

Cabinet - 9th January 2018

Comments on the Early Help Review

CUTS TO PREVENTION COST MORE IN THE LONG RUN

This report presents the latest in a series of proposals to cut preventative services that tackle issues at an early stage. Early Help services reduce the need for more expensive social care services later on in life. These cuts are a false economy.

The report proposes a 31% cut to Early Help services, including the closure of 24 of the Council's 40 children centres and a significant reduction in services for vulnerable families.

The report itself explains why this is a bad idea. Paragraphs 65, 66 and 67 reveal severe risks and even admit that the mitigating actions will not prevent bad outcomes.

As always, these decisions are being driven by Government cuts to council budgets. Are the Government aware of the effects that their spending decisions will have on outcomes for vulnerable children? We remember that David Cameron infamously criticised Oxfordshire CC for closing children's centres, seemingly unaware that it was as a result of his own Government's spending plans.

We question whether the Council is doing enough to make the current Government aware of the consequences of its decisions will have on Leicestershire's children? Underfunding of the NHS has already brought it to a state of crisis. If these and other proposed cuts in the next few years go-ahead unchanged, a number of the local services we provide will follow.

Geoff Welsh

Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for Children and Families

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