



Merton Centre for Independent Living
Wandle Valley Resource Centre
Church Road
Mitcham
CR4 3BE

Date: 02/02/2017

Open letter to Merton Council Expressing Concern at Planned Cuts to Adult Social Care

To: Stephen Alambritis, Leader of the Council, Ged Curran, CEO of the Council, Tobin Byers, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health, Simon Williams, Director of Community and Housing

At a recent meeting of the trustees of Merton Centre for Independent Living, we discussed the Council budget. As a result, we are writing to express our significant concern about planned cuts of £2.3 million to the Adult Social Care budget in 2017-18, half of which is planned cuts to disabled and older people's support packages, and on which there has been no consultation.

Over the last few years, the council has been repeatedly advised that planned cuts to services are unachievable and risk causing significant harm to local disabled people and older people. Many of us on the board of Merton CIL use Council services, and we also hear regularly from our members and service users about the difficulties they are facing in trying to live independent lives.

We appreciate that Merton Council is proposing to put £9 million into the Adult Social Care budget, however, this money will effectively be used to write off debts built up by the service, or in your language, overspend. These debts were seemingly built up because the planned cuts were impossible to meet.

Therefore, the insistence that a further £2.3 million is going to be cut from next year's budget represents a fundamental failure to learn from the mistakes of the past. The Adult Social Care service as a whole will

not have a chance to recover and we are concerned that Council staff will be forced into ever harsher decisions about cutting care and support to which local people are entitled. In addition, Council plans, on which there has been no consultation, to cut a further £6 million from Adult Social Care over the next few years, are extremely concerning¹.

We urge you not to cut Adult Social Care, and in fact to invest in improving services and in preventative services. We believe that by spending a little extra, in the right place, you would have a disproportionately greater return than on your current plans.

Kind regards



Roy Benjamin, Chairman and on behalf of the trustees of Merton CIL

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<http://democracy.merton.gov.uk/documents/b8835/Savings%20proposals%20consultation%20pack%20Thursday%2026-Jan-2017%2019.15%20Overview%20and%20Scrutiny%20Commission.pdf?T=9> p. 152

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