



# **Executive Advisory Board**

Agenda

Thursday, 7 December 2023  
2.00 pm

Smith Square 1&2, Ground Floor, 18 Smith  
Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

There will be a meeting of the Executive Advisory Board at **2.00 pm on Thursday, 7 December 2023** Smith Square 1&2, Ground Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ.

### **LGA Hybrid Meetings**

All of our meetings are available to join in person at [18 Smith Square](#) or remotely via videoconference as part of our hybrid approach. We will ask you to confirm in advance if you will be joining each meeting in person or remotely so we can plan accordingly, if you wish to attend the meeting in person, please also remember to confirm whether you have any dietary/accessibility requirements. 18 Smith Square is a Covid-19 secure venue and measures are in place to keep you safe when you attend a meeting or visit the building in person.

[Please see guidance for Members and Visitors to 18 Smith Square here](#)

### **Catering and Refreshments:**

If the meeting is scheduled to take place at lunchtime, a sandwich lunch will be available.

### **Political Group meetings and pre-meetings for Lead Members:**

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

### **Attendance:**

Your attendance, whether it be in person or virtual, will be noted by the clerk at the meeting.

### **LGA Contact:**

Alexander Saul  
02076 643273 / [alexander.saul@local.gov.uk](mailto:alexander.saul@local.gov.uk)

### **Carers' Allowance**

As part of the LGA Members' Allowances Scheme, a Carer's Allowance of National Living Wage and/or London Living Wage is available to cover the cost of dependants (i.e. children, elderly people or people with disabilities) incurred as a result of attending this meeting.

## Executive Advisory Board – Membership 2023/24

[Click here for accessible information on membership](#)

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Authority</b>
<b>Labour ( 14)</b>	
Cllr Shaun Davies (Chair)	Telford and Wrekin Council
Cllr Nesil Caliskan (Vice-Chair)	Enfield Council
Cllr Bev Craig (Deputy Chair)	Manchester City Council
Cllr Michael Payne (Deputy Chair)	Gedling Borough Council
Cllr Georgia Gould (Deputy Chair)	Camden Council
Cllr Tudor Evans OBE (Deputy Chair)	Plymouth City Council
Cllr Louise Gittins (Board Chair)	Cheshire West and Chester Council
Cllr Satvir Kaur (Board Chair)	Southampton City Council
Cllr Darren Rodwell (Board Chair)	Barking and Dagenham London Borough Council
Cllr Peter Marland (Board Chair)	Milton Keynes Council
Cllr Robert Stewart (Regional Representative)	WLGA
Cllr Graeme Miller (Regional Representative)	North East of England
Cllr David Baines (Regional Representative)	North West Regional Leaders' Board
Sir Stephen Houghton CBE	SIGOMA
<b>Conservative ( 13)</b>	
Cllr Kevin Bentley (Senior Vice-Chair)	Essex County Council
Cllr Izzi Seccombe OBE (Deputy Chairman)	Warwickshire County Council
Cllr David Fothergill (Deputy Chairman)	Somerset Council
Cllr Morris Bright MBE (Deputy Chairman)	Hertsmere Borough Council
Cllr Abi Brown (Deputy Chair)	Stoke-on-Trent City Council
Cllr Martin Tett (Board Chair)	Buckinghamshire Council
Cllr Matthew Hicks (Regional Representative)	East of England LGA
Cllr Jason Smithers (Regional Representative)	East Midlands Councils
Cllr Alan White (Regional Representative)	West Midlands
Cllr John Hart (Regional Representative)	South West Councils
Cllr Nick Adams-King (Regional Representative)	South East Councils
Cllr Sam Chapman-Allen	District Councils Network
Cllr Tim Oliver	County Councils Network

<b>Liberal Democrat ( 4)</b>	
Cllr Joe Harris (Vice-Chair)	Cotswold District Council
Cllr Bridget Smith (Deputy Chair)	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Cllr Heather Kidd MBE (Board Chair)	Shropshire Council
Cllr Liz Green (Board Chair)	Kingston upon Thames Royal Borough Council
<b>Independent ( 4)</b>	
Cllr Marianne Overton MBE (Vice-Chair)	North Kesteven District Council
Cllr Caroline Jackson (Deputy Chair)	Lancaster City Council
Cllr Andrew Cooper (Balancing Member)	Kirklees Metropolitan Council
Cllr Tony Saffell (Balancing Member)	North West Leicestershire District Council

## Agenda

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### Executive Advisory Board

Thursday, 7 December 2023

2.00 pm

Smith Square 1&2, Ground Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

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Item	Page	Timings
1. Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest		2.00
2. Minutes of the previous meeting	1 - 4	2.05
3. LGA Lobbying Headlines	5 - 12	2.10
4. King's Speech 2023	13 - 28	2.30
5. 2023 Autumn Statement	29 - 36	3.00

**Date of Next Meeting:** Thursday, 25 January 2024, 2.15 pm, Westminster Room, 8th Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ



## Minutes of last Executive Advisory Board meeting

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### Executive Advisory Board

Thursday, 19 October 2023

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

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### Attendance

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

Item	Decisions and actions
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<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest</b>
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The Vice-Chairman, Cllr Kevin Bentley welcomed members to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Shaun Davies, Joe Harris, Heather Kidd, Abi Brown, Morris Bright and Sam Chapman-Allen. No declarations of interest were made.

<b>2</b>	<b>Lobbying Document</b>
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Sarah Pickup, Acting Chief Executive, introduced the report which set out key areas of work at the LGA. Key issues included the upcoming Autumn Statement and Asylum and Resettlement. Since the circulation of the agenda, the LGA had done further work on RAAC in particular.

Members made the following comments:

- Members expressed concern that the LGA lacked visibility to some Ministers
- Following queries on engagement at party conference, it was noted that the LGA was well represented at the Green and Plaid Cymru party conferences. Proactive and sustained relationship building was critical and would continue following conference season
- In relation to retrofit of housing, the associated skills shortage was raised
- Members discussed the Office for Local Government (Oflog) and the pros and cons of more in-depth and interrogative Corporate Peer Challenges being delivered by the LGA.
- There was a balance between being a “critical friend” whilst acknowledging that a level of rigour and direction from the Department was to be expected given government funding is provided to support CPC delivery.
- Some councils would experience financial challenge regardless of how effective their CPC is.
- It was suggested that Oflog representatives be invited to shadow a CPC
- Members discussed approaches to lobbying for funding, including as an offer to reduce spending elsewhere. For example, investment in sport as part of social prescribing to prevent further spending in health and wellbeing and help support local economic growth.

Members heard the following in response:

- Our work has recognised the green skills gap and associated opportunities to create green jobs
- There were ongoing discussions with Oflog to work collaboratively and prevent duplication of work
- Prevention would be a large theme in the Local Government White Paper
- CPCs were being reviewed, and it was important they were sufficiently challenging so councils got the best feedback out of it
- Councils with financial challenges that may need to approach the government for support might benefit from having had a recent rigorous CPC demonstrating the actions it has been taking to address these challenges

**Decision:**

The Executive Advisory Board noted the report.

**3 Update on Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC)**

In confidential session, Mark Norris, Principal Policy Adviser, updated the Board on the LGA's activity concerning Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) since the previous meeting.

**Decision:**

The executive Advisory agreed to the recommendations set out in Paragraph 25 of the report.

**4 Autumn Statement submission and campaign**

Nicky Old, Director of Communications, updated members on the planned media campaign surrounding the LGA's submission to the Government's Autumn Statement which was yet to be published.

**5 Current issues and asks in Asylum and Resettlement**

Sally Burlington, Director of Policy (People), updated members on a meeting due to be held between the LGA Asylum Task Group and the Minister for Immigration.

Members raised concerns around community safety and cohesion as well as pressures on local housing availability and services.

**Decision:**

The Executive Advisory Board agreed to write to the Minister for Immigration ahead of the meeting.

**6 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the Executive Advisory Board meeting held on Thursday 7 September 2023 were agreed as an accurate record.



**Appendix A -Attendance**

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman		
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Nesil Caliskan	Enfield Council
	Cllr Marianne Overton MBE	North Kesteven District Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Tudor Evans OBE	Plymouth City Council
	Cllr Bridget Smith	South Cambridgeshire District Council
	Cllr Caroline Jackson	Lancaster City Council
Members	Cllr Louise Gittins	Cheshire West and Chester Council
	Cllr Satvir Kaur	Southampton City Council
	Cllr Kevin Bentley	Essex County Council
	Cllr Izzi Seccombe OBE	Warwickshire County Council
	Cllr David Fothergill	Somerset Council
	Cllr Martin Tett	Buckinghamshire Council
	Cllr Liz Green	Kingston upon Thames Royal Borough Council
	Cllr Andrew Cooper	Kirklees Metropolitan Council
	Cllr Tony Saffell	North West Leicestershire District Council
	Nick Adams-King	South East Councils
	Cllr Tim Oliver	County Councils Network
Apologies	Cllr Shaun Davies	Telford and Wrekin Council
	Cllr Bev Craig	Manchester City Council
	Cllr Michael Payne	Gedling Borough Council
	Cllr Georgia Gould	Camden Council
	Cllr Darren Rodwell	Barking and Dagenham London Borough Council
	Cllr Peter Marland	Milton Keynes Council
	Cllr Morris Bright MBE	Hertsmere Borough Council
	Cllr Abi Brown	Stoke-on-Trent City Council
	Cllr Joe Harris	Cotswold District Council
	Cllr Heather Kidd MBE	Shropshire Council
	Cllr Robert Stewart	WLGA
	Cllr David Baines	North West Regional Leaders' Board
	Cllr Sam Chapman-Allen	District Councils Network
LGA Officers	Sarah Pickup	Acting Chief Executive
	Sally Burlington	Director of Policy (People)
	Nicky Old	Director of Comms
	Mark Norris	Principal Policy Adviser
	Emilia Peters	Member Services Officer
	Alexander Saul	Executive Assistant to the Chair
	Amy Haldane	Assistant Member Services Manager

## Appendix B

### Executive Advisory Board Actions List

<b>Board Meeting</b>	<b>Action Taken</b>	<b>Status</b>
19 October 2023	The Executive Advisory Board agreed to write to the Minister for Immigration ahead of the meeting between the LGA Asylum Task Group and the Minister for Immigration.	Sent on 25 October.

## LGA Lobbying Headlines

### Critical issues

**Financial and service pressures** – It was hugely disappointing that the Autumn Statement did not provide the funding needed to protect children’s and adults’ services.

Our recently updated funding gap analysis shows the cost to councils of delivering their services at current levels will exceed their core funding by £2.4 billion in 2023/24 and £1.6 billion in 2024/25. The analysis excludes the resources needed to address existing underfunding in areas such as the adult social care provider market, children’s social care, SEND and homelessness, nor does it include funding to improve or expand council services. In the run up to the Local Government Finance Settlement, we will continue to push the Government for sufficient, sustainable, multi-year settlements for local government and to provide clarity on the future of the New Homes Bonus and local government finance reforms.

**Workforce capacity** – According to our latest Workforce Survey, more than 9 in 10 councils are experiencing difficulties with senior leadership and front-line service delivery roles. As part of the Sector Support offer for 2023/24 we are working with Solace and the sector to create a new national recruitment campaign that will promote the benefits of working in local government and highlighting the potential variety in a career in the sector. We are calling for medium-term financial settlements and sufficient funding to enable effective workforce planning, recruitment and retention in addition to compliance with government’s future National Living Wage policy.

**Asylum and resettlement** – Concerns about how current programmes are being managed remain acute. We are raising councils’ concerns around housing and homelessness, cohesion and safeguarding as a result of recent policy and process changes by the Home Office, including hotel maximisation, large site use, and much shorter notice of Home Office support ending as part of the streamlined asylum process. These are exacerbated by pressures resulting from Afghan hotel closure, Ukrainian homelessness presentations and high numbers of arrivals, including of lone children. We continue to stress that the Government should take account of the cumulative impact of all these pressures in existing regional plans for asylum dispersal, and are arguing for more effective engagement at political level, and clarity about how the Illegal Migration Act is to be implemented.

**Private rented sector reform** – The Renters (Reform) Bill - which aims to improve the system for private renters and landlords in England - was carried over into the King’s Speech on 7 November, and is currently in Committee Stage. While there is much in the Bill for the LGA to support, including abolishing unfair Section 21 “no fault” evictions; ending the system of assured shorthold tenancies; creating a new register of PRS landlords and establishing an Ombudsman for the PRS to help tenants and landlords to resolve disputes, further measures are required to fully realise our shared ambition for a fairer, more secure, and higher quality private rented sector. The Bill places significant new regulatory and enforcement responsibilities on councils and for the reforms to be effective, it is vital that councils are properly resourced.

**Housebuilding** – We have set out how councils can go faster and further, resuming their historic role as major builders of affordable homes by implementing [a six-point plan](#) for social housing. Our plan includes rolling out five-year local housing deals to all areas of the country that want them by 2025 – combining funding from multiple national housing programmes into a single pot; Government support to set up a new national council housebuilding delivery taskforce; continued access to preferential borrowing rates through the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB); further reform to Right to Buy; reviewing and increasing where needed the grant levels per home through the Affordable Homes Programme, as inflationary pressures have caused the cost of building new homes to rise; certainty on future rents, to enable councils to invest. The Government must commit to a minimum 10-year rent deal for council landlords to allow a longer period of annual rent increases and long-term certainty.

We are pleased that the Government has extended until June 2025 the Public Works Loan Board policy margin announced at Spring Budget 2023 to support local authority investment in social housing.

Whitehall has set out its own long-term plan for housing, including plans to extend permitted development rights. We continue to make the case that these rights should be revoked as homes created through these rights are often of poor quality that impact people's health and well-being.

**Homelessness** – We are pleased that the Government has acted on our urgent and consistent calls to restore Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates to the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile of market rents. However, we are disappointed that the Autumn Statement did not include a commitment to uprate the Local Housing Allowance rate to determine the subsidy for claims in respect of people living in temporary accommodation as the maximum subsidy, which remains capped at 90 per cent of the January 2011 rates. It is critical that this higher level of subsidy is available as local authorities spent £1.74 billion supporting 104,000 households in temporary accommodation, both the highest figures since records began. We continue to seek an explicit, national-level focus on homelessness prevention work (with an associated funding regime) that addresses the drivers and levers of homelessness, enables councils to avoid residents reaching crisis, and reduces demand for temporary accommodation and emergency homelessness responses.

**Data** – We are continuing to lobby on the importance of providing an opportunity for local government to collaborate and help shape the Office for Local Government's (Oflog's) work capturing and sharing good practice building on current work and expertise of the sector.

Oflog have recently set out another suite of metrics that they are looking to add to their dashboard. These metrics are already on our award winning benchmarking platform, LG Inform. We are aware that Oflog are looking to pilot their approach to having "early warning conversations" with councils and potential peer reviews. We continue to raise with Oflog the need to ensure that this work is not duplicating the LGA's work in this area including the work of our regional teams and member peers and our corporate peer challenge programme. We will submit evidence setting out our concerns to the LUHC select committee inquiry into Oflog.

**Children's social care** – Challenges around placements for children in care, particularly those with the most complex needs, remain critical, with the continued use of unregulated placements for some children due to a lack of regulated provision. Costs are escalating

rapidly amid difficulties in finding placements able or willing to provide appropriate support. The Government plans to establish two “Regional Care Cooperative” pathfinders involving around 20 councils to trial new approaches to commissioning provision, along with investment for some councils in fostering recruitment and retention work. However, the sector has significant concerns that these will not deliver change at the scale and pace required.

**Adult social care** – We used our Autumn Statement submission (and accompanying public-facing media and campaigning work) to highlight the continuing pressures on adult social care, despite the investment announced at Autumn Statement 2022. In particular we highlighted directors’ concerns about meeting statutory duties on market sustainability and prevention, the scale of the recruitment and retention challenge facing the care workforce, and persistent levels of unmet and under-met need. Our joint press release with ADASS highlighted the pressures facing the sector, including planned in-year overspends.

In our response to the Autumn Statement, we expressed our disappointment at the lack of new investment for adult social care and were clear that the government should not think that the adult social care system is fixed. While we also welcomed the increase in the National Living Wage, we pointed out that care providers will expect to see their increased wage costs reflected in the fees councils pay.

On assurance, the five pilot councils have now completed their CQC assessment and received their assessment reports and indicative ratings. 4 of the 5 received an indicative rating of ‘Good’, and the other received an indicative rating of ‘Requires Improvement’. Full rollout of assurance is due to commence early in the new year and we continue to push CQC and DHSC for clarity on when the first tranche of 20 councils to go through assurance will be notified.

**SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)** – We are engaging with the Department for Education at both Ministerial and official levels on the proposals in the SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan. We welcome the proposed national standards, which will clarify the support available, who will be responsible for delivering it, and the focus on early identification of needs and support. The focus on improving levels of mainstream inclusion is also welcome and will be crucial to both improving outcomes for children with SEND and reducing pressures on high needs budgets. However, we have expressed concerns that the proposals do not fully address the fundamental demand and cost pressures that prevent councils from effectively meeting the needs of all children and young people with special needs. We are calling for councils to be given more powers to lead local SEND systems and to intervene when children are not adequately supported. A programme of sector led support to mirror what is available for children’s social care would be helpful.

As a result of our engagement, the department has agreed to set up an elected member sounding board to allow for discussions and feedback on implementing the plan. Working with CCN, we have also commissioned independent research to ascertain whether the SEND and AP improvement plan proposals will improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND while allowing councils to manage and eliminate their high needs deficits.

## Other issues of importance for the sector

**Devolution, Economic Growth and Levelling Up** – The Government published a framework for extending deeper devolution to existing Level 3 Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs). The Level 4 framework provides new powers for MCAs to draw down on, and, based on the trailblazer deals negotiated with the Greater Manchester and West Midlands Combined Authorities, plans to roll out single settlements to Level 4 mayoral areas. The Government’s framework for devolution is an important step which the LGA has long called for. We will continue to advocate for a genuine ‘local first’ approach to policy making across Whitehall, and support calls for a National Devolution Baseline for England.

Government announced a Long Term Plan for Towns, which will see £1.1 billion allocated to 55 towns over the next 10 years. Government also announced projects awarded funding from the third and final round of the Levelling Up Fund. It is positive that both funding announcements have been allocated on the basis of need and not via competition, as we had proposed. We will work with DLUHC officials on next steps to the plan for towns in line with the Make it Local report.

**Planning** – The Government has committed in the Autumn Statement to ensuring councils will in the future be able to set planning fees to cover the full cost of processing major applications which will mean local taxpayers no longer have to subsidise these costs. This is welcome and we will continue to work with DLUHC on the details in due course. Legislative amendments to increase planning application fees will also take effect on 6 December 2023. Application fees will increase by 25% across the board, rising to 35% for major schemes.

The Government will be announcing a consultation on a new Permitted Development Right (PDR) for subdividing houses into two flats without changing the façade. It is disappointing that the Government continues to extend national permitted development rights further. We continue to call for PDRs to be urgently revoked as they undermine the plan-led system and local democracy.

**Cost of living pressures in communities** - We are very pleased that the Government has acted on our calls for a third round of the Local Authority Housing Fund which will help councils support families to move into their own homes and reduce homelessness risks amidst reduced supply of temporary and move-on accommodation for councils.

We held an event in Parliament with the APPG on Ending the Need for Foodbanks on 13 September, where MPs and Cllr Sharma Tatler from the LGA’s cost of living members advisory group demonstrated how councils have used the grant to reduce poverty and build financial resilience.

We continue to work closely with DWP and we are surveying the sector this month to build an evidence base on the impact of the grant.

**Early education and childcare** – Councils are considering the implementation of extended access to free early education and childcare. However, the early years sector is facing financial and sustainability challenges and these changes will cause further pressure. These changes are also building on a complex and difficult to navigate system and will place significant additional pressure onto council teams. We are stressing the need for additional

funding for local government to support the market and parents and carers, workforce support and capital funding, as well as pressing for assurance that early entitlements will be fully funded to ensure the financial sustainability of the sector.

**Climate change** – The LGA continue to work with DESNZ on the Local Net Zero Forum, which is working jointly on a business case for devolving council retrofit funding, initially through MCA trailblazer agreements. LGA Chair and LINZ Lead Members met with Ministers as part of the second Ministerial Local Net Zero meeting, discussing devolution and funding simplification. The LGA has continue campaigning, launching polling, holding parliamentary events, and engaging on the detail of a range of policy, including on retrofit, grid, transport and more.

**Public health** – We continue to make the case for multi-year settlements and for more long-term certainty around public health funding. We are pushing for an increased focus on prevention, achieved through an uplift to the public health grant. This will support the Government's wider aims by improving health outcomes, reducing health spending, and putting social care and the NHS on a better footing for the long term.

**Smokefree Generation and Teen Vaping** – As legislation progresses through Parliament, we continue to support the Government's ambition of creating a smokefree generation. We want tighter controls on the sale and marketing of vapes to children and a complete ban on the sale of disposable vapes. The LGA is concerned about the impact vaping is having on children and young people and the environment impact of discarded vapes.

**Education** – Since the abandonment of the Schools Bill, we are calling for the Department for Education to bring forward alternative legislative arrangements to introduce a register of children being electively home educated, accompanied by sufficient powers for councils to check that home educated children are receiving a suitable provision, where concerns have been raised that this is not the case. The Schools White Paper proposed that greater inclusion could be achieved by statutory regulation of the academy sector by the DfE. This proposal was also included in the Schools Bill. In the Bill's absence, we are calling for DfE to set out how similar outcomes can be achieved without the need for underpinning statutory powers.

**Environment** – The LGA continue to press the case for crucial further details in the operation of Biodiversity Net Gain, government is due to publish much of this soon as part of a wider nature strategy. We continue to work with officials on these issues. Defra has now published details of the responsible authorities for Local Nature Recovery Strategies and confirmed funding allocations to develop these. However, vital information still needs to be added around the role of local planning authorities, including guidance on how LNRSs will regard local plans.

**Waste** – The LGA continue to engage Government and councils on the detail of the new Extended Producer Responsibility scheme, which transfers the costs (estimated £900m a year for England) for dealing with packaging waste from the state to producers. We are also engaging Government on the detail of the 'simpler recycling' reforms, which while including some significant lobbying wins, present some new concerns. We also continue to press the Government on the solution for treating products containing Persistent Organic Pollutants,

the Emissions Trading Scheme application to Energy from Waste, waste prevention strategy, fly-tipping, and single-use vapes.

**Adults with care and support needs** – We remain concerned about the rollout of the ‘Right Care, Right Person’ (RCRP) National Partnership Agreement on Mental Health and Policing. Implementation should be planned and we need a clearer understanding of the impact on social services. The Chair is hosting a roundtable to discuss this in January 2024. We are asking for an increase in suicide prevention funding alongside the launch of the new Suicide Prevention Strategy.

We are calling for Government to [invest in therapeutic-led reablement](#). We are also calling for a focus on prevention and recovery services to reduce pressures in hospitals ahead of winter, including steps to support the voluntary sector to provide fast, low-level support. We need more funding for home adaptations so that councils can upgrade existing stock, and are pressing for simplification of the Disabled Facilities Grant process.

**Supported housing** – We need long term, sustainable funding for councils to commission supported housing as well as well working with DLUHC to ensure the upcoming supported housing act is implemented in a way that takes into account council pressures and improves outcomes for residents.

**Transport** – The LGA continues to call for longer-term, multi-year funding certainty to help patronage levels recover and grow and stick to commitments in the National Bus Strategy. We have said the Government should reverse its decision to reduce active travel spending by over £200 million over the next two years, and we continue to lobby for more funding for road maintenance as 20-25 per cent cost increases in the sector have resulted in increased repair backlogs and deterioration of road quality.

**Digital** – We continue to raise concerns with DSIT around the transfer of all analogue lines (Public Switch Telephone Network or PSTN) to digital internet-based infrastructure by 2025. We are calling on DSIT to coordinate the multiple bodies involved in the switchover and build on the LGA's communications campaign and wider support for the sector.

**Civility in public life** – A new report looking at what more councils can do to support councillors was published at LGA Annual Conference 2023. In light of international events and rising community tensions that may impact elected members, we wrote to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Michael Gove MP, in October to ask him to urgently amend the existing legislation so that councillors may choose not to have their full home address on the public register. The Home Office is also conducting a Protective Security Review and in November, the LGA facilitated a Roundtable with Home Office officials and councillors who have experienced significant abuse, threats and in some cases physical assaults. We are raising significant concerns about councillor safety and funding for physical security measures through this review.

**Elections delivery** – The Electoral Commission published its full review of the May 2023 elections, including the implementation of Voter ID in September 2023. It finds that some groups struggled to meet the ID requirement, and recommends government improve accessibility and support people who do not have accepted ID. The Commission is working with the electoral sector, including the LGA, to consider bolstering the capacity of electoral services and polling activities. A response to the Commission's report is expected on 30



November. The LGA continues to engage with the Government on implementing provisions in the Elections Act 2022 in the run-up to the 2024 electoral period.



## King's Speech 2023

### Purpose of Report

For information.

**Is this report confidential? No**

### Summary

To update the Executive Advisory Board of the Local Government Association (LGA) on the November 2023 King's Speech and to seek approval on the Bills the LGA should prioritise, based on the organisation's business plan and advocacy priorities, for the purpose of its lobbying.

**LGA Plan Theme: Strengthening our Voice**

### Recommendation(s)

**That the Executive Advisory Board discusses and agrees the recommended prioritisation of the LGA's legislative lobbying for the next parliamentary session.**

**We will use your feedback to take forward the LGA's legislative lobbying.**

### Contact details

Contact officer: Colm Howard-Lloyd

Position: Head of Public Affairs and Stakeholder Engagement

Phone no: 0207 664 3232 / 07932 230097

Email: colm.howard-lloyd@local.gov.uk

## King's Speech 2023

### Background

1. The King's Speech announced the Government's agenda for the next Parliamentary session of 2023-2024. The Speech contained some measures that will be of relevance to councils and this paper seeks to summarise the key Government Bills that will come before Parliament and proposes a prioritisation for the LGA's engagement with them.
2. The Speech did not make any other policy announcements. The LGA continues to lobby on many other issues that are important to the sector (this broader set of issues is addressed via the Lobbying Headlines document and set out in our organisation's Business Plan). The LGA will of course also continue to use its parliamentary communications to provide thought leadership and influence parliamentary reports and debates in order to help our efforts to shape decision-making.
3. The [full King's Speech can be found on the Government's website](#).

### Issues

4. Following a King's Speech, the LGA uses its business plan to prioritise the legislation and key policy announcements that the organisation will seek to influence. This prioritisation is based on cross-party political direction to ensure that, by focusing our lobbying, the best results are achieved for local government. This also provides councils with an early view of Bills they may wish to work with the LGA on to influence. Following an assessment of the implications of the Government's agenda, we are using the following system of prioritisation:
  - 4.1. **High profile engagement:** For a Bill identified as high profile, the LGA lobbies at each stage of the Bill's passage through Parliament, works with our network of MPs and Peers to table any relevant amendments, uses media, social media and stakeholder engagement to keep our priorities on the national agenda, and proactively engages with the Government department leading the legislation.
  - 4.2. **Medium profile engagement:** For legislation which is important, but does not require as much active lobbying, we will seek to ensure – through constructive engagement with Ministers and officials – that the proposals do not negatively impact on local government. For the Bills managed under the medium profile category, our engagement is usually limited to advising on the detail of the proposals and a general briefing on key issues to Parliament, if it is required. Should the Bill be amended to have a more significant impact on local government, it can be reclassified into the 'high' category.
  - 4.3. **Monitoring:** For legislation that has limited impact on local government, or are not captured by our corporate priorities as set out in the LGA business plan, we will seek to monitor progress. The status of Bills and policy categorised under 'monitoring' will

be reviewed to ensure that any changes do not require more active participation and lobbying by the LGA.

5. We will also be exploring which Private Members Bills (PMBs) will be of interest to us and likely to carry enough support in Parliament to be passed. We will monitor these Bills and make decisions on whether to engage with them on a case by case basis, taking guidance from our policy boards as required.
6. We will also be identifying suitable opportunities to promote our priorities on issues not covered in the legislation set out in the King's Speech by tabling amendments, written and oral questions, and by lobbying for further legislation. This includes remote meetings, publication of councillors' addresses, and buses.
7. We will engage with other relevant and important Green Papers, White Papers and strategies as they are brought forward. We will also look out for any secondary legislation that impact on our work which we need to respond to.
8. As this is a period in the run up to a General Election, the LGA will need to ensure that we are using skills, capacity and resources to support our work around our own White Paper – one of the priorities of our political leadership – and preparing for the next government, including the first King's Speech. We may therefore need to make a decision, in conjunction with political leaders, about re-prioritisation over the next 12 months.
9. Set out below is the proposed prioritisation of legislation and policy announcements in the King's Speech which have been identified as being of interest to councils. The King's Speech briefing, which outlines the overview of these Bills and sets out an initial LGA view, is annexed.

<b>High priority</b>	<b>Medium priority</b>	<b>Monitoring</b>
Tobacco and Vapes Bill	Automated Vehicles Bill	Football Governance Bill
Renters (Reform) Bill – carried over	Economic Activity of Public Bodies (Overseas Matters) Bill – carried over	Leasehold and Freehold Bill
Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill	Pedicabs (London) Bill	
	The Criminal Justice Bill	
	Victims and Prisoners Bill – carried over	
	Offshore Petroleum Licensing Bill	

### **Implications for Wales**

10. We anticipate that the territorial jurisdiction of the legislation we are set to engage with will be limited to England. We will however update WLGA as required, particularly if it becomes clear that a piece of UK Government legislation is significant for them.

### **Financial Implications**

11. None

### **Equalities implications**

12. None

### **Next steps**

13. We will use your feedback to take forward the LGA's legislative lobbying.

## Annex A

### Offshore Petroleum Licensing Bill

- *Legislation will be introduced to strengthen the United Kingdom's energy security and reduce reliance on volatile international energy markets and hostile foreign regimes. This Bill will support the future licensing of new oil and gas fields, helping the country transition to net zero by 2050 without adding undue burdens on households.*
- *The Offshore Petroleum Licensing Bill will make the UK more energy independent by increasing investor and industry confidence with regular annual oil and gas licensing. The Bill's emissions tests will ensure that future licensing supports the transition to net zero.*
- *The Bill will enhance the UK's energy security and reduce dependence on higher emission imports from overseas, including from countries like Russia - protecting the domestic oil and gas industry that supports more than 200,000 jobs as we grow the UK economy and realise our net zero target in a pragmatic, proportionate and realistic way.*
- *The UK has cut emissions further and faster than any other major economy and is proud to be a world leader in reducing emissions, but we can and must go further. This is why we have one of the world's most ambitious 2030 emissions targets and why the Government is taking the necessary long-term decisions to put us firmly on track to deliver net zero in 2050.*

### **LGA view**

- Government's specific commitment to continue working to secure record amounts of investment in renewable energy sources is important. Plans to reform grid connections and improve the energy efficiency of homes whilst boosting investments in clean technologies will grow the economy and create jobs.
- Net zero can only be achieved with central government working with local government and with business to establish a deliverable plan for achieving net zero in an affordable and inclusive way. The plan needs to include multi-year place-based funding allocations stimulating the market to respond on skills, workforce, and materials supply chains. [Local Climate Action would achieve net zero by 2050 while saving taxpayers around £140 billion](#) when compared to national approaches and returning an additional £400 billion in wider co-benefits.

### Automated Vehicles Bill

- *The Automated Vehicles Bill is intended to be one of the world's most comprehensive legal frameworks for self-driving vehicles. It will set a rigorous safety framework for self-driving vehicles, with safety at its core. It will:*
  - *Set the threshold for self-driving vehicles in law*
  - *Hold companies firmly accountable once vehicles are on roads*
  - *Introduce processes to investigate and learn from incidents*
  - *Require local authorities to send the legal orders they make (for example, to set speed limits, close roads and designate parking bays) to a central publication platform*

- *Create new organisations responsible for self-driving and protect users from being unfairly held accountable.*

#### **LGA view**

- [Autonomous Vehicles have potential to dramatically improve people's quality of life](#) especially in areas where bus services struggle to support them. It is important that the law keeps up with new technology and trends in the way we travel.
- Councils will continue to prioritise safety and public health, regardless of mode of travel, alongside plans to keep roads congestion free, buses moving and make walking and cycling the first choice for short journeys to reduce carbon emissions and improve health and wellbeing.
- Councils are already leading the way in digitalising their Traffic Regulation Orders to manage their streets more effectively and efficiently while preparing the ground for autonomous vehicles. It is important that these changes end a long overdue, outdated and expensive requirement for TROs, and other council notices, to be published in local newspapers.
- Government also needs to act to help pedestrians and road users today by regulating the estimated 750,000 private e-scooters already on our roads, the majority of which are used illegally and by banning pavement parking, which would make footpaths accessible to all parts of society.

#### **Tobacco and Vapes Bill**

- *The Bill will create the first smokefree generation so children born on or after 1 January 2009 (turning 14 this year or younger) will never be able to be legally sold cigarettes. This will mean effectively raising the age of sale by one year each year for this generation, to prevent them and future generations from ever taking up smoking in the first place.*
- *The Government is looking at new regulations to reduce the appeal and availability of vapes to children – while ensuring that vapes remain available for adult smokers to quit. Proposals include restricting the flavours and descriptions of vapes so they are no longer targeted at children; regulating point of sale displays so that vapes are kept out of sight of children; regulating vape packaging and product presentation, ensuring that neither are targeted to children and closing loopholes in the law which allow children to get free samples and buy non-nicotine vapes.*
- *The Bill will strengthen enforcement activity with new powers to fine - on the spot - rogue retailers who sell tobacco products or vapes to people underage.*
- *The Government is also considering measures to restrict the sale and supply of disposable vapes (including considering prohibiting their sale) and action on the affordability of vapes, including exploring a new duty on vapes.*

#### **LGA view**

- Smoking remains one of the leading causes of preventable ill health, disability, and death in England. We believe this is a [progressive piece of legislation that would undoubtedly impact on population level smoking prevalence](#), and ultimately reduce rates of smoking-related disease.
- Raising the legal age for tobacco purchase has been shown to reduce the likelihood



of young people starting to smoke. To make such a policy effective, we support strict enforcement measures and tough penalties for selling tobacco and e-cigarettes to those underaged.

- To help Trading Standards teams in the long term, the LGA continues to call on the Government to boost the future pipeline of qualified trading standards officers through a dedicated apprenticeship fund, investing in regional support networks, and enabling councils to recover more of the costs of running regulatory services. It is also essential that councils receive multi-year public health grant settlements and more long-term certainty around public health funding for all councils.
- With over 260 million disposable vapes thrown away each year, single use vapes blight our streets as litter, are a hazard in our bin lorries, and are expensive and difficult to deal with in our recycling centres. Their colours, flavours and advertising are appealing to children and their long-term health impacts are unknown. Young people who have never smoked should also be discouraged from using vapes.
- We believe a ban on disposable vapes is the next crucial step toward protecting our planet and our children.

### **Leasehold and Freehold Bill**

- *The Bill will improve home ownership for leaseholders in England and Wales, by making it cheaper and easier for more leaseholders to extend their lease, buy their freehold, and take over management of their building.*
- *The Bill will introduce the following measures:*
  - *Make it cheaper and easier for existing leaseholders in houses and flats to extend their lease or buy their freehold - so that leaseholders pay less to gain security over the future of their home.*
  - *Increase the standard lease extension term from 90 years to 990 years for both houses and flats, with ground rent reduced to £0.*
  - *Remove the requirement for a new leaseholder to have owned their house or flat for two years before they can benefit from the above changes.*
  - *Increase the 25 per cent 'non-residential' limit preventing leaseholders in buildings with a mixture of homes and other uses such as shops and offices, from buying their freehold or taking over management of their buildings – to allow leaseholders in buildings with up to 50 per cent non-residential floorspace to buy their freehold or take over its management.*
  - *Make buying or selling a leasehold property quicker and easier by setting a maximum time and fee for the provision of information required to make a sale (such as building insurance or financial records) to a leaseholder by their freeholder.*
  - *A requirement for transparency over leaseholders' service charges – so all leaseholders receive better transparency over the costs they are being charged by their freeholder or managing agent in a standardised comparable format.*
  - *Replace buildings insurance commissions for managing agents, landlords*

*and freeholders with transparent administration fees.*

- *Extend access to “redress” schemes for leaseholders to challenge poor practice. There will be a requirement for more freeholders to belong to a redress scheme.*
- *The presumption for leaseholders to pay their freeholders’ legal costs when challenging poor practice will be scrapped.*
- *Freehold homeowners on private and mixed tenure estates will be granted the same rights of redress as leaseholders – by extending equivalent rights to transparency over their estate charges, access to support via redress schemes, and to challenge the charges they pay by taking a case to a Tribunal.*
- *Protect leaseholders by extending measures in the Building Safety Act 2022 to ensure freeholders and developers are unable to escape their liabilities to fund building remediation work.*
- *A ban on the creation of new leasehold houses so that - other than in exceptional circumstances - every new house in England and Wales will be freehold from the outset.*

#### **LGA view**

- We support the broad intention of the Bill to make leasehold ownership fairer and more affordable for leaseholders, as well as the proposal to ban the creation of new leasehold houses.
- We will work with government and councils to understand and address any unintended consequences of the measures on councils in their role as registered providers of social housing.
- We welcome the proposal to require more freeholders to belong to a redress scheme, so that leaseholders have a clear route for challenging poor or illegal practice. We also support the proposal for freehold homeowners on private and mixed tenure estates to be granted the same rights of redress as leaseholders. It will be vital that the redress scheme has the appropriate set of powers and resources to effectively and efficiently tackle poor-performance and prevent reoccurrence of issues.
- It will be vital that any new requirements on councils to ensure compliance with the legislation is fully funded through new burdens funding.
- The LGA has long argued that [leaseholders should not have to pay the costs of making their homes safe](#) and has supported the provisions in the Building Safety Act 2022 designed to protect leaseholders. Measure to extend the protections for leaseholders are a positive step.

#### **Renters (Reform) Bill – carried over**

- *The Renters Reform Bill [published](#) in May 2023 with an accompanying briefing [paper](#) aims to provide greater security and certainty of quality accommodation for renters, while helping landlords get their property back swiftly when needed.*

- *The Bill will introduce the following measures:*
  - *Abolition of Section 21 ‘no fault evictions’. This will not commence until stronger possession grounds and a new court process is in place.*
  - *Strengthened landlord grounds for possession, adding new mandatory grounds for possession; for example, if landlords wish to sell property or for repeated serious rent arrears, as well as expanding grounds for when close family members wish to move in. If a tenant breaches their tenancy agreement or damages the property, landlords will be able to evict them in as little as two weeks.*
  - *Stronger powers to evict anti-social tenants. The Bill will seek to halve the delay between a landlord serving notice for anti-social behaviour and eviction, with landlords able to make a claim in the court immediately. The criteria for disruptive and harmful activities that can lead to eviction will be broadened.*
  - *Blanket bans on pets will be ended. Tenants will have the right to request a pet, which landlords cannot unreasonably refuse. Landlords’ properties will be protected by allowing them to require insurance to cover potential damage from pets.*
  - *Creation of a digital Private Rented Property Portal to bring together key information for landlords, tenants, and councils. Landlords will quickly be able to understand their obligations and demonstrate compliance. Councils will be able to use the Portal to target enforcement where it is needed. Tenants will be able to access helpful information when entering tenancies.*
  - *Support for quicker, cheaper resolution when there are disputes - preventing them escalating to costly court proceedings – with a new Private Rented Sector Ombudsman that will provide fair, impartial and binding resolution, reducing the need to go to court.*
  - *Blanket bans on renting to tenants in receipt of benefits or with children will be made illegal, with landlords retaining the final say on who they rent to.*
  - *Protection of the student rental market in recognition that this market is largely cyclical, and landlords must be able to guarantee possession each year for a new set of tenants. A new ground for possession will be introduced to facilitate this.*
- *Alongside the Bill the Government is also taking forward wider measures to support landlords:*
  - *Speeding up the courts process so landlords can quickly regain possession of their property if a tenant refuses to move out. This work includes an initial commitment of £1.2 million to begin designing a new digital system for possessions.*
  - *Proposals to require landlords to meet Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) C from 2025 in their private rented properties will be scrapped.*

#### **LGA view**

- This Bill will help to achieve better standards in the private rented sector through increasing the rights of tenants and enabling them to better hold landlords to account. It will also increase councils’ oversight of and ability to enforce against the small

minority of landlords guilty of criminal behaviour.

- The removal of ‘no fault’ evictions is a significant step towards tackling our national homelessness crisis, but the proposed delay to implementation, while the Government addresses court backlogs is very concerning. The Government should urgently publish the evidence base for the delay and bring forward the abolition of ‘no fault’ evictions, also known as Section 21 notices which allow landlords to evict tenants without providing any explicit reason, at pace.
- We also support measures that will enable councils to keep the proceeds of financial penalties to reinvest in enforcement activity. However, this funding won’t cover the costs of the new duties in the Bill or the scale of the proactive work that is needed to improve standards for tenants.
- We will continue to work with government to ensure that councils have the right powers, skills, capacity and resources to undertake effective enforcement activity. This includes removing the requirement for Secretary of State approval for larger selective licensing schemes.
- The LGA issued a [briefing for the committee stage of the Bill](#).

### **Football Governance Bill**

- *“Legislation will be brought forward to safeguard the future of football clubs for the benefit of communities and fans.”*
- *The Bill will extend to England and Wales. It will strengthen the governance and financial resilience of football clubs to protect the national game and clubs’ link with communities and fans. It will do this by;*
  - *Establishing a new independent regulator for English football clubs to address issues of financial sustainability and ensure fans’ voices are listened to.*
  - *Creating a new, strengthened owners’ and directors’ tests to make sure a club’s custodians are suitable.*
  - *Setting a minimum standard of fan engagement, which clubs will need to meet, and requiring the support of a majority of fans for any changes to the club’s badge, name, home shirt colours.*
  - *Requiring clubs to seek the Regulator’s approval for any sale or relocation of the stadium and demonstrate how they have consulted their fans as part of this.*
  - *Preventing clubs from joining breakaway or unlicensed leagues.*
  - *Intervening as a last resort to ensure financial sustainability through the redistribution of broadcast revenue.*
  - *Establishing a compulsory ‘Football Club Corporate Governance Code’.*

### **LGA view**

- It is positive to see a new bill to introduce an independent regulator for professional clubs in the English football pyramid (IREF).
- Local football clubs are community assets that play an important social, civic [and cultural role in local communities](#). Many councils are already working in partnership

with their local football club to protect their heritage and assets and are partnering with them to support more people to be active through football. This is resulting in many clubs being used as community hubs to deliver health and wellbeing classes and services especially since the COVID-19 pandemic.

- [Long-term sustainable funding for local government, including for sporting facilities is needed](#) to enable councils to help get the nation moving and to expand and build upon its vital work with local sports clubs.
- The Bill is an important opportunity for the Government to improve equality, diversity and inclusion in clubs and parity for women's football. Doing so could help contribute to the Government's specific targets to improve the activity levels of women, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups, disabled people and individuals from lower socio-economic groups which are significantly lower following the COVID-19 pandemic.
- We call on football authorities and the Government to urgently put measures in place to better protect the welfare of players exiting the game particularly for younger players which for many can result in severe mental health issues or involvement in crime. This would help to improve individuals' life chances as well as reducing the burden on the public purse.

### **Pedicabs (London) Bill**

- *The Bill will enable Transport for London (TfL) to regulate London's pedicabs and protect passengers by conferring powers on TfL to bring forward a licensing regime for pedicabs, in a similar way to local authorities throughout the rest of England and Wales. Enforcement action against those operating without a licence or outside their licence conditions, including civil sanctions and criminal offences, will be enabled.*
- *The Bill will also provide TfL with the ability to introduce fare control to combat overcharging on pedicab services and protect consumers. TfL will be allowed to set standards for operators, drivers and their vehicles to improve the safety of pedicabs, as well as introducing insurance requirements and ensuring vehicles are road worthy.*
- *TfL will be given powers to take steps to improve congestion and tackle issues such as highways obstruction. TfL will be able to restrict the presence of pedicabs in certain areas, at certain times. This will help improve road safety and traffic-related issues in central London.*
- *Pedicab drivers will undergo criminal record and right to work checks before being allowed to carry passengers in the same way that drivers of taxis and private hire vehicles (PHVs) must do, allowing passengers to use pedicabs with confidence.*

### **LGA view**

- We welcome regulating pedicabs and improving the safety of passengers. A similar Bill has also [previously had the support of many councils in London](#).
- Councils play an important role, alongside police and other partners, in protecting their communities and ensuring that they are safe places to live. We would urge TfL, as the named licensing authority in the Bill, to consult with the relevant London boroughs to ensure that the work already being done by councils to tackle pedicab-related anti-social behaviour and safety concerns is taken into consideration when deciding the regulatory framework.

- It is also crucial that this new licensing framework is in line with the Department for Transport's taxi and PHV statutory standards, which seek to ensure that licensing authorities have robust safeguarding processes in place to protect vulnerable passengers. We also believe, when enacted, a pedicab licensing regime should fall within the scope of the National Register of Licence Revocations, Refusals and Suspensions (NR3S) database, as its use is mandated in other areas of taxi/PHV licensing.
- The LGA has consistently called for urgent reform to the outdated legislation that governs taxi and PHV licensing, and the provisions in the Automated Vehicles Bill make the need for reform even more pressing. We continue to urge the Department for Transport to bring forward a comprehensive Taxi and PHV Licensing Reform Bill to replace the current outdated legislation and make the licensing system for taxis and PHVs fit for the 21st century.

### **Economic Activity of Public Bodies (Overseas Matters) Bill – carried over**

- *The Bill seeks to remove the possibility for public bodies, including councils, to campaign against, boycott, seek divestment from, or sanction a particular territory internationally, unless endorsed by the Government's own foreign policy.*
- *The Bill repeals the long-standing restriction set out in the Local Government Act 1988 which prevents local authorities from taking territory of origin into account in procurement decisions.*
- *Instead, the Bill introduces a new restriction: "The decision-maker must not have regard to a territorial consideration in a way that would cause a reasonable observer of the decision-making process to conclude that the decision was influenced by political or moral disapproval of foreign state conduct."*
- *The Bill bans making statements in support of boycotts and prohibits public bodies from making statements that clearly indicate that they would engage in boycotts if it were legal to do so.*
- *The Bill enables restrictions imposed by the Bill to be enforceable via judicial review and restricts the court to only accept cases where the applicant "has sufficient interest in the subject matter of the proposed application". The Bill goes on to specify that such an applicant is someone "affected by the decision in question."*
- *The Local Government Pension Scheme is the only UK pension scheme affected by the provisions of the Bill.*

### **LGA View**

- Awarding public contracts based on non-commercial considerations, such as the territory of the supplier or supplies has for many years not been [permitted](#) under Section 17 of the Local Government Act 1988.
- We are concerned that this Bill could stifle appropriate and proper discussion at pension committee meetings about concerns relating to investments' risk factors. Geopolitical and territorial factors are relevant to the risk of making, or retaining, certain investments.
- If a member of a pensions committee says that they, as an individual, would support

a boycott, then under the new legislation publishing this in minutes could constitute an offence. Where the individual councillor's view is not supported by the committee collectively, then it shouldn't be a breach of the law for them to express their views.

- The LGA will be seeking clarifications and amendments to protect local authorities from uncertainty, and at worst, vexatious legal actions being brought simultaneously with potential enforcement action from the proper regulator.
- Usually, judicial review is a last resort, but as currently drafted it could potentially be the first resort that an individual could use to complain about a decision or statement of a local authority. This could put courts and judges in the difficult position of having to establish whether there has been a potential breach of the law where there may have been no investigation into the facts of the case by the proper regulator.
- A lack of clarity around what constitutes "sufficient interest" for an applicant to make a complaint exacerbates the problem.

### **The Criminal Justice Bill**

- *The Bill will protect the most vulnerable by introducing a mandatory duty on those who work with children to report concerns relating to Child Sexual Abuse, doing more to expose this hidden crime.*
- *The Bill will tackle violence against women and girls by introducing a statutory aggravating factor at sentencing for offenders who murder their partner at the end of their relationship; criminalising the sharing of intimate images and expanding the offence of encouraging or assisting serious self-harm.*
- *The Bill will crack down on the crimes and anti-social behaviour that blight communities by increasing the maximum penalty for sale of dangerous weapons to under 18s.*
- *The Bill will crack down on the crimes and anti-social behaviour that blight communities by tackling persistent, nuisance, and organised begging.*

### **LGA view**

- We support the introduction of a duty on those who work with children to report concerns relating to child sexual abuse (CSA). However, if this is to be effective in protecting children, it is vital that the duty is introduced alongside a significant expansion in specialist support for victims and survivors of CSA, as both the Independent Inquiry into CSA and the Centre of Expertise on CSA have identified a significant shortfall in support and long waiting lists. Training for those working with children is also vital to ensure confidence in identifying and responding to abuse, while consideration must be given to ensure safe spaces for children to disclose abuse.
- Evidence from other jurisdictions suggests that introducing mandatory reporting can lead to a significant increase in both substantiated and unsubstantiated reports. The children's social care system is already under significant strain, and must be appropriately resourced to cope with any increase, to ensure that all children receive the help they need as soon as they need it.
- [Councils work closely with statutory and voluntary sector partners](#) to reduce violence against women and girls. As well as addressing new forms of abuse and harassment

the LGA believes there must be as much focus on prevention and early intervention to reduce the number of potential victims and offenders, and encourages the government to work with schools and academy chains to educate young people about these offences alongside ways of identifying and protecting against predatory behaviour.

- Local authorities are working hard alongside partners such as the police to make their communities safe and tackle anti-social behaviour. Measures to reduce the ability of young people to buy dangerous weapons are welcome. However, these measures will only work if councils have the resources to take robust enforcement action. Consideration urgently needs to be given to the cumulative impact of additional duties on councils' regulatory services as well as measures to ensure regulatory services are appropriately funded for example through measures which allow cost recovery for enforcement action.
- [Begging is often the result of street homelessness which is linked to the shortage of affordable housing across this country](#), leaving those unable to afford a place to live with very few options. Local authorities and other agencies need to work together to identify and provide support to people living on the streets. Some organised beggars are victims of modern slavery needing support, so we would welcome the targeting of the criminal gangs behind this. To eradicate begging and street homelessness, the focus should largely be on the wider context such as support into accommodation, prevention, multi-agency working and housing supply.

### **Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill**

- *Known as Martyn's Law, the Bill will introduce a new duty to protect public premises from terrorism.*
- *The Bill will require certain venues to take proportionate steps according to capacity to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack and reduce harm.*

### **LGA view**

- We broadly support the introduction of the legislation and further efforts to consider what more can be done to help protect local people and places from attacks. Local authorities take threats from terrorism extremely seriously and work hard alongside wider partners to keep their communities safe.
- We expect that councils will be impacted in a number of ways by the legislation. This will require substantial resourcing, and must consider the significant existing pressures on resources, capacity and expertise that councils already face. A New Burdens assessment to consider the financial impact on local government must be completed as soon as possible.
- We are pleased that the Government has listened to our concerns, shared by the Home Affairs Select Committee, about the potential impact of the legislation on local communities, community groups and small businesses. We therefore welcome the announcement of a further consultation to ensure requirements for standard tier premises (public premises with a capacity of 100–799 people) within scope are proportionate and not unduly burdensome. The legislation must not inhibit our freedoms to enjoy the places that are a critical and much-loved part of local life, nor threaten the viability of community events and sports. An appropriate balance must be sought that enables community facilities, groups and events to remain financially



viable and continue to operate.

- Further clarity is required in a number of areas, including where the enforcement and regulation role will sit, the premises and events within scope and how the duty will operate in practice. This should also include a national programme of support and guidance as the detail is confirmed.
- There must also be sufficient lead in time for the implementation of the new duty, including a national communications campaign to raise awareness, to ensure that those within scope are alert to their responsibilities and which allows a reasonable period to prepare.

### **Victims and Prisoners Bill – carried over**

- *The Bill proposes that Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs), health bodies and local authorities will be required to work together when commissioning support services for victims of domestic abuse, serious violence and sexual violence, to deliver a more joined-up support offer.*

### **LGA view**

- We support the Government's ambition to improve the service and support that victims receive, and hope that the Victims and Prisoners Bill and related non-legislative measures will help to improve victims' confidence to report crimes and seek justice, as well as to rebuild their lives.
- A [sustainably funded, locally-led approach](#), which provides areas with the flexibility and resources to identify local priorities and take action on them, will be the most effective way to improve collaboration and deliver on the priorities of the Bill. Alongside that, the Government should focus on preventing crimes occurring in the first place by investing in vital early intervention and prevention services, many of which are provided by local authorities.
- Further clarity is needed on how the enhanced role of the PCCs to review compliance with the Victims' Code will operate. We urge both PCCs and the Secretary of State to take a proportionate approach that minimises the burdens on youth offending teams and other local criminal justice bodies.



## Autumn Statement Update

### Purpose of Report

For direction.

**Is this report confidential?** No

### Summary

This report provides a summary of the work by the LGA leading up to the Chancellor's Autumn Statement on 22 November. It also sets out the main outcomes from the Statement that are relevant to local government.

**LGA Plan Theme:** A sustainable financial future; Children's service improvement; Other service specific support; Support to the local government workforce; Championing climate change and local environments

### Recommendation(s)

#### That the Executive Advisory Board:

- Notes the outcomes of the Autumn Statement
- Considers future LGA activity in the run up to the 2024/25 local government finance settlement and the 2024 Spring Budget.

### Contact details

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## Autumn Statement Update

### Background

1. This report provides a summary of the work by the LGA leading up to the Chancellor's Autumn Statement on 22 November. It also sets out the main outcomes from the Statement that are relevant to local government.

### LGA Submission

2. Ahead of the Chancellor's Autumn Statement on 22 November the LGA submitted its representation before the formal deadline on 13 October. The [submission](#) was then published online on 20 October. The submission takes the form of a letter setting out the financial challenges faced by the sector, accompanied by four appendices focusing on four key areas. These are adult social care and winter pressures, children's services, housing and homelessness, and climate change. The submission was cleared by the Chairman and Group Leaders and lead members of the Economy and Resources Board.
3. Key financial messages in the submission include:
  - 3.1. Since 2010/11 core spending power for councils has fallen by 27.0 per cent in real-terms.
  - 3.2. Recent spikes in inflation, the National Living Wage (NLW) and energy costs have placed substantial pressure on council finances. By 2024/25 cost and demand pressures will add £15 billion (28.6 per cent) to the cost of delivering council services since 2021/22.
  - 3.3. Despite new funding announced by the Government at the 2022 Autumn Statement our analysis shows an estimated funding gap of £2.4 billion in 2023/24 and £1.6 billion in 2024/25.
  - 3.4. Cost pressure increases have been particularly sharp in several services:
    - 3.4.1. Children's Social Care: rising costs and demand pressures – budgets up by 13.6 per cent in 2023/24 compared to 2022/23.
    - 3.4.2. SEND home to school transport: budgets up by 23.3 per cent compared to 2022/23.
    - 3.4.3. Adult Social Care: budgeted spend increased by 12.8 per cent in 2023/24, with average fee rates for external home care increasing by 9.6 per cent and supported living by 8.4 per cent from 2022/23 to 2023/24.
    - 3.4.4. Housing and homelessness: increasing costs due to multiple contributory factors, including asylum and resettlement, pushing budgets up by 19.9 per cent with pressures ongoing.

4. In addition to service-specific asks linked to each of the appendices, the submission included a number of our core financial asks including:
  - 4.1. Sufficient funding to deliver and set balanced budgets, prevent decline in local service provision, enable the rebuilding of local service provision and to recruit and retain skilled staff, meeting NLW increases.
  - 4.2. A renewed focus on prevention to address current and future demands for services.
  - 4.3. Multi-year and timely settlements.
  - 4.4. Review of Relative Needs and Resources, considering data and formulas used to distribute funding, ensure no council sees its funding reduce and ensure transitional arrangements for any business rates reset.
  - 4.5. Consider alternative forms of income for local government including an e-commerce levy with the funding retained by local government.

### Campaign activity

5. Following the publication of the LGA's submission there has been a substantial accompanying lobbying campaign drawing on the material in the submission. The campaign is based on a plan shared with the Chairman and Group Leaders in September. Campaigning activity has involved a range of news media, social media and Parliamentary and departmental lobbying.

### News media activity

6. News media activity has included:
  - 6.1. Publishing a [press release](#) on 20 October to accompany the publication of the submission
  - 6.2. Publishing complementary press releases on key themes in the Autumn Statement submission including:
    - 6.2.1. [The costs to councils of temporary accommodation](#)
    - 6.2.2. [Growing demand for children's social care](#)
    - 6.2.3. [Pressures on unpaid carers](#)
    - 6.2.4. [The need for the Government to back local climate action](#)
    - 6.2.5. Further planned complementary press releases on empty homes, adult social care cost pressures, climate change, and numbers of looked after children.
  - 6.3. Publishing a [joint statement](#) with CCN, DCN, London councils, the Special Interest Group of Municipal Authorities and the Unitary Councils Network on the challenges facing the sector's finances.

- 6.4. Publishing a joint letter [joint letter](#) with a large number of stakeholder bodies on the financial pressures faced by children's social care.
- 6.5. A [piece in the Municipal Journal](#) from the Chairman on the LGA's Autumn Statement submission.

### **Parliamentary and departmental lobbying**

7. Parliamentary and departmental lobbying has included:
  - 7.1. Sending the LGA submission to relevant Ministers, Permanent Secretaries and Committee Chairs.
  - 7.2. Briefing LGA Vice Presidents (MPs and Peers) on the LGA's representation, on the financial problems facing local government ahead of a King's Speech debate on [housing, health, local communities and public services](#).
  - 7.3. Briefing a number of select committees including Education, Energy Security and Net Zero, Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Health and Social Care, and Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.
  - 7.4. Promoting the LGA's Save Local Services campaign at the LGA Independent Group Vice Presidents dinner.
  - 7.5. Promoting relevant lines from the LGA's Autumn Statement submission in letters to the new Secretary of State for Health and Social Care Victoria Atkins MP and the new Chief Secretary to the Treasury Laura Trott MP.
  - 7.6. Sharing a [briefing](#) with all MPs not already covered by our contacts with ministers and committees.
  - 7.7. LGA Senior Vice Chairman Cllr Kevin Bentley met the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Children, Families and Wellbeing) David Johnston MP on children's services.
  - 7.8. Councillor John Fuller gave evidence to the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee inquiry on [financial distress in local government](#).
  - 7.9. Submitted written evidence to the Public Accounts Committee inquiry on Homes for Ukraine, which included the LGA's lines on housing and homelessness from the Autumn Statement submission.

### **Social media and marketing**

8. Social media and marketing activity, engaging key stakeholders, has included:
  - 8.1. The re-launch of our [Save Local Services](#) campaign banner and webpage including:
    - 8.1.1.A [social media thread](#).

- 8.1.2.A [key messages flyer and social media assets](#) for councils to use as the basis for their own lobbying.
- 8.1.3. Special bulletin to councils and stakeholders to encourage engagement with the campaign and sharing of key messages with local stakeholders.
- 8.2. Social media content to highlight submission and key campaign asks and financial challenges, including:
  - 8.2.1. an online explainer on the [use of reserves](#) with accompanying [social media post](#)
  - 8.2.2. an online explainer and social media thread on [how £1 of council funding is spent](#).
  - 8.2.3. Priority specific social media for children's and adult's social care, housing and temporary accommodation and net zero.
  - 8.2.4. Video statements from LGA Chair and Political Group leaders (or representatives) on key issues and asks and photographic coverage of behind-the-scenes moments.

## Outcomes of the Autumn Statement

- 9. There were few substantive announcements in the Autumn Statement on Wednesday 22 November relating to local government finance. The few relevant items included:
  - 9.1. For 2024/25, the small business multiplier in England will be frozen for a fourth consecutive year, while the standard multiplier will be updated by September CPI.
  - 9.2. The current 75 per cent relief for eligible Retail, Hospitality and Leisure (RHL) properties is being extended for 2024/25.
  - 9.3. Local authorities will be fully compensated for the loss of income from these business rates measures and will receive new burdens funding for administrative and IT costs.
  - 9.4. The Government has agreed the detailed terms of the long-term business rates retention arrangements for the Greater Manchester and West Midlands Combined Authorities. These arrangements will commence from April 2024.
  - 9.5. The Government is extending to June 2025 the Public Works Loan Board policy margin announced at Spring Budget 2023 for council investment in social housing.
  - 9.6. From 1 April 2024, the National Living Wage (NLW) will increase by 9.8 per cent to £11.44 with the age threshold lowered from 23 to 21 years old.
- 10. Other relevant announcements included:

- 10.1. The [recently announced](#) funding simplification doctrine will come into force from January 2024.
- 10.2. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities will work with the UK Infrastructure Bank, the British Business Bank, Homes England and other departments and private sector partners to consider how to support levelling up through improving access to finance. The group will report to Ministers by the spring.
- 10.3. The Government will raise Local Housing Allowance rates in Great Britain to the 30th percentile of local market rents in April 2024.
- 10.4. The Government has committed to ensuring councils will be able to set planning fees to cover the full cost of processing some major applications.
- 10.5. The Government announced £450 million for a third round of the Local Authority Housing Fund to house Afghan refugees and ease wider housing and homelessness pressures.
- 10.6. A range of announcements on devolution deals.
- 10.7. On pensions:
  - 10.7.1. Guidance for the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) will be revised to implement a 10 per cent allocation ambition for investments in private equity.
  - 10.7.2. The Government has set a March 2025 deadline for the accelerated consolidation of LGPS assets into pools and setting a direction towards fewer pools.

## On the day briefing and LGA response

11. On the day of the Autumn Statement the LGA produced an [on the day briefing](#) which was sent to Parliamentarians, council leaders, chief executives and chief finance officers. The briefing summarises the key announcements relevant to local government and gives an LGA view on each announcement.
12. The LGA produced a [press release](#) setting out the LGA's response to the Autumn Statement. In the response the Chair stated that "it is hugely disappointing that today's Autumn Statement has failed to provide funding needed to protect the services the people in our communities rely on every day". He highlighted specific services under pressure including children's and adult social care and temporary accommodation. The Chair also welcomed the changes to the Local Housing Allowance and the proposals for planning fee recovery.



## Implications for Wales

13. The Autumn Statement is likely to have an impact on Welsh councils through Government announcements, and through the Barnett consequential system and subsequent decisions by the Welsh government. The Welsh LGA is leading on work related to this although we are engaging regularly with the Welsh LGA and the other local government bodies in the devolved nations to exchange intelligence, ideas and consider joint work.

## Equalities implications

14. This paper outlines how the LGA is working on a range of local government issues. These issues affect councils and their residents as a whole and it is difficult to assess what individual impacts there are on people with protected characteristics. Improving the funding position of councils should help them to fund work that improves equalities. Working with the Government on improving guidance on finance should also help with enabling better outcomes.

## Next steps

15. Members are asked to note this update and consider future LGA activity in the run up to the 2024/25 local government finance settlement and the 2024 Spring Budget.

