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**Joint APPG meeting with Alistair Burt**

APPGs on Ageing and Older People, Autism, Carers, Housing and Care for Older People, Motor Neuron Disease, Multiple Sclerosis, and Spinal Cord Injury.

The meeting was supported by the Care and Support Alliance

18<sup>th</sup> November 2015

17:00-18:00, Thatcher Room, Portcullis House, Houses of Parliament

**Chair:** Vicky McDermott, Chair of the Care and Support Alliance (CSA)

**Speakers:** Rt Hon Alistair Burt MP, Minister for Community and Social Care

Barbara Keeley MP, Shadow Minister for Shadow Minister for Older People,  
Social

Care and Carers

Councillor Izzi Seccombe, Chair of the Community Wellbeing Board

Sue Hessel

**Vicky McDermott** opened by laying out the objectives for the meeting, which were to:

- Discuss the sustainability of adult social care. The meeting came at a critical time, less than a week away from the Spending Review. Local government budgets have witnessed significant pressures in recent years, and social care spending has significantly been reduced despite the introduction of the Care Act.
- Highlight the mounting evidence to show that the Spending Review must urgently look at social care spending

**Sue Hessel**, explained how she has worked to support carers relying on social care in her borough of Haringey. She set out that:

- Cuts in her area provide a stark example of what is happening nationally due to a lack of funding. In 2011 the council closed 5 residential homes, one 24 hour residential crisis unit and 6 day centres.
- Four years on, the council is cutting a further £24 million from the adult social care budget. This includes the halving of its learning disability staff and closing its remaining day services for people with a learning disability.



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- Sue, went on to tell 'Charlottes' story' as an example of what happens as a result of chronic social care underfunding.
- Charlotte's story:
  - Charlotte went to the day centre that was closed in 2011. The loss for her was devastating. She went from seeing her friends and being supported by staff she knew, and undertaking activities she wanted to take part in for 4 full days a week, to 4 hours a week.
  - Lack of a safe recreational environment outside the home has meant that Charlotte often wanders the high street, leaving her vulnerable to risk of exploitation.
  - Charlotte's older parents, will soon not able to offer any of the support she needs. Sue is worried that her needs will become more complex, which may mean that it will be the NHS who will then pick up the tab

**Councillor Izzi Seccombe, *Chair of the Community Wellbeing Board*** set out:

- There rarely a day goes by without reference to adult social care at a national level
- This is particularly true during winter as we see so many stories regarding delayed discharge that are attributed to social care
- The Spending Review is so crucial for the future of adult social care
- There will be greater pressures which suggests that the funding gap is set to continue to grow by at least £700 million a year. Cllr Seccombe stressed that was a minimum figure as it didn't take into account the full costs of the national living wage
- Concerns over capacity pressures in the adult social care workforce. The demand for support is increasing while the profile, pay and status of those working in care all remain low.

*How can we turn this around?*

- Cllr Seccombe argued that the Government needs to:
  - close the existing funding gap in the system,
  - monitor and fund in full all identified pressures and burdens,
  - introduce multiyear financial settlements to allow proper planning for service transformation



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**Barbara Keeley MP, Shadow Minister for Older People, Social Care and Carers** noted that:

- The Care and Support Alliance have sent an open letter to the Prime Minister ahead of the Spending Review
- It is not an exaggeration to say that the care system is in crisis, as currently a figure of £4.6 billion has been cut from adult social care budgets
- A recent Age UK report stated that more than a million older people now have an unmet social care need, and that's up from 800,000 since 2010
- Providers are also facing financial difficulty, which will only be exacerbated with the financial pressures of the national living wage
- The residential care sector also faces the further pressure of declining funding and greater demand for care services
- We need both short and long term solutions for social care to help us deal with the immediate pressures
- The Barker commission have reiterated their call for a new settlement for social care, as they are alarmed at how much the social care situation has worsened

**Rt. Hon Alistair Burt MP, Minister for Community and Social Care** closed the discussions by: Setting out that there are a whole range of Government services which are under pressure because of the current economic situation

- Stating that it was the Government's job to provide the resources and everyone's job to ensure we are doing everything we possibly can with them
- Highlighting that the Care Act has been a good step forward. 99% of councils were confident they could deliver the changes stated in the Care Act, 85% of which already have a plan to implement those changes.
- Highlighting the difference in local council practises, he explained that you could find two councils close to each other and find one is handling their duties very well and others are doing poorly. This means we need to work hard to raise the standards for all.



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- However, he said he could not comment on the contents of the Spending Review and how it will impact social care, but stressed that the Government is well aware of the concerns facing social care funding.