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Update on Adult Social Care Funding

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

This report is to update members on the LGA's work on social care.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the update.

Action

Officers to continue to provide updates to members.

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Update on Adult Social Care funding

Introduction

1. This paper updates members on key actions carried out by the Local Government Association (LGA) on adult social care since the last Panel meeting in September.

Ripe for Reform

2. The LGA set out its expectations for social care reform in '[Ripe for Reform – the sector agrees, now the public expects: a guide to the Care and Support White Paper](#)', published in March. This proposed three tests against which the sector could judge the adequacy of the White Paper using a series of scorecards. More than 80 council leaders, charity directors, directors of adult services, chief executives and social care experts responded. The survey showed that:
 - 2.1. more than four in five experts (83 per cent) believe Government plans have failed to move towards a system that provides sufficient funding;
 - 2.2. nearly nine in 10 (88 per cent) say the proposals don't address the funding needed to meet the demographic pressures facing the country;
 - 2.3. the timetable for reform is also called into question, with almost two in three people (62 per cent) saying the proposed timetable doesn't recognise the urgency of the problem or commit to immediate action.

Draft Care and Support Bill

3. On 19 October the LGA and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) submitted a joint response to the Government's consultation on the Draft Care and Support Bill, which was launched over the summer. Our response underlines our overall support for the Bill and its core principles; however, we also highlight several important areas of concern regarding its overall approach, including resources and funding, issues of scope and matters of detail.
4. Most critically, we are concerned that the Bill detaches policy direction and decisions from financial considerations. We have said that without a clear commitment from Government on funding for social care reform, the aspirations of the Bill will not be realised. This concern is a key driver behind the LGA's new 'Show Us You Care Campaign', supported by SOLACE and the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS). With the consultation now closed and the Bill team at the Department of Health developing its response to the submissions, the campaign will help us to keep pressing the case for the full suite of reforms that are needed to the system of care and support. More information the campaign is set out in paragraph 6.

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House of Commons Health Committee on Public Expenditure

5. On 23 October the House of Commons Health Committee held its first oral evidence session on public expenditure during which it heard from representatives from the LGA, ADASS and the NHS Confederation. The key headline messages included:
 - 5.1. social care funding must be seen in the wider context of funding for local government as a whole;
 - 5.2. there is a need for urgent reconsideration of the level of resourcing for adult social care;
 - 5.3. councils have a strong track record when it comes to delivering on efficiency. However, as councils continue to make efficiencies the options become more limited as to where these are secured. Councils have sought to protect frontline services where possible and, with this in mind, it is becoming likely that discretionary spend on prevention and early intervention may be the only place left to look for further efficiencies;
 - 5.4. a successful integrated approach will push costs 'down the system' – away from the NHS and onto council early intervention and preventative services and support. Whilst this creates a more cost effective and joined up approach, it is critical that NHS funding is simultaneously transferred to councils at the same time.

Show Us You Care Campaign

6. The LGA has launched its 'Show Us You Care Campaign' through which the sector is uniting to call on the Government to address the funding crisis facing adult social care now, rather than postponing until the Comprehensive Spending Review (which could be as late as 2016). As part of the campaign launch, SOLACE, the LGA and ADASS have jointly published ['The reform of adult social care and support: A guide for council Leaders and Chief Executives'](#). Alongside the guide, the LGA has published a template letter for authorities to send to their MPs and a draft press release, which together form the campaign pack.

National Children and Adult Services Conference (24-26 October 2012)

7. Cllr David Rogers OBE, Chair of the LGA's Community Wellbeing Board, set out a clear message at the National Children and Adult Services Conference (NCAS) in late October that although the white paper provided a good platform for a reformed care and support system, the Government's proposals would mean little unless they were backed with sufficient resources – both for the immediate system and for the longer term. There were mixed messages from ministers on the issue of funding reform. The new Secretary of State for Health, Jeremy Hunt, indicated his commitment to implementing the Dilnot proposals "as public finances allow"; however, the new Care Services Minister Norman Lamb MP recognised that the debate "has been in the long grass for too long" and signaled that he was committed to making sure it was resolved

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to ensure the future provision of quality services, with indications that key Dilnot proposals could be implemented within a two-year timeframe.

8. The urgent need for better integration between health and social care has long been another pillar of the LGA's campaign for reform of the system, so it was encouraging that integration was very much the watchword at the conference. In particular, the Secretary of State echoed the LGA's own position by emphasising that he saw integration as the key component to building a better system, with health and wellbeing boards as catalysts for integration that goes beyond health and social care to include housing, planning and transport, among other mainstream services.

Key areas for future focus

9. The LGA will continue to work closely with SOLACE and ADASS to develop our case for reform of the care and support system. Potential strands of future work that we are discussing include:
 - 9.1. the development of a robust evidence base to support engagement with Government about the future funding of adult social care in the lead up to Autumn Statement and next Spending Review;
 - 9.2. exploration of the potential benefit of a staged process to implementing Dilnot, although this may no longer be necessary in light of Normal Lamb's signals about implementing key Dilnot proposals at the NCAS conference.
10. There are also a number of areas highlighted in the White Paper which do not feature in the draft Bill, such as introducing free social care at the end of life, care and support in prisons and proposals for veterans. These implications of these proposals need to be better understood and there may be benefit in further exploration during pre-legislative scrutiny.

Financial Implications

11. This is core work for the LGA and is budgeted for within the 2012-13 LGA budget.