

Safer & Stronger Communities Board – report from Councillor Simon Blackburn (Chair)

EFRA select committee inquiry – welfare of domestic animals

1. On 14 June the EFRA select committee's inquiry into the welfare of domestic animals held a hearing where I gave evidence on behalf of councils.

Trading standards conference

2. Cllr Anita Lower spoke about the LGA's recent review of trading standards at the Chartered Trading Standards Institute's annual conference.

Annual conference

3. I chaired a Regulatory Delivery fringe event at our annual conference focusing on how councils can support businesses through their regulatory services. Cllr Tony Page spoke at a fringe event hosted by BACTA (the trade body for the amusement arcade industry) to discuss appropriate regulation for different sectors of the gambling industry.

Fixed Odds Betting Terminals

4. Cllr Tony Page met with Carolyn Harris MP, chair of the new All Party Parliamentary Group on Fixed Odds Betting Terminals, to discuss the LGA's call for a reduction in FOBT stakes and wider gambling licensing reform.

Environmental Health awards

5. Cllr Nick Worth attended a reception held by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health to celebrate their annual awards winners.

Tumble dryers

6. Cllr Jeremy Hilton, Chair of Fire Services Management Committee, called on manufacturers to recall faulty tumble dryer models, following a series of house fires caused by machines catching fire.

House of Lords Select Committee

7. Cllr Tony Page gave evidence to the House of Lords Select Committee on the Licensing Act 2003.

APPG Funerals and Bereavement

8. Cllr Ian Gillies, the SSCB Champion for Burial and Bereavement Services met with Mark Pawsey MP, Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Funerals and Bereavement to discuss a number of issues including the introduction of medical examiners, public health funerals and funeral poverty and the council role in bereavement services.

Protecting communities from extremism

9. On 7 July the LGA conference heard from Metropolitan Police Deputy Assistant Commissioner Helen Ball in a plenary session I chaired on protecting communities from extremism.

Association of Police and Crime Commissioners

10. On 16 June the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners' held an induction event for new PCCs. There are 42 PCCs, about half of whom were newly elected in May. At the event I spoke about the need for close working and resource-sharing with councils to tackle crime more effectively and efficiently. I also stressed the scope for delivering better fire services through collaboration, without the need for PCCs to take on the burden of responsibility for fire and rescue services. There was an opportunity to meet some of the new appointees over lunch.

Advisory Board on Female Offenders

11. The June meeting of the Ministry of Justice's Advisory Board on Female Offenders was attended by Cllr Janet Daby. The Board discussed the Ministry's strategic approach to working with female offenders, heard from Pause, an organisation working with women who have had repeated removals of their children into care, and reforms of the custodial estate for female offenders.

National FGM Centre

12. Following the award of transitional funding for National FGM Centre for 2016/17, a further meeting of the Centre's Advisory Group was held in June, which discussed the work the Centre is doing in six pilot authorities and other areas the Centre might look to work in.

CCTV Conference

13. Inside Government held a conference on CCTV in July, and I was invited to speak about the effective, transparent and appropriate use of CCTV in local communities.

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