

Safer and Stronger Communities Board – Update report from Cllr Nesil Caliskan (Chair)

County Lines and Child Criminal Exploitation

1. In September, I chaired an LGA webinar on tackling county lines and child criminal exploitation. The [webinar](#) (attended by over 280 delegates) was an opportunity to share best practice on how councils, working with their partners, are tackling county lines activity and child criminal exploitation. The session also reflected on the COVID-19 pandemic and what effect there has been on the drug supply chain. Our speakers included Leigh Middleton, Chief Executive Officer, National Youth Agency (NYA), Cllr Joe Calouri, London Borough of Islington Council, Jacqueline Nolan, SCP/SAB Business Manager, South Tyneside Council and Arnold Yousaf, St Giles Trust.

Serious Violent Crime

2. The LGA published a [case studies document](#) on 'Taking a public health approach to tackling serious violent crime'. The document contains case studies on councils working in partnership to deliver early interventions which help to prevent children and young people from becoming involved in serious violent crime. If you would like any further information about the case studies, please get in touch with Rachel.Phelps@local.gov.uk

Anti-Social Behaviour

3. I also chaired an LGA webinar on Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour during the COVID-19 pandemic, attended by over 280 delegates. Our guest speaker was Dame Vera Baird, the Victims Commissioner for England and Wales, who highlighted the importance of improving the community trigger process. We also had speakers from the National Police Chief's Council, the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners and local government representatives. A recording of the session and the presentations are [available here](#).

Police and Crime Panels

4. Councillor Katrina Wood, Vice-Chair of the LGA's Safer and Stronger Communities Board, chaired a Police and Crime Panels workshop session. This workshop provided an opportunity to share best practice, reflect on the changes to panels and procedures during COVID-19, and look ahead to the forthcoming Police and Crime Commissioner elections. We have speakers from the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, the Home Office and the National Association of Police, Fire and Crime Panels.

Domestic abuse and COVID-19

5. A [joint investigation](#) by Panorama and Women's Aid, into how the nationwide shutdown in response to Covid-19 has impacted victims of domestic abuse, found someone called police for help about domestic abuse every 30 seconds in the first seven weeks of UK lockdown. The investigation found that three-quarters of victims say the lockdown has made it harder for them to escape their abusers. These devastating accounts of domestic abuse highlight the importance of all partners and organisations helping to prevent and eliminate this appalling crime.

6. The [LGA has published a guide for councils on tackling domestic abuse](#) during the COVID-19 pandemic. Please contact Rachel.Phelps@local.gov.uk if you would be happy to discuss in further detail.

Statutory Standards for taxi licensing

7. Over the summer the Department for Transport [published new statutory standards on taxi and private hire vehicle licensing](#). The new standards have been developed to support councils to safeguard vulnerable passengers and included a number of recommendations that the LGA has pushed for including enhanced driver safety checks and safeguarding and disability awareness training. However, [we have also made the point](#) that the best way to improve passenger safety is to reform outdated legislation. We will be updating our [Cllr Handbook](#) to reflect these new standards shortly.

Spending Review Regulatory Services Submission

8. The LGA developed a [joint submission](#) with the Chartered Institutes of Trading Standards (CTSI) and Environmental Health (CIEH) for the Spending Review this autumn. The submission focused on our call for the Spending Review to address the challenges faced by council trading standards and environmental health teams and provide the resources needed to maintain these vital public protection services over the next few years and beyond.

LGA Coastal Special Interest Group Meeting

9. In September Cllr James Dawson spoke at the LGAs Coastal SIG updating members on the Safer Stronger Communities Board work around water safety.

Media work

10. I have been involved in responding to a range of issues in the national media including the £30 million made available for councils enforcement work around COVID-19, the funding made available to councils to prepare for their new duties under the Domestic Abuse Bill, the call by Age UK to provide better protection for older people from domestic abuse, the strengthening of measures to tackle modern slavery, the government's announcement of the marshal scheme, and the provision of greater support for councils in taking enforcement action where businesses have been flouting the COVID-19 rules.

Fire and Emergency Services

*Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS)
External Reference Group*

11. On 8 July, Cllr Ian Stephens and Cllr Rebecca Knox attended this meeting, at which Members were updated on current COVID-19 activity in their local areas and discussed proposed inspection activity ahead of the COVID-19 inspection.

Senior Sector Group (SSG)

12. On 28 July, the Fire Minister chaired an SSG meeting to discuss the Comprehensive Spending Review, which was attended by Lead Members of the Fire Services Management Committee, Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Roger Hirst, and representatives from HMICFRS, the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and the Home Office.

Meeting with HM Chief Inspector Sir Tom Windsor

13. On 30 July, Cllr Ian Stephens, Cllr Nick Chard (in his capacity as Chair of the Employers Side of the NJC), representatives from the Home Office and NFCC, and LGA officers attended a meeting with Sir Tom Windsor to discuss the timing of the recommendations provided in HMICFRS's State of Fire 2020 report.

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