

Appendix C

Councils respond to extra funding for public health

LGA media release 10 January 2013

Responding to the Government's announcement this morning on the public health funding settlement, Cllr David Rogers, Chairman of the Local Government Association's Community Wellbeing Board, said:

"This is very positive news for councils and we are pleased Government has taken the time to make the right decision and increased the amount of money being made available for local authorities by £400 million to fund public health services next year. The new total of £2.6 billion for 2013/14 represents an 18 per cent increase on the £2.2 billion originally proposed in February last year. This marks a real commitment to support local government in tackling vital issues such as smoking, alcohol abuse and obesity.

"The Department of Health has responded to the LGA's call for a longer-term settlement and taken the decision to allocate funding over a two-year period. This move will provide councils with a greater level of certainty and help them put new programmes in place to integrate public health with existing council services and start addressing some of the wider social and economic causes of ill-health.

"There are outstanding concerns over the individual allocations for each council but we are pleased that, where significant unforeseen funding issues appear, the Department of Health has agreed to work with the local authorities in question and, where there is sufficient evidence, provide additional funding through the relevant NHS Commissioning Board.

"In October last year we conducted a survey which showed a positive picture for the transfer of public health services. However, the biggest concern among councils was around the delay on the final funding decision. Today's announcement will give councils confidence that they have the money they need, but leaves a tight timescale of just three months to put plans in place to deliver on their statutory responsibilities for public health.

"Local authorities are eager to pick up the mantle of public health but we must be given the right resources to do so. Only then can councils truly be at the forefront of tackling the social factors that contribute to poor health by providing services that help people to live long and healthy lives. It is vitally important that the debate continues about the overall amount of funding that is needed to ensure local authorities can meet their new public health responsibilities beyond 2014/15."

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