Thank you for your letter regarding the Health Committee’s recent evidence session on the impact of the Spending Review on health and social care. I very much welcomed the invitation to give evidence on behalf of the LGA and the session provided a valuable opportunity to express the sector’s concerns about the future of adult social care.

As I mentioned in the discussion, the 2015 Spending Review helpfully recognised both the importance of adult social care and the pressures facing the sector. However, we believe that its proposed solutions, the council tax precept and additional funding for social care via the Better Care Fund, do not go far enough and would arrive too late in the Spending Review period. As we know, the challenges facing adult social care are immediate, whilst additional funding via the Better Care Fund will not be available until 2017/18, with the full benefit of the additional £1.5 billion not being felt until 2019/20. During this time councils will need to deal with rising levels of demand and inflation, which are already putting considerable pressure on providers, as well as the additional costs associated with the welcome National Living Wage, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards, seasonal demand increases, and workforce capacity.

We are calling on the Government to bring forward £700 million additional funding for social care for 2016/17. This is the proportion of the £1.5 billion additional funding for social care via the Better Care Fund by 2019/20 that is not dependent on the Government realising planned savings of £800 million from the New Homes Bonus reforms. The LGA wants to ensure that people’s care and support needs are met with services that enhance their independence and wellbeing and are delivered in a personalised way. Achieving this will allow social care to continue making a vital contribution to the health and wellbeing of people with a range of often intense needs, their carers and families, and our communities more generally. It will ensure the sector continues to be a key contributor to our economy and it will enable social care to continue its critical role in supporting a sustainable NHS.

Thank you again for the opportunity to feedback to the Committee. I would be happy to discuss this in further detail with you should you have any additional questions.

12 April 2016