# Social care under pressure in Bury as financial priorities overshadow need



The challenges facing the social care sector in Bury, Greater Manchester, have become glaringly evident, particularly through the experiences of care worker Julia, who tirelessly supports elderly clients. However, the gravity of her situation is compounded by the burgeoning pressures imposed by the new Labour government, which seems more focused on financial metrics than on the real-life implications of their policies.

Bury Council, which has been in a state of “financial distress” for over a year, is navigating a crisis exacerbated by Labour's fiscal mismanagement. Care workers like Julia receive a meager wage of around £12 per hour, an insult given their crucial role in society. Each day, Julia juggles between 10 to 15 clients, trapped in a system that prioritises spreadsheets over genuine care, robbing vulnerable individuals of the personal interactions they desperately need.

The upcoming increase in employers' national insurance contributions poses a further threat to an already floundering system. Labour's recent rejection of amendments to exempt care providers from this hike is a clear indication of their harmful priorities. Leanne, a manager at Homecare Services employing Julia, voiced her concerns about sustainability. “Our accountants are looking to see how long we can hold on for before we have to say enough’s enough, and give notice to the local authority," she lamented, exemplifying the growing anxiety surrounding the delivery of care services.

Compounding these dire circumstances are the chilling discussions about proposed cuts to disability and sickness benefits, particularly the Personal Independence Payment (PIP). Representatives from various advocacy groups have raised alarms that changes in eligibility criteria could devastate those with complex needs, suggesting an alarming trend towards prioritising budgetary constraints over compassion.

Labour's preoccupation with fiscal discipline rather than genuine support for society’s most vulnerable captures a stark shift in political ethos. Their portrayal as stewards of financial management comes at the cost of alienating those who rely on essential services.

Moreover, Keir Starmer's uncritical embrace of artificial intelligence in governance raises concerns about a future where statistics outweigh the fundamental human touch in public service. The implementation of such technology could signal a further distancing from the real needs of communities, as Labour’s focus on efficiency overshadows the foundational principles of care.

As the local social care crisis illustrates broader systemic failures, the implications of current policies loom heavy over the future of vital services, making clear that the path forward will not only be arduous but potentially devastating for those who rely on them. It’s time for a political voice committed to addressing the underlying issues rather than perpetuating the cycle of neglect and financial prioritisation.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://councildecisions.bury.gov.uk/documents/s43105/Final%20Bury%20Adult%20Carers%20Strategy.pdf> - This URL supports the discussion on the challenges faced by carers in Bury, highlighting the impact of health and social care pressures and the strategies in place to address these issues.
* <https://councildecisions.bury.gov.uk/documents/s42931/Adult+Social+Care+Performance+Quarter+Two+Report+2024.25+08012025+Cabinet.pdf> - This report provides insight into Bury's Adult Social Care performance, including the pressures and improvements in the delivery of social care services.
* <https://buryintegratedcare.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Bury-Workforce-Strategy_final_website.pptx> - This URL discusses workforce challenges in Bury's health and social care sector, including financial and recruitment issues that impact service delivery.
* <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-insurance-contributions#contents> - This government page explains the basics of national insurance contributions, which are relevant to the discussion about the financial pressures faced by care providers.
* <https://www.gov.uk/PIP> - This URL provides information on the Personal Independence Payment (PIP), which is discussed in relation to proposed eligibility changes affecting those with complex needs.