

Your
ref:
Our ref: MW/MW2
Ask for: Councillor Muriel Weisz
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Date: Thursday 31st March 2016



Chair of Adult Social Care & Health
Committee
County Hall
West Bridgford
Nottingham
NG2 7QP

Dear Councillor Cutts,

**QUESTION REQUIRING A WRITTEN RESPONSE
(COUNTY COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 40)**

**QUESTION TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE
ADULT SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH COMMITTEE**

At the Nottinghamshire County Council budget meeting on the 25th February 2016 a Council Tax increase a Council tax increase of 3.99% was approved including a 2% 'Social Care Precept' permitted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Given the Chancellor's stipulation that 'the money raised will have to spent exclusively on adult social care', could the Chairman of the Adult Social Care & Health Committee provide a detailed breakdown of her plans for the money raised through this levy, so that these can be scrutinised and measured against outcomes over the course of 2016/17?

Thank you very much for your question requiring a written response under County Council procedures received on the 10th March 2016.

In addition to the requirement you refer to in your question, the Spending Review sets out the intention behind the new precept in section 1.108.

"Taken together, the new precept and additional Local Government Better Care Fund contribution means local government has access to the funding it needs to increase social care spending in real terms by the end of the Parliament. This will support Councils to continue to focus on core services and to increase the prices they pay for care, including to cover the costs of the National Living Wage, which is expected to benefit up to 900,000 care workers."

Given the overall settlement for local government, there must be serious doubt about the assertion that the precept and the Local Government Better Care Fund settlement do provide the means to increase expenditure in real terms.

Setting this aside, the Government requirement is for the Section 151 Officer to verify that the precept is, indeed, spent on Adult Social Care and to demonstrate that expenditure is over and above what it otherwise would have been, by the amount of the precept.

You will recall that through the Joint Budget setting process we reviewed and agreed the funding to cover the additional costs of meeting essential requirements in Adult Social Care.

Appendix C of the County Council report of the 25th February sets out those additional cost pressures. These are listed below, but does not include funding for the Care Act as this has previously been provided to Local Government through a specific Grant.

	£000
Younger Adults	3,062
Shortfall in Client Contributions	806
Sleep in Allowances	3,800
Deprivation of Liberty/ Independent Living Fund	2,000
Social Care Inflation (Contract obligation)	500
Social care inflation (Minimum wage)	2,150
National Living Wage	9,579
	21,897

Against additional funding of £21.9, the precept raises £6m.

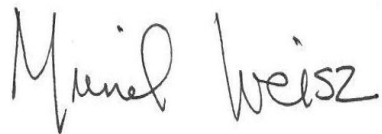
The Spending Review highlights the need to fund focus on core services, increase the prices paid to providers, including the costs of the National Living Wage.

I am sure you will agree that all of the £21.9m meets the criteria set out above. The Government do not require detailed information on which specific element of Adult Social Care budget is supported by the precept.

However, if we consider the Living Wage alone, this will cost £9.5m in 2016/17 and the outcome is to meet the Government legislative requirement that the National Living Wage is received by Care Workers.

In relation to scrutiny, as you know the Adult Social Care and Health Committee receives reports on fee levels and the availability and costs of the care market. Where relevant, issues of Performance and Finance are reported to the Policy and Finance and Property Committees. We will be taking a report to the April 18th Adult Social Care and Health Committee covering fee levels and the National Living Wage as part of this cycle of reports and oversight.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Muriel Weisz". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large 'M' and a distinct 'W'.

Councillor Muriel Weisz
Chair of Adult Social Care & Health Committee
Member for Arnold South Division
Nottinghamshire County Council