**Better Care Fund and Social Care in Wyre Forest**

Dear Editor,

I read with interest your recent article 'Clarity urged over Better Care Fund' (3rd June 2014) and applaud the concerns it raises over the scheme’s ability to improve care for people in their own homes. I wonder, however, if readers are also aware that the £6million needed to fund this policy will be taken from the Wyre Forest Clinical Commissioning Group; a body whose own work improving health care services in the area has been much applauded.

The Better Care Fund's stated intention is to integrate health and social care funding so that the elderly, and those with chronic illnesses, will receive a better quality of care in their own homes. The hope is that this will then reduce hospital waiting lists. These are laudable aims. However, a recent government commissioned study of similar schemes in other areas suggests that there is unlikely to be any significant reduction in hospital admissions as a result.

We should question the wisdom of removing such a large sum of money from Worcestershire hospitals in order to fund something with such a poor likelihood of success; especially at a time when austerity cuts mean that our hospitals are experiencing severe financial difficulties. Sadly, but also predictably, the Conservative led government refuses to increase their budgets to cope with the rising demand from an ageing population and an increased number of sufferers of chronic illnesses.

Readers may be shocked to learn that Worcestershire Acute Trust has a £14 million deficit. Transferring money into the careful hands of the county council will not improve this situation. I understand that there is an urgent need to increase the funding for social care within Wyre Forest but robbing our hospitals is certainly not the answer.

Yours faithfully

Martin Layton

Press Officer

Wyre Forest Green Party