



Safer & Stronger Communities Board

Agenda

Wednesday, 22 November 2023
12.00 pm

Hybrid Meeting - Victoria Room, 8th Floor, 18
Smith Square and Online

There will be a meeting of the Safer & Stronger Communities Board at **12.00 pm on Wednesday, 22 November 2023** Hybrid Meeting - 18 Smith Square and Online.

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.

Conservative:	Group Office: 020 7664 3223	email: lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk
Labour:	Group Office: 020 7664 3263	email: labgp@lga.gov.uk
Independent:	Group Office: 020 7664 3224	email: independent.grouplga@local.gov.uk
Liberal Democrat:	Group Office: 020 7664 3235	email: libdem@local.gov.uk

Attendance:

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

LGA Contact:

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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.

Safer & Stronger Communities Board – Membership 2023/24

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

Councillor	Authority
Conservative (6)	
Cllr Sue Woolley (Deputy Chairman)	Lincolnshire County Council
Cllr Bill Borrett	Norfolk County Council
Cllr Bobbie Dove	Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council
Cllr Priti Joshi	Oadby and Wigston Borough Council
Cllr Liam Bones	North Tyneside Council
Cllr Arnold Saunders	Salford City Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Simon Bennett	Wolverhampton City
Cllr James Gartside	Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Chris Pillai JP	Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Labour (6)	
Cllr Jeanie Bell (Vice-Chair)	St Helens Council
Cllr Brenda Dacres	Lewisham London Borough
Cllr Anthony Okereke	Royal Borough of Greenwich
Cllr Kelly Middleton	Telford and Wrekin Council
Cllr Asher Craig	Bristol City Council
Cllr James Dawson	Erewash Borough Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Sara Conway	Barnet London Borough
Cllr Kevin Dodds	Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr David Welsh	Coventry City Council
Liberal Democrat (3)	
Cllr Heather Kidd MBE (Chair)	Shropshire Council
Cllr Jon Ball	Ealing Council
Cllr Jake Short	Sutton London Borough
Substitutes	
Cllr Jacqui Taylor	St Albans City and District Council
Cllr Majory Millum	Richmond upon Thames London Borough
Independent (2)	
Cllr Clive Woodbridge (Deputy Chair)	Epsom and Ewell Borough Council
Cllr Karen Lucioni	Isle of Wight Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Chidi Nweke	Epping Forest District Council
Cllr Paul Hilliard	Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council
Cllr Matt Edwards	Bradford City Council
Cllr Andrew Walters	Salford City Council
Cllr Mandy Ewings	West Devon Borough Council

Agenda

Safer & Stronger Communities Board

Wednesday, 22 November 2023

12.00 pm

Hybrid Meeting - 18 Smith Square and Online

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Date of Next Meeting: Thursday, 18 January 2024, 12.00 pm, Hybrid Meeting
- 18 Smith Square and Online

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King's Speech

Purpose of Report

For direction.

Summary

The King's Speech earlier in the month set out the government's legislative programme for the new Parliamentary session. This report outlines 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.

LGA Plan Theme: Championing climate change and local environments

Recommendation(s)

That the Board:

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

Contact details

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King's Speech

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 which relate to the Board's remit. The LGA's Executive Advisory Board will consider the prioritisation of the bills for the LGA's engagement at their next meeting.
2. The [full King's Speech can be found on the Government's website](#).
3. The Speech did not make any other significant policy announcements.

Bills relevant to the Board

4. There were a number of Bills relevant to the Board included in the King's Speech, predominantly within the theme in the Speech of keeping people safe.
5. **Criminal Justice Bill**. The Bill will contain a range of measures to provide the police and the criminal justice system with the ability to prevent new or complex crimes. It covers the work not only of this Board but also the Children and Young People Board. From the Board's perspective the Bill seeks to reduce violence against women and girls by increasing the sentence for offenders who murder their partner at the end of the relationship, criminalising the sharing of intimate images and expanding the offence of encouraging or assisting serious self-harm. To address anti-social behaviour the Bill will increase the maximum penalty for the sale of a dangerous weapon, and tackle persistent, nuisance and organised begging.
6. In the LGA's response to the King's Speech we highlighted that begging is often the result of homelessness, which is linked to the shortage of affordable housing leaving those unable to afford a place to live with very few options. We also identified the need for local authorities and other agencies to work together to identify and provide support to people living on the streets, and that some organised beggars are victims of modern slavery needing support. We suggested the criminal gangs behind this are better targeted. 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.
7. **Terrorism (Protection of Premises Bill)**. This Bill will seek to implement Martyn's Law which seeks to improve protective security and readiness at venues across the country by requiring those responsible for certain premises to consider the terrorist risk and how they would respond in the event of an attack.

8. The Board gave evidence to the Home Affairs Select Committee when the draft Bill was given pre-legislative scrutiny by Parliament. Cllr Woodbridge raised a number of issues including the financial and other resources councils will need to commit to meet the new statutory duty. He also raised concerns about the potential impact of the legislation on local communities, community groups and small businesses. This was a point the Home Affairs Select Committee also made in their report on the draft Bill, so within the King's Speech documentation the Home Office announced there would be further consultation around the requirements for standards tier premises (public premises with a capacity of 100–799 people) are proportionate and not unduly burdensome.
9. Further clarity is needed however around 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. It will also be important that those required to implement the new duty are given sufficient lead in time to implement it. Councils and others will need to be provided with support and guidance on how to implement the new duty.
10. **Victims and Prisoners Bill.** This Bill was carried over from the last session of Parliament and 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.
11. The Board has previously supported the objectives of the Bill but made the point local partners need to be provided with the flexibility and resources to commission the services needed in their area.
12. **Tobacco and Vapes Bill.** The Bill will introduce legislation to create a smokefree generation by restricting the sale of tobacco so that children currently aged fourteen or younger can never be sold cigarettes, and it will also restrict the sale and marketing of e-cigarettes to children.
13. The provisions in the Bill will mean that the age for sale is effectively raised by one year each year for children currently fourteen or under. It will also reduce the appeal and availability of vapes to children with measures currently being consulted on including regulating points of sale displays, regulating vape packaging and product presentation, and restricting the flavours and descriptions of vapes so they are no longer targeted at children.
14. Enforcement of the legislation will be the responsibility of local authority trading standards teams, and the Bill proposes new powers to enable retailers who sell cigarettes and vapes to underage people to be fined on the spot. There will also be enhanced online age verification requirements to stop online sales to underage people.

15. Alongside bodies like the Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers, the Board will want to work with government to ensure that the new provisions are as easy to enforce as possible. Shortages of staff in key local government professions, including in regulatory services has been an issue that the LGA's Executive Advisory Board has taken a keen interest in, and the Board has previously contributed to the development of the LGA's plan to increase the numbers of people entering a range of professions such as regulatory services. In order to ensure trading standards teams have the resources they need, the LGA's response to the King's Speech called on the government to boost the pipeline of qualified trading standards officers through a dedicated apprenticeship fund, and to look at different funding models which enable councils to recover more of the costs of running regulatory services.
16. **Pedicabs (London) Bill.** The Bill will allow Transport for London (TfL) to regulate pedicabs in the capital through a licensing regime in a similar way that councils outside London in England and Wales can do. TfL will also be able to control fares, set standards for operators and drivers, introduce insurance requirements, and restrict the presence of pedicabs in certain areas at certain times.
17. Previous attempts to introduce similar legislation have been supported by many councils in London. In the LGA's response to the King's Speech we highlighted the importance of TfL as the licensing authority consulting London boroughs, and the new licensing framework is aligned with the existing Department of Transport taxi and private hire vehicle statutory standards. We also highlighted that the new regime should come within the scope of the National Register of Licence Revocations, Refusals and Suspensions (NR3S) database.
18. **Investigatory Powers (Amendment) Bill.** This Bill is designed to ensure the UK's investigatory powers framework remains fit-for-purpose, and that the powers the police and security services have are up to date with new technology. Although there are no proposals under the Bill that will impact councils it is possible that during the Bill's passage through Parliament amendments are tabled that would change the access councils have to communications data under the Investigatory Powers Act.
19. **Automated Vehicles Bill.** This legislation is intended to introduce one of the world's most comprehensive legal frameworks for self-driving vehicles, and results from the Law Commission's review of legislation in this space. It will set a rigorous safety framework for self-driving vehicles, with safety at its core designed to enable to safe deployment of self-driving vehicles.
20. The introduction of self-driving vehicles will have a range of implications for local authorities for example in areas where bus services struggle to support them. It is also likely to have implications for taxi and private hire vehicle licensing, and

provides further impetus to the Board's call for the nineteenth century legislation in this area being updated.

Proposal

21. 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.
22. The LGA has the following system of prioritisation for our lobbying around Bills:
 - 22.1. **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.
 - 22.2. **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.
 - 22.3. **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.
23. Taking account of the interests of a number of Boards in some Bills the proposed prioritisation for the Bills relevant to the Board are for:
 - 23.1. The Tobacco and Vapes and Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bills to be given high priority; and

- 23.2. The Pedicabs, Criminal Justice and Victims and Prisoners Bills to be given medium priority.

Implications for Wales

24. The territorial jurisdiction of a number of Bills crosses England and Wales and the LGA will be focusing on the provisions as they affect councils in England. Where need be we will update the WLGA as required, particularly if it becomes clear that a piece of UK Government legislation is significant for them.

Financial Implications

25. There are no direct financial impacts on the LGA from carrying out this work, which will be delivered through the policy and public affairs teams at the LGA. Some of the Bills such as the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill and the Victims and Prisoners Bill will have financial implications for councils, and we will raise these with the relevant Whitehall department.

Equalities implications

26. The equalities implications will be considered in more details once the Bills are published.

Next steps

27. Officers will feed back members' views on the proposed prioritisation of Bills to inform the decisions of the Executive Advisory Board in December.

Re-offending and Probation: policy positions re-evaluation

Purpose of Report

For direction.

Summary

At its last Board meeting, the Board were asked to review the policy positions that were published in Going Straight (2005) to ensure they remain relevant in light of developments in the field of reducing re-offending and supporting councils' community safety teams in these areas. This report outlines the developed position in response to the comments and actions made by the Board.

LGA Plan Theme: Championing climate change and local environments

Recommendation(s)

That the Board

- (a) Endorse the statement in Annex 2; and
- (b) Direct officers on the issue in paragraph 9 and 10.

Contact details

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Re-offending and Probation: policy positions re-evaluation

Background

1. At the previous meeting of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board (SSCB) members were asked to consider the LGA's policy positions on re-offending contained in the 2005 document *Going Straight*.
2. In discussion, the Board asked for understanding if local authorities are involved in the Home Office Prison Leavers project. As far as officers have been able to ascertain they are not, and the project is run by the Ministry of Justice.
3. Officers were asked to bring back a developed position following Members comments, as follows:
 - 3.1. the need to acknowledge recruitment and retention has worsened, particularly of probation officers.
 - 3.2. the need for mental health to be factored in, particularly in the drug and alcohol treatment section.
 - 3.3. Add gambling to the drugs and alcohol section.
 - 3.4. Add in the effect of neurodiversity on reoffending following the 2021 review into neurodiversity and the criminal justice system.
 - 3.5. The Home Office involvement of probation services with local authorities is different in different areas – could this be picked up as part of Community Safety Partnerships, or an area to look at in devolution?
 - 3.6. Explore what works internationally, such as Norway, around restorative justice and how local authorities are involved.
 - 3.7. Accommodation – where the probation service and the Ministry of Justice house people has an effect on the chance of reoffending (this is covered by the Community Accommodation Service (CAS) and falls under the LGA's Local Infrastructure and Net Zero Board).

Proposal

4. The amended policy position statement is set out in Annex 2. This is based on the proposals in the paper and members' comments.
5. A general section added at the start reflects the points made by community safety practitioners when consulted earlier this year, as set out in the previous paper and points made by members (1 and 5).
6. The education and employment section has been reworded to reflect advice from colleagues in the LGA's workforce team that the LGA should not be telling councils what to do, but rather suggesting points to consider. The points themselves are not substantially different from those in the original document but reflect the changed financial climate since 2005.
7. The accommodation section has been re-worded to align with the LGA's broader ask on social housing in recognition of the key role social housing plays in reducing the risk of re-offending, as recommended in the original paper.
8. The third section is renamed Individual Support following the addition of gambling mental health and finance to the existing section on drugs and alcohol (see 3.2 - 4). The Family Support section remains unchanged.
9. Further guidance is sought from members on whether further work is needed around the provision of drug and alcohol treatment for ex-offenders and whether the Board should work with other LGA Boards to develop positions on the support to families of ex-offenders and approaches that deliver better early intervention and prevention to reduce offending and re-offending.
10. Further guidance is also sought from members as to whether officers should investigate what works internationally to reduce re-offending as this may require substantial research.

Implications for Wales

1. As part of the next stages of the review work officers will engage the WLGA to check what extent, if any, it would be helpful for the final positions agreed by the Board to reflect practice and circumstances in Wales.

Financial Implications

2. This work will be resourced from within the existing work programme for the Board.

Equalities implications

3. Re-offending and probation are policy areas which necessarily deal with vulnerable and often marginalised residents. Therefore, any equality implications will be considered throughout this re-evaluation.

Next steps

4. Members are asked to:
 - 4.1. endorse the updated policy positions and direct officers if further development is required.
 - 4.2. Consider whether the SSC workplan should be adapted to incorporate further officer work:
 - 4.2.1.1. around the provision of drug and alcohol treatment for ex-offenders.
 - 4.2.1.2. on what works internationally to reduce re-offending as this may require substantial research.
 - 4.2.1.3. with other LGA Boards to develop positions on the support to families of ex-offenders, and approaches that deliver better early intervention and prevention to reduce offending and re-offending.

Annex 2

Updated policy positions from *Going Straight* on reducing re-offending, and supporting councils' community safety teams in these areas

General

1. That it would assist to have greater clarity from government on strategic ownership of reducing re-offending. The government should issue guidance which clearly delineates, in practice, where accountabilities and responsibilities lie within Community Safety Partnerships; and
2. Further guidance should be provided on the data that is required to be shared under the serious violence duty.
3. Police and probation should be leading on reoffending strategies, with consistent government involvement.
4. Local authorities should be viewed as partners and providers of services, with a fully funded and clearly delineated leadership role in coordinating the work of local partners in providing support to offenders returning to their communities, ensuring that issues of recruitment and retention are addressed.
5. Government involvement needs to be consistent. There needs to be stronger and clearer communication between partners working in the prisoner and probation system – particularly regarding the release of offenders into local authority areas. There needs to be greater alignment, communication, and data sharing, particularly with probation services.
6. Government should conduct research into what models work internationally in countries with lower levels of re-offending.

Education and employment

1. Local authorities should consider how educational programmes and councils' role as employers can contribute to efforts to reduce re-offending, specifically:
2. As employers, local authorities may consider providing training, work experience, or employment opportunities to ex-offenders; they can also encourage other employers to do so through development and regeneration programmes.

3. Councils are well placed to support partners to provide employment and training due to their knowledge of local labour markets.
4. Support the continued and expanding inclusion of restorative and reparative justice programmes in Regional Reducing Reoffending Plans, which are an important part of the criminal justice system, providing agencies with a low-cost, and moderately effective means of reducing re-offending.
5. Review existing patterns of adult and vocational training courses – namely moving away from courses running primarily from September to June to rolling entries to reflect varying release dates.

Accommodation

1. Social housing provision is essential to ensure ex-offenders have access to the accommodation they require. The LGA is calling for a long-term sustainable funding framework for social housing to ensure that councils have the ability to invest in and regenerate their housing stock, and to fulfil local and national ambitions of ensuring that everyone has access to a safe, secure and high-quality home.
2. The Department of Work and Pensions, the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and prisons should work more closely with local authorities and release dates need to be set in a manner that enables local authorities and partners to provide better support to ex-offenders.
3. It was also raised that the [Local Housing Allowance shared accommodation rate \(SAR\)](#) is problematic for prison leavers and people on probation for whom shared accommodation might be unsuitable because of the risks that they present or the vulnerabilities that they have. There is a need to consider flexibilities that would allow exemptions from SAR in specified circumstances.
4. A new statutory 'Duty to Collaborate' to named public bodies to collaborate to prevent homelessness would place less of a burden on homelessness services alone and widen access to preventative support while encouraging partnership working across multi-disciplinary teams. This could include a requirement to collect and publish data of those who are at risk of homelessness and the action taken to prevent it.
5. Central Government needs to reflect on and utilise the drivers and levers across Whitehall to prevent and reduce easily preventable homelessness –

for example, the recent restrictions on Friday releases. This will ease the burden on local authorities and allow them to more proactively and effectively meet the housing needs of ex-offenders and those in the probation system.

Individual support

1. Mental health, drug and alcohol reduction strategies and gambling addiction strategies need to be better integrated as well as stronger linkages with wider public health bodies.
2. There needs to be clearly outlined expectations regarding the support that the Probation Service expect from commissioned substance misuse services to deliver community treatment orders.
3. There should be recognition of and support for the neurodivergent conditions that impact ex-offenders' ability to engage in rehabilitation programmes, comply with their licence conditions and maintain employment.
4. The role of finance, benefits and debt in reoffending needs to be better recognised in particular in preparing for the day of release, to ensure that prisoners are not released into an impossible financial position.

Supporting families

1. Tailored services to children of offenders.
2. Authorities use their health scrutiny function to ensure families of prisoners are effectively supported.
3. Authorities should provide parenting, and anger management programmes within families that complement those in prison.

LGA Local Government White Paper

Purpose of Report

For decision.

Summary

All LGA Boards have been asked to develop proposals for inclusion in the LGA's Local Government White Paper. This paper sets out proposals for what the Board might suggest under the key areas the LGA has identified.

LGA Plan Theme: Championing climate change and local environments

Recommendation(s)

That the Board:

- (a) Notes the key areas set out in paragraph 5 of interest to the LGA as well as the emerging themes in paragraph 6; and**
- (b) Agrees 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.**

Contact details

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LGA's Local Government White Paper

Background

1. As Lead Members will recall from the paper taken to the Board in September the LGA Chair announced the Local Government White Paper as a priority at the LGA's Annual Conference in July 2023.
2. The White Paper is a broad piece of work designed to allow the LGA to influence manifestos and the detailed delivery plans of both the first year and the longer-term programme of a new/returning government.
3. Feedback from the sector has suggested that the fundamental problem we need to solve is the relationship between national and local government. We need a relationship which enables us to maximise our delivery for the public. A general election provides an opportunity to reset this relationship.
4. Therefore, the aim of the Local Government White Paper as agreed at the Executive Advisory Board in September is to *demonstrate how stronger and more empowered local government could deliver the public's priorities more effectively and strengthen the value that the public place on the UK's democratic structures.*
5. In order to provide a structure to the LGA's engagement with member authorities and stakeholders members agreed an analysis framework. There are 3 areas where the LGA is seeking specific feedback:
 - 5.1. **Public service reform:** How can fully empowered local government lead public service reform for better places and services?
 - 5.2. **Enabling local leadership:** How do we re-set the relationship with Whitehall?
 - 5.3. **Funding and resources:** What could local government "offer" in relation to any new resources?
6. From the feedback so far key emerging themes are:
 - 6.1. **Financial sustainability:** Continue to retain a focus on the issue of quantum. Some councils are keen to look at what reform of the existing system could enable councils to do ie business rates review, tourist tax options
 - 6.2. **Meaningful devolution/constitutional settlement:** An opportunity to use discussions about a new constitutional settlement to make the case for councils and greater devolved powers. Councils keen that devolution is meaningful and not just a means of reorganisation.
 - 6.3. **Accountability, transparency and assurance:** Wanting to be at the forefront of what this could look like. Can we make an offer as a sector?
 - 6.4. **Statutory duties and role in prevention:** Councils are keen that we shine a light on prevention. Strong feeling that we could have a greater role in this. Some councils raising questions about whether we can fulfil all of our current statutory duties - does this lead to a broader debate?

6.5. **Partnership working/convening powers:** Councils feel that we should have a nationally recognised role as the convener of partnerships in our localities.

6.6. **Recognising local leadership:** At a time when local government is more trusted than national politicians how do we use this relationship to deliver for our communities. Local leaders want to be able to deliver hope. What does that look like and how do we enable it? How do we get national government to trust us?

Proposal

7. As discussed at the September meeting the Safer and Stronger Communities Board needs to develop proposals setting out how a stronger and more empowered local government can deliver more effectively than central government on the public's priorities around reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, improving community safety, and strengthening consumer protection as well as emergency planning. Arranged below under the three major areas where the LGA is seeking feedback are proposals for the Safer and Stronger Communities Board's contribution to the White Paper

Public Service Reform

8. The Board has a number of legislative changes it has been pressing for (some for significant periods of time). It is therefore suggested the Board proposes the White Paper make the case for:

8.1. Comprehensive reform of the taxi and private hire vehicle licensing legislation to make it fit for the 21st century.

8.2. Introducing cumulative impact assessments under the Gambling Act as soon as possible, as pledged under the recent review of the legislation, and the use of these assessments to be considered more widely as a mechanism for examining impacts on communities.

8.3. Introducing health as a licensing objective in the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act.

8.4. Amending the Higher-Risk Buildings (Descriptions and Supplementary Provisions) Regulations 2023 introduced under the Building Safety Act 2022, to ensure regulators can consider buildings as a whole.

Enabling Local Leadership

9. The Board has less developed positions around strengthening local leadership in the community safety space, while there are long standing legislative frameworks and consultative arrangements for the Health and Safety Executive and Food Standards Agency to coordinate activity with councils. Members will be aware however that the Home Office review of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) Parts 1 and 2 has looked at the role of PCCs in the partnership landscape. This has included their relationship with community safety partnerships (CSPs), with the Home Office having recently commenced a review of CSPs.

10. When the Board considered the future of CSPs at its meeting in January 2021, members expressed concerns about PCCs having greater powers of direction in respect of CSPs, such as the ability to merge or direct them. Members also highlighted that CSPs were able to address problems at a community level, while PCCs were not so linked into local circumstances and issues. Members did however reflect on the differing quality of CSPs. The Board may therefore wish to propose the White Paper highlights the importance of sub-police force partnership arrangements in being able to respond to local issues and circumstances, with CSPs having the tools, powers and resources they need to take action. The Board could also highlight the need for investment in the training and resources available to CSPs.
11. Feedback we have received from council officers supporting CSPs is that the growth of statutory duties to cooperate to address particular crimes (such as those around the provision of emergency accommodation for victims and domestic abuse and to tackle serious violence) is becoming a burden to CSPs and reducing their ability to act more flexibly. The Board may therefore want to propose there is a review of existing community safety duties to cooperate between local partners with a view to rationalising and reducing them.

Funding and Resources

12. Funding and resources for a range of council community safety and regulatory services has been a Board priority for some time. It is therefore suggested the Board proposes the White Paper makes the case for:
- 12.1. Enable councils to set licensing fees under the Licensing Act 2003.
- 12.2. Funding health and safety at work functions through a fee for intervention approach, with this model also being explored for the funding of wider environmental health and trading standards services.
- 12.3. Dedicated funding for apprenticeships and recruitment programmes related to the regulatory services workforce to boost the future pipeline of officers entering local government.
- 12.4. Moving to multi-year funding settlements for community safety projects and initiatives in order to provide local partners with certainty about funding arrangements which would allow greater innovation.
- 12.5. A shift in the allocation of funding resources towards a more substantial investment in prevention and early intervention programmes to reduce the number of people entering the criminal justice system and re-offending. This will have the long term benefit of reducing crime rates, as well as reducing costs around policing and community safety. Such programmes could also reduce instances of violence against women and girls and with issues like domestic abuse.
- 12.6. Further and continued investment in measures that build community cohesion and resilience within communities. This will limit the ability of extremists to exploit issues to create polarisation, disorder, hate crime, and increased risks of

radicalisation. This includes funding for the Special Interest Group on Countering Extremism.

Implications for Wales

13. The Board may wish to consider seeking views from the WLGA on the differing model of local/central partnership which has developed in Wales since devolution, as well as from the models in Northern Ireland and Scotland, and whether there is anything the LGA might learn on the delivery of community safety services to inform the proposals it makes.

Financial Implications

14. There are no direct financial implications arising from this work for the Board. In terms of impact on government and local authority budgets where possible the options developed by each Board should concentrate on what could be delivered by reprioritising existing departmental budgets.

Equalities implications

15. As crime can have a greater impact on people with protected characteristics, the ability to tackle crime and disorder more effectively will improve equality, diversity and inclusion within communities, and the proposals set out in the paper will assist in improving equality.

Next steps

16. The proposals set out in paragraphs 8 to 12 which are agreed by the Board will be submitted as the Board's contribution to the development of the Local Government White Paper.

Update paper

Purpose of Report

For information.

Summary

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

LGA Plan Theme: Championing climate change and local environments

Recommendation(s)

That the Board note and comment on the update.

Contact details

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Update paper

Background

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

Modern slavery

2. [New modern slavery risk assessment and due diligence guidance for local authority commissioners of adult social care](#), produced by the University of Nottingham Rights Lab in tandem with the LGA, has been recently published. It provides advice on to how to set up effective local systems to identify and manage the risks of modern slavery in adult social care.
3. The LGA hosted a webinar in October to launch the guidance. The webinar was chaired by Cllr Heather Kidd, Chair of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board, and provided delegates with an overview of the guidance, as well as presentations from councils and the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services. Around 180 delegates attended the webinar.
4. Officers will continue to notify members when relevant pieces of guidance are published. In the coming weeks, we also plan to update our website to signpost to different resources on tackling modern slavery in the care sector. Members should also note that the Community Wellbeing Board signed off the paper that was before the Safer and Stronger Communities Board in September unamended.
5. Officers also met with the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) to discuss the rise of modern slavery cases in the care sector. The APCC noted the LGA's work and that of councils, and advised it is not doing any proactive work on this issue but monitoring the situation.
6. [The Home Office has announced](#) that Eleanor Lyons, the current Deputy Children's Commissioner, has been appointed the role of Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner. The role was established by the Modern Slavery Act in 2015 but had been vacant since Dame Sara Thornton left the position in April 2022.
7. The Government has [published the National Referral Mechanism \(NRM\) statistics for the third quarter of 2023](#), covering July-September. For the first time, reconsideration request details have been published with the statistics, as has an analysis of the devolved decision making pilot for children.

Councillor training

8. At the start of November, we held our Licensing Leadership essentials course for chairs and vice chairs of committees. The course focuses on how good committees are run and where licensing fits into wider council priorities. One of the Board's licensing champions, Cllr Jeanie Bell, attended the course as a

member peer and delivered a presentation on her work on licensing in St Helens. The course received excellent feedback from delegates, who said it had left them enthusiastic about their role and with improved levels of confidence. We charged a fee of £200 to attend the course, and this did not impact on attendance, so we will continue this approach moving forwards. We will arrange another date in 2024 in due course.

9. The [LGA has produced a range of tip sheets to support members of licensing committees](#). There are four tip sheets which cover the role of the chair/vice-chair, alcohol and entertainment licensing, taxi and private hire vehicle licensing, and gambling licensing. They provide a brief overview of the role of committee members within each licensing framework and some best practice ideas.
10. We will also be hosting our [annual licensing conference on Tuesday 6th February 2024](#). The conference will examine the government's plans and expectations for licensing as well as exploring the challenges facing licensing authorities, highlighting innovative work being undertaken by councils and their partners and discussing how we can build on best practice. Speakers will include the Department for Transport, the Home Office, the Department for Health and Social Care (cosmetic procedures), as well as a number of councils sharing good practice. The event will take place online, and will be chaired by Cllr Clive Woodbridge, Vice- Chair of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board.

Gambling harms guidance

11. The [LGA has updated its guidance on taking a whole council approach to tackling gambling related harms](#). The guidance provides an overview of the gambling harms landscape and the role of councils in addressing and preventing harms.

Taxi and private hire vehicle licensing

12. At the last Board meeting, Board members were keen that officers took a proactive approach to engaging with the LGA's members ahead of the expected consultation on the Government's proposal to transfer control of taxi and private hire vehicle licensing to combined and upper tier authorities (as set out in the Levelling Up White Paper).
13. Officers have developed a brief survey which we will send to licensing authorities who will be affected by this proposal. The survey will gather views on whether councils are in favour or opposed to the proposal, if councils have any safeguarding concerns or believe it will impact on the resourcing of licensing teams, as well as asking what criteria councils would like to see in the proposal if it was to go ahead (such as concrete steps to limit out of area working). Officers will work with the LGA's research team to finalise the survey and will send it to LGA members early in the New Year to complete. To support this work, we will also arrange a roundtable discussion with a few county councils who would be likely to be given this responsibility to understand their views on the proposal and any concerns they might have.

14. Cllr Linda Taylor, Vice-Chair of the Local Infrastructure and Net Zero Board, is giving evidence on 22nd November to the Transport Select Committee on Accessible Transport. The session will focus on buses, home to school transport, and community transport, but will also touch on taxi and private hire vehicle licensing. We expect questions will be asked around how councils enforce against drivers who discriminate against disabled passengers (such as refusing to take a guide dog or wheelchair user), how we get a more accessible vehicle fleet, and how out of area working impacts on council's ability to improve accessible travel locally. Officers have fed into Cllr Taylor's briefing and are supporting the team reporting into the Local Infrastructure and Net Zero Board around licensing issues.

Pavement licensing

15. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act, which makes provision for a permanent pavement licensing regime, has now completed its parliamentary stages. Following sustained LGA lobbying, the new regime includes a number of improvements. The fee has increased from £100 and is now capped at £500 for new applications, and £350 for renewals. The consultation and determination period has also increased from 14 days to 28, and there are now improved enforcement powers. We are pushing DLUHC for further information on commencement and will engage with councils when more details are available.

Cosmetic procedure licensing regime

16. The LGA has responded to the first of the Government's consultations on how to make non-surgical cosmetic procedures – including Botox, laser hair removal and dermal fillers – safer for consumers. A reminder that the Government is proposing a three-tiered licensing regime based on risk, with the highest risk (red) tier procedures being regulated by the Care Quality Commission, and the lower risk amber and green procedures being regulated by councils. This first consultation is primarily focused on what tier each procedure should be located in. Our response emphasised concerns around capacity in regulatory services teams, the need for adequate training and expert support where required, locally set fees, and the need to take a comprehensive approach and to incorporate and update existing local regimes.

XL Bully Ban

17. The Government has added the XL Bully breed type to the list of dogs banned under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 in England and Wales. From 31 December 2023, breeding, selling, exchanging, advertising, rehoming, gifting, abandoning and allowing an XL Bully dog to stray will be illegal, and these dogs must be muzzled and on a lead in public. From 1 February 2024 it will be a criminal offence to own an XL Bully in England and Wales unless the owner has a Certificate of Exemption. [Applications for the exemptions scheme are open until 31 January 2024.](#) Alternatively, owners who choose to have their dog put to sleep can apply for compensation. [Further details on how to apply for compensation](#) can be accessed online. [Defra has published further information about how to prepare for the ban which will be updated regularly](#), and they will continue

engagement with stakeholders.

18. The LGA has been engaging with officials at Defra about the ban and seeking to ensure local authorities are compensated for any new burdens. To assist this proposal, officers have held a roundtable discussion between a number of councils and Defra officials to discuss council's role in the ban, and what support councils will require to fulfil any requirements under the ban.

Online Safety Act

19. The Online Safety Act received Royal Assent in October, and includes a number of provisions of relevance to the community safety space. A recent [LGA briefing on the Bill](#) provides an overview of its key objectives.

Police and Crime Commissioners

20. Cllr Sue Woolley gave evidence to the Home Affairs Select Committee inquiry into PCCs: 10 Years on. Also giving evidence before the Committee were the Chair of the APCC, Donna Jones and Rick Muir, Director of the Police Foundation. The focus of the questions was around how PCCs hold chief constables to account, and the expected questions around police and crime panels were not raised. Written evidence on the points we would have asked around police and crime panels will be submitted in addition to the evidence Cllr Woolley gave in person.

Anti-Social Behaviour

21. The LGA was invited to join the ASB Ministerial Taskforce jointly chaired by the Home Secretary and the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. Cllr Heather represented the Board at the taskforce which focused on the work by the Ministry of Justice to set up the Immediate Justice and Community Payback pilots announced as part of the ASB Action Plan in March.

Decisions made outside of SSC Board meetings

22. Consultation response submitted on Diversionary and Community Cautions: Draft Code of Practice 12/10/2023
23. Consultation response submitted on the Government's proposed cosmetic procedure licensing regime 20/10/2023
24. Signed off updated guidance on taking a whole council approach to tackling gambling harms.
25. Sent a letter from the Chair to the Minister responsible for the Government Digital Service, the Rt Hon Jeremy Quin MP, regarding the future of the online licensing forms service.

Implications for Wales

26. Officers to work with the Welsh LGA as necessary.

Financial Implications

27. A number of the items within the Update paper may incur additional costs for councils and the LGA will seek to raise these as part of its ongoing work.

Equalities implications

28. To be considered in relation to each individual policy area.

Next steps

29. Officers to continue progressing these issues as required.