

REVERSING LOCAL GOVERNMENT CUTS TO REBUILD OUR COMMUNITIES

On 9 August, crisis-ridden, insolvent Northamptonshire County Council grabbed headlines yet again when its Tory majority voted for unprecedented “radical” cuts. The National Audit Office suggests fifteen other English councils are at imminent risk of insolvency.

On 4 August, Children’s Commissioner Anne Longfield predicted council cuts will have “catastrophic consequences” for vulnerable children. The Local Government Association reports children’s services at “breaking point”. By 2020, central funding for local government will effectively be abolished.

Conference believes that:

- Destruction of vast swathes of services has devastated local communities and gutted local democracy;
- Outsourcing is ideologically driven – “savings” come at the expense of workers and service-users, and benefit contracting companies, not the public
- We endorse John McDonnell’s call for “an urgent change of direction in local government funding”;
- Even to begin discussing a new vision for local government, we must reverse existing cuts;
- We need restoration of all lost funding – and then increases – to rebuild services, build a new generation of council housing, undo pay cuts, rescue social care, and restore the power of local communities to manage their own resources.

Conference calls on Labour to campaign for, and commit to implementing when in government:

- Rapid restoration of funding to the real-terms equivalent of 2009, then increased funding;
- Thoroughgoing reversal of outsourcing; restoration and extension of direct local government provision of services and employment, including education, housing, children’s services, adult social care and childcare;
- Re-empowerment and democratisation of local government.

South-East Cornwall CLP, 1st September 2018