

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

### **Licensing conference**

1. Cllr Woodbridge, Vice-Chair of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board, chaired the LGA's annual licensing conference.
2. The conference gave delegates an opportunity to reflect on some of the key developments that can be expected to affect councils' licensing committees and teams over the next year. There was a wide range of expert speakers who covered issues including licensing and counterterrorism, how to secure alignment between licensing and planning regimes and best practice in fee setting. Cllr Jeanie Bell, one of the Board's licensing champions, also delivered a presentation on how to link licensing into your council's priorities.
3. This was an in-person conference, which attracted around 60 delegates.

### **Gambling**

4. The [DCMS Committee is holding an inquiry](#) into gambling regulation, which investigates the progress the Government has made on addressing the known issues in gambling regulation. The LGA has submitted written evidence to the inquiry.
5. The LGA and APPC hosted a roundtable on tackling gambling harms in February. The meeting consisted of PCCs, the NPCC, councillors and council officers from public health and licensing. It sought to identify good practice and collaborative working between councils and PCCs on gambling harm.
6. The outcomes of the roundtable will inform a refresh of the LGA's guidance on taking a whole council approach to gambling harms and the APCC's checklist.

### **Annual Fire Conference and Exhibition 2023**

7. The LGA's Annual Fire Conference took place on 7th – 8th March in Nottingham with over 150 delegates in attendance.
8. The theme for the Conference was 'Building Resilience for the Future of the Fire Service'. Chris Philp MP was due to deliver the keynote address, updating on the Government's Fire reform programme and Andy Cooke, HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary and Chief Fire & Rescue Services was due to talk about key findings in the latest round of inspections.

9. Workshops covered the core code of ethics, sector-led improvement, research Shropshire FRS has done on 'on call' and Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs), with plenary sessions focussing on people, efficiency, and effectiveness.

### **Fire Services Management Committee**

10. FSMC met on 6 March at the Annual Fire Conference in Nottingham. Members heard from the Building Safety Regulator and discussed culture in the fire service as well as the findings from [State of Fire and Rescue: The Annual Assessment of Fire and Rescue Services in England 2022](#) and plans for the next round of inspections.

### **Fire and Rescue Services Pay**

11. A further [pay offer](#) has been made within the uk-wide National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services, which covers uniformed personnel including firefighters. The offer is for a 7% uplift in basic pay rates and continual professional development payments with effect from 1 July 2022, followed by a 5% uplift from 1 July 2023. Discussions would also take place to explore the wider points in the pay claim. The Fire Brigades Union will now consult its members, recommending acceptance. Notification of strike dates will not take place while the consultation is open (to 6 March).

### **Coroners Pay**

12. Agreement has been reached within the Joint Negotiating Committee for Coroners that with effect from 1st April 2022, local salaries and day rates for individuals derived from the JNC arrangements will be increased by 1.56%.

### **Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour**

13. The LGA continues to work with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on plans to tackle anti-social behaviour, following the [Prime Minister's speech on building a better future which set out plans](#) to give mayors and local authorities the tools they need to crack down on anti-social behaviour. The Government is expected to publish a Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour Plan in the coming weeks.

### **Surveillance equipment**

14. The Biometrics and Surveillance Camera Commissioner has published their [Annual Report 2021 – 2022](#), and [analysis of the results](#) of a survey of police forces on their use of overt surveillance camera systems in public places.

Both the report and survey highlight the Commissioner's concerns about the use of surveillance equipment where it is produced by companies subject to the National Intelligence Law of the People's Republic of China.

### **Domestic abuse**

15. The Government have confirmed the police and the probation service will start work immediately to ensure that offenders sentenced to a year or more for controlling and coercive behaviour are recorded on the violent and sex offender register. In addition, abusers could be fitted with a tag, prevented from going within a certain distance of a victim's home, and made to attend a behaviour change programme, as part of a trial of domestic abuse protection notices and orders. Also, those at risk of, or suffering from, domestic abuse will be able to receive emergency help from 18 jobcentres across the UK. Further details of the measures can be [found here](#).

### **Domestic Abuse Perpetrators Group Meeting**

16. The Board's Domestic Abuse Champion Cllr Lois Samuel attended the Domestic Abuse Commissioner's strategic group on tackling domestic abuse perpetrators. This meeting focused on improving the response to perpetrators in a healthcare setting, and evidence-based perpetrator interventions.
17. This follows the Government's [announcement](#) of up to £18 million per year over two years in funding towards the next phase of the Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Intervention Fund, bringing the total of the fund to £36 million. Police and crime commissioners (PCCs) will be given funding to increase the availability of domestic abuse perpetrator intervention schemes, such as behaviour change programmes, that aim to improve victim safety and reduce the risk posed by abusers. The Government also [published](#) seven standards which provides commissioners with the guidance on commissioning effective interventions with perpetrators while ensuring that victims' safety and welfare remain paramount.

### **Independent Review of Prevent**

18. The [Independent Review of Prevent and Government's response](#) were published in February. The report is broadly positive about Prevent's overall objectives, endorsing the strategy overall, and recognises the crucial role of local partners in its delivery. The report makes 34 recommendations, which the Government has accepted in full, including several which will impact on council delivery.



**Councillors' Forum**

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