

# Safer and Stronger Communities Board

## Agenda

Tuesday, 21 September 2021  
11.00 am

Westminster Room, 8th Floor, 18 Smith  
Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

**To:** Members of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board  
**cc:** Named officers for briefing purposes

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This meeting is



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Safer & Stronger Communities Board  
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There will be a meeting of the Safer & Stronger Communities Board at **11.00 am on Tuesday, 21 September 2021** Westminster Room, 8th Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ.

A sandwich lunch will be available at 1.00pm.

**Attendance Sheet:**

Please ensure that you sign the attendance register, which will be available in the meeting room. It is the only record of your presence at the meeting.

**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@lga.gov.uk">LABGP@lga.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>
<b>Independent:</b>	Group Office: 020 7664 3224	email: <a href="mailto:independent.group@lga.gov.uk">independent.group@lga.gov.uk</a>

**LGA Contact:**

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**Carers' Allowance**

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The twitter hashtag for this meeting is #lgassc

## Safer & Stronger Communities Board – Membership 2021/2022

Councillor	Authority
<b>Conservative ( 7 )</b>	
Cllr Mohan Iyengar (Vice Chairman)	Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council
Cllr Eric Allen	Sutton London Borough Council
Cllr Bill Borrett	Norfolk County Council
Cllr Lewis Cocking	Broxbourne Borough Council
Cllr Julia Lepoidevin	Coventry City Council
Cllr Lois Samuel	West Devon Borough Council
Cllr Arnold Saunders	Salford City Council
<b>Substitutes</b>	
Cllr Graeme Coombes	Bedford Borough Council
Cllr Paul Findlow	Cheshire East Council
Cllr James Gartside	Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council
<b>Labour ( 7 )</b>	
Cllr Nesil Caliskan (Chair)	Enfield Council
Cllr Asher Craig	Bristol City Council
Cllr Alan Rhodes	Bassetlaw District Council
Mayor Damien Egan	Lewisham London Borough Council
Cllr Jeanie Bell	St Helens Council
Cllr James Beckles	Newham London Borough Council
Cllr James Dawson	Erewash Borough Council
<b>Substitutes</b>	
Cllr Kaya Comer-Schwartz	Islington London Borough Council
Cllr Margaret Mullane	Barking and Dagenham London Borough
Cllr Clive Johnson	Medway Council
<b>Liberal Democrat ( 2 )</b>	
Cllr Heather Kidd (Deputy Chair)	Shropshire Council
Cllr Jon Ball	Ealing Council
<b>Substitutes</b>	
Cllr Kris Brown	Liverpool City Council
<b>Independent ( 2 )</b>	
Cllr Clive Woodbridge (Deputy Chair)	Epsom and Ewell Borough Council
Cllr Philip Evans JP	Conwy County Borough Council
<b>Substitutes</b>	
Cllr Nicola Dillon Jones	North Kesteven District Council
Cllr Karen Lucioni	Isle of Wight Council
Cllr Paul Hilliard	Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council

## Agenda

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### Safer & Stronger Communities Board

Tuesday 21 September 2021

11.00 am

Westminster Room, 8th Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

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**Date of Next Meeting:** Thursday, 11 November 2021, 11.00 am, Westminster Room, 8th Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

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## Note of the last Safer & Stronger Communities Board

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Title:	Safer & Stronger Communities Board
Date and time:	Thursday 17 June 2021
Location:	Videoconference via Microsoft Teams

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### Attendance

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

Item	Decisions and actions
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<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest</b>
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The Chair welcomed members to the Safer and Stronger Communities Board meeting.

Apologies were received from Cllr Johnson Situ and no declarations of interest were made.

<b>2</b>	<b>Notes of the previous meeting</b>
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Members of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board agreed the notes of the last Board meeting, held on Thursday 18 March 2021.

<b>3</b>	<b>Social cohesion and resilience</b>
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The Chair introduced the report and invited Sara Khan, Government Independent Adviser for Social Cohesion and Resilience to present to the Board.

Sara introduced herself and thanked the Board for inviting her to the Safer and Stronger Communities Board meeting, building on her earlier engagement with the Board as Counter-Extremism Commissioner. She informed the Board that she would update members on her plans for her role, explore members' concerns about extremism and cohesion issues and outline her plans for the coming year.

Sara emphasised that she was a firm believer in the role of local authorities in promoting cohesion, strengthening resilience and tackling division, intolerance and extremism.

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As Commissioner, one of her reports had focused on the broad question of what a whole society response to extremism looks like and looked at the issue of cohesion. The report showed that there was still a serious gap in knowledge about social cohesion and how local areas were targeted by extremists. Sara also noted that people talk about contributing to cohesion but sometimes undermine it, and that we need to improve and quicken our response to issues such as the Birmingham RSE protests.

Sarah confirmed that her role would focus on working with MHCLG to promote social cohesion, strengthening communities and institutional resilience: she commented that counter extremism and promoting cohesion and resilience are complementary and both need to be addressed. She noted data showing that investing in social cohesion is beneficial and leads to increased trust in government and social engagement. However, she stated that there are gaps in what we know and how we can assess cohesion and resilience.

Sarah emphasised that as part of her review she was keen to look at the following key areas:

- What more can be done to support victims targeted by hardliners promoting polarisation.
- What is the role of public bodies and local authorities - do they have the expertise, capacity and/or capabilities required?
- What was the role of national government in supporting this work?
- How could cohesion and resilience work be streamlined within existing structures and alongside other issues?
- How might local communities and civil societies work with local authorities to challenge polarisation and extremism?
- What works in promoting social cohesion and tackling extremism?

Following the discussion, Members made the following comments:

- Members commented that a particular issue in some local authorities was how to engage with communities beyond “community leaders”, and how to conduct this in a meaningful way. Many community leaders were men of a certain age who all seemed to know each other, leaving women plugged out of these networks. It would be useful to observe case studies of where places have been able to reach women who might not feel connected to any public bodies or community group to hear their views. Sara responded that this was a familiar issue where some men did not want women to be heard or seen but, now was a time for councils to go beyond community leaders and engage with women and people who would make a difference.
- It was noted that on issues such as RSE and teaching, councillors and others need to feel empowered to speak out on issues when necessary, including saying that having the support of lots of people on an issue didn’t make a



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position right. Sara agreed on the importance of giving confidence, training and examples of good practice, and cited the positive role of the local press in Sunderland.

- Members commented that it would be good to look at how local authorities with dedicated prevent officers might work alongside resettlement teams and the benefit of this. How could this be funded?
- Members asked what was being done to educate people about conspiracy theories and how schools could be supported, as reaching young people was critical. Sara replied that schools play a vital role in educating children on conspiracy theories and the curriculum should be modernised to fit the challenges of today's society.
- Members raised concerns that social media amplified extreme far-right views, leading to a breakdown in community cohesion, and created tension between communities. What could be done to bridge the gap between people who are vocally far-right on social media and choose not to vote at local and general elections; it was noted that having a social media tool kit for councillors would be useful. Members also noted the responsible role that politicians and political parties needed to play, including avoiding stoking so called "culture wars".
- Members noted the willingness of communities to engage on issues that matter to them, for example on issues such as knife crime, or housing repairs.
- Sara responded that being able to engage with people on a human level to understand their personal needs, e.g. education, work, housing, helps build trust and strengthen rapport as everyone has these basic needs. She agreed the importance of schools, particularly on issues such as VAWG and developing critical thinking to prevent conspiracy theories spreading. She also agreed that political parties need to take a zero tolerance approach, although this was outside the scope of what she wanted to focus on.

The Chair thanked Sara for her insightful and well detailed presentation.

**Decision:**

Members of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board noted the report.

**Action:**

- Officers to gather members' thoughts on the discussion and share with Sara.

#### **4 Update Paper**

The Chair asked Mark Norris, Principal Policy Advisor, to introduce the report, which outlined issues of interest to the Board not covered under the other items on the agenda. Mark stated that now the shift in focus had moved on from COVID-19 related issues the Board could resume with business as usual. Mark highlighted the following key points in the report:

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- Counter-extremism – broader conversations with government emphasised the need for investment in long-term measures.
- Regulatory services – issues around investment in local authorities and levels of staffing.
- Shisha premises - councils have raised concerns about the lack of effective powers to tackle ongoing nuisance, anti-social behaviour and criminality issues.
- Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill – the Chair had given evidence to the Bill committee highlighting the importance of taking a public health approach to tackling serious violent crime, investing in prevention and early intervention, as well as identifying the risk factors and drivers of youth violence

The Chair drew the Boards attention to the evidence she gave to the House of Commons Public Bill Committee for the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill and the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Domestic Abuse. The Chair emphasised that she used the opportunity to reiterate the Boards position with clear asks from the LGA for local authorities.

Following the discussion, Members made the following comments:

- Members commented that the proposed agreement to increase the permitted number of temporary event notices (TEN) per premises from 15 to 20 per year would impact other regulatory services in terms of more noise complaints.
- Members also warned that an increase in pavement licencing would ause further issues within local authorities facing complaints over obstruction of footways and tables and chairs infringing accessibility. Ellie Greenwood responded that the LGA would be able to put the issues raised by the Board in a letter to the government.
- Members highlighted the issues surrounding unauthorised encampments, the impacts caused for residents and the financial costs for local authorities in dealing with them, and questioned when the new enforcement measures in the PCSC Bill are expected to be passed as legislation. Rachel Phelps responded that the Bill was currently in the House of Commons stage and had only just begun its passage through Parliament.
- On regulatory services, members asked for more information about the work of the regulatory services task and finish group and recognised the issues local authorities were having with recruiting environmental health officers and the high usage of agency staff. Ellie replied that the task and finish group was set by up Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), in which the LGA pushed the government to set up last year to add pressure on environmental health and wider regulatory services. The full report would be shared with the Board once the work stream had reported back to the task and finish group within the coming weeks.

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The Chair concluded the item and asked the Board to note that in relation to paragraph 15, Offensive Weapons Homicide Reviews, the LGA has been invited to join the Home Office's Offensive Weapons Homicide Review Cross-Government design and pilot board. The LGA would provide feedback to Government officials on the reviews and put forward any local government queries or concerns.

**Decision:**

Members of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board noted the report.

**Action:**

- Officers to draft a letter to Ministers setting out concerns about the extension of temporary pavement licensing provisions.
- Officers to include regulatory services into a future agenda item to discuss.

## **5 Queen's Speech**

The Chair introduced the report which provided a summary of the announcements of relevance to the Safer and Stronger Communities Board in the Queen's Speech on Tuesday 11 May.

Mark highlighted the following key points in the Queen's speech that related specifically to the Board which were:

- Building Safety Bill
- Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill
- Animal Welfare Bills
- Online Safety Bill
- Victims Bill
- Criminal Justice catch up and recovery plan (including coroners)
- Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy
- Immigration Plan (including recommendations on modern slavery)
- Regulatory Reform
- Integrated Review

Mark continued that in relation to the legislation around the Action Plan for Animal Welfare, three Bills were expected, of which the Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill and Animal Welfare (Sentience) Bill had already been introduced to Parliament. The plan included a range of proposals in which councils were likely to have a role in enforcing, which was relevant to the discussion members had just had about pressures on regulatory services.

Following the discussion, Members made the following comments:

- Members raised concerns around unlicensed dog breeders and the ability for regulatory services to keep on top of demand. During the COVID lockdown there was an increase in unlicensed breeders and there was a strong link between serious organised crime gangs using puppy sales and theft of animals to fund organised crime.

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- Members commented on the increased sentencing power for assaults on emergency workers and agreed this was a positive step in protecting emergency staff. However, the sentencing guideline council should be asked to look at the sentencing policy as the disposal of these case were usually community penalties or suspended prison sentences, not deterring people to commit such crimes. Mark responded that this particular point has been raised in a number of other areas and that there were increased sentences available to courts but, the sentences were not reflecting the severity of the crime with little account taken into time taken to investigate the case.
- Members welcomed the proposed plans for modern slavery and in particular the proposal for the commitment for Government to clarify its obligations to victims of modern slavery within UK law as soon as possible.
- Members welcomed the Victims Bill but asked how this would be funded, noting that this mustn't be at the expense of detection r. The Chair agreed and replied that there was no clear commitment around additional resources for local government or other public sector organisations that may need the resources to fulfil the legislation and this point had been raised in LGA submissions for various parliamentary committees.

**Decision:**

Members of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board noted the report.

**Action:**

- Officers to consider comments made by members.

## **6 Building Safety update**

The Chair introduced the report which covers on the LGA's building safety related work since its last meeting.

Charles Loft, Senior Advisor informed the Board of the following key points:

- Remediation –
  - Following the recent fire at New Providence Wharf, the interim report showed that the smoke detectors on the 8th floor communal corridor failed to operate both the Automatic Opening Vent (AOV) and the cross-corridor fire doors. The building was first identified as having ACM cladding in September 2017 and work began just after the fire to remove the cladding. In response the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) And LGA are writing jointly to building owners to remind them of their responsibilities
  - The Joint inspection Team has secured funding for another year.
  - The Fire Protection Board's Building Risk Review program has remained on track to ensure all residential buildings over 18m will be assessed or inspected by the end of 2021.
- Reform –

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- The Building Safety Bill was due to be published in June but had been delayed, amidst concern about how to avoid passing costs to leaseholders.
- Fire Safety Act – an online tool that building owners would have to use to prioritise their buildings for fire risk assessments, has been delayed until October.
- Gateway One, developers of residential buildings over 18m would need to provide a Fire Statement and the Health and Safety Executive's Building Safety Regulator would become a statutory consultee on planning, due to commence from August.

Charles updated the Board on the following point since the report was produced:

- The government was consulting on building safety standards for schools and planning to remove the requirement for sprinklers to be installed in all new schools.
- The government has launched the consultation of personal emergency evacuation plans, looked at how to evacuate people that need assistance from relevant buildings.
- The LGA is putting together a training programme for councils/councillors on their obligations as landlords, incorporating the lessons from the Grenfell fire.

**Decision:**

Members of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board noted the report.

**7 Safer and Stronger Communities End of Year Report 2020/21 and 2021/22 work plan**

The Chair introduced the Safer and Stronger Communities end of year report, including initial proposals for the 2021/22 work plan.

Mark informed the Board that as this was the last meeting in the cycle of the year and that Board meetings would resume in September officers were looking to set priorities for the Boards work programme for 2021/22.

Mark stated that the new Board cycle of workstream would include the following:

- Prevent, counter-extremism and cohesion
- Community Safety
- Blue light services and civil resilience
- Licensing and regulation
- Building Safety
- Crematoria, coroners and registrars

Following the brief discussion, Members made the following comments:

- Members praised the work undertaken during the course of the year.
- Members commented they wished to explore issues regarding speeding and community safety, as there was a lack of enforcement powers for local authorities. Mark responded that this was an issue the police led on rather than councils, but recognised it is an issue that many councils were facing.

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- Members raised that another area of interest would be how to tackle the grip criminal drug gangs have in communities, with around 80% of young people youth teams work with having some links to gangs. The Chair replied that this linked to county lines which the Board and the LGA have worked on and there already was a good co-ordinated approach nationally on county lines work. Mark added that this issue fits within existing strands of work by the Board and with Children and Young People Board.
- Members asked to focus on the overall resilience of councils community safety work.
- The importance of linking up with the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners was noted. Members highlighted work to support PCPs in their scrutiny of PCCs, and opposition to mandatory transfers of fire governance to PCCs.
- Ongoing work around water safety and the outcome of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency review was also highlighted.

The Chair concluded the item and brought the meeting to a close.

**Decision:**

Members of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board noted the report.

**Date of the next meeting:** Tuesday, 21 September 2021, 11.00 am, TBC

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**Appendix A – Attendance**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Authority</b>	
Chair	Cllr Nesil Caliskan	London Borough of Enfield
Vice Chairman	Cllr Katrina Wood	Buckinghamshire County Council
Deputy Chair	Cllr Bridget Smith	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Deputy Chair	Cllr Hannah Dalton	Epsom and Ewell Borough Council
Committee Member	Cllr Eric Allen	London Borough of Sutton
	Cllr Mohan Iyengar	Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council
	Cllr Andrew Joy	Hampshire County Council
	Cllr Lois Samuel	West Devon Borough Council
	Cllr Alan Rhodes	Bassetlaw District Council
	Mayor Damien Egan	Lewisham London Borough Council
	Cllr James Dawson	Erewash Borough Council
	Cllr Farah Hussain	Redbridge London Borough Council
	Cllr Jeremy Hilton	Gloucestershire County Council
	Cllr Philip Evans JP	Conwy County Borough Council
Apologies	Cllr Johnson Situ	Southwark Council
Substitutes	Cllr Jo Beavis	
	Cllr Jeanie Bell	
	Cllr Tim Roca	
	Cllr Nicola Dillon Jones	
	Cllr James Gartside	
	Cllr Daniel Francis	
	Cllr Paul Findlow	
LGA Officers	Mark Norris	
	Ellie Greenwood	
	Lucy Ellender	
	Charles Loft	
	Rachel Duke	
	Rachel Phelps	
	Rachel Aldridge	
	Jade Hall	
	Joe Difford	
	Tahmina Akther	

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In attendance

Sara Khan  
Jane Farrington

Social Cohesion and Resilience  
Social Cohesion and Resilience

Press

Dan Peters

Municipal Journal



## **Safer and Stronger Communities Board 2021/22: Terms of Reference, Membership and Board Champions**

### **Purpose of report**

For information and approval.

### **Summary**

This report sets out how the Safer and Stronger Communities Board operates and how the LGA works to support the objectives and work of its member authorities.

Members are asked to note the Board's membership and agree its Terms of Reference and nominations to Outside Bodies for the 2021/22 year.

### **Recommendations**

That the Safer and Stronger Communities Board:

- i. agrees its Terms of Reference (**Appendix A**);
- ii. formally notes the membership for 2019/20 (**Appendix B**);
- iii. notes the dates of the future meetings (**Appendix C**); and
- iv. reviews and appoints member champions (**Appendix D**).
- v. that the Board identify a member to be the Equalities Advocate for the Board

### **Action**

Any actions will be undertaken, as directed by Members.

#### **Contact officer:**

Tahmina Akther

#### **Position:**

Member Services Assistant

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[Tahmina.akther@local.gov.uk](mailto:Tahmina.akther@local.gov.uk)

## **Safer and Stronger Communities Board 2021/22: Terms of Reference, Membership and Appointments to Outside Bodies**

### **Background**

1. The LGA's Boards seek to lead the agenda for local government on the key challenges and issues within their remit and support the overall objectives of the organisation as set out in the [LGA's Business Plan](#).
2. They take an active role in helping to shape the Association's business plan through extensive engagement with councils and oversight of the programmes of work that deliver these strategic priorities.

### **2020/21 Terms of reference and membership**

3. The Safer and Stronger Communities Board's Terms of Reference, Membership and future meetings dates are set out at **Appendix A, B** and **C** respectively for agreement and noting.

### **Safer and Stronger Communities Board Lead Members**

4. The LGA seeks where possible to work on the basis of consensus across all four groups. The Safer and Stronger Communities Board is politically balanced, and led by the Chair and three Vice/Deputy Chairs, drawn from each of the four political groups. This grouping of members – known as Lead Members – meet in between Board meetings, shape future meeting agendas, provide clearance on time sensitive matters, represent the Board at external events, meetings and in the media, as well as engaging with the wider Board to ensure your views are represented.
5. The Lead Members for 2021/22 are:
  - 5.1 Cllr Nesil Caliskan, Chair
  - 5.2 Cllr Mohan Iyengar, Vice-Chairman
  - 5.3 Cllr Heather Kidd, Deputy Chair
  - 5.4 Cllr Clive Woodbridge, Deputy Chair

### **The Safer and Stronger Communities team**

6. The Board is supported by a cross cutting team of LGA officers, with policy colleagues and a designated Member Services Officer being those who you are likely to have regular contact with.
7. The Safer and Stronger Communities team supports the LGA's work on the Board's priorities, and also a number of other issues which are within the Board's remit. The team works with Board Members, the LGA media team and political groups to maintain local

government's reputation on community safety issues in the media, directs our lobbying work (according to Members' steer) in conjunction with the Parliamentary affairs team, and works collaboratively with other Boards across relevant cross cutting policy and improvement issues.

8. The team supports Members in person or by briefing when they represent the LGA on external speaking platforms or at Ministerial or Whitehall events. We will provide briefing notes and/or suggested speaking notes as required in advance of each engagement.
9. The team also participate in a number of officer working groups and programme boards, representing the sector's interests and putting forward the LGA's agreed policy positions.

### **Communications and Events**

10. There are a number of internal and external communications channels available to help the Safer and Stronger Communities Board promote the work it is doing and to seek views from our member authorities.
11. The team arranges regular conferences (currently in webinar format), with the following sessions currently planned and are others likely to be scheduled over the course of the year:
  - 11.1 7 October 2021 - Tackling domestic abuse perpetrators
  - 11.2 2 and 10 November – Modern Slavery sessions
  - 11.3 3 November 2021 – Taxi and PHV Licensing
  - 11.4 8 February 2022– Annual Licensing conference
  - 11.5 14-16 March 2022 – Annual Fire Conference and Exhibition
12. We also have a dedicated section on the LGA website, monthly e-bulletins, outside speaking engagements and interviews, advisory networks, features and news items in First magazine as well as twitter accounts which are used to keep in touch with our members.

### **Safer and Stronger Communities Board outside body appointments**

13. The LGA benefits from a wide network of member representatives on outside bodies. These appointments are reviewed on an annual basis across the Association to ensure that the aims and objectives of the outside bodies remain pertinent to the LGA and accurately reflect its priorities. Appointments should as far as possible be made in proportion with political representation across the LGA; as an LGA representative. Members appointed to these roles should speak for the Association, and not one particular political Group.
14. At the current time, there are no standing outside body appointments for the Board to appoint to, although some individual champion roles may include participation in task and finish pieces of work or one-off meetings.
15. In the event that a Board member is required to represent the LGA on an outside body, officers will liaise with lead members to ensure a nominee from the Board is identified. In

these circumstances, Members appointed to represent the LGA on an outside body are asked to provide regular feedback, either through the Board meetings, or alternative mechanisms.

### **Member Champions**

16. For 2021/2022 the following member champion roles have been approved by the lead members. Political groups are asked to agree their nominations for these roles in their pre-meetings:

- 16.1 Domestic abuse/Violence Against Women and Girls
- 16.2 Modern slavery
- 16.3 Prevent, counter-extremism and cohesion
- 16.4 Licensing and regulatory services
- 16.5 Drowning prevention

17. A role description for member champions is set out at **Appendix D**. The Board is requested to review the current areas covered by member champions and consider whether these should continue, or whether different areas need to be addressed.

18. As the Board's work programme develops through the year, there will of course be scope to bring in members to specific aspects of this as required and to create new champion roles if needed as work progresses.

### **Equalities Advocate**

19. This year the Executive Advisory Board have asked each Board to identify a member to be an Equalities Advocate within each Board to raise the profile of any equalities issues within that Board's workstream. The advocates will work together to coordinate the messaging across the organisation and to report back to the Executive Advisory Board.

20. For 2020/2021 the Board's Equalities Advocate was the Chair of the Board; it is proposed that this should continue.

### **Financial Implications**

21. There are no substantial financial implications arising directly from this report. Reasonable travel and subsistence costs will be paid by the LGA for expenses incurred by a member appointee, whilst carrying out a representative role on an outside body on behalf of the LGA.

## **Appendix A – Terms of Reference for the Safer and Stronger Communities Board**

1. The purpose of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board is to provide strategic oversight of all the LGA's policy, regulatory and improvement activity in the promotion of the safety of local communities, including issues of crime and anti-social behaviour, policing, licensing, and emergency planning – in line with LGA priorities.
2. The Board will also have responsibility for LGA activity in relation to fire and rescue authority issues where the issues are of a cross-cutting nature or involve the setting of a new LGA policy. On such matters the Board may choose to seek recommendations or guidance from the Fire Services Management Committee, and from time to time may be requested by the Committee to consider recommendations on such matters.
3. Boards should seek to involve councillors in supporting the delivery of these priorities (through task groups, Special Interest Groups (SIGs), regional networks and other means of wider engagement); essentially operating as the centre of a network connecting to all councils and drawing on the expertise of key advisors from the sector.
4. The Safer and Stronger Communities Board will be responsible for:
  - 4.1 Ensuring the priorities of councils are fed into the business planning process.
  - 4.2 Developing a work programme to deliver their brief, covering lobbying, campaigns, research, improvement support in the context of the strategic framework set by Improvement & Innovation Board and events and linking with other boards where appropriate.
  - 4.3 Sharing good practice and ideas to stimulate innovation and improvement.
  - 4.4 Representing and lobbying on behalf of the LGA, including making public statements on its areas of responsibility.
  - 4.5 Building and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders.
  - 4.6 Involving representatives from councils in its work, through task groups, SIGs, regional networks and mechanisms.
  - 4.7 Responding to specific issues referred to the Board by one or more member councils or groupings of councils.
5. The Safer and Stronger Communities Board may:
  - 5.1 Appoint members to relevant outside bodies in accordance with the Political Conventions.
  - 5.2 Appoint member champions from the Board to lead on key issues.

21 September 2021

**Quorum**

6. One third of the members, provided that representatives of at least 2 political groups represented on the body are present.

**Political Composition**

Conservative group	7 members
Labour group:	7 members
Liberal Democrat group	2 members
Independent group	2 members

7. Substitute members from each political group may also be appointed.

**Frequency per year**

8. Meetings to be held five times per annum.

**Reporting Accountabilities**

9. The LGA Executive provides oversight of the Board. The Board may report periodically to the LGA Executive as required, and will submit an annual report to the Executive's July meeting.

**Appendix B – Safer and Stronger Communities Board Membership  
2021/22**

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Authority</b>
<b>Conservative (7)</b>	
Cllr Mohan Iyengar (Vice-Chairman) *	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Council
Cllr Eric Allen	London Borough of Sutton
Cllr Bill Borrett *	Norfolk County Council
Cllr Lewis Cocking *	Broxbourne Borough Council
Cllr Julia Lepoidevin *	Coventry City Council
Cllr Lois Samuel	West Devon Borough Council
Cllr Arnold Saunders *	City of Salford
<b>Substitutes</b>	
Cllr Graeme Coombes **	Bedford Borough Council
Cllr James Gartside	Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Paul Findlow	Cheshire East Council
<b>Labour (7)</b>	
Cllr Nesil Caliskan (Chair)	London Borough of Enfield
Cllr Asher Craig *	Bristol City Council
Cllr Alan Rhodes	Bassetlaw District Council
Mayor Damien Egan	Lewisham London Borough Council
Cllr James Dawson	Erewash Borough Council
Cllr Jeanie Bell *	St Helens Council

Cllr James Beckles *	Newham London Borough Council
<b><i>Substitutes</i></b>	
Cllr Kaya Comer-Schwartz **	Islington Council
Cllr Margaret Mullane **	Barking and Dagenham London Borough Council
Cllr Clive Johnson **	Medway Council
<b>Liberal Democrat (2)</b>	
Cllr Heather Kidd (Deputy Chair) *	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Cllr Jon Ball	Ealing Council
<b><i>Substitute</i></b>	
Cllr Kris Brown **	Liverpool City Council
<b>Independent (2)</b>	
Cllr Clive Woodbridge (Deputy Chair) *	Epsom and Ewell Borough Council
Cllr Philip Evans JP	Conwy County Borough Council
<b><i>Substitutes</i></b>	
Cllr Nicola Dillon Jones	North Kesteven District Council
Cllr Karen Lucioni **	Isle of Wight Council
Cllr Paul Hillard **	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Council

\*New Member

\*\*New Substitute



Company Number 11177145

**Appendix C – List of Future Safer and Stronger Communities Board Meetings for 2021/22**

1. Future meetings of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board will be held on:
  - 1.1 Tuesday 21 September 2021;
  - 1.2 Thursday 11 November 2021;
  - 1.3 Thursday 20 January 2022;
  - 1.4 Thursday 24 March 2022; and
  - 1.5 Thursday 16 June 2022.
2. The first two Board meetings will be held in Westminster Room, 8<sup>th</sup> floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ. The following Board meetings will be held in Smith Square 3 & 4, Ground floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ. You may wish to attend Board meetings in person or virtually via Microsoft Teams.



## **Appendix D - Board Member Champions Role Description**

1. Board member champions, and support member champions, where required, take responsibility for a specified subject area or programme and act as spokesperson. This is in addition to any formal role representing the LGA on outside bodies.

### **Accountabilities**

2. To be the main spokesperson for the LGA Safer and Stronger Communities Board (SSCB) in relation to a specified subject area or programme, including writing articles and making speeches at appropriate events.
3. To keep abreast of developments locally and nationally in relation to a specified subject area or programme.
4. To attend residential conferences and other events initiated by the board, leading and chairing sessions as required.
5. To engage actively with councils and groupings of councils to secure the views and involvement of the wider membership to inform the board's specific policy line on the specialist subject.
6. To communicate back to the wider membership the work and successes of the board in relation to the specified subject or programme area.
7. To lead/participate in task and finish groups set up to look in more detail at the specific areas of policy.
8. To be the principal representative of the Board on that subject area or programme at meetings with partner bodies and other key decision-makers.

### **Knowledge and Experience**

9. Member champions may be portfolio holders for that policy area in their home authorities or have experience/knowledge of, and special interest and commitment to, the policy area.

### **Appointment and support**

10. The expectation is that the Board will review these roles at the start of the Board cycle every September, along with formal appointments to outside bodies.



## **Safer and Stronger Communities Board Overview Paper and Policy Priorities for 2021-22**

### **Purpose of report**

For information.

### **Summary**

This paper provides an overview of the issues the Board has focused on in recent years, alongside proposals for the Safer and Stronger Communities Board's (SSCB) work programme for 2021-22 and the member champion roles to support this. The proposals are based on corporate LGA priorities and options for broader work based on a continuation of ongoing work (including responding to recent policy announcements by Government) and areas of interest previously indicated by Board members.

### **Recommendation**

That the Board approve the draft work programme

### **Action**

Officers to take forward the work programme as approved.

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

## **Safer and Stronger Communities Board Overview Paper and Policy Priorities for 2021-22**

### **Background**

1. At the first meeting of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board (SSCB), members are asked to consider the policy priorities for the work programme for the coming year.
2. This paper provides an overview of the current status of the key issues that the Board's work programme has focused on in recent years, along with the proposed high-level priorities for each of the key thematic work areas for the Board for 2021/2022. The work programme takes account of feedback and suggestions provided by Board members at the meeting in June 2021.
3. The LGA's business plan for 2019-2022 sets out a range of cross-cutting LGA priorities which the work programmes of individual Boards should contribute to:
  - 3.1 Funding for local government
  - 3.2 Adult social care, health and wellbeing
  - 3.3 Narrowing inequalities and protecting communities
  - 3.4 Children, education and schools
  - 3.5 Places to live and work
  - 3.6 Strong local democracy
  - 3.7 Sustainability and climate action
  - 3.8 Supporting councils.
4. The LGA's business plan is currently being updated for the current year, but as last year, the SSCB's activities will fall within the narrowing inequalities and protecting communities and the places for people to live and work objectives. The business plan includes the following broad priorities to help the Board develop its annual work plan:

Narrowing inequalities and protecting communities	<p>Councils lead the way in shaping communities where people feel safe - we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead the debate on councils' role in building safer and resilient communities and support them to reduce serious violence, domestic abuse, female genital mutilation and anti-social behaviour.</li> <li>• Provide council input to the development of the new modern slavery strategy, as we work collaboratively with partners to raise awareness and support councils to tackle this issue.</li> <li>• Contribute to the independent review of Prevent, reflect councils' views in the development of the new hate crime strategy and a new Protect duty, and ensure that councils are supported to build community cohesion, promote integration, tackle extremism and deliver the Prevent duty.</li> </ul>
Narrowing inequalities and protecting communities	<p>Councils continue to play a leading role in the design and delivery of blue light and other services that help protect local communities – we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the HSE and government to establish an effective, professional and fully funded system for regulating building safety.</li> <li>• Lobby for sustainable funding for fire and rescue authorities and support them to become more inclusive and representative of their communities and to strengthen their leadership and governance.</li> <li>• Support the fire and rescue sector's response to Phase 1 of the Grenfell Inquiry and strengthen their ability to take forward the fire reform agenda and the findings from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire &amp; Rescue Services (HMICFRS).</li> <li>• Support police and crime panels and share best practice.</li> <li>• Work with councils to review and share learning from COVID-19, to help strengthen community resilience and future emergency responses.</li> </ul>
Places to live and work	<p>Councils continue to drive higher safety standards across the housing sector – we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with government and councils to identify high-risk, high-rise residential buildings and lobby for support for councils to make changes and take urgent remedial action.</li> <li>• Respond to government consultations, including on the new building safety regulatory framework.</li> </ul>
Places to live and work	<p>Councils support strong communities through risk-based business-friendly regulatory services – we will:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Press for powers and resources where councils take on additional legal liabilities such as building regulations post-Grenfell and proposed new air quality requirements.</li> <li>• Support councils to demonstrate the value of regulatory services, take steps to increase service resilience and make the case for sustainable funding mechanisms.</li> <li>• Develop tools to support councils to strengthen local licensing processes, and lobby government to address key licensing issues including outdated taxi legislation and nationally set fees.</li> </ul>
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5. As in previous years, it is proposed that the SSCB work programme should focus on the following broad areas of activity:

- 5.1 Community safety
- 5.2 Blue light services, civil resilience and water safety
- 5.3 Prevent, counter extremism and cohesion
- 5.4 Regulatory services and licensing
- 5.5 Crematoria, funerals, coroners and registrars
- 5.6 Building safety

6. The following sections of this report summarise current issues in these areas, and suggested areas of work for 2021/2022. In some areas this will be a continuation of work that began in 2020/2021, or needs to be carried over where COVID activity reduced the capacity available to deliver the work.

### **Community safety**

7. Our community safety work includes a broad range of activity. Tackling **domestic abuse and violence against women and girls** (VAWG) has been one of the Board's main priorities, with a particular focus on the new Domestic Abuse Act as it passed through Parliament. With the Act now in force, a key task is to support councils with implementation, as they develop domestic abuse strategies for their areas, operate local domestic abuse partnership boards and implement the new duty for accommodation-based support services, as well as to promote best practice work more generally. We will also continue to make the case for increased investment in early intervention and prevention services, including domestic abuse perpetrator programmes, with the ultimate aim of helping to eliminate domestic abuse from occurring at all. The LGA will continue to work with the Domestic Abuse Commissioner's Office and remain active members of the Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Group which is led by the Commissioner's office.

8. The Government's current work to update its VAWG strategy is clearly linked to the domestic abuse work, and we will be pushing to ensure there is appropriate coordination between the two and across different government departments. Whilst the announcement



of a Safety of Women at Night Fund was welcome, we have emphasised the VAWG strategy must be matched with adequate resources and long-term funding, in order to ensure that we effectively tackle violence against women and girls.

9. Another ongoing focus for the LGA has been **serious violent crime**, including county lines and the close link to young people/youth services. Alongside continuing to share learning and best practice, our focus in this area will be the new duty proposed in the Policing, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill for public bodies to tackle serious violence, and ensuring that councils are properly funded to take the holistic approach to this issue that is required. We will continue to push for an extension of funding for Violence Reduction Units for all areas, and to make clear the need for links across the community safety landscape. We have also recently begun discussions with Solace, the Home Office and National Police Chiefs Council to discuss local government's role in tackling serious organised crime. We will be looking to share good practice on this, and also pushing to ensure appropriate join up between strategies to tackle serious and organised crime, serious violent crime and wider community safety work, given the intrinsic link between them all.
10. Our community safety work also focuses on wider community safety issues such as **anti-social behaviour** (ASB) recognising that these are serious issues for residents and businesses. We have been working to share best practice work on ASB, as well as to promote councils' understanding of the community trigger process to improve the response victims receive from local partners. As well as continuing to engage with the Home Office's ASB structures, we also expect to focus in the coming year on the Ministry of Justice's review of victim support services and victim's law reforms. At the current time, we understand the draft Bill will focus on a narrow definition of victims and is primarily focusing on victims of domestic abuse, sexual violence and serious violence, which could risk not only duplicating recent work through the Domestic Abuse Act and VAWG but also excludes other groups such as victims of modern slavery.
11. On **modern slavery**, we hope to further increase our work following the need to pause this during COVID. We aim to continue the awareness raising events started in summer, with a particular focusing on areas where we know improvements could be made, including housing and homelessness, making National Referral Mechanism referrals and partnership working. We will be working with the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner's office to update our joint council guide on modern slavery, while colleagues in the LGA's commissioning team will continue to support councils' developing work to eradicate slavery from their supply chains.
12. We will also be contributing to the Home Office's development of a new modern slavery strategy, which is an opportunity to highlight the need for additional funding to support growing numbers of modern slavery victims, an issue that will only increase as awareness increases and councils identify more victims. We will also monitor the pilot of localised decision making for child victims of modern slavery launched in summer.

13. On **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities**, we continue to await the Government's national strategy to tackle entrenched inequality and improve the lives of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. We will continue to liaise with the Government and councils about support for the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community and, with stronger police powers to tackle unauthorised encampments included within the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, will continue work to share good practice on dealing with unauthorised encampments.
14. In 2015, the LGA and the children's charity Barnardo's established the **National Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Centre**. The Centre was originally funded through the Department for Education, and has a vision is to keep children and young people safe from FGM, breast flattening and Child Abuse Linked to Faith and Belief (CALFB), including an aim to end new cases of FGM by 2030. The LGA ran the Centre's Advisory Board which was chaired by an LGA member and involved police, health, social care, education and legal representatives; however, the Board has largely been in abeyance over the past year due to discussions about future funding of the Centre, following the end of the DfE grant.
15. Following a long period of uncertainty about the Centre's future, Barnardo's has now been offered funding that would enable the Centre to continue in operation on a reduced basis. Discussions are currently underway with Barnardo's on the future LGA involvement with the National FGM Centre, but we will continue to make the case to government for further investment in the Centre to support councils to tackle FGM.
16. Proposed priorities for 2021/2022:
  - 16.1 Engage with the Government on the forthcoming Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2021 – 2024 and continue to lobby for increased investment in VAWG services - as well as the Domestic Abuse strategy. Highlight the role played by pornography in fuelling domestic abuse and VAWG.
  - 16.2 Support councils to implement the duties in the recent Domestic Abuse Act.
  - 16.3 Continue to lobby Government on the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, including ensuring the proposed new statutory duty to tackle serious violent crime is fully funded by Government. Also, engage with the forthcoming Draft Victims Bill.
  - 16.4 Share best practice work to tackle Serious and Organised Crime and promote an approach bringing together work on SOC, serious violence and other neighbourhood crime issues.
  - 16.5 Provide support to councils responding to unauthorised encampments and work with LGA Boards to inform our response on Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities.
  - 16.6 Take forward work delayed from 2020/2021 looking at resilience in community safety issues.
  - 16.7 Develop a programme of work to support councils on tackling modern slavery.
  - 16.8 Host a range of webinars and events for councils on community safety issues.

16.9 Continue to make the case to government for funding for the National FGM Centre.

**Blue light services, civil resilience and water safety**

17. On **police and crime panels**, our main area of activity will be engaging with the review of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) launched in July 2020 and the measures proposed by the review to strengthen the role of panels. Part 2 of the review is now looking at further ways to strengthen and expand the role of PCCs, including ensuring they have the tools and levers to fight crime, drugs misuse and anti-social behaviour. The review will also assess the role of PCCs in offender management and local partnerships, including their role in the Community Trigger. It also seeks views on how support to police and crime panels can be strengthened. We will respond to the Home Office's call for evidence to Part 2 of the review.
18. The independent review of the legal framework for beach safety commissioned by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) has been a major area of focus in our work on drowning prevention and **water safety**. With the majority of respondents to a National Water Safety Forum (NWSF) consultation on the MCA recommendations supporting recommendations that the LGA opposed, we have raised our concerns about the MCA proposal for a new duty, at Ministerial level. We will continue to make the case for alternative approaches to improving beach safety, as well as promoting the LGA's toolkit on this.
19. On **civil resilience issues**, our focus will be on influencing the development of the new national resilience strategy, including a review of the Civil Contingencies Act. The government is exploring how changes to the Act might incorporate the role of local elected members, and we want to work with the Government to ensure that the role of members is formally built into the Act but in a way which allows local areas to develop the structures that work best for them (recognising the very different footprints of local resilience forums). Another theme within the strategy is the development of a whole society approach to resilience, and we are supporting a cross-LRF funding bid to support a programme of work identifying what this means in practice.
20. The Board has previously expressed an interest in identifying the learning from COVID-19 about what works in developing community resilience structures. This is an issue that the government and VCS are also interested in, and which forms part (but not the totality) of a whole society approach to resilience. We are working with partners including the VCS Emergency Partnership and British Red Cross to identify the most effective role for the LGA to play in this space.
21. The Fire Services Management Committee leads the LGA's work on **fire safety**, with the Fire Commission providing a forum for fire and rescue authorities to discuss issues facing

the sector. The Fire Services Management Committee sits under the Safer and Stronger Communities Board.

22. Key issues for the Committee over the last year have been building safety, inclusion and learning from the first round of fire services inspections undertaken by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS). A number of key issues were also identified by the Committee including the Spending Review, transparency and standards, workforce development and HMICFRS's review of fire and rescue services' response to the pandemic, which included suggestions for reform of the national negotiating structures for pay and terms and conditions that the LGA currently supports in its role providing the secretariat to the national employers. The Committee has also had a significant interest in Part 1 of the PCC Review as this looked at the future of fire governance. The Home Office announced earlier this year that they would be consulting on proposals to transfer governance of fire and rescue services from the current Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) to Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners (PFCCs).
23. The Fire Commission will discuss the priorities for the coming year at their meeting in September 2020 which will then be discussed at the FSMC in October 2021. It is expected that the previous priorities and key issues will continue to be areas of focus with the addition of the forthcoming Fire Reform White Paper which will set out the Home Office's proposals on the transfer of governance of fire and rescue services to PFCCs.
24. Proposed priorities for 2021/2022:
  - 24.1 Respond to the Home Office call for evidence to Part 2 of the PCC Review and continues to support police and crime panels in their role of scrutinising PCCs.
  - 24.2 Continue to make the case for alternative means of improving beach safety to the measures suggested in the MCA review, and promote the LGA's water safety toolkit.
  - 24.3 Work the government to identify the most effective mechanisms for formalising member engagement in local civil resilience structures under the Civil Contingencies Act.
  - 24.4 Support work to broaden councils' understanding of effective community resilience structures and a whole society approach to resilience.
  - 24.5 Respond to the Fire Reform White Paper, in particular its proposals on changes in fire governance, continue to work with the Home Office and National Fire Chiefs Council around the Spending Review, assist FRAs implement the new building safety regime, support FRAs to respond to HMICFRS inspections and reports, assist services make their workforces more inclusive and input to new standards for the sector.

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

25. This strand of the Board's work covers counter-terrorism (particularly in delivering the Prevent duty, under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015), counter-extremism,

and building community cohesion. These can be particularly sensitive areas of work, and present a range of challenges for local government, which continue to evolve.

26. The pandemic saw the emergence of a number of extremism and cohesion issues and we anticipate that the post-COVID period will present new opportunities for extremists to exploit. Much of our work to support councils in response has been coordinated in partnership with the Special Interest Group on Countering Extremism (SIGCE); a local authority led network chaired by Leeds and Luton Councils which seeks to provide guidance, and develop and share good practice in countering extremism across councils in England and Wales. The LGA has been funding the SIGCE's work since last autumn, and has recently agreed to continue to fund the network until March 2022.
27. In the counter-terrorism space, the independent review of Prevent will conclude shortly and we expect a government response on the findings by the end of the 2021. The government has also recently concluded a consultation on a new Protect duty to increase security in publicly accessible locations, which will have a number of implications for councils, and we anticipate a government response over the autumn.
28. Proposed priorities for 2021/2022:
- 28.1 Lobby for further central government funding for the SIGCE's future.
  - 28.2 Support councils through a series of ongoing roundtables, webinars, case studies, training, KHub facilitation and bespoke support to councils facing specific current extremism challenges.
  - 28.3 Facilitate regional elected member networks in the North of England and East of England.
  - 28.4 Continue to support SIGCE working groups focussing on Far-Right extremism and "Islamist" faith-based extremism respectively, including trialling and evaluating community engagement initiatives in local areas with predominantly white-British communities.
  - 28.5 Ensure that local government's voice is heard as central government policy and delivery of counter-terrorism and counter-extremism measures is developed, and look to support councils to understand any changes as they are introduced - including the outcomes from the Prevent review, legislation and preparation for a new Protect duty and improving security, a new hate crime strategy, responding to a call for evidence on social cohesion and resilience, and relevant aspects of new measures to tackle online harms.

### **Regulatory services and licensing**

29. Our work on regulatory services has tended to be at a strategic rather than technical level, with a particular focus on highlighting that councils' regulatory services are becoming dangerously stretched as a result of cuts to local government funding. We have called for more funding and for a more thoughtful and coordinated approach to how government allocates new enforcement responsibilities, which are invariably passed to councils with

little consideration of the existing pressures on the service. However, it has been challenging to get this issue on the agenda given the many competing pressures that councils are facing.

30. Both EU exit and COVID have helped to illustrate the issue, with both local and national government turning to regulatory services as a key delivery arm in the response. During COVID, we have put more capacity into our work on regulatory services than in previous years; firstly, to support councils on COVID issues, but also to lobby for and subsequently support the work of a cross-government task and finish group focusing on regulatory services. The group recommended the creation of a fund to support regulatory apprentices; the establishment of a central government team tasked with maintaining a cross government view of the asks on services; and reviewed cost recovery mechanisms for the services, although the Government was not willing at this time to make changes.
31. Although our work on regulatory services is likely to reduce with the ending of COVID compliance work, we want to continue to make the case for new measures to bring additional resources into the services. We will also be working the professional bodies the Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI) and Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) to look at what support can be provided to increase the resilience of services. Finally, we will also work MHCLG and other government departments to seek to improve the policy development and new burdens process relating to new enforcement responsibilities.

## **Licensing**

32. The existing licensing governing the taxi and private hire vehicle (PHV) sector is outdated and needs substantial reform. We continue to lobby for the introduction of new Taxi and Private Hire Bill to modernise the licensing system for taxis and PHVs, improve passenger safety and create a level playing field for drivers for several years.
33. Although the Department for Transport is in principle still committed to this, it has yet to be included with the Government's legislative programme, so we are equally focused on supporting councils to take the steps they can to strengthen local taxi licensing. We set up the National Register of Revocations and Refusals (NR3) to share information on drivers who had had licences revoked to prevent them securing licences elsewhere and continue to promote use of this. We are also supporting councils to implement [new statutory standards on taxi and PHV licensing](#) published in July 2020, which should will go some way to improving consistency across the country, and are expecting updated best practice guidance shortly. We have updated our councillor handbook on taxi licensing and will be running a webinar on this later in the year.
34. On other licensing, the LGA has a number of longstanding policy asks which we are keen to resurrect as a result of developments over the past year:

- 34.1 the case for health as a licensing objective has been illustrated by COVID, as it would enable councils to address public health issues within the main framework for regulating licensed premises;
- 34.2 the need for an increase in licence fees is becoming greater, as services become more and more stretched and the gap between fees and costs widens. Our regulatory services spending review submission recognises the reluctance to increase fees now, given the challenges businesses have experienced, but urges the government to begin work now to prepare for future changes.
- 34.3 Finally, the LGA has previously called for a programme of licensing reform to streamline overlapping and outdated licensing frameworks. The Government is looking to permanently change the pavement licensing regime following temporary amendments to support businesses during COVID; we are highlighting what is needed to make a new system workable for councils while also looking at related legislation.

**35. Proposed priorities for 2021/2022:**

- 35.1 Lobby government to begin work on fees and funding mechanisms for regulatory services and look at other options to increase the resilience of the service.
- 35.2 Support councils to implement new statutory standards for taxi and private hire, including use of the NR3.
- 35.3 Contribute to the Government's review of the Gambling Act 2005 to ensure council priorities for gambling premises are addressed.
- 35.4 Contribute to the development of a reformed pavement licensing system and ensure that local concerns about noise and other issues can be addressed.
- 35.5 Promote the value of implementing health as a licensing objective.
- 35.6 Develop new training materials for licensing committees, including a further Leadership Essentials course for Chairs and Vice-Chairs of licensing committees, following a successful pilot course in early 2020.

**Crematoria, funerals, coroners and registrars**

- 36. Bereavement services have been a key part of the response to COVID-19 with a number of changes being introduced as a result of the outbreak though the Coronavirus Act 2020 and other guidance. Our focus has been on providing support to councils in their COVID-19 response, representing councils' interests to Government and providing resources for councils to draw upon. There have been some positives for these services with the introduction of telephone registration for deaths and we would like to see this expanded into other registrar services, such as birth registration.
- 37. Prior to COVID-19, our work was focussed on funeral pricing in local areas. The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) conducted a market study into the costs of funerals, looking particularly at crematoria costs (many crematoria are run by local authorities). The LGA contributed to the study providing a response on their proposed

remedies, which included introducing price controls for funeral directors and crematoria and local authority tendering for a low-cost funeral service.

38. Their study has been significantly affected by COVID-19, including the proposed remedies for the market. The CMA has now released its provisional decision report, which includes a commitment to publish an annual review of revenues and sales volumes, which include local authority crematoria. This would mean crematoria would also be required to publish price information to ensure that people can access and assess prices for services. They have said that these proposed activities would hold the door open to price controls in the future when the circumstances created by the pandemic change to allow these to be considered.

39. Proposed priorities for 2021/2022

39.1 Lobby for further flexibilities for registration services.

39.2 Continue to engage with the CMA on their work and respond to media enquiries around the cost of funerals.

**Building safety**

40. Since the Grenfell Tower fire in June 2017 a significant workstream for the safer communities team has been improving building safety, an issue that the Grenfell Task and Finish Group and FSMC and the EEHT have an interest in alongside the Board. Over the last four years the LGA has been successful in lobbying for and securing changes to building regulations so that combustible materials are banned from being used in buildings over 18 metres in height, the 45 councils with high-rise residential buildings with aluminium composite material (ACM) cladding systems have received funding to remove it, and the creation of a building safety fund to allow private high-rise residential buildings to be remediated. We have also shaped the recommendations from Dame Judith Hackitt's review of building regulations and fire safety and been closely involved in the development of the legislation to implement the new building safety regime she recommended.

41. The Building Safety Bill published earlier this summer provides on paper the strong regulatory framework needed to improve building safety. However key aspects of the new regime will be set out in secondary legislation, which has yet to be drafted and getting this right will be important to the overall success of the new regime. There remain a number of areas of the future framework that in our view have not been satisfactorily addressed in the Bill, including:

- 41.1 the costs of remediation to leaseholders and social landlords
- 41.2 operational costs to councils as landlords (on top of the costs imposed by fire safety reform)
- 41.3 clarity over accountability (in particular where councils oversee Arms Length Management Organisations) under the Bill
- 41.4 the scope of the new high-risk regime in the Bill and the speed with which additional buildings can be brought into its remit



- 41.5 the charging provisions in the Bill to pay for enforcement activity by councils' building control teams and Fire and Rescue Services
  - 41.6 the details of and funding for the product safety system
  - 41.7 the failure to end competition in building control
  - 41.8 the possibility that the developer levy could be imposed on councils.
42. As the Bill begins its Parliamentary passage the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) which will become the new building safety regulator, which is a key provision in the draft legislation, is in the process of establishing the regulatory body in shadow form. The HSE team leading this work recognise how dependent the new regulator will be on a close working relationship with councils and Fire and Rescue Services and are keen to continue to work with the LGA around the detail of how the regulator will work on a day-to-day basis. The HSE are also aware of the need for councils to prepare not only for their regulatory role working in partnership with the new regulator, but also as duty holders with responsibility for improving the safety of their own building stock.
43. Alongside the Building Safety Bill, the Fire Safety Act is expected to commence this autumn. The Act amends the Fire Safety Order 2005 (FSO) to clarify that the responsible person or duty-holder for multi-occupied, residential buildings must manage and reduce the risk of fire for the External Wall System (EWS, e.g., a cladding system) of the building and entrance doors to individual flats that open into common parts. This clarification will empower fire and rescue services to take enforcement action and hold building owners to account if they are not compliant.
44. The Act also provides a foundation for secondary legislation to take forward recommendations from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry phase one report. These will mean councils incur new responsibilities as landlords and it is as yet unclear whether the resulting burdens will be funded.
45. Although we welcomed the Act, we have serious concerns over the impact it could have on councils due to the shortage of fire risk assessors and the difficulties in obtaining professional indemnity insurance to conduct fire risk assessments that cover cladding. We successfully lobbied for an amendment to the Bill providing guidance that addressed these concerns but are still discussing the details of the guidance with the Home Office.
46. The Joint Inspection Team (JIT), which the LGA is funded by MHCLG to host, continues to provide multi-disciplinary support to councils in using their powers under the Housing Act 2004. The Secretary of State recently wrote to councils encouraging them to act on dangerous cladding, and the JIT will be able to assist them in this work across the full range of cladding types following an extension to the remit of the team agreed with MHCLG earlier this year.

**47. Proposed priorities for 2021/2022:**

- 47.1 Continue our work around the Building Safety Bill to ensure it provides a robust new regulatory regime for building safety.
- 47.2 Engage with HSE's programme to establish the new building safety regulator and raise awareness amongst councils of their responsibilities as regulators and duty holders under the new building safety regime.
- 47.3 Lobby for the funding of new burdens and a proportionate approach to transition to the new regime and new FSO responsibilities.
- 47.4 Continue to support councils in taking enforcement action under the Housing Act 2004 through hosting the Joint Inspection Team.

**Legislation and parliamentary work**

- 48. There are a number of pieces of legislation relevant to the Board's priorities, including the Building Safety Bill; Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill; and the Kept Animals Bill. These have been assigned medium priority for the organisation, meaning that the LGA will brief on them at key stages of the Parliamentary process. We will also be supporting Peter Gibson MP's Private Member Bill which is intended to make use of the National Register of [taxi licence] Revocations and Refusals mandatory.
- 49. We will continue our engagement with relevant select committee inquiries as they are announced and with All-Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs) who are active on safer communities issues.

**Conferences, events and media**

- 50. Since the transition to virtual events, the team has put on a wide programme of webinars, covering domestic abuse issues, county lines, anti-social behaviour and the community trigger, GRT engagement, modern slavery, police and crime panels and fire service issues. We have a number of other webinars already scheduled for the coming months and are also exploring the scope for in-person events for our major 2022 events, such as the annual licensing conference and fire conference.
- 51. The team will continue its work with the media team to produce a wide variety of media content, reflecting both our key lobbying objectives and the newsworthy issues council's protective services deal with.

**Implications for Wales**

- 52. We will work with colleagues at the Welsh LGA to identify areas where our work will be applicable to Wales in terms of non-devolved issues. Where work relates to devolved issues our focus will be on English authorities, with the WLGA leading on work in Wales, but we will share our work with WLGA should they wish to use it as a basis for Welsh specific work of their own.

**Financial Implications**

- 53.** The work priorities identified for 2021/22 will be delivered within the planned staffing budget, which includes dedicated capacity to support work on cohesion, extremism and Prevent and on building safety.
- 54.** Additional supporting projects may be commissioned subject to funds being available from a small directorate / team budget.

**Next steps**

- 55.** Officers to take forward the work programme as approved by the Board.



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## **National resilience strategy - overview and draft LGA response**

### **Purpose of report**

For direction.

### **Summary**

In July, the Government launched a call for evidence on a new national resilience strategy and an associated review of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

This paper summarises the key issues for councils and seeks the Board's approval for the draft LGA response to the consultation.

### **Recommendation**

That the Board provide their views on the key questions highlighted, and agree the draft response, subject to any necessary amendments.

### **Action**

Officers to amend the response in line with feedback.

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## **National resilience strategy - overview and draft LGA response**

### **Background**

1. In July, the Government launched a [call for evidence](#) on a new national resilience strategy. The call for evidence builds on a commitment in the [integrated review](#)<sup>1</sup> published in March this year, to develop a comprehensive national resilience strategy intended to establish a whole of society approach to resilience, with individuals, businesses and organisations all playing their part.
2. The review also committed to consideration of whether to strengthen the role and responsibilities of local resilience forums (LRF). The call for evidence therefore extends to the latest 5-yearly review of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, which sets out the obligations on councils and other category 1 and 2 responders in relation to civil contingency measures and preparedness.
3. In support of the call for evidence, the Cabinet Office has been running a series of workshops to seek input from key stakeholders, as well as engaging through established routes such as LRF networks. The Government is also keen to hear the views of councillors.
4. Following an initial steer from the LGA's political group leaders last month, officers have developed a draft response to the call for evidence, which closes on Monday 27 September. An outline draft response will be shared with the Board in advance of the meeting for review and comment; officers will finalise the response based on the discussion at the meeting and based on specific feedback from the Board.

### **Issues**

5. While the LGA is unlikely to comment on all of the detailed, more technical issues under consideration, there are a number of strategic issues of interest to councils in the call for evidence, which defines resilience as an ability to withstand and quickly recover from a difficult situation. The consultation sets out the ambition of making the UK 'the most resilient nation' based on:
  - 5.1. understanding the risks we face,
  - 5.2. investing in preparation to better prevent, mitigate and recover from risks, and
  - 5.3. energising and empowering everyone who can make a contribution.
6. The call for evidence sets out six thematic areas: risk and resilience; roles and responsibilities; partnerships; communities; investment, and resilience in an

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<sup>1</sup> The LGA [responded](#) to a call for evidence in the integrated review last year.

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interconnected world. The key themes and questions for councils in each of these themes are summarised in appendix 1. The sections below highlight the key themes of our draft response, as well as highlighting the broad themes that representatives from RED would be interested in hearing the Board's views on.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

7. Currently, the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) makes no specific references to local elected officials and there is no formal requirement for them to be involved in local resilience processes or local resilience forums. Our draft response reflects the clear and unanimous steer from the LGA's group leaders that that this omission should be addressed, and that the important role of local politicians in resilience issues should be reflected in a statutory requirement rather than by local convention. However, there will need to be flexibility in how this involvement is arranged, given both the different resilience footprints and local authority arrangements and very different types of emergencies.
8. Our draft response welcomes the review of the role of local resilience forums, which the Government has increasingly turned to help plan for EU exit and respond to COVID-19, with expectations of them going well beyond the statutory requirements set out in the CCA for multi-agency planning processes. The Government has acknowledged the challenges this has created and is exploring the scope for increasing LRF capacity and capability through the LRF funding pilots.
9. It is helpful that the Government has recognised the increasing demands being placed on LRFs: the experience of COVID indicates that councils and other LRF partners have inevitably borne a number of costs linked to increasing LRF activity. But it is also important that the issue of individual partner resilience is recognised alongside LRF capacity. Many councils have experienced a reduction in emergency planning/resilience capacity as a result of austerity and more broadly, embedding an organisational wide approach to resilience is undoubtedly harder when individual service areas are already stretched in relation to service specific responsibilities. Similarly, COVID has indicated the extent to which resilience has been reduced in key protective services such as environmental health: similar challenges exist in other professions. It is important that alongside LRF capability, the capacity of councils and other partner organisations to support the resilience agenda is also reviewed and supported.
10. The draft also reiterates a point we emphasised in our response to the integrated review, which is that councils and their local partners must be seen as trusted partners in responding to emergencies. Too often in recent years we have seen challenges created by a central government failure to share information, or by approaches being developed without local input to reflect the reality on the ground. Going forward, there is a need to

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think about how this partnership can be built into the resilience framework, including ensuring senior engagement between the centre and local areas during an emergency.

### **Communities and a whole society approach to resilience**

11. As place leaders, and perhaps more so than other local partners, councils have a significant role to play in supporting the concept of a whole of society approach to resilience set out in the call for evidence. The focus of the review is a specific civil resilience context, that is societal preparedness and resilience in the context of specific risks, shocks or emergencies. The LGA is supporting a joint LRF project to identify what a whole society approach to resilience means in practice, which is intended to help identify the tools that local places can use to help build community resilience to emergency situations.
12. However, as previous Board discussions have indicated, councils and wider society think about resilience in a much broader way, for example in terms of building community resilience to more routine issues such as crime. The COVID pandemic has highlighted very clearly how individual and societal resilience is impacted by structural and systemic issues such as health inequalities, prosperity etc. These long term issues clearly are relevant, and we therefore reference how local government can contribute to the agenda of levelling up, building back better and tackling inequalities to help support whole society resilience more generally.

### **Assurance and support**

13. The call for evidence also considers the question of assuring levels of local preparedness, an issue that the Government has been considering since the series of emergencies that local areas responded to in 2017. The LGA has previously recommended that the Government considers a peer review process for LRFs, in line with the overall approach for sector led support and the resilience peer reviews the LGA briefly launched in London in 2019-20 before the pandemic struck.
14. The LGA has also previously run a series of member training sessions on resilience issues. This is something that could be expanded and adapted to support a formal role for members under the CCA.

### **Climate change and flooding**

15. On climate change and flooding, we highlight the important role that councils have to play in building resilience to climate change and extreme weather. Our key point is to emphasise the role that councils should have in ensuring that flood defence funding is best directed to meet local needs, for example protecting key roads and bridges.



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Currently, the model for flood and coastal erosion risk management is overly complicated; providing block grant funding would enable councils to manage funding in line with local needs and deliver better outcomes. We also call for Government support for councils to establish a national framework for addressing the climate emergency, including tackling biodiversity loss.

### **Cyber security**

16. The LGA's cyber security programme team have included a number of key points within the draft. We set out the increasing awareness among councils of different types of cyber risks and the need to plan for all of these risks – from disruption to systems to a total IT loss – and call for a supported process of IT asset mapping by councils and investment to raise awareness of risks and mitigate them. The response also urges consideration of how a typically multi-agency response framework through LRFs works in the context of cyber events, and for clarity over government lead departments when local incidents occur, following confusion during previous cases of cyber attacks on councils.

### **Questions for the Board**

17. We would welcome feedback from the Board on their local experience of resilience issues to help inform both our response and our future work in this area. Alongside this, as part of their engagement, the Ministry of Housing, Community and Local Government's Resilience and Emergencies Division are particularly keen to hear the Board's input on the following issues:
- 17.1. What is the Board's experience of involvement in resilience work locally, including at the very different stages of preparedness, response and recovery? Is the role of councillors clear?
  - 17.2. What engagement and communication do local civic leaders have with local resilience forums in your areas?
  - 17.3. What roles do the Board think that councillors should have on these issues going forward?
  - 17.4. How can local councils and councillors support their communities to understand and prepare for local risks? How do we develop a whole of society approach to resilience?

### **Implications for Wales**

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18. The call for evidence is UK wide. Officers are engaging with the Welsh LGA regarding a response.

**Financial Implications**

19. None.

**Next steps**

20. Officers to revise and finalise the LGA draft submission in line with the Board's feedback.

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## **Appendix 1: summary of the call for evidence thematic areas**

1. The section's below briefly summarise the six key themes set out in the call for evidence, in particular the most relevant issues for councils.

### ***Risk and resilience***

2. This section discusses risk assessment, noting ongoing work to review the national security risk assessment methodology; the public facing national risk register; risk appetite, and the role of data and analysis in helping us to understand and manage risk. It seeks views on what more can be done to assess risk nationally and locally and to communicate on risk/risk appetite, as well on how current local risk assessment processes, managed through LRFs, could be strengthened.

### ***Roles and responsibilities***

3. On roles and responsibilities, the paper notes that the UK's resilience model is based on the principle of subsidiarity and recognises that the local tier is a fundamental building block for UK resilience. It notes the role of LRFs and the commitment to strengthening their role, and recognises that *'Elected Members (local mayors, MPs, Council leaders, police and crime commissioners), civic leaders, as well as the courts, prisons and probation services, also have a role to play in supporting resilience, including the discharge of their various powers and budgets, communicating with the public and supporting recovery efforts.'*
4. The call for evidence poses questions about the division of responsibility between the government, devolved assemblies and local government/responders, how these parties can better collaborate on resilience, and also asks what role central government should have in assuring that local areas are effectively carrying out their resilience responsibilities.
5. On the review of the CCA, the review asks a range of detailed questions on the following key issues:
  - 5.1. The definition of category 1 and 2 responders and whether there are any gaps in this.
  - 5.2. Whether elected local figures (e.g. Council Leaders, MPs, Metro Mayors, Police and Crime Commissioners) should have greater involvement in emergency planning and preparative exercising, response and recovery and in what way.
  - 5.3. Whether the duties placed on category 1 and 2 responders are appropriate, and whether the framework provides sufficient clarity on roles and responsibilities.

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- 5.4. Whether existing oversight and assurance mechanisms for organisations involved in resilience are adequate, and whether the CCA should mandate review of local contingency plans.
- 5.5. Whether the arrangements set out in the CCA enable LRF chairs and secretariats to effectively coordinate planning within their areas, and whether LRFs/strategic coordinating groups are fulfilling a sufficient role in terms of planning, response and recovery.
- 5.6. The conditions relating to the use of provisions under part 2 of the Act allowing for making of temporary special legislation ('emergency regulations', although these have to date not been enacted).

### ***Communities***

- 6. This theme considers the whole of society approach to resilience set out in the integrated review; the role of individuals, individual organisations, community groups and associations and networks within this, and what more can be done to inform communities about emergencies to help everyone be better prepared. It seeks to gauge: agreement on the proposition that everyone has a role to play to improve resilience; awareness of local risks and understanding about how to prepare or respond to them; the impact of recent emergencies on preparedness, and what barriers there are to accessing local volunteering schemes or community groups to discuss local emergency planning.

### ***Investment***

- 7. On public sector funding models, the document states that ownership or risks and their impacts is spread across government, local authorities and the wider public sector, and that there may be a case for a more holistic view of funding for resilience and the management of risk, for example, flexible funding models which could be used by government departments to manage emerging or previously unidentified risks.
- 8. The paper recognises the need to prioritise investment in adaptable capabilities such as contingency planning and regular exercising, the emergency services and other local responders and use of military personnel. It also notes the exceptional funding provided to LRFs in relation to both EU exit planning and the pandemic, and that the Government has launched an LRF funding pilot for 2021-22: each LRF has received a minimum sum of £160k for capacity and capability building, with additional funding available for innovation projects.

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## Update Paper

### Purpose of report

For information.

### Summary

The report outlines issues of interest to the Board not covered under the other items on the agenda.

#### **Recommendation/s:**

That members of the Board note and comment on the update.

#### **Action/s:**

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

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## **Update Paper**

### **Regulatory services**

1. On COVID issues, officers have continued to work closely with councils and with the Government on a range of issues including vaccine certification, enforcement approaches in the private testing market and the extension of regulations giving councils powers of direction.
2. Officers have also been engaging with officials from various government departments including the Department for Health and Social Care and Defra about a series of new enforcement burdens that councils will be expected to enforce. The Botulinum Toxin and Cosmetic Fillers (Children) Act 2021 comes into effect in October and will see councils responsible for enforcing a ban on the use of cosmetic fillers by the under-18s. We have also worked with officers to provide advice on enforcement costs relating to policies with a more environmental focus, including the deposit return scheme and requirement to return disposable coffee cups.
3. The Government has published a command paper on Reforming Competition and Consumer Policy: Driving Growth and Delivering Competitive Markets that Work for Consumers. The paper includes two chapters of particular relevance to council trading standards. A chapter covering consumer rights proposes updating consumer rights to keep pace with markets, including: maintaining strong consumer rights and business competitiveness; modernising consumer rights and subscription contracts; fake reviews; preventing online exploitation of consumer behaviour; balancing burdens on businesses; tackling non-compliance on refunds; and strengthening prepayment protections for consumers. The chapter on consumer law enforcement covers trading standards but does not address the challenge of lack of resources faced by most services. The Association of Chief Trading Standards and Chartered Trading Standards Institute will be responding to the paper.

### **Pavement licensing**

4. Following a request from the Board at the meeting in June, Cllr Caliskan wrote to the Local Government Minister about the regulations which extend temporary pavement licence provisions until September 2022. Cllr Caliskan's letter said councils are working hard to support the hospitality sector, but highlighted concerns about the financial implications of the regulations and the challenges around the expedited process for reviewing applications. She also stressed the need to balance the objective of supporting the hospitality sector with other considerations such as the impact of outdoor hospitality on local residents, highways and pedestrian access. In

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response, the Minister confirmed that his department is looking into new burdens funding to accompany these regulations. These regulations came into effect in July.

5. The Government has also confirmed that it will be consulting on what a permanent pavement licensing regime might look like. Officers have been proactively engaging with councils on this to try and get an understanding of what their priorities for a reformed pavement licensing system are and which aspects of the old and new frameworks they would like to keep. Our aim is to be able to share councils' views with MHCLG and inform their thinking whilst it is in the early stages.

### **Taxis and Private Hire Vehicle Bill**

6. Peter Gibson MP (Conservative, Darlington) has introduced a Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Safeguarding and Road Safety) Bill. This Private Members Bill would make it mandatory for licensing authorities to search a database, such as the National Register of Revocations and Refusals (NR3), to access vital background information about drivers seeking a licence in their areas. It aims to build on work carried out by the LGA to address the issue of taxi drivers losing a licence in one area but then applying for a licence in another area without declaring their previous licensing history.
7. The LGA issued a parliamentary briefing in support of the Bill as well as meeting with Peter Gibson MP to discuss his Bill in greater detail. It should be noted that this type of Bill tends to be unsuccessful due to not being allocated the parliamentary time to complete its stages. However, this Bill has a favourable position in the parliamentary calendar and has Government support, so it has a good chance of becoming law. On Friday 10 September, the Bill passed through Second Reading, meaning it has progressed further than a similar Bill introduced by the MP Daniel Zeichner three years ago.

### **Online safety**

8. The LGA has produced a series of resources around online harms. This includes [‘Must know’ guidance for elected members](#), aimed at raising awareness on online harms and empower councillors by providing an introduction to online risks, an overview of the Online Safety Bill, and a checklist to support effective decision making. Alongside this is a series of [short videos which outline what we mean by online harms](#), relevant legislation, resources and guidance on best practice, and [infographics to help support councillors to engage safely online](#).

### **Protect duty consultation**

9. Earlier this year the Government published a consultation document on a new Protect duty, aimed at increasing security measures in public venues and spaces to help prevent terrorist attacks. The consultation closed at the end of June and we are expecting a Government response later this autumn.

10. Under the consultation proposals as they currently stand, there will be a number of implications for local authorities; as owners and operators of venues in their own right; as employers of large organisations; and potentially in enforcing compliance.
11. In [our submission to the consultation](#) we set out that:
  - 11.1 Terrorism is a clear threat to the health and safety of the public. We support calls for the risks of terrorism to be explicitly assessed, but we believe they should be assessed as part of a wider approach that considers terrorism risks alongside a range of other health and safety issues. There are a number of existing duties and structures in place for local authorities and partners to consider and mitigate these risks that could provide an appropriate platform for this work, such as the Health and Safety at Work Act (HSAW) or licensing legislation.
  - 11.2 Any option that requires local authority enforcement would need to consider the significant existing pressures on resources, enforcement capacity and expertise that councils are already facing in delivering these duties.
  - 11.3 Greater clarity is required on a number of issues, specifically how the duty would operate in practice, and the significant resource and capacity that would be needed for successful implementation.
  - 11.4 Any new duty must not be unduly burdensome, and in particular must not be allowed to inhibit the freedom to enjoy the places and spaces that are a critical and much-loved part of local life. We do not believe the duty should apply to public spaces unless they are being used for a specific event.
  - 11.5 If the HSAW model (or similar) is not adopted as an alternative to the proposals, a risk-based approach to determining which venues/events should fall within scope of the duty would be preferable to a capacity model, enabling those responsible to consider the precise level of risk at that particular place/event. Local partners should also have the autonomy to be able to balance the level of risk with reasonable mitigation measures that take account of the local context.
  - 11.6 A new duty should be one aspect of a number of measures to keep our communities safe from terrorism; it is important that a new duty complements the many existing measures already in place. It is also vital that measures to increase security continue to sit alongside investment in prevention programmes, that aim to stop people being drawn into terrorism, tackle extremism and build cohesion and resilience.

### **Counter-extremism**

12. Earlier this month Cllr Caliskan met with Robin Simcox, Interim Lead Commissioner at the Commission for Countering Extremism, to hear about the Commission's future plans; discuss the key role of councils in tackling extremism and some of the current



challenges facing local authorities; and press the need for Government to continue to invest in measures to prevent extremism.

13. We have been continuing with our work to support councils to respond to extremism concerns in partnership with the [Special Interest Group on Counter Extremism](#) (SIGCE). This includes a series of practitioner roundtables to explore emerging extremism challenges and help share approaches in response. Dedicated sessions have been held on the harassment and intimidation of asylum seekers and refugees, which is a growing concern in a number of areas following increased channel crossings and the arrival of Afghan refugees.

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

14. The Government has launched its [Violence Against Women and Girls \(VAWG\) Strategy](#), which outlines several measures to protect women and girls from abuse and violence. This includes introducing a National Policing lead for VAWG, as well as a new [Safety of Women at Night Fund](#), which is open to bids from local authorities, Police and Crime Commissioners, the British Transport Police and civil society organisations. Our [LGA media response](#) can be found here.
15. The Government has [announced](#) reforms to increase the number of rape cases reaching court and additional support for victims. The Government's plan includes actions for the police, prosecutors and courts to roll out a new approach to investigations, reduce the number of victims withdrawing from the process, increase the volumes of trials being heard, protect the public and put more rapists behind bars. We are pleased to see the Government moving forward on this important issue, following our [submission](#) to the Government's Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy consultation, which called for action to be taken to improve the number of people prosecuted and convicted for rape and sexual assault cases, alongside improved support for survivors.

### **Domestic abuse**

16. The LGA has launched a guidance document on '[tackling domestic abuse – innovative approaches by councils and partner organisations](#)'. The guidance includes a series of case studies from councils on how they tackled domestic abuse before and during the pandemic. The ambition for these case studies is to share and disseminate best practice from across local government nationally to support locally led solutions.
17. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government [launched](#) a consultation on its draft statutory guidance, which accompanies Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act (which places new duties on tier one local authorities in England for the provision of support for victims and their children in safe accommodation.) The LGA submitted a [response](#) calling for the Government's forthcoming Spending Review to provide long-term, multi-year future funding to support local authorities in implementing the new statutory duty.

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18. Cllr Lois Samuel, the LGA's Domestic Abuse Champion for 2020/2021, attended the first meeting of the Strategic Reference Group on Domestic Abuse Perpetrators. The group has been convened by the Domestic Abuse Commissioner, Nicole Jacobs, to improve the response to tackling domestic abuse perpetrators and help inform the Government's forthcoming Domestic Abuse Strategy. The minutes of the first meeting are available on the Commissioner's website [here](#). The next meeting is expected to be held in October 2021 and will focus on a clear plan for domestic abuse perpetrator interventions: quality assurance, pathways, commissioning, and equalities.
19. In August, the Home Office announced £11.3 million had been awarded to 25 Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) in England and Wales to fund domestic abuse intervention programmes. The programmes focus on interventions encouraging behaviour change to help stop perpetrators from committing domestic abuse, with the ultimate aim of preventing further crimes from being committed. Funding will also focus on key areas such as stalking prevention and supporting adolescent perpetrators.

### **Domestic Homicide Reviews**

20. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 requires all Community Safety Partnerships to send final copies of any Domestic Homicide Review to the Domestic Abuse Commissioner. This will be a legal requirement from the 1st November 2021, but the Domestic Abuse Commissioner's would like to start receiving these from now onwards. The Commissioner has asked for all Domestic Homicide Reviews be sent to [DHR@domesticabusecommissioner.independent.gov.uk](mailto:DHR@domesticabusecommissioner.independent.gov.uk)
21. A criminal defence barrister has been appointed to conduct an [independent review](#) of the law around domestic homicides. Clare Wade QC – who was lead counsel in the high-profile case of Sally Challen – will examine the need to reform the law before presenting her findings and recommendations to the Lord Chancellor, Robert Buckland QC MP. She will consider whether the law could better protect the public and ensure sentences reflect the severity of these crimes.
22. A new report has been published on domestic homicides and suspected victim suicides during the Covid-19 pandemic. It is the first report of the Domestic Homicide Project, established by the National Police Chiefs' Council and the College of Policing working with National Policing Vulnerability Knowledge and Practice Programme (VKPP). The research aimed to establish the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on domestic homicides and suspected victim suicides with a known history of domestic abuse, to learn lessons from every incident and seek to prevent future deaths. It found that domestic homicides remain an 'entrenched and enduring problem' despite figures remaining relatively stable during lockdown. The full report can be accessed [here](#).

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

23. The LGA has [briefed](#) Peers ahead of the Second Reading of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, in the House of Lords. In the briefing, we highlight the importance of extending the Violence Reduction Unit (VRUs) funding to all police force areas and ensuring a five-year settlement for all VRUs to allow for long-term, strategic planning. Our full briefing is [available here](#).

## **Knife Crime Prevention Orders**

24. The Home Office has [announced](#) that Knife Crime Prevention Orders will be trialled in London by the Metropolitan Police Service, for 14 months, before a national roll-out is considered. The orders can be imposed on individuals as young as 12 whom police have reason to believe are carrying knives or are habitual knife carriers, or those who have been previously convicted of a knife-related offence. [Operational guidance](#) for the relevant public authorities has also been published.

## **Young Lives Commission**

25. Former Children's Commissioner Anne Longfield has launched a [Young Lives Commission](#) which aims to help prevent young people from becoming involved in serious violence, gangs and the justice system. We support this commission and have highlighted how council-run youth services have a vital role to play in helping young people avoid being drawn into harmful and dangerous situations. In our [media response](#), we say that these services have seen funding reduced by more than two-thirds in real terms since 2010, and that we want to work with government to invest fully in children and youth services, which is key to tackling serious violence, including making the £500 million Youth Investment Fund available as soon as possible. We also call for Violence Reduction Units to be extended to all police forces in England and Wales and for them to have long-term funding.

## **Prison leavers**

26. The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) has announced that seven partnerships were successful in applying for the first round of the Local Leadership and Integration Fund (LLIF), its grant funding scheme aimed at empowering local leaders and agencies to improve the join-up of services and find innovative ways to work together towards improved outcomes for prison leavers. You can find out more details about the pilots [here](#).

## **Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)**

27. The UK's first-ever ASB Awareness Week took place on 19-25 July 2021, bringing together housing associations, councils, police forces, charities and other agencies –

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along with government departments – to take a stand and work together to make communities safer. Organised by Resolve, ASB Awareness Week was supported by the Home Office, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), the LGA, National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and the National Fire Chiefs' Council (NFCC). Cllr Jeanie Bell spoke at the opening launch event and highlighted the importance of working in partnership and ensuring the victim's voice is central to any decisions made, when tackling anti-social behaviour.

28. The LGA has published a series of [case studies](#) on tackling anti-social behaviour. With thanks to the councils and their partners who have shared their experiences, and best practice in addressing and preventing anti-social behaviour. We have also sign-posted to [guidance](#) on the Community Trigger process and helpful resources and support from [ASB Help](#). If you would like any further information at all, please contact Rachel Phelps ([Rachel.Phelps@local.gov.uk](mailto:Rachel.Phelps@local.gov.uk))

### **Surveillance camera code of practice**

29. [The Government is consulting on revisions to the surveillance code of practice to reflect changes in legislation](#). This is the first revision to the code since its introduction in June 2013. The code, issued under section 30 of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 (PoFA), provides guidance on the appropriate use of surveillance camera systems by local authorities and the police. The consultation closes 11:45pm on 8 September 2021. [The Biometrics and Surveillance Camera Commissioner has also published a service level agreement \(SLA\) template](#), to aid partnership working on surveillance issues.

### **Modern slavery**

30. The Government's immigration plan included a commitment to update the 2014 modern slavery strategy. Throughout summer, the Home Office has been hosting roundtables to discuss issues such as victim support for adults and children's victims, and procurement and supply chains. The LGA alongside other organisations has been invited to provide a written submission to the review by the beginning of November.

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## **Building Safety update**

### **Purpose of report**

For information.

### **Summary**

This report updates members on the LGA's building safety work since the Board's last meeting.

#### **Recommendation**

That members note the update.

#### **Action/s**

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

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## **Building Safety update**

### **Remediation**

#### *Progress*

1. [MHCLG statistics](#) show that by the end of July 2021, 93% (440) of all identified high-rise residential and publicly owned buildings in England had either completed or started remediation work to remove and replace unsafe Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding (96% of buildings identified in December 2019). 18 new buildings have been identified in 2021.
2. Progress remains slow. Only one building completed work in July.
3. Three social sector residential buildings have yet to begin remediation; these buildings had not been identified as having ACM at the start of the year. They are not council-owned.
4. Funding for the remediation of 144 of the 160 social sector buildings is provided from the government's Social Sector ACM Cladding Remediation Fund. Remediation works for the remaining 16 buildings are being funded through a combination of existing funds and litigation action. Remediation works for half of private sector residential buildings are being paid for by building owners or other industry funding solutions. All but 6 of the rest are in scope for Government funding although they may have other fire safety issues that are not covered by the fund.
5. 657 buildings have been approved to apply for remediation funding under the Building Safety Fund and 85 have begun work, out of 2,820 registrations. Over 1,000 have either been withdrawn or deemed ineligible, the remainder are still being assessed.
6. One of the buildings with interim measures and ACM cladding, New Providence Wharf, experienced a serious fire on 7 May. The lead members of the Fire Services Management Committee and the National Fire Chiefs Council Chair wrote a [joint open letter](#) to responsible persons reminding them of their duties in response to the fire in August.

#### *Joint Inspection Team*

7. The Joint Inspection Team's (which the LGA hosts) funding has been approved for 2020-21 and signed off by the LGA Board. The Indemnity has also been finalised and

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extended to cover non-ACM cladding. The 2020-21 programme of work includes significant training for councils. This should help to maximise its impact.

*Fire Protection Board*

8. The Building Risk Review programme overseen by the Board, remains ahead of its target schedule to ensure all residential buildings over 18m have been assessed or inspected by the end of 2021. Although a number of new buildings have been discovered as a result of the review, it is still anticipated that the work will be complete by the end of the year.

*Waking watch relief fund*

9. Data on the fund is set out in **annex 1**.

*Written Ministerial Statement*

10. On 21 July the Housing Secretary published a [written ministerial statement](#) setting out the conclusions of a small group of experts on fire safety that he had asked 'to consider the evidence and advise me on steps that should be taken to ensure that a more risk-proportionate approach is taken to fire safety in blocks of flats'. The recommendations of this group's [report](#) were:

- 10.1. EWS1 forms should not be a requirement on buildings below 18 metres.
- 10.2. In the small number of cases where there are known to be concerns these should be addressed primarily through risk management and mitigation.
- 10.3. There should be a clear route for residents/leaseholders to challenge costly remediation work and seek assurance that proposals are proportionate and cost effective.
- 10.4. Government should work with the shadow Building Safety Regulator to consider how to implement an audit process to check that fire risk assessments are following guidelines, not perpetuating the risk aversion we are witnessing, in some instances, at the present time.
- 10.5. Fire risk assessors, and lenders should not presume that there is significant risk to life unless there is evidence to support this. This would ensure that they respond only to the evidence and adopt a far more proportionate and balanced approach.

11. The Government also announced that it would be taking additional steps 'to ensure a proportionate response to risk', including:

- 11.1. Development of a new more risk-proportionate guidelines for fire risk assessors, including PAS9980. The Consolidated Advice Note, the product of



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the need for reliable safety information in the period following the Grenfell Tragedy will shortly be retired.

- 11.2. Launching a government-backed professional indemnity insurance scheme for qualified professionals conducting external wall system assessments.
- 11.3. Working with the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) to re-emphasise the scope of the simultaneous evacuation guidance, the temporary nature of waking watches and the alternative proportionate fire safety interventions to be considered before implementing a waking watch, particularly in buildings below 18m.
12. The LGA has long argued for a more proportionate approach to remediation, calling for landlords to be allowed to take a cost-effective approach to ensuring residents are safe – for example installing sprinklers where this can be done more cheaply than remediating fire safety issues if – and only if – it delivers safety. In this respect the Government's move away from insisting that every last piece of flammable cladding must be removed is a welcome one.
13. However, the approach the Secretary of State set out is open to criticism in that it appears to suggest that because fires are rare, the risk of a cladding fire can be effectively ignored under 18m – even though some serious fires have occurred in buildings under 18m in recent years. It is also open to the criticism that it could lead to confusion as the expert report states nothing in it contradicts the Consolidated Advice Note (CAN), which said that ACM cladding should be removed from any building irrespective of height. Yet in seeking to discourage the requirement for EWS1 forms under 18m the WMS gives the impression that cladding need not be examined in these buildings.
14. The Government has now announced it intends to withdraw the CAN before PAS 9980 is ready. We have told officials that the government needs to make it clear what guidance exists for duty holders who are required to review their risk assessments by the Fire Safety Act.
15. Since late last year the LGA has argued for better join up between environmental health teams that might take action on buildings with dangerous cladding systems, council services in general and fire and rescue services. To this end, a working group was established by the Fire Protection Board that has drafted a protocol for joint working that should become available shortly. The LGA may be asked to host this protocol.
16. In August MHCLG wrote to local authorities about enforcement. The letter is annexed separately. The message we have been told the letter sought to convey is that the Secretary of State wants to see local authorities doing more to drive remediation, albeit



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in a proportionate manner (i.e. in a way that does not inflame the EWS1 issue). To this end the Joint Inspection Team has been funded to offer training to councils.

## **Reform**

### **Fire Safety Act**

17. The Fire Safety Act is expected to commence in mid-October. Following lobbying from the LGA (and the NFCC) the Home Office has agreed that it will not commence ahead of the completion of work on the Building Prioritisation Tool (but see the reference to CAN above).
18. We also expect regulations implementing recommendations from phase one of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry to be laid in October, although they will not come into effect immediately. LGA officers are working with member authorities to ensure the Home Office understands the processes that need to be undertaken in the transition to implementation of these regulations. The LGA continues to push MHCLG for an answer as to whether the costs associated with these measures will receive new burdens funding but have still not had an answer

### **Building Safety Bill**

19. The Bill passed its second reading in the House of Commons before the summer recess and is about to enter the Commons' committee stage, where the LGA gave oral evidence on 9 September.
20. The key messages set out below are taken from the written evidence LGA officers are drafting to send to the committee and which are in the process of being signed off at the time of writing.
21. These messages reflect previous submissions the LGA has made, including the evidence submitted to the select committee's pre legislative scrutiny (which has since reported) and the second reading briefing. It also reflects the views of fellow stakeholders: Councils with ALMOS Group, Local Authority Building Control; London Councils; National Fire Chiefs Council and National Housing Federation.

### *Key messages*

22. Government should pay up-front remediation costs and seek to claim as much back as possible either from those directly responsible or from the private developer industry.
23. Any protection for leaseholders against remediation costs should also cover social housing providers.

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24. The costs imposed on councils as landlords by the Bill and by fire safety reform need to be covered by new burdens funding.
25. The scope of the higher-risk regime is too narrow, and height is too crude a basis for it. A better approach would be:
  - 25.1. For new buildings: The Gateways that will be created under the Bill's amendments to the Building Act 1984 should apply to all major works, including for buildings under 18m where the local authority remains the building control authority.
  - 25.2. For existing buildings – adapt the Building Prioritisation Tool that has been developed for the Fire Safety Act to identify the higher risk buildings.
26. Alternatively, we want:
  - 26.1. A timetable to expand the Bill's scope to below 18m on the face of the Bill
  - 26.2. All new care homes and hospitals to be covered by the Gateway system, not just those over 18m.
27. In addition, the Bill should be amended to require any permitted development that results in a building that would be in scope of the Building Safety Bill if newly constructed, passing through all three Gateways with the Building Safety Regulator (BSR) as building control authority.
28. The Bill does not provide sufficient clarity on the duties of Accountable Persons and the siting of those duties within complex ownership structures. The provision of increased detail on the role and duties of Accountable Persons by the Government will facilitate effective and expedient transition to any new system.
29. The regulator must give Accountable Persons adequate time to implement the new system and provide appropriate guidance.
30. Imposing the developer levy on councils would leave council tenants paying for the failings of private developers. If the levy is imposed on social providers, their ability to deliver the improvements and additions to the housing stock that the Government requires will be put at risk.
31. An effective construction product safety system must deliver real consequences for the owners and managers of companies that miss-sell products. The product safety system in the Bill must provide a national prosecution funding resource, a single national test system, adequate officer training, effective links to building control and effective deterrents against miss-selling and misuse.
32. Competition in building control needs to end for major works in residential buildings of all heights.

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33. The Building Safety Regulator should be required to use local authority resource in the first instance on the face of the Bill to protect the significant investment in building control teams local authorities will be required to make because of the Bill.
34. The Government needs to invest in the necessary skills to ensure the new regime is effective and to allow reimbursement charges to be set locally

### **Implications for Wales**

35. Building regulations and fire and rescue services are devolved responsibilities of the Welsh Assembly Government, and the main implications arising from the recommendations of the Hackitt Review and the government's response to it are on building regulations and fire safety in England. However the Welsh government has announced that it will be making the changes recommended in the report to the regulatory system in Wales, and the LGA has been keeping in contact to ensure the WLGA is kept informed of the latest developments in England.

### **Financial Implications**

36. Although the LGA has set up the Joint Inspection Team, the cost of doing so is being met by MHCLG. Other work arising from this report will continue to be delivered within the planned staffing budget, which includes an additional fixed term post in the safer communities team to support the LGA's building safety work.

### **Next steps**

37. Officers to continue to support the sector's work to keep residents safe and reform the buildings safety system, as directed by members.

**Annex One – Waking Watch Relief Fund application data (July 31 2021) ([source](#))**

<b>Title</b>	<b>1st application window</b>	<b>2nd application window</b>	<b>Total</b>
No. of applications	213	60	273
No. of buildings	298*	70	368*
No. of successful applications**	157	22	179
No. of successful buildings**	235*	29	264
No. of rejected applications**	30	28	58
Amount of funding approved**	£19.8m	£2.7m	£22.5m
Mean Waking Watch cost per dwelling per month***	£113	-	-
Median Waking Watch cost per dwelling per month***	£77	-	-

\*GLA are continuing to assess buildings and data is not yet complete for applicants in London.

\*\*Not final figures as assessment is still ongoing.

\*\*\*Excluding GLA figures due to missing data; also; some missing data in Greater Manchester; currently excludes 2nd tranche MHCLG. Within the data provided there is a large range of Waking Watch costs with some high outliers. Therefore, both the mean and median are included in the table as large outliers can skew the mean but have little impact on the median.



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

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cc: Chair of Fire and Rescue Authority  
Local Authority Chief Executive

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[www.gov.uk/mhclg](http://www.gov.uk/mhclg)

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## Ensuring safety in higher risk buildings

Significant progress has been made to correct the errors built up over many decades. 96% of high-rise buildings identified with unsafe ACM cladding (the most dangerous form of cladding) at the start of last year have been remediated, or workers are currently on site. 81% of all high-rise buildings identified as having had unsafe ACM cladding no longer have this cladding.

This progress would not have been possible without the contribution of local authorities. Local authorities have led the identification of high-rise buildings with unsafe cladding, swiftly remediated their own stock, and have been instrumental in driving remediation progress amongst the other residential stock in their areas through monitoring, as well as escalation and enforcement where needed. Minister Greenhalgh and I have joined Leaders of local authorities in meetings with recalcitrant building owners. 20 local authorities have used their powers in the Housing Act 2004 to take enforcement action against those responsible for 43 high-rise buildings with unsafe ACM cladding, including 14 local authorities with the support of my department's Joint Inspection Team.

Like me, you regularly engage with leaseholders and residents of blocks that have not yet been remediated, and will know their frustration, worry and, at times, despair.

In February, I announced that further funding would be made available to pay for the replacement of unsafe cladding systems for all leaseholders in high-rise residential buildings. The Government had already provided £1.6 billion to remediate unsafe cladding, and I announced a further £3.5 billion. This will ensure that where cladding needs to be remediated in high-rise buildings it can and will be, preferably at the expense of those who built the buildings, but failing which the taxpayer will step in to protect leaseholders and residents.

I also recognised the concerns of leaseholders and residents in lower-rise buildings where dangerous cladding needs to be removed. Leaseholders will gain new protection from the costs of cladding removal where needed with a new scheme for buildings 11 to 18 metres in height. Under the scheme, no leaseholder will pay more than £50 a month towards the removal of

unsafe cladding. This will provide reassurance and security to leaseholders, and mortgage providers can be confident that properties will be worth lending against.

We will want to engage with you and the Local Government Association about the role of local authorities in delivering these programmes. As we learned from the remediation of unsafe ACM, the provision of funding as well as construction project management support for freeholders is not sufficient for swift remediation. Local authorities have a key role to play, as demonstrated this year in the success of the locally delivered Waking Watch Relief Fund.

In asking local authorities to play a bigger role, I am committed to providing support to assist you. My department will continue to regularly share information on Building Safety Fund registrants to allow you to understand, manage and prioritise the risks in your areas, drawing also on the data you have gathered since 2019 through the collection on external wall systems. Alongside taking action on buildings known to have combustible cladding, it is also important to ensure that those building owners who have not yet provided information about their cladding systems do so promptly. My officials will be writing to you further on this.

The passage of the Fire Safety Act 2021 presents an opportunity to strengthen your strategic and operational local partnerships with fire and rescue services to support this work. The Act puts beyond doubt that fire and rescue services can also use their enforcement powers against unsafe cladding. Local authorities retain their responsibilities under the Housing Act, and we expect a shared, multi-disciplinary approach from regulators. Local regulators should be sharing information, developing local strategies, and collaboratively considering their approach to buildings. To support this, my department and the Home Office, working with the Local Government Association and the National Fire Chiefs Council, are reviewing the published joint working protocol between local authorities and fire and rescue services.

Building on the Fire Safety Act, the Government has introduced the Building Safety Bill into Parliament, the next key step in taking forward the most significant building safety reforms in almost 40 years. Local authorities will have a key role working with the new Building Safety Regulator to deliver the new regulatory regime for higher risk buildings, confronting poor practice across the built environment, and establishing new norms and behaviours. And beyond that, you will of course also have crucial new responsibilities for the higher risk buildings you manage. I will look to local authorities to play a key role in helping to change the culture so that problems are identified and dealt with early, residents have a stronger voice in the system, and their concerns are never ignored.

Lastly, our Joint Inspection Team will focus this year on building capability within local authorities to take enforcement action against buildings with unsafe cladding. As well as supporting your work to drive remediation, it will also prepare your environmental health staff for their role in the future building safety regime. The Team, hosted by the Local Government Association, is delivering a series of free training sessions for environmental health officers, as well as producing written materials and hosts an advice line. The Team remains available to support local authorities in undertaking inspections. My department has extended the Team's remit from unsafe ACM cladding to cover high-rise residential buildings with any type of unsafe cladding.

Our approach to all buildings must be a proportionate one, guided by published expert opinion. The risk to life in all buildings is fortunately low and lower still in low and medium rise buildings. We must ensure that only buildings that absolutely need work are subjected to it and even then, that mitigation and fire safety measures such as fire alarms are considered first. Below 18 metres in particular, only a very small number of buildings will require costly remediation works as I set out in my Written Ministerial Statement on 21 July. Nonetheless some buildings do require unsafe cladding to be replaced, such as high-rise buildings with ACM cladding and those with the most dangerous forms of non-ACM cladding for which we have provided funding to ensure the work is completed. We must redouble efforts to finish the job.

Completing the removal of unsafe cladding, where it is necessary and proportionate to do so to achieve an acceptable level of fire safety for residents, requires joint work between the Government and local regulators. Minister Greenhalgh and I and our officials look forward to engaging with you and your officers on how this can best be done to deliver the programmes I announced in February. Would you please also share this letter with your private sector housing / environmental health teams.

**RT HON ROBERT JENRICK MP**

