

Response from Haringey Council Leader Claire Kober to letter from Robin 20 January 2015

Thank you for your email of 3rd January 2015. I do understand why you are anxious about the proposals and as well as responding now, we have also ensured that they are taken into consideration as part of the overall consultation which ended on 18th January 2015. None of us would choose to be setting out proposals that mean £70 million of savings over the next three years on top of savings of £117 million we have had to make since 2010 but that is the reality of the situation that Haringey, along with the rest of local government, must face. We did feel it important to put together a detailed three-year budget just so that people can be very clear about the future – what we can do, what we can't do and where the gaps are so that we can start to have a proper debate about what we should do with our every diminishing resources.

These are high level proposals and if a decision is taken to move forward on them there will be full consultation with users and carers. We do recognise that there are people with complex needs and it is proposed to retain Ermine Road as a day service for those with complex needs, although this may not be delivered directly by the council. Residents currently at Linden Road are to be offered alternative provision at 103 Dukes Avenue, Muswell Hill, where they will be supported to have their own tenancies. This is a joint collaboration between housing and adults social care which will enable the group of people to remain living together. The Council's Adult Social Care team has experience of working with people to safely move from residential settings to supported living settings. This has been viewed positively by service users and their carers who have been able to be involved in choosing care providers, but again if it is decided to move forward with this proposal, it will be subject to consultation.

As well as the formal consultation process that has just closed and which your comments have been included in, we have held a series of briefings across day service and in-house provision to explain the background of our plans and the financial challenges. The Interim Director of Adult Social Services also made a presentation to the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board on 10th December 2014 giving context and background of the Council's financial position. Following the Council's decision on the budget in February 2015, there will be additional opportunities for people to respond to more detailed consultations on specific plans. The outcome of these additional consultations will ultimately be used to decide whether or not these plans are taken forward.

With regards to standards of provision, we are working very closely with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspectorate to support the providers of care in Haringey. We hold regular quarterly meetings with CQC in order to facilitate a proactive approach to the monitoring of commissioned provision. We have a Quality Assurance (QA) division in commissioning, members of which work closely with CQC and contained within this is a specific post of a Commissioning Safeguarding officer whose role includes the monitoring of early area of concern and provision of support and advice where required. QA staff hold regular provider forums which enable us to share information and facilitate sharing of training and support for providers.

The concerns expressed in your email relating to the proposed changes have been heard and understood, and I can assure you that the impact of the cuts is also something that both officers and Members share. The feedback regarding the detailed issues that you have described is welcome and this will be considered as part of the consultation process, the outcome of which will be used to inform and assist Councillors in their decision-making and agreement of the budget in February 2015.

Best wishes,

Claire

Claire Kober

Leader of the Council