

Council: Tuesday, 28 July 2015

Administration Motion: Cllr Helena Hart

Public Health Funding

Council notes the Chancellor's plan to eliminate the UK's budget deficit during this Parliament and the mandate given for this at the General Election. Council believes that it is vital that the UK lives within its means to ensure a strong and stable economy and understands that this necessitates further reductions in our expenditure. In Barnet, we are far more advanced than most Local Authorities in planning ahead for future reductions in our revenue budget.

Council is, however, concerned by proposals for an in-year cut to Public Health funding. A £200m cut across the Country equates to about 7% of the total Public Health budget. It is unclear how this cut would be apportioned, but effected on a pro rata basis could see a reduction in excess of £1m for Barnet. This would create significant challenges. In addition, whilst increases in the prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases and TB further emphasise the necessity for vital preventative work, Barnet is already, per head, the third lowest funded Authority in London at the same time as experiencing rapid population growth in both young and older residents.

Council notes and welcomes the fact that the Leader has already written to the Chancellor, the Health Secretary and the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, arguing against a blanket cut.

Council understands that the upcoming Consultation now may consider how the cut should be implemented. Council calls on the Leader, the Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board and officers to continue lobbying (including via the consultation) for the protection of Barnet's Public Health funding, with any cuts being weighted towards those Authorities which have historically and are currently far better funded on a per capita basis and away from our own already underfunded service.

Under Full Council Procedure Rule 23.5: If my item is not dealt with by the end of the meeting I ask that it be voted upon at the Council meeting.