15 March 2017

Department for Communities and Local Government
Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

To whom it may concern

**Use of Adult Social Care Precept**

In reply to your letter of 21st February 2017, I am writing to confirm that Thurrock Borough Council has increased its council tax to fund adult social care services in 2017/18.

Thurrock’s council tax has increased by 4.89% in 2017/18.

I have completed the table below, comparing the changes in adult social care budgets (including overheads and running costs) with those of other non-ringfenced services, including and excluding precept.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2016/17 budget (£)</th>
<th>Total ASC 2017/18 precept (£)</th>
<th>2017/18 budget (£)</th>
<th>ASC % change 2016/17 to 2017/18 budget excluding precept</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Column</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>(C-B)/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget for non-ringfenced services</td>
<td>81,727,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>78,343,000</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget for Adult Social Care</td>
<td>32,947,000</td>
<td>1,781,000</td>
<td>34,259,000</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As per the table above, budgets for non-ringfenced services have reduced by 4% from 2016/17. There has been a small change in the budget for adult social care due to reduced overhead costs within the authority from wider council savings and the ongoing review of service delivery efficiencies. The budget includes a one-off grant for adult social care support of £657k in 2017/18, which although is presented as a net nil impact on the budget in the table, does provide a real increase in spending power. Also, in addition to the position above, the Chancellor announced further funding of £2.8m for adult social care in Thurrock as part of the Spring Budget 2017 which provides a further increase in spending power within the service.
The money raised through the precept in 2017/18 will be used to meet some of the following pressures:

We need to bring stability to the domiciliary home care services being delivered in Thurrock by various external providers. Thurrock has seen three providers exit the market (one due to quality concerns and one due to economic factors). The basic domiciliary care hourly rate to external providers has had to increase. The national living wage increase will affect domiciliary and residential care. We are negotiating inflationary increases in residential care for older people and an additional increase linked to performance.

Managing demand remains a key pressure as although numbers for older people overall have stabilised, complexity of need means our unit costs have gone up. We are experiencing particular pressures around dementia placements, younger people with autism and learning disabilities coming through transition and people with complex mental health problems.

The council tax increase for 2017/18 in respect of the precept is 3%. I certify that the authority will use the funding above 2% to improve the way social care services are delivered in my area, and set out below how we propose to do so.

Our in-house domiciliary care provision will receive investment to strengthen capacity and is working closely with the Care Quality Commission to improve quality amongst the service.

Additional staffing will be dedicated to reviewing mental health and learning disability placements to ensure the most appropriate provision is being commissioned and regularly reviewed.

“Thurrock First”, a new single point of access for adult residents is being launched and will be an integrated service with our partners in NELFT (North East London NHS Foundation Trust) & SEPT (South East Partnership Trust).

The increase in deprivation of liberty cases/assessments requires extra provision and this will ensure we are effectively carrying out our statutory safeguarding duties.

Yours faithfully

Sean Clark
Director of Finance and IT (S151 Officer)

Roger Harris
Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health