

Policy Outlook Update – October 2020

1. Introduction

1.1. There have been a number of national developments since the local and national policy outlook was reported to Cabinet in July that are expected to have implications for the County Council's future work and business and financial planning. These are detailed below.

2. Overall Context

Containing and managing local coronavirus outbreaks

2.1. Government launched a national COVID-19 Contain Framework in mid-July, which set out how NHS Test and Trace and the Joint Biosecurity Centre (JBC) will work with local authorities, Public Health England (PHE) and the public to contain and manage local COVID-19 outbreaks. The framework provided further guidance on roles, responsibilities and powers of Upper Tier Local Authorities (UTLA) in managing local outbreaks, following publication of Local Outbreak Management Plans by all UTLAs in June. Government has allocated funding to UTLAs to support development and delivery of these plans. ESCC has received £2.5m which will be used to support implementation of the East Sussex Local Outbreak Control Plan approved by the Health and Wellbeing Board in July. The move to localised management of outbreaks is part of the Government's strategy to undertake a targeted response, employ smarter restrictions and limit nation-wide restrictions as far as is possible to manage the pandemic. Government has reinstated some nation-wide restrictions following a national increase in COVID-19 case rates since early September.

2.2. A range of indicators are monitored to provide situational awareness of COVID-19 transmission and prevalence across England. The indicators used fall into four primary groups: PHE and NHS Test and Trace data (e.g. the number and rate of increase of positive cases and the number of outbreaks in an area), syndromic surveillance (e.g. increase in NHS111 calls regarding COVID-19 like symptoms), NHS activity (e.g. hospital admissions for COVID-19), and other indicators (e.g. mortality data). Detailed local data on the above indicators is now shared with local public health teams.

2.3. These indicators are used to assess the level of risk in each area and are the basis of PHE's weekly surveillance reports, which include a watchlist of areas with higher-than-average incidences of COVID-19. Areas are placed in one of three 'escalation categories' if it is deemed additional resource or approaches are required to augment local responses. Escalation categories are:

- areas of concern - UTLAs work with partners, supported by regional PHE and NHS Test and Trace resource, to take additional actions to manage outbreaks and reduce community spread of the virus to more normal levels.
- areas of enhanced support – area provided with increased national support, capacity and oversight, including additional resources deployed to augment the local teams where this is necessary.
- areas of intervention - are defined where there is divergence from the lockdown measures in place in the rest of England because of the significance of the spread of COVID-19. There are a range of non-pharmaceutical interventions available to local and national leaders, from extensive communications and expanded testing, to restrictions on businesses and gatherings.

2.4. A number of areas across the country have been placed in the above categories over the summer. The interventions taken in each place has varied according to local

circumstances and the national support available to augment local arrangements continues to develop. In August it was announced that councils in areas of intervention would be expected to reach consensus and bring forward proposals, informed by case data, on the geography that should be included in the area of intervention. The intention is that areas with lower rates of infection are not subject to restrictions unnecessarily.

2.5. Supplementary to the Contain Framework, publication of a COVID-19 Shielding Framework is expected to inform local authority planning to support Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) individuals in the event that shielding guidance is reintroduced on a local or national basis. Any decision to reintroduce shielding will be taken at a national level, and the framework is expected to set out that in the event this happens councils will now be responsible for assessing the food and basic support needs of CEV individuals and facilitating delivery of that support. Funding to support councils in assessing and meeting these needs is anticipated but details are to be confirmed.

2.6. There is now a legal requirement for people to self-isolate when they test positive for COVID-19 or are instructed to by NHS Test and Trace. New fines have been brought in to enforce the requirement. People on lower incomes who cannot work from home and have lost income as a result of being asked to self-isolate will receive a payment of £500, administered via local government. The Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) and Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government are engaging with local authorities on how this will work in practice.

Economic Outlook

2.7. In April, the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) assessed the potential impact of coronavirus on the UK economy and public finances. The OBR updated the analysis in July to take account of Government's announcement of lifting lockdown restrictions. The analysis provided three medium-term scenarios for the economy and in all scenarios a reduction in GDP of over 10% was projected for 2020. In August, the OBR published further commentary on public sector finances:

- Public Sector Net Borrowing (the budget deficit) has continued to rise sharply with £150.5bn borrowed between April – July 2020;
- Public Sector Net Debt had topped £2tn for the first time and was 100.5% of GDP in July;
- HMRC cash receipts for the first four months of 2020/21 were 31% lower than a year earlier, with VAT accounting for the bulk of deterioration due to the Government's deferral scheme and lower consumer spending; and
- Central Government spending was 36% higher than a year earlier reflecting the cost of the coronavirus job retention and self-employment income support schemes, plus higher public services spending.

2.8. Similar forecasting by the Bank of England has indicated GDP will shrink by 9.5% this year, less severe than previously forecast, but that unemployment could almost double to 7.5% by the end of 2020. Latest figures published by ONS indicate that 695,000 fewer employees were on UK payrolls in August than in March; and there was a large drop in employment of 16 – 24 year olds between May and July (decreased 156,000), while there was a combined increase in employment on the previous quarter for those aged 25 – 64. The end of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (furlough) and Self-employment Income Support Scheme on 31 October is expected to contribute to further job losses nationally, although the Treasury has announced further employment and business support measures to support retention of jobs through the winter. Other ONS figures released in August demonstrated that the UK economy is officially in recession following two quarters of negative GDP growth.

2.9. The second report of the House of Commons Treasury Committee's inquiry into the economic impact of coronavirus looked at the national challenges of economic recovery and found them to be maintaining recovery of consumer confidence and spending, including potentially through a second wave; minimising long-term unemployment increases while enabling sufficient labour flexibility to allow structural change and movement from shrinking to growing sectors; dealing with elevated levels of corporate debt; and, in the long term, managing Government debt sustainably.

Comprehensive Spending Review and Autumn Budget

2.10. Government launched the 2020 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) at the end of July to set Government departments' resource budgets for 2021/22-2023/24 and capital budgets for 2021/22-2024/25. Given ongoing uncertainty around COVID-19 and the end of the Brexit transition period, it is highly likely this will now be reduced to a spending review for 2021/22 only. The following priorities have been set for the review:

- strengthening the UK's economic recovery from COVID-19 by prioritising jobs and skills
- levelling up economic opportunity across all nations and regions of the country by investing in infrastructure, innovation and people – thus closing the gap with our competitors by spreading opportunity, maximising productivity and improving the value add of each hour worked
- improving outcomes in public services, including supporting the NHS and taking steps to cut crime and ensure every young person receives a superb education
- making the UK a scientific superpower, including leading in the development of technologies that will support the government's ambition to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050
- strengthening the UK's place in the world
- improving the management and delivery of our commitments, ensuring that all departments have the appropriate structures and processes in place to deliver their outcomes and commitments on time and within budget

2.11. Government confirmed that department spending would grow in real terms across the CSR period but that there would be tough choices in areas of spending outside the above priorities at the review. Government departments have been asked to identify opportunities to reprioritise and deliver savings. The CSR consultation closed on 24 September.

2.12. The Autumn Budget 2020 was expected to confirm the CSR/Spending Review outcome and Government's longer-term fiscal plans. The Autumn Budget has now been cancelled but it is understood that a Spending Review will still take place this autumn.

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation

2.13. Government committed in the December 2019 Queen's Speech to publish an English Devolution White Paper to 'unleash the potential' of all English regions by increasing the number of mayors and doing more devolution deals across 'functional economic areas' to level up powers and investment.

2.14. A Devolution and Local Recovery White Paper was expected to be published this autumn, although that is now in doubt. The paper was expected to propose a new phase of local government reorganisation and creation of Combined Authorities as the first step to securing further devolution deals to deliver economic recovery and renewal.

End of EU Exit Transition Period

2.15. Agreements on the future relationship between the EU and UK following the end of the transition period on a range of matters - including trade, security and control of fishing waters - are still to be agreed. On 7 September, the Prime Minister made a statement to open the final phase of negotiations with the EU in which he said that an agreement on trade must be reached by 15 October for the new relationship to be agreed in time. If an agreement is not reached, future trade with the EU will take place under World Trade Organisation rules from the end of the transition period on 31 December. There is a risk that ending the transition period without an agreed relationship between the UK and EU could result in disruption at Newhaven Port, in the local economy, to the coronavirus response and in delivery of the council's services and this has been captured on the Council's Strategic Risk Register.

2.16. Government is undertaking preparations for the end of the transition period. Plans for a post-transition Border Operating Model were published in July which set out that the Government has taken the decision to introduce the new border controls in three stages up until 1 July 2021. Government is also making plans for inland ports. A Border Facilities and Infrastructure (EU Exit) Special Development Order was laid in Parliament in early September to provide Government with emergency and temporary planning permission for the development of inland border facilities and associated infrastructure. 29 administrative areas in England were listed in the order, including East Sussex, although HMRC have confirmed they are not currently planning arrangements within East Sussex. The Trading Standards team are monitoring developments to understand regulatory requirements following the transition period and to ensure there is sufficient capacity to meet new demands for enforcement and business advice.

3. Adult Social Care and Health

Adult Social Care Taskforce Report and ASC Winter Plan

3.1. Earlier this year, Government established an ASC Taskforce to oversee delivery of support to the social care sector in its response to COVID-19; and of the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) Social Care Action Plan. As part of its work, the Taskforce was commissioned to advise the Minister of State for Social Care on what needed to be in place in the care sector in England to respond to COVID-19 ahead of winter. The final report of the Taskforce includes 52 recommendations for Government, local authorities, the NHS and others within the health and social care system. We are working through the recommendations with our partners across the local health and social care system.

3.2. The Taskforce recommendations have informed Government's ASC Winter Plan, published in September, setting out its ambitions for and challenges facing the social care sector this winter. The plan outlines actions DHSC is taking and actions local systems (councils, the NHS and Voluntary and Community Sector) should take to ensure that high-quality, safe and timely care is provided to everyone who needs it, whilst protecting people who need care, their carers and the social care workforce from COVID-19.

3.3. The plan outlines a wide-range of actions that local systems and DHSC are already taking to provide care while reducing transmission of COVID-19. Further actions the plan outlines DHSC is taking include:

- working up a designation scheme with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) for premises that are safe for people leaving hospital who have tested positive for COVID-19 or are awaiting a test result – although it will remain councils' responsibility to provide alternative accommodation in local systems for supporting people with a positive test result requiring care;

- providing free PPE (for COVID-19 needs in line with current guidance) to care homes and domiciliary care providers via the PPE portal until the end of March 2021;
- providing free PPE to local resilience forums (LRFs) who wish to continue PPE distribution, and to local authorities in other areas, to distribute to social care providers ineligible for supply via the PPE portal, until the end of March 2021;
- working with local authorities and the CQC to strengthen their monitoring and regulation role to ensure infection prevention and control procedures are taking place;
- publishing a new online Adult Social Care Dashboard, bringing together data from the Capacity Tracker and other sources;
- publishing information about effective local and regional protocols and operational procedures based on what we have learnt so far to support areas with local outbreaks and/or increased community transmission; and
- in partnership with the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services and Local Government Association, carrying out a Service Continuity and Care Market Review in the autumn to understand the robustness of the plans local authorities have in place, and what additional support may be needed.

3.4. The primary new and additional actions for ESCC resulting from the plan are:

- to put in a place an East Sussex Winter Plan building on existing planning, including the East Sussex Local Outbreak Plan and in the context of planning for the end of the Brexit Transition Period, by 31 October;
- provide free PPE to care providers ineligible for the PPE portal (supplied by DHSC) when required (including for personal assistants) directly until March 2021;
- to work with local partners to carry out learning reviews after each care home outbreak to identify and share lessons learned;
- to ensure care providers carry out testing as set out in the testing strategy and, together with NHS organisations, provide local support for testing in adult social care if needed;
- for the Director of Public Health to regularly assess of whether visiting care homes is appropriate, taking into account the wider risk environment and immediately moving to stop visiting if an area becomes an 'area of intervention' (see 2.3 above), except in exceptional circumstances such as end of life;
- to work alongside the Care Quality Commission to ensure care homes are taking necessary steps to prevent spread of the virus and follow up with care providers that are not limiting staff movement; and
- establish a weekly joint communication from the Director of Adult Social Care and Health and Director of Public Health to go to all local providers of adult social care.

3.5. Government has also requested all councils complete a care market sustainability self-assessment. This will be reported to the Minister of Care, through DHSC. The Minister is seeking assurance that care markets are sustainable though the winter period and where this cannot be provided the intention is to provide support to councils to address any identified challenges.

3.6. Government has committed to continue to engage across the sector to understand needs as they develop throughout the winter and provide appropriate support. We will continue to engage and emphasise the need for a sustainable funding settlement for social care, that reflects the scale of investment made in the NHS, and the need to limit self-assessment/ assurance/ Government reporting to free-up fundamental capacity to deliver.

3.7. Government has provided a second £546m tranche of Infection Control Funding, to be distributed by councils to care providers, to support delivery of the plan. The East Sussex allocation, conditions of this funding and reporting requirements are to be confirmed, but as with the first tranche, the expectation is the funding will help providers with the extra costs of

infection prevention and control measures – including the payment of care workers who are self-isolating in line with government guidelines. We anticipate central designation of what proportion of the funding is provided to which parts of the care market. £588m has also been provided for the NHS to support people needing additional follow-on care after they have been discharged from hospital. From September 1 – 31 March 2021, the NHS will fund up to the first six weeks of support following hospital discharge, during which assessments will be carried out to determine ongoing care and funding arrangements.

National Institute for Health Protection and future of population health improvement

3.8. Government has announced the creation of a National Institute for Health Protection (NIHP) to advance the country's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and any future pandemics and health threats. The NIHP brings together Public Health England's health protection functions, NHS Test and Trace and the Joint Biosecurity Centre under a single leadership team in its shadow form.

3.9. Government has published a paper providing detail on the transition to the new NIHP, as well as scoping plans for the future of the health improvement/ preventative functions PHE also currently has responsibility for. The paper confirms prevention of ill health remains a national priority and PHE will continue its health improvement and wider prevention work in the coming months under the leadership of the NIHP. In this time Government will consider the best future arrangements for work on health improvement, including the range of non-health protection functions PHE provides, engaging with representatives across the public health system.

3.10. The paper outlines a number of options under consideration, including:

- devolving functions to a more local level such as local authorities and/or integrated care systems
- creating a separate national organisation dedicated to driving progress on prevention, health improvement and, potentially, public healthcare services
- retaining health improvement responsibilities within DHSC and/or other government departments
- embedding health improvement responsibilities into existing health arm's length bodies such as NHS England and NHS Improvement
- a combination of the above options

3.11. A new Population Health Improvement Stakeholder Advisory Group has been established to advise Government on the options, and input into an options paper to be published in October. This will provide an opportunity for stakeholders to share views and we will consider the proposals and respond. The national budget of the NIHP and for future health improvement activities will be agreed in the Spending Review. Government intends to publish its final recommended approach and delivery plan by the end of 2020.

4. Children's Services

Support to schools

4.1. Pupils returned to schools and colleges at the start of September with education settings putting a 'system of controls' in place to keep students and staff safe, focussed around minimising direct contact and maintaining social distancing wherever possible.

4.2. Education settings re-opened in places subject to local restrictions and Government has been clear that re-introduction of restrictions on education and childcare settings is to be considered only once all other possible measures have been taken. A tiered system of

restrictions has been established to guide the phased introduction that would take place in circumstances where areas that are subject to national intervention require some level of restriction to education or childcare settings. Tier 1 restrictions apply to all areas subject to local intervention; all schools remain open but with a requirement for adults and pupils in settings educating years 7 and over to wear face coverings in communal areas where it is not possible to socially distance. Guidance has been provided to support settings to plan for how they would implement tier 2 restrictions - moving to a rota model, combining on-site provision with remote education - if required. Tiers 3 and 4 involve further limiting students attending on site in different education settings.

4.3. There has been an increased expectation on councils to support schools this year; with partial closure, with providing places for vulnerable children and children of keyworkers in lockdown, with provision of remote learning in lockdown, and recently with making preparations to re-open. In this new context, the focus of the Standards and Learning Effectiveness Service for the 2020/21 academic year will be on:

- Planning, preparation and support for schools in potential local lockdowns – see 4.2 above;
- Increased support for vulnerable pupils, including safeguarding, addressing learning loss and ensuring attendance;
- Ongoing co-ordination of services for schools;
- Managing the impact of COVID19 on early years providers and ensuring that we maintain sufficient places for the future; and
- Supporting young people into Education, Employment and Training during a period of rising unemployment and economic downturn that will disproportionately impact 18-24 year olds.

Home to School Transport

4.4. In the summer, national guidance was published on transport provision to support the return of schools and colleges in September. This set out that as capacity on public transport is limited, local authorities needed to put in place local demand management solutions for public services, and supplement the public bus network, and existing home to school transport, with additional capacity, to ensure that children could travel to school safely, and disruption for all passengers on the public network was minimised. The Transport Team made arrangements to support school returns accordingly, including working with operators to ensure sufficient provision on the network of bus services used by school children travelling to schools in East Sussex and to other neighbouring authorities.

4.5. The County Council has been allocated £464,596 by the Department for Education (DfE) to assist in securing additional transport capacity until the end of the October school term. There is uncertainty about the resource we will have for additional capacity after this period. All Chief Finance Officers have been asked by DfE to account for use of the funding provide to date, to inform a second tranche of funding for the second half of this term.

Ofsted Inspections

4.6. Ofsted has announced interim inspections arrangements for a range of settings:

- Ofsted and CQC will begin visiting councils in October to understand the impact of the pandemic on children and young people with SEND and their families. They will look to find out what has worked well for them during this time, what the challenges have been, and lessons learned;
- As part of a phased return to the Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) programme, Ofsted will be carrying out focused visits from the autumn. Inspectors will look at the experiences of children and how local authorities and providers have made the best possible decisions for children in the context of the pandemic. For

councils, this includes how they have joined up schools and social care services while schools were closed, to ensure vulnerable pupils continued to be identified. Ofsted is intending to visit as many providers and local authorities as possible, prioritising those it has concerns about (i.e. an area of priority concern or judged inadequate). Ofsted will also visit a sample of local authorities judged good or outstanding at their last inspection to identify good practice that will help others with their recovery plans, which could include ESCC;

- Assurance visits of social care provider's children's homes, secure homes and residential special schools will take place from 1 September 2020 – 31 March 2021 and will look at the experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account the Covid-19 context;
- Ofsted will be undertaking interim visits of registered early years providers from September to ensure standards are being maintained and there is safe and effective childcare available for all who need it; and
- Interim visits of maintained schools and academies will take place from 28 September to December to look at how leaders are managing the return to full time education for their pupils, including considering remote learning and safeguarding in line with the guidance for full re-opening.

4.7. With all inspections, Ofsted will not give graded judgements but will set out findings in a published report/letter setting out what is going well and what needs to improve.

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children

4.8. There has continued to be an increase in asylum seekers and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) entering the country in recent months, particularly in Kent. As a result, in August, Kent County Council declared it could no longer safely accept UASC into its care.

4.9. In response, the Home Office has launched a consultation on introducing a more sustainable National Transfer Scheme (NTS). The focus is on creating a sustainable rota system that will take account of the broader range of support local authorities provide across the whole of the asylum system, including to care leavers and the dispersed population. This will include a broad and comprehensive approach to look at all the issues facing local authorities hosting the greatest number of UASCs – particularly those that are over their 0.07% allocation (i.e. UASC make up more than 0.07% of the total child population) and those with significant numbers of former UASC care leavers.

4.10. The consultation is seeking views on:

- how the Home Office might implement a voluntary transfer system and what the barriers might be for local authorities;
- the need for a mandatory scheme to force those local authorities who have been less willing/ able to engage in the NTS; and
- including care leavers in the 0.07% ratio

4.11. ESCC already works closely with the scheme and has taken a number of new arrivals via NTS. Our willingness to continue to work with the NTS will not change. There will however be implications in terms of planning for increased numbers of new UASC admitted into care at certain times of the year to reflect our place on the rota set against the number of spontaneous arrivals that we receive outside of the scheme as a local authority with a port of entry. At the moment, we are able to balance the impact of assuming responsibility for young

people via the NTS and to sequence placements in a way that delivers good and safe outcomes for UASCs.

4.12. Whether the scheme continues to be voluntary or mandatory will arguably have a significant impact on the numbers and timing of young people who the Council is asked to take but a mandatory scheme would spread the requests more equitably. Including care leavers in the 0.07% ratio seems a sensible step given the ongoing commitment to that group of young people.

5. Communities, Economy and Transport

Planning for the Future White Paper

5.1. Published in August, the White Paper is open for consultation until the 29 October and proposes a fundamental reform of the planning system. The proposed reforms are heavily focussed on housebuilding and driven by the Government's clear aim of delivering a minimum of 300,000 new houses per annum. The paper proposes simplifying the role of Local Plans to focus on identifying land under three categories –

- Growth – areas suitable for sustainable development, and where outline approval for development would be automatically secured for forms and types of development specified in the Plan;
- Renewal - areas suitable for some development; and
- Protected - areas where development is restricted.

5.2. The White Paper sets out a vision for a reformed planning system so further detail will be required to fully understand the implications for ESCC. Whilst the reforms are likely to have a greater impact upon our District and Borough partners (as well as the South Downs National Park Authority), there are potentially significant implications for the County Council, particularly where we perform a statutory consultee role and/or are a key infrastructure provider. These implications include:

- Reforms to capture development value for infrastructure provision – it is proposed to replace Section 106 agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy with a national Infrastructure Levy to be paid on completion of developments. Government acknowledge that this may impact on the ability to get new and improved infrastructure in place before developments are occupied and therefore suggest that councils consider forward funding the necessary infrastructure improvements. If this materialises, the implications on the County Council will be substantial as it could involve the need to forward fund and deliver infrastructure improvements ourselves. We would encourage Government to consider an alternative mechanism to deliver transport improvements that make development sites viable in transport terms;
- Abolition of the Duty to Cooperate – while broadly welcomed as it has been an ineffective mechanism for undertaking strategic planning nationally, the paper has not set out how cross-boundary planning issues will be addressed or how reforms will enable planning for large-scale and cross-boundary infrastructure proposals linked to housing and employment growth;
- Commitment to review resourcing of planning functions – while welcome, it is essential that this also considers the resourcing that is required for statutory consultees in the planning process;
- the White Paper has no mention of waste and minerals planning, so clarification is needed as to how the reforms will impact upon this particular sector of planning, for which ESCC has responsibility; and

- further digitation of the planning system – this is welcome and a change authorities have been working towards.

5.3. ESCC's draft response to the White Paper will be considered by Lead Member for Transport and Environment, and in addition to the above points, will seek clarity and further detail on a number of areas; emphasise the need for the system to enable ESCC to continue delivering important public services, i.e. new school places; and that the system needs to be underpinned by democratic oversight and accountability for decisions.

5.4. Alongside the White Paper, the Government also published a consultation on changes to the current planning system. The majority of changes are unlikely to directly impact upon the County Council. However, of most significant consequence is the proposed revised formula for calculating the housing delivery target that each planning authority should aim to plan for, which if taken forward is likely to increase the demand on the Council's statutory consultees and those services tasked with planning and delivering infrastructure.

Pavement parking consultation

5.5. The Department for Transport has launched a consultation which will explore proposals to ban pavement parking in England. The Department for Transport is looking at three options: improving the Traffic Regulation Order process, under which local authorities can already prohibit pavement parking; legislative change to allow local authorities with civil parking enforcement (CPE) powers to enforce against 'unnecessary obstruction of the pavement'; and legislative change to introduce a London-style pavement parking prohibition. The consultation will run until late November. The decision to allow authorities with CPE powers to enforce the obstruction would have implications for ESCC as we undertake civil parking enforcement in Hastings Borough, Lewes District and Eastbourne Borough and anticipate the order enabling CPE in Rother to be in place from 29 September.

Integrated Review

5.6. The Cabinet Office is currently undertaking an Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy. Part of the review will consider national resilience and changes required to deliver resilient places and communities, including the future of Local Resilience Forums. Sussex Resilience Forum will be engaging in the review and making the case for the need for core funding for LRFs, particularly given their role in the COVID-19 response.

6. Support Services

Public sector exit payments

6.1. In April 2019, Government published a consultation seeking views on regulations implementing a £95,000 cap on exit payments in the public sector. In September, Government published a further consultation seeking information on

- the effects that the proposals for reform will have on the regulations which currently govern exit payments in local government; and
- the impact the proposals will have on the local government workforce.

Full details of the regulations and how they will operate in practice are not yet known as they are subject to the latest consultation, although Treasury regulations to implement the cap have already been introduced to Parliament. However, it is expected that they will have significant implications for how we manage workforce change and reform.