

Building a Care System That Works: Bury Council and the National Conversation on Care

In the names of A Arif, N Bayley, C Boles, A Chaudhry, U Farooq, E FitzGerald, R Gold, D Green, S Haroon, M Hayes, J Hook, C Hunt, B Ibrahim, G McGill, C Morris, E O'Brien, T Pilkington, A Quinn, D Quinn, T Rafiq, M Rahimov, I Rizvi, M Rubinstein, L Ryder, L Smith, J A Southworth, J Southworth, G Staples-Jones, T Tariq, S Thorpe, S Walmsley

This Council notes:

1. Social Care is one of the biggest issues of our time and the system, in its current state, is unsustainable - for patients, their families, communities and councils.
2. The Prime Minister has committed to fixing the broken social care system by finding common ground across party lines, setting out a new approach to politics based on problem-solving rather than point-scoring, and drawing a line under decades of governments leaving this issue unaddressed.
3. That we welcome the cross-party approach to fixing adult social care, and that we here in Bury have a long history of working across party lines to deliver the best for our residents.
4. Baroness Louise Casey, who chairs the Independent Commission on Adult Social Care, has launched the Big Conversation on Care, a new online platform giving the public the chance to share their views and help shape the future of adult social care in England, starting with what values and principles a care system should be built on.
5. The scale of the challenge is significant: there are an estimated 1.46 million adult social care workers and 5.8 million unpaid carers in England, mostly women, proving care worth £184bn to the economy; in June 2026 an average of 13,600 people a day were medically fit to leave hospital but unable to do so, partly due to the availability of social care; and around 3,000 instances of corridor care are occurring daily as a result of pressures on hospital capacity.
6. The number of A&E attendances by people aged 65 and over has risen from 3.3 million in 2011/12 to 5.8 million in 2024/25, growth far outstripping the increase in the older population, and cuts to social care funding between 2010 and 2018 are estimated to have driven around half a million additional A&E attendances a year among people aged 65 and over.
7. In Bury, despite our strong performance in adult social care - where our recent inspections have revealed Outstanding care at Killelea and overall Good care across the system, we still face challenges in delivering the best possible care to our residents, following over a decade of cuts to funding from central government, combined with increases in demand, complexity and cost.
8. In Bury we have over 16,000 carers and in some areas of the borough the number of people providing unpaid care is as high as 10.5%. These carers perform an invaluable role but are faced with navigating an antiquated social care system that is not fit for purpose.

Bury Council welcomes:

9. The pace and drive shown by the Independent Commission on Adult Social Care in working to bring forward its reporting timetable by a year, recognising the urgency felt by residents, carers, care workers, Unions and councils who cannot afford to wait for lasting reform.
10. The Prime Minister's willingness to reach across party lines, and the engagement of the opposition parties with this process, in the belief that a problem of this scale and longevity can only be solved through a settlement built to outlast any single Parliament.

Bury Council resolves to:

11. Promote the Big Conversation on Care to residents, staff, carers, providers, Unions and local partners, and encourage the fullest possible local participation in it.
12. Offer this Council's full support and participation in the Big Conversation in whatever way is most useful to the Independent Commission - whether that is through local engagement events, sharing local data and case studies, or any other means the Independent Commission considers helpful.

13. Continue to work constructively with all political groups represented on this Council, and with neighbouring authorities, health partners and Unions in the same spirit of problem-solving over point-scoring as we have repeatedly done in Bury - recognising that social care reform will only endure if it is built on cross-party consensus, not the priorities of one administration or party.
14. Ask the Leader & Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care to report back to full Council on the outcomes of local engagement with the Big Conversation on Care, and on the Independent Commission's findings as they are published.