

# Community Wellbeing Board

Agenda

Thursday, 27 May 2021  
12.00 pm

Microsoft Teams

**To:** Members of the Community Wellbeing Board  
**cc:** Named officers for briefing purposes

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**LGA Community Wellbeing Board**  
27 May 2021

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There will be a meeting of the Community Wellbeing Board at **12.00 pm on Thursday, 27 May 2021.**

**Political Group meetings:**

The group meetings will take place in advance of the meeting. Please contact your political group as outlined below for further details.

**Apologies:**

Please notify your political group office (see contact telephone numbers below) if you are unable to attend this meeting.

<b>Conservative:</b>	Group Office: 020 7664 3223	email: <a href="mailto:lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk">lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk</a>
<b>Labour:</b>	Group Office: 020 7664 3263	email: <a href="mailto:LABGP@local.gov.uk">LABGP@local.gov.uk</a>
<b>Independent:</b>	Group Office: 020 7664 3224	email: <a href="mailto:independent.grouplga@local.gov.uk">independent.grouplga@local.gov.uk</a>
<b>Liberal Democrat:</b>	Group Office: 020 7664 3235	email: <a href="mailto:libdem@local.gov.uk">libdem@local.gov.uk</a>

**LGA Contact:**

Amy Haldane  
07867 514938 / amy.haldane@local.gov.uk

**Carers' Allowance**

As part of the LGA Members' Allowances Scheme a Carer's Allowance of £9.00 per hour or £10.55 if receiving London living wage is available to cover the cost of dependants (i.e. children, elderly people or people with disabilities) incurred as a result of attending this meeting.

**Social Media**

The LGA is committed to using social media in a co-ordinated and sensible way, as part of a strategic approach to communications, to help enhance the reputation of local government, improvement engagement with different elements of the community and drive efficiency. Please feel free to use social media during this meeting. **However, you are requested not to use social media during any confidential items.**

The twitter hashtag for this meeting is #lgacwb

## Community Wellbeing Board – Membership 2020/2021

Councillor	Authority
<b>Conservative ( 7)</b>	
David Fothergill (Chairman)	Somerset County Council
Adrian Hardman	Worcestershire County Council
Colin Noble	Suffolk County Council
Jonathan Owen	East Riding of Yorkshire Council
Judith Wallace	North Tyneside Council
Sue Woolley	Lincolnshire County Council
Vacancy	Conservative Group
<b>Substitutes</b>	
David Coppinger	Windsor & Maidenhead Royal Borough
Wayne Fitzgerald	Peterborough City Council
Arnold Saunders	Salford City Council
<b>Labour ( 7)</b>	
Paulette Hamilton (Vice-Chair)	Birmingham City Council
Louise Gittins	Cheshire West and Chester Council
Shabir Pandor	Kirklees Metropolitan Council
Natasa Pantelic	Slough Borough Council
Arooj Shah	Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
Amy Cross	Blackpool Council
Denise Scott-McDonald	Royal Borough of Greenwich
<b>Substitutes</b>	
Mohammed Iqbal	Pendle Borough Council
Joanne Harding	Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council
Bob Cook	Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
<b>Liberal Democrat ( 2)</b>	
Richard Kemp CBE (Deputy Chair)	Liverpool City Council
Doreen Huddart	Newcastle upon Tyne City Council
<b>Substitutes</b>	
Rob Rotchell	Cornwall Council
<b>Independent ( 2)</b>	
Rosemary Sexton (Deputy Chair)	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Vacancy	Independent Group
<b>Substitutes</b>	
David Beaman	Waverley Borough Council
Tim Hodgson	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Sue Baxter	Bromsgrove District Council

## Agenda

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### Community Wellbeing Board

Thursday 27 May 2021

12.00 pm

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Item	Page	Time
1. Welcome and declarations of interest		
2. Note of the previous meeting	1 - 8	
3. Integration and Innovation White Paper	9 - 14	
4. Public Health reforms and update on Covid-19 work		
Verbal update		
5. Sleep-ins Judgement	15 - 18	
6. Update on Other Board Business Paper	19 - 24	
7. Queen's Speech	25 - 66	

Guest speaker: Stephen Chandler, President of ADASS

**Date of Next Meeting:** Thursday, 15 July 2021, 11.00 am

## Note of last Community Wellbeing Board meeting

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**Title:** Community Wellbeing Board  
**Date:** Thursday 4 February 2021  
**Venue:** Virtual meeting

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### Attendance

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

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
1	<p><b>Welcome, declarations of interest and apologies for absence</b></p> <p>Apologies were received from Cllr Adrian Hardman and there were no declarations of interest.</p>	
2	<p><b>Adult Social Care Funding and Reform – where next?</b></p> <p>The Chairman welcomed James Bullion, President of ADASS, and Anna Severwright and Lara Dowd from Social Care Futures (SCF) to the meeting.</p> <p>James gave a presentation outlining the challenges that Directors of Adult Social Services (DASSs) experienced both pre-Covid and during the pandemic.</p> <p>He highlighted the increased demand for Social Care, the financial pressures the sector was facing and explained the need for reform of the current system. He outlined that 60 per cent of Directors of Adult Social Services had experienced disruption to the way care was able to be provided and that in some areas, presentation of need during covid had risen by 60-70 percent.</p> <p>James also explained that there was a problem with the image of social care and that instability in the care market and significant workforce issues - 40 percent turnover, 10 vacancies, 20 per cent quality problems - was causing further problems.</p> <p>James highlighted the prospect of reform of both social care and the NHS, and that DASSs faced a year of potential upturn and reform. ADASS was calling for multi-year a settlement for adult social care to provide stability.</p> <p>James suggested that a public conversation about the future of social care was needed in order to find out what society expected. He said that integrated care systems should be built around people, health, housing, care and the community. James explained that good social care would require adaptations to housing and that alternative solutions to residential care would need to be found. Finally, he said that a workforce strategy would need to be developed and implemented and that the sector would need to fully embrace digital.</p> <p>The Chairman invited Anna, Convener of Social Care Futures and a user of social care, to address the Board. Anna agreed with the need for proper funding of the sector to achieve stability. Anna said that reform of social care would enable people</p>	

who use social care to live the lives they want to live. She said that social care should be reframed as the public associated it with the NHS, crises and care homes and not care in the community.

Anna explained the SCF was holding an enquiry into social care called 'Who's care is it anyway' as social care was often discussed and decided on by people who did not have lived experience of care and called for members of the Board to participate in the enquiry. The final recommendations were due to be published late Spring/early Summer 2021.

Lara Dowd gave a personal testimony about her father and his experience using social care. She highlighted how important personalisation of care was and said how hard it was to find access to funding.

In the discussion that followed the following points were raised:

- Sustainable funding. Some areas reliant on the 2 percent council tax increase had a council tax base of 70 percent A and B Band properties. Local funding based on council tax would not deliver the funding needed.
- Concern that the LGA had been discussing this problem with government this for years and this would only continue. It was suggested that the Board make a public representation to the Secretary of State on the future of social care.
- There had been an 8 percent drop in occupancy, but the care market had not collapsed because of the investments councils had made which kept providers afloat.
- Concern over how long residents would accept annual council tax rises in order to pay for social care.
- Concerns about turnover of staff and the impact of this on their mental health.
- The role of education and skills so that social care could be presented as a career choice with a clear path and professional development opportunities.
- Good social care saves the NHS money and a good relationship between local government and the NHS would be crucial to achieving parity and reform.
- The need for local government to have a sense of confidence in social care and what it can achieve and articulate what social care is.

### **Decision**

Members of the Community Wellbeing Board noted the speakers' presentation and information contained in the written report.

### **Action**

Write to the Secretary of State asking for a commitment on Adult Social Care Reform.

### **3 Update on NHS England consultation**

The Chairman invited Alyson Morley, Senior Advisor, to give a verbal update on the NHS England integrated care consultation.

Alyson explained that a White Paper on integrated care system proposals was due to be published in March 2021. It was unclear whether this would be consultative or would simply outline the Government's proposals. Following the publication of the White Paper, a Bill would be presented to Parliament sometime in the Spring, likely May 2021, in order for the final proposals to be implemented in April 2022.

There had been lots of engagement events, both with the LGA and local government more generally. The LGA's key messages, outlined in the report, were the need for parity of esteem between local government and the NHS, the need to address the wider determinants of health (housing, access to jobs), the importance of place and local government places, and that it should be acknowledged that in many places innovative, constructive, influential healthcare and wider partnerships already existed between councils and their partners. Wherever possible any new legislation should support existing partnerships that delivered on integration.

Alyson highlighted the progress made; the Secretary of State had accepted the need for wider and more meaningful consultation with local government on integration of care systems.

Members of the Community Wellbeing Board agreed that flexible, place-based solutions were needed, and that work must be built upon existing systems already in place e.g. Health and Wellbeing Boards. There was support for constructive co-operation with the Government's process.

#### **Decision**

Members of the Community Wellbeing Board agreed to note the report and verbal update.

### **4 Mental Health Act White Paper**

The Chairman welcomed Kevin Halden, Adviser, to address the meeting. Kevin introduced the Government's White Paper on Reforming the Mental Health Act. The consultation was in response to the recommendations made in Sir Simon Wesley's 2018 independent review. The content of the White Paper was extremely technical, it reflected the Review and detailed how the Mental Health Act was used and how practise could be improved. In particular, the rising numbers of people detained under the act and the disproportionate number Black and Ethnic Minority (BAME) people detained and it introduced measures that could mitigate against this. The reforms aimed to meet better the needs of people with autism, learning difficulties and people with serious mental illness within the criminal justice system. The new Mental Health Act was likely to come through in May 2022.

Kevin explained that the proposed changes outlined in the White Paper were based on four basic principles; choice and autonomy, least restriction, therapeutic benefit

and ensuring patients are viewed as individuals.

Kevin outlined the LGA's key messages:

- The LGA supports the Mental Health Act reforms and four principals.
- It is important that the new act clearly identifies the role and responsibility of local government.
- The new Act needs to reflect the operational needs and pressures on local government particularly around an improved (Approved Mental Health Professional) AMHP workforce.
- The new act should be fully funded on a long-term basis.
- The new Act should support councils to grow the capacity and capability of voluntary sector providers, such as Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA) services, who are operating in an increasingly fragile market.
- It is important to recognise that to achieve a reduction in detentions is not solely about legislative change. There needs to be a system-wide shift towards prevention, away from medicalisation and treating mental ill health, to early intervention and support for recovery through integrated community-based services.

In the discussion that followed, the following points were raised:

- Long term housing for people with mental illness and adults with learning disorders would be needed.
- Members of the Board were pleased to see a distinction between those with autism and those with learning difficulties.
- Mental health facilities served people from multiple local authority areas, however the advocacy costs of those who had been detailed were picked up by the council where the facility was located.
- Patients shouldn't be treated equally but treated according to their individual needs.
- Greater investment in community services was needed
- Concerns that the pandemic had exacerbated mental health issues and that this is was not reflected in the document.
- Concern that children and young people under 25 were missing from the document.
- Glad to see the focus on the individual and choice and autonomy.
- Voluntary sector and faith organisations would be key in reaching the BAME



communities

- Concerns were raised over insufficient specialist places for people suffering with eating disorders.

For information, Kevin then gave an update on a recent legal judgement separate to White Paper but related to the Mental Health agenda. There was a legal ruling at the end of January 2021 in the case of Devon Partnership NHS Trust vs the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (2021) which challenged the guidance on mental health assessments on the grounds that it did not provide certainty to practitioners over the use of remote assessments. The Court decided that video assessments were not legal and that doctors and AMHPs must be present when deciding whether or not to section someone. The LGA and ADASS planned to commission their own legal advice in response to the judgement.

### **Decision**

Members of the Community Wellbeing Board agreed to the lines of submission.

### **Action**

Community Wellbeing Board Lead Members would give sign off on the final submission. Legal guidance will be circulated to members of the Community Wellbeing Board once available.

## **5 Other Board Business**

Comments were made that:

- Combatting loneliness would be increasingly important.
- Suicides and attempts at suicide had increased. Concerns were raised that there was insufficient support provided to coroners and the bereaved.
- No specific funding had been made available for the Armed Forces Covenant.

### **Decision**

Members of the Community Wellbeing Board noted the updates contained in the report.

## **6 COVID-19 Update – Lockdown 3, Shielding and Vaccination programmes**

Mark Norris, Principal Policy Adviser and Paul Ogden, Senior Adviser, gave an update to the Board on the LGA's Covid-19 related work since the previous meeting including Lockdown measures, the shielding programme, the roll-out of COVID-19 vaccines, self-isolation and role of local authorities in local test, trace and outbreak management.

Mark advised that officers had been seeking clarity from Government on what the transition out of lockdown would look like and explained that officers had also been in discussions with the Department of Health and the Joint Biosecurity Centre about

what support would be provided to local authorities when managing local outbreaks.

There had been a change to local surge testing in response to new variants.

On vaccinations Mark advised that:

- Significant roll out had taken place so far with over 10 million vaccines administered.
- Groups one to four out of nine had been vaccinated.
- Discussions would be held on how best to vaccinate the estimated 1.7 million unpaid carers (priority group six).
- Roll out had been patchy; 97 percent of people over the age of 80 in the North East had been vaccinated but this was far lower in London and the South East.

In the discussion that followed, the following points were raised:

- The LGA should have a view on how the UK exit's 'Lockdown 3'.
- Concerns were raised that the public had unrealistic expectations that coronavirus could be eliminated and would eventually be completely eradicated.
- A National Annual Vaccine Strategy would need to be developed and implemented. Concerns that local government would not be able to continue to redeploy staff to the NHS in the numbers needed to deliver this.
- Concerns were expressed that NHS England was not sharing meaningful data with local authority health protection teams.
- A view was expressed that ambulance staff, teachers, election staff, police officers, fire officers and shop workers should be vaccinated as a priority.
- Concerns around the supply of vaccines across the country and of a north/south divide surrounding vaccine roll out.
- Concerns about vaccine hesitancy amongst certain communities and how to combat this.

### **Decision**

Members agreed to note the update on the LGA's Covid-19 related activity since the Board's last meeting including the related LGA Behavioural Insights Projects 2020/21.

## **7 Note of the previous meeting**

### **Decision**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 2 December 2020 were agreed.



**Appendix A -Attendance**

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Ian Hudspeth	Oxfordshire County Council
Vice-Chair	Cllr Paulette Hamilton	Birmingham City Council
Deputy-chair	Cllr Richard Kemp CBE	Liverpool City Council
Deputy-chair	Cllr Claire Wright	Devon County Council
Committee Member	Cllr David Fothergill	Somerset County Council
Committee Member	Cllr Colin Noble	Suffolk County Council
Committee Member	Cllr Jonathan Owen	East Riding of Yorkshire Council
Committee Member	Cllr Judith Wallace	North Tyneside Council
Committee Member	Cllr Sue Woolley	Lincolnshire County Council
Substitute Member	Cllr Wayne Fitzgerald	Peterborough City Council
Substitute Member	Cllr Arnold Saunders	Salford City Council
Committee Member	Cllr Louise Gittins	Cheshire West and Chester Council
Committee Member	Cllr Arooj Shah	Oldham MBC
Committee Member	Cllr Shabir Pandor	Kirklees Metropolitan Council
Committee Member	Cllr Natasha Pantelic	Slough Borough Council
Committee Member	Cllr Amy Cross	Blackpool Council
Committee Member	Cllr Denise Scott-MacDonald	Royal Borough of Greenwich
Substitute Member	Cllr Joanne Harding	Trafford Council
Substitute Member	Cllr Bob Cook	Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
Committee Member	Cllr Doreen Huddart	Newcastle upon Tyne City Council
Committee Member	Cllr Neil Burden	Cornwall Council
LGA Officers	Mark Norris Alyson Morley Paul Ogden Kevin Halden Matthew Hibberd Amy Haldane	



## **Integration and innovation: working together to improve health and social care for all – update on LGA activity**

### **Purpose of report**

For information.

### **Summary**

This report updates Community Wellbeing Board members on progress on government proposals on health and care integration since their last meeting on 4 February 2021.

### **Recommendation**

The Board is requested to note the action taken so far on its behalf and direct officers on further action required in promoting the LGA response on the forthcoming Health and Care Bill.

### **Action**

By officers, as appropriate.

**Contact officer:** Alyson Morley  
**Position:** Senior Policy Adviser  
**Phone no:** 07554 765 130  
**Email:** Alyson.Morley@local.gov.uk

## Integration and innovation: working together to improve health and social care for all – update on LGA activity

### Update on activity and LGA response

1. On 4 February, the CWB received an update report on the LGA's response to the NHS England publication consultation on measures to support the NHS Long Term Plan, in particular recommendations on the legal status, role and remit of integrated care systems (ICSs). The CWB approved the the LGA policy positions on ICSs. This report gives a brief update of the progress on this active policy area. This is a dynamic policy area and there has been significant progress since the last CWB meeting.
2. On 11 February, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) [published the legislative proposals for a Health and Care Bill](#). The proposals in the white paper are a combination of:
  - 2.1. Proposals developed by NHS England (NHSE) to support the implementation of the NHS Long Term Plan (and which are the main focus of the document).
  - 2.2. Additional proposals that relate to public health, social care, and quality and safety matters, which require primary legislation
  - 2.3. The White Paper emphasises that the legislative proposals should be seen in the context of broader current and planned reforms to the NHS, social care, public health and mental health. It commits to bringing forward detailed proposals for reform on these key policy areas later this year.
3. On 16 February the **LGA published a briefing** summarising the proposals of most significance to local government and the LGA's initial response: <https://www.local.gov.uk/parliament/briefings-and-responses/lga-briefing-health-and-social-care-bill-white-paper> .
4. The **LGA Executive Advisory Board** (EAB) discussed the LGA's response to the White Paper at its meeting on 11 March 2021. The EAB acknowledged the strong and clear lead taken by the CWB in promoting the LGA's key messages on health and care reform. It agreed that the CWB should continue to lead the LGA policy development and promotion on this vital policy issue.
5. On 7 May, **the LGA published it's position paper** on the white paper, summarising our positions, priorities and concerns on the wide-ranging proposals: <https://www.local.gov.uk/parliament/briefings-and-responses/integration-and-innovation-working-together-improve-health-and> . Drafts of this document were shared with all members of the CWB for their comments and has since been shared widely with local government and national stakeholders. The key policy headlines are summarised below for information in paragraphs 9 – 18. These may develop as the Government and NHS clarify the proposals.
6. The **Queen's speech on 11 May** included proposals to bring forward a bill to: "empower the NHS to innovate and embrace technology. Patients will receive more tailored and preventative care, closer to home." It will include proposals for ICSs, a new system of assurance, and new public health measures.

7. The LGA published a briefing on the Queen's speech:  
<https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/LGA%20On-the-Day%20Briefing%20-%20Queen%27s%20Speech%202021%201.pdf> , including a summary of our views on the Health and Care Bill, in line with the policy lines in paragraphs 9 - 18 below.
8. The **LGA and DHSC have also set up two new forums** to ensure that local government has a voice and influence in the development of health and care policy. The Ministerial Group comprises the four CWB lead members and selected local authority chief executives who meet regularly with the Care Minister, Helen Whately, to discuss health and care reform. We have also set up the Local Government Health and Care Sounding Board, which brings together senior officer representatives of local government with the senior officers in DHSC, NHSE and MHCLG to ensure that local government is engaged in the developed of policy on the health and care reform agenda. Its first meeting was on 18 May. It is co-chaired by Sarah Pickup, LGA Deputy Chief Executive and Tabitha Jay, DHSC Director of Social Care Policy and Workforce. It is not a formal part of DHSC or LGA governance structure but it will provide regular informal reports to the CWB.

### **Summary of LGA policy messages on the Integration and innovation white paper**

9. We support Integrated Care Systems (ICS) as a strong driver for integrating health services in a system through the Integrated Care Board (ICB) and an ICS Health and Care Partnership (ICP) as a partnership of equals with a duty to 'produce a plan for health, social care and public health services'.
10. **Parity between the ICS Board and ICS Health and Care Partnership** - The white paper says that the ICS will set up the partnership and that local areas can 'appoint members and delegate functions as they see fit'. It is not clear whether this means the ICS NHS Body (ICB) will set up the ICS Health and Care Partnership (ICP). The establishment of the partnership in each system must be a joint responsibility of the ICB, councils and other partners. We support local flexibility, with health and local government leaders working as equal partners, to agree the forms of and relationship between ICB and the ICP that works for each area and which build on existing effective partnerships at place.
11. **Terminology** - Calling the ICS Health and Care Partnership the ICP is confusing. Many place-based joint arrangements are called integrated care partnerships already and ICP can also refer to 'integrated care provider'. Why not stick to ICS Health and Care Partnerships?
12. **A clear commitment to addressing health inequalities** - The white paper states that the Health and Care plan will focus on 'health, social care and public health services'. This service-based approach is not helpful. It needs a broader objective of improved population health outcomes and reducing health inequalities, which will involve a far wider range of strategies and services across the public, private and community sector.

13. **A whole population approach** - There is very little reference to children and young people's health in the white paper. In adopting a population health approach, ICSs will need to work closely with public health in local government, education, early years services and the private and voluntary sector to improve the health and wellbeing of children and young people. Getting support right from pregnancy and early childhood will have lifelong impacts and needs a far higher priority because of its long-term benefits.
14. **Footprint** - We strongly support the commitment that, wherever possible, the ICS footprint will be coterminous with the local government footprint (councils with ASC responsibilities). We urge the Government to resolve any problematic ICS footprints at the earliest opportunity through a transparent transition process that involves all relevant councils and NHS organisations.
15. **Primacy of place and subsidiarity** – The governance within each ICS – at system, place and neighbourhood levels – must be underpinned by subsidiarity. ICSs will need support to ensure that decisions will be taken at the most local appropriate level. This must be agreed between partners at neighbourhood, place and system, not just by the ICS. ICS structures need to build on existing place-based partnerships, in particular health and wellbeing boards (HWBs). In some places, partners will need to review them to ensure that they are fit for purpose. In others, new system and place -level partnerships will need to be developed and they will need support to do this, learning from their peers and existing good practice elsewhere.
16. **Accountability** - Accountability mechanisms within ICSs between the ICS NHS Board and the ICS Health and Care Partnership, and between the ICS and existing governance bodies such as HWBs, existing integrated partnerships and joint committees will need to be clearly mapped and agreed by all partners. This mapping will need to ensure that decision-making is as local as possible, transparent and accessible to local people.
17. **Inclusion and co-production** – ICSs need to develop plans and services in collaboration with the communities within their systems. Engagement and inclusion mechanisms at system level need to build on and add value to existing place-based and neighbourhood mechanisms.
18. **Keep bureaucracy to a minimum** – ICSs should not lead to unnecessary additional layers of bureaucracy, more rules, reporting and processes.

### Implications for Wales

19. Health, public health and adult social care policy are all devolved functions. The proposals in the White Paper relate to England only and, therefore, there are no implication for Welsh local authorities.

### Financial Implications

20. The proposals in the white paper are wide-ranging and not all are fully developed. There may well be financial implications for councils with adult social care and public health





responsibilities. We will continue to work with councils, government departments and NHS England to identify all financial implications for local government and ensure that these are addressed by government.

**Next steps**

21. The Board is requested to note the update.
22. Action will be taken by the Community Wellbeing Board, as appropriate.



27 May 2021

## Supreme Court Ruling on Sleep-In Shifts

### Purpose of report

*For information.*

### Summary

On Friday 17 March, the Supreme Court [confirmed](#) that the National Minimum Wage does not apply to hours when social care workers are expected to sleep, including time when care workers are paid to sleep overnight in someone's home on a precautionary basis.

### Recommendation

To note the update on the Supreme Court decision.

### Action

Officers to keep Lead Members updated on how providers and councils are responding to the decision and the implications for LGA work on social care reform, funding, workforce and innovation.

**Contact officer:** Laura Caton  
**Position:** Senior Adviser  
**Phone no:** 07775706087  
**Email:** laura.caton@local.gov.uk

## Supreme Court Ruling on Sleep-In Shifts

### Background

1. LGA intervened on behalf of councils in an ongoing legal case which centred on the issue of whether social care sleep-in workers were only entitled to the minimum wage when they are awake for the purposes of working.
2. On Friday 17 March, the Supreme Court confirmed that care workers who have to sleep at their workplace are not entitled to the minimum wage for periods when they sleep.
3. In our [response](#) to the judgement, we said that this significant ruling is in line with councils' and social care providers' understanding of the law. Had the appeal been upheld, care providers and councils providing social care would have faced paying a significant backpay liability and higher ongoing costs, which would have increased the huge financial pressures they were already facing.
4. As we said in our submission to the Court, the LGA strongly supports care workers being paid a fair wage for their valued work. The decision does not remove the need for a sustainable funding settlement for adult and children's social care, which includes important decisions on the workforce such as pay, recruitment and career development. We also called on Government to bring forward its proposals on adult social care funding as soon as possible.
5. The LGA's workforce team provided a [commentary](#) on the case in their March Employer Bulletin, which emphasised the clarity the decision provided to the interpretation of the National Minimum Wage Regulations as it applies to sleep-in shifts.
6. On 10 May, DHSC and DfE Ministers wrote to Directors of Adult Social Care and Children's Services. The letter shared BEIS's updated national minimum wage [guidance](#) and encouraged commissioners to carefully consider the impacts on market and workforce stability in responses to the judgement.

### Implications for Wales

7. Social care is a devolved policy responsibility. LGA Officers maintain contact with WLGA Officers on the sleep-ins issue.

### Financial Implications

8. There are no direct financial implications for councils from the Supreme Court decision because it confirmed councils' and social care providers' understanding of the law.

**Next steps**

9. We continue to work with ADASS, providers and DHSC on the wider policy implications from the decision for work on provider sustainability and adult social care reform, including workforce, and developing personalised care in new and different ways. We will provide a further update to Lead Members over the Summer.
  
10. The Children and Young People's Board is leading on the implications of the decision for children's social care.



## Update on other board business

### Purpose of report

For information.

### Summary

This report sets out other updates relevant to the Board, and not included elsewhere.

#### Recommendations

Members of the Community Wellbeing Board are asked to:

1. **Provide oral updates** on any other outside bodies / external meetings they may have attended on behalf of the Community Wellbeing Board since the last meeting; and
2. **Note** the updates contained in the report.

#### Action

As directed by members.

**Contact officer:** Mark Norris  
**Position:** Principal Policy Adviser  
**Phone no:** 020 7664 3241  
**Email:** Mark.Norris@local.gov.uk

## **Update on other board business**

### **The Future of Care and Integration**

1. On 11 February, the CWB Lead Members and invited local authority chief executives who form the Ministerial Advisory Group met Care Minister, Helen Whately, for an informal meeting to discuss health and care reform – in particular the role of local government in ICSs.
2. On 9 March, Cllr Ian Hudspeth and Lord Victor Adebawale co-chaired a joint LGA and NHS Confederation Round Table to discuss the role and contribution of local authority public health teams in ICS. The Lead Members of the CWB also participated in the discussion.
3. On 11 March the Cllr Ian Hudspeth updated the LGA Executive Advisory Board on activity to represent local government on the government white paper on Innovation and Integration, and the forthcoming Health and Care Bill. The EAB acknowledged the clear and strong leadership provided by the CWB and agreed that they should continue to lead the LGA's response to the health and care reform agenda.
4. The CWB Lead Members agreed to sponsor the Devo Connect Health Devolution Commission's inquiry into the role and function of integrated care systems. Cllr Paulette Hamilton is an 'advisory commissioner' and CWB Chairman, Cllr David Fothergill, gave evidence to the Health Devolution Commission on 21 May 2021.

### **Public Health**

5. On 23 and 24 March, the LGA hosted the Annual Public Health Conference 2021: Rising to the challenge. Over 1,000 delegates attended over the two days to hear from Prof Chris Whitty, Prof Devi Shridhar and Rt Hon Matt Hancock.
6. In March, the LGA published the ninth LGA Annual Public Health Report. This year's annual report looks back at what public health has helped to achieve during the pandemic. It also looks to the future - the new UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and the publication of the Department of Health and Social Care's (DHSC) white paper and the significant organisational changes these could bring.
7. In April, the LGA responded to the review of the public health system and the creation of the UKHSA and the Office of Health Promotion.
8. On 22 April, the LGA held a webinar with the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) to support local authorities evaluate public health interventions.
9. On 18 May, Cllr Colin Noble chaired a joint LGA/PHE webinar on Inclusive economies and powerful link between health and economic growth.



**Mental Health and Wellbeing**

10. On 27 March 2021 the Department of Health and Social Care announced the COVID-19 Mental Health and Wellbeing Recovery Action Plan for 2021 to 2022 to mitigate and respond to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health. As part of this Plan, £15 million was allocated to preventing mental ill health and promoting good mental health in the most deprived communities in England. PHE has invited eligible upper tier councils to apply for their portion of the funding by 11:59pm Friday 28 May. Proposals will be reviewed by a National Panel on 9 June 2021 and funding confirmed before the end of June 2021.

**Suicide Prevention**

11. The latest Office for National Statistics [provisional analysis](#) shows that there were 4,902 suicides were registered in England in 2020, equivalent to a provisional rate of 9.9 suicide deaths per 100,000 people; this represents a statistically significant reduction in the rate from 2019 when there were 10.8 suicide deaths per 100,000, but caution is required in the interpretation of this decrease. The reduction in the number of suicides registered in 2020 from the previous year most likely reflects delays to coroner inquests, because of the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, as opposed to a genuine decrease in suicide. The analysis does not show suicides that occurred during the pandemic, because of the length of time it takes to hold an inquest. It is important to note that while early studies into [suicide data](#) during the pandemic have not found a change in suicide rates, these are early figures and significant economic, social and clinical risks remain. Given this, it is welcome that the Department for Health and Social Care has confirmed funding for year 2 of the LGA/ADPH sector-led improvement suicide prevention programme.

**Armed Forces Covenant**

12. We continue to shape the new statutory duty for all UK public authorities to have due regard to the principles of the Covenant, which is being introduced via the Armed Forces Bill. We are concerned that clause 8 of the Bill lacks detail. This means that it is difficult to fully understand the implications for councils across housing, education and healthcare services. It is important that potential new burdens are fully funded by national government and kept under review so that councils can continue to deliver high quality services to their armed forces community. We look forward to seeing guidance which will set out what is expected of councils in greater detail. We will continue to work positively with government to further embed the Covenant locally, building upon what has already been achieved.
13. The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust is inviting [applications](#) for a £25,000 grant from councils that previously delivered work under the Strengthening Delivery of the Covenant programme. The funding will enable eligible councils to achieve longer term improvements for the Armed Forces communities and better access to services and support in local areas. The closing date for applications is midday 11 June 2021.

### **Mental Health Act**

14. We have made a formal submission to the Governments Reforming the Mental Health Act White Paper. The Act is likely to become law in 2022. In our submission we stated that the LGA supports the reform of the Mental Health Act. We welcome the ambition to achieve meaningful change for people living with severe mental illness, and the role of local government in supporting this.
15. We highlighted that the new Act will have significant resource implications for councils and are working with MHCLG to model new burdens. In our submission we stated that councils' statutory children's and adults' mental health services and wider public health responsibilities need parity of funding with NHS mental health services, so that councils – working closely with partners – can help the whole population to be mentally healthy, prevent the escalation to clinical services and support people of all ages who are mentally unwell.
16. Finally, we welcome the intention of the Act to address the rising rates of detention and experiences of people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds. We stressed that achieving a reduction in detentions is not solely about legislative change. There needs to be alternative treatments and services available, commissioned by councils in the community, as well as NHS services. There needs to be a system-wide shift in policy and resources away from medicalisation and treating mental ill health, to early intervention, prevention, and support for recovery through integrated community-based services.

### **Children and Young People's Mental Health**

17. In collaboration with the Children and Young Peoples Board, we commissioned the Centre for Mental health to produce a number of case studies on a whole household approach to children and young people's mental health. These were published in May 2021 to coincide with Mental Health Awareness. We also held a Webinar on the findings in March 2021, chaired by Cllr Judith Blake and joined by Cllr Ian Hudspeth

### **Autism**

18. The Autism Strategy is to be published later this year. The LGA are members of the Autism national Executive Group which is leading on the strategy. We have made a number of comments on the new strategy. We are in support of the strategy ambitions, but areas where further information is needed include: the Implementation Plan, clarification around any supporting funding/resources for councils and partners to build community support and how the Government proposes to monitor or measure the progress of the strategy.

### **Dementia**

19. The DHSC is developing the Dementia strategy. The strategy will be overseen by the national Dementia Programme Board – the LGA are members of the board.

20. It will be a three-year strategy. It is proposed that year one will be focussed on Covid recovery and issues arising from the pandemic. Years two and three will look at issues agreed by the Dementia Programme Board prior to the pandemic.
21. We have provided feedback on the draft strategy. In our comments on the proposal, we have emphasised the central role of councils in delivering/commissioning services for people with dementia in the community. Also, the importance of social care reform and long term funding to support councils to deliver the best outcomes for people with dementia and their carers. The strategy also needs to reflect the diverse needs of communities – particularly around raising awareness, risk reduction and ensuring appropriate support. Finally, the strategy needs to reflect our principles for social care reform.
22. In May, Sarah Pickup, LGA Deputy Chief Executive gave evidence to the Health and Social Care committee on Adult Social Care and Dementia.





## Queen's Speech

### Purpose of report

For information.

### Summary

This report provides a summary of the announcements of relevance to the Community Wellbeing Board in the Queen's Speech on Tuesday 11 May 2021.

### Recommendation

That the Board note the report and the impact of the Queen's Speech on the future work programme.

### Action

Officers to incorporate members' comments into the LGA's work around the Queen's Speech going forward.

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## Queen's Speech

### Background

1. On Tuesday 11 May, the Queen's Speech set out the Government's forward programme of legislation and a range of policy announcements. This paper includes a summary of the Bills and other announcements of relevance to the Community Wellbeing Board. For ease, these are summarised in the list below:
  - 1.1. Health and Care Bill
  - 1.2. Armed Forces Bill
  - 1.3. Adult Social Care reform
  - 1.4. Beating Covid and backing the NHS
  - 1.5. Prevention
  - 1.6. Mental Health Act Reform
  - 1.7. Early Years Development Review
2. The **appendix** to this paper includes an overview of each of these announcements and our initial response to the announcement, extracted from the LGA's comprehensive 'On the Day Briefing' paper. In the short paper below, we provide a summary of the programme of activity, and the likely implications for our work and that of councils.

### Issues

3. The two Bills announced in the Queen's Speech of direct relevance to the Board were ones it has already had some engagement with: the Health and Care Bill and the Armed Forces Bill.
4. As is set out in the paper on integration and innovation in the agenda the Board has been closely involved with the work associated with the development of the provisions in the Health and Care Bill, including responding to the NHS England consultation on measures to support the Long Term Plan as well as the briefing and position paper on the Department of Health and Social Care's (DHSC) White Paper on the legislative provisions to be included in the Bill. The Bill will continue to be a priority for the Board and the LGA's lobbying activity during its passage through Parliament over the coming year.
5. The LGA has also been working closely with officials around the new statutory duty for councils and other public authorities in the Armed Forces Bill to have regard to the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant. As detailed in the Update Paper in the agenda for this meeting we will continue to push for greater clarity from government about what the duty will mean for councils and the services they deliver that impact on the armed forces community.

6. The Queen's Speech also included a commitment to bringing forward proposals to reform adult social care. This was welcome, especially as it had not been clear until the Speech itself that the government would include a reference to adult social care reform in the Speech. The briefing material published by the government on the Speech however did not include any further detail on what reform would mean or the timescales in which the proposals would be brought forward. In our response we therefore highlighted the urgent need for government to address both these points, and the LGA's willingness to work on a cross-party basis to ensure adult social care is sustainably funded going forward.
7. The government's response to Covid-19 featured significantly in the Queen's Speech, and highlighted the on-going vaccination programme. In response we set out the important role local government has played in the national response to the pandemic around not only the delivery of the vaccination programme but also in test and trace, support to the care sector, help to the extremely clinically vulnerable and ensuring compliance with the social distancing requirements.
8. As might be expected given the role of public health in the last year in responding to the pandemic, there was a commitment from the government in the Queen's Speech to bring forward measures to support the health and wellbeing of the country. In the LGA's response we set out the need for the health inequalities revealed over the last year by the pandemic to be addressed, for the cuts made to public health since 2014/15 to be re-evaluated in the Spending Review, the need for better nutrition and calorie labelling on alcohol and food, and welcomed plans to ban advertising on products high in fat, sugar and salt before 9.00pm on TV.
9. Members will recall from the last Board meeting that there is substantial work underway to reform the Mental Health Act, and further information on the LGA's work in that area can be found in the Update report. The Queen's Speech set out how the Act would be revised and updated, and drew attention to the government's Mental Health Recovery Action Plan. Our response drew on the submission made to government which incorporated the points members made at the last Board meeting.
10. The final announcement of direct relevance to the Board in the Queen's Speech was around the Early Years Healthy Development Review which was part of the government's announcement that measures will be brought forward to ensure children have the best start in life. In our response we highlighted the need for implementation of the review to build on the positive programmes already in place, for councils and other partners to be properly resourced to deliver it in particular commissioning preventative services, and for local authorities to be at the heart of the new structures being established by the Health and Care Bill.



### **Implications for Wales**

11. Health, public health and adult social care policy are all devolved functions, so many of the legislation and policy announcements included in the Queen's Speech do not have direct implications for Welsh local authorities. Where they do have implications for Welsh authorities we will work with the Welsh Local Government Association on them.

### **Financial Implications**

12. The proposals in the white paper are wide-ranging and not all are fully developed. There may well be financial implications for councils with adult social care and public health responsibilities. We will continue to work with councils, government departments and NHS England to identify all financial implications for local government and ensure that these are addressed by government.

### **Next steps**

13. Members are asked to note the legislation and policy announcements in the Queen's Speech of relevance to the Board.

14. Points raised by members will be incorporated into the LGA's work around the legislation and policy announcements going forward.



**Appendix:** Relevant announcements from the Queen's Speech

**Health and Care Bill**

*My Ministers will bring forward legislation to empower the NHS to innovate and embrace technology. Patients will receive more tailored and preventative care, closer to home.*

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- Lay the foundations for a more integrated, efficient and accountable health and care system - one which allows staff to get on with their jobs and provide the best possible treatment and care for their patients.
- Give the NHS and local authorities the tools they need to level up health and care outcomes across the country, enabling healthier, longer and more independent lives.

LGA view

- We support Integrated Care Systems (ICS) as a strong driver for integrating health services in a system through the Integrated Care Board and an ICS Health and Care Partnership. We will want to ensure that there is provision in the Bill to ensure parity of esteem between the Integrated Care Board and an ICS Health and Care Partnership.
- ICSs will need to work closely with public health in local government, education, early years services and the private and voluntary sector to ensure that the health and wellbeing of children and young people is a priority, alongside the care and support of older people and working age adults who need support. Getting support right from pregnancy and early childhood will have lifelong impacts and needs a far higher priority because of its long-term benefits.
- Wherever possible the ICS footprint must be coterminous with the local government. We urge the Government to resolve any problematic ICS footprints at the earliest opportunity through a transparent transition process that involves all relevant councils and NHS organisations.
- ICSs will need to ensure that decisions will be taken at the most local level. ICS structures need to build on existing place-based partnerships, in particular health and wellbeing boards. ICSs should not lead to unnecessary additional layers of bureaucracy, more rules, reporting and processes.
- For our more detailed commentary on the Health and Care White Paper, please read our recently published position paper.

**Armed Forces Bill**

*Honour and strengthen the Armed Forces Covenant, placing it in law.*

The main elements of the Bill are to:

- Renew the Armed Forces Act 2006, which would otherwise expire at the end of 2021 and there would be no legislative basis for our Armed Forces.

- Introduce a new duty to require relevant public bodies across the UK, when exercising specified public functions in the education, healthcare and housing sectors to have due regard to the three principles of the Armed Forces Covenant:
  - Recognising the unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the Armed Forces.
  - That it is desirable to remove disadvantages arising for Service people from membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces.
  - That special provision for Service people may be justified by the effect on such people of membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces.

#### LGA view

- Armed Forces serving personnel, veterans, reservists and their families are valued members of our communities. All councils have signed the voluntary Armed Forces Covenant and are fully committed to honouring their obligations to those who have served their country.
- We fully support the aim of the Bill to help ensure armed forces personnel, veterans and their families are not disadvantaged by their service when accessing key public services. We will continue to work positively with government to further embed the Covenant locally, building upon what has already been achieved.
- We are concerned that clause 8 of the Bill, which sets out the proposed statutory duty for all UK public authorities to have due regard to the principles of the Covenant, lacks detail. This means it is difficult to fully understand the implications for councils across housing, education and healthcare services. It is important that potential new burdens are fully funded by national government and kept under review so that councils can continue to deliver high quality services to their armed forces community. We look forward to seeing guidance which will set out what is expected of councils in greater detail.

#### **Adult social care reform**

*Proposals on social care reform will be brought forward.*

Key issues the Government will address:

- Do more to ensure that everyone receives high-quality, joined-up care.
- Through the Health and Social Care Bill, improve the oversight of how social care is commissioned and delivered, and facilitate greater integration between health and care services by placing Integrated Care Systems on a statutory footing across the UK and putting more power and autonomy in the hands of local systems.
- Support the development of the adult social care workforce and engage with staff about how best to support them.
- Work with local and national partners to ensure the Government's approach to reform is informed by diverse perspectives, including those with lived experience of the care sector.

## LGA view

- We are pleased that proposals on social care reform will be brought forward, but urgently need a clear timeline. It is vital that this is also urgently converted into concrete funding proposals to provide sustainable support to people of all ages across the country who draw on social care to live the life they want to lead. We are keen to work with the Government and other stakeholders on a cross-party basis to achieve this. Councils and their communities need to see action as soon as possible.
- In our recent letter to Government on adult social care reform, we called for sustainable funding, defined in three broad ways. First, investment on an ongoing basis to fully move from a historical model of wellbeing based on care homes and hospitalisation to one of prevention, reablement, more appropriate accommodation, and community care and support that puts people first and acts on their knowledge of lived experience. This is what will deliver the necessary transition to a broader model of care that achieves better outcomes for people and, in turn, strengthens our local communities.
- We must end the approach of additional one-off grants and, in particular, the adult social care precept to fund social care. While welcome, these measures are only ever sticking plaster solutions that are unsustainable and harm longer term planning. Care and support to help people live their best life is a national entitlement and dependence on council tax to fund it is not the solution.
- As important as it is to protect people from having to sell their home to pay for care, this will carry a significant cost. Alongside any reforms of this type, we need a solution for bringing more money into social care that matches the level of ambition we have for social care as a key way in which people are supported to lead their best and most fulfilling lives. We have previously stated, and still believe, that the case should be made for increases in national taxation and/or a social care premium based on the core principle of universal risk-pooling. It is therefore helpful that the Queen's Speech recognises that the risk of people's future care costs is not shared equally across society. It is also helpful that the document recognises the vital role played by our care workforce and the need to support them. The LGA looks forward to extensive engagement across the whole sector, including employers and commissioners, about all aspects of workforce development including reward and career structures as well as skills and wellbeing.

**Beating COVID and backing the NHS**

*My Government will protect the health of the nation, continuing the vaccination programme.*

## LGA View

- Local government has successfully supported the national effort to tackle the COVID-19 emergency. The LGA notes that the Government has significantly increased the financial commitment to the NHS to address the ongoing impact of the pandemic. Local government services have been vital in supporting and protecting people during the pandemic including assisting in the delivery of the vaccination programme, establishing local contact tracing partnerships and conducting surge testing, supporting care

providers to prevent COVID infections in care settings, helping the clinically extremely vulnerable needing to shield and those having to self-isolate, as well as ensuring compliance with social distancing requirements.

- Councils have worked with social care providers to increase their fee levels and ensure providers have had support with the additional costs posed by Covid-19, such as higher staff sickness and absence rates and higher administration and PPE costs. Councils have also supported providers with cash flow, such as by paying on plan in advance. All of these efforts have been part of councils' wider efforts to best support people who draw on care and support. We are disappointed therefore that there is no equivalent recognition of the need for additional resources for adult social care and public health.

### Prevention

*Measures will be brought forward to support the health and wellbeing of the nation, including to tackle obesity.*

#### LGA view

- Everyone agrees that prevention is better than cure. Additional measures to help make our residents happier and healthier would be welcome and councils look forward to working with the government to bring forward efforts to improve the health and wellbeing of the nation in our recovery from Covid-19. Local government is at the heart of local work to improve the public's health. It provides the leadership, expertise, partnership-working and access to local resources that are fundamental to strong place-based coordination.
- Health inequalities between the most and least deprived communities have been exposed and deepened over the past 12 months, while we have yet to see the long-term physical and mental impact of the pandemic and what it means for our future health and wellbeing. Councils should be at the centre of efforts to reduce inequalities and improve people's lives. This includes making greater use of combined resources at local, system and national level. Encouraging behaviour change, such as through healthy weight programmes, stop smoking campaigns, tackling vaccine hesitancy and promoting positive mental health, will also see people across the country have longer, healthier and happier lives.
- Every pound invested by government in council-run services such as public health helps to relieve pressure on other services like the NHS and the criminal justice system, while also proving to be three to four times more cost-effective in improving people's health than money spent in the NHS. Councils have seen a £700 million real terms reduction in public health funding between 2014/15 and 2020/21 – a fall of almost a quarter (23.5 per cent) per person. If the Government's prevention agenda is to succeed then this must be re-evaluated in future spending rounds.
- We support proposals to strengthen front-of-pack nutrition labelling and calorie labelling on alcohol. We believe a single system will help people make informed choices. We also welcome plans to ban adverts of products high in fat, sugar or salt from TV before 9pm. It is disappointing that the white paper did not give councils powers to ban junk food advertising near schools.

## **Mental Health Act Reform**

*Measures will be brought forward to support the health and wellbeing of the nation, including to...improve mental health.*

The main elements of reform are to:

- Bring the Mental Health Act into the 21st century and give people greater control over their treatment and receive the dignity and respect they deserve.
- Reform the process for detention, improve care and treatment whilst someone is detained, and give them better support to challenge detention if they wish, shifting the balance to give the patient more say.
- Change the law around how people with a learning disability or autistic people are treated under the Act to prevent prolonged detentions.
- Address the disproportionate number of people from black and minority ethnic groups detained under the Act.
- The Government remains committed to its ambitions in the NHS Long Term Plan to expand and transform mental health services in England.
- The Government has also set out its Mental Health Recovery Action Plan as part of the commitment to build back better.

### LGA view

- The LGA supports reforming the Mental Health Act. We welcome the ambition to achieve meaningful change for people living with severe mental illness, including addressing the disproportionate number of people from black and minority ethnic groups detained under the Act, changing the law around how learning disabled and autistic people are treated, and a stronger focus on upholding people's human rights.
- The Act will have significant resource implications for councils' already stretched statutory children's and adults' mental health services, which central government will need to fully fund in line with recent investment in NHS mental health services.
- Achieving a reduction in detentions is not solely about legislative change. There needs to be a fully funded system-wide shift in policy and resources away from medicalisation and treating mental ill health, to early intervention, prevention, and support for pandemic recovery through integrated community-based mental health services that are jointly commissioned by councils and the NHS.
- It is positive that the Mental Health Recovery Action Plan makes available additional one-off funding to help national and local services from all sectors to meet new demand for mental health and wellbeing support arising from the Covid-19 pandemic. Going forward, local statutory children's and adult's mental health services, and wider public mental health services, need long-term parity of funding with NHS mental health services, to support mental health recovery and help the whole population to be mentally well.

## **Early Years Healthy Development Review**



*Measures will be brought forward to ensure that children have the best start in life, prioritising their early years.*

Measures will include:

- Encouraging all local authorities to publish a clear Start for Life offer for parents and carers, showing families what support they can expect to receive during the 1,001 critical days from conception to age two.
- Building on the Government's commitment to champion 'Family Hubs', encouraging local authorities to make them a place for families to access Start for Life services.
- Working across the system to hold local services to account, including through proportionate inspections, and to improve data, evaluation and outcomes of health services
- Encouraging local areas to nominate a leader and ensuring the delivery of the Review is overseen at a national level.

LGA view

- It is positive that the Early Years Healthy Development Review conducted by Andrea Leadsom MP recognises the crucial support provided by councils to improve outcomes for children aged zero to two.
- We will work with the Review team to ensure the 'Start for Life' and Family Hubs vision builds on the positive programmes already in place locally.
- For the vision to be realised it will need to be properly resourced. To develop 'excellence' in the early years, the Government will need to reverse the reductions to the public health and early intervention grants and ensure local authorities have the resources they need to commission effective preventative services.
- Local authorities are already accountable for improving outcomes in the early years sector and have established leadership. The Review should remain flexible and support local arrangements.
- The creation of Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) provides an excellent opportunity to improve the health and wellbeing of children and to tackle health inequalities. To do this effectively local government leaders need to be at the heart of ICS leadership to ensure a joined-up approach across the wider system.

# Local Government Association

## Queen's Speech

### On the Day Briefing

11 May 2021



#### Introduction

The Queen has today set out the Government's agenda for the next Parliamentary session. The Speech contained many measures that will be of relevance to councils and this paper provides details on the key proposals affecting local government and the LGA's initial response to them. Full details of today's Queen's Speech can [be found on the Government's website](#). You can also read about our work engaging with Parliament in [our LGA in Parliament 2020/21 report](#).

The LGA has circulated a [collection of media statements](#) responding to today's announcement.

#### Key messages

- The Government has announced a wide range of measures, including in respect of planning, jobs, health and care reform, environment, climate change and building safety. Councils are committed to working with Government and parliamentarians to help shape and deliver the proposals so that local communities are empowered to deliver meaningful and positive change.
- **Levelling up:** Councils know their local areas best and will be central to efforts to address the stark inequalities that have been exposed further by the pandemic. One of the main lessons from the COVID-19 crisis is that councils can innovate well and help create and deliver new services from scratch and at speed. All councils can support the drive for economic recovery, new infrastructure investment, build more homes where needed, join up public services and provide greater access to jobs and prosperity. We will also be discussing with Government its stated ambition for English Devolution, the plans for a White Paper and how this aligns to work on the levelling-up agenda.
- **Planning:** Councils are granting permission for 9 in 10 planning applications and are not a barrier to development, yet over 1.1 million homes given planning permission in the past decade are still to be built. Councils want to work with Government to reform and strengthen our planning system, ensuring it is locally-led and delivers sustainable development so that communities can shape their local areas and ensure that the right infrastructure (such as schools and roads) is in place. To meet the Government's target of building 300,000 new homes a year, councils need to be given the powers to get building homes not seen on a scale since the 1970s. This is backed by Parliamentarians with eight in 10 MPs (80 per cent) we surveyed saying councils should have more financial freedoms and powers to build homes in their area."
- **Skills:** Many in our local communities will need to reskill for new jobs and it is good that the Queen's Speech has included plans to address this. Councils are uniquely placed to bring together partners in local places to address these challenges. With adequate resourcing and powers, councils can bring together

# Briefing

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diverse national schemes to ensure delivery on the ground is more effective, keeping people in work and businesses recruiting.

- **Environment:** Councils welcome the reintroduction of the Environment Bill. The Bill points to a new relationship between local and national government on the environment and while councils are best placed to take the lead on this agenda, they will need adequate funding and access to skills to deliver on our shared ambitions. It is difficult to predict the full impact of new legislation and costs associated, but we know that the pandemic has further increased the financial pressure on councils, any new duties must be fully funded in the long-term.
- **Adult social care:** Whilst we are pleased that the Government will bring forward proposals on social care reform, councils urgently need a clear timeline. Councils will also want to see concrete funding proposals that will provide sustainable support to people of all ages across the country who draw on social care to live the life they want to lead. We are keen to work with the Government and other stakeholders on a cross-party basis to achieve this. LGA commissioned polling of MPs shows that an overwhelming majority (83 per cent) are in favour of additional funding for councils' social care budgets to tackle the funding gap.
- **Health and care reform:** Councils support an equal partnership approach to improving health and wellbeing, health and care services and ensuring the best use of resources, through the Integrated Care Board and an Integrated Care System (ICS) Health and Care Partnership. There should be local flexibility, with health and local government leaders working as equal partners, to establish the Health and Care Partnership in a way that works for each area and builds on existing effective partnerships. Wherever possible, the ICS footprint should match that of councils with adult social care responsibilities. We urge government to resolve any problematic ICS footprints at the earliest opportunity through a transparent process involving all relevant councils and NHS organisations. ICSs will also need support to ensure decisions are taken at the most appropriate level, based on existing place-based partnerships, in particular Health and Wellbeing Boards.
- **Building safety:** People have a right to be safe and to feel safe in their own homes. The construction industry and those with legal duties now need to step up and deliver the remediation work required by the Building Safety Bill. It is also important that innocent people should not have to pay the costs of fixing problems to make their homes safe. Action should be taken to force the construction industry to meet the costs they have imposed on the country through decades of failure on an industrial scale and prevent wider economic damage that could result if the cladding scandal continues to impact the housing market.
- **Online safety:** Councils support the measures in the Online Safety Bill to manage online safety. We support the appointment of Ofcom as an online safety regulator and we hope the Bill will go some way to reducing online harms, including of children and vulnerable adults. Councils also support calls for the Bill to also include consideration of financial harms through scams as well as other types of harm. Long-term, sustainable funding for councils' trading



standards teams would allow them to support the Government's ambitions to tackle a greater number of cases however, online platforms must ultimately take responsibility for activity on their sites.

- **Online and hybrid meetings:** It is disappointing that the Speech did not announce a Bill to allow councils to hold online and hybrid meetings, following the High Court Judgement which confirmed that primary legislation is needed to give councils similar powers to those granted by the Coronavirus Act. The flexibility has been paramount in allowing access for both councillors and the public to council meetings. Councils want the flexibility to meet in this way and continue their business, especially in times of emergency such as when flooding occurs or if there is significant traffic disruption due to weather conditions.

### **Legislation:**

For further information on any of these Bills, please contact the [LGA public affairs team](#).

### **Planning Bill**

*Laws to modernise the planning system will be brought forward, so that more homes can be built.*

#### **The main elements of the Bill are:**

- Changing local plans so that they provide more certainty over the type, scale and design of development permitted on different categories of land.
- Significantly decrease the time it takes for developments to go through the planning system.
- Replacing the existing systems for funding affordable housing and infrastructure from development with a new more predictable and more transparent levy.
- Reforming the framework for locally led development corporations to ensure local areas have access to appropriate delivery vehicles to support growth and regeneration.

#### **LGA view**

- Certainty in planning through Local Plans is critical to signal to communities and developers what development will happen in an area. This builds flexibility into the system, allowing local authorities to respond to changing circumstances.
- Local authorities will need the appropriate resources to lead on the transition and implementation to a more streamlined approach. Democratic input must be retained as part of the local decision-making process to ensure local people can have a say.

- We support a framework that will enable locally led sustainable development, driving growth and regeneration, revitalising communities and creating the right mix of homes. However, any new infrastructure levy is unlikely to be able to fund all necessary infrastructure and will require trade-off decisions to be made.
- The delivery of the right infrastructure is critical to supporting the high-quality homes and places communities need. It is vital that new occupants of homes and wider communities get the infrastructure they need, and that councils can access sufficient funding for this infrastructure in line with Local Plan ambitions.
- Councils also need powers to incentivise developers to build and ensure there is a mix of homes – to rent and buy – that are available and affordable to people that need them.
- We support measures to enhance public participation by using digital technology rather than out-of-date notices in local newspapers. A more digital service will make the planning system more accessible and efficient, alongside other forms of engagement to ensure that all residents can engage in the planning process.

## **Environment Bill**

*My Government will invest in new green industries to create jobs, while protecting the environment... Legislation will set binding environmental targets.*

### **The main elements of the Bill are:**

- Placing a duty on Ministers to ensure environmental considerations are central to policy development; setting legally-binding targets; producing a long-term environmental improvement plan; and setting up the independent Office for Environmental Protection.
- Extended producer responsibility, product labelling powers, introducing a consistent approach to recycling across local authorities in England, introducing a deposit return scheme for drinks containers, providing for more effective litter enforcement and provide the powers to introduce charges for single use plastic items.
- Improving air quality.
- Managing water sustainably.
- Protecting nature by mandating 'biodiversity net gain' in the planning system and through Local Nature Recovery Strategies.
- Putting forward amendments to reduce the harm from storm overflows to our rivers, waterways and coastlines and new duties on the Government to publish a plan to reduce sewage discharges from storm overflows.

### **LGA view**

- We welcome the reintroduction of the Environment Bill. The legacy of the COVID-19 pandemic must be that we, as a nation, grasp the opportunity to protect and enhance our natural environment, and tackle the climate emergency.
- We welcome the Bill's intention to strengthen local powers in relation to air quality enforcement. Existing mechanisms are decades old, misaligned with one another and need to be reformed to fit with modern sources of emissions. Additional resources will need to be available for councils to deal effectively with environmental protection and to fund local solutions.
- The Bill points to a new environmental relationship between local and national government, with potentially greater responsibility sitting with councils. The impact of this is that councils will have a new environmental improvement role within their localities.
- Local government is well placed to take the lead on this agenda but to deliver on these ambitious plans they will need to have appropriately skilled staff and adequate resources.
- At this stage it is difficult to predict the impact of the legislation and the costs for local authorities in meeting their new statutory duties. We therefore recommend the Bill is amended to ensure an assessment is made of how the new duties are operating into the future and ensuring local authorities are sufficiently funded.

### **Skills and Post-16 Education Bill**

*Legislation will support a lifetime skills guarantee to enable flexible access to high quality education and training throughout people's lives.*

#### **The main elements of the Bill are:**

- Offer adults across the country the opportunity to retrain in later life through the Lifetime Skills Guarantee, helping them to gain in-demand skills and open up further job opportunities. (Page 50)
- Put employers at the heart of the post-16 skills system through the Skills Accelerator, by enabling employers and providers to collaborate to develop skills plans aimed at ensuring local skills provision meets local needs. (Page 50)

#### **LGA view**

- The focus on adult training, the Further Education Skills for Jobs White Paper and the introduction of Skills and Further Education Bill are important. The long-term impact of the pandemic has changed our labour market and it is already clear many adults will need to upskill and reskill for new jobs.
- Adult training must be delivered by strong local providers including colleges, independent training providers, and [council run adult education centres](#), who can work together. There should be the offer a clear pathway to further

learning and work, with support for those who need to increase their basic skills and go on to further learning and work.

- The spatial and funding scope of the Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIP) is yet to be defined. It will be important this they are informed by the new DfE trailblazers. Employers should rightly inform local further education (FE) provision and the new LSIPs but they should also work with well-established local partnerships. Councils and Mayoral Combined Authorities provide strong local strategic and democratic oversight to the delivery of post 16 and adult skills provision. Local government involvement will be critical to the success of LSIPs.
- The Lifetime Skills Guarantee for adults to pursue their first Level 3 in-demand qualification is welcome. Courses must respond to the evolving needs of different local areas and employers and councils, combined authorities and colleges will play an important role in such planning. Allowing local flexibility would ensure the guarantee reaches those already qualified to Level 3 but who have been furloughed, need to retrain or are out of work.
- There are many adults who will not be able to access Level 3 as they lack a Level 2 qualification, leaving them vulnerable to job losses and finding it harder to secure work. The Adult Education Budget has been vital in providing support to improve skills levels but more funding for Level 2 would enable upskilling.

## **Health and Care Bill**

*My Ministers will bring forward legislation to empower the NHS to innovate and embrace technology. Patients will receive more tailored and preventative care, closer to home.*

### **The purpose of the Bill is to:**

- Lay the foundations for a more integrated, efficient and accountable health and care system - one which allows staff to get on with their jobs and provide the best possible treatment and care for their patients.
- Give the NHS and local authorities the tools they need to level up health and care outcomes across the country, enabling healthier, longer and more independent lives.

### **LGA view**

- We support Integrated Care Systems (ICS) as a strong driver for integrating health services in a system through the Integrated Care Board and an ICS Health and Care Partnership. We will want to ensure that there is provision in the Bill to ensure parity of esteem between the Integrated Care Board and an ICS Health and Care Partnership.
- ICSs will need to work closely with public health in local government, education, early years services and the private and voluntary sector to ensure that the health and wellbeing of children and young people is a priority, alongside the care and support of older people and working age adults who need support. Getting support

right from pregnancy and early childhood will have lifelong impacts and needs a far higher priority because of its long-term benefits.

- Wherever possible the ICS footprint must be coterminous with the local government. We urge the Government to resolve any problematic ICS footprints at the earliest opportunity through a transparent transition process that involves all relevant councils and NHS organisations.
- ICSs will need to ensure that decisions will be taken at the most local level. ICS structures need to build on existing place-based partnerships, in particular health and wellbeing boards. ICSs should not lead to unnecessary additional layers of bureaucracy, more rules, reporting and processes.
- For our more detailed commentary on the Health and Care White Paper, please read our recently published [position paper](#).

### **Building Safety Bill**

*A Bill to establish in law a new Building Safety Regulator to ensure that the tragedies of the past are never repeated.*

#### **The main elements of the Bill are:**

- Create the Building Safety Regulator, with a duty on council regulators and fire and rescue authorities to cooperate with it.
- Introduce new duties for those responsible for residential buildings over 18 metres or seven storeys, including stock-holding councils.
- Establishing a new framework to provide national oversight of construction products and strengthen the powers of the Office for Product Safety and Standards in this area.
- Establishing a new homes ombudsman and simplifying the process to log complaints to the Housing Ombudsman for social housing tenants.
- Making provisions for a levy on developers.

#### **LGA view:**

- This Bill cannot come soon enough as our broken building safety system needs reforms to be enshrined in tough new legislation. Residents have a right to be safe and to feel safe in their own homes, and the construction industry and those with legal duties now need to step up and deliver the cladding remediation work required.
- The Government has yet to respond to the points raised by the Housing, Communities and Local Government Select Committee's scrutiny of the draft Bill or to provide adequate funding to protect leaseholders. No leaseholder should have to pay the costs of making their home safe. Action should be taken to force developers and product manufacturers to meet the costs they have imposed on the country through decades of failure and prevent wider economic

damage that could result if the cladding scandal continues to impact the housing market.

- Social housing providers will also need to be protected from these costs if they are to provide the housing the nation needs and improve the existing housing to the standards Government wants.
- Building safety is not only an issue for buildings over 18 metres which is why a risk-based approach, which considers the vulnerabilities of residents, is required.
- Councils and fire services will have a vital role to play in delivering the new regime. The government needs to ensure this role is fully funded.

### **Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill**

*My Government will introduce measures to increase the safety and security of its citizens. Legislation will increase sentences for the most serious and violent offenders and ensure the timely administration of justice.*

#### **The main elements of the Bill are:**

- Introducing tougher sentences for offences such as rape, manslaughter and wounding with intent to cause Grievous Bodily Harm by ending the automatic release at the halfway point for serious sexual and violent offenders sentenced to a standard determinate sentence of between 4 and 7 years. This will bring their release point in line with serious violent and sexual offenders sentenced to seven years or more, following the secondary legislation we introduced in April last year.
- Increasing the maximum prison sentence for assaulting an emergency worker from 12 months to two years and creating a statutory requirement for the Home Secretary to report annually on progress made against the Police Covenant.
- Strengthening community sentences to cut crime by providing appropriate punishment addressing drivers of offending.
- Placing a duty on local authorities, the police, criminal justice agencies, health and fire and rescue services to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence, and the introduction of Serious Violence Reduction Orders. These will be used to prevent serious violence by equipping the police with new powers to stop and search those convicted of knife and offensive weapons offences.
- Reforming pre-charge bail so that bail conditions, such as prohibiting contact, are used more effectively to better protect victims and witnesses.
- Extending the scope of offences in the Sexual Offences Act 2003 relating to the abuse of positions of trust legislation to capture additional roles, such as sport coaches and religious leaders.
- Balancing the rights of protesters with the rights of others to go about their business unhindered, by enabling the police to better manage highly disruptive

protests.

- A new criminal offence to target trespassers using vehicles to reside on land who are causing significant damage or significant disruption to local communities. Creating the necessary basis in legislation for the providers of Secure Schools to operate this new form of youth custodial institution that is designed to place education at the heart of youth custody in order to cut crime.

### **LGA view**

- The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts (PCSC) Bill covers a broad range of community safety issues and seeks to introduce measures which aim to have an impact on victims of crime, those who perpetrate crimes, and wider community safety.
- Councils will continue to play their important role, alongside the police and other partners, in protecting our communities and ensuring they are safe places to live.
- We would like to see further formal consultation on several measures in the Bill, particularly the Offensive Weapons Homicide Reviews, imposing conditions on public protests, and the youth justice measures.
- The Bill seeks to place a new statutory duty on local authorities and wider partners to collaborate and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence. We support taking a public health approach to tackling serious violent crime and emphasise the importance of investing in early intervention and prevention measures. Any new duties in the Bill must be fully funded. We are also calling on the Government to extend funding and support for Violence Reduction Units (VRUs) to all areas.
- Effectively tackling unauthorised encampments will require a multi-agency response and the resources to support this. It is important the Government moves quickly to bring forward the good practice guidance it has committed to publish as this will support councils in dealing with unauthorised encampments.
- It will be important for this Bill to complement the measures outlined in the Domestic Abuse Act, the forthcoming Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy, the Draft Victim's Bill, as well as wider legislation and guidance, to ensure that simultaneous changes to the local government community safety landscape are considered collectively and carefully.

### **Product Security and Telecommunications Infrastructure Bill**

*Proposals will be taken forward... to extend 5G mobile coverage and gigabit capable broadband.*

#### **The main elements of the Bill are:**

- Reform the Electronic Communications Code to support faster and more collaborative negotiations for the use of private and public land for telecommunications deployment

### **LGA view**

- Access to fast and reliable digital connectivity is a necessity for all communities, something they have rightfully come to expect and essential to keeping pace with developments across the globe.
- Positive progress has been made in extending connectivity across local areas, yet some communities, many in rural areas, are unable to maintain a consistent mobile signal throughout the day.
- Councils recognise the important role they must play to ensure local policies are streamlined and conducive to the commercial roll out of mobile infrastructure.
- At the same time, any move to weaken planning control and increase permitted development rights takes away the ability of residents, businesses and councillors to contribute in a meaningful way to the deployment of new or upgraded masts, sites and infrastructure.
- We look forward to working with the Government and Industry to ensure genuine collaboration that respects the needs of local communities and meets the growing demand for high quality digital connectivity.

### **Subsidy Control Bill**

*Government will take forward a Subsidy Control Bill that will implement a domestic UK subsidy control regime that reflects our strategic interests and national circumstances.*

#### **The main elements of the Bill are:**

- Creating a consistent set of UK-wide principles that public authorities must follow when granting subsidies.
- Exempting categories of subsidies from certain obligations of the regime or leaving out of scope entirely.
- Prohibiting and placing conditions on certain types of subsidies which are at a particularly high risk of distorting markets.
- Obligating public authorities to upload information on subsidies to a new UK-wide, publicly accessible transparency database.
- Establishing an independent subsidy control body to oversee the UK's bespoke, modern subsidy control system.
- Providing for judicial oversight and enforcement of the granting of subsidies.

### **LGA view**

- The UK's new subsidy control regime must give a green light to the ambitions of local areas. Addressing the needs of local areas through specific financial



support to businesses and local organisations must become a stated objective for the regime. This will ensure changes in the law deliver real benefits on the ground. The regime must be based on local government's experience of what is needed and what works.

- Simplification and local flexibility should be the foundation of the regime as this will help ensure a wide range of local ambitions can be delivered, including:
  - COVID recovery: supporting businesses and individuals,
  - local economic growth and job creation to deliver 'levelling up',
  - environmental, climate, and energy improvements,
  - waste, housing, and transport improvements,
  - high speed digital infrastructure for all,
  - improved social and public health services,
  - safer and stronger communities,
  - promoting employment and skills,
  - promoting the arts, culture, heritage, and sports.
- Grant and loan schemes to deliver these ambitions must continue to be allowed when in line with certain principles. Arrangements must be set out in legislation for legal certainty, be at least as flexible as the previous regime, and designed in conjunction with local government.
- The system must be simplified for those awarding aid, easier to understand, and new reporting requirements must be light touch. A new approach to low-value support of a 'purely local nature' is also needed to ensure local initiatives can go ahead which benefit communities.

## **Procurement Bill**

*Laws will simplify procurement in the public sector.*

### **The main elements of the Bill are:**

- Enshrining in law the principles of public procurement such as: value for money, public benefit, transparency, integrity, fair treatment of suppliers and non-discrimination.
- Overhauling the complex and inflexible procurement procedures and replacing them with three simple, modern procedures. This will allow the public sector more scope to negotiate with potential suppliers to deliver innovative new solutions.
- Requiring buyers to have regard to the Government's strategic priorities for public procurement as set out in a new National Procurement Policy Statement.
- Introducing procurement processes that allow contracting authorities to buy at pace, for serious situations that are declared a crisis, with strengthened safeguards for transparency.
- Establishing a single data platform for supplier registration that ensures suppliers only have to submit their data once to qualify for any public sector procurement.

- Tackling unacceptable behaviour such as supplier fraud through new exclusion rules and giving buyers the tools to properly take account of a bidder's past performance.
- Reforming the process for challenging procurement decisions to speed up the review system and make it more accessible and capping the level of damages available to bidders in order to reduce the attractiveness of speculative claims.

### **LGA view**

- The LGA welcomes the ambition to transform public procurement as set out in the Transforming Public Procurement Green paper (2020) including the move to simplify and reduce the number of procurement procedures from seven to three. We support the removal of the Light Touch Regime (LTR) from procurement legislation and the proposal to supersede it with the new flexible procedure although there are some concerns around how the procedure might work in practice.
- The LGA has been working with Government on the new regime to ensure councils' needs are considered in relation to the proposed national procurement policy statement. New priorities set out in relation to social value, pipelines and benchmarking capabilities are all things we have been promoting in the LGA's National Procurement Strategy since 2018.
- There are concerns that the proposed single supplier registration system will add complexity. The LGA and councils look forward to working with the Government to ensure the new system is a success.
- The area of tackling unacceptable behaviour and supplier fraud needs to be strengthened and fairly applied. There are additional behaviours to be included under grounds for exclusion beyond what is proposed, such as tax evasion, data protection, equalities, modern slavery, and professional misconduct.
- The proposal to cap the level of damages awarded to aggrieved suppliers is welcome. It will reduce large and speculative damages claims and delivers on the objective of making proper use of public funds and be more proportionate.
- We are concerned that the changes to the current procurement rules for the NHS might lead to an uneven playing field between local government and the NHS. Any measures to reduce procurement requirements on the NHS must not, inadvertently, create barriers to joint commissioning or local authority-led commissioning.

### **Armed Forces Bill**

*Honour and strengthen the Armed Forces Covenant, placing it in law.*

**The main elements of the Bill are to:**

- Renew the Armed Forces Act 2006, which would otherwise expire at the end of 2021 and there would be no legislative basis for our Armed Forces.
- Introduce a new duty to require relevant public bodies across the UK, when exercising specified public functions in the education, healthcare and housing sectors to have due regard to the three principles of the Armed Forces Covenant:
  - Recognising the unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the Armed Forces.
  - That it is desirable to remove disadvantages arising for Service people from membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces.
  - That special provision for Service people may be justified by the effect on such people of membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces.

### **LGA view**

- Armed Forces serving personnel, veterans, reservists and their families are valued members of our communities. All councils have signed the voluntary Armed Forces Covenant and are fully committed to honouring their obligations to those who have served their country.
- We fully support the aim of the Bill to help ensure armed forces personnel, veterans and their families are not disadvantaged by their service when accessing key public services. We will continue to work positively with government to further embed the Covenant locally, building upon what has already been achieved.
- We are concerned that clause 8 of the Bill, which sets out the proposed statutory duty for all UK public authorities to have due regard to the principles of the Covenant, lacks detail. This means it is difficult to fully understand the implications for councils across housing, education and healthcare services. It is important that potential new burdens are fully funded by national government and kept under review so that councils can continue to deliver high quality services to their armed forces community. We look forward to seeing guidance which will set out what is expected of councils in greater detail.

### **Animal Welfare Plan and Legislation**

*Legislation will also be brought forward to ensure the United Kingdom has, and promotes, the highest standards of animal welfare.*

#### **The main elements of the plan and legislation are:**

- Deliver on the Government's commitment to the highest standards of animal welfare by creating an Action Plan for Animal Welfare and legislation.
- Recognise animal sentience in law through the Animal Welfare (Sentience) Bill.
- Increase protections for pets, sporting animals, and farm animals by ending the export of live animals for slaughter, banning the keeping of primates as pets,

improving standards in zoos and cracking down on puppy smuggling, and enhancing conservation through a Kept Animals Bill.

- Ban the import of hunting trophies from endangered animals abroad and end the advertising for sale of low welfare experiences abroad through an Animals Abroad Bill, as well as considering steps to limit the trade and sale of foie gras.
- Introduce mandatory cat microchipping and review current microchip databases.

### **LGA view**

- We support the objective of increasing animal welfare standards and eradicating cruel practices both domestically and internationally. However, the Government should balance the need to educate consumers alongside the need for enforcement, particularly in terms of poor welfare overseas, and it must ensure councils can practicably take action in response to new regulations.
- The elements outlined in the announcement are likely to mean a significant amount of additional work for councils' regulatory services which are already under significant pressure. New responsibilities will need adequate resourcing in order to deliver the Government's ambitions.
- The cross-government regulatory services task and finish group is already considering the challenges facing local regulatory services. These new responsibilities around animal welfare demonstrate the importance of the group's work to secure sustainable funding for regulatory services and a long term cross-government view of the demands being placed on them.

### **Dormant Assets Bill**

*Legislation will support the voluntary sector by reducing unnecessary bureaucracy and releasing additional funds for good causes.*

#### **The main elements of the Bill are:**

- Expanding the Scheme into new asset classes and improving consumer protection in reuniting people with forgotten money.
- Aligning the model for how dormant assets funding is allocated in England with that used in the devolved administrations. This will enable Ministers to set, through secondary legislation, more specific purposes for the allocation of funding within the general "social or environmental purpose".
- Improving the Scheme's operation, for example by allowing the Scheme's administrator, Reclaim Fund Ltd, to only accept transfers from participants who have undertaken appropriate efforts to trace, verify and reunite the asset with its rightful owner.
- Naming Reclaim Fund Ltd as the Scheme's authorised reclaim fund.

### **LGA view**

- Voluntary and community sector organisations are vital partners for councils across a wide range of issues. COVID-19 has led to a significant increase in demand for support from the voluntary and community sector and had an impact on major income streams from retail units and fund-raising activities.
- We look forward to understanding more about how the Bill will support the voluntary sector to tackle social and environmental challenges facing local areas, and what over support Government will offer to ensure the sustainability of the voluntary and community sector.

### **Professional Qualifications Bill**

*Create a new framework to recognise professional qualifications from across the world to ensure the UK can access professionals in areas of a workforce shortage. This will replace the interim system that gives preference to professional qualifications from the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein.*

*Enable the Government to provide UK regulators with a consistent set of powers to enter into agreements with regulators overseas to recognise professional qualifications.*

### **LGA view**

- The initial impact of the proposals for local government will be around social workers because that is the only regulated profession on the current shortage occupation list for which councils are the main employer and may wish to recruit more widely overseas. The LGA will seek clarification on the impact for other professions where the sector experiences recruitment difficulties. The emphasis will be on professional regulatory bodies making reciprocal arrangements with their overseas equivalents.
- It will also be important to ensure any process for recognising qualifications from EU and non-EU citizens is easy to understand for all employers, including councils.

### **Draft Online Safety Bill**

*Introduce ground-breaking laws to keep people safe online whilst ensuring that users' rights, including freedom of expression, are protected online.*

### **The main elements of the Bill are to:**

- Place a duty of care on companies to improve the safety of their users online. This will require them to tackle illegal content on their services and to protect children from harmful content and activity online. They must seriously consider the risks their services pose to users and take action to protect them.

- Require major platforms to set out clearly in their terms and conditions what legal content is unacceptable on their platform and enforce these consistently and transparently.
- Requiring platforms to have effective and accessible user reporting and redress mechanisms to report concerns about harmful content, and challenge infringement of rights (such as wrongful takedown).
- Designating Ofcom as the independent online safety regulator and giving it a suite of robust enforcement powers to uphold the regulation. This will include very large fines of up to £18 million or 10 per cent of annual global turnover - whichever is greater - as well as business disruption measures. The Government expects Ofcom to prioritise enforcement action where children's safety has been compromised.
- Boosting public resilience to disinformation through media literacy and supporting research on misinformation and disinformation.

### **LGA view**

- Abuse online or offline should not be tolerated. We look forward to working with government to build a thriving digital economy that is trusted by and protects everyone in the UK while ensuring users' rights, including freedom of expression.
- Appointing Ofcom as an online safety regulator is a step in the right direction. We hope it will go some way to reducing online harms, including of children and vulnerable adults.
- We are concerned about the increasing spread of mis- and disinformation, and incidents of intimidation and abuse of elected representatives. Both pose significant threats to local democracy, as well as public health and community safety, and we welcome measures to tackle these issues.
- We are pleased that the Bill requires platforms to take responsibility for what is on their website and those who use it. In addition, we support calls for the Bill to include consideration of financial harms through scams, as well as other types of harm.
- Councils' trading standards teams play a vital role in tackling fraud, including online, and additional funding would allow councils to support the Government's ambitions to tackle a greater number of online scam cases. In addition, it is vital that online platforms take responsibility for fraudulent activity taking place on their sites.

### **Draft Victims Bill**

*Proposals will be brought forward to...support victims.*

**The main elements of the Bill are:**

- Enshrining the 12 key rights in the new Victims' Code into law. Those key rights include being:
  - Kept informed at key stages of the case.
  - Provided with regular updates on the progress of their case.
  - Referred to organisations supporting victims of crime.
  - Given the opportunity to make a Victim Personal Statement and be informed how it was used in court.
  - Informed when an offender is released, where eligible under the Victim Contact Scheme.

### **LGA view**

- We welcome the Government's commitment to enshrine victims' rights into law, as this will help to ensure victims are more consistently supported and thereby enable them to deal with and recover from the impacts of crime. The proposals should also improve victims' experiences within the criminal justice process.
- It will be important for the Bill to recognise that 'victims of crime' will apply to a broad range of crimes – including those where the victim is also a perpetrator, such as in cases of child criminal exploitation – and there will be different prosecuting authorities involved in these cases. Listening to and engaging with victims of crime, and understanding more about their lived experience, will be vital in helping to achieve meaningful change and reform. We are also keen to work with the Government to ensure child victims of crime receive suitable support.
- The LGA has long called for greater investment in domestic abuse community-based support services, as well as early intervention and prevention services, and perpetrator programmes. It is therefore positive to see the Government has committed to consult on the provision of community-based domestic abuse services and will set expectations for the standard and availability of victim support for victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence.
- Current funding for victim support services is short-term and piecemeal. This does not allow for long-term strategic planning, nor provide any consistency for much-needed specialist support services and the victims that need to access these services. There needs to be greater collaboration across Government departments on this important issue, as well as comprehensive, multi-year funding provided to commissioners.
- To accompany this Bill, we would also like to see a greater focus on tackling perpetrators of crime, and a clear ministerial lead focusing on this important issue. There needs to be an integrated approach to identifying and responding to perpetrators, to help change their behaviour and address the risks posed by them.
- This new Victims' Bill should align and complement the provisions outlined in the Domestic Abuse Act, the Police Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, the forthcoming Domestic Abuse Strategy, and the forthcoming Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy, as well as wider guidance and legislation.

## **White Papers, Green Papers and policy measures**

### **Levelling Up White Paper**

*My Government's priority is to deliver a national recovery from the pandemic that makes the United Kingdom stronger, healthier and more prosperous than before. To achieve this, my Government will level up opportunities across all parts of the United Kingdom, supporting jobs, businesses and economic growth and addressing the impact of the pandemic on public services.*

#### **The main elements of the proposals around levelling up are:**

- The Government will bring forward a Levelling Up White Paper later this year, building on actions the Government is already taking to level up across the UK.
- This will set out bold new policy interventions to improve livelihoods and opportunities in all parts of the UK. It looks to improve living standards, grow the private sector, improve health, education and policing, strengthen communities and local leadership and restoring pride in place.
- It defines levelling up in terms of creating good jobs, skills and productivity in places that have seen economic decline and enabling more people to grasp the opportunities of Brexit and get on in life without feeling they have to leave their local area.

#### **LGA view**

- The LGA and councils look forward to working closely with the Government to help deliver on its commitment to level up and invest in local areas across all parts of the country.
- Bringing greater resources and powers closer to communities is the best way to ensure a recovery that works for everyone. A unity of effort will be needed between local businesses, public services and communities to address the full range of opportunities and challenges across the country.
- Councils are crucial partners to achieving a recovery that works for all. With the right funding, freedoms and devolved powers, councils can work with partners to drive improvements in public health, boost local economic growth, revive town and city centres, build more homes, improve our roads and equip people with the skills they need to succeed so no one is left behind.
- We will be discussing with Government its stated ambition for English Devolution, the plans for a White Paper and how this aligns to work on the levelling-up agenda.

### **Adult social care reform**

*Proposals on social care reform will be brought forward.*

#### **Key issues the Government will address**

- Do more to ensure that everyone receives high-quality, joined-up care.



- Through the Health and Social Care Bill, improve the oversight of how social care is commissioned and delivered, and facilitate greater integration between health and care services by placing Integrated Care Systems on a statutory footing across the UK and putting more power and autonomy in the hands of local systems.
- Support the development of the adult social care workforce and engage with staff about how best to support them
- Work with local and national partners to ensure the Government's approach to reform is informed by diverse perspectives, including those with lived experience of the care sector.

### **LGA view**

- We are pleased that proposals on social care reform will be brought forward, but urgently need a clear timeline. It is vital that this is also urgently converted into concrete funding proposals to provide sustainable support to people of all ages across the country who draw on social care to live the life they want to lead. We are keen to work with the Government and other stakeholders on a cross-party basis to achieve this. Councils and their communities need to see action as soon as possible.
- In our recent [letter](#) to Government on adult social care reform, we called for sustainable funding, defined in three broad ways. First, investment on an ongoing basis to fully move from a historical model of wellbeing based on care homes and hospitalisation to one of prevention, reablement, more appropriate accommodation, and community care and support that puts people first and acts on their knowledge of lived experience. This is what will deliver the necessary transition to a broader model of care that achieves better outcomes for people and, in turn, strengthens our local communities
- We must end the approach of additional one-off grants and, in particular, the adult social care precept to fund social care. While welcome, these measures are only ever sticking plaster solutions that are unsustainable and harm longer-term planning. Care and support to help people live their best life is a national entitlement and dependence on council tax to fund it is not the solution.
- As important as it is to protect people from having to sell their home to pay for care, this will carry a significant cost. Alongside any reforms of this type, we need a solution for bringing more money into social care that matches the level of ambition we have for social care as a key way in which people are supported to lead their best and most fulfilling lives. We have previously stated, and still believe, that the case should be made for increases in national taxation and/or a social care premium based on the core principle of universal risk-pooling. It is therefore helpful that the Queen's Speech recognises that the risk of people's future care costs is not shared equally across society. It is also helpful that the document recognises the vital role played by our care workforce and the need to support them. The LGA looks forward to extensive engagement across the whole sector, including employers and commissioners, about all aspects of workforce development including reward and career structures as well as skills and wellbeing.

- Our view on the social care elements of the Health and Social Care White Paper are set out in detail in our recently published [position paper](#).

### **Skills: COVID-19 Recovery and the Skills for Jobs White Paper**

*Incentivising new apprenticeship hires.*

#### **LGA view**

- Extending the duration and the value of the apprenticeship incentives to September 2021 will make apprenticeships more attractive to many employers. The Government has listened to employers including local government and we are suggesting the Government should extend incentives to at least March 2022 so that employers can take full advantage once current restrictions are lifted.

### **Climate Change, Net Zero and COP26**

*My Government will invest in new green industries to create jobs, while protecting the environment. The United Kingdom is committed to achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and will continue to lead the way internationally by hosting the COP26 Summit in Glasgow.*

#### **The main elements are:**

- Legislation to set Carbon Budget six at the level recommended by the Climate Change Committee.
- A Ten Point Plan for a green industrial revolution which will mobilise £12 billion of investment and create thousands of highly-skilled green jobs.
- The Energy White Paper which sets out the transformation of the UK's energy system.
- The Industrial Decarbonisation Strategy which sets out an ambitious blueprint to deliver the world's first low-carbon industrial sector.
- Forthcoming sector strategies, including Heat and Buildings, the Transport Decarbonisation Plan, and the comprehensive Net Zero Strategy.
- The UK hosting the COP26 negotiations in November.

#### **LGA view**

- The LGA supports the UK's commitment to achieving net zero by 2050. We declared a climate emergency alongside at least 230 councils, where nearly two thirds of councils in England aim to be carbon neutral earlier than the national target.

- Net-zero can only be achieved with decarbonisation happening in every place across the country – that’s every household, community and local economy. This will require local leadership. Councils share the ambition for a green revolution and want to work with government and businesses to establish a national fiscal and policy framework for addressing the climate emergency, supported with long term funding.
- Councils can play a significant role in delivering a green recovery, which includes supporting national government to create green jobs. Councils can use their role as local leaders to bring together the skills and low carbon agendas to unlock growth in their areas. Renewable energy infrastructure can also provide significant opportunities in the green growth sector and job creation.
- COP26 provides an opportunity to highlight councils as essential local partners in translating international and national ambitions into transformative local action. Councils are already leading the way and the Glasgow Summit offers an opportunity to promote British councils’ work and innovation.
- The LGA welcomes the previous announcement to cut carbon emissions by 78 per cent by 2035, compared to 1990 emissions levels which was recommended by the Government’s independent advisors, the Climate Change Committee. We await more detail on how a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions will be delivered and the role of councils through the forthcoming sector strategies and comprehensive Net Zero Strategy.

## **Bus Reform**

*Proposals will be taken forward to transform connectivity by rail and bus.*

### **The main elements of the Reform are:**

- Our National Bus Strategy for England, we will deliver better bus services for passengers across England outside London, through ambitious and far-reaching reform of how services are planned and delivered.
- The National Bus Strategy outlined how we will spend the £3 billion announced by the Prime Minister to transform buses outside London. In order to access that transformational funding, local authorities and operators will be required to work together to improve services.
- These reforms will be one of our major acts of levelling up by ensuring there are more frequent, cheaper and more reliable bus services across the country which are easier to understand and use with integrated services and ticketing.
- £120 million will be spent in the 2021-22 Financial Year on supporting the Government’s commitment to introduce 4,000 zero-emission buses, building on the recent award of £50 million to Coventry from the All-Electric Bus Towns and Cities competition.

## **LGA View**

- We are pleased the Government is investing in improving local bus services, and it is good the National Bus Strategy recognises the important role of

councils.

- Councils want to work with government to make sure every community is able to access a local bus service. We would urge government to also plug the £700 million annual funding gap councils faced before the pandemic in providing the concessionary fares scheme, which would help to protect local routes and reverse the decline in bus services.

## **Beating COVID and backing the NHS**

*My Government will protect the health of the nation, continuing the vaccination programme.*

### **LGA View**

- Local government has successfully supported the national effort to tackle the COVID-19 emergency. The LGA notes that the Government has significantly increased the financial commitment to the NHS to address the ongoing impact of the pandemic. Local government services have been vital in supporting and protecting people during the pandemic including assisting in the delivery of the vaccination programme, establishing local contact tracing partnerships and conducting surge testing, supporting care providers to prevent COVID infections in care settings, helping the clinically extremely vulnerable needing to shield and those having to self-isolate, as well as ensuring compliance with social distancing requirements.
- Councils have worked with social care providers to increase their fee levels and ensure providers have had support with the additional costs posed by Covid-19, such as higher staff sickness and absence rates and higher administration and PPE costs. Councils have also supported providers with cash flow, such as by paying on plan in advance. All of these efforts have been part of councils' wider efforts to best support people who draw on care and support. We are disappointed therefore that there is no equivalent recognition of the need for additional resources for adult social care and public health.

## **Prevention**

*Measures will be brought forward to support the health and wellbeing of the nation, including to tackle obesity.*

### **LGA view**

- Everyone agrees that prevention is better than cure. Additional measures to help make our residents happier and healthier would be welcome and councils look forward to working with the government to bring forward efforts to improve the health and wellbeing of the nation in our recovery from Covid-19.

- Local government is at the heart of local work to improve the public's health. It provides the leadership, expertise, partnership-working and access to local resources that are fundamental to strong place-based coordination.
- Health inequalities between the most and least deprived communities have been exposed and deepened over the past 12 months, while we have yet to see the long-term physical and mental impact of the pandemic and what it means for our future health and wellbeing. Councils should be at the centre of efforts to reduce inequalities and improve people's lives. This includes making greater use of combined resources at local, system and national level. Encouraging behaviour change, such as through healthy weight programmes, stop smoking campaigns, tackling vaccine hesitancy and promoting positive mental health, will also see people across the country have longer, healthier and happier lives.
- Every pound invested by government in council-run services such as public health helps to relieve pressure on other services like the NHS and the criminal justice system, while also proving to be [three to four times more cost-effective in improving people's health](#) than money spent in the NHS. Councils have seen a £700 million real terms reduction in public health funding between 2014/15 and 2020/21 – a fall of almost a quarter (23.5 per cent) per person. If the Government's prevention agenda is to succeed then this must be re-evaluated in future spending rounds.
- We support proposals to strengthen front-of-pack nutrition labelling and calorie labelling on alcohol. We believe a single system will help people make informed choices. We also welcome plans to ban adverts of products high in fat, sugar or salt from TV before 9pm. It is disappointing that the white paper did not give councils powers to ban junk food advertising near schools.

### **Mental Health Act Reform**

*Measures will be brought forward to support the health and wellbeing of the nation, including to...improve mental health.*

#### **The main elements of reform are to:**

- Bring the Mental Health Act into the 21st century and give people greater control over their treatment and receive the dignity and respect they deserve.
- Reform the process for detention, improve care and treatment whilst someone is detained, and give them better support to challenge detention if they wish, shifting the balance to give the patient more say.
- Change the law around how people with a learning disability or autistic people are treated under the Act to prevent prolonged detentions.
- Address the disproportionate number of people from black and minority ethnic groups detained under the Act.
- The Government remains committed to its ambitions in the NHS Long Term Plan to expand and transform mental health services in England.

- The Government has also set out its Mental Health Recovery Action Plan as part of the commitment to build back better.

### **LGA view**

- The LGA supports reforming the Mental Health Act. We welcome the ambition to achieve meaningful change for people living with severe mental illness, including addressing the disproportionate number of people from black and minority ethnic groups detained under the Act, changing the law around how learning disabled and autistic people are treated, and a stronger focus on upholding people's human rights.
- The Act will have significant resource implications for councils' already stretched statutory children's and adults' mental health services, which central government will need to fully fund in line with recent investment in NHS mental health services.
- Achieving a reduction in detentions is not solely about legislative change. There needs to be a fully funded system-wide shift in policy and resources away from medicalisation and treating mental ill health, to early intervention, prevention, and support for pandemic recovery through integrated community-based mental health services that are jointly commissioned by councils and the NHS.
- It is positive that the Mental Health Recovery Action Plan makes available additional one-off funding to help national and local services from all sectors to meet new demand for mental health and wellbeing support arising from the Covid-19 pandemic. Going forward, local statutory children's and adult's mental health services, and wider public mental health services, need long-term parity of funding with NHS mental health services, to support mental health recovery and help the whole population to be mentally well.

### **Education recovery plan**

*As we build back from the pandemic, we are putting in place a package of measures to ensure no child is left behind as a result of the education and extracurricular activities they may have missed out on. We are working with the Education Recovery Commissioner – Sir Kevan Collins – to develop an ambitious, long-term plan that builds back a better and fairer education system in England and delivers significant reforms to address the scale of this challenge.*

*As a first step, over the past year we have already provided over £2 billion to schools, colleges and early years settings to support pupils' academic and wider progress. This includes £1.7 billion in funding to support education recovery and over £400 million is being invested to support access to remote education including securing 1.3 million laptops and tablets.*

### **LGA view**

- Education recovery is a long-term endeavour and must go beyond academic achievement to include measures to support children and young people's socialisation, communication and mental health and well-being. While recovery support should be made available to all children and young people, it is vital

that vulnerable children, who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, are the focus of this programme of work.

- Councils are ideally placed, in their role as leaders/convenors of local education systems (a role that has been emphasised during the pandemic) to bring together early years providers, schools, academies, Multi Academy Trusts and the further education sector, to join up local efforts to promote education and wellbeing recovery for children and young people, working towards a number of education recovery objectives that have been set nationally.
- Additional funding to support education will be essential and to maximise the effective use of this funding locally, councils should have flexibility to pool the various funding streams to best meet the need of children and young people.

### **Wider Education Reform**

*We are investing an additional £730 million into high needs in 2021/22, building on the additional £780 million in 2020/21.*

*We have launched an independent review of children's social care, looking at the needs, experiences, and outcomes of the children it supports. We are also continuing our work on the Review of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), which aims to ensure the SEND system is consistent, high quality, and integrated across education, health and care.*

### **LGA view**

- We welcome the Government's review into support for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). It is imperative that the findings of the review are published as a matter of urgency and that they address the rising demand and cost pressures facing councils and their partners in delivering SEND support. We are supportive of a reformed, sustainable system which puts families at its heart and gives children and young people with SEND support at the earliest opportunity, so they can live healthy and fulfilled lives. Reform of the system will also help to clearly align responsibilities and powers amongst councils and their partners to ensure there is effectively delivery.
- Councils continue to face major financial challenges in supporting children with SEND and we are pleased that the Department for Education (DfE) has recognised this, with £1.5 billion in additional high needs funding allocated to councils for 2020/21 and 2021/22.
- Irrespective of the shape of a reformed SEND system, we are clear that significant legacy costs are already 'baked in' to the existing system, largely due to the extension of duties to support children and young people and the expectation of an education placement to the age of 25. We are keen to work with the DfE to model the long-term financial impacts of the 2014 Children and Families Act to aid understanding of how we collectively deal with legacy issues, which will require different arrangements of support than those that may be in place as a result of the SEND Review.
- Every child deserves a safe and happy childhood in which they are loved and supported to reach their full potential. Some children will need help from children's social care services for that to happen, and this review gives the

entire system the opportunity to make sure services work as well as they should.

- The review will need to look at the experiences of children in the round, considering not only the work of children's social care departments, but partners including schools and healthcare services who have a vital role to play in supporting children and their families. Demand for support has increased dramatically over the last decade, and it is important that we understand why this is and whether services are adequately resourced to give children the right help at the right time.
- We have consistently called for additional funding to meet increased demand across the entirety of children's services.

### **Criminal Justice Catch-up and Recovery Plan**

*Legislation will...ensure the timely administration of justice.*

#### **The main elements of the Plan are:**

- To put the running of the coronial system on the same footing as other courts and tribunals, with efficiency increased through virtual hearings, the holding of inquests without a hearing in non-contentious cases, discontinuing investigations where the cause of death is natural without first requiring a post mortem, and allowing coroner areas to merge across local authority boundaries.
- By ensuring the coroners' jurisdiction is in line with other courts and tribunals, delays in progressing cases will be reduced and will therefore reduce the distress of bereaved families.

#### **LGA view**

- Councils are keen to ensure that coronial inquests minimise the distress to bereaved families, and welcome measures that allow coroners' courts to operate more effectively by working in the same way as other courts and tribunals.
- The ability to rationalise coroner areas will assist councils in making coroners' services operate more efficiently. Government should fully fund the costs associated with these proposals as councils may need to invest in new technology and systems to deliver these new ways of working.
- As part of the plan, the Government should also review whether coroners' courts should continue to be a locally managed service, or whether it would be better for the coronial service to be run, managed and funded by central government.

### **Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy**

*Proposals will be brought forward to address violence, including against women and girls.*



**The main elements of the Strategy are to:**

- Tackle crime and this includes tackling violence against women and girls.
- Take action to toughen sentences, protect the public and improve support for victims and investing in support for victims.
- Publish a new VAWG Strategy and increase the ability to tackle emerging crime types such as 'upskirting' and revenge porn.
- Conduct an end-to-end review of the criminal justice response to rape, due this summer, looking at how every stage of the criminal justice system handles rape cases, from police report to the final outcome at court.
- Also to publish a Domestic Abuse Strategy focusing on prevention, accompanied by £25 million of investment which will more than double the amount being spent on programmes to work with perpetrators.

**LGA view**

- Councils are determined to help tackle Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG), working alongside the police and criminal justice services, Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs), health and education services, the voluntary and community sector and wider support services, to help ensure women and girls are protected from all forms of abuse.
- It is right the Government's VAWG strategy (2021 – 2024) should focus on all forms of violence against women and girls, including rape and sexual violence, domestic abuse, forced marriage, so called 'honour-based' abuse, female genital mutilation (and other culturally specific forms of abuse), stalking, sharing of personal intimate images without consent and online harassment, which have devastating consequences.
- We welcome the new strategy's ambition to drive forward improvements in the effort to target perpetrators; to respond to the changing nature of these crimes; and, to place victims and survivors at the heart of the approach. It is particularly important that the Government's strategy captures the lived experience of those affected by VAWG, to help improve the response to these crimes. We also welcome the Government's commitment to carrying out an end-to-end Rape Review.
- Increased investment in the Safer Streets Fund is positive, but it will not, on its own, address systemic VAWG issues. There needs to be a comprehensive and long-term approach focused on achieving culture change and preventing VAWG issues arising in the first place, spanning across education, health, housing, families, and communities through to policing and criminal justice measures.
- This approach must be accompanied by comprehensive, multi-year funding made available to local commissioners to allow for long-term strategic planning and delivery of VAWG services. This should include Government funding the National Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Centre. There also needs to be greater co-ordination across Government departments, to make this a cross-

departmental work-stream that focuses on both support for victims and tackling and preventing perpetrators' violent or abusive behaviour.

### **New Plan for Immigration Legislation**

*This supports the delivery of the [New Plan for Immigration](#) with a range of measures that include a new system of asylum support and accommodation.*

#### **The main elements are to:**

- Move towards a reception centre model while claims for asylum are processed, with routes to the UK having an impact on both the decision making process and eventual status of those claiming asylum, including changes in access to councils' support at the end of the process
- Clarify government's role in both tackling trafficking networks and supporting victims of modern slavery.

#### **LGA view**

- Councils are keen to build on their strong track record of supporting those resettling in new communities.
- Future developments for asylum support and accommodation should include joint priorities agreed between local and central government. It needs to shift to a more place-based, equitable and sustainably funded system that provides effective support for asylum seeking children, adults and families.
- Local experiences and learning should inform the development of a reception centre model, particularly to ensure early engagement of councils and local partners.
- Local government is keen work through changes to councils' responsibilities for supporting those at the end of the process to ensure a full understanding of the potential impacts for councils, communities and on a wide range of adults and families.
- Modern slavery is a heinous crime and councils want to play their part in both working to eradicate it and supporting victims to recover but need the resources to enable them to do so.

### **Early Years Healthy Development Review**

*Measures will be brought forward to ensure that children have the best start in life, prioritising their early years.*

#### **Measures will include:**

- Encouraging all local authorities to publish a clear Start for Life offer for parents and carers, showing families what support they can expect to receive during the 1,001 critical days from conception to age two.

- Building on the Government's commitment to champion 'Family Hubs', encouraging local authorities to make them a place for families to access Start for Life services.
- Working across the system to hold local services to account, including through proportionate inspections, and to improve data, evaluation and outcomes of health services.
- Encouraging local areas to nominate a leader and ensuring the delivery of the Review is overseen at a national level.

#### **LGA view**

- It is positive that the Early Years Healthy Development Review conducted by Andrea Leadsom MP recognises the crucial support provided by councils to improve outcomes for children aged zero to two.
- We will work with the Review team to ensure the 'Start for Life' and Family Hubs vision builds on the positive programmes already in place locally.
- For the vision to be realised it will need to be properly resourced. To develop 'excellence' in the early years, the Government will need to reverse the reductions to the public health and early intervention grants and ensure local authorities have the resources they need to commission effective preventative services.
- Local authorities are already accountable for improving outcomes in the early years sector and have established leadership. The Review should remain flexible and support local arrangements.
- The creation of Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) provides an excellent opportunity to improve the health and wellbeing of children and to tackle health inequalities. To do this effectively local government leaders need to be at the heart of ICS leadership to ensure a joined-up approach across the wider system.

#### **Enterprise and jobs**

*As part of our drive to net zero, creating 250,000 highly skilled green jobs across the UK.... Supporting and creating jobs across the UK through our Plan for Jobs, which will particularly help areas at risk of unemployment.*

#### **LGA view**

- [LGA analysis projects that the low carbon sector could require and create 700,000 jobs across England by 2030](#) and almost 1.2 million jobs by 2050. These jobs will respond to regional and local economic specialities.
- One of the main lessons from the COVID-19 crisis is that councils can innovate well and help deliver and at speed. The Plan for Jobs will require all private, public and voluntary partners to work together at a local level. Councils have proved that they have the legitimacy to provide the local leadership needed to

bring together partners to ensure delivery is effective and at speed.

### **UK Community Renewal Fund and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)**

*The £220 million UK-wide Community Renewal Fund will provide funding for local areas across the UK in 2021-22 to help them prepare for the introduction of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, in addition to the continued high level of funding from EU structural funds.*

#### **LGA view**

- The LGA recognises that the UK Community Renewal Fund is an important way to help councils invest in their areas. It is good that councils have been placed at the heart of the delivery.
- We are looking forward to working with the Government to help design the UK Shared Prosperity Fund in advance of its introduction in 2022/23 through a Task Force. We look forward to further announcements on the UKSPF, including confirmation of the total quantum of the funding (based on commitment from ministers).

### **Regulatory reform**

*The Prime Minister has established a Better Regulation Cabinet Committee, chaired by the Chancellor, to ensure the Government is driving an ambitious programme of regulatory reform that enables and supports growth and innovation.*

#### **LGA view**

- COVID-19 has highlighted the important and versatile role of councils' frontline regulatory services teams in protecting the public and supporting businesses.
- It will be important to ensure any short-term regulatory easements introduced in relation to the pandemic are fully consulted on before they are made permanent, and that councils are not impacted financially by them.
- The LGA and councils have previously put forward a series of proposals for streamlining and improving our outdated licensing frameworks. We would welcome the opportunity to take forward these proposals with Government as part of this programme of work.

### **The Electoral Integrity Bill**

*My Government will strengthen and renew democracy and the constitution. Legislations will be introduced to ensure the integrity of elections.*

#### **The main elements of the Bill are:**

- Improving the absent ballot process by increasing protection on postal and proxy voting, including banning postal vote 'harvesting'.
- Strengthening the laws on intimidation and undue influence.

- Requiring identification to vote in a polling station, as already required in Northern Ireland.
- Extending the 'imprint' requirement to digital political campaigning, and introducing measures to prevent foreign interference in elections. Improving access to voting for electors with disabilities.
- Removing the 15-year limit on the voting rights of British expats and making it easier to cast their vote.

#### **LGA view**

- We welcome the commitment to legislate to protect those standing for public office and their campaigners from intimidation and abuse and to clarify the existing offence of Undue influence. The LGA supported the Government's proposals in the 'Protect the debate' consultation to develop new electoral legislation to tackle intimidation and continues to call the creation of a specific offence to protect elected members while in office.
- The commitment to introduce imprints for digital campaign material to ensure transparency for voters, campaigners and regulators is also positive. We would be keen to understand how this can be achieved while maintaining a level playing-field for all candidates.
- Councils are hugely experienced at running elections and working to support communities to participate in the democratic process effectively. The recent double year of elections, run in the extremely challenging context of the pandemic, have run smoothly and are testament to their incredible hard work and expertise.
- Councils fully support proposals to ensure disabled people can cast their vote. New duties on councils will of course need to be fully funded to help ensure they work effectively and their intention to increase voter participation is realised.
- Councils will want to understand more about how the proposals for voter identification, extension of the rights of overseas voters and changes to the postal and proxy voting systems might work in practice. Local government will also want to be assured that proper impact assessments have been completed to understand and mitigate the potential impact on protected groups and that councils are not adversely affected by the implementation or cost of complying with new duties or processes.

#### **Integrated Review**

*My Ministers will implement the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy.*

#### **LGA view**

- The Government's commitment to taking forward its recent Integrated Review is positive. It will include looking at the role of Local Resilience Forums (LRFs) in preparing for and responding to emergencies.

- It will be important for the review to take into account the learning from councils' and LRFs' experiences of responding to the pandemic, as well as considering the steps necessary to taking a whole society approach to building resilience.