

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee met on Monday 21st January 2002. The following members of the Cabinet attended the meeting to respond to questions by the Committee:-

Mr D. R. Parsons CC	Cabinet Lead Member – Health and Social Care
Mr R. Miller CC	Support to Cabinet Lead Member – Health and Social Care

REVISED ESTIMATE 2001/02

The Committee NOTED that the revised estimate for 2001/02 showed an overspend of £548,220.

REVENUE BUDGET 2002/03

Arising from the discussion and questions put to the Cabinet representatives on the proposed revenue budget the following points were made:-

Independent Sector Residential Care Providers

The Cabinet recognised the cost pressures facing independent sector providers of residential care and had agreed a two stage process to support the sector. It was hoped to provide a level of fees which matched the levels paid by the Department of Works and Pensions with the aim of meeting further costs the following year. Details of the current and proposed rates payable at each band would be supplied to members of the Committee;

Independent Sector Homecare Services

The cost of independent sector domiciliary care was an average of £10 per hour and compared favourably with that of the in-house sector which was approximately £14 per hour. The budget proposals would seek to assist and stabilise the independent sector which was experiencing costs and recruitment difficulties. An analysis of the cost comparisons between the in-house and independent sector would give an opportunity for the Scrutiny Commission to consider and comment on the proposals. The information on cost comparisons should also include the administrative and support costs which the Authority would incur in any event whether the service was provided in-house or by the independent sector.

Specific Grants

The Lead Members shared the concerns expressed by the Committee about the increasing use of specific grants by central government and the uncertainties these caused for medium term planning. The Cabinet would give consideration as to the best way to progress the suggestion put forward that the Government be lobbied to ensure that clearly identifiable and adequate provision was made on a continuing basis when specific grants were transferred to mainstream local authority funding.

Decision of the Committee

“That the Scrutiny Commission be informed that the Committee notes and welcomes the proposed Revenue Budget for 2002/3.”