

TITLE OF REPORT: **Adult Social Care White Paper**

REPORT OF: **Steph Downey, Service Director, Adult Social Care**

Summary

This briefing is to provide a summary of the Adult Social Care (ASC) White Paper, outlining the objectives, key themes and how the paper will impact Gateshead, including financial implications.

Introduction

The ASC White Paper, titled People at the Heart of Care, is the Government's 10 year vision for delivering ASC, setting out the policies which they will work on and implement with the sector and those who use care, focusing on the next 3 years. The paper builds on The Care Act 2014 and seeks to strengthen how care and support is delivered with the tools and funding to support this delivery on both the letter and spirit.

Overview

Person-centred care is a key thread throughout with an emphasis on choice and control of personalised care, to enhance quality of life and promote independence in a way that matters to the individual. There are 'I Statements' throughout the paper which are outcomes the Government expect to see.

There are 3 main objectives:

- People have choice, control and support to live independent lives
 - Embedded personalised care which is user-led, individuals are supported to maintain or gain independence
- People can access outstanding quality and tailored care and support
 - Bespoke care and support to individuals, building on their strengths and enabling them to achieve the outcomes that matter to them
- People find adult social care fair and accessible
 - Creating a fairer system of ASC, and providing the right information and advice at the right time with the different options available to best meet individual preferences and circumstances

The key themes outlined are:

- **Providing the right care in the right place at the right time**

This focuses on making every decision about care a decision about housing, giving people the choice to live independently and healthily in their own homes for longer. Utilising innovative technology to support lives and aspirations and enhancing the quality of care in people's homes, as well as equipping the workforce with the tools. There is also a focus on prevention and health promotion, with early intervention key to support people to live healthier lives for longer.

- **Empowering those who draw on care, unpaid carers and families**

This will seek to improve the information and advice that is available to those who need it, when they need it, ensuring it is available and accessible. It focuses on improving the ability to identify and recognise unpaid carers to support and empower them to lead happy, healthy and fulfilling lives, as well as supporting those who are autistic or have a learning disability to overcome barriers in entering and sustaining employment.

- **A strategy for the social care workforce**

Transformation and support for the social care workforce through new universal career structures and training opportunities.

What this means for Gateshead?

In many of these key areas we are already underway with developments which support the objectives and themes within the White Paper. We are working with the LGA, housing, planning and commissioning colleagues with regards to our MPS and discussions around the direction of future **housing requirements** including extra care; we also have a brand-new state of the art independent living facility opening early next year. We have invested in two key areas - **digital technology** with a dedicated Improvement Manager in post, undertaking several innovative pilots with partners to replace traditional services, with plans to develop our digital strategy this year; and also ASSET, which provides an **early signal driven approach** to assist in identifying those at risk of entering Care Act arrangements to divert and delay. In addition, the Sister Winifred Laver Promoting Independence Centre build is underway, it will **promote and increase the independence** and confidence of individuals following discharge from hospital or admission from the wider community, in order for them to return home. We have also already started working with partners on innovative **workforce solutions** including accessing the Kickstart scheme for our Provider and Care Call services and developing a Trainee SW programme.

Financial Implications

There are several proposed investments associated with the ASC White Paper which are still to be confirmed which are summarised below:-

- **£300 million to integrate housing into local health and care strategies** - focus on increasing the range of new supported housing options available. This will provide choice of alternative housing and support options.
- **£150 million of additional funding to drive greater adoption of technology and achieve widespread digitisation** - Digital tools and technology can support independent living and improve the quality of care.
- **£500 million so the social care workforce** - have the right training and qualifications, feel recognised and valued for their skills and commitment.
- **A new practical support service to make minor repairs and changes in peoples' homes** - to help people remain independent and safe in their home, alongside increasing the upper limit of the Disabilities Facilities Grant.
- **Up to £25 million to support unpaid carers** - to work with the sector to kick start a change in the services provided.

- **£30 million to help local areas innovate around the support and care they provide in new and different ways** - providing more options that suit peoples' needs and individual circumstances.
- **A new national website** to explain the upcoming changes and **at least £5 million to pilot new ways** to help people understand and access the care and support available.
- **£70 million to increase the support offer across adult social care to improve the delivery of care and support services** - including assisting local authorities to better plan and develop the support and care options available.

Adult Social Care Reform Funding								
£5.4bn over 3 years on adult social care reform								
£3.6bn over 3 years directly to local government for the cap, means test, and fair cost of care		£1.7bn over 3 years to improve wider social care system						
Funding commitments made in the <i>People at the Heart of Care</i> adult social care reform white paper.*								
£2.2bn over 3 years for the cap and means test 22/23: £0m 23/24: £800m 24/25: £1.4bn	£1.4bn over 3 years for fair cost of care: 22/23: £162m 23/24: £600m 24/25: £600m	At least £300m to integrate housing	At least £150m for technology and digitisation	At least £500m for workforce training and qualifications	Up to £25m to support unpaid carers	£30m for innovation of support and care	At least £5m to help people understand care and support available	More than £70m to improve the delivery of care and support services

Whilst these appear positive, we feel there are some caveats which are worth noting:

- Social Care is getting just £5.4 billion over 3 years, £5.4bn of the £30.3bn raised by the Health and Social Care Levy, with the majority going to the NHS. (<https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/blog/2021/12/social-care-white-paper>)
- In 2017 the LGA carried out modelling on the growth requirements for adult social care, predicting that by 2024/2025 the growth required totalled £7.93billion – this falls short of the £5.4bn mentioned above (https://futureofadultsocialcare.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/29.17-The-future-of-care-and-support_03.2-Final-1.pdf)
- It is possible that these pots of money will be based on pilots and or bids, both of which are not favourable. These take time and resources to respond too, which LAs are in short supply of and there often isn't much notice given to respond appropriately.
- Conditions of reporting, if successful, are often complex and unhelpful.
- Short term funding via bids and pilots does not allow for long term planning and continuity.

In addition to these a recent presentation by John Jackson, National Care and Health Improvement Advisor for Finance and Risks highlighted the following areas which are adding to the financial pressures being faced by ASC:

Demography:

- For most of the last ten years, there has been a consistent trend where demography is at least 3% of net spending on adult social care. This is more about younger adults than older people.
- In the last 2 years, demographic pressures appear to be increasing – almost certainly reflecting more people with more complex needs in addition to more people needing care.

- ADASS report that DASSs estimate that demographic pressures this year amount to £660m – 4.1% of the net adult social care budget.

Inflation – facing social care providers:

- Advice is that this will be a minimum of 6% and potentially more. The 6% figure is calculated as follows:
 - National living wage increase 6.6% applies to 70% of costs
 - General inflation 2.5% applies to 30% of costs
 - These two = 5.37%
 - In addition, providers will need to be compensated for the cost of the Health and Social Care levy. Best estimate is that this will be another 0.5%.
- General inflation is likely to be more than 2.5%
- CPI inflation was 5.1% in November 2021. This partly reflects increasing energy costs.
- If general inflation is 3.5%, this would increase inflationary pressures by 0.3%.
- More significantly, many providers are reporting they have to increase wages by more than 6.6% due to wage increases in other competing parts of the economy.
- Workforce is one of the biggest issues facing adult social care and is likely to lead to significant cost pressures which may dwarf these costs.

Other areas which are not yet quantifiable:

- The long-term impact of Covid on the need for long term care
- Pressures on informal carers
- Existing unmet need/under met need/wrongly met need
- Mental Health Act
- The impact of Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS)
- The impact of the Norfolk case on charging income

Conclusions

The publication of the ASC White Paper is welcome, and we embrace the spirit and journey of what it sets out to achieve with the objectives and themes being in line with our vision for ASC in Gateshead and our Business Plan. However, we do feel that the nature of the short - term funding, identified but not confirmed, within the White Paper, coupled with the pressures being faced by ASC currently, as well as those which will be facing us in the near future, such as new assurance arrangements, changes to paying for care and the fair rate of care, leaves ASC and the Local Authority in a potentially precarious position financially.

Recommendations

The OSC is asked to :-

- note and give its views on the information provided.
- request local members of Parliament to lobby Government to convey the message surrounding the pressures being faced in ASC in Gateshead and the financial implications for the Authority.

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