

Budget feedback

Details

The following comments are made from Liverpool Against the Cuts as an organisation.

Adult Social Care and Health Directorate Budget proposals

The proposals are to save £11.7 million this year from Adult Social Care and ongoing to save £9.7 million a year. There are one or two proposals such as ASC16 (use of a specific fund for assessment and care) which might well be acceptable, but a cut of £9.7 million (estimated at 6.3 per cent of the current net budget) cannot be implemented without devastating consequences.

ASC03 Review and revise model for Day Services
Day services are the lifeline for disabled people and their carers. They have already been cut to the bone.

ASC04 Demand management - review and reduce support at home for people with low level need.
What is low level need? Care packages are already only for those with "substantial" or "critical" needs., so lots of people who need less care than this do not get it. We should be increasing them not reducing.

ASCO6 Review high cost packages of care and eligibility for health contribution where appropriate.
This is shunting costs back between NHS and local government - both are underfunded, so the situation won't really be resolved by arguing who should do the paying.

ASC11 Review social care charging policy/ client contribution

We assume this is related to the decision of 3 December 2021, to increase the amount possible to charge those clients who pay for care. Whilst this will not hit the very poorest, where care will remain free, it will hit others who are not particularly well off, but have modest savings or an Occupational Pension. Eventually there will be no cap at all on the client contribution.

Budget feedback

ASC12 Demand management: use of telehealth and assistive technology to reduce demand for mobile nights services.

Many clients by definition (under stress, elderly, learning disabilities) will not be able to deal with IT and will fall through the net. Further, in many cases it is only by observing clients that problems can be detected - weight loss, dementia etc cannot be picked up over phone or zoom.

ASC13 Demand management - review the use of 1:1 additional support packages of care

Only highly disabled people are offered this: we do not see how this could be reviewed without damage to the client.

ASC14 and ASC15

Demand management - use Disabled Facilities grant to fund assistive technology and telecare

Demand management - use Disabled Facilities Grant to increase independence at home with aids and adaptations.

Of course there is a place for aids, and of course the Disabled Facilities grant should be used to fund aids where possible but it is unlikely that this will take the place of personal care, and telecare is totally inadequate for many people - see comments on ASC12 above.

General comments on Adult Care proposals

There is frequent reference to Demand Management, which implies clients are currently getting care which they don't really need. In fact, the Assessment Criteria is already quite strict, and there are already many clients whose lives are restricted because they don't have any care, or don't have enough care.

The effects of cuts to health and social care are not minimal. The research by the University of York suggests 23,662 additional deaths nationally caused by Social Care cuts since 2010. (1500 increase nationally for each 1% cut in care).

These are not the first cuts by the Council to Adult Health and Social Care. As early as 2014, the then Cabinet member was saying that they had already cut to the bone.

Budget feedback

Childrens and Young Peoples Directorate budget proposals

CYPS05 and CYPS06 Demand management - special needs transport

Demand management - home to school transport

Again 'demand management' implies that people, in this case parents of disabled children, are expecting too much. There is the assumption that transport to school is a luxury but special schools are not neighbourhood schools and they serve the whole city. For instance there are three special schools in the Fazakerley area, serving children city-wide. By definition special schools nowadays only serve children with the most severe problems. It is ridiculous to assume that these children will manage to use public transport and even change buses to travel distances to school - they simply won't get to school. We would advocate school transport being taken inhouse.

CYPS10 Review and reconfigure short breaks provision - use of personal budgets and direct payments to provide greater choice and control This is intended to save £200,000. We cannot see how this can be done except through cutting the service. Short breaks are desperately needed by children and young people who are disabled, and by their carers.

CYPS11 Service review. Children in Care Participation team

CYPS12 Service review. ART team

I can't find out from the website what these services offer, but I assume they offer social and therapeutic support for children in care. This is a cut of £150,000 and, given the very poor outcomes for looked after children, these services are needed and it should be a priority to preserve them.

Communities Directorate Budget proposals

CSO5 Review of support to non-statutory Library services

When Council library services were under threat of closure in 2016, closure of Breck Road and Walton libraries were justified on the grounds that community

Budget feedback

organisations could meet the need and would be given some financial support. But now these grants are being withdrawn. Liverpool has one of the worst 'school readiness' records in the UK and the best way of dealing with this is to encourage reading for pleasure. (Extensive research on this topic). Extension of libraries and increased community involvement is needed rather than further cuts.

General points

Council tax increase

Whilst the very poorest can claim Council tax support, the proposed increase comes at a time of rising inflation, so will be another additional expense to families who are slightly better off and are hit by rise in fuel and food costs.

One Stop Shops

The decision to reduce the One Stop Shop service was made two years ago, so is not part of the consultation on this year's budget but is an ongoing cut. We wish the Council to reverse this decision to reduce This is an example of a really valued and supportive service to Liverpool citizens and it is needed as never before.

Cost of Commissioners

We note that the four Commissioners together cost £4500 per day. On the modest assumption of 50 days' work over the year, this comes almost to a quarter of a million - more than the money that is being cut from Day Services for elderly and disabled. I assume consultants brought in by the Commissioners are also costly. We find it outrageous that in a time when the poorest in Liverpool are facing cuts, this money to Commissioners who have been imposed by one of the most wasteful and corrupt governments in our lifetime, is being taken out of the Liverpool budget. We should refuse to pay the Commissioners.

No Cuts budget

We call on the Council to use reserves, legitimate borrowing, and all possible means to set a No Cuts budget and to start campaigning on a Needs-led

Budget feedback

Budget for the following years.

Contact details

Forename 1	Ruth Knox
Surname	Secretary, Liverpool Against the Cuts
Address	c/o 95 Belgrave Road
Town	Liverpool
County	
Postcode	L17 7AQ
Email	liverpoolagainstthecuts@gmx.com
Read and accept privacy notice	Yes

About this request

Issued by	Liverpool City Council Cunard Building Water Street Liverpool L3 1AH
Received on	19/01/2022
Request reference	10373050