

Letter from Sue Hessel, Organiser Carers' Coffee Morning, to Catherine West, Prospective Labour parliamentary candidate, Hornsey and Wood Green

2 January 2015

Dear Catherine,

Thank you for meeting with us on 19th December.

We were encouraged that you agreed to stand up for the borough's most vulnerable adults and look forward to your press statement. Although people understand public spending has sometimes been profligate and unwise, and that there is a requirement for public spending cuts - there is a political need for the parties to differentiate how they would apportion these. There is otherwise a danger that the electorate will vote for more extreme and volatile parties. The electorate will also be seeking a representative who when necessary will stand up to his/her council with courage.

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. Its consultation closes on 18th January. Below is a breakdown of the proposed cuts - which its consultation has not clearly stated:

proposed breakdown cuts:

- funding for care packages £10m
- residential care funding for the elderly £4m (including closure of its last remaining residential home - which had been paid for with money allocated to Hornsey Central Hospital after it was closed in 2000 )
- residential care of learning disabled £5.2m (including closure of its last remaining residential home)
- day care of learning disabled £2.5m (including closure of three day centres, leaving only one remaining)
- 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 £1m (including cutting 25% social workers for disabled)

- funding for voluntary sector	£1.4m
TOTAL	£30m

source:

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

This comes on top of its devastating cuts in 2011 following which Haringey Council closed five of its residential homes and five day centres. The vulnerable are being sacrificed all over again.

The difference this time is that all carers will be affected by these cuts because on top of them all, care packages are being cut by £10m, and with a 25% reduction in social workers it will become even harder for them to navigate the care they need. Voluntary groups are also being cut so they may find there is no one to turn to. The council's assertion that "reablement" programmes will mean they won't require as much funding are particularly irrelevant to people who are brain damaged, profoundly disabled, or at end of life. Haringey Council cannot work miracles! The council still has a duty of care and this is high risk.

There are 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. These are public meetings and we are hoping people will come and support the vulnerable groups,

Learning Disabilities: 2 Ermine Road Day centre, N15 6DB, Tuesday 6th January, 2-3pm and 5-6pm

Elderly: The Haven Day centre, 20A Waltheof Gardens, N17 7DX, Friday 9th January 12-1pm

Elderly: Osborne Grove Nursing Home, Friday 9th January 5 -6pm

We hope that you will follow and contribute in this debate, in any way that you feel you can. I hope you can at the very least come to one Ermine Road Day Centre consultation, as learning disabled/autism are hit particularly hard, and maybe at least one of the elderly consultations.

Many thanks and happy new year,

Sue Hessel