

POLICY DEVELOPMENT WORK IN PROGRESS: NOT A STATEMENT OF
GOVERNMENT POLICY or LGA POLICY

Steering Group 03 October 2016

**Health and social care deep dive virtual workshop – recommendations from
Responsibilities Working Group**

1. At its last meeting, the Steering Group asked for an update from the Responsibilities Working Group on the deep dive into health and social care services, and how this could link to business rates.
2. As well as the economic growth deep dive workshop, the working group had hoped to arrange a parallel workshop on health and social care services. Unfortunately, in the time available it was not possible to secure the time of sufficient suitable attendees to make the workshop viable. Instead a “virtual” workshop has been run, with potential invitees being sent the discussion questions that would have shaped a “real life” workshop and asked to send comments that they would have made in discussion.
3. The Working Group meeting on 20 September discussed the process and the responses received, and made the recommendations that are contained in this paper.

Process and responses:

4. The questions sent out are appended to this paper.
5. In quantity terms, the response has been disappointing. Only three formal responses have been received; one of these was direct from a council DASS.
6. In qualitative terms, the responses are helpful in that some consensus points emerged, either reinforcing the discussions the working group has already had or providing a useful steer for the future. Points emerging include:
 - a. Consensus that the future role of social care will include further integration with health, devolving responsibility for commissioning to councils to move to a single local commissioning role to ensure a focus on achieving local outcomes in local communities.
 - b. Consensus that current funding issues remain the priority; future funding for social care needs to address current unfunded pressures first.
 - c. Consensus that attendance allowance should not be considered for business rates funding. This was for a number of reasons, including that demand pressures are likely to outpace BR growth, lack of a link to the economic growth agenda, and the interconnected/complex nature of welfare system. That said, there were differing views on whether attendance allowance could be looked at outside of business rates (although the confusion over what might be being proposed here was seen as unhelpful).
 - d. Agreement that for the services / grants in the consultation relating to social care, public health and ILF would be suitable (subject to suitable terms and conditions) but that iBCF was more problematical.
7. In addition, one response went into some detail on linking economic growth factors to health and social care – such as building strong communities, workforce skills and digital

services. The working group should be able to take these ideas forward as part of the economic growth work.

Conclusions and recommendations from the working group:

8. The small response is disappointing. Although the responses received were all valuable in themselves, it is doubtful that the group can take these as necessarily being representative of the sector as whole.
9. Nevertheless, there is sufficient consensus from this and from other views received over the summer that while some existing social care grant funding can sit comfortably with business rates funding, there is little appetite for linking the business rates changes with reshaping of additional responsibilities and further devolution in the health and social care area.
10. There is a major concern that there will be a big disjoint between business rates funding and the potential demand for services and growth in that demand, and that linking the two could create an unsustainable financial risk for councils.
11. Clearly health and social care integration is a major area for local government and therefore had to be looked at. The conclusion reached by the working group is that any links between this and business rates should be in the context of:
 - a. Financial pressures for existing responsibilities.
 - b. Unringfencing and localising the funding for existing responsibilities as listed in the consultation, where these are thought to be appropriate.
 - c. There should be no link between business rates funding and any proposals for local government to take on significant new responsibilities in the health and social area. Any such changes should be discussed on the basis that they will be fully funded by grant.
12. This conclusion should therefore shape the further work of the group.

Appendix – Questions included in questionnaire

- (1) CARE, HEALTH AND INTEGRATION - THE VISION: In an ideal world, what should local government's role be in the realm of adult social care, public health, health and integration?
- (2) (2) CARE, HEALTH AND INTEGRATION - THE REQUIREMENTS: What specific responsibilities would local government need to take on to achieve this vision? (This could be adaptations to existing council responsibilities, the transfer of existing responsibilities from beyond local government to councils, or the creation of new responsibilities.)
- (3) CARE, HEALTH AND INTEGRATION - FUNDING THE REQUIREMENTS: Which, if any, of the requirements identified above would be appropriate to fund through 100 per cent retained business rates?
- (4) ATTENDANCE ALLOWANCE: Do you support the transfer of 'more responsibility to councils to support older people with care needs – including people who, under the current system, would be supported through Attendance Allowance' under the 100 per cent business rates retention agenda?
Yes/No (please delete as appropriate)
Why?
- (5) ATTENDANCE ALLOWANCE: Would you support the transfer of 'more responsibility to councils to support older people with care needs – including people who, under the current system, would be supported through Attendance Allowance' under a separate grant transfer, ie separate to the 100 per cent business rates retention agenda?
Yes/No (please delete as appropriate)
Why?
- (6) SPECIFIC GRANTS RAISED IN CONSULTATION
The consultation identifies the following social care and health-related grants as in scope for consideration:
- Public health grant
 - Improved Better Care Fund
 - Independent Living Fund
- For each of these, do you think they should be funded from business rates income in future? If yes are there any specific conditions that you think need to be attached?