

Note of last Safer & Stronger Communities Board meeting

Title: Safer & Stronger Communities Board
Date: Thursday 17 September 2020
Venue: Zoom

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A** to this note

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
1	Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest Cllr Nesil Caliskan (Chair) opened the meeting and gave short personal introduction as the new Chair of the Safer & Stronger Communities Board. Nesil also welcome the following new members to the Board; Cllr Lois Samuel, Cllr Paul Findow, Mayor Damien Egan, Cllr Jeanie Bell and Cllr Nicola Dillon Jones. The Chair gave a brief reminder of best practice and etiquette in remote meetings. There were no declarations of interest.	
2	Security threats in COVID-19 recovery The members of the Safer & Stronger Communities Board received a confidential update from a government security adviser. Decision The members of Safer & Stronger Communities Board noted the report.	
3	Safer and Stronger Communities Board 2020-21 a) Terms of reference b) Board membership 2020-21 c) Outside body appointments 2020-21 d) Board meetings for 2020-21 e) Board member champions role description (including Equalities	

Advocate)

The Chair invited Mark Norris (Principal Adviser) to introduce the item and each aspect of the paper.

Mark noted that the Board appoints several Champions who work to support a specific area of policy. All Boards are being asked to appoint an Equalities Advocate. The scope of the role and how each Advocate is appointed still under development, with discussions taking place, but it is proposed for the SSCB that Champions monitor equalities issues in their area and work is collated by the Chair as the lead advocate for equalities. Additional work is ongoing between Political Groups on this issue and will be referenced back to Lead Members.

In the subsequent discussion members raised the following points;

- A number of members expressed interest in specific areas and champion roles.
- Members considered whether a joint champion role for Grenfell & Building Regulations would link well into other work around the LGA.
- Members proposed a potential role overseeing Governance of Police & Crime Commissioners. Mark explained that the timings of the Review and submission timetable, with consultation needed across SSCB and Fire Safety Management Board. Noted that the Board will need to review the response from the Home Office in due course.
- The creation of a role covering Security and Emergency Planning that could link into the work of the Prevent Champion was put forward. Mark suggested that a role focused on Emergency Planning could be considered at a late date. Security elements would be covered by the Prevent role.
- Questions were raised on the division of Modern Slavery and Serious Violence & County Lines in to separate champion roles. Mark noted that there is some nuance in their definition based on the work plan but acknowledged the two roles will be heavily interlinked so will require cross working.
- Members noted the need to replace Cllr Anita Lower as the Board representative on the FGM Advisory Group. The Chair noted that this is being discussed by Lead Members.
- There was a discussion of the decision to discontinue the Bereavement Services Champion, especially with the anticipated spike in COVID cases. Mark gave an overview of the decision and the changes to the Competition & Markets Authority work plan which has limited the scope of the role, however it was helpful to have indications of which Board members had an interest in this area.

The Chair asked Officers to work to confirm the list of Champions.

Decisions:

The members of the Safer & Stronger Communities Board:

- a. Agreed the Terms of Reference;
- b. Noted the membership for 2020/21;
- c. Agreed the Board's nominations to outside bodies;
- d. Noted the dates of the future meetings;
- e. Agreed the proposed approach to member champions and that Lead Members finalise the roles for 2020/21 and
- f. Agreed that appointment of the Equalities Advocate for the Board be finalised once the role of the Group Offices in the appointment process had been confirmed.

Action:

Officers to take any action as required.

4 Safer and Stronger Communities Board priorities and work plan for 2020-21

The Chair noted that the proposals presented were built on the corporate LGA priorities and options for broader work based on a continuation of ongoing work (including responding to recent policy announcements by Government) and areas of interest previously indicated by Board members.

Mark Norris introduced the paper, noting that brief work programmes have been presented with each area of priority, and that additional work may be needed around COVID-19.

In the subsequent discussion the Chair asked for comments in relation to each section of the priorities paper;

Community Safety Issues:

- Regarding Modern Slavery, members suggested that reference should be made to procurement and supply chains in the programme to go to local authorities.
- Members argued that recent events have shown the importance of the relationships between communities and the Police, and that specific work should be focused on this topic.
- The publication of the Maritime & Coastguard Review was highlighted; it was suggested that follow up work on suicide prevention may be helpful.
- Members noted the need for certainty around the role of and funding for COVID Marshals.

Regulatory Services:

- Members noted that following the LGA's call for local authorities to receive powers to sanction premises breaching social distancing this

may be an area of focus.

Bereavement services

- Cllr Pennington volunteered to maintain an overview on items around Bereavement Services.

Civil Resilience/Blue Light Services:

- Members recommended that in light of the ongoing COVID crisis, civil and community resilience should be given greater emphasis within the priorities paper as whole.

Decision:

The members of the Safer & Stronger Communities Board noted the Board's priorities and work programme for 2020/21.

Action:

Officers to update the work plan based on feedback.

5 Building Safety Update

The Chair invited Charles Loft (Senior Adviser) to discuss the report, which updates members on the LGA's building safety related work since the last meeting.

Charles raised the following points;

- The Building Safety Bill has been published and is going through pre-legislative scrutiny. Lord Porter will present evidence on behalf of the LGA.
- The Fire Safety Bill (FSB) has passed the Third Reading in the House of Commons. A dedicated Task & Finish Group is addressing the implications for duty holders of the perceived shortage of insured fire risk assessors who are competent to consider external wall systems.
- A consultation has been launched on secondary legislation under the FSB and Building Safety Bill, including implementation of the Phase One findings of Grenfell Tower Inquiry.
- The LGA has continued to facilitate conversations and support MHCLG, local authorities and developers on the issue of remediating cladding. Progress continues to be slow and compounded by Covid-19 and the absence of comprehensive government funding.
- The Public Accounts Committee has reported on the difficulties being faced by leaseholders in selling homes, increasing insurance costs and securing mortgages on clad properties.

In the subsequent discussion the members raised the following points;

- Members raised concerns with the cost of EWS1 Forms for

external wall fire safety. Residents are being faced with substantial bills even where cladding is not an issue.

- Members suggested that the £1bn proposed by the Government for remediation work is not sufficient support for leaseholders. Clarification was sought on whether additional funding would overcome the shortage of assessors. Charles explained that while additional funding will be a key part of the answer, the Government is attempting to encourage developers to cover part of the cost. Professional Indemnity Insurance is proving to be a major obstacle, with insurers unwilling to sign-off cladding systems. Charles suggested that in the current climate a Government led scheme might be the most effective solution.

Decision:

The members of the Safer & Stronger Communities Board noted the report.

Action:

Officers to incorporate members' views in the LGA's ongoing building safety related work.

6 Covid-19 Update

The Chair invited Ellie Greenwood (Senior Adviser) to introduce the item which updates on Covid-19 related activity since the previous meeting.

In the subsequent discussion members raised the following points;

- Members sought assurances that data collected in hospitality venues for tracing purposes is being deleted in line with the 21-day retention period stated. Ellie explained that this would be governed in line with the regulations and data protection principles (with the Information Commissioner's Office providing guidance), but added that she was aware Environmental Health Officers have also been monitoring data gathering practices. The Chair suggested that dedicated communications be issued by the LGA to member authorities on this matter.
- It was suggested that given the swift changes to regulatory practices due to COVID, some consideration should be given to changes that might be desirable to retain after the emergency response.
- Questions arose on the role of SSCB and the LGA in chasing the monies promised to local authorities under the Local Government Income Compensation Scheme. Ellie noted that this would fall under the remit of the Resources Board and the LGA Local Government Finance team, but that it the financial impact of COVID is a key issue for the LGA

Decision:

The Members of the Safer & Stronger Communities Board noted the report and the implications for the Board's 2020-21 work plan.

Action:

Officers to take forward as directed.

7 Update paper

The Chair gave a brief overview of the paper which outlined issues of interest to the Board not covered under the other items on the agenda.

In the subsequent discussion member raised the following points:

- Cllr Dawson noted he had a meeting to discuss water quality with the Coastal Special Interest Group in his role as Drowning Prevention Champion.
- It was suggested that the Board should closely monitor the use of the Community Trigger, given reports of increasing COVID related Anti-Social Behaviour.

Decision:

That members of Safer & Stronger Communities Board noted the update.

Action:

Officers to action any matters arising from the discussion as appropriate.

8 Minutes of the previous meeting

The Chair asked the members of the Board to approve the minutes of the previous meeting as an accurate record.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman		Enfield Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Katrina Wood	Buckinghamshire County Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Hannah Dalton	Epsom and Ewell Borough Council
Members	Cllr Eric Allen	London Borough of Sutton
	Cllr Mohan Iyengar	Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council
	Cllr Andrew Joy	Hampshire County Council
	Cllr John Pennington	Bradford Metropolitan District Council
	Cllr Dave Stewart	Isle of Wight Council
	Cllr Lois Samuel	West Devon Borough Council
	Cllr Kate Haigh	Gloucester City Council
	Cllr Alan Rhodes	Nottinghamshire County Council
	Mayor Damien Egan	Lewisham London Borough Council
	Cllr James Dawson	Erewash Borough Council
	Cllr Farah Hussain	Redbridge London Borough Council

Cllr Johnson Situ
Cllr Jeremy Hilton
Cllr Philip Evans JP

Southwark Council
Gloucestershire County Council
Conwy County Borough Council

Apologies

In Attendance

LGA Officers