

Note of decisions taken and actions required

Title:	Safer and Stronger Communities Board
Date and time:	Tuesday 11 September 2012, 11.00am
Venue:	Millbank Room 8.2 (8 th Floor), Local Government House

Attendance

Position	Councillor	Council
Chair	Cllr Mehboob Khan	Kirklees Council
Vice Chair	Cllr Joanna Spicer	Suffolk CC
Deputy Chair	Cllr Duwayne Brooks	Lewisham LB
	Cllr Philip Evans JP	Conwy Council
Members	Cllr Robert Gordon CBE DL	Hertfordshire CC
	Cllr David Burbage	Windsor & Maidenhead RBC
	Cllr Tom Fox	Scarborough BC
	Cllr Shona Johnstone	Cambridgeshire CC
	Cllr Nick Worth	South Holland DC
	Cllr Kay Hammond	Surrey CC
	Cllr Nilgun Canver	Haringey LB
	Cllr Ann Lucas	Coventry City
	Cllr Florence Nosegbe	Lambeth LB
	Cllr Michael Payne	Gedling BC
	Cllr Lisa Brett	Bath & NE Somerset Council
	Cllr Anita Lower	Newcastle City
Substitutes	Cllr Audrey Lewis	City of Westminster
	Cllr Richard Chattaway	Warwickshire CC
	Cllr Kate Haigh	Gloucester City
Apologies	Cllr Paul Bettison	Bracknell Forest Council
	Cllr Henri Murison	Newcastle City

Officers: Helen Murray, Mark Norris, Gwyneth Rogers, Ian Leete, Stephen Service (all LGA)

Item	Decisions and actions	Action by
	<p>Cllr Mehboob Khan welcomed Members to the meeting, including new appointments.</p> <p>Cllr Kay Hammond announced her appointment as Fire Services Management Committee and Fire Commission Chairman and said that SSCB Members were welcome to attend these meetings. She voiced a desire to bring the work of Fire and Safer Communities Boards closer together.</p> <p>Cllr Khan welcomed Cllr Hammond's comments and commented that a number of issues between the two Boards overlap, including part time firefighters pensions. He agreed that strengthening links between the two boards was a positive step and confirmed that the Safer Communities lead members would bring back recommendations on how links could be developed to the next Board.</p> <p>Action</p> <p>Report on the work of the FSMC, pulling out synergies with safer communities and emergency planning, to be presented to the next SSCB.</p>	
1.	<p>Safer and Stronger Communities Board membership, Terms of reference and appointments to Outside Bodies 2012/13</p> <p>Cllr Khan encouraged Members to participate actively in the work of the Safer Communities Board.</p> <p>On Board champions, Members noted that some appointees had not been called upon in the previous year. They asked if the expertise of representatives was being made the best use of and questioned whether all of the Member Champions were needed.</p> <p>Officers responded that the amount of work that Member Champions were given often depended on what was happening in the policy sphere. Some areas, such as emergency planning had received less attention in 2011/12 as there were fewer incidents which the LGA had needed to respond to.</p>	Eamon Lally

On outside bodies, Members asked for greater opportunity to feed back on work which representatives had been involved in. Cllr Khan agreed that lead Members would discuss a new format for presenting outside bodies feedback alongside the monthly Chair's report.

Members were asked to note that the Local Government Health and Safety panel would be removed from the outside bodies list, as despite repeated requests from the LGA, officers had received no response on whether the panel was still active.

The Member champions for 2012/13 were confirmed as:

Domestic Violence – Cllr Ann Lucas (Deputy: Cllr Lisa Brett)
Licensing – Cllr Nilgun Canver
Community Cohesion – Cllr Duwayne Brooks
Anti Social Behaviour – Cllr Anita Lower, Cllr Nick Worth (joint champions)
Emergency Planning – Cllr Tom Fox
Regulatory Services – Cllr Paul Bettison

As the Home Office boards and projects related to PCCs were being reviewed ahead of the elections members agreed not to appoint members to these Boards, with the Board being a pool that could be called on as necessary to represent the LGA, and any structures that the Home Office continued in existence could be brought back to the Board in November. Members also wanted to see if the Local Government Panel on health and safety was still meeting, before considering any appointments, and agreed that lead members would discuss appointments to the Public Funding Regulatory Association and the Purple Flag Board.

The Outside Bodies nominations were agreed as:

Criminal Justice Council - Cllr Robert Gordon CBE DL
Urban Commission Steering Group – Cllr Florence Nosegbe

Decision

The Board formally **noted** the membership and terms of reference for the forthcoming year.

Action

Lead Members to discuss a new format for presenting outside bodies feedback alongside the monthly Chair's report.

**SSCB Lead
Members / LGA
Officers**

Officers to inform outside bodies of any changes in or confirm continuation of LGA representatives.

LGA Officers

Officers to confirm appointments with Members, including Regulation appointments via a paper at the next SSC Board.

LGA Officers

2. 2012/13 Business Plan Performance Report

Helen Murray, LGA Head of Programme introduced this item. She asked Members to note that there had been less demand from authorities for a Community Safety Peer Review than for Peer Reviews in other work areas so Members were encouraged to promote these more widely. Members asked for community safety peers to include specific elements about working with PCCs in their peer challenges to encourage wider take up.

Cllr Hammond said that local government struggled with the relationship between council overview and scrutiny committees and police and crime panels and community safety partnerships and PCCs. She argued that further work is needed to support councils with building these relationships.

Cllr Nosegbe noted that the Safer Communities Conference would take place just after the PCC elections. She asked if there were plans to have PCCs speak at this event. Mark Norris, LGA Senior Policy Advisor confirmed that this was the case, but Officers would be unable to make approaches to individuals until it was clear who had been elected.

Members advocated that local resilience forums feature in the new business plan, with a focus on their role and effectiveness and sharing good practice. Officers agreed to bring a plan back to the Board for this area of work.

Helen said that as part of the conference there would be a masterclass on commissioning Community Safety services. She offered to send the Board further details of this event.

Action

Officers to send further details of masterclass on commissioning Community Safety services to Members.

**Helen Murray
/Mark Norris**

Community safety peers to be asked to include specific elements about working with PCCs in their peer challenges to encourage wider take up.

Chris Williams

Local resilience forums should feature in the new business plan – role and effectiveness, good practice etc (Clive to develop plan)

Clive Harris

3. Criminal Justice System White Paper

Mark Norris, LGA Senior Policy Advisor presented this item. He invited comments from Members on the draft response attached to the report as Appendix A.

Members broadly supported the content of the draft, but said that language could be strengthened regarding restorative justice, which could reduce re-offending rates and on offender release days. Members highlighted that the release of offenders on Fridays and Saturdays put significant strain on services dealing with prisoners as they returned to civilian life.

Councillors cited further examples where shared protocols between different areas could improve the system, including the conflict between “paperless” guidance issued by many government departments and the prison service’s ban on barristers’ external laptops for appointments held within the prison building.

Members raised the issue of Crown Prosecution Service satellite offices and their future in smaller cities.

Identifying who short term offenders are was also a problem as probation would not necessarily be working with them directly. Members proposed that the issue of short term offenders be made a priority for the LGA’s future work.

Some Members objected to the way information was being proposed to be disseminated via an independent Police Information and Communications Technology company. Helen Murray responded that there was little room for debate on this

point as arrangements had already been set in motion.

Some Members were unclear what the naming and shaming of offenders mentioned in paragraph 6.4 of the Board entailed and asked that this be clarified. **LGA Officers**

Action

Shorter sentences to feature in LGA's new business plan. Officers to consider content for new work programme. **Mark Norris / Vicki Goddard**

Revised Criminal Justice White paper response to be circulated to lead members, incorporating Member comments. **Vicki Goddard**

Decision

Members noted the report.

4. Discussions with the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners

Helen Murray updated Members on progress in establishing a national representative body for PCCs.

On the PCC offer, Members commented that any proposal put to PCCs should stress the LGA as an appropriate membership body for them. Councillors emphasised that the APCC's top priorities were only achievable with the involvement of local government and the importance of councils in creating safer communities needed to be communicated to candidates in time for their manifesto.

Adam Pokun, LGA Corporate Programme Manager responded that the LGA is advocating 101 ways that Councils can work with PCCs, with a new area highlighted on the LGA website each day in the run up to the elections. Members asked for this list to be circulated to them.

With regards to Police and Crime Partnerships, Members highlighted that demonstrating the role of local authorities could prove difficult as reduced funding has meant that much of the local authority budget have been spent on tackling problems rather than promoting their work.

Cllr Khan noted that local government was a key feature of the

new Minister's speech. He was optimistic that the LGA's message was getting through, but the strong campaigning needs to continue. He encouraged Members to contact their local PCC candidates.

Action

Officers to circulate to the Board the list of 101 ways that Councils can work with PCCs.

**Adam Pokun /
Stephen Service**

5. Legislation update – Metal theft

Mark Norris introduced this item.

Members emphasised that it was imperative that the LGA did not weaken its position stipulating that councils be allowed to set their own conditions within scrap metal licenses. They highlighted the grave consequences of metal theft in local areas, including a library shut for a year due to the lead roofing being stolen.

Councillors also reaffirmed that legislation was one of a range of tools that could be used to curb metal theft, with a range of ways action could be taken set out in the council toolkit. Cllr Khan also drew attention to the success of Central Bedfordshire's voluntary licensing scheme. He encouraged Members to share other examples of good practice in their areas.

Some Members felt a more Councillor-friendly version of the Scrap metal licensing toolkit, with less technical language might be easier to promote in their authorities.

Cllr Khan said that Members of the Board would continue to be asked by the LGA to lobby their MPs on this issue behalf of local government.

Decision

Members **noted** progress and the LGA's amendments to the Bill.

Action

LGA Officers

LGA Officers to progress, taking account of Members comments.

6. Update on regulatory services issues

Cllr Khan asked Conservative colleagues to register the LGA's concern with Eric Pickles MP in light of the factual errors contained within the recent report into Council CCTV usage by Big Brother watch.

Action

LGA Officers to send Cllr Spicer a copy of the Big Brother Watch report for reference and any correspondence to date between LGA Officers and CLG on this issue.

Gwyneth Rogers

7. Notes of the last meeting

Cllr Spicer asked Officers to amend the minutes from July to reflect the fact she sent apologies.

Stephen Service

The notes of the last meeting were agreed as a correct record.

8. AOB

Further to the meeting, the Lead Members agreed for Shona Johnstone to represent the Board on the Public Funding Regulatory Association body.

Cllr Bettison agreed to continue his role as the LGA representative on the Better Regulatory Outcomes Group, with Cllr Phillip Evans as Substitute.

Cllr Khan agreed to be the Board's representative on the Better Regulation Delivery Office Steering Group.

Date of next meeting: 11am, Monday 5 November 2012, Local Government House