

**Council:** 11 April 2006

**Agenda Item:** 10.1

**Administration Policy Item:** Cllr. Brian Salinger

Council believes the NHS is in crisis, not just in Barnet, but all across London and the UK.

Council is dismayed that, as a result of this, Barnet PCT is being forced to forfeit 3% of its allocation for this year to bail out debt ridden areas in the London NHS.

Council condemns the Labour Government's *Operating Framework* that has recommended this.

Council understands that this will mean at least £12 million in cuts to the services the PCT offers Barnet residents.

Council believes this will affect some of the vital joint work between the Trust and the Council in looking after sick and vulnerable people in Barnet, and in addition will affect:

- Health Education Work in Barnet Schools
- Work to prevent accidents among Barnet's elderly
- Support in the Community for Barnet's mentally ill
- Support for people discharged from hospital

Council notes that more Barnet residents use the Royal Free than people from any other Borough in London (including Camden).

Council therefore deplores the savage cuts seen at the Royal Free Hospital, which mean nearly 500 fewer staff (including nurses), 100 fewer beds and closed wards.

Council believes these are being implemented to solve a colossal debt problem at that hospital, and the refusal of the Labour Government to come to the rescue of the Royal Free.

Council believes that all these cuts will cause misery to elderly and infirm people across the Borough.

Council calls on Cabinet to lead the fight against these cutbacks in London. Cabinet is requested to write to the Secretary of State for Health, our three Members of Parliament and the Chief Executive of the London Strategic Health Authority, explaining our opposition to these plans.

Cabinet must also call for the full 2006/7 allocation to be returned to Barnet PCT, and for the Government to find a way of solving the debt crisis in the NHS without commandeering money meant for local health services or forcing Hospitals to make major reductions to the services they offer to vulnerable people in our Borough.