

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Joint Improving Places and Health Select Commission
2.	Date:	27th October 2011
3.	Title:	Caring For the Future
4.	Directorate:	NAS/ CPP

5. Summary

The purpose of this report is to bring Members of the two Select Commissions up to date with the emerging national policy agenda regarding reform of the Social Care System. This will provide a background context for the themed meeting and the discussions being held. It is also to seek early input from the two Commissions into the emerging response from the Council to the Government's current public engagement process on this agenda.

6. Recommendations

That Commission Members consider:

- **The information contained within this paper as policy context for the themed discussions**
 - **Early thoughts and comments on the Council's response to the public engagement exercise.**
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7. Proposals and Details

On 15 September, the Government launched *Caring for our future: shared ambitions for care and support* – an engagement with people who use care and support services, carers, local councils, care providers, and the voluntary sector about the priorities for improving care and support.

Caring for our future is an opportunity to bring together the recommendations from the Law Commission and the Commission on Funding of Care and Support with the Government's *Vision for Adult Social Care*, and to discuss with stakeholders what the priorities for reform should be.

Within 20 years, the number of over 85s will double, and the number of people living with lifelong disabilities is likely to grow too. At the same time, though, there will be relatively fewer people working and paying taxes to help pay for the support the Government provides. As a society, we should celebrate the fact that people are living longer. However, it means that if we don't spend more on care and support, fewer people will have financial help from the Government. More people, and their families, will struggle on their own to meet the costs of care. The engagement exercise is aimed at getting people's views on this agenda, whilst taking on board the following key issues:

- People want greater choice and control over their care and support.
- People's expectations are rising
- Care is expensive, and people often face very high care costs without being able to protect themselves.

Last November the Government published its *Vision for Adult Social Care*. The vision set out the principles for a modern system of care and support. It said that they want to see a care and support system where care is personalised, people have choice in how their needs and ambitions are met, and carers are supported. Active, strong communities should help people maintain their independence and high quality care should be delivered by a diverse range of providers and a skilled workforce that can provide care and support with compassion and imagination. People must be confident that they are protected against poor standards and abuse.

The Law Commission report said that adult social care law is outdated and confusing, making it difficult for people who need care and support, their carers and local authorities to know what they are entitled to. It recommended bringing together all the different elements of social care law into a single, modern, adult social care statute.

The Commission on the Funding of Care and Support which was led by Andrew Dilnot recommended that the amount that people have to spend on care over their lifetimes should be capped, although people in care homes should continue to pay a contribution towards their living costs, sometimes known as 'hotel' costs such as food, and building based costs.

The Commission also recommended that the current system of means-tested support should be extended, so that more people can get additional help in paying for care.

These reports contain some proposals to help the Government decide their approach to changing the care and support system. They have therefore launched this engagement exercise to generate a wider discussion about every aspect of the system. There are 6 key themes, each of which is being led nationally by a publically known figure. At the end of the engagement, the discussion leaders will bring together views about the priorities for change. This will help the Government decide what to do.

The Government will publish a White Paper in spring 2012, alongside a progress report on funding reform. The White Paper will set out the approach to reform, to start the process of transforming our care and support system.

It is clearly important that the Council responds to this engagement process, which is broken down into the following discussion areas.

- Improving quality and developing the workforce
- Increased personalisation and choice
- Ensuring services are better integrated around people's needs
- Supporting greater prevention and early intervention
- Creating a more diverse and responsive care market
- The role of the financial services sector in supporting users, carers and their families

Appendix 1 shows the questions that are being asked in each area. We are currently in the process of pulling together responses to these questions and would anticipate being able to share early thoughts on this with members at the meeting.

8. Finance

The financial implications of this paper are non-specific at this stage, as it is a policy and consultation related report. The potential reform of the Social Care system, however, into the future will have significant implications for the Council.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Given that this is an early policy and consultation document uncertainties about future policy direction and future funding implications are high. The risk associated with this relates to impact of the White Paper and future legislation on social care funding and costs.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Future implications for the Council's Corporate Plan and in particular its priority entitled - Ensuring care and protection are available for those people who need it most.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Vision for Adult Social Care

Law Commission Report

The Commission on the Funding of Care and Support

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