



Department of Health & Social Care

*From Helen Whately MP
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The Rt Hon. the Lord Forsyth of Drumlean
Chairman of the Economic Affairs Committee
House of Lords
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Thank you for your letter regarding the Economic Affairs Committee report on social care. You are right in saying that our care workforce should be recognised. We are incredibly proud of our social care workers and are determined to do everything we can to show they are valued. The National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage apply across social care, and we expect local authorities to work with providers to determine a fair rate of pay. Whilst the Government does not set the levels of pay for care workers, we are committed to raising the profile of the social care sector.

I fully agree with the report that funding the system should be a key priority. This is why we have provided councils with access to an additional £1.5 billion for adults and children's social care in 2020/21 on top of maintaining £2.5 billion of existing social care grants. This will support local authorities to meet rising demand and continue to stabilise the social care system. This includes an additional £1 billion of grant funding for adults and children's social care, and a 2% precept that enables councils to access a further £500 million for adult social care.

The additional funding for social care was part of a Local Government Finance Settlement that increased Core Spending Power by 4.4% in real terms, the largest year on year real terms increase in a decade.

Additionally, we have now made £3.7 billion available to local authorities so they can address pressures on local services caused by the pandemic, including in adult social care and on 15 May we published details of an additional £600 million Infection Control Fund for Adult Social Care.

I can assure you we are giving these issues our full consideration in the light of current circumstances in order to bring forward a long-term plan for social care. It is unfortunate we were unable to connect for our planned meeting a few weeks ago, but I look forward to our continued engagement on the best way to tackle this unresolved and critically important challenge.

HELEN WHATELY