

**COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 18<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2021**

**Question to Cllr Alan White  
Leader of the Council**

**By Cllr Charlotte Atkins**

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**Question**

Does the Leader of the Council agree that a one percent pay rise for nurses and other NHS staff is a totally inadequate reward for their sacrifices over the last year, having faced the immense challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic?

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**Reply**

I want to start by acknowledging that the NHS has done an amazing job over the past year.

For many people, the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic are like none they have seen before. People have sacrificed aspects of their lives they took for granted: seeing family and friends, going to school or work, and going to weddings or funerals,

The variety of people who have provided essential services and made sacrifices alongside nurses and other NHS staff during the pandemic are too numerous to list here. Some examples might include: the lorry drivers, without whom food wouldn't get on to the shelves of the supermarkets; the care workers in old people's homes; the teachers striving to ensure our children are educated; our social workers looking after our children and families; and people collecting our bins and cleaning our streets. They all deserve reward for their sacrifices over the last year.

In addition to those listed above are the army of volunteers who seek no reward at all, other than that of knowing they have helped a person in need.

There are others who have also made sacrifices over the past year that also need to be considered. They are the people whose businesses will never recover, and the people who have lost their jobs. There is no pay rise available to them.

I do understand the desire to reward nurses and other NHS staff, I also note that there are others who have sacrificed too; their sacrifice might go unnoticed or unrewarded, because it isn't as high profile, or can't be afforded. Ultimately, the decision about the reward for nurses and other NHS staff will be made by an independent body later this year and we will await their verdict.