

Minutes of last Safer & Stronger Communities Board meeting

Safer & Stronger Communities Board

Thursday, 22 September 2022

Hybrid Meeting - 18 Smith Square and Online

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A**

Item	Decisions and actions
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1 Welcome, Apologies and Substitutes, Declarations of Interest

The Chair welcomed members to the Safer and Stronger Communities Board meeting.

Apologies were received from Cllr Jas Athwal and Cllr Tracey Dixon, with Cllr Tamoor Tariq and Cllr Carleene Lee-Phakoe in attendance as substitutes.

Declarations of interest were made by Cllr Lewis Cocking, who informed the Board he was Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire.

2 Notes of previous meeting

Members of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2022.

3 Safer and Stronger Communities Board 2022-23

- a) SSCB Terms of Reference
- b) Board Membership 2022-23
- c) Board Meetings for 2022-23
- d) Board Member Champion Roles 2022-23

The Chair introduced the report which set out how the Safer and Stronger Communities Board operates and how the LGA works to support the objectives and work of its member authorities.

The Chair sought the Board's agreement for appendixes A, B and C, to which the Board members agreed.

The Chair continued that lead members had discussed and agreed the list of Board Champions roles and would put forward group nominations.

Following the brief discussion, members made the following comments:

- Members suggested that an additional champion role for the

Voluntary Community Sector was needed given that it was an additional work stream for the Board.

Decision:

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

Action:

- Officers to add voluntary community sector into the board champion roles.
- Lead members to provide their group's nominations to champion roles.

4 SSCB overview and policy priorities 2022-23

The Chair introduced the report, 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 2022/23.

The Chair noted that lead members of the Board had previously discussed and agreed the priorities for the Board. She added that the priorities set out in the report reflected members' feedback, and that it was recognised that the remit of the board is very broad. This year the Board had sought to keep policy work focused and condensed, to avoid overloading and ensuring capacity to be agile and responsive.

Following the discussion, members made the following comments:

- Members commented that it would be useful to see how they as a Board could link in with the direction of the Local Government Association (LGA), as well as a list of what priorities other boards had and the crossover with SSCB work. It was suggested that it may be helpful to rank items in order of priority to help understand why the Board focuses on different areas and how they support a strategic vision. The Chair responded that the priorities identified were in line with board and strategic corporate priorities of the LGA and agreed that it would be beneficial to have an understanding of other Board priorities and their overlap in work.
- Members asked if the legislative changes proposed around crematoria, funerals, coroners and registrars are still happening. Mark Norris, Principal Policy Adviser, responded that there were still some work continuing at a national level, particularly around registrars.
- Members were keen to see more work in areas of racism, antisemitism, islamophobia, etc.

Mark added that the LGA were in the process of finalising the LGA Business plan which had input from the Safer and Stronger Communities Board policy team. Additionally, priorities set out for this year had been discussed by the Board at the last meeting which had helped inform the LGA Business plan.

Decision:

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

Actions:

- Officers to include racism and discrimination as a work area for the Board.
- Next meeting to include an item on 1) the priorities of other Boards and areas of overlap with SSCB and 2) how SSCB priorities link to the LGA priorities, to help clarify strategic approach and identify any links the Board chair should make with other Boards.

5 Strategic relationships between councils and their local voluntary and community sector

The Chair introduced a research report that the LGA had commissioned from Locality into the state of strategic relationships between councils and their local voluntary and community sector (VCS).

The Chair invited Hannah Small, Policy Adviser and Ed Wallis, Director of Policy & Engagement at Locality to present to the Board.

Hannah mentioned that the LGA had been active in this policy areas for some time. During the pandemic, members had expressed how important it was to form strategic relationships with their VCS, as well as subsequently maintaining those relationships post-pandemic and addressing new challenges such as cost of living pressures. The LGA commissioned Locality to conduct research into the state of strategic relationships between councils and their local VCS. This was the LGA's first in depth analysis and provided an honest reflection of the current state of relationships, the challenges and shared ambition.

Ed highlighted the following key points in his presentation which were:

- Research showed no fast and hard rules on what made a strategic or nonstrategic relationship but instead was defined by a set of qualities which were either present or absent.
- Relationships were mixed across the country and had been impacted by two key events: the 2008 financial crash and Covid-19 pandemic.
- Present day factors that shaped the scope of council-VCS relationship included continuing financial pressures and transitioning from one crisis to another.
- Four principles underpinning strategic relationships included:
 - Shared foundations: clarity of purpose, values, and roles, built on shared understanding, knowledge and a commitment to partnership working.
 - Relational culture: behaviours and ways of working that enable the power of community to flourish, with both sides giving generously to the process and being open to receiving feedback.
 - Effective structures: systems, mechanisms and processes that are fit for purpose and enable innovation and sustain long-term commitment.
 - Capacity and resources: having the capacity to play a full role, with the right time and supportive funding arrangements.

Hannah concluded that there would be several workstreams following the report. The first would be an accessible tool kit for members and officers to use. Secondly, one of the major challenges was the current cost of

living crisis and the LGA would be creating a top tips guide for councils on how to support the VCS during this period.

Following the discussion, members made the following comments:

- Members highlighted that partnerships could work well but there could be tension as well. On occasion councils and the VCS could be chasing the same funding pots and commission. Ed replied that it was important to note the shared foundations between the two sectors and having a shared mutual understanding.
- Some members welcomed the Board taking this area on, although others questioned the fit with the SSCB and sought confirmation that councils had said a toolkit would be used.
- Members raised that the faith sector was missing and if there a reason why this had been left out. It was important for councils and VCS to be able to work with different faith groups. Hannah replied that the VCS partners engaged with included faith based groups.
- The Chair stressed that not everything under the VCS heading falls as part of the SSCB remit, but that it was appropriate for the Board to take this overall area of work forward. She added that with funding pressures, strategic commissioning was paramount and more important than one off grant funding, as it ensured outcome focused objective to spending money. The Chair said there was a need for needs mapping with a technology-based solution, matching up needs to where resources are.

Decision:

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

Action:

- Officers to develop an accessible toolkit for lead members and senior officers to use to assess their relationships with their local VCS, based on a shortened version of the research.

6 Social cohesion and resilience

Members had a confidential discussion on social cohesion and resilience following a presentation from Dame Sara Khan.

7 Update Paper

The Chair introduced the report which outlined issues of interest to the Board not covered under the other items on the agenda.

Following the brief discussion, members made the following comments:

- Members commented that recently there was a lot of publicity around the length of time victims had to wait to receive justice. Would this be an area which the LGA or the board would be looking to be part of the solution.
- The recommendation for enforcement powers over pavement licencing to have the ability to seize and remove furniture, would not work and a proper fine system was needed.
- Members took the opportunity to thank Cllr Alan Rhodes who had previously sat on the Board as the Modern slavery Champion, for his hard work and contribution to the role.

Action:

- Officers to include representation on the length of time victims are having to wait as part of work on the Draft Victims Bill.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Nesil Caliskan	Enfield Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Lewis Cocking	Broxbourne Borough Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Heather Kidd	Shropshire Council
	Cllr Clive Woodbridge	Epsom and Ewell Borough Council
Members	Cllr Eric Allen	Sutton London Borough Council
	Cllr Bill Borrett	Norfolk County Council
	Cllr Louise McKinlay	Essex County Council
	Cllr Julia Lepoidevin	Coventry City Council
	Cllr Lois Samuel	West Devon Borough Council
	Cllr Arnold Saunders	Salford City Council
	Cllr Jeanie Bell	St Helens Council
	Cllr Amanda Chadderton	Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
	Cllr Asher Craig	Bristol City Council
	Cllr James Dawson	Erewash Borough Council
	Cllr Karen Lucioni	Isle of Wight Council
Apologies	Cllr Jas Athwal	
	Cllr Tracey Dixon	
	Cllr Jon Ball	
Substitutes	Cllr Carleene Lee-Phakoe	
	Cllr James Swindlehurst	
	Cllr Kris Brown	
	Cllr Tamoor Tariq	
	Cllr John Riley	
	Cllr Chidi Nweke	
In Attendance	Ed Wallis	Locality
	Sara Khan	Independent Adviser for Social Cohesion and Resilience
	Jane Farrington	
	Penny Phillips	
LGA Officers	Mark Norris	
	Ellie Greenwood	
	Lucy Ellender	
	Charles Loft	
	Rachel Duke	
	Jade Hall	
	Jessica Norman	
	Tahmina Akther	
	Caroline Horner	
	Emma Munkhdalai	

