



Message from Cllr Barry Wood, leader of Cherwell District Council:

"Oxfordshire County Council is shouting about how it could potentially save £100 million with its plans for a single unitary council – but it's being less vocal about the costs of implementing the scheme.

"According to its own report, the county council "estimate that creating a single unitary would save around £100 million over five years... after the one-off costs of £16 million for reorganisation".

"The implementation costs associated with this model are huge – particularly as the savings proposed are only "estimates" – and that's by the council's own admission.

"There are no guarantees this model would work or that the savings would be made. The county council also state that "this is money that could be used to improve services and protect them". Again, the key word here is "could" – there are no guarantees, especially when Oxfordshire County Council still has a very big debt to pay off and no budget left to do it with...

"In contrast, let's cut to Cherwell. Since 2011, we have saved in excess of £1.5 million a year by introducing a joint working initiative with South Northamptonshire Council. That's more than £8 million in savings over six years.

"We did not have excessive reorganisation costs – in fact we had no costs. During that period we did not increase our share of council tax by even 1p – unlike the county council which has increased its precept year on year. And unlike the county council we have not cut any of our frontline services to residents. That certainly can't be said for the bus routes, grass verge maintenance or children's centres which have all suffered as a result of the county council.

"None of our figures are "estimates" or empty promises; they are proven facts and figures. Cherwell remains in a financially strong position – unlike the county council. Cherwell remains committed to delivering all of the services that matter to residents – unlike the county council. And Cherwell has a proven track record of delivering more services for less money – unlike the county council.

"So in considering which council should be abolished to make way for the other, surely it makes more sense to retain the authority with a proven success rate – in this case Cherwell – as opposed to an authority that has failed to deliver on its promises again and again?"

Join us in protecting CDC and preventing these proposals by voicing your opposition at <http://www.oneoxfordshire.org/get-involved>