

2 January 2015

I have learned that Haringey Council is proposing that 40% (£30m) of all its £74m funding cuts over the next three years should target its most vulnerable residents who need adult social care services, with a consultation closing on 18th January. Below is a breakdown of the proposed cuts - which your departmental consultation pamphlet has not clearly stated:

proposed breakdown cuts:

- funding for care packages	£10m
- residential care funding for the elderly residential home - which had been paid for with money allocated to Hornsey Central Hospital after it was closed in 2000)	£4m (including closure of its last remaining residential home)
- residential care of learning disabled residential home)	£5.2m (including closure of its last remaining residential home)
- day care of learning disabled leaving only one remaining)	£2.5m (including closure of three day centres,
- funding for the physically disabled	£0.5m (reduction residential care)
- funding for mentally unwell	£1.6m (reduction residential care)
- funding for sexual health	£1.7m
- funding for substance abuse	£0.6m
- funding for "healthy life expectancy"	£1m
- unspecific funding for public health	£1.2m
- funding for social workers disabled)	£1m (including cutting 25% social workers for
- funding for voluntary sector	£1.4m
TOTAL	£30m

source:<http://www.minutes.haringey.gov.uk/Published/C00000118/M00007188/AI00040179/P2Savings031214final.pdf>

Please can you tell me how Haringey Council has informed residents of these proposals? Its December issue of "Haringey People" makes no mention of them. It would be too difficult for many of your service users to navigate the Haringey website, and anyway how would they know to look if they have not been told?

As you know these new proposals come on top of devastating cuts in 2011, following which Haringey Council closed five of its residential homes and five day centres. Only three years on, the vulnerable are being sacrificed all over again.

The difference this time is that all carers may be affected by these cuts, because care packages are also being cut by £10m. With a 25% reduction in social workers and voluntary sector funding being halved by £1.4m, it will become near impossible for families on reduced services to navigate the care they need. Many carers who do not use the remaining council day centres or residential homes have no idea that these particular cuts will affect them directly, and I have been told they have not yet received correspondence from the council. In order for a meaningful consultation to take place, please can you indicate how the council will organise the splitting of these three particular funding cuts (care packages, social workers and voluntary groups) between learning disabled, the elderly, the physically disabled and the mentally unwell?

Haringey Council should not abandon these most vulnerable residents simply because their funding has not been ring-fenced. The council has a duty of care and this is high risk. Cllr Kober, the Leader, has candidly agreed the cuts will "remove services and resources from people who really need them" (Ham and High Broadway 18 Dec 2014). Has your department informed councillors that you cannot offer a safe service with these financial constraints?

I do not agree with your assertion that "reablement" programmes will mean these groups won't require as much funding in future. Reablement is irrelevant to people who are brain damaged, profoundly disabled, or at end of life - Haringey Council cannot work miracles!

You are offering only 4 consultation meetings and we suspect that many frail and profoundly disabled residents will find it hard to get to them - many will not even know of them or understand them.

Your department's consultation process has been slipshod: why were Haringey's Learning Disabilities Board not informed or involved in the decisions? The council's easy read booklet given to the day centre users (now rewritten as its dates and days did not tally) does not tell people what they are losing, nor ask them their views, unclearly stating "There are 4 meetings you chose which meeting you go to"

There are no meetings arranged for people with learning disabilities at the day centres which are closing, surely it will be confusing, distressing and unfamiliar to those that even manage to get to Ermine Road. These learning disabled cuts alone will affect 648 residents, plus their families - does the council expect them all to come here? There are also residents with younger disabled - they too will be interested.

And last but not least, most of this has taken place around Christmas, with only a couple of weeks to go now before the consultation ends.

I look forward to your reply. Please do not remind me that these are only proposals and that they are out for consultation (history tells us that they will become policy in due course) or that the council is under restraint - I am quite aware that there needs to be a public sector re-

haul, but I do not think that this should be at the expense of the most fragile and disabled people who cannot speak up for themselves.

My questions concern your consultation and the council's duty of care.

Happy New Year!

Sue Hessel, Organiser, weekly carer coffee morning