

## **Safer and Stronger Communities Board – Report from Cllr Nesil Caliskan (Chair)**

### **Domestic Abuse Bill**

1. The LGA [briefed](#) Peers ahead of the Committee Stage debates in the House of Lords for the Domestic Abuse Bill. In our briefing, we highlighted the importance of funding wider community-based support services which help to prevent domestic abuse, as well as calling for a National Perpetrator Strategy. The Government has committed to publishing a perpetrator strategy as part of its work on the future Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021. The Bill continues to Report Stage in the House of Lords on 8 March 2021.

### **LGA workshops – Domestic Abuse Bill**

2. On Wednesday 24 February and Wednesday 3 March 2021, the LGA hosted two workshop sessions for local government officers to discuss the forthcoming statutory duty on local authorities (outlined in the Domestic Abuse Bill), to commission emergency accommodation and support services. The LGA will be holding future sessions with local authorities to help share best practice and help local authorities prepare for the forthcoming statutory duty. We continue to work with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Domestic Abuse Commissioner's office on this important issue. If you would like any further information, please contact [Rachel.Phelps@local.gov.uk](mailto:Rachel.Phelps@local.gov.uk)

### **Domestic Abuse Bill – draft statutory guidance**

3. The draft guidance on the delivery of support to victims of domestic abuse, including children, in domestic abuse safe accommodation services has now been published, and can be accessed [here](#). The Government has also published the [funding allocations](#) for the £125 million for the new statutory duty, and its response to the funding allocations [consultation](#). I responded on behalf of the LGA to the announcement of the funding allocations for the new statutory duty.

### **Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy (2021 – 2024)**

4. The LGA submitted a [response](#) to the Government's [consultation](#) on the development of the next Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy (VAWG), highlighting the need for this to align with other strategies and legislation, including the Domestic Abuse Bill.
5. The Government's strategy (2021-2024) aims to focus on all forms of violence against women and girls and drive forward improvements in the effort to target perpetrators, placing victims and survivors at the heart of the approach, something the LGA supports.
6. The LGA have said on a number of occasions that investment in early intervention and prevention space, particularly community-based support, are integral to any work in this area. We hope that the Strategy will consider the systemic barriers facing Black and minoritized women, migrant women, Deaf and disabled women and LGBTQ+ survivors, as these groups are disproportionately affected.

## **Offensive Weapons Homicide Review**

7. Ahead of new legislation being introduced to Parliament on the forthcoming serious violence duty, the LGA is holding a workshop on Offensive Weapons Homicide Reviews. The Home Office will outline their proposals, which will be included in the forthcoming Bill – and outline the plans for a formal consultation process at a later date.

## **Community Trigger**

8. Vice-Chair of the LGA's Safer and Stronger Communities Board, Cllr Bridget Smith, chaired a webinar on 'an introduction to the community trigger'. The webinar was attended by over 350 delegates, from a wide range of councils. Speakers included the Minister for Safeguarding Victoria Atkins MP (via video message), and guest speakers from the organisation ASB Help. Following the session, over 50 councils have signed the ASB pledge to improve the information available online relating to the community trigger. If you missed the LGA's webinar on the Community Trigger last week, you can find a copy of ASB's Help's [presentation here](#).

## **Counter Extremism**

9. In February Cllr Hannah Dalton spoke at an LGA/EELGA/[SIGCE](#) event on the evolving extremism and cohesion challenge for local authorities. The regional event for East of England councils and Police and Crime Commissioners saw members and senior officers come together to discuss the risks and threats from extremism and how these have grown during the course of the pandemic.

## **LGA Virtual Annual Licensing Conference**

10. In February, Cllr Eric Allen and Cllr Kate Haigh chaired virtual sessions of the LGA's Annual Licensing Conference. The conference which ran over three days was attended by over 800 Members and officers. The conference covered a range of different areas of licensing with a particular focus on the impact of COVID-19 on the licenced trade and what recovery might look like. Speakers including Minister for taxis Baroness Vere of Norbiton and UK Hospitality Chief Executive Kate Nicholls, with delegates also hearing from a number of councils who reflected on their experiences and shared good practice.

## **Fire Diversity and Inclusion Champions Network**

11. Dr Fiona Twycross, Vice Chair of the Fire Services Management Committee (FSMC), chaired the LGA's Fire Diversity and Inclusion Champions Network on 22 January. The session was focussed on racial equality with facilitation from [Amber & Greene](#) and a presentation from West Midlands fire and rescue service.

## **HMICFRS Chairs and Chief Event**

12. Cllr Ian Stephens (Chair of the FSMC), Dr Fiona Twycross and Cllr Nick Chard (Deputy Chair of the FSMC) all attended a fire service event run by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service's regarding the inspection they had undertaken on the sector's response to Covid on 25 January.

## **Fire Standards Board**

13. Cllr Nick Chard represented the LGA at the Fire Standards Board on 16 February. Standards on prevention and protection were discussed.

**LGA Fire Conference**

14. On 1-4 March we held our first virtual fire conference. Lord Greenhalgh, the Fire and Building Safety Minister, attended the conference to speak on the Government's Fire Reform agenda of People, Professionalism and Governance. We also had sessions on inspection with Sir Tom Winsor, HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary and Fire Service, Building Safety with Peter Baker, Chief Inspector of Buildings, as well as sessions on climate change and neurodiversity.

**Media work**

15. I was interviewed by ITV for their programme Antisocial Britain: Trouble on our streets about the role of councils on the increase in reports of anti-social behaviour during the pandemic and councils' role in responding to it.

16. I also responded on behalf of the LGA to the Children's Commissioner's report into preventing gang involvement and youth violence by taking a public health approach to highlight that success in this area of work requires multi-agency working and cannot just be the responsibility of councils' public health teams.

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