

Community Wellbeing Board – Report from Cllr David Fothergill (Chairman)

Vulnerable people

1. In December 2022, the Community Wellbeing Board Lead Members agreed publication of a joint LGA/NHSE guidance 'Quick guide on accommodation based mental health, learning disability and autism support in adult community, crisis and acute services'.
2. In December 2022, the Community Wellbeing Board Lead members agreed publication of a LGA 'Get in on the act' briefing on the new Mental Health Act.
3. In February 2023, Cllr David Fothergill and Professor Louis Appleby (Chair of the National Suicide Prevention Advisory Group) published a blog on 'Breaking the link between financial difficulty and suicide' to highlight the importance of prioritising suicide prevention during financially difficult times.
4. On 8th February 2023, Cllr David Fothergill chaired a LGA webinar on 'No Homeless Veterans'. The event was to help councils identify and respond effectively to the needs of homeless veterans.

Public Health

5. On 17 January 2023, Cllr David Fothergill had a constructive meeting with the Minister for Primary Care and Public Health, Neil O'Brien MP. They discussed the public health grant 2023/24, supporting the economically inactive back to work and the tobacco plan and alcohol strategy. The Minister is keen to visit innovative programmes delivered by councils or in partnership with the NHS and others. Feel free to drop the office a line if you have any examples you may have we can share with the Ministers office.
6. In January 2023, Cllr David Fothergill published a joint blog with Sharon White, CEO of the School and Public Health Nurses Association and Alison Morton, Executive Director of the Institute of Health Visiting calling for urgent investment these vital public health nursing services.
7. On 11 February, Cllr David Fothergill was interviewed by BBC News following an LGA press release about the need to better regulate the sale of vaping products to those under 18 years of age.
8. As of the 1 March, councils are still calling for the Government to urgently publish the Public Health Grant funding allocations 2023/24 which councils will receive from April. This means that time is running out for councils to set their

budgets and to make critical decisions on renewing contracts for vital public health services. A lack of certainty around councils' public health funding this year is exacerbating the growing crisis of demand for support services, such as for sexual health services or drug and addiction support. This is leaving these vital services facing an uncertain future and risks people being forced to go without crucial help and support. We continue to raise our concerns and call for future grant allocations to be more closely aligned to the publication of the Local Government Finance Settlement.

9. The LGA is calling for vaping products to be kept out of sight of children in shops and for the legal minimum age of 18 to be marked clearly on each product. The LGA is wanting vaping products to be subject to the same rules as cigarettes and kept out of reach and sight of children behind shop counters as more children can be attracted to the product due to its bright colourful packaging. We are also calling for the closing of a loophole that allows for the free distribution of vape products to children.
10. The LGA submitted evidence to the Health and Social Care Select Committee review on Prevention on 14 February 2023. The LGA has consistently argued that the current social care and health system is unsustainable and will buckle under the weight of demand unless we re-engineer our planning and service provision to protect health, prevent sickness and intervene early to minimise the need for costly hospital treatment and care. Trying to fix this by focusing on treatment alone is not the answer. We need preventative strategies that mitigate or defer the need for costly interventions and at the same time deliver better outcomes for individuals
11. There has been an 83% increase in extractions for tooth decay in children compared with 2020/21, though this the increase is likely to reflect a partial recovery of hospital services following the Covid-19 pandemic. The rate of tooth extractions for children living in the most deprived areas was almost 3.5 times higher than those living in the least deprived areas. This month we called on the Government to use the upcoming spring Budget to recommit to vital measures to combat childhood obesity and diet-related ill health, such as the sugar levy which has helped cut down the consumption of drinks with high sugar content.
12. The LGA annual public health conference takes place 21-23 March and will offer delegates the opportunity to hear from leading expert speakers on the very latest thinking in national public health policy issues, as well as gaining insights from those delivering on the ground. Over three half-day virtual sessions, delegates will be able to put their questions and comments to a stellar line up of speakers and will have the opportunity to participate in sessions sharing good practice

from local areas and to discuss issues that matter to them. I encourage colleagues to book a place.

Integration and devolution update

13. In December, the Community Wellbeing Board Lead Members agreed to sponsor the Devo Connect Health Devolution Commission in 2023/24. Cllr David Fothergill will be represent the LGA as an advisory commissioner. Click on the following link for more information about the Health Devolution Commission: <https://healthdevolution.org.uk/>
14. In February, the Community Wellbeing Board Lead Members agreed to support a proposal to establish a joint NHS Confederation and LGA Health and Devolution Working Group to understand the opportunities and challenges for leaders in local government devolution areas and ICSs in aligning health and local government devolution. The City Regions Board and People and Places Board have also considered the proposal. So far, the CRB has approved the proposal and we expect clearance from the People and Places Board imminently. Each of the LGA Boards will have Member level representation on the Working Group, with Cllr David Fothergill representing CWB.
15. In November, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that the Rt Hon Patricia Hewitt would be conducting a review of the autonomy and accountability of integrated care systems (ICSs). The LGA submitted written evidence to the Hewitt Review: <https://www.local.gov.uk/parliament/briefings-and-responses/lga-response-hewitt-review-ics-accountability-and-autonomy> . On 13 January, Patricia Hewitt attended a special meeting of the CWB to hear the Board Members views on ICSs. In response to Patricia Hewitt's request for LGA representation on specific workstreams focusing on 5 aspects of accountability and autonomy, Cllr David Fothergill represented the LGA on the accountability, autonomy and regulation workstream.

Press Statements

[We must shift the narrative on ageing and disability – LGA responds to Archbishops' Commission report on Reimagining Care | Local Government Association](#)

[Councils warn of 'alarming' pressures on households this winter – LGA responds to ONS winter pressure data | Local Government Association](#)

[Local public health services at risk amid funding uncertainty | Local Government Association](#)

[Councils left in the dark about mental health funding future – LGA responds to NAO report on mental health service demand | Local Government Association](#)

[Vapes need to be 'out-of-sight and out-of-reach' to tackle underage sales – LGA | Local Government Association](#)

[Councils also need clarity over public health cash – LGA on drug and alcohol treatment funding | Local Government Association](#)

[Lack of dentists leads kids teeth to rot – LGA on hospital tooth extractions data | Local Government Association](#)

[Urgent social care investment needed to meet demand – LGA on The King's Fund report | Local Government Association](#)

Contact details

Contact officer: Mark Norris

Position: Principal Policy Adviser

Phone no: 0207 664 3241

Email: mark.norris@local.gov.uk