

Haringey's toughest ever challenge



Council Leader Claire Kober explains the impact of the government's spending cuts

Months of speculation ended in December when the council received details of the local government financial settlement.

We feared that the cuts being imposed by central government would have to be made too fast, and would cut too deeply, and our fears were confirmed. Haringey is facing the most savage cuts in the borough's history.

The budget shortfall will be £46million next year alone. Over the next three years, we will have to find savings of around £85million.

In percentage terms, the government has axed a staggering 13 per cent from our grants from April 2011.

We lobbied hard for a fairer settlement and have urged ministers to visit Haringey to see for themselves the devastating impact their austerity measures will have on residents in one of the most deprived parts of the country.

But our pleas have fallen on deaf ears – with Haringey facing a financial settlement which leaves reductions in services unavoidable. No one who works in public service came into it because they want to make cuts – it is an incredibly difficult thing to ask of staff.

This month (February) we will begin to finalise our budget plans for the coming year. It will be the hardest budget report we've ever had to produce – there simply isn't the money to deliver all the services we would like to.

We don't want to salami-slice services to a point where quality collapses, we want to ensure that the services we can offer remain of a high standard.

We will continue to prioritise services for the most vulnerable and will do our utmost to

maintain services which matter to Haringey residents, but it won't be easy.

Also unavoidable are job losses within the council. We are trying to lessen the impact on staff and make sure people are dealt with fairly at this difficult time.

These are hard times for the country, and hard times for Haringey. As one borough we remain determined to work together to deliver the best possible outcome for all of our residents.

Any questions?

I hold a Leader's surgery on the second Wednesday of every month where residents can raise any questions or concerns about council policies. The next session is at 12 noon on Wednesday 9 March at the Civic Centre, Wood Green.



For details call 020 8489 2139 or you can email me at leader@haringey.gov.uk