also attended. I emphasised the opportunities presented by local government's new public health responsibilities to really maximise the role of libraries in improving health.

Sport

10. I was pleased to speak at the fifth LGA / Sport England Leadership Academy on 26 June. The event supported 15 portfolio holders to lead transformational change of sport services and in total we've reached 30% of portfolio holders through our academies programme.

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

Spending Review - Growth

1. I was delighted to share a platform at the recent LGA conference in Manchester with Lord Heseltine and to hear his views on how well the Government had responded to his independent review on growth. He spoke the day after we launched the LGA's work on Rewiring Public Services, with a clear call for more levers of economic growth to be made available to local partners.
2. During his presentation Lord Heseltine stated that the £2 billion for the creation of the Single Local Growth Fund to be allocated to LEPs via a single pot was a "start". He emphasised that this was an opportunity for local government to prove itself; "If you can prove what you can do, this is a stepping stone to a revolution in the way this country is run."
3. Whilst Lord Heseltine had originally called for £49 million to be localised, Government has announced £2 billion which is expected to be operational in April 2015 and sustained each year of the next Parliament. My press comments on the day of the Spending Review announcement were: "Establishing a local growth fund is a step in the right direction to helping councils unlock their potential to drive economic recovery. However, the £2 billion a year announced by the Chancellor won't come close to the £70 billion recommended by Lord Heseltine in his growth report. Local government has great ambition to get on with the job of building homes, creating jobs, supporting businesses and investing in new infrastructure, but has been hamstrung by funding cuts. The latest 10 per cent reduction only serves to stifle growth further. We need Whitehall to make a more serious financial commitment to the growth fund otherwise this ambition won't materialise into the boost for local economies which this country desperately needs. We will be scrutinising the details of where this £2 billion has been sourced and it's also crucial that the bidding process is fair and transparent so all regions have the opportunity to better support their local economies."

LEPs at LGA Annual Conference

4. During annual conference, I chaired the "Making Your LEP Work" workshop. The session was very lively and a complete 'sell-out' with nearly 100 people in the room. Speakers included Cllr Nick Forbes, Leader of Newcastle City Council, Cllr Tony Jackson, Leader of East Herts DC, and David Marlow from Third-Life Economics. The debate centred on LEP geography and functional economic areas, accountability of devolved public sector funding and the wish for successive governments to stop tinkering with structures and let local government decide. A key message was the need for councils and local private sector partners to be able to 'get on with it' rather than wait for Government guidance or permission and to provide compelling evidence that councils can work at a sub-regional level to drive growth and are best placed to do so.

Local Growth Campaign at LGA Annual Conference

5. Conference also provided an opportunity to explore local economic growth across the Commonwealth and beyond. Along with colleagues from the European and International Board, Cllr Tony Ball, Vice Chair of the Board, was a panelist at a fringe event that enabled him to present Basildon's business and trade relationships with China, as well as his personal experience as a local leader of influencing wider policy around European-Chinese relations. The session was chaired by Cllr Dave Wilcox, Chair of the European and International Board and included representatives from the

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Commonwealth Local Government Forum, UK Trade & Invest and the economic development agency for the city of Edmonton in Canada (via video link).

LGA Vice-Presidents lunch on economic growth

6. On 20 June, I, alongside Sir Merrick Cockell attended a lunch with a selection of the LGA's parliamentary Vice-Presidents to discuss the LGA's work around economic growth. This was one of a series of lunches being held throughout the month, covering the LGA's priority issues. Sir Merrick and I presented the LGA's emerging ideas around devolution of growth powers. Broad-ranging discussions with the parliamentarians then drew out the need for devolution to go further than local government; support for the LGA's work to address the skills mismatch and better align training and education with the job vacancies in existence; support for the LGA's desire to see a new relationship emerge between councils and their local universities; and support for ensuring LEPs are made fit for purpose and not redesigned following the next change of government.

Spending Review - Transport

7. The LGA has been successful in lobbying government for additional funds for roads maintenance. I wrote to the Rt Hon Danny Alexander MP, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, setting out the case for more funding and the government has committed a further £300 million per year for 6 years from 2015/16. This is very welcome although it still falls short of the £800 million annual spending gap identified by councils. The government also increased the local major transport scheme funding to £819 million per year from 2015/16 this represents a 118% increase on the 2010 spending review allocation. Again, this is very welcome and follows campaigning by the LGA and others on the importance of locally determined infrastructure investment for growth and jobs.

Select Committee - Parking Enforcement

8. On 8 July I appeared alongside Westminster Council, Nottingham Council and London Councils as part of the Transport Select Committee's investigation into local authority parking enforcement. The key points I made were that there has to be parking enforcement if we are to avoid gridlock in our towns and cities and, given that each area is unique, only local authorities can set parking charges at appropriate levels. The committee appeared receptive to these arguments and we await its report.

Centre for Public Scrutiny Annual Conference

9. On the 12 June, Deputy Chair of the Board, Cllr Mike Haines, chaired a workshop on the value of scrutiny to councils' work on economic growth and recovery at the Centre for Public Scrutiny Annual Conference. Delegates saw a number of ways in which scrutiny councillors could add value, either by maintaining an oversight of LEPs and ensuring that decisions being taken in partnership are robust, or by working collaboratively with LEPs (and other partnerships set up to promote economic growth, particularly in city regions) to explore the wider impacts of their decisions and to provide them with an evidence base to support their strategy.

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

Spending Round 2015-16 and infrastructure spending beyond 2015

1. In response to government's infrastructure investment priorities beyond 2015 published on 27 June, our key message remains that councils are overwhelmingly saying 'yes' to new homes and are working directly and in partnership to bring forward homes and encourage investment in infrastructure.
2. The Government announced a range of measures to encourage capital investment in affordable housing including £3.3 billion to support 165,000 new affordable homes over three years from 2015 -16. As demand for affordable homes continues to increase, it is helpful that the government has listened to the LGA's call for investment in housing and it is important that councils, as well as Housing Associations, are able to access the £3.3 billion fund on an equal basis. The LGA will continue to press for local authorities and ALMOs to be provided with the financial flexibilities to invest in housing and to press government to remove the unnecessary and arbitrary restriction of the HRA borrowing cap.
3. The announcement included Government plans to pool £400 million of funding for the New Homes Bonus across LEP areas as part of the Single Local Growth Fund 'the single pot'. Whilst we remain very supportive of Lord Heseltine's recommendation to devolve funding held by central government departments to Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) through a single pot, the decision will redistribute money previously received directly by councils and impact on planned funding for local services. Those impacts do not appear to have been properly considered and we are urgently seeking more detail.
4. Protection and certainty for those areas at risk of flooding has been a long term aim of the Board and our Inland Flood Risk Management Group has consistently ensured that Government hears the concerns of councils who are frontline in responding to flooding. The Government's announcement of a new agreement with the insurance industry on the provision of accessible and affordable floods insurance was therefore most welcome. The measures will be introduced via the Water Bill and the Board will continue to represent local government as the legislation develops. Also welcome was the long-term funding settlement for flood defences set out by Government, rising from £344 million in 2014/15 to £370 million in 2015-16 and then protected in real terms to 2020-21.

Environment and Housing at the LGA Annual Conference

5. There was a strong focus on the role of local government in driving growth at conference this year and the need for further real devolution of power. Cllr Keith House, Cllr Clyde Loakes and I led well-attended sessions with fellow Councillors, and key partners on planning, housing and waste.
6. On the Monday preceding the Conference the Environment and Housing Board met to consider the progress made against our objectives set out at the beginning of the year. Amongst other successes we have secured a number of changes to the Growth and Infrastructure Bill; led a forceful challenge to the Government's proposals for a raft of extension of permitted development rights; successfully defended councils' interests in a Judicial Review of Defra; and lobbied hard for councils to be able to access funding from energy companies for local energy efficiency projects through the ECO brokerage

scheme. We have also supported councils to address climate change through our Climate Local initiative.

Local Waste Review

7. On 4 June, we launched our Wealth from Waste report with an event at Local Government House chaired by Cllr Clyde Loakes and a key speech from Lord de Mauley, The event was attended by over 80 delegates from local and central government as well as other waste related organisations. There has been significant interest in the report's findings and recommendations from the waste management industry and local and central government, at the highest level. The report has secured good coverage in the national media and Cllr Clyde Loakes and I have given a number of interviews and spoken at several events to highlight the work. The full report can be downloaded from: <http://www.local.gov.uk/waste-management>

Rural Mobile & Wireless Connectivity Seminar

8. On 13 June, I attended a half-day seminar on the progress of better mobile connectivity and coverage in rural areas, hosted by DCMS and chaired by the Rt. Hon Maria Miller MP. The seminar will brought together senior representatives from the mobile network operators, broadband stakeholder groups and rural organisations such as Countryside Alliance, Country Land and Business Association and the National Farmers Union. I communicated Councils' concerns that changes in legislation and regulation give the Government a blanket power to remove the prior approval requirement for all electronic communication apparatus, including mobile, without restriction to broadband. This removes decision making from local communities.

Rogue Landlords/Beds in Sheds Taskforce

9. Cllr Frances Roden attended a meeting of the Government's taskforce which heard from LB Newham, Slough BC and Fenland DC councils who are working to quantify the size of the problem in their areas using thermal images and surveys. Work is concentrated on poor quality rented sector properties, poor quality extensions and suspect landlords.
10. DCLG have made £3 million available to local housing authorities to help them tackle rogue landlords in the private rented sector. Areas with acute and complex problems relating to rogue landlords are invited to submit a bid for funding by 20 September. DCLG are also looking at the impact and effectiveness of licensing schemes.

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

Delivering Our Lobbying Priorities

1. The past couple of weeks have been very active for those of us in the world of local government, with the Spending Review announcement on 26 and 27 June and the LGA Annual Conference on 2 – 4 July. Specifically from a European and internationally perspective, the Spending Review included significant details relating to the 2014-2020 EU funding programmes and the LGA Annual Conference brought to the fore the cross cutting nature of much of the Board's work, with many of the conference workshops and sessions having European and International perspectives.

Spending Review: EU Funding 2014 – 2020

2. The Chief Secretary to the Treasury's speech on the government's infrastructure plan included several announcements relating to EU funding. These included: the notional allocations to Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) areas; confirmation that top-slicing would be minimised to just over 4 per cent; the devolution of European Social Fund (ESF); and the allocation of £170 million of ESF match skills funding into the Single Local Growth Fund for 2015/16.
3. I am pleased to say that this represents a real success for the sector and for the work of the Board, which has made a sustained long-term case for devolving 2014-2020 EU funds. These developments have the potential to give all local partners the kind of influence that they did not have in the 2007-2013 programmes. Despite these major positive developments, it is however still disappointing that the Ministerial decision in February to re-allocate £784 million from the England programme into the Devolved Administrations still stands, thereby reducing LEP allocations by around 13 per cent.

EU VAT rules

4. Our European Association, the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), have written to the European Commission to underline the important role of local government in any future VAT reforms affecting the VAT treatment of public bodies. Whilst there are no imminent legislative proposals, some lobbying groups are placing pressure on the Commission to come forward with reforms in the next legislative period. Such reforms may be detrimental to the current system which allows councils to recover the majority of VAT they incur when delivering public services.

International Links: Learning and Sharing

Council's role in supporting International Trade and Investment

5. The LGA has made a strong case that local government has a central role to play in attracting inward investment and supporting export activity, and this message has resonated with Ministers and Civil Servants alike. Our successful work has created strong interest and demand from UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) to engage and work with us on this issue. One key example of this was the participation of UKTI in a session at the LGA Annual Conference to promote this collaboration. Cllr Tony Ball (Vice Chair of Economy and Transport Board) also spoke at this meeting and set out the innovative work that was taking place in his council, Basildon.

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6. Sir Merrick Cockell also met with Lord Green of Hurstpierpoint, Minister of State for Trade and Investment on 25 June, to discuss developing a more strategic relationship between the LGA and UKTI. This was a very positive discussion, in which the Minister explicitly recognised the value of UKTI supporting the local government sector in a more systematic manner. It was agreed that the LGA and UKTI will follow up this discussion and itemise a six-point action plan for council/UKTI collaboration. I look forward to bringing you updates on progress as this work develops.

Congress Peer Review of UK Democracy

7. A five person delegation from the Congress of the Council of Europe (CoE) visited the LGA at the end of May as part of the peer review of local democracy in the UK. The rapporteurs met with the LGA Chairman and Leaders, including the Board's Vice Chair Cllr Richard Kemp, and visited councils, including Hackney and Leeds. Leaders raised a series of issues with the delegation including sustainable local government finance. I will be meeting with the rapporteurs upon their return visit later in the year.

African Peer Review Project

8. I was pleased to have the opportunity to reflect on the success, challenges and learning from the African Peer Review Project. As part of the internal evaluation of the project, on 11 – 12 June the LGA hosted the Secretary General of United Cities and Local Governments Africa (UCLGA) Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi. This was a valuable opportunity for Jean Pierre to receive feedback from the UK peers who took part in the African peer reviews and for us to discuss future collaboration between UCLGA and the LGA. Our pioneering programme has created significant demand across Africa, and UCLGA are pursuing discussions with a number of international partners for further commissioning opportunities for the LGA.

Commonwealth Local Government Forum and United Cities & Local Governments

9. On 11 June, along with the other Lead Members of the Board, I meet with Mr Carl Wright, the Secretary General of the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF). The meeting provided an opportunity to discuss some of the recent developments in the Commonwealth and EU relating to a more localist approach to international development. We will be discussing these issues further at our July Board meeting, so I look forward to being able to report back to you more fully next month.
10. In addition to this, from the 5-7 June, I attended the Executive Bureau meeting of United Cities & Local Governments (UCLG). It provided an opportunity to meet with a number of our European and African partners to discuss joint lobbying efforts and potential funding opportunities for international improvement programmes at the local level, particularly in light of the recent EU Communication on empowering local authorities in international development.

Representation on European Bodies

11. A number of vacancies on the UK Delegation of the Committee of the Regions (CoR) have recently been filled. Following an e-election, Cllr Gordon Keymer CBE was elected as UK Delegation Leader and Cllr Kay Twitchen OBE (Conservative) was elected unopposed to the role of UK Vice President. May I congratulate both Members on their appointments and wish them well for the remainder of their terms in office.

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Improvement & Innovation Board – report from Cllr Peter Fleming

INNOVATION

Council Leaders' role in fostering innovation session at LGA Conference

1. On 4 July at an LGA Annual Conference session in the Innovation Zone, I presented the research findings from the “Accelerating Innovation in Local Government” Research Project that has recently undertaken new research, in partnership with the LGA, on the role council leaders can play in fostering innovation in their organisations. The session was well attended and launched the ‘Council Leaders’ Key Action for Innovation’, a checklist council leaders can use to review whether there is more they might do to encourage innovation to flourish in their councils.

Capita conference on Developing Commercialism in Local Government

2. With more and more councils seeking innovative ways of maximising revenue, I was very happy to be invited to chair the Capita conference on Developing Commercialism in Local Government. With even tougher financial times ahead it is important that councils explore more entrepreneurial ways of maximising revenue streams.

PRODUCTIVITY

One Public Estate Programme

3. The LGA/Government Property Unit ‘One Public Estate Programme’ was launched on 25 June at Guildford Fire station. This is a central-local programme aiming to aid both local and central government asset holders to ‘unblock’ any barriers that may be preventing a more integrated approach to utilizing capital assets across a locality.
4. The event was hosted by Cllr David Hodge, Leader of Surrey County Council and in attendance were Chloe Smith MP, Parliamentary under Secretary for the Cabinet Office and Sir Merrick Cockell, Chairman of the LGA.
5. The pilot authorities were announced in March 2013 as part of the Government response to the Heseltine ‘No Stone Unturned’ review. The participants are: Bristol, Chester and Cheshire West, Essex, Hampshire, Hull, Leeds, Nottingham, Portsmouth, Sheffield, Surrey, Warrington and Worcestershire.

IMPROVEMENT

Promoting Small and Medium sized businesses (SME's) through public sector procurement

6. Councils have a vital role to play in driving economic growth, helping to create the right infrastructure and environment for local businesses to succeed. So this month I was very glad to attend the launch of The Federation of Master Builders (FMB) report “Improving public procurement for construction SME's” at the House of Commons.
7. There is a real need to highlight local authorities that are supporting local suppliers and streamlining procurement practice to help level the playing field for SME's. At the heart of this, many councils are ensuring that they are “open for business”, in particular

working with SMEs and local suppliers to make it easier for them to bid successfully for public contracts. But with council funding being cut by more than a third, there is simply less work available, particularly in the construction sector. The LGA is, therefore, working with the Federation of Master Builders to “shine a light” on good practice around the country, using these examples to promote SME’s across the sector.

LGA Staff Briefing on Sector led Improvement

8. This month I spoke to LGA officers on the future for sector led improvement. Alongside Executive Director Michael Coughlin, I set out the scale of what the LGA has to offer, demonstrated the impact that this is having in the sector, and raised some of the challenges, including cuts to funding. Despite pressure on councils it is clear that most are embracing sector led improvement and that it is having a significant and positive impact on service delivery.
9. As well as speaking at the briefing I also had a regular meeting with Brandon Lewis MP on 12 June to discuss our improvement work.

TRANSPARENCY

Cutting down on tenants fraudulently sub-letting council properties

10. On 11 June I went on BBC Radio London to discuss the issue of council tenants illegally subletting council properties. I explained that in order to tackle this problem councils rely a lot on other agencies and members of the public bringing forward cases or suspicions of tenancy fraud. In London it is the number of people who live there, the number of people who want to live there and the high cost of rent that is causing the problem. However local government needs to get credit for really leading the way on tackling housing tenancy fraud - 69 per cent of those illegally subletting or committing fraud have been caught by London councils.

Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) Good Scrutiny Awards

11. I was recently a judge on the shortlisting panel for the CfPS Good Scrutiny Awards. The awards celebrate accountability and transparency in public services. Three councils were shortlisted under each of the following headings: Innovation, Involving communities, Raising the profile, Transforming services and Working together. The awards aim to share best practice and highlight the achievements of those whose influence has led to improvements in the delivery of local services.

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

Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill

1. The Bill had its Second Reading on 10 June, which it passed without being put to the vote. It then started its committee stage in the House of Commons. The Board was invited to give oral evidence to the public bill committee on 18 June. Cllr Mehboob Khan gave evidence alongside Angela Mawdsley, an anti-social behaviour practitioner from Leeds City Council, and representatives from a number of housing organisations. Issues raised at the evidence session included the powers to tackle anti-social tenants living in private rented accommodation, how useful the community trigger would be, the lack of consultation with local authorities before the police use dispersal powers, whether there needed to be further provisions about dangerous dogs, and the use of community protection notices. Cllr Khan also stressed the importance of early intervention as a means of preventing anti-social behaviour occurring in the first place. The Board has also submitted written evidence to supplement its oral evidence and will be monitoring the clause by clause analysis of the bill by the committee to table and influence possible amendments.

Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013

2. The Board hosted a fully booked conference on the new Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 in mid-June. The conference, which was chaired by the Board's Vice-Chair Cllr Joanna Spicer, was addressed by Richard Ottaway MP, who took the legislation through parliament as a private members bill, and the Board's Chair Cllr Mehboob Khan. The delegates from across England and Wales also received presentations from the Home Office and British Metal Recycling Association giving an overview of the Act, while speakers from Blackpool and Sandwell Councils, British Transport Police, Gwent Police and the Environment Agency looked in more detail at what the legislation requires councils to do. The Home Office were also able to provide details of the transitional provisions between the 1964 Act and the new one. The 2013 Act is due to come into effect on 1 October, with councils accepting applications from the 1 September. Guidance on fees and the necessary statutory regulations from the Home Office are due out in the next few weeks.

Horsemeat investigations

3. The Food Standards Agency has published its final report on their handling of the horsemeat incident. The report pays tribute to the hard work of councils in providing a rapid response and undertaking thousands of sampling visits to ascertain the extent of the problem.
4. Cllr Khan subsequently met with Lord Rooker, Chairman of the Agency, to discuss the ongoing implications of contamination for those who live by certain religious tenets, such as the kosher and halal communities. Cllr Khan will also meet with David Heath MP, Minister for Agriculture, to press Government to take action to guarantee the food chain.

Proceeds of Crime

5. The Board drew attention to the work of councils in recovering the financial assets of criminals to ensure that crime really does not pay, following on from successful coverage in National Scams Week. Councils have recovered more than £13 million of assets in the last year alone, and are re-investing the funds in activities that seek to prevent crime. The coverage was picked up across a range of trade press, including the MJ and Local Government Lawyer.

Late-night levy and EMROs

6. The LGA continues to support councils that are considering the introduction of these two new tools to manage alcohol-related disorder. On 14 June, Cllr Canver chaired a workshop for these councils to share their experiences so far, discuss emerging issues and identify strategies for effectively communicating the need for these tools. Councils continue to face challenges in introducing them, in the face of significant opposition from the alcohol industry, and there has been a succession of councils opting not to proceed with them following public consultation.

Street Fundraising

7. Cllr Khan responded to the publication of the Public Administration Select Committee report on charity fundraising. There are now 62 local agreements in place to manage fundraisers following the launch of the joint LGA-PFRA agreement in November last year. These are showing that working in partnership with the charity sector can provide a cost effective way of responding to public concern. By working with charities, councils have been able to strike a sensible balance between charities' duties to ask people for support and the rights of local people not to be put under undue pressure to give.

LGA Conference 2013

8. Members of the Safer Communities Board led workshops on a number of issues as part of the LGA Annual Conference in July. Cllr Khan hosted sessions exploring the mutual benefits of more effective working between businesses and councils on local regulation, and launched an Open for Business template for councils to adapt, and a new vision for Regulation. He also chaired a session on the developing relationship between councils and PCCs, in conjunction with PCC colleagues. Cllr Anita Lower chaired a session about the implications of the proposed community trigger for local authorities in addressing persistent anti-social behaviour.

Sir Ken Knight's Efficiency Review

9. Members of the Fire Commission met with the Fire Minister, Brandon Lewis MP to discuss Sir Ken Knight's Efficiency Review. The review is a significant contribution to the future of the Fire and Rescue Service and members stressed the need for sector led reform. The Fire Service Management Committee has provided a submission to the Communities and Local Government Select Committee's inquiry into Sir Ken's review and Cllr Kay Hammond chaired a breakfast session with Sir Ken at the LGA conference exploring the sector's response to the review.

Fire meetings and regional visits

10. Cllr Hammond chaired a working dinner in the South West with chairs of FRAs from Devon and Cornwall, Avon and North Wales. Cllr Hammond also attended the quarterly meeting of the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme; and undertook a visit to the East Midlands Fire Forum.

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

1. As this will be my last report as Chair of the Workforce Board I would like to take the opportunity to thank political colleagues of all parties who have worked together over the last eight years on both the board and the negotiating bodies. These have not been the easiest of times but I believe we have come together to work in the best interests of Local Government. I would also like to thank the officers, past and present who have served the board during that time for their **unstinting** support. I am pleased to be able to depart on a positive note starting with the outcome of the recent pay negotiations.

Negotiations

2. **Local Government Services** – Unison and GMB members voted to accept the National Employers' offer of 1% from April 2013, plus the deletion of the lowest pay point from October 2013. At the time of writing the outcome of the consultation by Unite is awaited. Over the coming months, the LGA will be consulting authorities through a series of regional meetings as to whether, in the absence of any appetite from the unions to seriously engage in reform to terms and condition at national level, whether national bargaining should merely concern itself with pay. The consultation will also consider what support authorities may want from the LGA to achieve reform locally.
3. **School teachers** – NEOST submitted evidence to the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) on 18 June to inform its recommendations on (a) the pay framework for school leaders, (b) the provisions for allowances, other pay flexibilities and pay safeguarding and (c) the framework for non-pay conditions of service. The Review Body will report in January 2014. On 27 June the STRB's 22nd Report, containing recommendations for the September 2013 pay award, was published. It recommended a 1% uplift to all pay points and allowances. This was argued for by NEOST as a fair and appropriate award to avoid additional complexity at a time of otherwise unprecedented change to teachers' pay and conditions and to avoid a further detrimental effect on motivation and morale.
4. **Youth and Community** – The 2013 JNC Workforce Survey was completed. The survey gathers information on staff numbers, pay and workforce characteristics and provides the JNC with accurate pay and workforce details for national negotiations. This year there has been a 52% response rate and a key finding from the survey was that overall the total number of both full and part-time employees had decreased by 7% in the last year. The decreases in workforce were to be found amongst the support worker range and professional range but were offset by numbers moving to other pay schemes in the sector.
5. **Teachers in Residential Establishments** – Pay and conditions for teachers employed in residential children's services establishments were aligned with teachers under the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document in 2007.
6. **Fire – National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services**
 - 6.1. **Mileage rates review** – agreement was reached to alter the mileage rates applicable to essential and casual users. This has been introduced on a phased

basis commencing on 1st July 2013 with all essential and casual users covered by a simple link to Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs approved rates by 1st April 2014. This will provide significant savings to fire authorities and remove the burden of tax administration.

- 6.2. **Pay, terms and conditions** – the NJC committed to work jointly on changes identified by each Side to ensure that there is a pay framework alongside terms and conditions in the fire and rescue service which reflect the responsibilities of, and current and future demands on, the service and the profession.
- 6.3. **Pay award 2013** – agreement was reached to apply a 1% across the board increase to basic pay and to continual professional development payments with effect from 1st July 2013

Pensions

7. LGA has worked with trade unions in order to minimise the impact of the ending of contracting out proposed in the Pensions Bill. This change is estimated to cost LGPS employers over £800m per annum from 2016 onwards and discussions are currently being held with bill committee members to seek recognition of the issue and to actively investigate solutions.

Strategy

8. **LGA conference 2013** – The Workforce team ran two sessions at conference this year, which were well attended and received. The first was a workshop on 'Re-shaping your workforce' and the second was a sub-plenary on 'Taking your workforce with you' which demonstrated how engagement of employees is crucial to delivering improved services both now and in the future.
9. **Public Health** – Public health staff moved smoothly into local government despite considerable challenges in intensive negotiations involving the workforce team which continued until shortly before the transfer date. The final terms of the transfer gave considerable flexibility to councils as they think about future terms and conditions and there are encouraging signs of strong local developments. A good relationship with Public Health England has been developed as part of moves to ensure that councils continue to receive the advice and support they need, especially on employing senior medically qualified staff.
10. **Future Councils: Future Workforce** – The LGA Workforce team launched its future workforce offers this year, including pay benchmarking, layers and spans of control, workforce planning, the employee value proposition, a roadmap for change to help councils with the transformational change which they are experiencing.

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

Spending Round

1. The 2015-16 Spending Round included several announcements impacting on local government. The Chancellor announced:
 - 1.1 a 10% reduction in core local government main funding of £2.1 billion;
 - 1.2 a £3.8 billion pooled budget for health and social care including £2 billion through the NHS to join up local health and social care services reducing the reduction to 2.3%;
 - 1.3 £200 million investment in the Troubled Families Programme;
 - 1.4 a £100 million council efficiency and transformation fund;
 - 1.5 further support to freeze council tax for 2014-15 and 2015-16 equivalent to a 1% increase in council tax with referendum limits of 2% in both years; and
 - 1.6 £200 million reduction in Education Services Grant.
2. Our headline response was that the reductions to core local government funding will stretch essential services to breaking point in many areas. The 10% cut on top of the 33% reduction since 2010 confirms local government as the hardest hit part of the public sector.
3. The LGA was instrumental in negotiating the budget for health and social care. We are also pleased with the measures on public service transformation, including the £100 million council efficiency and transformation fund, and the shift towards public services locally working even more closely.
4. The following day Chief Secretary announced investment in infrastructure, including a £2 billion Single Local Growth Fund made up principally of transport funding already devolved to local areas and £400 million from the New Homes Bonus. We signalled our concerns about the size of the fund and the limited extent to which Departments had contributed. The Chief Secretary also announced £300 million more funding for road repairs.
5. The LGA was very visible in the media both before and on the day of the Spending Round announcement. We produced two separate on the day briefings, available on the following link: http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=9615cfda-d0e2-4ca5-a2bc-5898a78bb947&groupId=10171.

Funding Model Outlook

6. The Future Funding Model was fully updated for the Spending Round announcement on 26 June and was launched at Conference on the 4 July accompanied by the contextual 'AnyCouncils' papers covering typical District, County and Single Tier authorities.

7. The modelling confirms that, even after allowing for additional funds for Social Care, the funding gap in local government continues to widen by £2.1 billion a year and will reach £14.4 billion by the end of the decade. This is very much in line with what we found last year and is not a deliberately pessimistic assumption; we have assumed for example that authorities will continue to deliver efficiency savings at between 1-2% a year over this period, which will not be easy.
8. We also prepared individual forecasts for each member authority which were distributed after the Conference. The model will continue to be used to support improvement across the sector and assess the impact of Government policy. We will be giving some thought later in the year to how we can improve it further to make it into a permanent part of the LGA's offer.

Council tax referendum and Levying bodies

9. The House of Lords is now considering the Local Audit and Accountability Bill. One of the provisions changes the rules on council tax referendums. The effect of this will be that increases in levies will be taken account of in working out whether or not council tax increases are excessive and therefore a referendum needs to be held. The LGA has heard quite a lot of concern about this from member councils, particularly from those councils with large levies from transport, waste and internal drainage boards and we have been briefing members of the Lords so that these concerns are addressed.

Universal Credit

10. The Department for Work and Pension's (DWP) Universal Credit (UC) programme has a new Director General – Howard Shiplee – who has been very keen to hear from local government and how we can help to support our residents who may need to claim UC. He has reinstated local government's place on the UC Programme Board, is reviewing the current programme, and over the next few months will clarify key issues such as rollout timetable.
11. Lord Freud and Sir Merrick Cockell recently met to discuss UC. Sir Merrick used the opportunity to outline the sectors continued willingness to support UC claimants, but highlighted the need for councils to have the necessary information so that UC related service planning can start to take place. Both agreed that they wanted to look at how far the community budgets model could provide a format for managing UC funding. The LGA is keen to look at funding models which encourage a partnership working approach.
12. The Local Authority Face to Face Pilots are continuing their good work. A publication sharing the early findings from the pilots was launched at the Annual Conference. The LGA Chief Executive and the Chief Executives of the pilots have collectively written to Lord Freud asking for the pilots to be extended so that they can test out elements of the Local Support Services Framework. There will be a series of open days from September, hosted by the pilots, to give local government colleagues a chance to see what the pilots have been doing. For more information: www.local.gov.uk/events.

Impact of Welfare Reforms on Housing

13. On 3 June I had a meeting with the Chair of the Environment and Housing (E&H) Board, Cllr Mike Jones to discuss the impact of the Government's package of welfare

reform on housing. The scale, scope and pace of the welfare reforms will have a significant impact on councils and communities, much of which will only be seen and understood in real time as the changes are implemented. The Finance Panel will continue to work with the E&H Board on this cross cutting issue. One particular area that we will continue to discuss with local authorities is availability of appropriate and affordable housing stock and out of area placements. A session on this took place at the Annual Conference.

Social Investment

14. The LGA have held two master classes on social investment in June, with a third to follow on 9 July looking at social investment in adult services. In addition, Social Finance and the LGA launched a Guide to Social Investment at the LGA Conference and there was also a workshop where delegates heard from Ben Jupp (Social Finance) and Matt Robinson (Big Society Capital). My Panel colleague Councillor Finch spoke about Essex's social impact bond on preventing children going into care.

Annual Conference

15. There were a number of well received sustainable funding and welfare reform themed sessions at the LGA Conference, which I and other Finance Panel colleagues took an active role in. These included: Welfare reform – the role of local government in delivering positive change; Social Investment – the risks and benefits for councils; Local Government funding model reloaded; Making welfare reform work – the role of local partners; and Local authority bonds.

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

1. The Audit Committee met twice in June to review the audited financial statements for the LGA and its associated companies, prior to these being adopted by the relevant company boards and, for the LGA's consolidated accounts, by the LGA General Assembly on 2 July. The external auditors, Littlejohn, also attended the Audit Committee meetings and confirmed that the audits had gone well and that all the accounts had received unqualified audit opinions.
2. The Audit Committee also received reports from the LGA's internal auditors, Parkhill, on the second phase of the internal audit programme for 2012/13 along with the annual report from Parkhill.
3. Substantial audit opinions have been provided for four of the audits conducted: Human Resources, Procurement, Strategic and Operational Planning and Key Financial Controls. Adequate opinions were provided in two areas: income generating activities and ICT strategy. All of the twenty five recommendations made by the auditors have been accepted by management.
4. The Committee agreed the internal audit programme for 2013/14, which is now getting underway. Again, this will be carried out by Parkhill.
5. The Committee received its annual report on instances of fraud occurring in the year. There were no significant issues in 2012/13.

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Resources Panel – report from Cllr David Neighbour (Deputy Chairman)

1. The Panel received the LGA's audited consolidated financial statements for the year to 31 March 2013. Paul Hopper from Littlejohn LLP reported that the audit had gone smoothly and confirmed that an unqualified audit opinion had been given on the accounts. These were recommended to the General Assembly and adopted at their meeting on 2 July.
2. The Panel reviewed the LGA's performance against the current year's business plan for the final quarter, including financial performance. All but two of the objectives in the business plan had been delivered in what was judged to have been a very successful year for the LGA.
3. Members reviewed progress with ICT at the LGA and noted the recent appointment of an ICT Development Manager to oversee the implementation of the LGA's ICT strategy.
4. Members reviewed the LGA's overall financial position and the revised budget for 2013/14 in the light of the additional reduction in RSG topslice announced shortly before the start of the financial year. The Panel noted the revised budget and officers' assurances that a balanced budget could be achieved this year.
5. The Panel was updated on progress with implementing the changes secured through the Liberata contract renegotiation to achieve significant savings on the LGA's back office services.
6. The Panel reviewed its work over the year and reflected on the decision for its responsibilities for overseeing the financial management of the LGA to be transferred to the LGA's Leadership Board from September 2013.

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Digest of Meeting

Title:	Councillors' Forum
Date and time:	13 June 2013, 12.30pm
Venue:	The Westminster Suite, Local Government House, Smith Square

Item	Action by
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Welcome and Introductions

Councillor Sir Merrick Cockell, LGA Chairman, welcomed Members to the meeting.

The Chairman introduced Louise Casey CB (Head of the Troubled Families programme, DCLG)

1 Troubled Families

Members received a presentation from Louise Casey in which she set out the rationale for Government's Troubled Families programme, its progress so far, and its continuing challenges.

Louise reminded Members that the Troubled Families scheme's purpose is to turn around the lives of 120,000 families who have and cause serious problems. It has been around 18 months old since the programme was initiated, and it is just into its second full year of work on the ground.

Louise felt that the programme should feel personal – an attempt to change children and adults' recurring patterns of behaviour and ways of interacting with local services which over generations have not been addressed by the many initiatives and programmes of the past.

From her experience in councils, she noted that the prevalence of domestic and sexual violence in such families is high, as is interactions with the care system. Where behavioural problems develop in children in these families, this can often develop into problems at school and exclusions.

Whilst the programme's eligibility criteria are deliberately set wide to allow for local discretion as to what constitutes a troubled family, she urged councils to focus on those families who are worst affected first.

Louise also thanked local government for supplying her team with the fiscal evidence to make the case for a preventative scheme to

address these issues. In this context family intervention workers represent a step change from previous ways of working. Each family is assigned a single dedicated officer, who is empowered to both support the families involved but also challenge them and make clear the consequences of bad behaviour.

Louise reiterated that continued success demands leadership from both the Chief Executives and senior political leadership of every council. A 'Business as usual' attitude will not succeed and a tick-box approach to safeguarding children will not improve their life-chances – a fundamental change in the way things are done at a local level is required.

The police force should aim to, and increasingly are, shifting resources from reactive measures to deal with callouts by troubled families, towards measures to manage demand down. Similarly local authorities have opportunities to improve children's life chances and save money by reducing the demand for pupil referral units if they intervene in the right way. Equally health services should be working in a more preventative and holistic way and need to engage with local authorities on this issue.

Louise acknowledged that the programme is ambitious and challenging, but noted that over half of the 120,000 target has been identified and local authorities are working with one-third of the total already. For a programme only one-year old this represents a real story of achievement for local government, but councils should not become complacent.

The upcoming opportunity for councils to claim for results in July 2013 is a milestone for the programme which Louise hoped that councils will use both to assess their progress and to push for a result which places them in the top group of achievers.

To conclude, Louise thanked a number of officers and councillors at the LGA for their support and input and for the LGA's support for the current evaluation project – support which indicates cross-sector support and gives the programme credibility in Whitehall.

She also reminded those present that the project's aims are similar to what will have inspired many of the audience into public service – to improve the lives of the next generation, and prevent them from living a type of life they did not choose, and don't deserve. In order to achieve success local government must maintain its commitment to the troubled families programme and redouble its efforts.

Key issues raised in the following discussion were as follows:

- The impact of Universal Credit;
- Tensions between target and universal approaches to transformational public sector reform;
- Scaling up and applicability of the scheme's way of working to other areas;
- Flexibility of what can be considered a troubled family;

- Sustainability of the approach;
- Troubled families and health;
- Influence on future spending reviews.

The Chairman thanked Louise and echoed her determination not to fail future generations. He noted that a clear evidence base was emerging which indicated the approach was beginning to work. Councils could now point to the programme as an example of the success that community budgeting-style approaches to public sector reform can have - provided that the Government is prepared to invest money upfront and acknowledges that the resultant savings will be released over a period of time.

2 Chairman's Update

Members noted and accepted the Chairman's report.

3 Programme Board Chairs' Reports

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

Date of next meeting: Thursday 18 July 2013
12:30pm – 1:30pm
The Westminster Suite (8th Floor)
Local Government House

LGA location map

Local Government Association

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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.

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

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

Central London Congestion Charging Zone

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

