

Notes of Decisions Taken and Action

Safer Communities Board

12 September 2005

Local Government House

Present

- Chair:** Cllr Bryony Rudkin (Suffolk CC) (Lab).
- Deputy Chairs:** Cllr Caroline Seymour (Hambleton DC) (Lib Dem) and Cllr Graham Brown (Powys CC) (Ind).
- Conservative:** Cllr Les Byrom (Merseyside F&RA), Cllr Roland Domleo (Congleton BC), Cllr Audrey Lewis (Westminster City) and Cllr Clare Whelan (Lambeth LB).
- Labour:** Cllr Milkinder Jaspal (Wolverhampton City Council) and Cllr Mehboob Khan (Kirklees MBC), Cllr Ann Lucas (Coventry City Council).
- Liberal Democrat:** Cllr Christina Jebb (Staffordshire CC), Cllr Audrey Jones (Greater Manchester FCDA) and Cllr Paul Porgess (Stockport MBC).
- Substitutes:** Cllr Alison Wiley (Kettering BC) (Con), Cllr David Dewdney (West Sussex CC) (Con), Cllr David Lancaster (Salford City) (Lab) and Cllr Peter Young (Tyne & Wear F&RA) (Lab).
- Apologies:** Cllr David Smith (Lichfield DC) (Con), Cllr Andy Sutton (Isle of Wight Council) (Con), Cllr Robert Light (Kirklees MBC) (Con) and Cllr Mark Burns-Williamson (Wakefield MBC) (Lab).

1. Membership and Office Holders of the Safer Communities Board 2005/2006 and Terms of Reference

The Board received a report setting out the Board membership and office holders for 2005/2006 and its terms of reference.

With regard to paragraph 4 of the terms of reference, which required the Board to nominate a Member representative on social inclusion and equalities issues, Members sought clarification of the process for making this appointment and what work had been undertaken by the incumbent nomination.

The Board noted that it would be asked, at its meeting in November, to consider its relationship management priorities in the context of its objectives, and included in that discussion would be the invitation to make

its social inclusion/equalities nomination for 2005/2006. The existing representative, Cllr Mehboob Khan, reported that he had attended meetings with the other Board nominees, but that the last meeting had been in July and there was, therefore, no update to give on his work at this point in time

Decisions

That:

- (i) the Board's terms of reference be noted;
- (ii) the membership and office holders for 2005/06 be noted; and
- (iii) at the next meeting of the Board, Members be invited to consider the Board's relationship management priorities, including appointments to outside bodies.

Action

That a report be prepared for the Board setting its relationship management priorities (including appointments to outside bodies) in the context of the agreed objectives.

JB/ KF

2. Safer Communities Board Priorities and Objectives for 2005/06

The Board was presented with a paper setting out proposals for Board priorities and objectives for 2005/06, based on discussion at the Board away day on 15 July 2005. With the suggested priorities and objectives were proposals for making those a reality and for testing the LGA's achievement in those areas. As part of the methodology for achieving the priorities and objectives the Board was presented with a schedule Board meetings for 2005/2006 whereby each meeting of the Board focused its attention of one of the ambitions, or an aspect of one of the ambitions.

Members made the following specific observations with regard to the proposals:

- that a detailed update on the work of the Domestic Violence Project be provided at the meeting of the Board in January 2006, which was scheduled to focus on Safer Neighbourhoods;
- that the stakeholder engagement strategy should be amended to include the voluntary sector;
- that a mechanism should be determined for reporting to the Board the work of the Fire Services Management Committee;
- that in relation to the reducing re-offending key interventions wording should be amended to include the need to work at how local authorities link into National Offenders Management Service (NOMS); and
- that thought needed to be given to how the Board could best link its work with the new Directors of Adult Services posts, perhaps through the appointment of an appropriate advisor to the Board.

Decisions

That:

- (i) the following ambitions for 2005/2006 be agreed:
 - Making every neighbourhood a safe neighbourhood;
 - Reducing the rate of re-offending; and
 - Modernising regulatory services.
- (ii) the key interventions required to achieve the ambitions be agreed as set out in the report;
- (iii) the procedures for testing the success of the key interventions be agreed as set out in the report;
- (iv) the schedule of Board meetings set out below be agreed.
 - September 2005 – Modernising Regulatory Services.
 - November 2005 – Community Safety and Community Cohesion.
 - January 2006 – Safer Neighbourhoods.
 - March 2006 – Reducing Re-offending.
 - May 2006 – Report on progress and review of achievements.
 - July 2006 – Setting priorities for next year.
- (v) a detailed update on the work of the Domestic Violence Project be provided at the meeting of the Board in January 2006;
- (vi) the stakeholder engagement strategy should be amended to include the voluntary sector;
- (vii) an appropriate mechanism be determined for reporting to the Board the work of the Fire Services Management Committee;
- (viii) in relation to the reducing re-offending key interventions wording should be amended to include the need to work at how local authorities link into National Offenders Management Service (NOMS); and
- (ix) thought needed to be given to how the Board could best link its work with the new Directors of Adult Services posts, perhaps through the appointment of an appropriate advisor to the Board.

Actions

That:

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| (i) the ambitions for 2005/06 be agreed and key interventions and procedures for testing the interventions be implemented; | SCB Team |
| (ii) arrangements be made for a schedule of Board meetings as listed in decision (iv) above; | SCB Team |
| (iii) an update on the Domestic Violence Project be provided at the meeting of the Board in January 2006; | KM |
| (iv) the stakeholder engagement strategy be amended to include appropriate voluntary sector organisations; | KF/JB |
| (v) in relation to the reducing re-offending key interventions, wording be amended to better reflect the need to work on how local authorities link into National Offenders Management Service (NOMS); | KF/JB |
| (vi) an appropriate mechanism be determined for reporting to the Board the work of the Fire Services Management Committee; and | CC |
| (vii) consideration be given to how the Board could best link its work with the new Directors of Adult Services posts, perhaps through the appointment of an appropriate advisor to the Board. | KF/JB |

3. Hampton Review – A Vision for Regulatory Services

The Board was addressed by Paul Connolly, Cabinet Office and Chair of the Local Authority Better Regulation Executive Group (LABREG), with regard to the work of LABREG and its various sub-groups. LABREG was intended to be a partnership between national and local regulators and other relevant interests. Its key objective was to spread best practice and improve the performance of local authority regulatory services, consistent with the recommendations set out in the Hampton report. In its initial work programme, LABREG was addressing the priority issues set down for it by the Hampton Review and the government's Business Manifesto and would produce reports on:

- prioritisation;
- identifying, codifying and generalising best practice;
- performance management;
- risk; and
- compliance incentives.

Members discussed the work of LABREG and expressed specific concern at the following aspects of its work:

- Competition and the recommended feasibility study – the Board was keen that new arrangements did not work to the benefit of business at the cost of consumer protection or added burdens for local authorities;
- Service Structure Integration – the Board emphasised the need for local flexibility in two-tier and unitary areas, and, furthermore, expressed concern at the regional element of LABREG's work;
- Presumption against routine inspection – Members noted the apparent shift towards risk-based, intelligence led inspection rather than inspection as a matter of routine, but raised questions about how authorities would ensure adequate monitoring processes were in place to identify when businesses that were previously not considered a risk, became a risk.

The Board requested that these and other issues be discussed in more depth through a meeting between office holders and Paul Connolly.

Decisions

That:

- (i) the report and presentation with regard to the work of LABREG be noted; and
- (ii) a meeting between Board office holders and Paul Connolly, Chair of LABREG, be arranged to discuss Members' views in more depth.

Action

That arrangement be made for a meeting between Board office holders and Paul Connolly, Chair of LABREG.

TO'F/
LACORS

4. Monitoring Live Issues

The Board received an update on the implementation of the Licensing Act, including that the Chair of the Board had, prior to the meeting, attended an Independent Fees Panel Review to give evidence on behalf of the LGA. During discussion of the Act Members noted that Westminster City Council had prepared a list of proposed amendments to the guidance and it was agreed that those points be circulated to all Board Members prior to inclusion in any further LGA submission on the issue.

Decisions

That:

- (i) the update be noted; and
- (ii) the list of proposed amendments to the guidance for the Licensing Act, as prepared by Westminster City Council, be circulated to Board Members prior to inclusion in any future LGA submission.

Action

That the list of proposed amendments to the guidance for the Licensing Act, as prepared by Westminster City Council, be circulated to Board Members prior to inclusion in any future LGA submission.

TO'F/
LACORS

7. Notes of the Previous Meeting

Decision

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