

CABINET

THURSDAY 21 JULY 2011

PUBLIC AND COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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Public Question – Answer to supplemental question 4

Supplemental Question: What is the Council's forecast increased cost per year to be incurred across all Council Directorate budgets if half or more of the Discretionary Freedom Passes for people with mental health problems are terminated by the end of the year and their mental health begins to deteriorate as a result?

Supplemental Answer: I cannot answer that directly and that is also a pre-supposition that this will happen. We are still at the consultation stage, but I will give you a written answer on that.

Answer: First of all you are assuming that any discretionary freedom passes will be withdrawn and if they are that this will affect residents with mental health problems. The consultation on this matter is still taking place and no decision has been made yet.

Those suffering from serious mental health issues will be able to apply for the National Disabled Freedom Pass as of right if they fulfil the national scheme's conditions. In addition, Harrow, as part of its consultation, is reviewing its eligibility criteria for the Discretionary Freedom Pass. We have no intention of not supporting people with clear mental health issues as can be seen by the proposed specific eligibility criteria for this area. On that basis it is not envisaged that any seriously ill resident who is known to our mental health teams will lose the concession and as such cannot see any change to our existing costs in this area across all Council Directorates generally.