

# Minutes of last Safer & Stronger Communities Board meeting

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## Safer & Stronger Communities Board

Wednesday, 22 November 2023

Hybrid Meeting - 18 Smith Square and Online

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### 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 everyone to the Safer and Stronger Communities Board meeting.

Cllr Saunders declared an interest in Item 4 as his ward has the largest concentration of Jewish people in the country. For transparency, Cllr Saunders shared he had been selected as a prospective parliamentary candidate for Bury South.

Cllr Jeanie Bell declared an interest as Deputy Policy and Crime Commissioner for Merseyside. Cllr Brenda Dacres, Cllr Bobbie Dove and Cllr David Welsh (substitute) declared that they had family members who were police officers.

It was noted that due to the resignation of Cllr Afrasiab Anwar from the Labour party, Cllr Jeanie Bell is the new Labour Lead Member for the Safer and Stronger Communities Board.

Apologies had been received from Cllr Sue Woolley, Cllr Priti Joshi and Cllr Anthony Okereke. Cllr James Gartside attended as a substitute and Cllr Bill Borrett stepped up as Lead Member.

### 2 Minutes of previous meeting

Members agreed the minutes of the previous meeting held on 29 September.

### 3 Protective security at venues and public spaces

Members had a confidential discussion on protective security at venues and public spaces.

#### **4 Community cohesion update**

Members had a confidential discussion on community cohesion following an update.

#### **5 King's Speech**

The Chair invited Mark Norris, Principal Policy Adviser, to introduce the paper which outlined what the King's Speech had set out in the government's legislative programme for the new Parliamentary session. This report indicated the Bills of relevance to the Board, and the proposed prioritisation of those Bills for the LGA's lobbying activity which will be considered by the LGA's Executive Advisory Board in December.

Members comments:

- It was raised that the LGA should work with London Councils in regards to the Pedicabs Bill.
- A concern was raised regarding the use of automated vehicles in the terrain of rural areas. Additionally, if taxis are to become mainly automated vehicles, some communities may be left without a taxi service. Mark noted the concern and commented that the Local Infrastructure and Net Zero Board will lead on the work on this Bill.
- A member encouraged the serious consideration of the Investigatory Powers Bill, particularly with section 17 of the Serious Violence Duty being placed on councils.
- A request for information on if the LGA had considered the effect of passive inhalation of vape smoke.

Mark Norris thanked Members for their comments which will be reported back into the Executive Advisory Board.

#### Decision

The Board:

- (a) Noted the Bills relevant to the Board included in the King's Speech and;
- (b) Agreed and commented on the proposed prioritisation of the Bills within the LGA's lobbying activity over the coming Parliamentary session set out in paragraph 23.

#### **6 Reoffending and probation policy position**

The Chair invited Aurora Petrova, Graduate Trainee, to introduce the paper which outlined the developed position in response to the comments and actions made to the existing policy position, *Going Straight* (2005). To ensure the LGA's policy position remained relevant in light of developments in the field of reducing re-offending and supporting councils' community safety teams in these areas.

Members comments:

- There was a request to focus international research into Norway only, particularly their reintegration guarantee scheme.

- There was a need to emphasise causation and prevention in the position.
- It was raised that more emphasis is needed on speech and language capabilities as being the greatest predicative power of whether someone is going to offend or reoffend.
- A member commented on the need to include Project Adder in the position.
- It was raised that there is an opportunity for crossover work on Project Adder, as the work goes through local criminal justice boards which are linked up with the violence reduction units which report to regional criminal justice boards and overseen by the Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs).
- A member raised the existing inclusion of neurodiversity in the policy position allows for all learning difficulties, brain injuries, epilepsy, ADHD and Autism to be considered.
- A member commented on the issue of drugs within prisons, leading to drug additions which continue when prisoners are released creating a cycle of reoffending.

#### Decision

The Board:

- (a) Endorsed the statement in Annex 2 with above comments to be considered; and
- (b) Directed officers on the issues in paragraph 9 and 10.

#### Actions

- Officers to feed in above Member comments to the final reoffending policy position.
- Officers to contact the Home Office to understand if there is an opportunity for Local authorities to be involved in the Prison Leavers Project.
- Officers to pick up with the Children and Young People Board regarding youth offending and speech and language capabilities in the development of the policy position.
- Officers to consider if drug use in prisons can be furthered explored.

## **7 Local Government White Paper**

The Chair invited Mark Norris to introduce the paper which detailed that all LGA Boards have been asked to develop proposals for inclusion in the LGA's Local Government White Paper. This paper set out proposals for what the Board might suggest under the key areas the LGA has identified.

Members comments:

- It was raised that more emphasis is needed on the importance of local leadership, the unique power of local authorities and the effectiveness of local government, particularly referencing councils' resourcefulness, and value for money with the limited funding available. The White paper needs to provide evidence which would allow central government to eventually give councils multi-year

settlements.

- A member commented that a thematic message is needed throughout the White Paper on prevention, as this will also save money long term.
- There was a suggestion that local government should be more involved in health and should obtain powers to direct more of the money than they currently can.
- A member requested that a proposal is provided on taxi and private hire vehicle licensing legislation (8.1) rather than a request for comprehensive reform. Information was also requested on whether this is being led by the District Councils Network (DCN). The Chair highlighted that unitary councils should not be forgotten.

#### Decision

The Board:

- (a) Noted the key areas set out in paragraph 5 of interest to the LGA as well as the emerging themes in paragraph 6; and
- (b) Agreed the proposed approaches set out in paragraphs 8 to 12, and that these are then submitted by the Board as its contribution to the Local Government White Paper, following the inclusion of Member comments.

## **8 Update Paper**

The Chair invited Mark Norris to introduce the report which updated Members on the issues of interest to the Board not covered under the other items on the agenda.

#### Decisions

Members noted the update.

#### Action

- Officers to encourage Members to sign up to the Community Safety Bulletin.

## Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chair	Cllr Heather Kidd MBE	Shropshire Council
Vice-Chair	Cllr Jeanie Bell	St Helens Council
Deputy-Chair	Cllr Clive Woodbridge	Epsom and Ewell Borough Council
Members	Cllr Brenda Dacres	Lewisham London Borough
	Cllr Kelly Middleton	Telford and Wrekin Council
	Cllr Asher Craig	Bristol City Council
	Cllr James Dawson	Erewash Borough Council
	Cllr Bill Borrett	Norfolk County Council
	Cllr Bobbie Dove	Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council
	Cllr Karen Lucioni	Isle of Wight Council
	Cllr Liam Bones	North Tyneside Council
	Cllr Arnold Saunders	Salford City Council
	Cllr Jon Ball	Ealing Council
	Cllr Jake Short	Sutton London Borough
Apologies	Cllr Anthony Okereke	Royal Borough of Greenwich
	Cllr Sue Woolley	Lincolnshire County Council
	Cllr Priti Joshi	Oadby and Wigston Borough Council
In Attendance	Cllr Kevin Dodds	Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council
	Cllr Sara Conway	London Borough of Barnet
	Cllr David Welsh	Coventry City Council
	Cllr Simon Bennett	City of Wolverhampton Council
	Cllr James Gartside	Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council
	Cllr Chidi Nweke	Epping Forest District Council
	Cllr Andrew Walters	Salford City Council
	Cllr Mandy Ewings	West Devon Borough Council
	Cllr Jacqui Taylor	St Albans City and District Council
	Cllr Majory Millum	London Borough of Richmond upon Thames