

Improving government planning and spending

Public Accounts Committee

Progress on improving government's planning and spending framework is an ongoing challenge for the Treasury and the Cabinet Office. Although some progress has been made, the committee remain concerned that planning and spending are treated as disparate. Departments are not incentivised to plan for the longer-term, and they are repeatedly over-optimistic when planning for what they can deliver, by when and for how much. Unless action is taken to correct these issues, the government's long-standing problems of short-term thinking, sticking plaster funding and cost-shunting will persist, resulting in poorer quality, less sustainable and joined-up services.

Recommendations include:

- By June 2019, the Treasury and the Cabinet Office should write to the committee with its action plan to fill the gaps in skills, experience and behaviours needed across the Treasury, Cabinet Office, functions and departments
- When issuing guidance for the next spending review and future SDPs (single departmental budget plans), the Treasury and the Cabinet Office should require departments to show how their plans and funding bids deliver long-term, sustainable value for money.

Enfield Council

Rob Flynn, Information and Research Manager, Resources.

What particular challenge has your Council recently faced?

Tackling poverty is a key priority for Enfield Council. An important element of this is understanding who, why and how households are impacted by poverty.

What research piece have you found helpful to tackle this challenge?

A series of research reports from Policy and Practice and Trust For London entitled Low Income Londoners and Welfare Reform have tracked Londoners impacted by welfare reform. Enfield's participation in this analysis has helped to provide detailed and valuable insight into this cohort which has informed the Council's understanding of their financial resilience.

Do you have any further reading you'd recommend on this topic?

The Social Metrics Commission Report A New Measure of Poverty For The UK.

[Closing the regional attainment gap](#)

All Party Parliamentary Group on Social Mobility and Sutton Trust

This inquiry sought to explore the origins of differences in school outcomes between areas, what efforts have been made to close the regional attainment gap, along with what we can learn from best practice across the country and how it could be shared and implemented