

My ref: DB/ CB/JB
Your ref:

Cllr David Burbage
Bray Ward
Leader of the Council

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Rt Hon Andy Burnham MP
Secretary of State for Health
Dept of Health
Richmond House
79 Whitehall
LONDON SW1A 2NS

10 March 2010

Dear Secretary of State

Re: Personal Care at Home Bill

I write to express concern on behalf of the Council of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. The following motion was agreed at Council:

“This Council notes the recent discussions in local government about the Government’s Personal Care at Home Bill; further notes that many local authority leaders are concerned that the Government’s proposals remain unfunded and could lead to cuts in service or council tax rises; believes that the Government should give a serious rethink to this policy; resolves to ask the Leader to write to the Secretary of State for Health and the Shadow Secretaries of State reiterating our concerns about this issue.”

Whilst we of course give the highest priority to providing advice, care and support to all older and disabled people and have a good record of achieving this, we should not be expected to implement a new statutory requirement which significantly underestimates the costs to our local authority. We urge you to reconsider this.

Yours sincerely,



Cllr David Burbage
Leader of the Council

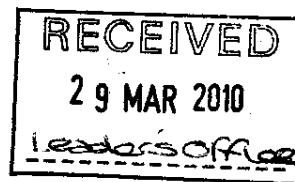
Cc: Shadow Secretary of State for Health, Andrew Lansley MP, Conservative
Shadow Secretary of State for Health, Norman Lamb MP, Liberal Democrat

From Phil Hope MP
Minister of State for Care Services



Your Ref: DB/CB/JB

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Councillor David Burbage
Leader of the Council
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead
Town Hall
St Ives Road
Maidenhead SL6 1RF

24 MAR 2010

Dear Councillor Burbage,

Thank you for your letter of 10 March to Andy Burnham about proposals under the Personal Care at Home Bill. I am replying as the Minister responsible for this policy area.

I note your view that the Government's calculations regarding the numbers of people eligible, and the cost of the measures, under the Bill are an underestimation of the true numbers and cost of the policy.

We are aware of the recent Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) survey of 61 local authorities with regard to the proposed costs of the measures. This survey suggested that the costs of the policy could be over £1 billion, compared with the Government's estimate of £670 million annually.

In the time since the survey, the Department of Health has been engaging with ADASS and the Local Government Association (LGA) to better understand the process through which the higher figure was reached. ADASS and the LGA have accepted that some aspects of the process were incorrect.

You may be interested to know that an independent report commissioned by the Department has recently been published, highlighting the potential benefits and savings to be achieved through reform of the care and support system. *The case for social care reform – the wider economic and social benefits* (Glasby et al, 2010) published by the University of Birmingham, shows that by investing in social care and giving help to the most vulnerable, we can also build strong communities and help the economy. The report highlights a number of areas where councils can make efficiency savings and considers the evidence base.

The provisions under the Personal Care at Home Bill will be funded through a combination of providing additional grants and redirecting local authority efficiency savings. Central government is providing £210 million next year to help deliver this new commitment. This will be made up from nearly £50 million allocated for indicative advertising and communications spending, over £60 million reduction in management

STEPHEN O'BRIEN MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Councillor David Burbage
The Leader's Office, Town Hall,
St Ives Road, Maidenhead, SL6 1RF

24th March 2010

Dear Cllr. Burbage,

Thank you for copying Andrew Lansley into your letter of the 10th March to Andy Burnham regarding the Personal Care at Home Bill.

I have received numerous letters from Councillors who have expressed similar concerns about the Bill. Throughout its passage through Parliament, Conservatives have led the way in holding the Government's feet to the fire about the uncosted nature of the proposals and the burden that it places on Local Authorities. Given that the Bill will only extend access to care in the home to as little as 110,635 people, I believe the cost of this Bill to Local Authorities is disproportionate to the benefit it will bring to social care users.

To date, we have defeated the Government on four votes and have succeeded in passing a sunset clause that will ensure that if the Bill's proposals are not implemented within two years then the legislation is repealed. We have also ensured that a rigorous independent review of the Bill's costings must take place before its implementation which our amendments sought to delay until April 2011.

I will continue to hold the Government to account for this irresponsible piece of legislation which not only inflicts a large burden on local authorities but also misleads the elderly into thinking they can access more support than in reality the Bill makes available.

It is absolutely vital that we support individuals who wish to stay in their homes and receive care in the home but we must ensure that any approach we adopt is costed and affordable for both service users and taxpayers. The Conservatives want to take a fiscally and socially responsible route to reform and we will continue to press the Government to do the same.

Once again, thank you for giving the Shadow Health Team sight of your letter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen O'Brien', followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Stephen O'Brien
Shadow Health Team

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