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**Meetings with Outside Bodies**

**Purpose of report**

For information.

**Summary**

This paper is to inform members of the activities that have been undertaken since the last update to the Board by members and LGA officers, on behalf of the Board.

**Recommendation**

Members are asked to note the report.

**Action**

Officers to progress as appropriate.

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## **Meetings with Outside Bodies**

### **Member Activity**

#### **Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act**

1. Cllr Joanna Spicer was invited to speak at the East of England Strategic Authority Leaders' meeting in Cambridge at the end of September on the work the LGA has been doing on the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act. At the meeting Cllr Spicer outlined the LGA's lobbying work around both the policing and licensing sections of the Act. The presentation to the East of England leaders also outlined the role of police and crime commissioners and the issues that would need to be taken into account when establishing a police and crime panel.
2. Several members of the Board were involved in the successful conference the Board held on 19 October jointly with the Association of Police Authorities (APA) on preparing for the introduction of police and crime commissioners. The conference, which was sold-out, saw Board members Cllrs Mehboob Khan and Mark Burns-Williamson OBE address the conference in their role as chair of the Board and chair of the APA respectively. The morning session of the conference was also chaired by the Board's Vice-Chair Cllr Les Lawrence. In addition to speeches from Board members the conference looked at the elections for commissioners (which councils will be running), setting up police and crime panels, and the future relationship between commissioners and community safety partnerships and other local structures. There were speakers from a range of councils and police authorities already engaged in planning for the election of police and crime commissioners, as well as speakers from the Home Office, including the Policing Minister, Nick Herbert MP.
3. Cllrs Joanna Spicer and Henri Murison represented the Board at the Home Office's Police and Crime Commissioners Transition Sponsorship Board meeting in October and December respectively. The October meeting looked at the future commissioning of community safety activity, which commissioners will have a key role in, in the future. Links with health were felt to be important as was the ability for commissioners to merge their budgets with other partners if they wished. The meeting also considered the timetable for setting up police and crime panels, with the issue of Home Office funding for the panels being raised at the meeting. The Home Office indicated that they would be using their work over October and November with four force areas (Leicestershire, South

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Wales, West Midlands and West Yorkshire) to inform their guidance around the introduction of police and crime panels.

4. One of the main issues for consideration at the Transition Sponsorship Board meeting in December was the commissioning role that police and crime commissioners will have. The need for councils to have clarity as soon as possible on what funding will be transferred to police and crime commissioners and from when was made in the meeting by Cllr Murison. It was agreed that councils needed better communication on this issue, and the Home Office would be looking to address it.
5. The Board was also invited to contribute to the APA's transition seminar held at the start of December outside Coventry. Cllr Lawrence spoke about the responsibility on English councils to set up police and crime panels, as well as the role police and crime commissioners (PCCs) will have in commissioning key local services including those on community safety. Cllr Lawrence also participated in the workshop on commissioning of services by PCCs.
6. To assist councils with the transition to police and crime commissioners, two guides with forewords from Cllr Khan, were published in November 2011 and earlier this month respectively. The November publication produced in conjunction with the Centre for Public Scrutiny explored the questions councils need to consider in setting up a police and crime panel, while the guide published in January looks at the implications of the introduction of police and crime commissioners for community safety partnerships.

### **Annual Safer Communities Conference**

7. The annual LGA Safer Communities Conference was held in November and looked at the changes facing community safety partnerships over the next year, and how they could go about meeting them. The conference was chaired by Cllrs Les Lawrence and Duwayne Brooks from the Board, and Cllr Khan addressed the conference to set out the LGA's view of what councils and partnerships need to do in the year ahead. Delegates also heard from Glasgow Community Safety Partnership on the City Council's outsourcing of their community safety function, lunchtime sessions on metal theft and gang violence and workshops on digital engagement, restructuring and merging partnerships, working with colleagues in health, commissioning services and the assistance which the LGA is able to provide to councils.

### **Magistrates Association**

8. The Board's Licensing Champion Cllr Canver met the Magistrates Association at the start of October to discuss a range of issues of mutual concern. This

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included the impact of court closures on the time for cases to reach court, the role that magistrates' courts will have in approving the use of covert surveillance, and how councils could build better relations with their local benches to resolve local issues around inconsistencies in approach over cases and the seriousness with which some crimes such as fly-tipping and other environmental crimes are treated by the courts.

### **Anti-Social Behaviour**

9. At the end of September Cllr Anita Lower, the Board's Anti-Social Behaviour Champion spoke at the Northern Housing Consortium conference in York on crime and anti-social behaviour. The conference was attended by a diverse set of delegates drawn from local authorities, housing associations, and legal firms. Cllr Lower set out the LGA's views on the new tools and powers which the Home Office outlined in the spring for tackling anti-social behaviour. In her speech Cllr Lower also set out how the introduction of police and crime commissioners would in the LGA's view influence how councils and community safety partnerships tackled anti-social behaviour in the future.

### **Officer Activity**

#### **Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act**

10. LGA officers visited or met with a number of member authorities in the last quarter of 2011 to assist them in their preparations for the transition to police and crime commissioners. This list includes councils in Avon and Somerset, Bedfordshire, Derbyshire, Devon and Cornwall, Essex, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, Lancashire, Leicestershire, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, North Yorkshire, Thames Valley and Sussex. During these visits officers outlined the key provisions in the Act, and the main implications for local authorities. Authorities have said they found the process useful and visits to further councils have already been arranged for January and February.
11. Officers have also spoken at a number of events about the implications of police and crime commissioners for councils including the LGA's Independent Group conference, a workshop on setting up police and crime panels at the APA transition seminar, and a seminar organised by Clinks on the implications for the voluntary sector.

#### **Tackling gang and serious youth violence**

12. The report from the government on tackling gang and serious youth violence was published at the end of October. This set out how, over the lifetime of a potential young offender or gang member, local agencies could intervene to

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break the life-cycle that leads to violence or work to reduce reoffending when individuals have already been involved in violence. The LGA's involvement in the officials group producing the report ensured that community budgets were seen as having an important role in funding the multi-agency work to address gang and serious youth violence. Initial plans to require multi-agency serious case reviews after the gang related murder of someone under 18, have also been amended due to LGA lobbying on the basis that this would be a new burden. Instead councils and others would only be encouraged to conduct such reviews.

13. Following publication of the report, the LGA has been invited to participate in the Home Office's Ending Gang Violence and Serious Youth Violence programme board which brings officials from across government to implement the action points in the report. Through our involvement, the Home Office have been persuaded to adopt a more supportive approach with the 22 areas they are looking to work with. The Home Office team have as a result adopted the LGA methodology for conducting peer reviews of these areas, and the LGA will be providing assistance with accrediting the practitioners supporting the Home Office team.

**Metal theft**

14. Officers met with Home Office officials in October to discuss the government's approach to tackling metal theft, and also attended the seminar organised by the Greater London Assembly on the issue held at the end of November. This event saw representatives from the main sectors affected by metal theft explaining the impact on their businesses to the Home Office and a concerted call for early legislation to reform the regulations around scrap metal dealers.