

Draft minute of the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee
– 11 September 2018

'The Lives we Want to Lead' The Local Government Association Green Paper
for Adult Social Care and Wellbeing

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities and Director of Corporate Resources, which was due to be presented to the Cabinet on 14 September 2018, on 'The Lives We Want to Lead' – the Local Government Association Green Paper for adult social care and wellbeing. The Government had stated its intention to publish a Green Paper on adult social care, but the publication of this had been delayed a number of times. It was anticipated that this would now be published in the autumn, alongside a ten year plan for the NHS would be developed. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 8', is filed with these minutes.

The Lead Member for Adults and Communities stated his support for the main principles within the Green Paper. He made particular reference to the individual stories within the Green Paper of people who had required adult social care services but were not aware that this was not part of the NHS and hence not a free service.

The current draft response to the LGA Green Paper from Leicestershire County Council was proposing free personal care as being the most equitable and transparent solution but that, whilst a 'cap and floor' mechanism would provide people with protection of assets, it would also require a bureaucratic and resource intensive process, and would mean that a large number of people who currently funded their own care would have to create an account with the local authority and the local authority would have to assess everyone.

Members welcomed the LGA Green Paper and the report, which outlined the County Council's perspective and initial assessment. The Committee was of the view that the issue of funding social care had been avoided for too long and that, given the pressures facing the sector, the LGA needed to lobby hard for Government action to address the funding issue.

In respect of the response to the LGA Green Paper, the Committee asked the Director of Adults and Communities and the Lead Member to have regard to the following when formulating a Council response:

- i) Making personal care free would lead to greater simplicity and help with the integration of health and social care, although it was recognised that this may be too expensive. As such, the 'cap and floor' appeared to be a sensible way forward.
- ii) It was agreed that the responsibility for social care services should not be transferred to the NHS. The local authority, with elected members representing their constituents, was better placed to understand local needs and be more effective at commissioning primary and social care. The NHS should focus on its strengths, that being providing acute care.

- iii) The challenges facing social care could not, as the LGA paper made clear, be addressed by narrowly focussing on social care. The interdependence of housing, public health and other services provided by local authorities needed to be addressed. In this regard, planned reductions in public health funding were unhelpful.
- iv) The important role of the carer's workforce needed to be recognised, both in terms of remuneration as well as improved career prospects and training. Failure to do so would lead to a greater turnover of staff and threaten the sustainability of the care sector.

The Committee recognised that all of the above required bold decisions on funding and that there needed to be national funding formula for social care.

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet be advised of the comments made by the Committee.