

11 September 2012

**Item 2**

## **2012/13 Business Plan Performance Report**

### **Purpose of report**

For discussion and direction.

### **Summary**

This report reviews progress against the priorities for the Safer and Stronger Communities Programme Board as set out in the LGA's business plan.

### **Recommendation**

Board members are asked to note progress and that work on next year's business plan will begin with the January Board meeting examining priorities for the year ahead.

### **Action**

As directed by Members.

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## **2012/13 Business Plan Performance Report**

### **Background**

1. The annual business plan for 2012/13 for the LGA was agreed by the Executive in March 2012. Mid-way through this cycle, it is therefore timely to review the impact of our work and our delivery against the priorities in the business plan.
2. Across the LGA, the performance report presented to the Leadership Board after the first quarter showed that we are on track to deliver 31 of the 42 outcomes identified. All of the priorities identified for the Safer and Stronger Communities Board were rated as green, with outcomes on track to be achieved.
3. For reference, six priorities were identified as the focus for the LGA's work in 2012/13:
  - 3.1 Public Service Reform
  - 3.2 Growth and Prosperity
  - 3.3 Funding for local government
  - 3.4 Efficiency and Productivity
  - 3.5 Sector-led Improvement
  - 3.6 The LGA's own effectiveness and efficiency.

### **Safer and Stronger Communities Programme Board Priorities**

4. The first half of this year has been mainly devoted to following through the implications of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act, particularly in supporting councils to prepare for the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners and assisting and advising councils to establish Police and Crime Panels.
5. The July Board received an update paper on the LGA's work programme to support councils in this area. This has included: a Police and Crime Panel Peer Support network; a vibrant Knowledge Hub site and a suite of technical documents. We have recently published a further guide on confirmation hearings and are currently writing a guide on Panels' first 139 days about decisions which need to be taken between 22 November and 31 March 2013.
6. We have previously indicated that most areas were making good progress with setting up Panels and we were able to deploy bespoke assistance to areas, if requested. The result is that all areas except one were able to submit satisfactory returns to the Home Office's July deadline. There are some residual issues we are working through, such as names of all members of the Panels, and there is more work to do to ensure that all arrangements are locked down soon. There is ongoing work with one area, but there is currently no indication of any Home Office intervention to determine local arrangements. Indeed, officials have been liaising closely with officers and asking us to facilitate solutions and this contact is ongoing.

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7. The challenges for authorities to set up Panels should not be underestimated. The legislation is not clear on some key points; the interpretation of political proportionality varies and authorities have come together to form these joint arrangements in a responsible and mature way. As soon as we have clarity about arrangements in the final area, we propose to organise media work highlighting the great work of the sector in establishing Panels. This will complete one of the major planks in our work programme.
8. The second headline area to report back on is our work to support Community Safety Partnerships to prepare for the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners. Our work to date has been focused on ensuring Community Safety Partnerships are linked in to the Police Authority transitional arrangements and feeding in to any draft Police and Crime Plans; drawing out clear outcomes from existing funding streams and presenting this in a risk managed way. This engagement work will continue.
9. Members will be aware of work to compile an offer to Police and Crime Commissioners as a national representative body, and the promotion of this through a three pronged strategy of engagement using the political and officer resources of the LGA. The development of the offer was completed in April although work continues to refine the offer, make contact with candidates and ensure our work is relevant. Our campaign continues to evolve, as detailed in the LGA/APCC agenda item for this meeting.
10. Although not a priority issue at the start of the year, the LGA's General Assembly confirmed tackling metal theft as an important issue impacting both directly and indirectly on businesses and town centres. A separate paper details progress on this issue and our close input to Richard Ottaway's bill. This is resource intensive but we are optimistic of a good result for local government.
11. We will continue to lobby on key issues such as ensuring the regulations to deliver a fully flexible alcohol licensing system are fit for purpose; ensuring the government's gang related violence programme is designed with local authority input and that reforms to anti-social behaviour enhance the efforts of anti-social behaviour practitioners. Close links with the work on families with complex needs, and ensuring a focus on the importance of tackling violence against women and girls will continue.
12. We continue to work with community safety partnerships (CSPs) to make them more efficient and effective so they are able to deliver safe and secure communities. CSPs saw grant funding from the Home Office reduce by 20% this year and it will fall by a further 40% in 2012/13 before being handed to PCCs the year after. The LGA continues to provide support to CSPs to examine their structures and provide advice on alternative models such as merged partnerships, shared services and outsourcing.
13. Our sector-led improvement offer continues to develop, with a range of peer-led improvement options available to our member authorities. This includes peer reviews, desktop document reviews, and a new mentoring programme for community safety officers. We were pleased to assist the Home Office with accreditation programmes for 75 of their Ending Gang and Youth Violence peers and to provide advice on modelling their peer review programme on that of the LGA.

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14. Although we have maintained a focus on core activities, we have aimed to adopt a flexible approach in order to respond effectively to issues which arise throughout the year – there are good examples of our work to lobby for magistrates to be able to serve on Police and Crime Panels; our work on chuggers in the form of a new national agreement; a continuing response to criticism about surveillance powers; and highlighting the role of trading standards regarding counterfeit products. This has been positively received by our member authorities.
15. The remainder of this financial year is busy. With Parliament returning in early September, there will be a raft of legislation coming forward resulting from the white paper on anti-social behaviour, Ministry of Justice consultations on probation, community payback and re-offending and reforms to regulation in the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform bill. Board Members are engaged in a number of speaking engagements at the Autumn Party conferences and the annual safer communities conference is scheduled for 28 November, and a PCC event in early December. The PCC work continues with ensuring the role of local government is community safety is embedded in candidates' minds, establishing the size of the community safety fund and work with the Centre for Public Scrutiny on how best to support Police and Crime Panel members as we approach the November elections.

## **Communication**

16. There are a number of internal and external communications channels available to help the Safer and Stronger Communities Board promote the work it is doing and ensure key messages are received in a professional manner by as many stakeholders as possible. Members will be aware that we use the full suite of these tools and techniques to ensure that the safer communities and policing contacts are aware of, and support, our work.
17. We have a full programme of conferences and events, a dedicated section on the LGA website, regular e-bulletins with a personal introduction from the Chair of the Board, outside speaking events and interviews, Knowledge Hub, blogs, features and news items in First magazine, and twitter accounts which are used to keep in close touch with our members to hear their concerns, but also to ensure they are aware of the work of the LGA. We also work with some of our key partners to give added strength to our messages, and this has been particularly evident in our PCC Bulletin where our partners have included the Prison Reform Trust, AgeUK, the British Retail Consortium, the Electoral Commission and others. There are regular opportunities for Lead Members and Champions to do both broadcast and radio media and also parliamentary work.
18. One area where we might focus for the remainder of this year is showcasing the work of our Member authorities more at a national level. We hear about some excellent projects across the country and there is more we can do on packaging up positive, pro-active news stories to the national media using the best examples of what our members are doing.

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**Conclusion and next steps**

19. This is a good mid-year report but Members will want to review and comment on the workstreams for the remainder of the year. Consideration of next year's business plan will start early in 2013.

**Financial Implications**

20. The activity budget for this area of work is £166k. At this mid-year point there is £67k uncommitted and therefore we expect to come in on budget at the end of the year.