

**Report to:** Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health

**Date of meeting:** 2 November 2020

**By:** Director of Adult Social Care and Health

**Title:** Notice of Motion calling on Her Majesty's Government to publish its White Paper on the reform and future of Adult Social Care

**Purpose:** The report sets out the Adult Social Care and Health response to the Notice of Motion for East Sussex County Council to call on Her Majesty's Government to publish its White Paper on the reform and future of Adult Social Care

---

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health is recommended to recommend to the County Council that it:

- 1) notes the consideration given to the call for the Government to publish its White Paper on the reform and future of Adult Social Care and rejects the Motion for the reasons set out in the report; and**
  - 2) supports the ongoing lobbying and engagement with central government about financial, and other support, for social care throughout the Covid-19 crisis**
- 

## **1 Background**

1.1 The following Notice of Motion has been submitted to the Chairman of the County Council by Councillors Tutt and Ungar:

*East Sussex County Council calls on Her Majesty's Government to publish its White Paper on the reform and future of Adult Social Care.*

1.2 In line with County Council practice, the matter has been referred by the Chairman to the Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health for consideration to provide information and inform debate on the Motion. The Lead Member's recommendation on this Notice of Motion will be reported to the Full Council at its meeting on 1 December 2020 (the Notice of Motion is attached at Appendix 1).

1.3 At the time of writing, there is no published central government timeframe for Social Care reform. Given the onset of the Covid-19 crisis, on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2020, Lord Bethell, parliamentary undersecretary of state at the Department of Health and Social Care, stated that a social care plan could not be committed to before the end of this year.

1.4 The Care Act 2014 was the first overhaul of social care statute in England for more than 60 years. The Government initially delayed implementation of Part Two of the Care Act, funding reforms, until April 2020 to allow Local Authorities to have more time to introduce and embed Part One of the Care Act.

1.5 Published in January 2019, the NHS Long Term Plan recognised that the NHS in England needs to provide more co-ordinated and personalised care. To promote health and wellbeing, and

break down barriers between health and social care, the NHS will also need to work closely with local government. Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) are the latest in a series of NHS initiatives to develop integrated care in England. In East Sussex, health and social care partners are working together to deliver the ambition set out in the NHS Long Term Plan, including the ongoing development and delivery of integrated care and support.

## **2 Supporting information**

2.1 Covid-19 is the biggest challenge the health and care system has faced in living memory. It is essential that lessons are learned from this experience. There is now not only an imperative to restore service provision while remaining prepared for future waves of the virus, but to build on this learning to bring about positive change so that the health and care system can support improvements in health and wellbeing for their local populations, well beyond this crisis.

2.2 The experience, both nationally and locally, of implementing the Care Act reforms underlines the need to approach system-wide change with caution. Such change consumes significant time and resource, diverting staff and leaders away from other priorities. It can be argued that the health and social care system, especially providers of care and support services, can ill afford such upheaval given the pressure it is currently under.

2.3 There is also the risk that if the case for change lands in the midst of a crisis, the lens by which solutions are assessed could be through a health care crisis, given the current focus on protecting the NHS. In consequence a new social care system fit may be developed for a crisis but not be fit for purpose in the longer term.

2.4 Although there is not currently a published timescale for a Social Care reform, the future of Social Care is actively being considered by several national organisations, including the impact of Covid19 on the sector.

2.5 In July 2020, the Local Government Association, together with 32 other organisations, published seven key principles which they believe must underpin reform of social care and support, considering the many lessons learned from the pandemic. The seven principles are listed below and cover several points raised in the Notice of Motion, which is particularly evident in Principle 2: The importance of 'local'.

2.6 The principles are:

### **1. People first and the value of social care**

### **2. The importance of 'local'**

*Councils' democratic accountability and leadership supports effective partnership working at the local level and the Government should follow this lead by working with local government and its many partners as equals in helping to build resilient communities that are geared towards prevention, wellbeing and public health.*

### **3. Funding**

### **4. Workforce**

### **5. Providers and commissioning**

### **6. Health and integration**

### **7. Care and support reform**

2.7 The full report can be found at:

<https://local.gov.uk/adult-social-care-seven-principles-reform>

2.8 The Kings Fund has produced a number of papers relating to Covid-19 and the impact of the care sector. Prior to the pandemic, the 2018 Kings Fund published the report: 'A fork in the road: Next steps for social care funding reform. The costs of social care funding options, public attitudes to them – and the implications for policy reform'. The report considers various options for social care funding reform which have been debated in recent years and offers a clear summary of all the key options:

<https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-05/A-fork-in-the-road-next-steps-for-social-care-funding-reform-May-2018.pdf>

### **3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations**

3.1 There is consensus that long term, sustainable reform is required for the Social Care sector, however the timing of such reform is a critical consideration. Such reform will require considerable consultation and engagement with the public and all key stakeholders at a time when the social care sector is facing another round of winter pressures on top of the continuing challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic.

3.2 Given the context that the health and social care system is currently operating within, Lead Member is recommended not to support the Notice of motion that 'East Sussex County Council calls on Her Majesty's Government to publish its White Paper on the reform and future of Adult Social Care'.

3.3 Lead Member is recommended instead to support the ongoing lobbying and engagement with central government about financial, and other support, for social care throughout the Covid-19 crisis, prior to longer term reform being proposed.

**KEITH HINKLEY**  
**Director Adult Social Care and Health**

Contact Officer: Samantha Williams, Assistant Director, Strategy Commissioning and Supply Management

Tel. No. 01273 482115

Email: [Samantha.williams@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:Samantha.williams@eastsussex.gov.uk)

#### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:**

None