

Cabinet meeting on 1st Feb 2017

Cllr Eleanor Jackson

It is very difficult to avoid sounding like an Old Testament prophet when responding to the Budget proposals:

Woe to you, children, because the play areas you love in familiar children's centres which assist your development so much, will disappear, without even a key under the mat for volunteers to use.

Woe to you, young people. If you turn to the youth services because you need help and support in your personal relationships, and something *constructive* to do in your leisure time, 7/10 of the role models you admire, will have gone.

Woe to you, young disabled people profiting from activities at day centres and gardening projects in Radstock, your transport will disappear and probably the volunteer led opportunities .

Woe to you if you are indulging in dodgy behaviour or have poor eating habits– the public health budget is drastically cut.

And so on. I have already dealt with adult social care, but that is what concerns me most. A society is judged by its care for the sick and the elderly, and ours is falling short. Ideology is pursued concerning care in the community, without acknowledging how much deficiencies in mental health provision are creating homelessness. (see The Big Issue 30 January) All across the board, there is a shocking lack of consideration of equalities issues. This administration seems bent on selling off the family silver, such as the Library buildings in MSN and Radstock, the children's centre buildings, the land in Waterloo Road etc. etc, without any consideration of Ken Clarke's dictum that you can only sell off the family silver once. This administration, despite being in government nationally, is failing to build for the future.

Much of the budget is aspirational – we all eat sensibly, stop smoking, invest our savings wisely and plan for our pensions, and stop our relationships fracturing so that one party is left homeless.

I want a budget in real terms, which leaves our children and young people saying, 'Yes, I can', seeing visions and dreaming dreams they can achieve.