



HM Treasury, 1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

5 June 2020

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean  
Chairman of the Economic Affairs Committee  
House of Lords  
London SW1A 0PW

Dear Lord Forsyth,

Thank you for your letter of 26 May, regarding the Economic Affairs Committee report on the future of social care funding, following the evidence session on 19 May. I greatly appreciate your sending through your report, *Social care funding: time to end a national scandal*. As you say, this has come at a time when the vital work done by the sector is at the forefront of the public's minds.

I know you understand that at present, the Government's number one priority for adult social care is for everyone who relies on care to get the care they need throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The Government has been clear that our health and social care systems are both vital in our response to COVID-19, and we recognise the important role of the adult social care sector in supporting some of the most vulnerable in our society, as well as our NHS, at this difficult time. That is why, over the past three months, we have approved £3.2bn of funding for Local Authorities, £1.3bn for an enhanced NHS discharge programme, and a further £600m Infection Control Fund which is ringfenced for social care.

However, as stated in the evidence session, I know that this doesn't reduce the need for a long-term action plan for social care. Putting social care on a sustainable footing, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect, is one of the biggest challenges that we face as a society. This Government continues to be committed to ensuring that everyone has access to the care and support that they need, but we are clear that there should continue to be a principle of shared responsibility, and that people should continue to expect to contribute to the cost of their care as part of preparing for later life.

Your report must be considered alongside the other reports that have been published in recent years, which have varying suggested approaches to reform and demonstrate how complex this issue is. This complexity is why we have invited cross-party talks from all MPs and Peers to voice their views, and I am sure you agree that it will be necessary to ensure consensus if we are to reach a sustainable long-term solution. I can assure you that these cross-party talks will take place at the earliest opportunity in light of the current circumstances.

The Government will then bring forward a plan for social care for the longer term. My officials continue to work closely with the Department of Health and Social Care on this issue, in addition to their work on our response to COVID-19.

I am copying this letter to the Rt Hon. Matt Hancock MP, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rishi Sunak', with a stylized flourish at the end.

RISHI SUNAK