

Notes of Decisions Taken and Action

Safer Communities Board

21 March 2005

Local Government House

Present

Chair:	Cllr Bryony Rudkin (Suffolk CC) (Lab).
Vice Chair:	Cllr Ann Stribley (Poole BC) (Con).
Deputy Chairs:	Cllr Caroline Seymour (Hambleton DC) (Lib Dem) and Cllr Graham Brown (Powys CC) (Ind).
Conservative:	Cllr Les Byrom (Sefton MBC), Cllr Roland Domleo (Congleton BC), Cllr David Smith (Lichfield DC) and Cllr Andy Sutton (Isle of Wight Council).
Labour:	Cllr Mark Burns-Williamson (Wakefield MBC), Cllr Milkinder Jaspal (Wolverhampton City Council), Cllr Ann Lucas (Coventry City Council) and Ms Val Shawcross (LFEPA).
Liberal Democrat:	Cllr Christina Jebb (Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire Authority), Cllr Audrey Jones (Greater Manchester FCDA) and Cllr Patrick O'Connor (Lincolnshire CC).
Substitutes:	Cllr David Williams (Merton LB) (Con).
Apologies:	Cllr Mehboob Khan (Kirklees MBC) (Lab) and Cllr Victor Lyon (Barnet LBC) (Con).

1. Community Safety Objectives: Reducing Offending and Re-offending

The Board received a report setting out proposals for taking forward its three major community safety objectives, including proposals for Member steering arrangements.

During discussion of the key areas of focus set out as part of the proposals for taking forward this work, it was suggested that the following issues be added:

- Family support for offenders;
- The role of drugs in offending and re-offending; and
- Domestic violence, specifically through the ongoing Domestic Violence Project.

In addition, the Board was also keen that the proposed work on

community safety acknowledged the issue of looked after children and requested that officers look into the work currently being undertaken by the Children and Young People Board in this area to ensure that community safety issues were an integral part of that work. Members asked that feedback on this be circulated to the Board.

Members also requested that the role of the fire service in community safety work, including their responsibilities under the Crime and Disorder Act should be acknowledged in the report.

The Board also noted that discussion was ongoing between the LGA and Home Office in relation to a community safety central local partnership (CLP) sub-group. It was hoped that the proposed terms of reference for the group would be circulated among Board Members as soon as possible and that the inaugural meeting of the sub-group would be held in June 2005.

Members discussed various examples of good practice in relation to community safety and noted the need for the Board and the LGA more widely to facilitate the successful sharing of good practice.

Decisions

That:

- (i) the proposed work towards achieving the Board's community safety objectives be agreed as set out the report, with the addition of the following issues to the key areas of focus:
 - The role of the fire service in community safety work
 - Family support for offenders;
 - The role of drugs in offending and re-offending; and
 - Domestic violence, specifically through the ongoing Domestic Violence Project.
- (ii) a project scoping paper be drafted for the approval of the Board's office holders and recommendation to the LGA Executive;
- (iii) contact be made with the Children and Young People Board to ensure that its work on looked after children covered community safety issues; and
- (iv) the terms of reference for the CLP sub-group on community safety be circulated to the Board when available.

Actions

That:

- (i) a project scoping plan (including the bullet points set out in the above minute) be drafted for the approval of the Board's office holders; KF
- (ii) the approved project scoping plan be submitted to the LGA Executive for approval; KF
- (iii) the Board be kept up-to-date on the work of the Children and Young People Board in relation to looked after children, specifically in the community safety context; and KF

- (iv) the terms of reference for the CLP sub-group on community safety be circulated to the Board when available. KF

2. Developing a Coherent Approach to Regulatory Services

In discussing the suggestions for future work towards the development of a coherent approach to regulatory services, Members agreed that the proposal to form a central local partnership sub-group on this issue should be deferred in anticipation of recommendations from the Hampton Review and, in the light of that, to allow the LGA and LACORS to discuss the best way of taking this issue forward.

Members expressed concern at the impact of professional boundaries on workforce development and effective practice.

The Board was of the view that the LGA and LACORS should give consideration to its current relationship with the Trading Standards Qualification Council (TSQC) and that this issue be discussed in more detail at the next meeting of Board office holders.

Decisions

That:

- (i) the project should proceed as discussed by the Board and a bid be made to the LGA Executive for Member task group to take forward the various pieces of work;
- (ii) discussion about the formation of a sub group of the Central Local Partnership be deferred,
- (iii) LACORS and the LGA further discuss the option of a CLP sub-group and report to the next meeting of Board office holders;
- (iv) the LGA/LACORS give consideration to the current relationship with the Trading Standards Qualification Council (TSQC) and that the issue be discussed in more detail at a future meeting of Board office holders; and
- (v) work be undertaken with key stakeholders to address workforce issues, specifically with regard to achieving more effective cross-boundary working between regulatory staff.

Actions

That:

- (i) the LGA Executive be asked to approve the creation of project to take forward the various pieces of work on developing a coherent approach to regulatory services; TO'F/
LACORS
- (ii) LACORS and the LGA discuss further the option of a CLP sub-group and report to a future meeting of Board office holders; and TO'F/
LACORS
- (iii) the LGA/LACORS give consideration to the current relationship with the Trading Standards Qualification Council (TSQC) and that the issue be discussed in more detail at a future meeting of Board office holders. TO'F/
LACORS

3. LGA Member Arrangements for Fire and Rescue Services

The Board was informed that the LGA Executive had, at its meeting on 10 March 2005, agreed in principle new Member arrangements for fire issues at the LGA. In essence, the new arrangements would re-affirm the executive position of the Safer Communities Board for fire issues at the LGA, with an emphasis on issues that were of a cross-cutting nature, acknowledged the flexibility of the Fire Services Forum to host routine seminars or additional meetings to focus on specific issues of interest (perhaps including special meetings for combined fire authorities), agreed the dissolution of the existing Fire Modernisation Task Group and replacement of the Task Group by a larger, more representative, Member body with a more formal, leading role on fire issues at the LGA, reporting to the Safer Communities Board. The suggestion of establishing a Special Interest Group for Combined Fire Authorities was deferred.

Although the LGA Executive had approved the principle of the new arrangements, the detail of the name for the new body, its terms of reference, its size and political balance remained unresolved. Member views would be sought on these matters and, if a political consensus could be reached, plans for the body would be taken forward without the need for further approval from the LGA Executive. It was hoped that the new Member arrangements could be implemented soon after elections in May 2005.

Members noted the new structure and, in relation to fire services, requested that the Board receive copies of the Scrutiny Panel report on fire.

Decisions

That:

- (i) the LGA Executive decision in relation to Member arrangements for fire be noted; and
- (ii) a copy of the Scrutiny Panel report on fire be circulated to the Board.

Action

That a copy of the Scrutiny Panel report on fire be circulated to the Board:

CG/ JRa

4. Other Business of the Board

Decisions

That:

- (i) the proposed away day in July 2005 be endorsed;
- (ii) the proposed Policy Review Group on reducing road and driving offences be approved for a date in September 2005;
- (iii) when publicising the PRG on reducing road and driving offences, the emphasis be placed on presenting the issue in a way that showed its importance;
- (iv) the suggested letter to the Rt. Hon Hazel Blears, MP, be approved and sent; and

- (v) the Board meeting planned for 18 April 2005 be postponed, but that a meeting of Board office holders be arranged for mid-to-late May 2005.

Actions

That:

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| (i) a date for the Board away day in July 2005 be circulated to Members; | CG |
| (ii) a Policy Review Group on reducing road and driving offences be approved for September 2005, with an emphasis on presenting the issue in a way that showed its importance; | KF/AS |
| (iii) the suggested letter be sent to the Rt. Hon Hazel Blears, MP; and | KF |
| (iv) a meeting of Board office holders be arranged for mid-to-late May 2005. | CG |

5. Notes of Previous Meeting

Decision

That the notes from the previous meeting of the Board be agreed.