

My intervention during the debate on Local Government and Social Care Funding, 24 April 2019

John Redwood (Wokingham) (Con): My area is one that got a really bad deal under past Governments and is still getting a bad deal. Let me build a bit of cross-party support. It is obvious that the Government have to find more money for social care for future year budgets, and it needs to go to my area and some areas represented by Opposition Members. It needs to be done fairly, but what is Labour's current thinking on how much individuals and families should contribute, because in social care, one of the big issues is how much of the family asset and income is at risk? Does it have any new thinking on that?

Andrew Gwynne (Denton and Reddish) (Lab): Of course, individuals and families are taking the hit from all the cuts, and they are having to step in.

James Cartlidge (South Suffolk) (Con): rose—

Andrew Gwynne: Let me answer the right hon. Member for Wokingham (John Redwood) first. We have to have a sensible discussion about how we are going to fund social care. Yes, it is about money, and we have pledged to ensure that there is £8 billion for social care—that was in Labour's manifesto in the 2017 general election—and we need to make sure that that commitment remains in our future manifesto and is updated, because it needs that immediate cash injection to start with. However, we also need to look very seriously at how we provide adult social care.

I really do wish that we could try to break down some of the politicking that has gone on for far too long—[*Interruption.*] Members can heckle, but it is a fact that before the 2010 general election, Andy Burnham, the then Health Secretary, sat down with the Liberal Democrat health spokesperson and the Conservative health spokesperson to try to work out a way forward. We went into that 2010 general election with poster boards about Labour's "death tax". That serves nobody. We need to make sure that we will have something that is sustainable for the long term, and I hope that we can genuinely get to a place where we can do that and talk about how we fund adult social care and children's services going forward.