

**Agenda Item 4: 2023-24 Financial Overview as at the Third Quarter Stage (FP/037/02/23)**

**Response by Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care and ICS Integration to question asked by Cllr Ivan Henderson**

Dear Ivan,

You raised a question at the last cabinet meeting, on the Q3 Finance Report, so first of all, please accept my apologies for the delay in sending you a response. The question related to the additional £500,000 requested from the Covid Equalisation Reserve to help address mental health issues in young people.

You asked how much of the need was due to complexity of cases and how much to increased demand.

Officers have now responded to confirm that, while the overall volume of children in care has not materially increased, of those who do come into care, there is greater complexity of need, requiring higher-cost placements. This is then allied to limited choice in the care market. So, primarily a question of complexity, but then that in turn leads to greater demand for more expensive placements. These issues were highlighted and expanded upon during December's Full Council debate on the social care motion and subsequent letter to government.

As usual I am copying in Democratic Services and would ask that this response is recorded in the usual way.

Regards,

John

**Cllr John Spence CBE**

**Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care and ICS Integration  
Councillor for Chelmer Division - Beaulieu Park, Boreham, Danbury and Little Baddow  
Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford**