

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Mr David Jones
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23rd October 2018

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tom Pursglove'.

Thank you for your email of the 3rd October 2018 in respect of your concerns about the funding of local health and social care services; your comments upon which I read with interest.

First, I should say at the outset that decisions relating to council services are entirely a matter for Northamptonshire County Council and its democratically elected members, who are accountable to local people through the ballot box. As I am sure you will appreciate, it would be wrong of me, as a local Member of Parliament, to dictate to local councillors about decisions which they are directly elected to make. Instead, my role is to ensure that the views of local people are heard loud and clear by those taking these decisions at County Hall.

There can be no doubt that, in recent years, local authorities, like all of government, have been presented with challenging financial circumstances. It is noteworthy, however, that some local authorities have coped with these pressures better than others. I'm afraid to say that Northamptonshire County Council is one of those local authorities that has found it more difficult to meet that challenge, and it has serious questions to answer as a result.

Looking to the role of local Members of Parliament, including myself, in funding for local government, it is worth noting that I voted to increase local government spending in Northamptonshire this year by £14.5 million, meaning that, for this financial year (2018/2019), Northamptonshire has Core Spending Power of £431.2 million - an increase of 3.5%. Unfortunately, it is a matter of record that Labour MPs voted against this additional funding for Northamptonshire local government, despite the rhetoric we hear locally.



In direct relation to NHS funding, I am happy to say that the Government will invest an additional £20.5 billion in the NHS by 2023/24 – additional money I campaigned for. This will enable the NHS to address the growing challenges of an ageing population and properly plan for the future. The Chancellor will publish the precise details of how this funding will be provided in the autumn. This new investment is extremely welcome, and I hope you agree it demonstrates the Government's commitment to properly funding our NHS and public services.

Earlier in the year, the Communities Secretary also announced extra funding to help local authorities meet the needs of vulnerable people and support services in rural areas. However, following representations from local government and we, as Members of Parliament, on the provisional funding plans announced, a further £150 million was made available to councils to support adult social care provision. In addition, £16 million was made available to councils providing services in rural areas, taking the total Rural Services Grant to £81 million - the highest it has ever been and a recognition of the cost of providing local services in sparsely populated areas.

For Northamptonshire, this additional funding amounts to £1.7 million - a very welcome increase on the provisional settlement that had been announced, and more money for county services - something I am proud to have campaigned for, alongside my colleagues.

In my discussions recently with the leaders of our local councils, I have also offered to wholeheartedly support other initiatives to lever additional funding into the county - for example, any bid for a business rates retention pilot, which it is estimated would see Northamptonshire £17 million a year better off, and a bespoke 'Growth Deal' application for the county, which would undoubtedly be beneficial. In addition to this, I will continue to actively engage with the Commissioners and I will take my lead from them as to what is required in ensuring my constituents are able to access the services they need, moving forward, and as local government goes through the period of reform that is anticipated.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBYP & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE