

12 March 2020

## **Safer and Stronger Communities Board – report from Cllr Simon Blackburn (Chair)**

### **Conferences and events**

#### *LGA Annual Licensing Conference*

- 1 In February, Cllr Kate Haigh chaired the LGAs Annual Licensing Conference which was attended by 120 Members and officers. The conference covered a range of different areas of licensing with highlights including Leeds City Council's innovative approach to using health data in licensing and St Helens Council's local campaign around passenger safety. Devon County Council also gave a thought-provoking presentation about their experience of using scrutiny as a way to highlight the issue of problem gambling. Presentations from the day are available on the [LGA website](#).

#### *Best bar none awards*

- 2 Cllr Kate Haigh attended the Best Bar None Awards at the House of Lords in February. The awards were in recognition of the work partners had achieved as part of Best Bar None to improve the night time economy. Sheffield won 'best overall scheme' with schemes in Cumbria and Bolton also winning awards.

#### *Tackling knife crime conference*

- 3 In February, Cllr Alan Rhodes chaired a conference on tackling knife crime. Over 80 delegates heard what councils across the country are doing to try to protect their communities from knife crime, with presentations on the work of some of the new violence reduction units; trading standards' work to prevent under age knife sales; and serious youth violence. The presentations from the event are available on our [website](#).

#### *Prevent*

- 4 In February, the Chair of the LGA's Safer and Stronger Communities Board, Cllr Simon Blackburn, facilitated a Prevent leadership essentials course for elected members in London. The event was well attended by councils from London and the South East and provided members with an opportunity to explore local government's role in Prevent and some of the challenges for local leaders in this space.

#### *Cohesion and integration*

- 5 In March, Cllr Blackburn also facilitated a two-day leadership essentials course for elected members on cohesion and integration. The event brought together councillors from across the country to share learning and approaches to building cohesive communities.

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*FGM*

- 6 Cllr Anita Lower chaired the Advisory Group in late January. The extra meeting was conducted to allow members of the Group to scrutinise the work the Centre is doing to create a sustainable future for the service.

*Her Majesties Inspectorate for Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service External Reference Group*

- 7 Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Essex, Roger Hirst, attended the External Reference Group on the 27 January representing the Fire Services Management Committee. The Group discussed the outcomes of the State of Fire and Rescue report, the second cycle of inspections, monitoring arrangements and possible thematic and governance inspections processes.

*LGA Fire Diversity and Inclusion Champions Network*

- 8 Fiona Twycross AM opened and led the first meeting of the Network which has been established to provide a forum for elected members with responsibility for Diversity and Inclusion to network, share their local challenges and best practice. The meeting was attended by twenty authorities and established the general purpose of the network and future ways of working.

*LGA Leading the Fire Sector: Culture, diversity and inclusion event*

- 9 Cllr Rebecca Knox lead the LGA masterclass on culture, diversity and inclusion in Salisbury in January. Fifteen fire officers and fire authority members attended the full day events and heard from speakers from the Fire Inspectorate, Avon Fire and Rescue Service, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service and from Women in Fire.

*LGA Fire and Rescue Leadership Essentials*

- 10 Fiona Twycross opened and lead the fourteenth Fire and Rescue Leadership Essentials programme in early February, where seventeen delegates, including elected members and an officer from a police, fire and crime commissioner area, attended.

*National Fire Chiefs Council – People Engagement Forum*

- 11 Cllr Roger Price attended the Forum on 25 February where the forum discussed items related to the NFCC People Programme. The forum received updates on various aspects of the programme and made comments on key projects including the Fire Standards Board and the Leadership Programme Project Initiation plan, which included the Code of Ethics.

*LGA Annual Fire Conference and Exhibition*

- 12 Members of the Fire Services Management Committee lead keynote sessions at this Conference in Blackpool in March. The programme focuses on climate change, finance,

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building safety and responding the recommendations of the fire Inspectorate, which were published in January.

**Press and publicity**

- 13 Cllr Blackburn [responded to the Government's announcement](#) that it will launch a consultation for legal duties to protect public spaces from terror attacks.
- 14 Cllr Blackburn [welcomed new Government funding](#) for domestic abuse refuge services.
- 15 Cllr Blackburn [responded to calls to license hand car washes](#) and said that a proper debate needed to take place about where the responsibility for such a scheme would most appropriately lie and, most importantly, how it would be funded.
- 16 Ahead of the forthcoming Budget, Cllr Blackburn said that the [LGA wanted to work with government](#) to ensure councils have enough funding to tackle illegal knife sales and help protect people from harm, including revitalising youth services as part of a public health approach to tackling serious violence.
- 17 Cllr Blackburn [responded to Ministry of Justice figures](#) showing that the number of knife crime offences dealt with by the criminal justice system in England and Wales in the year ending September 2019 were the highest in a decade.

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