

Update Report

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

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

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

Health and Care Bill

1. The LGA, NHS Confederation, NHS Providers, the King's Fund and the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny drafted an amendment regarding the increased powers for the Secretary of State to intervene earlier in NHS reconfigurations. The amendment proposed that the Secretary of State be required to consult the relevant health overview and scrutiny committees and all relevant NHS organisations in exercising this power. The amendment was tabled by Baroness Cumberlege (Con) was tabled in the Lords Committee Stage on 26 January but was withdrawn after discussion in which Lord Stevens (CB), Lord Howarth (Lab) and Lord Shipley (LD), Lord Patel (CB), Baroness Walmsley and Baroness Thornton (Lab) all spoke in favour of the amendment.
2. Lord Kamall, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for DHSC gave the following commitment with regard to the LGA amendment: "I have heard what a number of noble Lords have said, especially former Ministers, Secretaries of State and others involved in the system, and it is quite clear *that I need to go back and consult further*. In that spirit, I ask that noble Lords do not move their amendments, and hope that I have explained the reasons why." We will continue to seek support for this amendment at the Lords Report Stage.

ICS development

3. On 12 January Cllr David Fothergill joined the City Regions Board (CRB) for a discussion on the development of ICSs. While CRB members agreed the roll out of ICSs could bring opportunities to address issues around population health in a more integrated way, there were also concerns raised that the rollout of ICSs could weaken the role of local government in public health, and in doing so hamper the ability of local areas to deliver the best outcomes for their areas.

The Integration White Paper

4. Publication of the white paper has been delayed from Autumn 2021 to early 2022 in order to allow more time for the DHSC to consult with key stakeholders, including senior figures in local government. On 17 January the Prime Minister held an informal briefing with Mark Lloyd, LGA chief executive and several local authority chief executives. On 19 February, Jason Yiannikou, Director of the NHS Legislation Programme for DHSC gave an informal briefing on the key proposals in the integration white paper to Community Wellbeing Board members. Their views will be considered in the drafting of the final publication. We expect the white paper to be published shortly.

Mental Health Strategy

5. The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has announced that the Department for Health and Social Care is developing a 10-year cross-departmental mental health strategy in response to unprecedented demand for mental health support arising from the pandemic and at a time when mental health services are under significant pressure. We understand the strategy will cover the spectrum of people's mental health and wellbeing from prevention and early intervention through to crisis and severe mental illness and that the department wants to fully reflect the important role of councils. We are expecting a public consultation to be launched in the coming months and will bring this to the Board for a substantive discussion.

Suicide prevention support offer

6. The LGA and ADPH have launched their suicide prevention support offer for 21/22. Through the offer we will provide support in three areas:
 - 6.1. National support through a series of case studies and a national sharing event designed to provide wider and easier access to the good practice, learning and existing resources.
 - 6.2. Regional support through the regional ADPH network which will receive a grant for suicide prevention activity. This will fund coordination capacity, enabling each network to build upon strong existing suicide prevention activity within the regions.
 - 6.3. Local support for up to 15 local authorities and partners who self-identify as facing significant delivery challenges locally around suicide prevention. Peer experts will deliver a one-day workshop on a specific delivery challenge or will support local authorities with up to three days of light touch support on a specific delivery challenge. An action plan will be produced for the local area to take forward to address local opportunities and challenges in suicide prevention.

[Find out more about the suicide prevention support offer, including how to apply for a bespoke support visit](#)

Older people's housing

7. We have commissioned Housing LIN to produce a refreshed version of [Housing our ageing population](#). This is a timely piece of work given the prominence of housing within the Adult Social Care Reform White Paper. It also links to the Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board's work on planning reform and housing more broadly. We are hosting a roundtable with council officers on 10 February to agree the scope of this work, which will cover:

- 7.1. issues and barriers affecting housing for an ageing population,
- 7.2. the benefits of getting older people's housing right, and

- 7.3. recommendations for Government, councils, housing providers and other stakeholders to widen housing choices for an ageing population
- 7.4. case studies showing good practice from councils

Armed Forces Covenant

Veterans' Strategy Action Plan

- 8. The Office for Veterans' Affairs has published the [Veterans' Strategy Action Plan: 2022 to 2024](#). The Action Plan sets out the steps the Government will take in the next two years towards their ambition of making the United Kingdom the best place in the world to be a veteran by 2028. Local government shares that ambition. Councils will have an important role to play implementing the action plan across the priorities of understanding our veteran community, transforming services for veterans and recognising our veterans' contribution to society.

Armed Forces Families Strategy 2022 to 2032

- 9. The Ministry of Defence has published the [Armed Forces Families Strategy 2022 to 2032](#). The strategy addresses the challenges armed forces families face with mobility, deployment and separation and the implications this has for accessing good quality healthcare, education, and accommodation. It also notes the evolving nature of family life and the pressures this can place on childcare and managing the career of the partner or spouse alongside that of the Service person. The strategy will be supported by an action plan that includes the commitments made in the government's response to Andrew Selous MP's ['Living in Our Shoes'](#) report. Councils will be key partners in the delivery of the strategy and we will continue to support councils' engagement with this important work.

Veterans Advisory and Pensions Committees

- 10. Leo Docherty, the Minister for Defence People and Veterans, has endorsed updated [terms of reference](#) for the thirteen Veteran, Advisory and Pension Committees (VAPC) – 9 in England, 2 in Scotland and one in Northern Ireland. The Committees are an independent advisory non-departmental public body sponsored by the Ministry of Defence. They advise and liaise with veterans, their families and relevant organisations on their needs, issues and concerns. The Minister has asked the Committees to collect information about regional veteran priorities and the Armed Forces Covenant. This will require close working with councils, some of whom are represented on the VAPCs. We have encouraged councils to look out for how this is being taken forward in the regions.

Down Syndrome Bill

- 11. The aim of the Down Syndrome Bill is to ensure that certain health, education, and local authorities take account of the specific needs of people with Down syndrome when exercising their relevant functions. This builds on the government's stated commitment to improve outcomes for people with a learning disability.

12. The Bill 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.
13. The Bill is currently at Report Stage in the House of Commons. The LGA supports the aim of the Bill, but in our [briefing](#) we highlight that 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. 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.
14. We have also said that 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.

Social Care

15. On 2 November, Cllr Rosemary Sexton attended a roundtable on the care workforce organised by the Future Social Care Coalition. Cllr Sexton was invited to give a presentation on the LGA's reaction to the Government's report, 'Build Back Better: Our plan for health and social care'. Cllr Sexton welcomed aspects of the plan but raised concerns about the adequacy of the funding allocated to deliver all aspects of the announced reforms. She also offered reflections on the Spending Review and what it meant for adult social care.
16. On 4 November, Cllr David Fothergill attended and spoke at the All Party Parliamentary Group on adult social care. Discussing their vision for care and support reform, Cllr Fothergill set out the LGA's views on the funding pressures facing councils and the priority issues that needed addressing in the reform agenda, including tackling unmet and under-met need, pressures on the care workforce and care worker pay, a greater investment in prevention, greater stability for the provider market, and action to ease the pressures on unpaid carers.
17. On 12 January, Cllr Paulette Hamilton represented the LGA at the first meeting of a new adult social care policy network established by Public Policy Projects and chaired by Rt Hon Damian Green. The network, attended by a range of senior figures from across the social care sector, is examining the issues of integration, funding, workforce and digitisation, with reports on each planned over the coming twelve months. As well as contributing to the general discussion, Cllr Hamilton also gave a short presentation setting out the LGA's position on the integration agenda, including our perspective on the

Health and Care Bill and what we want to see from the forthcoming integration white paper.

Health inequalities hub

18. The LGA launched their [Health Inequalities Hub](#) at the end of November 2021 which includes new case studies and think pieces. A part of our work on health inequalities has been a number of webinars on key areas including mental health, age & gender and ethnicity. A Community Wellbeing Board member has Chaired each of these, which are listed below;
 - 18.1. Cllr Louise Gittins chaired the first webinar on Tuesday 30 November [focussed on how people with learning disabilities](#) were impacted by COVID-19.
 - 18.2. Cllr Paulette Hamilton chaired the second webinar on 14 December focused on [how black and minority ethnic people have been, and continue to be, impacted by the virus.](#)
 - 18.3. Cllr Fothergill chaired the third webinar on 18 January focused on how the pandemic has exacerbated the inequalities in different ways for older and younger people. The summary when completed will be found on our [health inequalities hub](#).
19. The next webinar will be focussed on the impact of the pandemic on mental health and is on 15 February. This can be found on the LGA events site [here](#) for anyone interested in joining us.
20. Cllr Fothergill will also chair a webinar in which Professor Clare Bambra will share the findings of her recent co-authored book '[The Unequal Pandemic: COVID-19 and Health Inequalities](#)' on 15 February, the page on the LGA events site to book to attend can be found [here](#).