



## **Just when we thought it wouldn't happen.....**

..... The care costs debate surfaced massively in Scotland this week. A paper by the Association of Directors of Social Work was published and the figures and claims in it should make for lively debate now north of the border. The Association estimates that the cost of social care provided by councils is expected to more than double in about twenty years to nearly £3 billion per year. This is a massive figure – certainly unsupportable in current Scottish Government budget terms.

Even more interestingly the ADSW suggest we need a similar “Dilnot type” review for Scotland to establish how these costs are going to be met. The Dilnot report proved to be a hot potato for most of the politicians in England – with currently no clear agreement on a way forward and parties split over what to do next.

The ADSW report produced some early reactions – along political lines to some extent. The Scottish government reiterated their commitment to free personal care and others doubted whether on the face of these figures it could continue.

David Borrowman of Solicitors for Older People in Scotland commented “I can see all sides of the arguments here. Free personal care is clearly desirable but it must be sustainable long term. I personally would welcome a Scottish “Dilnot” actually, in the hope that after it the care costs issue could be de politicised. If all Scottish politicians could agree on one approach which gave security to older people this would be a huge step forward. The truth is there is great fear out there amongst older people and their families. They are terrified of what might happen to the family finances if care is needed. This fear is very corrosive and surely we as a society can pull together and get this issue dealt with once and for all for the long term.”