

ADULT SOCIAL CARE SELECT COMMITTEE**Item under consideration: BUDGET MONITORING****Date Considered: 30 November 2012**

At the meeting on 30 November, the Committee considered a report on Budget Monitoring in Adult Social Care. Discussion on this item centred on the pressures that the Directorate is currently experiencing. A primary reason for these pressures is a significant unforeseen increase in demand for social care assistance, coupled with continuing demographic pressures. The Directorate has been a victim of its own success because of its work to raise awareness. For example, there has been a five-fold increase in the numbers of people diagnosed with early onset dementia that now require assistance.

The Directorate has worked very hard over the last few years to make savings to its budget. The Committee heard from two providers of services to people with learning disabilities. They indicated that they were experiencing their own significant budget pressures due to the savings the Directorate had to make. For example, the Directorate has not given inflationary uplifts in line with RPI since 2007. Providers indicated this meant that the real value of every £1 paid in fees in 2003 is now 86p. This affects the care they are able to provide due to staffing costs, food price increases and the general economic climate.

The Committee was greatly concerned to hear that the savings that the Directorate was being asked to make might ultimately affect the care our residents receive. The Committee recognised that the savings targets were necessary and that the Directorate had worked very hard to meet these but are very concerned that the targets being set for next year are a step too far. There is concern that Adult Social Care is being asked to shoulder more of the burden than other Directorates.

Therefore the Select Committee recommends to the Cabinet:

1. The Adult Social Care Directorate has worked extremely well over the last two years to meet very challenging financial savings targets;
2. The Committee continues to champion preventative measures that will affect the long term figures positively;
3. The savings that have been required and will need to continue may now begin to affect the quality of care in some areas;
4. The Adult Social Care Select Committee formally requests that the Cabinet re-consider the savings targets being imposed on the Adult Social Care Directorate, bearing in mind the demographic challenges and increased demand facing it; and
5. The public need to be informed and prepared for possibly difficult announcements and impacts of the funding allocation from central government due in December and in the future.

Sally Marks
Chairman, Adult Social Care Select Committee

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