

11 April 2018

## Chief Executive's Report – April 2018

### Purpose

For discussion and direction.

### Summary

The LGA business plan for 2017/18 centres on six external priorities:

- Britain's exit from the EU;
- Devolution and funding for local government;
- Inclusive growth, jobs and housing;
- Children, education and schools;
- Adult social care and health; and
- Supporting councils.

Part 1 of the six-weekly Chief Executive's report sets out the LGA's main achievements against those priorities. Part two focusses on our internal priority – *a single voice for local government* - including membership and our media outreach activities.

### Recommendation

That the LGA Leadership Board notes the Chief Executive's report for April 2018.

### Action

As directed by members.

**Contact officer:** Mark Lloyd  
**Position:** Chief Executive  
**Phone no:** 020 7664 3213  
**Email:** [mark.lloyd@local.gov.uk](mailto:mark.lloyd@local.gov.uk)

## Chief Executive's Report – April 2018

### Achievements against our external priorities

#### Priority 1 – Britain's exit from the EU

- 1.1 **Cross-Whitehall working group on exiting the EU:** the Chief Executive addressed the group on the impact of Brexit at a local level, with a focus on trade, workforce and funding using local case-studies, whilst putting forward the case for local government involvement in creating solutions.
- 1.2 **EU Withdrawal Bill:** the LGA consulted with members to support an amendment on replicating consultative rights and responsibilities tabled and [debated in the House of Lords](#) on the 19 March. In the debate our Chairman Lord Porter and Vice-Presidents spoke about why this is important and this led to an assurance from the Minister Lord Bourne that local government could expect “to be consulted on certain matters, following their repatriation from Europe”. Further detail is due to be provided in a written ministerial statement.
- 1.3 **Public Administration & Constitutional Affairs Committee:** Cllr Kevin Bentley of the LGA Brexit Task & Finish Group [gave evidence to the committee on Brexit and devolution](#) - he reiterated the need for clarity around the future of funding available through EU schemes.
- 1.4 **Cavendish Coalition Research:** the LGA has co-funded a research report, as an associate member of the Coalition, on the social care market in the wake of Brexit which is being prepared by the National Institute of Economic and Social Research.
- 1.5 **Draft Withdrawal Agreement:** on 19 March 2018, the United Kingdom and European Union published a draft withdrawal agreement, which sets out the arrangements for a transition period of 21 months following the UK's departure from the EU. We have published a briefing focused on the issues in the agreement most important to local government, including the transition period, workforce, procurement, trade, funding and the European Investment Bank.

#### Priority 2 – Devolution and funding for Local Government

- 2.1 The Chancellor delivered his **2018 Spring Statement** on Tuesday 13 March. As previously expected, the Chancellor did not unveil new tax measures or extra spending. The LGA provided [a short on-the-day briefing](#) on the Statement as well as a [media statement](#) setting out its reaction.
- 2.2 The Chancellor used the Spring Statement to confirm that the 2018 Autumn Budget will set total public expenditure limits for 2020/21 and future financial years. In 2019, a **Spending Review** will then allocate the funds to Government departments. Funding for local government at a national level is normally covered by this exercise. No date for the Spending Review has yet been set.
- 2.3 Officers are starting work on influencing **the Autumn Budget and the Spending Review**. As a starting point, the LGA is looking to produce estimates of the funding challenge facing local services by 2025 in time for the annual LGA conference.
- 2.4 The Chief Executive attended a roundtable discussion on '**speaking with a single voice on public finances**', joined by officials of special interest groups (such as the County Councils' Network), CIPFA, the National Audit Office and other stakeholders as well as Cllr John Fuller in his capacity as Chairman of the District Councils' Network. The event, hosted by the LGA, CIPFA and the Municipal Journal, provided a useful forum to discuss points of consensus within the sector as we start mounting a campaign for additional resources in the Spending Review.

11 April 2018

- 2.5 The **National Audit Office** recently published its [report into the Financial Sustainability of Councils](#), including some stark messages about the funding of local government. We provided evidence during this study and responded to the report with a [media statement](#) and [briefed MPs](#) for a debate in Parliament on this on 20 March.
- 2.6 We also produced a [briefing on council reserves](#) in response to comments made about these at Treasury questions in the House of Commons and in the media.
- 2.7 **Combined Authority Chief Executives' Network:** we hosted a network meeting on 27 March with items discussed including the follow-up to the Mayoral Forum and public service reform. Officers are currently arranging the next meetings of CA networks focused on: employment and skills, housing and planning, and finance.
- 2.8 **Devolution support:** we have continued to provide tailored capacity support to a number of established and aspiring combined authorities. This has included initial engagement with the North of Tyne authorities following the announcement of the North of Tyne devolution deal in the Autumn Budget.

### **Priority 3 – Inclusive Growth, Jobs and Housing**

- 3.1 **Leading Places:** the second phase of the programme is drawing to a close in the fifteen partnership areas. We hosted an event in partnership with HEFCE, Universities UK and the NHS Confederation on 28 March to mark the conclusion of this phase of the programme and this focused on the role of local anchor institutions in delivering the Industrial Strategy.
- 3.2 **Lane rental:** the Government has announced it will allow other authorities to access lane rental powers for roadworks after the successful pioneer schemes in Kent and London. Guidance will be written in the coming months for authorities who would like to propose a new scheme. This has been an LGA call for some time and we are pleased that the Government has listened to us.
- 3.3 **Planning Positively through Partnership:** this [publication](#) launched in partnership with the Planning Advisory Service, Home Builders' Federation and the British Property Federation showcases a number of case studies to illustrate a number of different ways that councils and developers are working together to bring new development forward.
- 3.4 **National Planning Policy Framework:** in a [speech](#) on 5 March 2018, the Prime Minister pledged to “rewrite the rules on planning”. In our [response](#), we highlighted that the planning system is not a barrier to building. Developers need to get on with building affordable homes, and councils need the borrowing powers to deliver our own. Following her address, MHCLG published its draft revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for [consultation](#). The draft revised NPPF incorporates policy proposals previously consulted on, and seeks views on additional proposals to change planning policy and legislation announced at the Autumn Budget 2017.
- 3.5 **Developer contributions consultation:** alongside the NPPF consultation documents, additional documents have been published for reference – [draft planning practice guidance on viability](#) and the [housing delivery test measurement rulebook](#). A separate [consultation has also been published](#) seeking views on a series of reforms to the existing system of developer contributions in the short term. To help navigate the proposed reforms, we have prepared a short [briefing document](#). The changes, when implemented, will be significant and councils should consider the implications and to respond to the consultations.
- 3.6 **Building Safety Programme:** councils continue to survey the private high-rise buildings in their areas to identify those with aluminium composite material cladding. MHCLG have announced that an additional £1 million was being made available to help the most affected councils in identifying those buildings. While additional money for this work is welcome, it will not cover the costs councils have so far incurred, or the costs they are likely to incur going forward. This will especially be the case where

building owners are less than cooperative. We will therefore continue to make the case for councils to be fully funded for undertaking this work.

- 3.7 **Homelessness:** MHCLG have [published](#) quarterly homelessness statistics showing that councils are now housing 79,000 homeless families in temporary accommodation. This is unsustainable for councils and bad for families. We continue to make the case to the Government to adapt welfare reforms and to enable councils to build affordable homes for low-income families across the country. We're also working hard to support councils' implement of the [Homelessness Reduction Act](#) from 3 April.
- 3.8 **Rough sleeping:** the Government's have announced that a new £30 million fund to tackle rough sleeping will be made available to councils for the next year, with further money for the following year. In addition, a new expert Rough Sleeping Team will be established, tackling everything from affordable housing to addiction. An additional £100,000 funding to support frontline Rough Sleeping workers across the country to make sure they have the right knowledge and skills to work with vulnerable rough sleepers.
- 3.9 **Flexible Homelessness Support Grant:** the Homelessness Minister has [announced](#) a further £215 million of the Government's Flexible Homelessness Support Grant to support councils in 2019/20.
- 3.10 **Housing Infrastructure Fund:** MHCLG has [announced details](#) of a further [44 areas](#) it is working with to develop local projects. In a written ministerial statement the Secretary of State said the remaining £4.1 billion of the £5 billion HIF has the potential to deliver over 400,000 homes in areas of greatest housing need. Final successful bids for HIF funding will be announced in the autumn.
- 3.11 **Pothole funding:** the Government has announced an extra £100m for local authorities to repair potholes cause by the recent poor weather. The money will be allocated directly to authorities and will be an expansion of the existing pothole action fund. It is positive that the Government has listened to councils and made more funding available However, the funding announced will provide just over 1 per cent of what is needed to tackle our current £9.3 billion local roads repair backlog.
- 3.12 **Culture led regeneration:** we have commissioned research into how councils are using culture to lead regeneration in their areas, identify transferrable learning, and any unique benefits from a culture-led approach to regeneration. The research is part-funded by a grant from the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.
- 3.13 **In Parliament:** we provided written evidence to the Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee's inquiry into housing for older people, briefed MPs ahead the construction of council housing debate in the House of Commons and on our priorities for housebuilding and planning reform, ahead of Housing Communities and Local Government Questions. We also submitted written evidence to the Housing, Communities and Local Government Select Committee's inquiry into the planning guidance available for councils processing fracking applications and responded to the DDCMS select committee inquiry into the social impact of participation in sport and the arts, highlighting the work of councils to promote inclusive participation and affordable access to activities.

#### **Priority 4 – Children, education and schools**

- 4.1 **Children's Social Care improvement:** DfE has [announced](#) that we will receive £2 million in funding to improve leadership in children's social care services. We will be working with ADCS and Solace to deliver much greater hands-on peer support for councils, offering everything from regular 'health checks' to training for lead members and senior officers. The achievements of councils through the sector-led improvement approach demonstrate its success and show what councils can achieve by working together and supporting one another

11 April 2018

- 4.2 **Virtual School Heads:** our collective lobbying efforts have successfully secured an additional £7.6 million a year for councils to help them to extend Virtual School Head support to previously looked-after children, including adopted children, as introduced by the Children and Social Work Act 2017.
- 4.3 **Personal Adviser Support:** another [positive announcement](#) came as the Government committed to improved new burdens funding for the extension of personal adviser support to care leavers aged 21-25. While the initial assessment estimated an annual cost of £7.8 million, councils will now receive £12.1 million a year. This is good news, and we will continue to lobby for a review and further uplifts in funding.
- 4.4 **Youth Justice Grants:** we are aware that councils had still not received their Youth Justice Grants by the middle of March, after council budgets had to be set, and of the difficulties this is causing with planning services for young people. We have raised concerns with the Youth Justice Board, and [warned](#) publicly that any further cuts to the grant risk years of progress and outstanding work by Youth Offending Teams.
- 4.5 **Bright Futures:** we worked with a cross-party group of MPs to table an Early Day Motion raising the profile of the LGA's Bright Futures campaign. This calls for the provision of school counselling in every secondary school or alternative education provision in England. We continue to promote this EDM to MPs. At the time of writing, it has signatures from 26 MPs
- 4.6 **In Parliament:** Cllr Richard Watts, Chair of our Children and Young People Board, gave evidence to the Children APPG on children's services funding and we briefed MPs ahead of a debate on foster care and on the contribution to society of social workers ahead of the debate in the House of Commons.

### **Priority 5 – Adult Social Care and health**

- 5.1 **Sleep ins:** we have successfully applied for permission to intervene in Royal Mencap Society's challenge of an Employment Appeal Tribunal decision on the law relating to payment of the national minimum wage for "sleep ins". Our application emphasised that we support fair pay for all care workers, but the financial consequences for councils could be significant if the court decides that the law requires sleep-in carers to be paid the National Minimum Wage for their entire shift. The judges hope to reach a decision as soon as possible.
- 5.2 **Social Care Green Paper:** on 28 March, Cllr Izzi Seccombe, Cllr Richard Kemp and Elected Mayor Kate Allsop attended a Ministerial roundtable on the forthcoming green paper on care and support for older people. Colleagues from ADASS were also in attendance and together the Minister heard a strong set of views from local government on what councils hope to see from the green paper. The conversation was wide-ranging and covered funding, quality, commissioning and providers, workforce, integration, and carers, communities and places.
- 5.3 **Transfers of care:** the Care and Health Improvement Programme are leading the coordination and delivery of partners' enhanced support programme on hospital to home transfers of care. Ten of the most challenged systems (identified collectively with DHSC/ADASS/NHSI/NHSE) are in receipt of tailored support packages over the next 3/4 months. Embedded evaluation will determine whether and how this might be rolled out as a national offer in future.
- 5.4 **Support for care providers:** we have secured Cabinet Office funding to develop support for social care providers with data sharing and security for care records, working in collaboration with the Department of Health and Social Care and the Care Provider Alliance. Expressions of interest sought from councils to identify three for on-site work with care providers.
- 5.5 **Social care market modelling:** work is underway to develop an in depth understanding of the local and regional adult social care markets and inform modelling of future demand. The project will develop

a national data set, building on work done already in some regions, and be accompanied by local and regional support to understand implications and develop action plans based on this.

- 5.6 **NHS Funding:** During a recent appearance giving [evidence](#) to the House of Commons Liaison Committee, the Prime Minister promised long-term funding arrangements for the NHS in response to calls by the Public Accounts Committee in its [report](#) into NHS sustainability and transformation. The LGA has [called](#) for it to be matched by same commitment to social care.
- 5.7 **In Parliament:** Cllr Jonathan McShane, a member of our Community Wellbeing Board, gave evidence to the Health Committee as part of their inquiry into integrated care, Cllr Izzi Seccombe, Chairman of our Community and Wellbeing Board, wrote to Meg Hillier MP, Chair of the Public Accounts Committee, to promote our key recommendations on adult social care, and highlight councils' progress on delayed transfers of care, ahead of the Committee's inquiry into reducing emergency admissions to hospitals. We provided written evidence to the Health and Social Care Committee inquiry on childhood obesity and published a briefing for Parliamentarians highlighting information on adult social care funding and delayed transfers of care.

### **Priority 6 – Supporting Councils**

- 6.1 **New Burdens Payments:** council's final new burdens payments relating to property searches were paid by the end of the financial year by MHCLG. The final payments total nearly £10 million and bring the total amount of new burdens funding into councils as a result of our legal work to £54 million.
- 6.2 **Sport Leadership Essentials:** we have piloted a Leadership Essentials Sport event aimed at officers, in partnership with Sport England. This explores the feasibility of using the existing councillor model to train senior officers who had sport added to their portfolio and needed an accelerated induction, as well as aspiring future leaders. Feedback was generally positive and Sport England are commissioning a rollout of the programme.
- 6.3 **Culture, Tourism and Sport Conference:** was held in Hull on 7/8 March, showcasing Hull's achievements as City of Culture and sharing learning on using culture, tourism and sport to transform places and communities. The conference included the presentation of the Hearts for the Arts awards to councils and officers championing the arts in their area – Plymouth Council and Lorna Lee of LB Waltham Forest were presented with awards for their work by Samuel West, actor and director, and chair of the National Campaign for the Arts.
- 6.4 **Local Government Pay:** GMB members voted 94% to accept the pay offer whilst Unite voted 75% to reject. Following UNISON's very close ballot result (50.44% voted to reject) it is conducting a further branch consultation (with a recommendation that the offer now be accepted) which will close on 5 April, shortly after which the three unions will be meeting in order to take stock and consider whether it will be possible for them to reach a consensus position. The National Employers are meeting on 10 April and are expected to respond to pay claims from Chief Executives and Chief Officers.
- 6.5 **Local Government Workforce Strategy:** the LGA has set out a suggested vision for the workforce over the next five to ten years, identifying key challenges we will need to address and how we can respond to a changing world. Your responses will help us shape our future work and support you in delivering your key workforce priorities. You can read our proposed strategy and comment on it at [www.local.gov.uk/workforcestrategy](http://www.local.gov.uk/workforcestrategy); please also share with colleagues.
- 6.6 **Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) annual report:** CPC remains at the heart of our sector-led improvement support. Our annual report, available on our [website](#), shows that CPC is still highly regarded by councils who have received one, delivers many positive benefits and impacts, and provides value for money.

11 April 2018

- 6.7 **Shared Service Map:** this [map's](#) annual refresh starts this month. Councils are being asked for their most up-to-date information and to provide any savings figures so we can continue to evidence councils' role at the forefront of efficient service delivery. Councils can [submit any new services here](#).
- 6.8 **Behavioural Insights event:** the Behavioural Insights Team, London Councils and eight councils spoke at our very successful '[Using Behavioural Insights in Local Government](#)' event on 15 March about how behavioural insights methodology has managed demand and changed resident behaviour.
- 6.9 **Supporting councils to improve revenue collection with behavioural insights:** our Behavioural Insights Team have developed a set of [practical recommendations](#) to assist local authorities with increasing their revenue collection.
- 6.10 **Productivity experts programme film:** we have launched a [film](#) to encourage councils to apply for support from one of the LGA's 'pool' of productivity experts.
- 6.11 **Modern slavery in the supply chain:** the London Universities Purchasing Consortium has opened its [modern slavery in the supply chain e-Learning tool](#) for procurement practitioners to the local government sector, with a standalone module for councils to develop Transparency in the Supply Chain reports.
- 6.12 **Cyber Security:** we have continued to encourage councils to review their cyber security arrangements drawing attention to a range of resources including the National Cyber Security Centre's work with councils and other public sector organisations to develop a free tool [Web Check](#) to help identify out of date certificates or systems that need patching, reducing the risk of a cyber-attack.
- 6.13 **Business continuity:** councils continue to respond well following the collapse of Carillion but the potential for market failure of some of local government's largest providers remains. We have encouraged councils to review the arrangements they have in place around construction and business support services and adult social care including home care providers. Our Vice-Chairman, Cllr David Simmonds, has also given evidence to the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee inquiry into Carillion and public sector outsourcing.

## **Internal Priority – A single voice for local government**

### **LGA Membership**

7. No councils left membership of the LGA at the close of the 2017/18 membership year.
8. The total number of councils on notice to leave the LGA on 31 March 2019 is six. These are:
  - East Staffordshire Borough Council
  - London Borough of Richmond
  - Leicestershire County Council
  - Lincolnshire County Council
  - Southend Borough Council
  - West Sussex County Council
9. Four councils remain out of membership – the London Boroughs of Bromley, Wandsworth and Barnet and Gosport Borough Council.
10. As a result of local government reorganisation, we have been informed by a further nine authorities that they wish to give notice to leave LGA membership on 31 March 2019 as these councils will cease to exist. These are;
  - Poole Borough Council
  - Bournemouth Borough Council
  - Christchurch Borough Council
  - North Dorset District Council
  - West Dorset District Council
  - Weymouth & Portland Borough Council
  - Purbeck District Council
  - East Dorset District Council
  - Dorset County Council
11. We have been informed that their successor authorities intend to take up LGA membership on 1 April 2019.
12. Due to further local government reorganisation, we expect more authorities to give notice to leave LGA membership over the next year and we will be working with those authorities to ensure that their successor authorities are LGA members.

### **New LGA Company**

13. Further to the meeting of the Board of Directors of the LGA company on 7 March 2018, and the Special Resolution passed by the first General Meeting of the company on the same day, the Articles of Association were lodged with Companies House, directors' details submitted and the accounting date changed to 31 March. The new LGA came into effect on 1 April 2018.
14. All member authorities have been sent an application for admission as a member authority to the new LGA. At the time of writing 169 completed applications have been



11 April 2018

received. We continue to work with the remaining authorities to ensure full membership. A verbal update will be provided to Leadership Board.

**Membership engagement by the Strategic Management Team**

8 March – 10 April 2018

<b>Chief Executive</b>	
14 March	MJ/Solace/LGA/CIPFA 'Speaking with a single voice on public finance'
16 March	London Borough of Southwark
20 March	Liverpool City Council
23 March	Society of Metropolitan Chief Executives
27 March	Combined Authorities Network
<i>Forward plan</i>	
12 April	Cambridge City Council
17 April	Luton Council
26/27 April	MJ Spring Forum
3/4 May	Association of County Chief Executives Spring Seminar
<b>Deputy Chief Executive</b>	
9 March	Greater Nottingham Transformation Partnership
<i>Forward plan</i>	
12/13 April	ADASS Spring Seminar

**Media**

<b>Britain's Exit from the EU</b>
Urgent clarity over how government intends to replace current EU structural funds (Guardian Online)
Brexit could cut support for victims of abuse and minority groups, human rights charities warn (Independent Online)
Opinion piece about Brexit dominating the Government's agenda and affecting its ability to address other important issues, including children's services (Guardian)
<b>Devolution and funding for local government</b>
Mention at Prime Minister's Questions on councils needing to cut back services or stop some altogether by 2020 due to funding reductions (BBC News, Sky News, BBC Daily Politics, BBC Radio 5 Live, LBC, Guardian Online, Express Online, Mirror Online)
Council tax increases will not be enough to fill funding gaps and prevent reductions to services (Sunday Times, Guardian, Metro, Express, Telegraph Online, Mirror Online, Sky News, BBC Daily Politics, BBC Radio 5 Live, LBC)
Response to NAO report on the sustainability of local authorities (TalkRadio, BBC Victoria Derbyshire Show, BBC News, FT, Mirror, Mail, Mail Online, Sun Online)
Lord Porter on BBC News channel, BBC Radio 4's Six O'Clock News, BBC Radio 2, BBC Radio 4 news bulletins with Spring Statement response (Sky News' The Pledge debate programme)
IFS report on social care set to account for half of council spending by 2035 (Independent Online, Mirror Online)
LGA's warnings of a 77 per cent decrease in core central government funding between 2015-20 (BBC Daily Politics)
More than £5 billion funding gap facing local government by 2020 (BBC Daily Politics)
LGA Labour group leader Cllr Nick Forbes about how Labour councils will lobby for tax-raising powers if party wins General Election (Independent, Guardian Online, Express Online, Huffington Post)
Funding disparity between national roads which receive 52 times more funding than local roads (Mail Online)
Call for chewing gum tax to help pay for £60 million annual clean-up costs to remove gum from pavements (Telegraph)
Bus services remain under threat without more funding (Mirror)
<b>Inclusive growth, jobs and housing</b>
Senior Vice Chair Cllr Nick Forbes on BBC News channel, Sky News, BBC Radio 5 Live and LBC, EEHT Chairman Cllr Martin Tett on BBC Radio 5 Live and LGA Deputy Chairman Cllr Peter Fleming on Channel 5 News with our response to the Prime Minister's speech on planning changes to build more homes (BBC Online, FT, Times Online, Guardian Online, Mail Online, Sky News Online, LBC Online, Independent, Mirror, Mirror Online, CityAM Online, Huffington Post, Sky News, BBC News channel, BBC Daily Politics, BBC Radio 4's Today, BBC Radio 2, BBC Radio 5 Live, Talk Radio, BBC local radio news bulletins)
Lord Porter: NPPF proposals response (Guardian, FT, Times, Telegraph, Independent, i paper, Sun, Mirror, Huffington Post, BBC Radio 4, Talk Radio, BBC local radio)
EEHT Chairman Cllr Tett on BBC Radio 5 Live about annual ALARM survey on state of UK's roads, highlighting strategic road network funding is 52 times higher than for local roads (BBC Breakfast, BBC News, BBC News at One, Times, Sun, ITV Online, Express Online, Metro Online, Huffington Post)
Cllr Tett on BBC Radio 5 Live about annual ALARM survey on state of UK's roads, highlighting strategic road network funding is 52 times higher than for local roads (BBC

Breakfast, BBC News, BBC News at One, Times, Sun, ITV Online, Express Online, Metro Online, Huffington Post)
Cllr Tett on BBC Radio 2's Jeremy Vine Show about £100 million new funding to repair local roads (BBC News, BBC Radio 4, Times, Express, Mirror, Star, Huffington Post)
LGA Deputy Chairman Cllr Peter Fleming on Sky News and ITV News and EEHT Chairman Cllr Tett on LBC about how on-street parking charges are reinvested into transport schemes (Mail, Sun, Express, Sunday Mirror, Express Online)
EEHT Chairman Cllr Tett on ITV 's Tonight programme about £12 billion roads repair backlog faced by councils (ITV Online, BBC Online, Telegraph, i paper online, Sun Online)
Lift the borrowing cap to enable councils to borrow to build more homes (Huffington Post)
Call for government to reform apprenticeship levy, after latest figures revealed 131,000 fewer apprenticeships in the last seven months since scheme was introduced (LBC, i paper)
9 out of every 10 planning applications are approved (Independent, i paper, Guardian)
Temporary accommodation costing £1 billion a year, call councils to borrow to build more homes (Mirror)
Cllr Tett on BBC News at One about claims manufacturers exaggerating amount of plastic they use (BBC Online)
Call for government to implement powers for councils to crack down on empty homes (Guardian)
LGA analysis that there were 423,544 unimplemented planning permissions last year (BBC Online, Telegraph Online)
£800 million allocated for affordable homes returned to the Treasury (Observer)
Councils co-locating with other public agencies to free up buildings to be sold to create affordable housing (BBC Radio 4 Today programme)
Councils need maximum flexibility in accessing new funding to deliver affordable homes (FT, Express Online)
Homelessness figures response, need for councils to borrow to build (Mail Online, Metro Online, Huffington Post)
Impact of barn conversion developments on rural communities (Mail Online, Metro)
Hackitt Review submission into Building Regulations (Independent)
One in seven tenants spend half their private income on rent (Sun Online)
<b>Children, education and schools</b>
£2 billion funding gap facing children's services by 2020 and councils opening more than 500 child protection cases every day (Guardian Online, Independent Online)
Call for government to provide additional and ongoing funding for children with high needs (BBC News, BBC Online)
Government funding not reflecting the demands being placed on councils to provide suitable school transport for SEND children (BBC Breakfast, BBC News)
Cuts to youth offending budgets could lead to increase in youth crime (Sky News Radio, Mirror)
Response to Family and Childcare Trust's annual childcare survey, which found that spend on childcare could be reformed to create a simpler, more efficient system (Independent Online)
LGA warning about how almost half of councils are at risk of being unable to meet demand for secondary school places within the next five years (Independent Online)
Social workers' unmanageable workloads, call for children's services to be fully funded (Sunday Mirror)
Response to government consultation on mandatory reporting of child abuse (Times)
Determination to tackle the issue of CSE (ITV Online)

Secondary school pupil numbers will rise by more than 600,000 by 2023 (Mail)
Response to NAO report on Sure Start funding halved over the last eight years (Guardian Online)
Greater flexibility needed for schools on allowing parents to take children on holiday during term time (Mail Online)
Unauthorised school absences (Mail Online, Huffington Post)
<b>Adult social care and health</b>
CWB Chairman Cllr Izzi Secombe on LBC and BBC Radio 5 Live, LGA Vice Chairman Cllr David Simmonds on BBC Breakfast and Sky News on LGA release about how within two years nearly 1,000 people a day will be taken into hospital after a fall (Telegraph, Sunday Telegraph, Independent, Mirror, LBC, BBC Radio 2, BBC Radio 4)
Councils facing annual funding gap of £2.3 billion in social care by 2020 (Express, ITV Online)
Individual care costs for social care to be scrapped, LGA call for additional resources (Guardian Online, Mirror Online)
NICE guidance on helping people become more active (Times, Telegraph, Independent, i paper, Mail, Mail Online, Express Online, Huffington Post)
LGA warning that only 25 per cent of the Government's additional funding for social care is being spent on care homes (Guardian)
Government's target of 2040 for end of conventionally-fuelled vehicles is too long and action needed now to improve public health (Mail, BBC Online, Express Online)
Adult social care facing a "tipping point" (Guardian)
Response to Independent Age report on quality of care (Express)
'Sleep-in' back pay for care workers could lead to unfunded historic liabilities (ITV Online)
Integrated Care Scheme launch for older people whose homes need improvement (Express)
Call for calorie counts to be displayed on menus (Mail)
Need to reduce the amount of salt in food (BBC Radio 5 Live)
<b>Supporting councils</b>
EEHT Chairman Cllr Martin Tett live on Talk Radio about the winter weather conditions and councils' efforts to tackle it (Express, Mirror, Telegraph Online, Mail Online, Mirror Online)
Online shopping is increasing congestion across the country as more delivery drivers take to the roads (Times, Mirror, i paper, Sun on Sunday, Mail Online, Metro Online, ITV Online, BBC News, BBC Radio 2, BBC Radio 4 Today, BBC Radio 5 Live, Talk Radio, LBC, BBC local radio, Sky News Radio)
Recycling rates have quadrupled in the last decade and eight out of 10 people are happy with the way their council collects their rubbish (BBC Online, Express Online, Star)
LGA Deputy Chairman Cllr David Simmonds on Channel 5 News about response to Gambling Commission report into lowering stakes for Fixed Odds Betting Terminals (BBC Radio 5 Live)
Cleaning up used chewing gum costs councils £60 million a year (Times)