

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

Taxi licensing

1. On 3rd November Cllr Clive Woodbridge, one of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board Licensing Champions, chaired a webinar on taxi licensing and implementing the statutory standards. The webinar had around 500 delegates and speakers included the Taxis Minister, Baroness Vere.

Gambling licensing

2. Lead Members of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board wrote to the Gambling Minister, Chris Philp MP, to highlight the LGA's priorities for the Gambling Act Review. The letter reiterated the need to limit the statutory aim to permit and give councils the full powers they require to effectively manage local gambling premises.
3. In the Minister's reply, he noted Lead Members concerns and confirmed that Government is carefully considering the issue of local authority powers in the Gambling Act Review.

Food regulation

4. In early January, Cllr Nesil Caliskan met with the new Chair of the Food Standards Agency, Professor Susan Jebb. The meeting discussed the FSA's Achieving Business Compliance programme, which is aiming to update the framework for food regulation and discussed local authorities' role within the framework for food regulation. The meeting also considered the challenges councils face in using the planning system to promote health eating and target obesity and the broader role the FSA may take on health, as well as food safety, in future.

Drink spiking

5. On Wednesday 19th January, Cllr Jeanie Bell, one of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board Licensing Champions, is providing oral evidence to the Home Affairs Select Committee's inquiry on drink spiking. Cllr Bell will provide an overview of the role of licensing committees in regulating the night-time economy and promoting safeguarding.

Domestic Abuse

6. On Tuesday 11 January, Cllr Nesil Caliskan attended the Ministerial Roundtable, chaired by Rachel Maclean MP, to discuss the Government's forthcoming Domestic Abuse Strategy. Cllr Caliskan highlighted the importance of the forthcoming strategy aligning with wider Government legislation and guidance and called for prevention of domestic abuse to be central to the strategy.

7. Domestic abuse-related crimes represent a higher percentage of all crimes in December than the rest of the year. The [LGA joined forces with Women's Aid and the Domestic Abuse Commissioner Nicole Jacobs to urge people to look out for common signs of domestic abuse this Christmas](#). As well as a community effort to spot the signs of domestic abuse and report concerns, we are calling for greater investment in early intervention and prevention schemes that helps stop it from occurring in the first place.

Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill

8. The LGA has [briefed](#) Peers during the Report Stage debates for the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill. Amendments have been agreed on Harpers Law (mandatory life sentences for those who kill an emergency worker in the course of their duty), data-sharing protocols, and the extension of the serious violence duty to include domestic abuse and sexual offences. The Bill [continues](#) in Report Stage until 17 January 2022.

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