

## Note of decisions taken and actions required

---

<b>Title:</b>	LG Group Safer and Stronger Communities Programme Board
<b>Date and time:</b>	Monday 11 July 2011, 11.00am
<b>Venue:</b>	Rathbone rooms 1 & 2 (7 <sup>th</sup> Floor), Local Government House

---

### Attendance

Position	Councillor	Council
Chair	Cllr Mehboob Khan	Kirklees MBC
Deputy Chair	Cllr Duwayne Brooks	Lewisham LB
	Cllr Les Lawrence (Vice Chair)	Birmingham City Council
	Cllr Goronwy Edwards (Deputy Chair)	Conwy
Members	Cllr Tom Fox	Scarborough BC
	Cllr Joanna Spicer	Suffolk CC
	Cllr Ian Gillies	City of York
	Cllr Ann Lucas	Coventry City
	Cllr Mark Burns-Williamson	Wakefield MDC
	Cllr Anita Lower	Newcastle City
	Cllr Brian Coleman	Barnet LB / LFEPa
	Cllr Nilgun Canver	Haringey LB
	Cllr Daisy Benson	Reading BC
Substitutes	None	
Apologies	Cllr Paul Bettison	Bracknell Forest

**Officers:** Helen Murray, David Lock, Thomas Coales, Stephen Service (all LG Group)

Item	Decisions and actions	Action by
------	-----------------------	-----------

**1 Motions from the LGA General Assembly**

**Metal theft**

Helen Murray introduced this item. She concluded by saying that Cllrs Angus Adams and Roger Horton had been invited from Centro as proposers of the motion on metal theft, but were unavailable to attend and proposed that the board writes to them to keep them up to date on the outcomes from this meeting.

Members agreed that a robust response was required to metal theft as it was fast becoming a national problem. Members cited such examples as cash for gold schemes and a steady growth in scrap trading as factors affecting the increase in this form of theft, and there were many examples cited from around the country of this crime causing serious inconvenience and danger.

Members felt that metal theft was currently not an issue at the top of Police authorities' agendas, partly because the cost of crime assessment prioritises violence.

On potential responses to the problem, members advocated that the voluntary code of conduct to reduce sales of stolen metal could be made statutory although there was a recognition that legislation has a limited impact and voluntary approaches with joint operations at local level was often a more effective solution. Some members felt that technology such as CCTV and numberplate recognition has a key role to play in the operation of scrap metal dealers, and that normal business principles around payments should apply to this industry. It might also be worth engaging the insurance industry in discussion about this. Cllr Lucas suggested piloting new approaches in the West Midlands.

Members felt that greater awareness needed to be raised over the potential impact of metal theft on everyday life, citing an instance where power was cut off in 3 villages as a result of cabling being stolen.

Some Members pointed out that new materials such as hardened plastic are replacing metal on drains and manholes in some areas. Designing out crime provides a solution to the

issue in the future.

### **Licensing**

Cllr Nilgun Canver provided an update on the legislative proposals on licensing and the timing of the Bill.

Members highlighted the current situation whereby planning authorities can set separate opening times to the licensing authority. This is an issue Richard Kemp wrote to the Home Affairs Select Committee about earlier this year.

There was a brief discussion about the importance of involving health authorities in licensing decisions.

Members stressed that the courts have a role to play in ensuring that licensing appeals are dealt with swiftly and that training provided by courts reflects this duty. Members proposed writing to the Magistrates' Association to discuss this further.

Some members felt that although the focus on late night alcohol licences was important, there is an associated issue around late night refreshments and a broader approach would be more effective in tackling anti-social behaviour issues.

Members commented that under the new proposals, one or two premises causing problems in an area could restrict the sale of alcohol across an entire area and penalise premises which did not contribute to anti-social behaviour issues.

On residents, Councillors expressed the view that parents have a responsibility to ensure alcohol kept in the home is drunk responsibly.

Although there remain concerns about the late night levy, it could end up being a major benefit in that it will persuade businesses to close early which will reduce costs.

Helen Murray concluded the discussion by saying that the LG Group would continue to work with Cllr Canver to lobby parliament on this issue.

**Action**

Chairman Khan to write to Cllrs Adams and Horton to update them on the progress of the metal theft motion.

**Cllr Khan/LG  
Group Officers**

Officers to arrange meeting between Cllr Khan and the Environment and Housing board to agree an approach to DeFRA on metal theft.

**Cllr Khan/LG  
Group Officers**

Officers to draft letter to ACPO on metal theft.

**LG Group  
Officers**

Officers to arrange a meeting for Cllr Canver to meet the Magistrates' Association to discuss appeals.

**2 Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill**

The Chair praised LG Group officers for their work so far in influencing the bill and achieving some significant changes, including strengthening the powers of police panels.

Officers responded by thanking the Chair for his contribution, stating that the group had achieved some good wins but that there is still more to do.

Members felt there were still many inconsistencies in the government's proposals. They emphasised the importance of working with APA to ensure there was consensus on how much the reforms would cost. The Chairman responded that the group had already had joint meetings, but that exact costs would not be known until later.

Some Members felt that proposed voting rights in the House of Lords for police and crime commissioners could mean that they are seen as an extension of the Home Office.

On the mechanism for Deputy Police and Crime Commissioners, Members stressed that a democratic process was required to ensure the role was seen as legitimate by the public. There was, however, a different of views about how this should work.

Members sought clarification on what was meant by "confirmation hearings". Cllr Coleman clarified that this would involve prospective candidates appearing before a committee and the panel then making recommendations to the commissioner on their suitability. Cllr Coleman stressed that

the decision for the appointment would ultimately lie with the Commissioner.

Lead Members have subsequently discussed the LG Group position on Deputies and agreed the position as follows: The Deputy PCC is a working role, with public visibility and much more than standing in for the PCC occasionally. As such the postholder should have a democratic mandate and be properly accountable to the public. The postholder should be a councillor, but it would not be right to draw a councillor from the Panel as he/she cannot perform both an executive and scrutiny role. The Panel should agree the appointment of the Deputy, and there can be more than one Deputy PCC in each police force area.

### **Action**

Officers to share practice from Local Authorities already preparing plans based on the Bill's recommendations.

**Cllrs Lawrence,  
Edwards &  
Brooks/LG  
Group Officers  
LG Group  
Officers**

### **3 Olympics Resilience**

Andrew Huddart, Programme Manager for the National Local Authority Olympic Resilience team at LFEPA presented this paper.

Members voiced concern about the loss of local resources to London in councils outside of the capital during the games and questioned what impact this will have on neighbourhood policing and fire services, including contingency planning.

Mr Huddart responded that there is a large amount of work being done nationally to ensure certain regions are not called upon disproportionately and that adequate resilience is maintained in each region.

Members emphasised the likely increase of activities such as prostitution, counterfeiting and enviro-crime in and around the time of the games. Organised crime was also raised as a concern, with members commenting that the rental of fake properties over the internet to overseas tourists could pose a problem.

**Item 7**

Some members felt that the availability of cheap alcohol could increase instances of domestic violence and the influx of tourists and athletes would lead to more race hate crime.

Mr Huddart responded that in London, the Metropolitan police are taking the issue of organised crime very seriously. He said that London Councils have already put together lots of good guidance on a number of Olympics related issues.

With fewer shop deliveries and reduced transport and highway capacity for non-Olympic travel in many cities, some Members felt plans should focus on ensuring normal life can continue during the games. Cllr Canver said that there were currently moves to introduce flexibility on night time deliveries which could ease the pressure on shop supplies.

The Chairman concluded by saying the board would revisit this item in September.

**Action**

Officers to add Olympics resilience to September agenda of Safer Communities Board.

**4 End of Year Board Report**

Members asked about the date and venue for this year's LGA Community Safety conference.

Officers responded that this would need to be financial viable and said that a 1 day conference was being planned for 8 November in Local Government House.

Other **provisional** events are:

4 October 2011: Adult Safeguarding and Community Safety, York

19 October 2011: Police and Crime Commissioners: LG House

22 November 2011: Community Safety and Mental Health: LG House

1 December 2011: Licensing: LG House

Members requested Safer Communities themed media releases to be sent to them. They noted achievements against the Board's priorities in 2010/11.

***Decision***

*Members agreed the programme of meetings for 2011/12.*

**Action**

Officers to circulate proposed date for LG Group Safer Communities Conferences.

**LG Group  
Officers**

Officers to send Safer Communities media releases to all board members from the LG Group media team.

**LG Group  
Officers**

**5 Getting Closer**

Members noted the outcomes of the Getting Closer programme and that the new organisation had been effective since 1 June.

**6 Update on Regulatory Services**

The Board noted the activities outlined in the report. Members commented that more work needed to be done on understanding the way different CABs worked as they can vary in their arrangements and in terms of the size and quality of the service they provide.

**7 Meetings with Outside bodies**

Members noted the report.

This month, Cllr Lower will be taking part in a public policy exchange to tackle forced marriage, honour based violence and new anti social behaviour rules. She will also be attending a Westminster Board on domestic and honour based violence. Members were asked to feed any comments or views on these issues to Cllr Lucas to take to these meetings.

On Police Reform, the Chairman said that a draft leaflet outlining the role of the Police and Crime Commission should be drawn up once the proposals were finalised. He emphasised the need to ensure information produced by the LG Group was kept separate from the Home Office's own information as they were currently engaged on roadshows about this subject.

**Action**

LG Group Officers to draft leaflet for the Police and Crime Commissioner when the position is clearer.

**LG Group  
Officers**

**10 Notes of the last meeting**

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

**Date of next meeting: Tuesday 13 September 2011**