

### **Short-sighted cuts – long term damage**

North Hinksey Parish Council has made clear its strong opposition to proposed County Council budget cuts in services supporting vulnerable children and adults through submissions to the current County Council consultations.

We are appalled by the prospect of Children's Centre closures across the county. These Centres are vital assets to our community, providing a wide range of services to families throughout Oxfordshire. They play a crucial role in *identifying* vulnerable and disadvantaged families, as well as providing essential support. The proposed new hubs would not be able to carry out that role effectively, leading to families slipping through the net.

County Council representatives agree that Children's Centres are doing a great job, and that closing them is a bad idea, but, given the scale of Government cuts, they feel that closures are the only option left. In the long term, moving from a policy of prevention to intervention will lead to serious negative impacts on communities, and raise costs for other services as more social workers are employed to sort out the mess and further responsibilities are forced onto other public bodies. These cuts are a false economy.

The additional proposed 95 'Saving Options' would also lead to even more pressure on vulnerable children and adults. Supporting people in need, especially the most vulnerable, is what communities are all about.

We urge Councillor Hudspeth to challenge Government imposed restrictions on local councils including funding cuts, blocks on income generation schemes, and referendum requirements for rises in Council Tax above the current limit. He should do the right thing, and not allow short-sighted cuts forced on him by political pressure to cause irreparable long term damage to services supporting vulnerable individuals, and our communities as a whole.

Councillor David Kay,  
Chairman, North Hinksey Parish Council.