

Update Report

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

This report sets out other updates relevant to the Board, and not included elsewhere.

Reports should be made available to the public where possible. Consider why the report should be confidential (e.g. does it include commercially sensitive or personal information?). Please note that reports may be disclosable under Freedom of Information legislation. For further information see the FOI procedure [here](#).

Recommendation

Members of the Community Wellbeing Board are asked to:

1. Provide oral updates on any other outside bodies / external meetings they may have attended on behalf of the Community Wellbeing Board since the last meeting; and
2. Note the updates contained in the report.

Action

As directed by members.

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Update Report

National Children and Adults Services Conference

1. Board Lead Members contributed to key sessions at this year's National Adults and Children's Service Conference, including sessions with the Secretary of State, opposition spokespeople and workshops on autism, and mental health and wellbeing. Attended by over 700 delegates, key issues raised across the three days included the importance of addressing adult social funding, workforce pressures, co-production and a person and place based approach to integration.

Health and integration

2. On 26 October, Cllr David Fothergill gave a presentation and joined a panel discussion at a national NHS England webinar on thriving places, to promote the importance of place based leadership – especially health and wellbeing boards – in the new health and care landscape.
3. On 1 November Cllr Sarah Osborne gave a presentation and joined a panel discussion on a national King's Fund webinar on Integrated Care Systems and place-based partnerships – six months on.
4. On 2 November Cllr David Fothergill contributed to a briefing to the All Party Health Group on the Health and Care Bill.
5. On 9 November, the LGA published our submission to the forthcoming white paper on integration: <https://www.local.gov.uk/parliament/briefings-and-responses/lga-position-paper-integration>
6. On 10 November the LGA had strong representation at the NHS Confederation's first national conference of ICS leaders. Cllr David Fothergill, Cllr Paulette Hamilton, Sarah Pickup (LGA Deputy Chief Executive) and Fiona Russell (CHIP Principal Improvement Adviser) all gave presentations and contributed to panel discussions at the event.

Adult Social Care

7. On 2 November, Cllr Rosemary Sexton spoke at a roundtable organised by the cross-party and cross-sector Future Social Care Coalition (and in partnership with the LGA) to discuss adult social care workforce reform. The roundtable was an opportunity to take stock of recent developments and consider where we collectively need to go next on workforce reform.
8. On 4 November, Cllr David Fothergill spoke at a roundtable meeting of the Adult Social Care All Party Parliamentary Group at which the APPG launched its report, 'A vision for

adult social care'. The roundtable was chaired by Rt Hon Damian Green MP and the Minister of State for Care, Gillian Keegan MP, also attended. Cllr Fothergill used his time to set out the value of social care, its pressures and the LGA's reaction to the Government's announced funding reforms and the Spending Review.

Housing

Supported Exempt Accommodation

9. We are aware that a number of councils are experiencing difficulties with supported exempt accommodation (EA). Although councils have different concerns about EA, the common theme is a lack of local levers to act when there are concerns about excessively high rents and/or the adequacy of the care and support provided. EA does not have to be commissioned by the council. A provider can set up and largely operate outside of the regulatory framework with neither councils, CQC (unless social care is commissioned) nor the social housing regulator having sufficient oversight powers. As a result, a minority of providers use EA status to maximise income while delivering poor quality services for their residents.
10. We want to work with Ministers to develop pragmatic proposals that will give councils greater powers to act against the minority of EA landlords who charge excessive rents and do not provide adequate support to their residents. We are mindful that in many instances higher rents are justified. With the right local oversight powers, we do not need to change the whole system, but can instead build on good practice so that councils can take action against the minority of poor quality providers. Following consultation with councils, the National Housing Federation, the Social Housing Regulator and DLUHC officials, we worked with Housing LIN to develop draft policy options which will shortly be shared with Community Wellbeing Lead Members and Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Lead Members for their comments and clearance.
11. Our work is building upon the work of the [five councils](#) that were part of the Government's supported housing pilot programme and received extra funding to improve the standard and quality of non-commissioned EA.

Good Home Inquiry webinar

12. On 14 October, Cllr Fothergill chaired a well-attended joint webinar with Centre for Ageing Better about the recommendations from their [Good Home Inquiry final report](#). Around 10 million people in England live in a home that presents a serious threat to their health and safety. With an ageing population, and one of the oldest housing stocks in Europe, the webinar explored how innovative finance models, public health approaches and investing in our housing infrastructure, can promote the benefits of good homes for people's health, financial stability and social connectivity. We will be taking forward the good practice points shared at the webinar with the Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board.

Armed Forces Covenant

Armed Forces Covenant Bill

13. We support the aim of the Armed Forces Bill, which will introduce a new statutory duty on specified local public authorities to have 'due regard' to the Covenant, to help ensure armed forces, personnel, veterans and their families are not disadvantaged by their service when accessing key public services. We are pleased the Government is working closely with local government to develop the statutory guidance for in scope public authorities that will underpin the legislation. This will help to ensure that the duty builds upon existing partnerships and good practice, allows local flexibility to deliver Covenant pledges and supports innovative approaches.
14. The LGA briefed ahead of the Armed Forces Bill's Report Stage in the Housing of Lords of 23 November. The Lords passed amendments that would extend the 'due regard' duty to central government and require the statutory guidance to be laid before Parliament in draft form. An amendment to extend the scope of the duty to social care (and other service areas) was not moved. The Commons is due to consider the amendments on 6 December.

LGA Armed Forces Covenant Officer Network

15. The LGA's Armed Forces Covenant Officer Network met on 10 November to discuss the latest version of the Ministry of Defence's statutory guidance for the aforementioned 'due regard' duty. Overall, officers felt the guidance was heading in the right direction and would be a helpful tool to support local implementation. Councils, other public authorities affected by the duty, and partners will have a further opportunity to comment on the draft guidance at regional focus groups between now and mid-December. Subject to the Bill receiving Royal Assent before recess, a further version of the draft guidance will be shared in early 2022, and the new duty will come into force Summer 2022.
16. We support the Ministry of Defence's commitment to review potential new burdens costs for councils one year after the new statutory duty starts. Whilst many councils are already leading comprehensive approaches to local Covenant delivery, and there is learning to draw upon from other similar duties, some councils may incur additional costs to get ready for and implement the new duty. It is important that new burdens costs that may arise from implementing the duty are kept under review and fully funded by government.
17. The Network is next meeting on 10 February 2022 when in addition to the statutory duty guidance, councils will be discussing early planning for 2022 Remembrance Parades and the 40th anniversary of the Falklands War. In recognition of the Culture Tourism and Sport Board's lead role on commemorations and anniversaries, the discussion will be fed back to both Boards.

Down Syndrome Bill

18. The Down Syndrome Bill had its second reading in the House of Commons on 26 November.
19. The LGA supports the aims of the [Down Syndrome Bill](#), which would create a new duty on the Secretary of State to issue guidance to relevant authorities (health, education and local authorities in respect of social care and housing) on how to meet the specific needs of people with Down syndrome; and for relevant authorities to have due regard to the guidance in providing services.
20. Councils already play a key role in supporting people with Down syndrome to help them live the lives they want to lead, including through their social care functions and their work with partners, particularly the voluntary and community sector and schools.
21. While we support the aims of the Bill, the financial pressures facing adult social care and support for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) must be considered in regard to the additional duties set out in the Bill.
22. Any new statutory duty in the Down Syndrome Bill will need to be accompanied by new funding in line with the New Burdens Doctrine. We are therefore pleased to have had confirmation from the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) that new guidance will be formed in consultation with partners, including local government, and a new burdens assessment will be undertaken ahead of finalising any guidance.
23. It would be helpful for any new guidance to include information that helps councils and the NHS understand the needs of those with Down syndrome and what effective support would look like. However, we would be concerned about any guidance which creates a differential level of access/eligibility for support compared with other groups of people with learning-disabilities, as the duty on Local Authorities regarding assessment under the Care Act 2014 is to assess people based on need, not diagnostic categories.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Mental Health Act reform

24. LGA Officers recently met the DHSC team leading on the Parliamentary planning for the new Mental Health Act, and also with the Chief Social Worker leading on mental health at the DHSC. A further meeting with the DHSC team to plan the implementation of the Mental Health Act is being arranged. We continue to emphasise the role and responsibilities of councils in delivering statutory mental health services. We are highlighting some areas where we need further clarity on the Act. We have contributed to new burdens assessments related to the act on Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA) services and Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHP) and are discussing any additional potential burdens of implementation.

Suicide Prevention

25. DHSC, the LGA and ADPH have agreed a Memorandum of Understanding to deliver the suicide prevention sector led improvement programme for 2021/22. Due to the delay finalising the agreement, DHSC has agreed that the programme can run until September 2022. We will shortly be sharing this year's offer with councils, including grants to bolster regional suicide prevention activity and improvement resources.

Mental Health 'Must Know' guidance

26. We have recently published a [Mental Health 'Must know' guide for lead members](#). This covered children and adults and reflects recent policy changes and the impact of the pandemic. We held a workshop on the Community Mental Health Framework at NCASC and may hold a further NHSE/LGA webinar on the framework.

Loneliness

27. We recently published [8 loneliness case studies](#) and are due to publish an updated 'must know' loneliness guide for councillors.
28. On 19th October Cllr Rosi Sexton spoke at the IGPP Loneliness Conference on working in partnership to tackle loneliness and isolation.

Care and Health Improvement Programme (CHIP) - Mental Health Offer

29. A core offer for improvement of mental health services has been developed in the CHIP programme. Key themes include: the principles of social justice, achieving parity of esteem between a person's social and psychological needs and their physical and personal needs, co-production and lived experience, integrated commissioning, workforce planning, training and development, governance and leadership and data and performance.
30. CHIP are currently seeking someone to shape this programme further. The ambition is to be in a position to develop a clear support offer from 2022-23, with preparatory work being progressed in the second half of 2021-22 focusing on a number of priority areas identified through initial scoping work.

Dementia

31. The government is currently drafting a new Dementia Strategy. The overall aim of the strategy is to improve the experience of being diagnosed and living with dementia. The project is led by the Alzheimer's Society on behalf of the DHSC. We are members of the Programme Board and are contributing to the overall strategy. The strategy launch date has not been confirmed, but is likely to be in early 2022 and run until 2027.

Autism

32. The government's [national strategy for autistic children, young people and adults](#) was launched in July 2021 – it is a five year strategy to improve the lives of autistic people of

all ages and their families. We are members of the Executive Group leading on the strategy, and with ADASS and ADCS, contributed to its development. The strategy also has an implementation plan, this largely focusses on actions for government departments in Year 1 though further actions will be agreed up to 2026 – these will likely include actions for councils. We held a session on the Autism Strategy at NCASC.

Public Health

33. On 12 October, Cllr David Fothergill Co-Chaired a webinar with the Chairman of the LGA's Coastal Special Interest Group which welcomed the Chief Medical Officer Professor Chris Whitty and a number of Directors of Public Health from across the country. This was a valuable opportunity to discuss the CMOs annual report on health in coastal areas.
34. On 30 November, Cllr Louise Gittins Chaired the first in a series of webinars on health inequalities that the LGA are delivering and is funded by Government. This first webinar was focused on people with learning disabilities, their experiences of health inequalities during the pandemic and looking ahead to what more Councils can and are doing to mitigate these.

Children's health

35. On 22 October Cllr David Fothergill gave the keynote speech at the launch of the School and Public Health Nursing Association's Vision: Creating a world in which children can thrive. A Service Fit for the Future. Cllr Fothergill reiterated the LGA's support for school nursing and our call for every secondary school to have access to a school nurse and also thanked them for their tireless work keeping children safe during the pandemic.
36. On 18 November Cllr Rosi Sexton attended the Social Market Foundation roundtable discussion: Adolescent obesity in Britain, highlighting the important work of councils in tackling obesity and health inequalities and the case for increased powers to tackle the obesogenic environment.