

17 April 2018

Our Ref: RFI 22962

Dear

**Freedom of Information Act 2000
Information in Relation to Learning Disability Underspend**

I am writing to confirm that the South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust (the Trust) has now completed its search for information relating to the above which you requested on 15 March 2018.

A response to each of the questions raised has been provided by the Finance & Estates Directorate and is attached in Appendix A.

Under the terms of the legislation, if you are unhappy with this response you have the right to seek a review within the Trust in the first instance. If you wish to do so, please write to me at the address below.

If after such a review you are still unhappy with the response, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner who will undertake an independent review. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, SK9 5AF.

If you have any queries about this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

**L McAree (Miss)
Head of Information Governance &
Directorate Support**

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Q1. What is the deficit in investment in your Trust (i.e. underspend) in learning disability services over the last financial year & what does it amount to financially?

A1. Overspend in Adult Learning Disability Services over the year (being the last reported full financial year 2016/2017) was £0.1 million overspend.

Q2. What is the deficit in investment in your Trust (i.e. underspend) in learning disability services over the last three financial years & what does it amount to financially?

A2. The financial position in Adult Learning Disability Services over the last three financial years is provided in Table 1 below:-

Table 1

Financial Year	Spend
2016/2017	£0.1 million overspend
2015/2016	£-0.6 million underspend
2014/2015	£0.3 million overspend

There are a variety of reasons for overspend and underspend as noted below:

- Financial allocations for Adult Learning Disability services are strictly ring-fenced monies and will therefore not be spent on any other services within the Trust;
- It is not always possible to spend these allocations in full in the financial year of receipt as there may be a lead in time before expenditure can reasonably start to be accrued;
- The time taken for recruitment of posts where it may take some months to secure the health professionals required to support a client with a Learning Disability;
- The time taken to procure appropriate accommodation to facilitate the individual needs of a client with a Learning Disability;
- The timing of transitions from children to adult learning disability services;
- The overspend in 2016/2017 was primarily due to the necessity to use higher costing agency staff within a supported living scheme to cover a number of vacant posts;
- The overspend in 2014/2015 was primarily due to higher than anticipated domiciliary care costs required to support clients with a Learning Disability;
- Overall, over the three years, the Directorate was extremely close to breakeven, ie spend and investment being aligned.