

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 9 DECEMBER 2021

Question to Cllr Jessel  
Cabinet Member for Health and Care

By Cllr Charlotte Atkins

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**Question**

Will the plan set out in the Government's White Paper resolve the County Council's social care challenges? If not, what more needs to be done?

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**Reply**

On 01 December the Government published the White Paper ***People At The Heart Of Care: adult social care reform***. The White Paper builds on the Care Act 2014 and sets out a vision that many elderly and disabled people will welcome, with its three objectives to ensure that:

1. People have choice, control, and support to live independent lives.
2. People can access outstanding quality and tailored care and support.
3. People find adult social care fair and accessible.

There remain significant questions about how the ambitions in the White Paper will be funded. It includes a promise of £3.6bn over the three years 2022/23 to 2025/26 to fund the Care Cap, more generous capital thresholds and equalise the prices paid by local authorities and private individuals. However, it is not clear that this will lead to a net increase of funding for the adult social care sector. A further £1bn is earmarked for various national schemes to support the workforce, housing and technology, which might amount to around £5m annually for Staffordshire.

The big challenges in adult social care are rising demand and the ability of the providers to pay competitive wages. The Council has a range of initiatives underway to try and address these. We will need support from HM Government, with significant additional funding, if the aspirations of the White Paper are to be realised.