

## Supplementary Agenda

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### **Safer & Stronger Communities Board**

Thursday 16 June 2022

11.00 am

Beecham Room, 7th Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

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	<b>Item</b>	<b>Page</b>
5.	<b>PCC complaints</b>	1 - 6
6.	<b>Safer and Stronger Communities End of Year Report 2021/22 and 2022/23 work plan</b>	7 - 22





## Police and Crime Panels and PCC Complaints

### Purpose of report

For decision.

### Summary

The Association of Police and Crime Commissioners have raised with the LGA's Chairman some issues related to the process for resolving non-serious complaints about Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs). The Home Office also committed at the end of Part 2 of the Review of PCCs to further consider the process for handling complaints against PCCs. This paper seeks agreement from members on a set of principles to inform the LGA's future work in this policy area, and also seeks agreement to raise a number of practical points which would assist police and crime panels in their work.

### Recommendation

1. Members are asked to agree the principles for reforming the system for resolving non-serious complaints against PCCs set out in paragraph 11 as well as the proposals set out in paragraph 12.

### Action/s

The agreed principles and proposals will be used to inform the LGA's work in relation to the handling of non-serious complaints against PCCs.

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## **Police and Crime Panels and PCC Complaints**

### **Background**

1. Under the Police, Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 police and crime panels were given responsibility for making arrangements to informally resolve non-serious complaints about the conduct of police and crime commissioners (PCCs) and their deputies. The process for handling such complaints is covered by the complaints and misconduct regulations. Responsibility for investigating serious complaints of criminal conduct by a PCC lies with the Independent Office of Police Complaints (IOPC).
2. In July 2021 the Home Secretary announced that Part 2 of the PCC Review being conducted by the Home Office would consider the role of the IOPC in the handling of complaints about PCCs.
3. Following the conclusion of the Part 2 Review the Home Office committed to giving further consideration to the processes for how complaints of criminal misconduct against PCCs are handled. One option it mentioned considering was the scope to align a new code of conduct with the regime for mayors and councillors in local government. In addition the Home Office said it will also consider how to address the problems of vexatious and political motivated complaints, especially those which stem from disagreements with the political views of the Commissioner, or complaints which are nothing to do with policing.
4. This latter point on the problems of vexatious and politically motivated complaints is an issue of concern to the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC), who have raised this issue with the LGA's Chairman. The APCC are aware of instances where complaints have been politically motivated and the media are notified a complaint has been received before the relevant PCC has been made aware a complaint has been made. The IOPC went on to investigate these complaints but did not uphold any of them, but the PCCs and their families were in some instances subject to abuse through social media. The APCC are therefore keen to see panels supported with guidance on how to handle complaints.

### **The views of panels on the system for resolving complaints against PCCs**

5. In order to inform its submission to Part 2 of the PCC Review the Board sought views from police and crime panels on the key issues being considered during the Review, which included the system for handling complaints.
6. Panels reported very different experiences, with the level of complaints they received varying considerably. Panels did however agree that the complaints process was complex, lacking in clarity and as a result expensive to service as they often have to seek legal guidance to navigate their way through the legislation, regulations and guidance issued by the Home Office.

7. Panels also felt that although they made every effort to be clear about the type of complaints they are responsible for resolving, the public found it hard to differentiate between complaints against the PCC and the wider police complaints system overseen by PCCs and the IOPC. As a result panels have received complaints about operational policing matters, or where members of the public felt their complaint about a police force had not been resolved in what they deemed to be satisfactory way. Again this led to a mixed experience by panels with repetitive and want might be considered vexatious complaints.
8. Overall panels have indicated the system for resolving complaints against PCCs needs to be improved, and the Home Office's consideration of the issue of complaints provides an opportunity to make the case for changes in the process.

#### **Improving the resolution of complaints about PCCs.**

9. In councils there are specific and separate processes for scrutinising the decisions of the authority and considering breaches of the authority's code of conduct; with scrutiny committees and standards committees dealing with these issues. Police and crime panels combine these functions into one body. Part 2 of the PCC Review sought views on whether the IOPC for example might take on the role of handling all complaints. The views of panels on this issue were split, with some favouring transferring responsibility of all complaints to the IOPC, while others wished to retain accountability of PCCs at a local level.
10. In the absence of suggestions from the Home Office to reform the resolution of complaints against PCCs by transferring responsibility completely to the IOPC, it is likely that panels will retain the responsibility for resolving non-serious complaints against PCCs.
11. Given the different feedback from panels about what might be changed to improve the process for resolving non-serious complaints against PCCs, members are asked to agree the following principles to guide future discussions with the Home Office about changes to the complaints process:
  - 11.1. The system for resolving non-serious complaints against PCCs should be as simple and as easy for police and crime panels to conduct as possible.
  - 11.2. The system should minimise the need for police and crime panels to seek specialist legal guidance in order to resolve a non-serious complaint.
  - 11.3. The system should as similar as possible to the processes councils use for dealing with breaches of their code of conduct on their own authorities as this would allow panels to draw on familiar processes, while also being able to draw on a wider range of expertise and experience.
  - 11.4. Members of the public should be able to distinguish more clearly between any reformed process of resolving complaints about the PCC, and the system for

handling complaints about operational policing matters, so it is easier for them to direct their complaints to the right body.

12. In their responses to the Part 2 Review of PCCs police and crime panels also identified some practical actions which would assist them in resolving non-serious complaints against PCCs, and these were raised in the LGA's submission to the Review. Members are also asked to confirm the following proposals, which would then inform the Board's future lobbying around the resolution of non-serious complaints:

12.1. The Home Office should update and expand its guidance on the handling of complaints, including around complaints recording, identifying valid complaints, dealing with vexatious or repetitive complaints, the role of the IOPC and the parameters of complaints. In doing so the Home Office should engage with panels.

12.2. The inability to impose any sanctions in the event they found against a PCC was thought to be unhelpful by panels, and they also highlighted the lack of a requirement on a PCC to respond any recommendations made by a panel. The Home Office should consider providing further clarity (which could be done through the guidance) on how PCCs should engage with the complaints process and any findings a panel arrives at.

12.3. The Home Office should fund an on-going training programme on the complaints process for members of panels and the monitoring officers supporting panels, and should also support the sharing of good practice.

12.4. Having previously considered whether panels should be given the power to investigate complaints, the Home Office should complete its examination of this option (including the need for further funding to enable panels to carry out any investigations).

### **Civility in public life – safety of elected people**

13. While improvements in the process for handling complaints would address some of the issues the APCC have raised about social media abuse related to vexatious and politically motivated complaints, this will not prevent PCCs all social media abuse. The LGA and APCC have therefore been in discussion about linking their work around the civility in public life agenda.

14. The [LGA Civility in public life programme](#) was established by the LGA's Executive Advisory Board in 2019 to address growing concerns about the impact an increasing level of public intimidation and toxicity of debate is having on local democracy. In particular, there were concerns that attacks risk the personal safety of councillors, undermine local democracy and decision-making, and can put of prospective candidates from standing for election.

15. The purpose of the programme is to address the intimidation of elected members and officers, improve standards of public and political discourse and behaviour in public office and provide support and advice to councils and councillors.

16. Since 2019, the LGA has produced a Model Councillor Code of Conduct and associated guidance for councillors and monitoring officers; a Councillors guide to handling intimidation that has recently been updated; a Councillor guide on using social media and handling abuse on social media; guidance on Digital citizenship; and case studies highlighting good practice from councils supporting councillors experiencing abuse and intimidation linked to their role.
17. In addition, the LGA is working to understand the emerging issues relating to civility in public life, particularly around mounting concerns about the safety of elected members. The LGA launched a Call for evidence of abuse and intimidation of councillors in October 2021 and is due to publish a report of the findings in time for LGA Annual Conference. The report will support the launch of the LGA Debate Not Hate campaign and an associated plenary session also at Annual Conference.
18. The findings of the Call for evidence indicate a significant amount of variance in support offered to councillors to handle intimidation and abuse, and levels of response from police to incidents perpetrated against councillors in relation to their councillor role. The findings also suggest that there is a normalisation of abuse generally and specifically in relation to figures in public life and that some individual may be more likely to experience personalised abuse than others. Finally, evidence from the Call for evidence and other feedback to the LGA indicates that there is a perception that abuse, intimidation and risks to personal safety of elected members are worsening and that this can have a deterrent effect for people interested in getting into local politics.

### **Implications for Wales**

19. Policing is not a devolved matter, while local government is a devolved responsibility of the Welsh Government. As a result police and crime panels in Wales are appointed and supported by the Home Office, although the Home Office works closely with the Welsh Government and WLGA. The LGA will continue to liaise with colleagues in the WLGA around the resolution of non-serious complaints by panels, but the proposals outlined in this paper would only apply to police and crime panes in England.

### **Financial Implications**

20. There are no direct financial implications for the LGA arising from this report. As is highlighted in the paper, making the process for resolving non-serious complaints would reduce some costs for police and crime panels, while permitting panels to investigate non-serious complaints could place additional costs on councils.



**Next steps**

21. Members are asked to agree the principles for reforming the complaints system set out in paragraph 11 and the proposals set out in paragraph 12. If these are agreed they will inform the LGA's work in relation to the handling of non-serious complaints against PCCs.



## **Safer and Stronger Communities End of Year Report 2021/22 and 2022/23 work plan**

### **Purpose of report**

For direction.

### **Summary**

This paper sets out the Safer and Stronger Communities end of year report, including initial proposals for the 2022/23 work plan.

### **Recommendations**

That members of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board note the end of year report and consider the Board's work priorities for 2022/23.

### **Actions**

Officers to prepare a paper setting out the proposed work plan for 2022/23 in line with the Board's feedback, for consideration at the September meeting of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board.

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## **Safer and Stronger Communities End of Year Report 2021/22 and 2022/23 work plan**

### **Background**

1. At its meeting in September the Board considered its priorities for 2021/22 and agreed five overarching themes:
  - 1.1. Community safety
  - 1.2. Prevent, counter extremism and cohesion
  - 1.3. Regulatory services and licensing
  - 1.4. Blue light services and civil resilience
  - 1.5. Crematoria, funerals, coroners and registrars
  - 1.6. Building safety.
2. This paper provides an overview of the achievements delivered against these themes and seeks an initial steer from the Board on its priorities for 2022/23.
3. Feedback from members on their priorities for next year will subsequently be developed into a full paper for consideration at the first meeting of the 2022/23 Board cycle in September.

### **Prevent, counter extremism and cohesion**

4. Throughout the year we have continued to raise concerns with Government about the impact of extremism on communities and the challenges this presents for councils, and of the need to retain national investment in measures to build resilience and tackle division and polarisation.
5. We have again provided significant support to councils to respond to ongoing extremism and cohesion issues through our work with the [Special Interest Group on Countering Extremism](#) (SIGCE), which the LGA has continued to support both financially and operationally. The SIGCE's lead facilitator attended the Board earlier this year to highlight some of the evolving challenges.
6. The SIGCE's work programme for this year has included delivering eight roundtables and webinars covering a range of emerging issues, including incels, extremism and education, the evolution of conspiracy theories since COVID-19, and the Ukraine conflict, and a bespoke session with government officials to feed in sector views on hate crime policy. A further six roundtables have taken place focussing on the intimidation and harassment of asylum seekers and refugees. We have also continued to provide regular

guidance and updates to over 300 members of the SIGCE's online Knowledge Hub, which has also been revamped during the year.

7. Two thematic leads were appointed to provide bespoke support and advice to councils tackling far-right extremism and faith-claimed "Islamist" extremism respectively, and have continued to support the SIGCE's two working groups in these areas. This has included organising an in-person workshop and simulation exercise to help inform a toolkit for councils on responding to anti-minority extremism; and completed our community dialogue pilot in one local authority area to explore how to improve local engagement. We have also concluded research and a series of local focus group sessions on the impact of "Islamist" terminology on communities.
8. Beyond the SIGCE, we have also provided bespoke communications training to a council facing significant far-right activity, and have continued to support two regional elected member networks on Prevent and counter-extremism. We also recently published a series of [case studies and guidance note on partnership working to counter extremism and tackle hate crime](#).
9. Over last summer we [submitted a response](#) to the [Government's consultation on a new Protect duty](#), aimed at helping to prevent terrorist attacks. In our response we called for terrorism risks to be assessed alongside a range of other health and safety issues, and that a risk-based approach to determining which venues/events should fall within scope of the duty would be preferable to the capacity model proposed. We also highlighted the importance of a proportionate approach to introducing new measures and raised concerns about how the duty would operate in practice, and the significant resource and capacity that would be needed for successful implementation. A new Protect duty Bill featured in the Queen's Speech in May and we will continue to ensure that sector views are fed in to Government as the legislation is drafted.
10. We recently submitted a response to DLUHC's call for evidence on social cohesion and resilience. In our response we set out concerns about the abuse and harassment of elected members, and highlighted the important role of local authorities in countering extremism and building resilience alongside partners. We also set out a number of challenges including tackling sensitive issues, national policy uncertainties, the need for a long-term approach that addresses underlying cohesion issues, and limited resources and capacity available for this work.
11. In April we responded to the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities' (DLUHC's) consultation on proposals for amending the legislation around changing street names. In our response we argued that the proposals were unnecessary and

16 June 2022

undermined the fundamental principles of local democracy, and raised a number of concerns that the proposals would be unworkable in practice.

12. Across the year we have fed into the LGA's wider policy work on the Online Safety Bill and will continue to provide input as the Bill completes its passage through the parliamentary process.

### **Community safety**

#### *Domestic abuse*

13. Following Royal Assent of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, the LGA continues to support councils with the implementation of their statutory duty to deliver domestic abuse accommodation-based support and services.
14. Throughout the course of the year, the LGA has hosted and supported 15 workshops for local authorities to share best practice and identify and respond to challenges associated with the duty. The LGA continues to engage with DLUHC on the future funding for the statutory duty, following the [announcement](#) of an additional £125 million for councils in this financial year (2022/2023). We will be calling for the third year of the funding allocation (2023/2024) to be made known to councils before the end of this financial year, to help with longer-term strategic planning.
15. In October 2021, the Minister with responsibility for homelessness and domestic abuse and the Domestic Abuse Commissioner convened the first meeting of the National Expert Steering Group on Domestic Abuse. The purpose of the group has been to monitor the progress of the new statutory duty (Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act) and to help improve the overall response to domestic abuse. The Board's Chair Cllr Nesil Caliskan, and Cllr Lois Samuel, the Board's Domestic Abuse Champion, continue to attend the group meetings on behalf of the LGA and our membership. Updates from these meetings will continue to be provided to members via our Board update paper.
16. The LGA is also a representative of the Strategic Reference Group on Domestic Abuse Perpetrators. The group has been convened by the Domestic Abuse Commissioner for England and Wales to improve the response to tackling domestic abuse perpetrators and help inform and respond to the Government's [Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan](#).
17. As part of this work, the LGA has supported a number of workshops and events on tackling domestic abuse perpetrators, including a joint session with the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC). The workshops have been well-attended, with over 280 delegates joining our most recent LGA webinar on tackling domestic abuse

perpetrators, with presentations from the Domestic Abuse Commissioner, the Home Office, and wider speakers.

18. To help share best practice, the LGA, in partnership with Social Finance, launched a guidance document on [‘tackling domestic abuse – innovative approaches by councils and partner organisations’](#). The guidance document includes a series of case studies from councils on how they tackled domestic abuse before and during the pandemic. The ambition for these case studies is to share and disseminate best practice from across local government nationally to support locally led solutions.
19. In addition to our wider press work, the [LGA joined forces with Women’s Aid and the Domestic Abuse Commissioner Nicole Jacobs to urge people to look out for common signs of domestic abuse over Christmas](#). As well as a community effort to spot the signs of domestic abuse and report concerns, we called for greater investment in early intervention and prevention schemes that helps stop it from occurring in the first place. This built on our successful campaigning with Women’s Aid and partners to raise awareness of domestic abuse during the [football World Cup period](#).

*Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG)*

20. Ahead of the publication of Government’s [updated Violence Against Women and Girls \(VAWG\) Strategy](#) in June 2021, the LGA responded to the [Government’s consultation](#) and [subsequently responded](#) to the publication of the Strategy. The LGA also submitted [written evidence](#) to the Home Affairs Committee [inquiry](#) on tackling VAWG.
21. In addition to the publication of the Government’s Strategy, the Home Office outlined several measures to protect women and girls from abuse and violence. This included introducing a National Policing lead for VAWG, as well as a new [Safety of Women at Night Fund](#), which was open to bids from local authorities, Police and Crime Commissioners, the British Transport Police and civil society organisations. The LGA worked with the APCC and the Home Office to circulate details of the fund to councils and PCCs. We intend to hold a best practice event to share the findings from the fund, once the schemes have been evaluated in Autumn 2022.
22. In November 2021, DCC Maggie Blyth, the newly appointed National Policing Lead for VAWG spoke at the Safer and Stronger Communities Board. DCC Blyth updated the Board on plans for a [National Policing Framework to prioritise tackling VAWG issues](#) and outlined the importance of working in partnership with local authorities to proactively change the culture and response on VAWG.

16 June 2022

23. DCC Blyth and the Domestic Abuse Commissioner will be speaking at our LGA Annual Conference workshop session on tackling Violence against Women and Girls in July 2022, chaired by our Domestic Abuse Champion Cllr Lois Samuel.

*Serious violent crime*

24. In April 2022, the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act, received Royal Assent. During the Bill's passage through Parliament, Cllr Nesil Caliskan gave [oral evidence](#) to the House of Commons Public Bill Committee. She emphasised the importance of taking a public health approach to tackling serious violent crime, investing in prevention and early intervention, as well as identifying the risk factors and drivers of youth violence. The LGA will be publishing a Get-in-on-the-Act explainer in the coming weeks to provide further details about how the provisions in the Act will have an impact on local government.
25. The LGA has held a series of workshops with the Home Office serious violence team to discuss the forthcoming serious violence duty, and the proposed Offensive Weapons Homicide Reviews. We will continue to hold best practice sessions and support councils with the implementation of the forthcoming duty.

*Serious and organised crime*

26. The LGA, the APCC and the Home Office continue to meet regularly to discuss the Home Office's forward plan for tackling serious and organised crime (SOC). In January 2022, the LGA held a webinar on tackling SOC, which reached over 190 delegates. We will continue to hold best practice sessions throughout the year and engage with the Home Office on this important issue.

*Drug strategy*

27. In December 2021, the Government announced an investment of £780 million in drug treatment to break the cycle of addiction as part of a [10-year drugs strategy](#). The Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) said that all local authorities in England will receive new money for drug treatment and recovery over the next three years.
28. Cllr Joanne Harding, the LGA's substance misuse lead, gave evidence to the House of Commons [Home Affairs Committee inquiry on drugs](#). Cllr Harding welcomed the 10-Year Drug Strategy and the additional funding it has brought. However, she stressed that it must be backed by measures and funding for the wider preventative services that are needed to tackle the socio-economic drivers of problem drug use. The LGA will continue to liaise with the Government on the introduction of drug partnership arrangements, and implementation of the Drug Strategy.

16 June 2022

- Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Review / Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs)*
29. Cllr Caliskan and Cllr Mohan Iyengar both gave evidence to the Home Office's Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Part 2 Review. LGA officers also submitted a formal response on behalf of local government. The purpose of the two-part review was to consider how the role of police and crime commissioners (PCCs), can be sharpened and expanded.
30. The Government also announced it would undertake a full review of Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) to initially improve their transparency, accountability, and effectiveness, before assessing their position within the wider landscape of local partnerships across England and Wales. Through the review of CSPs, the Government said it would consider introducing a new duty for CSPs to report on local ASB strategy and delivery to PCCs and legislating to set out the PCC role in the ASB Community Trigger process.
31. To help inform our work, the LGA held a series of introductory sessions with local government officers to discuss the forthcoming Community Safety Partnership Review. We will continue to hold sessions with elected members, officers and wider CSP partners to help inform the LGA's response to the Government review.
32. Following discussions at the Safer and Stronger Communities Board we responded to the Policing Protocol Consultation. This was one of the recommendations from Part one of the PCC Review, to clarify the responsibilities of and relationship between PCCs, Chief Constables, the Panel and the Home Secretary and better reflect the current policing landscape.

*Anti-social behaviour*

33. In July 2021, the LGA supported the UK's first-ever ASB Awareness Week, bringing together housing associations, councils, police forces, charities and other agencies – along with government departments – to take a stand and work together to make communities safer. Organised by Resolve, ASB Awareness Week is backed by the Home Office, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the Local Government Association (LGA), National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and the National Fire Chiefs' Council (NFCC).
34. The LGA continues to contribute to Government strategic discussions on tackling antisocial behaviour and regularly attends the Home Office-led Anti-Social Behaviour Advisory Board. We have hosted a well-attended webinar on tackling anti-social behaviour and continue to share best practice with councils and partners on this issue.



16 June 2022

35. In April 2022, Safer and Stronger Communities Board lead members attended a roundtable discussion with Association of Police and Crime Commissioner leads to discuss tackling anti-social behaviour and wider community safety issues. LGA officers will continue to work with the APCC on a joint webinar to raise awareness of the community trigger, and support ASB Awareness Week in July 2022.

36. In June 2022, the LGA has responded to the Government's consultation on an effective replacement for the Vagrancy Act. Our full response is available [here](#). We will continue to work with the Government on this issue as it progresses.

*Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) Communities*

37. In May 2022, DLUHC launched £10 million of capital funding for 2022/23 to support local authorities in building new transit and permanent traveller sites, to refurbish existing permanent traveller and transit sites and provide temporary stopping places and facilities for travellers. The LGA hosted a [webinar](#) with the department to provide further information about the [Travellers Site Fund](#), which reached over 100 delegates.

38. Prior to this, we held a best-practice webinar on unauthorised encampments, with presentations from DLUHC and the National Liaison Group for GRT Communities.

*Modern Slavery*

39. On modern slavery, we held a series of webinars to share learning and promote best practice on the following issues: an introduction to modern slavery; making quality NRM referrals; partnership working; and housing/homelessness services and modern slavery.

40. Our housing/homelessness services and modern slavery webinar was accompanied by the launch of [guidance](#) and case studies aimed specifically at these services. As highlighted by the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner in her remarks to the Board in January, the provision of housing for victims of modern slavery has been a challenging issue and frequent pinch point that is often the source of tension between councils and organisations working with victims of slavery. Our guidance has been welcomed as an important tool in increasing awareness and understanding of the role services can play; we have also been working with The Salvation Army, which provides support under the Modern Slavery Victim Care Contract (MSVCC), to build relationships between councils and MSVCC sub contractor organisations.

41. We undertook a [survey](#) of councils' work and progress on modern slavery issues to help inform a refresh of our modern slavery guidance for councils. A full draft of the revised guidance is almost completed, and we will be working with sector experts to refine this in the coming weeks, supported by the development of a maturity matrix for councils' work on this issue. We expect the final documents to be complete by the end of summer.



42. In recent months, we have also been involved in connecting our contacts in the anti-trafficking sector with the wider VCS/humanitarian sector in relation to the work on the Ukraine refugee schemes.

### **Blue light services and civil resilience**

#### *Fire Reform White Paper*

43. On 18 May the Government published its White Paper on reforming the Fire and Rescue Service. Following an initial discussion at the Fire Services Management Committee (FSMC) and the Fire Commission the LGA will be submitting a response when the consultation closes at the end of July. The paper contains a wide range of proposals around governance of the fire and rescue sector, and the Government's preferred model of having a single, elected – preferably directly elected – person governing fire and rescue services. There are proposals around operational independence for chief fire officers as well as questions on changes to promotion and entry requirements, ethics and the negotiating machinery for pay and terms and conditions.

#### *Fit for the Future*

44. Fit for the Future is a joint piece of work being undertaken by the LGA, the National Fire Chiefs Council and the National Employers (England) on the future of the fire and rescue service, and how we will seek to enhance and improve the service going forwards. A revised version of Fit for the Future will be published soon.

#### *Equality and diversity*

45. The LGA has continued to support the Fire Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Member Champions Network. We have held sessions on different issues including case studies from London Fire Brigade, councillors, women in the fire service and had input from the inspectorate. The Network provides a forum for discussion of EDI issues and support for members and is chaired by the Equalities Advocate for the FSMC, Dr Fiona Twycross, Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience in London.

#### *Training*

46. We have undertaken a range of support and training activities for members on fire and rescue authorities. We held three training sessions on governance and leadership in September, October and November. We have also continued with our Fire Leadership Essentials Programme to support leading members on FRAs.

#### *Civil Contingencies and Resilience*

47. We contributed to two reviews (one Government led, one independent) looking at the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and national resilience strategy, convening two roundtables

16 June 2022

to provide member input to these. The findings of the both the post-implementation review of the CCA and the independent review recognised the need for the Act to formally reflect the role of democratically elected local politicians within resilience structures, and agreed that there should be a stronger framework of assurance for Local Resilience Forums (LRFs) and resilience activities. We expect more detail in the national resilience strategy, which is expected later in summer.

48. In support of the objective of strengthening democratic input to resilience work, we will shortly be commissioning a series of case studies showcasing effective member engagement and oversight of resilience work.

49. We have been participating in the work of the National Consortium for Societal Resilience, which brings together LRFs, the voluntary and charity sector and other partners to consider how to build the foundations for a whole of society approach to resilience. We plan to work with the National Preparedness Commission over the summer to promote case studies they have commissioned on community resilience activities during the pandemic.

### **Water safety**

50. We have published a water safety toolkit to support councils to ensure that both locals and visitors are able to enjoy the natural environment safely whether on the coast or inland. This includes guidance for councils as well as some examples of best practice.

51. We also responded to a Department for Transport consultation on personal watercraft and supported world drowning prevention day.

### **Licensing and regulation**

52. We have worked with officials at DLUHC on the temporary pavement licensing regime introduced by the Business and Planning Act 2020. Our lobbying was instrumental to securing new burdens funding for licensing authorities for year one and two of the temporary regime. We also successfully lobbied for changes to DLUHC's proposals for a permanent regime, and the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill now contains provisions for a higher fee cap, longer consultation and determination period, and improved enforcement powers for licensing authorities.

53. We delivered a second licensing leadership essentials course in March and have another planned for October. This course received excellent feedback. We also ran our annual licensing conference in February, which was a paid for event that generated significant income for the LGA and received positive feedback. We have also progressed work on developing virtual training resources for members of licensing committees (an

16 June 2022

updated e-learning module and scenario videos) and hope to have that work completed in the coming weeks.

54. On taxis, the LGA worked closely with the Department for Transport on the Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle (Safeguarding and Road Safety) Act as it progressed through Parliament. The Act will mandate the use of the LGA developed and funded NR3 database and increase public safety, which is welcome. We also developed a guidance note for licensing authorities on home to school transport contracts and will be submitting evidence to the Department's best practice consultation in the coming days.
55. Cllr Jeanie Bell, one of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board Licensing Champions, provided evidence to two select committees: first, to the Home Affairs Committee on spiking and second, to the Lords Liaison Committee on the Licensing Act. Cllr Bell showcased the important work of councils to keep communities safe and highlighted our key lobbying asks, such as localised licensing fees.
56. Following the pandemic, there has been a renewed interest in the idea of health as a licensing objective. We have been working with public health colleagues to make the case for health considerations in licensing, including liaising with DLUHC colleagues on this issue.
57. We have continued to work with the Department of Culture, Media and Sport ahead of the publication of the Gambling Act Review and the Lead Members of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board have written to the Minister to reiterate our priorities for the review.
58. On wider regulatory services, in the early part of the Board year officers continued to work with the DLUHC Covid division and Department of Health and Social Care as the Government developed plans for Covid passes, which were subsequently introduced following the rise of the Omnicron variant. We hosted a webinar for compliance leads to discuss the application of the covid pass requirements and reinstated face mask requirements in early January.
59. Disappointingly, the work of the DLUHC regulatory services task and finish group has not been progressed by Government. As in 2020, the LGA developed a spending review submission covering regulatory services, calling for investment in apprenticeships in environmental health and trading standards: despite this being supported by DLUHC officials this was not ultimately included within the DLUHC departmental bid. We are engaging with our workforce colleagues to ensure that the shortages in these professions are considered as part of wider LGA-DLUHC work on workforce challenges.
60. We continue to work with partners in the professional bodies and Office for Product Safety and Standards to support the professions where possible. We developed a series

of case studies of senior officers with regulatory services backgrounds to accompany the launch of a regulatory services leadership development course, and will shortly finalise a councillor handbook on public protection services to highlight best practice. We also developed guidance for government departments on issues to consider when developing new enforcement duties that councils are expected to enforce. Finally, we have been supporting the development of the new Association of Chief Environmental Health Officers to provide additional professional capacity and input to central policy making.

### **Crematoria, registrars, coroners and medical examiners**

61. We have continued to provide support to member authorities on issues related to coroners and registrars, as well as responding to media enquiries. Media enquires have concerned the impact of the pandemic on registration services, as well as other issues facing the sector. We have continued to provide input into the Ministry of Justice Coroner Services Committee and the Coroner Services Managers Panel.

### **Building safety**

62. Over the last year our focus has been on the passage of the Building Safety Bill through parliament and working to ensure it aligns with the LGA's [fundamental asks](#): that the construction industry, developers, and manufacturers should pay for the cladding crisis. We have continued to press the government to distinguish between local authorities and developers, and fund councils to deliver the Building Safety Regulator (BSR). We have supported a coordinated audit of risk within medium-rise residential buildings.

63. We have also lobbied for the commencement of the Fire Safety Act, which has now taken place with [secondary legislation](#) implementing most of the recommendations of the Grenfell Inquiry. Following our lobbying with other bodies, the Home Office published the Fire Safety Assessment Prioritisation Tool alongside the Fire Safety Act and agreed to implement the LGA's working group on PEEPs neighbour assistance. We will engage in the [new consultation on PEEPs](#) and the Emergency Evacuation Information Sharing (EEIS) proposal.

64. The LGA has published [case studies](#) and a document on [principles of effective regulation](#), and has run several webinars and Leadership Essentials events with more being planned currently. The Joint Inspection Team has secured funding for the next two years which will see it triple in capacity by the end of this financial year.

### **2022/23 Priorities**

65. It is expected that the themes for the 2022/23 work priorities will remain broadly consistent with 2021/22, with a number of workstreams continuing into the new Board cycle.

66. The table below sets out some initial thinking on workstreams that will continue into the new Board cycle, subject to the Board’s views:

<b>Priority area</b>	<b>Proposed activity</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prevent, counter-extremism and cohesion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to lobby Government on the importance of retaining investment in measures to prevent extremism and build resilience</li> <li>Deliver a programme of support to councils on tackling extremism through the Special Interest Group on Countering Extremism, including:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A series of roundtables and webinars for practitioners to share emerging challenges and facilitate support</li> <li>Case studies and guidance to capture good practice</li> <li>Facilitating academic support to councils on tackling extremism</li> </ul> </li> <li>Provide training for elected members on delivering the Prevent duty, tackling extremism and building cohesion</li> <li>Lobby around the Online Safety and draft Protect Duty Bills to ensure they reflect sector views.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community safety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a further round of awareness raising events on modern slavery</li> <li>Continue to support councils on the implementation of their domestic abuse duty (outlined in Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021)</li> <li>Lobby on the draft Victims Bill during pre-legislative scrutiny stages, and when the Bill passes through Parliament.</li> <li>Support councils with the implementation of the forthcoming serious violence duty and Offensive Weapons Homicide Reviews, outlined in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act.</li> <li>Continue to hold best practice sessions on tackling anti-social behaviour, and support 2022 ASB Awareness Week.</li> <li>Provide good practice case studies on community safety issues, such as VAWG, domestic abuse, serious violence – to help support councils with the forthcoming duties.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with the Home Office and partners on tackling serious and organised crime – continue working with the APCC on any joint work related to the Government’s SOC strategy.</li> <li>Respond to the Government’s forthcoming Community Safety Partnership review and ensure local government views are fed-in throughout each stage of the process.</li> <li>Work with the Department for Health and Social Care on the implementation of the 10 year Drug Strategy, and provide support on the implementation of proposed drug partnership arrangements.</li> <li>Continue engaging with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on the Travellers Site Fund – making the case for increased funding to help councils improve current transit sites.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Blue light services and civil resilience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fire Services Management Committee will be considering its priorities at its July meeting, and these are likely to focus on responding to the Fire Reform White Paper and the outcome of inquiries such as those into the Grenfell Tower fire and the attack at Manchester Arena.</li> <li>Respond to the publication of the national resilience strategy and help shape future pilots and activities on local resilience</li> <li>Support members and officers to strengthen council activity on resilience</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Licensing and regulation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update the LGA’s guidance on gambling harms, working with the APCC on joint local work on this issue.</li> <li>Continue to make the case for localisation of alcohol licence fees.</li> <li>Work with the Department for Transport on taxi licensing reform and with DLUHC on pavement licensing provisions in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill.</li> <li>Make the case for dedicated support to develop expert capacity in regulatory services.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building safety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will engage with HSE’s programme to establish the new building safety regulator and raise awareness amongst councils of their responsibilities as regulators and duty holders under the new building safety regime. As part of this, we will continue to lobby for the funding of new burdens and a proportionate approach to</li> </ul>

	<p>transition to the new regime and new FSO responsibilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will continue to support councils in taking enforcement action under the Housing Act 2004 through hosting the Joint Inspection Team and to monitor the impact of the continuing competitive environment in building control regulation for buildings under 18m. We will continue to support a coordinated approach to regulation between fire services and councils.</li> <li>• We have an improvement programme to support councils and FRs in their enhanced regulatory role and to support councils as landlords.</li> <li>• We will consider any developments around the Grenfell Tower inquiry, including the recommendations of its Phase Two report and respond.</li> <li>• We will continue to lobby around Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans and improved building regulations.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crematoria, coroners and registrars</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We anticipate that there will continue to be continuing press and related media work related to the death management processes including crematoria and registrars' service.</li> </ul>

67. The Board's views on any other areas they would like us to focus on would be very helpful.

**Implications for Wales**

68. We will work with colleagues at the Welsh LGA to identify areas where our work will be applicable to Wales, and where WLGA may wish to use our work as a basis for Welsh specific work of its own.

**Financial Implications**

69. None. The work priorities identified for 2022/23 will be delivered within the planned staffing budget and grant funding available from the LGA's DLUHC grant (which supports dedicated posts on building safety and counter extremism/cohesion).

**Next steps**

70. The Board are asked to reflect on the work delivered this year and consider and comment on their priorities for 2022/23.

