**Motion for Labour Party Ward Meetings and Trade Union branches**

This meeting notes:

That the implementation of 8 years of austerity policies **by the** **Coalition and Conservative governments** have had a devastating effect on our local communities nationally, and in Lewisham.

That these government cuts have included massive cuts of up to 50% of local authority budgets The cuts have impacted on the provision of council services including housing, social care, youth services and public health and have greatly affected the most vulnerable members of our community.

This is demonstrated by the recent documented increase in child mortality (babies dying under age of 1 year) and the increase in unexplained deaths among the elderly across the UK.
These cuts can cause unnecessary suffering and even deaths.

Due to government cuts to the Public Health budget, Lewisham Council is currently considering budget cuts of £640,00 to Lewisham’s vital public health services which include cuts to vital community services for substance misuse, diet and exercise, and sexual health and as well as to health visitors.

The proposed cut to the Health visitor service is £198,000. This comes on top of a 16.4% cut **only 18 months ago**. Health visitor caseloads in Lewisham are already twice the recommended level and further cuts will put vulnerable children at greater risk. **This is unacceptable.** We need more Health Visitors not fewer.

We welcome the Damien Egan’s statements that he will take an active role in publicising and campaigning against the Tory cuts through the Councils Against Austerity Campaign.
We welcome that he has signed, along with other council leaders, an open letter to Theresa May highlighting the impact of austerity and calling on her to reverse it.

**We call on the Mayor and Council:**

* **To consider use of reserves to offset the health visitor cut**
* **To campaign harder against government cuts by joining with other Councils, the Save Lewisham Hospital Campaign and other health campaigners to fight these government cuts**
* **To publicise the cuts and organise a public meeting jointly with the Save Lewisham Hospital Campaign to highlight the cuts and their impact**
* **We call on Jon Ashworth, Shadow Secretary of State for Health, to support such campaigns**