

SELECT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday 7 May 2013

6:00pm

**Committee Room 1, City
Hall**

Membership: Councillors David Jackson (*Chairman*), Bob Bushell, Gary Hewson, Ronald Hills, Patrick Vaughan

Officers attending: John Bibby, Steve Bird, Democratic Services, Andrew Taylor, Carolyn Wheeler

AGENDA

SECTION A	Page(s)
1. Confirmation of Minutes - 28 March 2013	1 - 7
2. Declarations of Interest	

Please note that, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, when declaring interests Members must disclose the existence and nature of the interest, and whether it is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) or Personal and/or Pecuniary.

SITTING AS THE CRIME AND DISORDER COMMITTEE UNDER POLICE AND JUSTICE ACT 2006

3. West Lincolnshire Community Safety Partnership Update	Verbal Report
4. Lincolnshire Police Update	Verbal Report
Presentation by Inspector Mark Garthwaite	
5. City of Lincoln Council - Public Protection Team - Update	Verbal Report

CALL-IN REQUEST CONSIDERATION

6. Request to Call- In Executive Decisions	8 - 11
a. Urban Rangers - Appendix A	12 - 75
b. Commons Warden - Appendix B	76 - 127
c. Ward Budget - Appendix C	128 - 133
d. Call-In Request Form - Appendix D	134 - 136

7. Exclusion of the Press and Public

You are asked to resolve that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items because it is likely that if members of the press or public were present, there would be disclosure to them of "exempt information."

City Hall
Lincoln

CCP
26 April 2013

Present:	Councillor David Jackson (<i>in the Chair</i>)
Councillors:	Gary Hewson and Karen Lee
Apologies for Absence:	Councillors Darren Grice and Edmund Strengiel
Substitutes:	John Metcalfe

1. **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations were made

2. **West Lincolnshire Community Safety Partnership Update**

Ben Barley, Office Manager - Urban Challenge provided a report to enable members to scrutinise the workings of the West Lincolnshire Community Safety Partnership in respect of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour within Lincoln and advised:

a. that the West Lincolnshire Community Safety Partnership (WLCSP) is the partnership that has the statutory responsibility for the reduction of crime, disorder and anti social behaviour within Lincoln.

b. that the Partnership has a strategic group, a performance group and a number of thematic delivery groups.

c. that as a result of the Police and Justice Act 2006 District Councils have a duty to scrutinise the work of the community safety partnerships.

d. that each year the partnership undertakes a strategic assessment of Community Safety in order to identify its priorities.

e. that the partnership has identified the following strategic priorities for 2011 -12 and 2012 -13:-

2011 -12

- Anti Social Behaviour
- Violent Crime (including domestic abuse)
- Domestic Burglary
- Offender Management
- Substance Misuse - cross cutting priority

2012 -13

- Anti Social Behaviour
- Violent Crime (including domestic abuse)
- Acquisitive Crime (domestic burglary and vehicle crime)

- Offender Management
- Substance Misuse - cross cutting priority

f. on an overview of how the partnership was performing including data for the period April to December 2011.

Members commented as follows:-

- i. Arson is only a small proportion of ASB, do we have any figures in respect of ASB as a whole?

Response - The Partnership has not set any figures to reduce ASB, however they are looking to increase the reporting of incidents. Reporting is fragmented as reporting arrangements vary between districts. The provision of the new database will assist in producing figures in future.

- ii. In respect of increasing the reporting of ASB, how is this to be done?

Response - An extensive amount of advertising including letter drops and inclusion on websites will be undertaken.

- iii. Will the data be included on the City Council's new IMPS system?

Response - Only the data that the ASB Team hold. We cannot put the Partnership's data on our website as we do not own it. We will look to see if there are any data that we could publish as we do collect some data on behalf of the Partnership.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and Officers consider what information can be included on the IMPS system.

3. **Countywide ASB Challenge Project**

Simon Colburn, Environmental Protection and Anti - Social Behaviour Manager, updated members on the countywide ASB challenge project and advised:-

- a. that following the tragic case of Fiona Pilkington, her daughter, and similar cases a number of reviews of how ASB is dealt with have been carried out at a national level
- b. on the objectives of the multi agency approach which were detailed in paragraph 22.1 of the report
- c. on the Partners involved in the Lincolnshire ASB Partnership and the objectives of the Partnership
- d. that different systems had been used by Partners and a new system called Sentinel was to be used, which would be hosted by the Police on a secure server

- e. that by using the same database it would allow persistent offenders to be identified and reports to be made on vulnerable persons affected
- f. that this was the single biggest project in the country.

Members commented as follows:-

- i. This is a really good system, a good joined up approach which will reduce Police time. This is a positive use of diminishing resources
- ii. Is this something only open to statutory bodies or could Lincoln BIG be involved as there may be a connection re offenders?

Response - It is not open to non statutory bodies at the moment. It is difficult to engage with some agencies, however it might be considered in the future.

- iii. In support of this process, a recent case was referred to in respect of a complaint from a Council Tenant regarding private land involved ASB Team, Housing and the Police.

Response - We are trying to co-ordinate this approach. However we still have a responsibility - whether it is two separate teams is a matter for management. The ASB Team has various levels of meetings with Housing and the Police

- iv. Wasn't Sam Barstow the Alcohol Prevention Officer?

Response - Yes he has been seconded to his current role. His previous role was part of the ASB Team. A report is currently being prepared on the future of the Alcohol Prevention Officer

- v. Not enough is done about helping the victim - could this be looked into?

Response - Victims are risk assessed by ASB and support for victims is available and one central point of contact is currently in place. One of the objectives of the new scheme is to improve communications between agencies and to keep victims informed of the progress in respect of their complaint

- vi. The loss of the PCSO through the Police budget cuts has been noticed within the West End

RESOLVED that the report be noted and the comment made in respect of the loss of the PCSO in the West End of the City be forwarded to the Police.

4. **Proposed Changes to National Anti-Social Behaviour Tools and Powers**

Simon Colburn, Environmental Protection and Anti - Social Behaviour Manager updated members on the proposed changes to national anti - social behaviour tools and powers and advised:-

- a. that in February 2011, the Home Secretary launched a consultation called "More Effective Responses to Anti - Social Behaviour". It proposed a radical streamlining of the tools and powers currently available to anti - social behaviour (ASB) practitioners
- b. that whilst no date has been set as yet, the Home Office is anticipating that the proposed regulations will be fundamentally the same as those proposed in the consultation
- c. that it is unlikely that the legislation will come into force before 2013
- d. that the consultation proposed a radical streamlining of the tools and powers with a move away from having a tool for every different problem to ensuring that Councils, police and other partners have faster, more flexible tools
- e. that the proposed tools and powers are as follows:-
 - Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO)
 - Crime Prevention Injunction
 - Community Protection Order (CPO) Level 1
 - Community Protection Order (CPO) Level 2
 - Direction to Leave - Police "Direction" Power
 - Community Trigger

Members commented as follows:-

- i. Was there evidence to suggest that the current arrangements did not work?

Response - It would appear so.

- ii. This new system looks very similar but with different names

Response - In theory, yes, but it provides alternative ways of dealing with issues. It is too early to make a judgement yet, but we do know that it is going to be introduced

- iii. This follows on from the previous report. In respect of the criminality element enforcement through the courts doesn't often work. This offers alternative options to address issues

- iv. If the ASB Team has a whole raft of powers then they should be able to address problems. Other areas have similar enforcement powers and will have been trained, Some of the issues to be resolved will be in respect of who will be enforcers and who should receive training

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

5. **Designated Public Place Order - Update**

Sam Barstow, Acting Anti Social Behaviour Co-ordinator, updated the meeting on the current status of the Designated Public Place Order (DPPO) and advised as follows:-

- a. Permission was still awaited from the County Council in respect of locations for signage
- b. Progress was being made and it was likely to be completed in the next couple of weeks
- c. Details of the implementation of the DPPO would be provided in the local press, Lincoln BIG and Inspector Mike Garthwaite from Lincoln Police would be contacted at that time
- d. the DPPO on its own won't resolve everything but will assist the Police in dealing with problem drinkers

Members commented as follows:-

- i. Dispersal Orders are not related to DPPOs but are used for persistent ASB issues.

Response - That is correct. Dispersal Orders are unrelated to alcohol problems and are generally enforced by the Police but enacted by the Council.

- ii. Enforcement is important.

Response - A protocol will be developed in respect of dealing with persistent offenders. It will take into account how to identify vulnerable persons and health issues

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

6. **Purple Flag Scheme**

Sam Barstow, Acting Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator, updated members on the Purple Flag Scheme and advised as follows:-

- a. that the Chair had been a member of the Substances Misuses and Violent Crime Theme Group which had considered the potential of applying for Purple Flag status
- b. that an application was submitted and an assessment undertaken which included the answering of some very challenging questions
- c. that a response was still awaited, however the indications are good and a response is expected in April
- d. that the North West Public Health Observatory had identified Lincoln as the 6th worst place in the country in respect of drink and violence. Applying for something like Purple

Flag involves all agencies and is good PR for the City

Members commented as follows:

- i. The award of Purple Flag is not a given and a third of applications fail. A really good case was made.
- ii. The late night levy maybe included as one of the proposals within the BID Ballot 2014

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

7. **Lincolnshire Police Update**

Superintendent David Lynch provided an update on the work of the Police and advised as follows:-

- a. New Years Eve was very quiet and there were no arrests for assaults or ABH between the hours of 7pm to 3am on that evening
- b. on various crimes and how they were being dealt with
- c. on the assistance they receive from Night Time Wardens and security staff at establishments within the City
- d. on the Dispersal Order for Birchwood which came close to being implemented
- e. on the Police approach to issues within the City and the different methods used.
- f. the Police currently have 100 Specials their target for April 2013 was 200
- g. on the revised management arrangements for the City

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

8. **Lincoln BIG Update**

Matt Corrigan, Lincoln BIG updated members on the role of Lincoln BIG and its connection with other agencies within the City and advised as follows:-

- a. that Lincoln BIG had two roles connected with safety and security both within the daytime and evening
- b. that in respect of ASB whilst figures are increasing nationally, Lincoln's figures are reducing
- c. that in respect of the night time economy Pub Watch had identified 50 individuals who were banned from premises

d. that there had been an increase of daytime thefts by persistent offenders and by gangs coming in from other areas. Records were kept of thefts and the information was shared.

e. there were sanctions available to the Police and the Courts; in addition there was the Civil Exclusion Scheme and the Civil Recovery Scheme

f. businesses welcomed the introduction of the DPPO as there had been an increase in the numbers of problem drinkers seen in the City Centre

g. the Police Beat Scheme will be co-located at the Lincoln BIG offices

Members commented as follows:

- i. The work undertaken by the Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee in respect of the DPPO was significant. It just needs to be implemented.
- ii. What are your views on "chuggers" and how far does the Lincoln BIG area stretch?

Response - The issue of "chuggers" was debated at the last BIG Board meeting. There is a voluntary agreement in place between the Public Fund Raising Association (PFRA), the City Council and Lincoln BIG. They operate four times a week and PFRA would not want to visit less. There is unenacted legislation that needs to be enacted. Lincoln BIG is currently watching what happens elsewhere in the country.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

9. **Lincoln's Health**

This item was deferred as the NHS representative was unable to attend.

SUBJECT:	REQUEST TO CALL- IN EXECUTIVE DECISIONS
REPORT BY:	DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
LEAD OFFICER:	CAROLYN WHEATER – ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (LEGAL AND CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICES)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To submit a request for the ‘call-in’ of three separate Executive decisions made at the meeting held on 25 March 2013 in respect of the following items:-

- a) Closure of the Urban Rangers Service
- b) Closure of the Commons Warden Service
- c) Cessation of the Ward Budgets Scheme.

2. Background

2.1 Applications for Call in

2.2 On 3 April 2013 Councillors H Spratt and R Hills submitted an application to call-in three decisions of the Executive.

2.3 The application sought to call-in the Executive’s decisions in respect of the Urban Ranger Service, Commons Warden Service and Ward Budgets made at their meeting on 25 March 2013. The applications are detailed below. Copies of the Executive reports and associated minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2013 are attached as **appendices A, B and C**.

2.4 A copy of Councillors H Spratt and R Hill’s application along with the grounds under which the request has been made is attached at **Appendix D**.

3. Applications for call in to be considered by committee

3.1 Each application needs to be dealt with separately as these relate to three separate executive decisions. Each will follow the procedure detailed in Section 4 below. The individual requests are detailed below along with the relevant Executive minute.

3.2 Urban Rangers

3.3 The “decision” to which the application for call-in relates has been extracted from the minutes and is set out below:

- 1. That the proposed closure of the Urban Ranger service be approved.
- 2. That the Director of Housing and Community Services be authorised to

issue notices of redundancy to the three affected members of staff and proceed with the implementation of the decision in accordance with the Council's Management of Change policy and procedures.

3.4 The call – in application states that the grounds for call in are:

1. That the decision maker has failed to give adequate reasons, take relevant considerations and not considered any viable alternative.

3.5 **Commons Warden**

3.6 The “decision” to which the application for call-in relates has been extracted from the minutes and is set out below:

1. That the proposed closure of the Commons Warden service be approved.

2. That the Director of Housing and Community Services be authorised to issue a notice of redundancy to the one affected member of staff and proceed with the implementation of the decision in accordance with the Council's Management of Change policy and procedures.

3.7 The call – in application states that the grounds for call in are:

1. That the decision maker has failed to give adequate reasons, take relevant considerations and not considered any viable alternative.

3.8 **Ward Budgets**

3.9 The “decision” to which the application for call-in relates has been extracted from the minutes and is set out below:

That the Ward Budgets scheme be discontinued

3.10 The call – in application states that the grounds for call in are:

1. That the decision maker has failed to give adequate reasons, take relevant considerations and not considered any viable alternative.

4. **Call in Process**

4.1 In an application for a call – in, the Committee must first decide whether it agrees to the request for the call-in of an Executive decision. In making this judgment members may ask themselves whether the grounds set out within the Constitution and application are met and whether there is sufficient concern with the decision to call it in.

4.2 Paragraph 14.5 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules sets out the relevant grounds for an application for call in, and they are set out below:-

- that having regard to the nature of the decision, and the circumstances in which it was made, the decision has been taken on the basis of inappropriate or insufficient consultation.
- that the decision maker has failed to give adequate reasons for the decision
- that the decision maker has failed to take relevant considerations, or has taken irrelevant considerations into account, or has come to a decision which no reasonable decision maker, taking everything properly into account, could have come to
- that the decision is contrary to the policy framework.
- that the decision is contrary to, or not wholly in accordance with, the budget
- that the decision cannot be justified and is open to challenge on the basis of the evidence considered
- That a viable alternative was not considered

4.3 The procedure adopted by this committee in addressing call in applications is set out below :-

1. The Chairman of the meeting will introduce the item and allow one of the members making the application to speak to it. The second member making the application may also speak with the Chairman's permission. The member in presenting their application for call in may refer to documents not contained within the application but should ensure copies are available for the meeting. (Democratic Support Officers will copy any documents received in good time before the meeting.)
2. Members of the committee may ask any questions of the members making the application for call in.
3. The Chairman may also ask for a short response from the relevant Executive member, addressing in particular from their perspective any factual discrepancies with the application for call in.
4. Members of the Committee may ask the relevant Executive member any questions of clarification .The Committee should then decide whether or not to call in the decision.
5. If the decision is to be called in for review the Chairman will seek to establish from all the members of the Committee the scope of the committees concerns and summarise the parameters of the review of the decision to be called in.

6. The committee should then determine whether it has all relevant information and persons before it to enable it to proceed and consider the call in directly. If further information or other persons attendance is required the Chairman will outline the requisite requests and adjourn the item to a future meeting of the Committee.
7. If members decide that they can safely proceed on the basis of the information before it the Chairman will set out the scope of the committees concerns and seek a full response from the decision maker.
8. The Executive member will respond referring to any relevant documents. Copies of any documentation referred to by the decision maker should be available for members of the Committee.
9. Members of the committee may then ask any questions of the Executive member.
10. Having considered the information, the Committee may resolve: -
 - To take no further action
 - To refer the decision to the decision maker, with a recommendation as to whether the decision maker should rescind the decision, or amend it, and if so how and why.
 - To refer the matter to full Council for the Council to exercise the power of scrutiny and review (this latter option is most appropriate where committee believes that the executive decision is contrary to the budget and policy framework agreed by Council).

5. Equality Implications

- 5.1 There are no equality implications arising purely from the possible call-in.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no financial implications resulting purely from the consideration of the application for call-in.

7. Recommendation

- 7.1 That Committee considers each separate request for call – in and decide whether they wish to agree to the request for call-in and, if so, what action should be taken to review the decision to enable the Committee to make a resolution in accordance with the above.

List of Background Papers: Request for Call-In dated 3 April 2013
Lead Officer: Carolyn Wheater, Assistant Director (Legal and Corporate Support Services)

APPENDIX A(i)

Extract from Committee

EXECUTIVE

25 MARCH 2013

SUBJECT: MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2013-18: PROPOSAL TO WITHDRAW AND CLOSE THE URBAN RANGER SERVICE [PART A]

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

LEAD OFFICER: STEVE BIRD, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (COMMUNITIES AND STREET SCENE)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present to Executive the Business Case relating to a proposal to close and withdraw the Urban Ranger Service in order to contribute to the required budget savings targets set out in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The attached Business Case examines the implications of a proposal to close and withdraw the Urban Ranger Service. The proposal, if implemented, would require the deletion of 3 posts from the staffing establishment and the redundancy (or potential redeployment if possible) of 3 full time staff.

3. Background

- 3.1 The key drivers underpinning this review are:

- The local government finance settlement the City Of Lincoln Council received in December 2012 has left the Council needing to find £1million of ongoing savings in 2013/14, rising to an estimated £3million per annum by 2016/17.
- Whilst the organisation is still committed to Lean systems reviews in order to achieve cost efficiencies the scale of reductions required now mean that the Council finds itself at the point where it can no longer make the size of savings demanded without impacting on front line services.
- Towards the end of 2012 the Leader of the Council, along with Executive members and the Corporate Management Team conducted a detailed review of our spending.
- A driving principle of this review was to accept that the organisation must do fewer things well and therefore, although the Strategic Plan was only approved last year, careful consideration was given to further refocusing the Council's priorities. A number of considerations has led to these now being defined as:

- **Growing the local economy**

- **Protecting the city's poorest people from the effects of the recession**
 - **Increasing the supply of affordable housing**
- Once this had taken place the Executive and Corporate Management Team undertook a detailed review of the Council's current budgets, including a review of all savings achieved since 2008. Budgets were considered from a number of perspectives including the way in which they contributed to these priorities.
 - In addition to ensuring that the Council balances its budget it is committed to achieving a position of financial sustainability from which the Council has a steady base and is in the best position to grow moving forward. A revised strategy entitled "Towards Financial Sustainability" (TFS) has been developed to deliver this.
 - As part of this fundamental review and the TFS Strategy a number of potential savings have been identified for 2013/14 over a wide range of services. These savings include, amongst others, a proposal to withdraw the Urban Ranger Service during 2013/14.

These drivers are set out in the attached Business Case.

3.2 The proposed closure and withdrawal of the Urban Ranger Service was put to staff and key stakeholders in January 2013.

- Formal presentations to trade unions through the Joint Consultative Committee on the Council's financial position and an initial face to face meeting with trade union representatives have been held and formal consultation in relation to this proposal began on 17 January 2013 with those staff directly affected.
- The various Parks Advisory Panels were also advised of the proposal and invited to submit their views and comments and the Commons Advisory Panel considered the matter at its meeting on 11 February 2013.

3.3 A number of responses were received from staff and interested stakeholders in response to these proposals and these responses are set out in the attached Business Case.

4. Business Case (attached)

4.1 A Business Case setting out the proposal and an examination of the risks and service impact is attached including:

- Details of the scope and objectives of the review
- Summary of existing service provision including staffing arrangements and staffing establishment
- Summary of the proposal and reasons for the proposed withdrawal and closure of the service
- Appraisal of the proposal including financial and staffing implications
- Stakeholder responses to the proposed withdrawal and closure of the

service

- Analysis of the service impacts, principle risks associated with the proposal and equality impacts.
- Outline implementation plan and timetable if the proposal is approved.
- Key decisions required

5. Stakeholder consultation

5.1 The proposal to withdraw and close the Urban Ranger Service has been subject to consultation through the various Parks Advisory Panels and the Commons Advisory Panel and views and comments have been received from the following organisations/individuals:

- Lincoln Commons Horse Association
- Long Leys Residents Association
- West End Residents Association
- Ramblers Association (Lincoln Group)
- The Café at Hartsholme Park Ltd
- Monks Road Neighbourhood Initiative (incorporating combined comments from Park Advisory Groups)
- Staff at Hartsholme Park Café

These responses are summarised in Section F of the Business Case and set out in full in Appendix E(i) of the document. All of the responses received to date express objections to or concerns about the proposed withdrawal of the service.

5.2 The Commons Advisory Panel discussed the proposal to close and withdraw the Commons Warden Service and Urban Ranger Service at its meeting on 11 February and resolved that:

- Commons Advisory Panel to make its views expressed collectively on the proposed cuts to the Commons Warden and Urban Rangers Service via the formal consultation process, expressing its deep regret and requesting in the strongest terms that the Council should not go ahead with the proposals.
- In the event that the Council should have to take the decision to withdraw the Commons Warden and Urban Ranger Service; a special meeting of Commons Advisory Panel be convened to look at a way forward in the coordination of volunteers within organisations across the City and to set up a watch scheme for the Commons.
- Members of the public, Karl McCartney, MP for Lincoln, and Alan Hardwick, Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincoln be invited to attend the above special meeting of Commons Advisory Panel.
- Lincolnshire Police be invited to nominate an advisory representative to serve on the Commons Advisory Panel.

5.3 The Council has also received a 67 page petition signed by some 1200 people objecting to the proposed closure of the Urban Ranger Service. A copy of the

petition will be available for inspection at the meeting, and the front sheet is attached as Appendix Eiii.

- 5.4 In accordance with the Council's adopted Petition Scheme petitions containing more than 900 signatures would normally be submitted to Full Council for debate at the next meeting of Council and the organiser given 5 minutes to present the petition at the Council meeting. However due to the timing of the submission of the petition (the next Council meeting is on 16 April) and the fact that it was submitted in response to a proposal that is due for consideration by the Council's Policy Scrutiny and Executive Committees prior to that date, the organiser of the petition has been advised that the petition will form part of the formal reports to the aforementioned Committees. The organiser of the Committee has been invited to attend the Policy Scrutiny Committee and it is recommended that the organiser of the petition be invited to present the petition to the Committee if they so wish.

6. Timeline

- 6.1 The outline timeline for withdrawal and closure of the service is included within Section H of the Business Case and is designed to allow for an orderly wind-down and exit from the service, the requisite redundancy notice period for affected staff and consideration of opportunities for redeployment through the Council's redeployment pool
- 6.2 The proposed withdrawal and closure of the service may be accelerated if employees under notice of redundancy have opportunity of redeployment elsewhere in the authority or job offers outside the authority conditional upon them taking up employment prior to the planned closure date.

7. Resource Implications

Finance (including impact on Savings Targets)

- 7.1 The forecast budget savings arising from a decision to close the Urban Ranger Service measured against the forecast expenditure over the five years of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) are as follows:
- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| • Net saving 2013/14 (part year) | £29,960 |
| • Net saving 2014/15 | £86,170 |
| • Net saving 2015/16 | £87,680 |
| • Net saving 2016/17 | £89,220 |
| • Net saving 2017/18 | £90,800 |
| • Total saving over the 5 year MTFS | £383,830 |
- 7.2 Savings in 2013/14 assume withdrawal and closure of the service by July 1st i.e. 9 months of savings only and also include redundancy costs and other salary adjustments in 2013/14 that may be incurred in relation to the deletion of the 3 posts of Urban Ranger. Such costs will be funded from the Invest to Save fund.
- 7.3 The full cost breakdown is detailed in a separate report under Part B of this agenda.

- 7.4 These savings are costed against current budget expenditure. There is a possibility that one of the consequences of the withdrawal of the service may be an increase in the level of vandal and other damage to parks, play areas and open spaces as a result of the withdrawal of the regular patrols made by the Urban Rangers but this cannot be accurately forecast and would need to be monitored.

Staffing

- 7.5 Staffing implications are set out in **Section E** of the Business Case. The Council's Management of Change Policy has been applied.
- 7.6 Consultation has taken place with staff and unions on the proposed closure of the service. The end of the first stage of formal consultation period was 21 February 2013. The Council's Joint Consultative Committee will consider the proposal at its meeting on 19 March 2013. The issues highlighted in the responses received have been summarised in the Business Case (**Appendix D**).

8. Policy Impacts – Strategic Priorities

- 8.1 The City Council needs to find £1million of ongoing revenue savings in 2013/14, rising to £3million ongoing revenue savings by 2016/17. Every effort has been made to implement savings without impact on front-line services but the Council has now reached a point where it is necessary to cease provision of some discretionary non-statutory services in order to achieve the level of savings required as a result of the Government's austerity programme. The Council has therefore refocused its strategic priorities as follows:
- Growing the local economy
 - Protecting the city's poorest people from the effects of the recession
 - Increasing the supply of affordable housing
- 8.2 The Urban Ranger Services is a discretionary service that provides a valuable service to users of the city's parks and open spaces but does not directly contribute to the Council's refocused strategic priorities set out above and withdrawal of the service would contribute significantly to achievement of the necessary financial savings set out in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 8.3 The risks and impacts of withdrawal of the Service are set out in the Business Case. Should the Council's Executive decide not to proceed with withdrawal and closure of the service, equivalent levels of savings would need to be identified from other service areas.

9. Recommendations

9.1 Executive is asked to:

1. Consider the attached Business Case relating to the proposal to withdraw and close the Urban Ranger Service taking into account:
 - a. The need to find significant financial savings in the General Fund Revenue budget to meet the targets set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy
 - b. The responses received to the proposal from stakeholders and the public petition objecting to the closure as set out in the Business Case
 - c. The views of the Policy Scrutiny Committee meeting 20 March
 - d. The views of the Joint Consultative Committee meeting 19 March 2013.
2. Subject to consideration of the Business Case and responses to the proposed closure of the service to approve or otherwise the proposal to withdraw and close the Urban Ranger Service.
3. In the event of a decision to close the service, to authorise the Director of Housing & Community Services to issue notices of redundancy to the 3 affected staff and to proceed to implement the decision in accordance with the Council's managing change policy and procedures.

Key Decision Yes

Key Decision Reference No.

Do the Exempt Information Categories Apply No – Any exempt information is contained within a separate report in Part B of the agenda for this Committee

Call In and Urgency: Is the decision one to which Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply? No

Does the report contain Appendices? Yes:

If Yes, how many Appendices? 1 : Business Case and associated appendices

List of Background Papers: Medium Term Financial Strategy

Lead Officer: Steve Bird,
Assistant Director (Communities & Street Scene)
Tel 873421

**Business Case for withdrawing the Urban Ranger
Service**

March 2013

**Report By: Director of Housing & Community Services
Lead Officer: Steve Bird, Assistant Director(Communities &
Street Scene)**

A. Scope and Objectives of the review

Drivers for the Review of the Service:

The local government finance settlement the City Of Lincoln Council received in December 2012 has left the Council needing to find £1million of ongoing savings in 2013/14, rising to an estimated £3million per annum by 2016/17.

Whilst the Council remains committed to Lean systems reviews in order to achieve cost efficiencies and reductions of the scale required, we now find ourselves at the point where we can no longer make the size of savings demanded of us without impacting on the services we provide.

Towards the end of 2012 the Leader of the Council, along with Executive members and the Corporate Management Team conducted a detailed review of our spending.

A driving principle of this review was to accept that the organisation must do fewer things well and therefore, although the Strategic Plan was only approved last year, careful consideration was given to further refocusing the Council's priorities. A number of considerations has led to these now being defined as:

- ❖ **Growing the local economy**

- ❖ **Protecting the city's poorest people from the effects of the recession**

- ❖ **Increasing the supply of affordable housing**

Once this had taken place the Executive and Corporate Management Team undertook a detailed review of the Council's current budgets, including a review of all savings achieved since 2008. Budgets were considered from a number of perspectives including the way in which they contributed to these priorities.

In addition to ensuring that the Council balances its budget it is committed to achieving a position of financial sustainability from which the Council has a steady base and is in the best position to grow moving forward. A revised strategy entitled "Towards Financial Sustainability" (TFS) has been developed to deliver this.

As part of this fundamental review under the Towards Financial Sustainability Programme a number of potential savings have been identified for 2013/14. These savings include, amongst others, a proposal to withdraw the Urban Ranger Service during 2013/14.

B. Summary of the existing service

Current Service Delivery:

The Urban Ranger Service was introduced in 1999 and from the outset has consisted of a team of three staff, equipped with motorcycles suitable for off-road use, patrolling the Council's open spaces.

The original purpose in introducing the service was to enforce laws and byelaws in public parks, play areas and open spaces. The main role and function of the service covers a range of service elements:

- Regular patrols of parks and open spaces to act as a deterrent to misuse and abuse and ensure the safety of park and open spaces
- Provision of advice and assistance to users of parks and open spaces
- Enforcement of rules and byelaws
- Control of anti-social behaviour in parks and open spaces

- Education and raising awareness of the value of parks and open spaces
- Maintenance of equipment and opening and closing of parks and play areas (where locked).

The range of service provided has evolved and grown since its inception. The Urban Rangers are empowered to take direct action where it is reasonable and safe to do so, including immediate action to respond to vandalism and other damage including the cleaning up of graffiti, making safe damage to play equipment clearing broken glass and littering as a part of the routine patrols. The Urban Rangers act in an ambassadorial role with members of the public and seek to establish good working relationships with the users of parks and open spaces(particularly local youths) to encourage use of the facilities and to deter vandalism.

The Service has also developed its educational role with Urban Rangers visiting and speaking at local schools on a regular basis to explain the value of caring for open spaces, and other environmental messages pertaining to the work of the Council encouraging young people to use parks and open spaces responsibly.

The Urban Rangers are equipped with high visibility uniforms and operate mobile patrols of the Council's parks and open spaces on motorcycles in an extended shift system covering evenings and weekends which sees them work through until 10pm on some nights of the week and provide patrols at weekends and bank holidays when park and open space usage is at a peak. The team routinely address anti-social behaviour issues in parks and open spaces, working in co-ordination with the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Team , CCTV, and the Police.

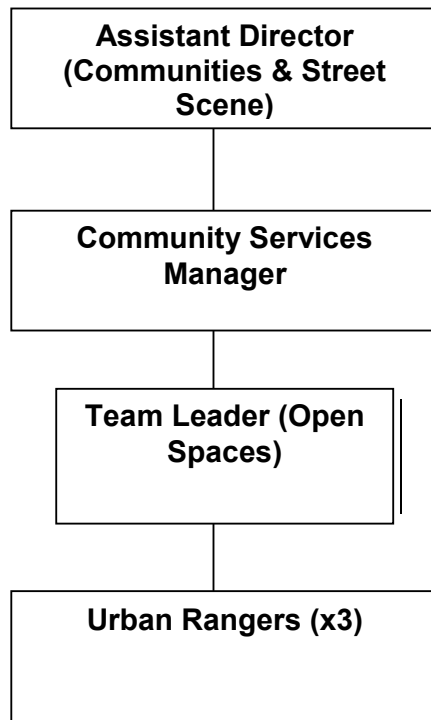
Staffing:

The Urban Ranger Service consists of the following staff -

- 3 Urban Rangers (Full time posts – salary grade 4)

Overall line management of the 3 staff is undertaken by the Team Leader (Open Spaces) who also has responsibility for a range of other services including day to day management of the council's grounds maintenance contracts

Current Structure – Urban Ranger Service



Description of key roles from the Job Descriptions

The key duties and responsibilities of the Urban Rangers as set out in the job description for the post are to:

1. To carry out patrols of land and premises managed by the City Council, opening and securing premises as necessary **(55%)**
2. To offer advice and assistance to the public, and provide information and support for the Council's Street Cleansing, Refuse Collection and Grounds Maintenance Monitoring Service **(15%)**

3. To co-ordinate/assist with the apprehension of those in breach of the law or Council policies, and present documentation and evidence sufficient to secure prosecutions **(10%)**
4. To monitor and effect the removal of graffiti by direct or indirect means **(10%)**
5. To participate in the organisation and presentation of talks to schools and other interested groups on the role of the service in connection with the promotion of pride and citizenship.**(5%)**
6. To be responsible for the security of all equipment and carry out regular checks and basic maintenance of motor cycles **(5%)**

The proportion of time allocated to each element of the job is indicative only and may vary from time to time.

C. Proposal Summary

Outline proposal

The proposal is for the full withdrawal of the Urban Ranger Service and deletion of the 3 posts of Urban Ranger from the staffing establishment in order to contribute to the £3million budget savings identified in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Full year revenue savings will be of the order of £86,170 in 2014/15 (actual savings in 2013/14 will be of the order of £29,960 (based on 9 months of savings and potential redundancy costs if staff cannot be redeployed). Withdrawal of the service will provide net ongoing revenue savings of £383,830 to the General Fund over the life of the Medium Term Financial Strategy as illustrated in Section d..

Other options could include maintaining the service or deleting one or two posts from the current establishment of three. However these will not

- a) Contribute significantly towards the identified savings target and therefore do not contribute to savings identified in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy / Towards Financial Sustainability Programme.

- b) Deliver against the principle of doing fewer things well - less staff will inevitably lead to a decline in outputs.
- c) Will not fundamentally contribute to the revised Council priorities.
- d) Will not provide sufficient staff hours to operate a rota of patrols and other activities covering weekdays, weekends and evenings as now and provide sufficient resilience of service allowing for holiday entitlements and any sickness absence.

The scope and brief for this review has been to examine the implications of a proposal to close and withdraw the service and therefore these options have therefore not been considered in any more detail at this stage.

D. Detailed appraisal of option

The withdrawal of the Urban Ranger Service and the deletion of the 3 posts of Urban Ranger in the Urban Ranger Team will involve the cessation of the service and related activities in Section B above or (where essential), the delivery of those activities in an alternative way. For example the Council will still need to respond to reports of vandalism and damage in parks, play areas and open spaces which present an immediate health and safety risk to users and would need to make alternative arrangements via other staff or contractors to respond to such reports from the public but this would be a purely limited responsive service.

It is inevitable that the withdrawal of the service will lead to both a perceived and actual reduction in the provision of services in the Council's parks and open spaces.

The withdrawal of the Urban Ranger Service will mean that parks and open spaces will no longer be routinely patrolled and may add to the public's fear of crime and a potential increase in anti-social behaviour and vandalism in such

areas but it is difficult to assess the extent or cost of any such impact and this will need to be kept under review.

Any reports of criminal activity, anti-social behaviour or vandalism in the Council's parks and open spaces will need to be referred on directly to the Police and/or to the Council's Anti-social Behaviour Team and be prioritised along with other reports of such activity. However given the existing workloads and competing demands on such services it is inevitable that service levels in terms of responses to reports of anti-social behaviour and vandalism in parks, play areas and open spaces will be adversely affected.

Savings identified with the proposal:

A summary of the predicted savings against projected budgets are set out in the following table:

Year	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Net savings	£29,960*	£86,170	£87,680	£89,220	£90,800

* 2013/14 savings based on withdrawal of service from 1 July 2013, therefore delivering savings from start of qtr 2. Identified savings include potential redundancy costs

A more detailed breakdown of the financial data including staff redundancy costs is presented in the report in Part B of the agenda for the meeting.

E. Staffing Issues

Under this proposal, **three full time posts** will be deleted from the organisational structure.

- Urban Ranger (Salary Scale 4)
- Urban Ranger (Salary Scale 4)
- Urban Ranger (Salary Scale 4)

All 3 posts are currently filled and there are no vacancies in the establishment and should the Council proceed with the proposal to withdraw the service the

post holders would be at risk of redundancy unless they can be redeployed to suitable alternative employment within the Council.

If the service is deleted then the post of Team Leader (Open Spaces) will at some point need the job description and person specification revising. However because this service forms a relatively small part of the range of services and duties and responsibilities and extended range of services managed by that post it is not envisaged that the changes will substantially affect the day to day duties or role of the post nor the salary grade. The post of Team Leader has not therefore been formally included in the current consultation although the post holder is fully aware of the proposal.

The Council's Management of Change Policy is being applied in terms of consultation on this proposal and the 3 affected staff have been notified of the proposal and consulted under the Policy including the right of representation by their trade union or other representative.

The 3 Urban Rangers have submitted a joint response to the proposed closure of the service which is enclosed at **Appendix D (i)**.

The Unison trade union has submitted a general response to the package of measures and proposed budget savings identified in the Medium Term Financial Strategy and in regard to the Urban Ranger Service has commented generally as follows:

- “Unison acknowledges the need to save money due to government cutbacks, however the withdrawal of services should always be a last resort. Not only do withdrawal of services lower the public's esteem of the Council, but also the dramatic changes to individual staff members affected by possible redundancy, affect, hugely, staff morale throughout the authority.”

On the specific proposal to withdraw the Urban Ranger service Unison commented as follows:

- “the public perception is that the Council don’t care about anti-social behaviour and vandalism”

In the event that Council decide to proceed with the proposal to close the Urban Ranger Service the 3 post holders will be issued with redundancy notices and unless suitable alternative employment can be found for the 3 employees through the Redeployment Pool they would be entitled to redundancy payments calculated in accordance with the Council’s Redundancy Payments Scheme. Further details are set out in the report in Part B of the agenda for the meeting

F. Stakeholder Responses

Following announcement of the proposed closure of the Urban Ranger Service alongside the publication of the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy the following groups were advised of the proposal and their comments (and or those of their constituent member & member organisations) were invited:

- Arboretum Park Advisory Panel
- Boutham Park Advisory Panel
- Hartsholme Country Park Advisory Panel
- Birchwood Nature Park Advisory Panel

Comments on the proposed closure of the Urban Ranger Service have been received from:

- Lincoln Commons Horse Association
- Long Leys Residents Association
- West End Residents Association
- Ramblers Association (Lincoln Group)
- The Café at Hartsholme Park Ltd
- Monks Road Neighbourhood Initiative (combined response from the Parks Advisory Groups)
- 2 staff at Hartsholme Park Café

These responses are set out in **Appendix E (i)**

In addition to these responses the Council has received a 67 page petition signed by some 1200 people objecting to the proposed closure of the Urban Ranger Service stating:

- *“We would like to raise our objections to the planned closure of the Urban Ranger Service. The removal of the service will lower our feeling of safety whilst using the parks and may affect our usage of them. We would also like to point out that anti-social behaviour will increase as will damage to our green spaces and we all do not see how the removal of this service versus the impact and increase in damage and anti-social behaviour makes financial/business sense” “ We the undersigned want the City of Lincoln Council to retain the Urban Ranger Service”*

A copy of the petition will be available for inspection at the meeting, and the front sheet is attached as Appendix E (iii).

The Commons Advisory Panel meeting on 11 February 2013 also considered the withdrawal of the Urban Ranger Service and the relevant extract from the minutes of the Commons Advisory Panel meeting held on 11 February 2013 at which the proposal for closure and withdrawal of the Commons Warden Service was discussed are attached at **Appendix E (ii)**

All of the responses express concern at the proposal to close and withdraw the Urban Ranger Service. The Council has received a public petition objecting to the proposal to close the service and the Commons Advisory Panel resolved to request in the strongest terms that the Council should not go ahead with the proposal.

<p>G. Analysis of the Service implications, Risk and Equality Impact Assessment</p>
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A summary of the main concerns raised in response to the proposals and identified risks and mitigations from withdrawing the service are set out below;

Risks	Mitigation
<p>Lincoln Commons Horse Association</p> <p>Letter submitted expressing concerns relating to the Commons Warden and Urban Ranger services. Consider that the Commons Warden and Urban Rangers have made Lincoln's open spaces better places since their introduction.</p> <p>Unclear who will now tackle ASB issues and believe that the open spaces generally will be less safe.</p>	<p>The enforcement of laws and byelaws is a matter that would have to be reported to, be picked up, and prioritised by the Police.</p> <p>The Council's Anti-social Behaviour Team may be able to address persistent problems of anti-social behaviour (e.g. street drinking in parks and open spaces) but like the Police would need to prioritise such work.</p>
<p>Long Leys Residents Association</p> <p>Letter submitted that covers concerns relating to the Commons Warden and Urban Ranger services. Consider that the Commons Warden and Urban Rangers have made Lincoln's open spaces better places since their introduction.</p> <p>Suggests closure is a risk to the care of Green Flag accredited open spaces such as the Arboretum and Hartsholme Park.</p>	<p>The absence of the dedicated staff resources will undoubtedly impact on the Council's ability to pro-actively maintain the sites and will not help the prospects for Green Flag status. However, the Green Flag judging criteria covers many areas, and the effect on the accreditation cannot be prejudged. It does not mean certain failure of any bid.</p>

<p>Asks who will provide enforcement in open spaces?</p>	<p>The enforcement of laws and byelaws is a matter that would have to be reported to, picked up and prioritised by, the Police and/or the Council's Anti-social Behaviour Team.</p>
<p>West End Residents Association</p> <p>Letter submitted that covers concerns relating to the Commons Warden and Urban Ranger services. Consider that the Commons Warden and Urban Rangers have made Lincoln's open spaces better places since their introduction.</p> <p>Asks who will respond to crime and ASB in open spaces if these services stop?</p>	<p>See comment above.</p>
<p>Ramblers Association</p> <p>Letter submitted that covers concerns relating to the Commons Warden and Urban Ranger services. Considers that the Commons Warden and Urban Rangers have done an excellent job.</p> <p>Concern that without both services there will be nobody addressing misuse of the commons.</p>	<p>See comment above</p>
<p>Hartsholme Park Café owner (member of PAG)</p> <p>Considers Urban Rangers vital & believes park visitors will feel less safe.</p> <p>Asks what has changed since the ranger service was started to make it less worthwhile now?</p>	<p>The absence of regular, highly visible patrols by the Urban Ranger service may result in an increase in visitors fears of crime and anti-social behaviour. It is difficult to accurately predict whether the absence of the service will in fact result in an increase in crime and anti-social behaviour</p> <p>The financial position of the Council has changed significantly as a result of the Governments austerity</p>

<p>Concern that loss of protection in open spaces means more vandalism and damage.</p>	<p>measures as set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the Council has no alternative but to find £3million savings over the next 3 years. The fact that this proposal is being brought forward for consideration is a reflection of the budget position and not a reflection on the quality of the Urban Ranger Service.</p> <p>The enforcement of laws and byelaws is a matter that would have to be reported to, picked up and prioritised by, the Police.</p>
<p>Park Advisory Groups –Joint (Arboretum, Hartsholme , Boultham Park, Birchwood Nature Park) .</p> <p>Accept that due to the financial position the Council would not be able to maintain the services in their present form. But View is that the Urban Rangers are of great value in controlling ASB and make people feel safer, giving on-the-ground support to CCTV and feel that service is too important to be cut.</p> <p>Option put forward on possibility of sponsorship from local businesses, with the City Council still managing the service. Asked for this to be considered by the Council as a serious option, which the Park Advisory Groups could be allowed to pursue.</p>	<p>Experience of seeking and obtaining sponsorship for ongoing revenue services show this to be very difficult to obtain, and even more difficult to sustain and the Council cannot predicate its budgets in the hope of obtaining the necessary ongoing sponsorship.</p> <p>The Council may wish to invite sponsorship proposals from Park Advisory Groups that could show how third party funding/volunteer services could be secured but does not have the resources to seek this funding itself. Given the financial deadlines that the Council faces in order to make the necessary savings it is not in a position to enter into protracted negotiations unless there was a</p>

	demonstrable high probability of success at the outset.
<p>Urban Ranger Service- Staff Response</p> <p>Objects to the closure based on:</p> <p>Decision not thought through. Considers that the saving is small against the benefits the service gives, and comments that it will cost in redundancy payments. Believes the Council will see increased costs from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damage • ASB • Fly tipping • Littering • Graffiti • Dog fouling • Drug/alcohol abuse • Motorcycles in parks <p>Wishes it to be noted that currently the Police look to the URS to deal with parks issues.</p> <p>Asks who will enforce parks and commons byelaws now?</p> <p>Believes that the public will feel less safe, and use open spaces less as a result.</p> <p>The loss of the URS means no 'out of hours' response to problems in open spaces. Who will attend incidents such as traveller encampments in the future?</p> <p>Believes that the educational role the URS has fulfilled in establishing local ownership of open spaces, and promoting the Council's work will be lost.</p>	<p>No decision has been made to close the service.. Following the statement by the Chancellor on further cuts to local government the City Council has needed to respond quickly with proposals in order to meet the budget pressures placed upon it. The proposal to close the Urban Ranger Service (URS) arose from those considerations, and has lead to consultation on this proposal.. The consultation has identified the key issues and risks in order to permit opportunity for consideration and deliberation on key matters.</p> <p>It is recognised that the URS has been of benefit for the care and maintenance of open spaces. However it is difficult to quantify in financial terms the direct impact that the introduction of the service has had. There have been no budget cuts in areas as a result of the introduction of the service. It is expected that additional costs may be incurred in some areas should the service close but these will need to be absorbed by respective service areas.</p> <p>The most important area for savings that the Council is required to make are on 'revenue', that is to say to reduce the on-going year-on-year operating costs of the Council in the longer term. The redundancy costs for the Council would be one-off single costs that need to be taken into account, but even if incurred would still deliver year-on-year savings in operating costs compared to current budget.</p>

<p>Asks who will look for lost children in parks?</p> <p>Who will CCTV contact for on- the-ground response to issues in parks?</p> <p>Believe that members have forgotten how bad things were before the URS was established and that nothing is in place to address their loss.</p> <p>Concern that changing minds later, if/when problems emerge, will cost the Council more to re-establish a new service, with loss of knowledge and experience.</p> <p>They do not believe that the decision to close the service is supported by the public.</p>	<p>Lost children would be a matter for the Police to consider and prioritise.</p> <p>The Police would have to be the contact point for all matters in the future, and they would have to prioritise them against the resources available, at that time</p> <p>Before the Council developed the Urban Ranger Service the Police enforced laws and byelaws. This responsibility has not changed, although it is accepted that the Police would have to prioritise calls for action in open spaces against other priorities and there is no doubt that the loss of this service would mean a reduction in enforcement in open spaces.</p> <p>Assessment will need to be made of incidents on a case-by-case basis. Very minor incidents may be addressed by Community Services staff if there is a resource available, alternatively it may be something that would be referred to the Police. It is accepted that some issues raised with the Council would not receive a direct response. Traveller encampments would be dealt with by the staff in the Community Services section as additional work.</p> <p>A public petition has been received and is enclosed with this Business Case for consideration in any decision to close the service.</p> <p>The valuable work that the Urban Rangers have undertaken to protect and promote the Council's open spaces since their inception is acknowledged. However, faced with the need for significant cuts it has been necessary to consider difficult and in other circumstances</p>
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	<p>undesirable proposals.</p> <p>If a decision were to be taken to close this service, it would be to meet financial demands on the Council. There is currently no prospect of an improvement in local government finances and thus, if a decision were to be taken to close the service, then there would be little prospect of a replacement in the foreseeable future.</p>
Other risks:	
Expectation that work currently undertaken by the Urban Ranger service will need to be absorbed by other staff elsewhere within the service or organisation	There is no capacity to absorb the pro-active work undertaken by the Urban Ranger service but to the extent that members of the public and park visitors report damage, vandalism and anti-social behaviour in parks and open spaces demand on customer services and the community services team generally will not diminish. This will have to be carefully monitored by the Assistant Director and Service Manager.
Reduction in resources for responses to emergencies under the Emergency Plan	During declared emergencies (eg the floods of 2007 & 2012) the Urban Ranger Service has been deployed in a forward liaison role by the Council's operational command. Other staff would be deployed in such a role if necessary but the mobility provided by motorcycles would be lost

Copies of the full responses of stakeholders are attached at **Appendix E(i)** and the staff response at **Appendix D (i)**

An Equalities Analysis on the proposed closure has also been carried out and is attached at **Appendix A**

H. Implementation plan

The broad implementation plan for this restructure is as follows:

- Staff Consultation starts - letter & meeting with those directly affected with their trade unions - Offer of HR rep & TU present as well for those staff directly affected –**issued on 17 January 2013**
- Initial responses to proposal – **21 February 2013**
- JCC considers business case – **20 March 2013**
- Policy Scrutiny Committee considers Business Case – **20 March 2013**
- Executive considers business case –**25 March 2013**
- Call in period ends –**5 April 2013**
- Implementation starts – **8 April 2013**
- Notice of redundancy issued to relevant staff and potential redeployment options considered – w/c **8 April 2013**
- Gradual exit from programmes and handovers where relevant - **8 April – 14 June 2013**
- Service withdrawn – **14 June 2013**

I. Key Decisions Required

The key decision required to enable the Detailed Business Case to move to implementation is:

- Decision to proceed with the proposal to withdraw the Urban Ranger Service
- In the event of such a decision authority to officers to issue notices of redundancy to the 3 affected staff and to implement the Council's managing change procedures.

Appendix A: EQUALITY ANALYSIS

Attached

Appendix B: FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Summarised in Section D and detailed as set out in report in PARTB of the agenda papers.

Appendix C: TRADE UNION COMMENTS

To be added after Joint Consultative Committee has met on 19 March 2013

Appendix D: RESPONSE FROM STAFF

Attached. (i) collective response from 3 Urban Rangers

Appendix E: RESPONSES FROM PARKS ADVISORY GROUPS & OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Attached: i) Individual responses.
(ii) Minutes of Commons Advisory Panel 11 February 2013

Appendix F: POLICY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE COMMENTS

To be added after Policy Scrutiny Committee has met on 20 March 2013

SECTION A

Name of policy / project / service	Withdrawal of Urban Ranger Service
<p>Background and aims of policy / project / service at outset</p>	<p>The City Council needs to find £1million of ongoing savings in 2013/14, rising to an estimated £3million per annum by 2016/17. Every effort has been made to implement savings without loss of service, but the council has now reached a point where it is necessary to cease provision of some non-statutory services in order to achieve the level of savings required. The council has therefore refocused its priorities and these are now defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing the local economy • Protecting the city's poorest people from the effects of the recession • Increasing the supply of affordable housing <p>The Urban Ranger Service does not directly contribute to these refocused priorities and withdrawal of the service will contribute to delivering financial savings required to meet the council's Medium Term.</p> <p>The Service started in August 1999, and from the outset has consisted of a team of three staff, on motorcycles suitable for off-road use, patrolling the Council's open spaces. Their original main purpose was to enforce laws and byelaws, but ever since inception their role has grown. They are empowered to take direct action where it is reasonable and safe to do so, so can clean up graffiti, broken glass and littering as a part of their rounds. They have also developed an educational role visiting schools to explain the value of caring for open spaces, and other environmental messages pertaining to the work of the Council.</p> <p>Their high profile patrols are on a shift system, which sees them work through until 10pm on some nights of the week, and permits suitable staff coverage at weekends. The team routinely addresses ASB issues in parks and open spaces, working with our own ASB team, CCTV, and the Police as well as the Commons Warden.</p> <p>The varied shift pattern means that although the rangers are unlikely to spend long at any one location, the timing cannot be predicted and therefore the fact that the rangers might be around provides some reassurance to commons users from a personal safety perspective.</p>

	<p>Statistics relating to incidents dealt with by the urban rangers over the past year indicate that there could be a limited potential impact on protected characteristics (see Section B under disability for further comment).</p> <p>Consultation responses suggest that without the presence of the urban rangers people would feel less safe. In some isolated cases it is evident that some comments have been made by older, disabled or female persons, although other comments may have come from people with different characteristics. From the latest survey there appears no cluster of comments around a particular protected characteristic. There is no evidence to suggest that these groups would be less safe than any other groups. However, in mitigation of this feeling that they would be less safe work with the Park Advisory Groups on replacement initiatives such as Park Watch have been suggested. Whilst the Panel have shown a willingness to work with the council on replacement initiatives, no specific programme of work has yet been planned. In addition the Communities and Street Scene Service will continue to work in close partnership with Police in respect of parks and open spaces.</p> <p>The council has received a petition stating that "We the under signed would like to raise our objection to the planned closure of the Urban ranger Service. The removal of the service will lower our feeling of safety whilst using the parks and may affect our usage of them. We also would like to point out that antisocial behaviour will increase as will damage to our green spaces and we all do not see how the removal of this service versus the impact and increase in damage and antisocial behaviour makes financial/business sense." However, this does not specifically raise any equality issues.</p> <p>It should be noted that a separate savings proposal is to withdraw the Commons Warden who works closely with the Urban Rangers Service.</p>
<p>Person(s) responsible for policy or decision, or advising on decision, and also responsible for equality analysis</p>	<p>Decision – Executive EA – Steve Bird ADCSS</p>
<p>Key people involved i.e. decision-makers, staff implementing it</p>	<p>Executive Members Portfolio Holder for Health and Recreational Services Director of Housing and Community Services ADCSS</p>

SECTION B

This is to be completed and reviewed as policy / project / service development progresses

	Is the likely effect positive or negative? (please tick all that apply)			Please describe the effect and evidence that supports this?*	Is action possible to mitigate adverse impacts?	Details of action planned including dates, or why action is not possible
	Positive	Negative	None			
Age		X		See background section above regarding feeling of personal safety. A small part of the role of the urban rangers is to participate in the organisation and presentation of talks to schools and other interested groups – there were 39 school visits in 2011-12. The original purpose of these visits was to promote the role of the service in connection with the promotion of pride and citizenship, but they now also include the value of caring for open spaces, and other environmental messages.	Yes – for personal safety (see background section) No – for school visits	Whilst it is not feasible to continue with school visits environmental information is available at Hartsholme Country Park.
Disability		X		The Urban Rangers assist the Police in searches for vulnerable missing persons, where the wardens' off road capability and knowledge of the parks and open spaces have both been an advantage.	If requested the council could ask its contractors	When reviewing progress on the Commons Management Plan consideration will need to be given to the timing of works

	See background section above regarding feeling of personal safety.	to assist in such searches, but no off road motorcycles would be available so searched would be on foot	on access issues to ensure they are prioritised appropriately.
Gender re-assignment	X	No differential impact.	NA
Pregnancy and maternity	X	No differential impact	NA
Race	X	Some graffiti in open spaces is racist in nature. Depending on its type, the urban rangers are sometimes able to provide a faster response for its removal than the cleansing or grounds maintenance contractor.	Existing contracts provide for graffiti removal and will remove it promptly when reported.

Religion or belief		X	No differential impact	NA	
Sex		X	See background section above for general evidence.	NA	See background section
Sexual orientation		X	No differential impact	NA	
Marriage / civil partnership		X	No differential impact	NA	
Human Rights (see page 8)		X	Withdrawal of the Urban Ranger Service will have no impact on human rights.	NA	

* Evidence could include information from consultations; voluntary group feedback; satisfaction and usage data (i.e. complaints, surveys, and service data); and reviews of previous strategies

Did any information gaps exist?	Y/N/NA	If so what were they and what will you do to fill these?
No		

SECTION C

Decision Point - Outcome of Assessment so far:

Based on the information in section B, what is the decision of the responsible officer (please select one option below):

- **No equality or human right impact** (your analysis shows there is no impact) - sign assessment below
- **No major change required** (your analysis shows no potential for discrimination, harassment)- sign assessment below
- **Adverse Impact but continue** (record objective justification for continuing despite the impact)-complete sections below
- **Adjust the policy** (Change the proposal to mitigate potential effect) -progress below only AFTER changes made

• **Put Policy on hold** (seek advice from the E&D officer as adverse effects cant be justified or mitigated) -STOP progress []

Conclusion of Equality Analysis (describe objective justification for continuing)

In the context of needing to deliver financial savings, the Urban Ranger Service is not a statutory function, and has limited potential to contribute to the revised strategic priorities.

Closure of this service has the potential to impact on the management of open spaces through slower responses to maintenance and enforcement issues, which could in turn impact negatively on perceptions of safety for some open space users.

The Park Advisory Groups have recognised this and would work with the Council to mitigate these impacts. The local Police are represented on the Park Advisory Groups and so would be well placed to both feed into, and take advice from, the Park Advisory Groups so as to establish priorities for their resources.

When and how will you review and measure the impact after implementation?*

The local Police would be asked to provide reported crime statistics for specific key open spaces as a part of their engagement with Park Advisory Groups. The Park Advisory Groups will then monitor these.

The Council established questions relevant to perceptions of management and public safety in public open spaces within its annual Citizen Panel Survey this year. This has provided a benchmark from which to monitor perceptions in the future.

Checked and approved by responsible officer(s) (Sign and Print Name)
Checked and approved by Director (Sign and Print Name)

Steve Bird

7th March 2013

John Bibby

7th March 2013

When completed, please send to info.equality@lincoln.gov.uk and include in Committee Reports which are to be sent to the relevant officer in Democratic Services

The Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance to the Public Sector Equality Duty is available via: <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/new-public-sector-equality-duty-guidance/>

APPENDIX C

CoLC and Employee Joint Consultative Committee

19 March 2013

39. Closure of Urban Rangers

The Director of Housing and Community Services

- a. presented to committee the Business Case on the proposed changes to close and withdraw the Urban Ranger Service to contribute to the required budget savings targets set out in the Councils Medium Term Financial Strategy
- b. highlighted the key drivers underpinning the review as detailed at paragraph 3 of the report and advised on the staff consultation that had been undertaken
- c. gave an overview of the Business Case and highlighted the following:
 - o Scope and Objective of the Review
 - o Summary of Existing Services
 - o Staffing
 - o Proposal Summary
 - o Detailed Appraisal Option
 - o Staffing Issues
 - o Stakeholder Responses
 - o Analysis of the Service Implications, Risk and Equality Impact Assessment
 - o Implementation Plan
- d. advised on the Stakeholder Consultation that had taken place through various Parks Advisory Panels and summarised the responses received
- e. referred to paragraph 5.3 to 5.4 and highlighted that a petition had been received
- f. referred to Part 2 of the report and presented the detail behind the overall summary figures within the Business Case including the impact on savings targets
- g. advised on the staffing implications and detailed the proposal for the deletion of three full time posts from the staffing establishment
- h. referred to the supplementary paperwork circulated at the meeting and highlighted the comments received from staff

The Trade Union Side asked for clarification on the support and training provided to staff who were in the redeployment pool.

The Human Resources Manger gave an overview of the Redeployment Policy and advised that staff would be supported throughout the process by HR.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

Response to the proposal to stop the Urban Ranger Service

The following report outlines the feelings and concerns of the Urban Rangers regarding the proposed closure of their service in June 2013. This document has been drawn up with full consultation with each ranger and is their agreed response.

It is an ill conceived 'knee jerk' reaction to budgetary pressures.

It would appear that the proposal has been made purely on a financial basis, The rangers are not a statutory service *'they cost us X, there for cutting the service saves X'* As outlined further in this document we do not believe adequate consideration has been given to the additional expense incurred by the removal of the service.

Further to this, as no requests were made for any information regarding the Ranger Service prior to this decision it must be concluded that this decision was made blindly with out any understanding of what the service currently provide for the council.

It provides minimal saving £88,000.

Although it has been made very clear the reasons why financial saving must be made we consider the cost to the council of £88,000 is only a very small percentage of what is required especially when the council may need to make redundancy payouts of £35,500. As a service we have been aware of the financial situation the council is under and for some time now have operated the service in a stream line fashion ensuring costs are minimised and value for money emphasised.

It short circuits the lean review process.

Over the last 12 month we have been increasingly aware of the likelihood of coming into lean review. A process which the council have invested heavily both financially and in work hours devoted to it. We have endeavoured to make appropriate actions to best serve this process. This involved a considerable amount of work collecting and collating information regarding the activities of the service so that when the review came we would already be up and running with data required for the review process. We had been told quite clearly that the review would mean a change in the service. As previously stated the service has been running with an eye on its expenditure and we were unsure what savings or efficiencies could be made but we welcomed the input of other parties. Cutting us out of this process is a case of 'throwing out the baby with the bath water,' valuable skills and resources will be lost.

It is short sighted?

What, if any, consideration has been made to address the likely impact of removal of the service?

Although the service has a very wide remit one of our key roles is to "Reduce crime and the fear of crime through education and enforcement" If this is removed it can be expected to see a rise in many unwelcome areas such as:

Damage to open spaces	Littering
Antisocial behaviour	Graffiti
Fly tipping	Dog fouling
Motorcycles in the parks	Drug and Alcohol abuse

This by far not an exhaustive list, but an increase in such activity will at the very least incur an increase of council expenditure. The impact to the public will be immeasurable.

It could be argued that some of these areas may be enforced by the police. This is in fact very unlikely as they are overstretched and underfunded themselves. In our experience the police are too stretched to attend incidents in the parks let alone regularly and proactively patrol them. To date the Police often call upon the assistance of the URS for problems in the parks of Lincoln. They then know that if the URS call for Police attendance, the matter does

require attention. This subsequently eliminates the element of wasting Police time and facilitates a one stop solution.

There will be no civil enforcement of bylaws.

The council have in place bylaws laid out for the vast majority of its parks and green spaces. These were put in place for valid reason and should be enforced. They are complicated and not always straight forward. The service has been enforcing these bylaws for the past 13 years, educating the public and where necessary taking legal action against perpetrators. The belief the commons are "Common land I can do what I want" is still widely held. Once the Rangers are no longer around to educate and enforce the bylaws what will stop anybody "Doing what they want"? What ever that may be, Raves, Bottle digging with Mini Diggers or illegal traveller encampments all of which have happened in the recent past.

There will be further additional costs.

As part of the daily patrols we undertake many minor tasks, clearing broken glass, picking up litter, locking up gates left open by others, untangling swings to name but a few, all of these are necessary and will still need to be carried out. In the absence of Rangers, who will do this and who will pay for it?

Rangers see and report a great deal; the regular monitoring of sites enables us to see quickly any new issues within a site and can report it to the correct member of the council or appropriate agency ensuring efficient rectification. We can also monitor the progress of any rectification required and highlight any areas of concern. This is a necessary task which will have to be undertaken by others increasing their work loads or council expenditure.

There appears to have been little consideration for the affect on the public.

The removal of the service will see a decrease of public safety, both actual and perceived. It is believed that people do not commit crime for the fear of being caught. Remove the deterrent of the Rangers patrolling and there will be nothing to deter the undesirable elements of society in our parks. This is what people think and may well prove to be true.

We predict a decrease in use and ownership of the parks and green spaces this in itself will lead to and increase in unwanted behaviour
There is already a loss of good will towards the council from the general public, the public the council exist to serve.

There will be no more Education.

The Ranger Service, from its onset has a remit to provide education to the general public. We visit the majority of Infant and Primary Schools and many Senior and Special Needs schools teaching the students about the role of the Rangers and of the City Of Lincoln Council, how to stay safe, how to protect the environment and even basic drug waste safety. This service is not restricted to schools, but also includes local groups such as Scouts, St John's Ambulance and groups for the elderly.

To our knowledge if we stop going into schools there will be no council presence in local education.

Education is also a daily and ongoing process. Each and every day the public are educated as to what can and can't be done. Where they can go and what restrictions apply. What the Councils' stance is on various issues and how to contact the Council or their local Councillors.

No out of hour's presence or support for open spaces.

We currently provide a highly visible presence which is not restricted to office hours Monday to Friday. We are a high profile service well known by the public and other agencies and are often the first point of contact for many issues, for example animal welfare, horses in

particular. We are city wide key holders for quick fixes of open gates, alleviating traveller threats by locking up vulnerable areas. The URS has on occasion persuaded many travelling groups to move on to other pastures. We also have a working relationship with resident travellers in Lincoln. Who will realistically liaise in the future?

Lessons should be learnt from past incidents and events.

There are many people who have been in the council since before the existence of the Ranger Service and these people paint a very bleak picture of how things used to be. For example The Arboretum was a no go area for the general public, rife with all kinds of substance abuse and so called undesirables, The Hartsholme Country Park was terrorised by large groups of youth causing damage, leaving litter, starting fires, intimidating visitors even going on to the camp site and rocking caravans with the occupants petrified inside who would leave as soon as possible demanding their money back and bad mouthing Lincoln to everyone they met. This is how things were according to people who were in the council at the time. How long will it take to return to this or worse?

The cost to reinstate the service or similar.

If this proposal goes ahead we believe it may well be in hindsight that it is deemed in error. There may well come a time when it is necessary to reinstate the ranger service or something very similar. This would not be straight forward and would be extremely expensive.

There would be costs incurred for all new kit of all staff and equipment required
This is a very long list but just to clothe a ranger cost in the region of £2000. To supply and kit out a motorcycle would cost in the region of £7000. Each member of the rangers has received extensive training including First Aid, Legal training, Enforcement training, Child protection training, all of which would need provided.

Then there are the un-measurable costs;

The loss of the relationships and networking links established over years

The loss of local knowledge

Current rangers will be reemployed leaving nobody to train up new employees

It is not supported.

In all our many conversations with the public, bar two exceptions, there is no support for this proposal. Even councillors who have been critical of the service in the past have stated that they think this decision is in error. Council employees have said "It is a return to the Dark Ages."

To generalise the public attitude in to one word would be disbelief. Nobody can see any wisdom in this suggestion, and it is our opinion that there is none.

Finally.

The nature of the service, to daily patrol the sites managed by the council allows for both reactive and proactive protection and care of the sites themselves, the service users, local or visiting.

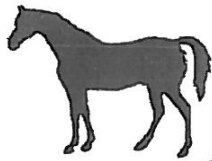
Who will be there when a parent loses sight of their child, in a park that takes over an hour to walk around?

Who will CCTV contact for assistance for eyes on the ground for many incidents including finding suicidal and vulnerable missing persons?

Who will, just by their very presence deter the potential sex offenders?

This may be seen as sensationalist but these are real incidents the URS has been involved with. These are questions being asked by the people we come into contact with.

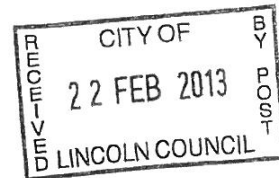
Questions we have no answers to.



**LINCOLN COMMONS HORSE
ASSOCIATION**

Mr J. Bibby

Lincoln City Council



The Lincoln Commons Horse Association would like to put forward our concerns, and objections regarding the proposed axing of the Common Warden and Urban Ranger Services.

The focus of our concerns relate to the Lincoln Commons, however this in no way diminishes the importance of their roles in other recreational areas in and around Lincoln.

We will look at the two services separately as all be it they overlap in many instances.

The Commons Warden

How refreshing it was to have an identified person and role dedicated to the commons with whom we could liaise, bridge between the commons' users and the city council officers. Areas addressed through the Commons Warden include areas such as grass management, safety and welfare, fencing, vandalism. Also importantly, someone who could identify a horse, locate the ownership and work with them in problem solving – or seek intervention from outside agencies if rarely required.

A management plan for the commons has now been passed which details interventions to enhance and improve this unique open space. The Commons Warden's role is highlighted repeatedly in this management plan, and a great deal of time and thought was given to this document, what happens to the plan now?

Urban Rangers

This is a service of great importance and has been demonstrated time and time again in its effectiveness in both prevention and dealing with misdemeanours on our commons.

Who do the public turn to as regards to antisocial behaviour issues and safety and welfare concerns of those accessing the parks and recreational areas? The Police, who are already over stretched and have to prioritise their case loads.

Prior to the Urban Ranger service, the commons were often a haven for unsavoury characters, vandals, litter bugs, drugs and alcohol abusers, and sexual offenders. Although some of the problems will be ever present, the commons are now considerably safer places for children to play, people to exercise and enjoy their rights to roam.

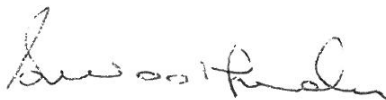
The commons are patrolled regularly with easy accessibility, the rangers are highly visible, which is both a reassurance and a deterrent. They have an approachable and helpful attitude and have always responded to incidents when requested.

Without this monitoring through the current ranger service, we can foresee that the commons will become unsafe places. Those who genuinely enjoy these spaces for recreation, walking and having quality family time will shy away from the areas, as they become unsafe and unclean through increased crime, damage and litter. This would be a sad and sombre outlook for areas of land that enhance the city's boundaries and are enjoyed not just by locals, but by visitors attracted by its historical and unique persona.

We sincerely hope you will take on board our comments and concerns, as we truly believe this service is too valuable to lose for all.

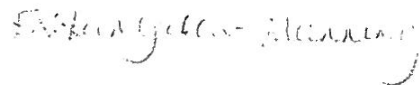
We await your response with interest.

Yours faithfully



Mrs Barbara Woolfenden

Chairperson of LCHA



Mrs Emma Langdon-Manning

LCHA representative for the
Commons Advisory Panel

Bird, Steve (City of Lincoln Council)

From: John Shipton [jshipton1949@hotmail.co.uk]
Sent: 14 February 2013 21:51
To: Bird, Steve (City of Lincoln Council)
Cc: Bibby, John (City of Lincoln Council)
Subject: The proposed withdrawal of the Commons Warden and Urban Rangers service...
Importance: High

The Long Leys Residents' Association believe that the withdrawal will be detrimental to the City of Lincoln.

First, let's look at the Commons Warden position.

This was instrumental in the later part of the 20th century in where then the Common Warden looked after the three commons in Lincoln for their maintenance, security, upkeep, and appearance, to include the well being of the horses which grazed the commons. This came about due to the three Commons being protected by the Lincoln City Council Act 1985 which states that the City Council 'has a duty to maintain and to preserve the aspect of the Commons as an open space. The position was abolished at a later stage because of the council's budget cuts.

Secondly, the Commons Warden post was reintroduced in February 2007. The Commons Warden position is dedicated to the future enhancement of Lincoln's Common Land.

The role is to:-

- Patrol the Commons (alongside the Urban Rangers)
- Issue fixed penalty notices for dog fouling and littering
- Watch out for anti-social behaviour and illegal use of the commons
- Make sure the commons are well maintained
- Meet and talk to the users and non-users of the commons
- Meet environmental groups and commons advisory panel

After a lengthy process and much discussion, a management plan was agreed by the City of Lincoln Council and the Lincoln Commons Advisory Panel. This was given approval and adopted by the Executive only just recently. The Common Warden is to play a major part and role of its implementation.

With the abolition of the Common Warden, it is believed that the management plan will fail as well as monitoring what has been written in the document. This is not the best way forward for the protection, etc, for the West Common, the South Common, and the Cowpaddle.

Now let's look at the Urban Rangers which are under threat.

There are three Urban Rangers. The council's Urban Rangers are responsible for looking after the city's many open spaces.

This included all parks in Lincoln, the three commons, dealing with anti social behaviour, abuse, and all sorts of problems affecting them.

Both the police and the public welcome them and they act as a deterrent plus give valuable advice.

Without them who will police the open spaces of Lincoln?

Kindly read this account made by a local resident of the Long Leys Road area of Lincoln from the residents' forum...

LOSING A COMMUNITY NEED AS THIS WILL AFFECT ALL

□ by Jeff » Thu Jan 31, 2013 9:23 pm

Urban Rangers employed by the City of Lincoln Council patrol the parks, open spaces and the three commons sited in and around Lincoln. They act as a deterrent with the use of motorcycles and attached to their helmets are video cameras. When it comes to tackling yobbery, littering and dog foulers they are on the front

15/02/2013

line. They also deal within their remit drugs addicts and alcoholics plus vandalism. Complaints about graffiti, mini-moto riding, fly-tipping and abandoned syringes have diminished thanks to the Urban Rangers. Since their deployment, the work of the Urban Rangers has led to a dramatic drop in incidents of anti-social behaviour.

Urban Rangers have been effective on Withams Park and the West Common. There are three urban rangers for the Lincoln area.

All that is going to change from June 2013. And Why?

The Urban Rangers team who look after parks and urban spaces in the city, leading to savings of £100,000 per year, will be scrapped. The Commons Warden role will be lost as well.

This is due to budget cut and no one will be patrolling the parks, the open spaces and the three commons leaving them all open to vandalism, the return of drug addicts and alcoholics, using them for unauthorised raves and binge drinking, fences being ripped up for bonfires, and where anything else goes.

The police, due to their budget cuts and these green spaces being owned by the City of Lincoln Council, have not the manpower to do the job of the urban rangers. Not a priority unless serious crime has been committed such a murder, GBH, rape, and so forth.

These areas could become out of bounds for those who wish to use them for pleasure, recreational, etc, and the problem will be if the playground at Withams Park with its swings, slides, etc, for children are destroyed, there is no money in the kitty to replace them.

The question given to the residents on the Long Leys Road area of Lincoln and the local residents association is this - should the three urban rangers remain or should they go?

You decide and what to do about the situation!

Local residents have said to me since the proposed budget cuts became known, what will happen to The Lincoln Arboretum which was originally designed and laid out between 1870 and 1872 by Edward Milner, one of the most celebrated Victorian gardeners of his time. A well maintained park, with beautiful gardens, lakes, fountains and bridges, Victorian bandstand and children's play area. It is a park of grade II of historic importance. The size is 22 acres.

In 2003, three million pounds worth of restoration work was carried out on the park to bring it back to its original beauty. Of course it is owned and managed by the City of Lincoln Council to be enjoyed by residents, tourists, and visitors. The Urban Rangers again act as a deterrent against vandalism and abuse, etc. The PCSOs and the police cannot patrol on foot as it is too large to cover but the Urban Rangers can use their motorcycles.

Local residents say also what will happen to Hartsholme Country Park and Swanholme Lakes Local Nature Reserve which lies within the boundary of Lincoln. It is a Green Flag Award winning park containing Victorian landscaped gardens, a large reservoir, woodlands and grasslands. It also has a play area and playground for children. Hartsholme Country Park covers more than 200 acres. Again, the Urban Rangers play their role here.

The common census from members of the Long Leys Residents Association is to keep the services of the Urban Rangers and the Common Warden. For without them, who and what will take their place. A local government officer from City Hall is no replacement or can provide such a service that still exists. Nor can the police authority provide any service due to their restraints.

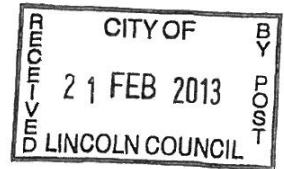
Therefore please do not withdraw the Commons Warden and Urban Rangers service as they are irreplaceable.

Would you kindly acknowledge receipt of this letter by e-mail.

John Shipton
Long Leys Residents' Association
Lincoln

15/02/2013

WEST END RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION



183 Carholme Road

Lincoln LN1 1RU

19th Feb 2013

Mr J Bibby

Lincoln City Council

Dear Sir

Removal of Commons Warden and Urban Ranger Service

We wish to object to the removal of the above services in the strongest possible terms for the following reasons:-

Commons Warden :- Is responsible for the supervision of all three commons within the City boundary and having recently completed the Commons Management Plan will this have been just a paper exercise with no actual worth? His duties are varied and many but he is only one person and limited only to common land.

Urban Rangers:- The removal of these posts would provide by far the most serious threat to the City's open spaces and council property. They patrol approximately 90 sites within the City and are frequently the first line of response to users of Parks, Play Areas and Commons; generally making these areas safe for adults and children to enjoy. Since the Urban Ranger posts were commissioned we have seen a massive drop in anti-social behaviour on Whittons Park and West Common, with much vandalism being curtailed by the public contacting the Urban Ranger service and the rapid response of the team. Who will provide this response in their place?

There is obviously a great need for this service (the statistics speak for themselves) and the loss could result in those areas becoming unsafe to use as it is apparent that abusive behaviour, drinking gangs (driven out of the City centre) and marauding youths are becoming more of a concern.


WEBSITE: www.wera-lincoln.co.uk

E-MAIL: wera@hotmail.co.uk

We feel very strongly that the areas of open space used by our community are under threat with the entire Council interface with our open space users being removed and we would request that you inform us what protection for the public at large will be put in place for these much loved and cherished areas.

We await your reply with great interest.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'G Woolfenden', written over the text 'Yours faithfully'.

G Woolfenden (Chairman)

Cc Mr S Bird

Coun N Murray

From: Colin Smith[GMAIL] [mailto:colin.colinjsmith@gmail.com]
Sent: 18 February 2013 10:30
To: Bird, Steve (City of Lincoln Council)
Subject: Proposed withdrawal of Commons Warden Service

Steve,

In response to the letter you sent about this on 22nd January, here are my comments –

Duncan Hall has done an excellent job as Commons Warden and the Council should think very carefully before removing that service.

The work being done by Duncan ensures that the maintenance of vegetation, hardware, ecology etc is as good as is financially possible he has also done a good job by generating the draft of the Commons action plan. His job in working with the golf club is also useful.

I believe that the way that Duncan works with the Urban Ranger service in clamping down on misuse of the Commons has made sure that they are pleasant places for the people of Lincoln and their families to be. Without the service provided by the Commons Warden and the Urban Rangers the Commons could become unpleasant places where nobody wants to be.

Regards,

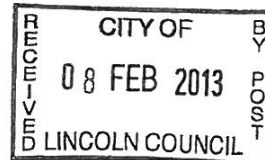
Colin Smith,
Ramblers Association, Lincoln Group.

The Cafe at Hartsholme Park Limited
24 Moor Lane, North Hykeham,
Lincoln LN6 9AE
01522 872828
jhaw@btinternet.com

City of Lincoln Council
City Hall
Beaumont Fee
Lincoln
LN1 1DB

5th February 2013

To whom it may concern,



Re Urban Rangers

I am writing with regards to the announcement that the Urban Rangers Service will cease in the next few months. As a business within one of the parks that the Urban Rangers patrol I am astounded that the Council has made the decision that this service is no longer sustainable.

I understand the Councils budget deficit and a need to cut costs but to cut such a vital service which covers such a large area of Lincoln in my opinion would be a mistake. In this time of economic problems and uncertainties free leisure activities are becoming increasingly popular and necessary and the parks and open spaces around Lincoln are seen as a safe haven for families to visit free of charge.

I have grave concerns that the loss of this service will have a huge impact on the perceived safeness of these areas. I know many of our customers cannot believe the announcement. The high visual impact of the Urban Rangers patrolling certainly makes the parks feel safer and their presence for well over a decade has enhanced these areas. I realise there is no legal obligation to provide the service but back in the late 1990's the service must have been deemed important enough for it to be introduced. What has changed? In my opinion nothing. The police are over stretched as it is and I do not see who is going to fill the void left.

On one hand the Council has invested heavily on improving the parks including many play areas and spent tens of thousands of pounds. The service which protects these areas from vandalism/damage is now being taken away. How much will it cost to keep repairing/ replacing the play equipment etc? Vandalism and damage in general in Hartsholme Park is certainly rare I am concerned that anti social behaviour will increase without the Urban Rangers presence. I hope that the Council does not regret this decision when the parks around Lincoln are no longer attracting the law abiding responsible people of this community as they are no longer deemed safe places to go.

I do hope the Council will reconsider their decision

yours sincerely

John Haw

M R N I

Monks Road Neighbourhood Initiative

Mr John Bibby
Director of Housing and Community Services
City Hall
LINCOLN
LN1 1DE

17 February 2013

Urban Rangers Consultation

Following letters circulated by City of Lincoln Council to park advisory groups a meeting was called by the Arboretum Group on Friday 8th February to consider the proposed cut of the urban rangers service. In addition to residents from the Abbey Ward, members of Hartsholme, Birchwood and Boultham Park groups were also present.

After a brief introduction by City Council representatives outlining the reasons behind the suggested cuts the matter was discussed at some length. Because of the financial restraints placed on the Council it was accepted that retaining the service in its present form was not an option. It was agreed, however, that the urban rangers were of great value in controlling anti-social behaviour, were highly visible, able to access difficult to reach areas and respond quickly to call-outs, made people feel safer and provided important support to the already stretched CCTV service. They are the "eyes and ears" of the Council.

The groups considered that the service was too important to be axed. In view of the financial difficulties faced by the Council they felt a solution might be found in seeking sponsorship from local businesses with the Council continuing to be responsible for the administration. It was therefore proposed that local firms should be approached by the groups in an attempt to fund the urban rangers service. As we understand the service will continue until the summer, it would allow time for the sponsorship scheme to be put in place. Would the Council be prepared to consider such a solution and meet us part-way in our efforts to save the service?

Chairman: John East, 11 Clarina Street, Lincoln, LN2 5LZ
Secretary: Britt Gallop, The Old Bakery, 38A Winn Street, Lincoln, LN2 5EN
Email: bgallop@tiscali.co.uk

A list of possible sponsors is being accumulated so we are all set for action and look forward to a positive response from the Council.

Yours sincerely

On behalf of

Arboretum, Birchwood, Boultham Park and Hartsholme Advisory Groups

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Britt Gallop', written in a cursive style.

Britt Gallop

Secretary

Monks Road Neighbourhood Initiative

As I work in Northbourne Park
Cafe for 7 years, I feel safe
knowing that there is urban
rangers across the road!
Without them there will be
so much trouble, as before
there was kids making fire's
trashing the play park's,
wrecks on the slide riding,
motorbikes on the grass, hunting
wild life the list can go on!
if they did go I would feel
safe bringing my young child
which many people feel the
same, dog walkers come a
long way to walk there class
in a safe park knowing there
are urban rangers, this will
stop many people coming!

Rosemary Hall

13 Funchase Brookwood
Lancaster LA16 0JX

Lesley Pipers Harts Holme Cafe

I'm beginning to hear, from many, many visitors to the park, that they are scared, fearful and very frightened because the Urban Rangers are about to be disbanded. The tales of anti-social behavior, not regulated by local police, are far too frequent to be mere coincidence.

I would appeal to the Council, who are making this decision, to reconsider.

The damage which will undoubtedly happen, will more than outweigh the costs of keeping this service active. - But there is no cost that can be put on 'safety'!

Please don't wait for something dreadful to happen before you make the case for this ongoing costs.

Appendix E(ii)

Extract from Committee

COMMONS ADVISORY GROUP

11 FEBRUARY 2013

16. Commons Rangers Redundancies

Lincoln Commons Horse Association presented a short report raising concerns regarding the potential loss of the Commons Ranger Service and questioned how this would affect the running of the Commons and the management plan for the future.

Steve Bird, Assistant Director, Community Services, Leisure and Sport:

- a. updated Commons Advisory Panel on further financial restraints imposed on the Council by the local government finance settlement
- b. advised that this had resulted in proposals put forward to form part of the strategy to achieve our financial target in 2013/14, which included withdrawal of the Urban Ranger and Commons Warden Service
- c. urged members of Commons Advisory Panel to respond to the consultation process either in person or together in groups within their individual organisations.

External Members of Commons Advisory Panel commented on the proposed cuts to the Urban Rangers and Commons Warden Service as follows:

- Comment: The cuts would be detrimental to the City resulting in further incidents of anti social behaviour on the City Commons.
- Question: Why couldn't the money ring fenced from parking charges on the South Common be used to fund the Commons Warden?
- Officer response: There was still a receipt to be added to the income for match day parking on Boxing Day 2012; it currently stood at £6,048.00. This sum of money would not fund a Commons Warden.
- Comment: The proposed cuts took out a whole tier of protection currently afforded to the City Commons and parks. Commons Advisory Panel should make its objections extremely clear; once this protection had gone it would be difficult to know who to contact in the event of incidents of anti social behaviour as the police did not get involved unless only in specific cases.
- Comment: It was difficult to comprehend why the Council were proposing to withdraw from a need for 4 rangers to police the Commons and parks to having none at all.
- Response by Chair: No one was saying this. The Council had been instructed to cut £3 million from its revenue budget. Urban Rangers had not always existed. We bought into the service when the police were short of financial resources. We had the resources then but not now. The police had a legal duty to respond to incidents of crime and disorder.

- Comment: We must assess which services remained essential to the Commons, for example, maintenance of fences. What did the rangers do? Were there other ways of performing essential tasks?
- Officer Response: The proposed cuts only related to the budget for the Commons Warden and Urban Rangers. The wider budget for fencing remained protected.
- Comment: There had been more anti social behaviour over the last few years; the Urban Rangers were excellent at pre-empting problems before they escalated.
- Comment: The situation in respect of the golf club lease should be reassessed to increase the Council's income stream.
- Response by Chair: The lease for the Carholme Club extended over a long period of time and was a small amount of money compared to the extent of the savings to be made. The core budget for the Commons still remained.

Councillor C Burke advised that although he fully agreed with the sentiments made; financial restraints imposed by central government meant that cuts had to go so deep we must dispose of essential services we believed in.

A discussion took place around how the community could respond positively to ease the pressure on the Commons should the proposed cuts go ahead. The following suggestions emerged from discussions held:

- Park Watch Schemes
- Volunteering
- Increased signage
- Engagement with the community
- Use of Community Service Volunteers
- Use of 'ring fenced' car parking fund to employ a part time coordinator to organise volunteers

RESOLVED that:

1. Commons Advisory Panel to make its views expressed collectively on the proposed cuts to the Commons Warden and Urban Rangers Service via the formal consultation process, expressing its deep regret and requesting in the strongest terms that the Council should not go ahead with the proposals.
2. In the event that the Council should have to take the decision to withdraw the Commons Warden and Urban Ranger Service; a special meeting of Commons Advisory Panel be convened to look at a way forward in the coordination of volunteers within organisations across the City and to set up a watch scheme for the Commons.
3. Members of the public, Karl McCartney, MP for Lincoln, and Alan Hardwick, Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincoln be invited to attend the above special meeting of Commons Advisory Panel.
4. Lincolnshire Police be invited to nominate an advisory representative to serve on the Commons Advisory Panel.

APPENDIX E(iii)

Petition for Reconsideration

When complete, please either:

- a) Please call 07799470231 to arrange collection of completed forms;

Or:

- b) deliver it to City of Lincoln Council, City Hall, Beaumont Fee Lincoln marked Private and Confidential FAO Urban Rangers

Topic: Objection to proposed closure of the Urban Ranger Service

What do you want the council to do? We (undersigned) would like to raise our objections to the planned closure of the Urban Ranger Service. The removal of the service will lower our feeling of safety whilst using the parks and may affect our usage of them. We also would like to point out that anti social behaviour will increase as will damage to our green spaces and we all do not see how the removal of this service versus the impact and increase in damage and anti social behaviour makes financial / business sense

Lead petitioner: Name: NIKKI HUGHES
Email address: W/A
Telephone: Home /
Work /

We, the undersigned, want the City of Lincoln Council:to:

Retain the Urban Ranger Service

APPENDIX F

Policy Scrutiny Committee 20 March 2013

37. Medium Term Financial Strategy 201318: Proposal to Withdraw and Close the Urban Ranger Service

John Bibby, Director of Housing and Community Services

1. presented the Business Case on the proposed changes to close and withdraw the Urban Ranger Service to contribute to the required budget savings targets set out in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.
2. highlighted the key drivers underpinning the review, as detailed in paragraph 3 of the report and advised on the staff consultation that had been undertaken.
3. gave an overview of the Business Case and highlighted the following:
 - Scope and Objectives of the Review
 - Summary of Existing Services
 - Staffing
 - Proposal Summary
 - Detailed Appraisal Option
 - Staffing Issues
 - Stakeholder Responses
 - Analysis of the Service Implications, Risk and Equality Impact Assessment Implementation Plan
4. advised on the Stakeholder Consultation that had taken place through various Parks Advisory Panels and summarised the responses received.
5. highlighted that a petition had been received and that the lead petitioner had been invited to tonight's meeting to present their views.
6. advised on the staffing implications and detailed the proposal for the deletion of three full time posts from the staffing establishment.
7. advised that the report had been split into two parts, due to some of the information within the report containing "exempt information" relating to the financial details of the affected post holders.
8. referred to the supplementary paperwork circulated at the meeting and highlighted the comments received from staff.

9. concluded that the proposed forecast budget savings from the closure of the service would be £383,830 over the 5 year Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Nikki Hughes, Lead Petitioner

1. advised that a petition had been circulated to object against the Council's proposal to close the Urban Ranger Service and added that local residents were concerned that the removal of the service would impact on the parks and green areas significantly.
2. referred to her own personal circumstances and stressed that the parks/ green areas were valuable assets to the communities, in particular to those who lived in more disadvantaged areas and were unable to afford day trips out for their children.
3. advised that the Urban Ranger Service was a beneficial service and made the community feel safe; and stressed that she was concerned about the safety of children if the service was withdrawn.
4. raised concern that there would be an increase in antisocial behaviour, in particular relating to gangs and drug abuse.
5. referred to the historic issues within Boutham Park regarding antisocial behaviour and littering including broken glass and used needles, which was a health and safety issue; and stressed that the issues would reappear if the Urban Ranger Service was to be withdrawn.
6. added that there were concerns that the Hartsholme Country Park would be used inappropriately and would have a detrimental impact on the campsite.
7. stressed that the Urban Rangers were proactive and felt that their services assisted in disbursing issues before they merged into serious incidents.
8. added that due to the Lincolnshire Police having limited resources they would be unable to apply this more proactive approach to their routine and would only manage issues in a reactive manner.
9. felt that there would be an increase in antisocial, littering, damage to the parks/ green space and risk to users, which would cost the Council more to resolve than retaining the service.
10. requested that the Council reconsider their proposal to close the Urban Ranger service.

Members' noted the comments raised by the Petitioner and asked the following clarification questions to officers accordingly:

Question/ Comment 1:

Members acknowledged the need for the Council to make savings, however, felt the closure of this service would have a detrimental impact on the community and asked if there was a possibility for the Council to provide a reduced service instead of withdrawing the service completely.

Response:

The Director of Housing and Community Services acknowledged members concerns, but felt that it would be unrealistic for the Council to provide a reduced service which was still fit for purpose, due to the nature of the role. He further stressed that due to the current financial situation and the need for the Council to made significant savings; frontline services would be affected.

Question/ Comment 2:

Members felt the removal of the Urban Ranger service would contradict the council's priority of protecting those poorest residents in the city who were affected by the recession, as they would use the parks/ open green spaces; and questioned if the council should identify alternative savings which would not have a negative impact on the council's priorities. They proposed that the Council should instead consider to withdraw the yearly funding to light up the Cathedral.

Response:

The Director of Housing and Community Services advised that the maintenance cost for the Cathedral was around £15k and would not make the significant savings required before 2017/18. He further advised that whilst all services have a link to the priorities, they felt this service did not have a direct link to these priorities.

Question/ Comment 3:

Members were concerned that the police had limited resources and were more reactive rather than proactive; and asked how the parks/ green areas would be managed in the future.

Response:

The Director of Housing and Community Services advised that unfortunately in the current climate, it is not possible to retain the service

given the financial background to the proposal. He outlined the duties of the police and highlighted that the Council still had officers delegated to monitor the parks on a regular basis. He advised that he could not guarantee the same level of response from the council but the sites would be inspected. He added however that these areas would only be monitored during normal office hours and would not be as proactive as the Urban Rangers.

Question/ Comment 4:

Members felt that it was likely that if the Urban Ranger service was removed, the costing for maintaining the parks would be significantly high.

They stressed that the value of complaints and retrospective events due to the loss of the service, would cost the council more than retaining the service, They stressed that there was a risk of tented villages, fires, joy riding and theft of fish.

Response:

The Director of Housing and Community Services advised that the Council had a duty of care to parks/ green spaces users and stressed that if the Council was made aware of an issue the Council would respond accordingly. He stressed that due to the reduction in services, the council would not be proactive and there would be a cost for resolving incidences, for example, removal of broken glass.

Question/ Comment 5:

Members questioned if the Council could obtain sponsorship from local businesses?

Response:

The Director of Housing and Community Services advised that the Council might be able to obtain sponsorship/ funding from local businesses, however, stressed that this was not a sustainable income and there was no guarantee the service could be continuously supported after a year. The Committee were concerned that the loss of the service could have a significant impact on the city. The following alternative recommendation was proposed by Councillor Kerry and seconded by Councillor Clayton-Hewson, which was debated accordingly:

- the Committee supports the receipt of the petition and recommends the Executive accepts the petition and its presentation to Council.

- Committee recommends to the Executive that the proposals in the business case be rejected and that the Executive reconsider the proposal to join the Urban Ranger service and the commons warden service together to provide some kind of cover

RESOLVED that

1. the contents of the petition be noted and the Executive be recommended to forward the Petition to Council for acceptance.
2. the Committee recommends the Executive reject the proposals in the business case;
3. and that the Executive be recommended to reconsider the proposal to join the Urban Ranger service and the Commons Warden service together to provide some savings but which would mitigate the risks across the city if the service was withdrawn completely.

Additional Information

Item No. 3

EXECUTIVE

25 MARCH 2013

SUBJECT:	MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2013-18 :PROPOSAL TO WITHDRAW AND CLOSE THE URBAN RANGER SERVICE: SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT
REPORT BY:	DIRECTOR OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
LEAD OFFICER:	STEVE BIRD ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (COMMUNITIES AND STREET SCENE)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Further to the report circulated with the agenda for the meeting, to present additional information relevant to the proposal to withdraw and close the Urban Ranger Service:
- Comments on the proposal received from Lincolnshire Police.
 - Additional comments received from staff
 - Further information on the scale and type of work undertaken by the Urban Ranger Service.

2. Comments from Lincolnshire Police

- 2.1 Comments on the proposal to withdraw and close the Urban Ranger Service were received from the Chief Inspector Local Policing for Lincoln & West Lindsey on 18 March 2013 as follows:

I would like to offer my community safety perspective in relation to the Urban Ranger Service. Urban Rangers are a front line resource which provides a reassuring presence in locations where you routinely do not see Police Officers or staff on duty unless in response to an incident. This is an important point; Rangers provide a reassuring and preventative presence, especially within our open and green space that ensures that low level anti social behaviour does not become serious or persistent crime or disorder.

Over recent years Rangers have been effective in tackling such things as the anti social use of motor cycles, which became a significant issue, especially within Greetwell Hollow, as well as helping to make parks, such as Hartsholme, a friendly and welcoming place, which encourages visitors even from outside of the City.

Urban Rangers for me represent a valuable public asset and an ideal opportunity to ensure that Lincoln remains a safe and welcoming place, as part of the wider protection team, which continues to evolve and tackle the issues which our community raises as their greatest concern.

In considering what effect their loss would have, I would have to state

that it may not be immediately obvious. However, my concern is that low level nuisance and anti social behaviour will increase within our parks and that perversely, reporting of such incidents will actually decrease in correlation with a decrease in public confidence and attendance.

3. Further comments from staff

- 3.1 Having consulted and invited comments from staff on the initial proposal, copies of the final committee report and business case relating to the proposal to withdraw and close the Urban Ranger Services were shared with the affected staff and a further joint response received from them as follows:

We have received a copy of the documents and wish to raise some points in relation to omissions/oversights. There are some points within the Commons Warden case that we feel should have been included in the Urban Ranger Service case namely:

- Issuing of fixed penalty notices for dog fouling and littering are not included in the Urban Ranger Service case*
- Liaison with Community Services staff and grounds maintenance contractors to ensure parks and open spaces are well maintained.*

We would request these points are raised.

- 3.2 This further response from staff should be read in conjunction with the staff comments already received as set out in Section E and Appendix D of the Business Case

4. Further information on the scale and type of work undertaken by the Urban Ranger Service.

- 4.1 Further information on the scale and type of incidents dealt with by the Urban Ranger Service has been requested and the Community Services Manager has compiled a summary analysis of the incidents dealt with in 2012 (attached as Appendix G).
- 4.2 This provides a summary analysis of the number, nature and type of incidents dealt with by the Urban Ranger Service during the calendar year 2012, together with comments on how such matters might be responded to (or not as the case may be) if the service is withdrawn.
- 4.3 This information supplements the information set out in Section B of the Business Case.

URBAN RANGER INCIDENTS 2012						
Category / Description	TOTAL number of Incidents	REACTIVE Attended in response to call	PROACTIVE Discovered during patrols or reported by public in person during patrols	ACTION CURRENTLY TAKEN BY URS	Suggested alternative reactive response	Suggested alternative proactive response
Bins – overflowing, vandalised, missing	61	0	61	URS pass to contractor to resolve	Issues will be passed directly to the contractor for resolution, if sufficient information is provided by the individual reporting. If not, issue will be passed to CCO, to visit the site, gather more information and pass to the contractor.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Responses are expected to be slower as a result. Issue would then be passed to contractor.
Animals – loose dogs, lost dogs, horses loose, distressed animal, animal welfare	111	36	75	Various – can be dealt with directly by the Urban Ranger (help locate lost dog, free stranded animal) or alongside partner organisation, or passed to relevant individual / organisation	Issues passed directly to PPASB (Animal Warden) if relating to animal welfare or loose animal. PPASB may pass on to RSPCA, Lincoln Commons Horse Association or other relevant organisation. No action will be taken in relation to lost animals.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue might be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Issue would then be passed to PPASB or another organisation, dependant on circumstances.
Motorbikes – individuals or groups riding bikes or mini motos in parks	41	16	25	URS speak to offenders and advise that behaviour is not acceptable. If appropriate bring to attention of Police / CCTV	Public will be encouraged to contact Lincs Police who will prioritise response based on severity and resource available.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue may be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Issue would then be passed to Police who would prioritise and respond if possible.
Alcohol – drinking and drinking related aggression	12	6	6	URS speak to individuals, move on, advise on not leaving litter, not to be a nuisance to others. Aid Police in response.	Issues passed by Customer Services to PPASB, or Lincs Police dependant on severity. In either case response will be dependant on resource available.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue may be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Issue would then be passed to Police or PPASB who would prioritise and respond if possible.
Drugs – individuals taking drugs in parks / open spaces	3	1	2	URS speak to individual and advise behaviour must stop. Where appropriate refer to Lincs Police / aid Police in response. Ensure drug-related litter is removed.	Public will be encouraged to contact Lincs Police who will prioritise response based on severity and resource available.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue may be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Issue would then be passed to Police who would prioritise and respond if possible.
Fly tipping	88	3	85	URS advise PPASB if evidence may be available. Otherwise issue work order to contractor for removal. Either way ensure removal.	Customer Services will refer to CCO who will assess whether evidence is available. Refer to PPASB if so. Refer direct to contractor for removal if not. Either way ensure removal.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Responses are expected to be slower as a result. CCO would pass to PPASB if evidence may be available, or direct to contractor for removal otherwise. Either way ensure removal.
Graffiti	15	2	13	URS remove if straightforward to do so, or report to contractor for removal	Customer Services refer CCO to check location, assess if a photographic record if required, help track patterns and refer to contractor for removal.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Responses are expected to be slower as a result.

Groups – dealing with groups who may be intimidating to others, or who are causing nuisance to others	15	0	15	URS speak to groups, advise on not causing nuisance to others, remind them of any relevant bye laws, where appropriate disperse and move on, or contact Police.	Issues passed by Customer Services to PPASB, or Lincs Police dependant on severity. In either case response will be dependant on resource available.	Issue would then be passed to contractor after record made in order to help track patterns. Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue may be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Issue would then be passed to Police or PPASB who would prioritise and respond if possible.
Homeless – checking welfare, providing advice on where to go, moving on homeless-related camping	7	2	5	URS speak to individuals, give advice about where they can go for help if required, advise on any relevant bye laws and avoiding nuisance to others.	Customer Services report to Homelessness Officer.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. It is possible that an issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Issue would then be passed to Homelessness Officer.
Litter	96	2	94	URS remove litter themselves or refer to contractor for larger quantities. In some cases, URS ask groups or individuals to pick up litter that their group has left. Where appropriate issue FPN.	Customer Services pass direct to contractor. In the event of an individual witnessed littering, and if the caller is happy to be a witness, issue passed first to PPASB.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Responses are expected to be slower as a result. Issue would then be passed to contractor.
Hazardous litter – discarded needles and other drug-related litter, glass, dog fouling including intelligence re offenders	51	5	46	URS remove needles / glass themselves, or refer to contractor. Where appropriate issue FPN.	Customer Services pass direct to contractor for emergency removal. In the event of an individual witnessed littering, and if the caller is happy to be a witness, issue passed first to PPASB.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Responses are expected to be slower as a result. Issue would then be passed to contractor for emergency response.
Missing person – reported missing or vulnerable person found	25	19	6	URS help to look for a missing person in response to a report from the Police or a member of the public, aided by their knowledge of the area and off-road bikes, or find a vulnerable person alone in an open space and help reunite them.	Public will be encouraged to contact Lincs Police.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. It is possible that an issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Issue would then be passed to Lincs Police.

Other vehicle – issue relating to a vehicle other than a motorbike, e.g. car driving in to park, abandoned or blocking access.	18	5	13	URS speak to driver and move on, or pass to CCO if abandoned vehicle.	If reported abandoned vehicle, pass to CCO. If considered to be a H&S issue, CCO would deal with the matter as a priority.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. It is possible that an issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Issue would then be dealt with as appropriate (as a matter of priority if H&S issue).
Injured / distressed adult / child	9	1	8	Give first aid, help to safe point or call ambulance (make report if accident relating to use of open space facilities) URS attend schools on invitation, to talk about environmental issues including looking after our parks and open spaces, respect for the environment and other people, not breaking laws and bye laws.	Caller advised to contact emergency services. Details taken if accident relating to use of open space. This service will no longer be available.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. It is possible that an issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Issue would then be passed to Lincs Police. This service will no longer be available.
School talk	23	23	n/a			
Vandalism / Damage to gate / fencing / play equipment / sports pitches or other facilities / secure unlocked gate	161	22	139	Attend to damage directly if possible. Otherwise report to relevant officer / contractor to repair. If aware of offender, speak to them or refer to Lincs Police if appropriate. Where appropriate take legal advice on further action.	Call referred to CCO who will assess and pass on to relevant contractor. Caller advised to contact Lincs Police if witnessed vandalism.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Responses are expected to be slower as a result. Issue would then be passed to contractor.
Damage to green environment / wildlife	35	6	29	Attend to damage directly if possible. Otherwise report to relevant officer / contractor to repair.	Call referred to CCO who will assess and pass on to relevant contractor. Caller advised to contact Lincs Police if witnessed vandalism	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Responses are expected to be slower as a result. Issue would then be passed to contractor.
Issue Fixed Penalty Notice for litter or dog fouling	3	0	3	URS speak to offender, takes name and address and explains that enforcement action may be taken. Passed information to Enforcement Officer for FPN to be issued, and any follow-up paperwork.	In the event of a member of the public reporting that they have witnessed an offence, Customer Services would refer them to PPASB who would review the case, take statements and issue a FPN if appropriate, along with any follow-up paperwork.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. In the event of a member of staff witnessing and offence whilst visiting the site for another reason, or a member of the public approaching them with the details of an offence, the information would be passed to PPASB. PPASB would review the case, take statements and issue a FPN if appropriate, along with any follow-up paperwork.
Concern about standards of maintenance	16	3	13	URS speak to complainant (if reactive) and pass comments to relevant	Call referred to CCO who will take action as appropriate.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc.

or facilities	22	4	18	officer (or take direct action if appropriate)	URS speak to individuals if appropriate and safe to do so. Aid Police with their knowledge of the area and off-road bikes. Provide information to Police. Advise public when to talk to Police.	Caller advised to contact Lincs Police who will prioritise and take action where possible, dependant on resources available.	Responses are expected to be slower as a result. Issue would then be passed to relevant member of staff. Proactive patrols would not be replaced. It is possible that an issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Issue would then be passed to Lincs Police.
Fire – talk to individuals starting fires, clearing fire damage	28	5	23	URS speak to individuals if known. Advise on bye laws. Move on. Ensure fire out and cleared up. Where appropriate take legal advice on further action and take part in that further action as required.	Caller advised to contact Fire Brigade if fire still burning. Referred to CCO who will direct contractor to ensure fire is out and remains are cleared.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Responses are expected to be slower as a result. Issue would then be passed to Fire Brigade or contractor as appropriate.	
Camping – moving on campers	9	5	4	URS speak to individuals if known. Advise on bye laws. Move on. Ensure any mess is cleared. Where appropriate, take legal advice on further action and take part in that further action.	CCO would attend and make an assessment if resources allow.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue might be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, in which case member of staff would advise offender on bye laws and, if comfortable doing so, move them on.	
General public queries / interaction incl for other services	35	4	31	URS speak to public and advise / pass on comments / provide contact details where appropriate.	Call referred to CCO who will deal with each case as appropriate.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. It is possible that a member of the public would approach a member of staff visiting the site for another reason, in which case their comment / enquiry would be dealt with as appropriate.	
Other – carry out survey / take photographs	5	4	1	URS carry out work in response to management requests.	Other staff carry out the work, as appropriate.	N/A	
Other bye law infringement	6	2	4	URS speak to offender, advise on bye laws, move on. Where appropriate, take legal advice with a view to further action and take part in that further action.	CCO would attend and make an assessment if resources allow.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue might be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, in which case member of staff would advise offender on bye laws and, if comfortable doing so, move them on.	
Total	892	176 (19.7%)	716 (80.3%)				

THESE FIGURES ARE BASED ON A SAMPLE YEAR AND MAY VARY

CCO = Community Contracts Officer

PPASB = Public Protection & Anti-Social Behaviour team

APPENDIX A(ii)

Minute Extract

Executive: 25 March 2013

137. Medium Term Financial Strategy 201318: Proposal to Withdraw and Close the Urban Ranger Service

Purpose of Report

To present to the Executive the business case relating to a proposal to close and withdraw the Urban Ranger service in order to contribute to the required budget savings targets set out in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Decision

1. That the proposed closure of the Urban Ranger service be approved.
2. That the Director of Housing and Community Services be authorised to issue notices of redundancy to the three affected members of staff and proceed with the implementation of the decision in accordance with the Council's Management of Change policy and procedures.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Policy Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on the 20 March 2013 requested the Executive to consider joining the Urban Ranger Service and the Commons Warden Service to provide some savings which would mitigate the risks across the city if the service was withdrawn completely. This was rejected for the reasons set out in the "Reason for Decision" below.

Reason for Decision

Having regard to the consultation responses provided by staff and the public, in addition to the views of the Policy Scrutiny Committee and the City of Lincoln Council and Employee Joint Consultative Committee, the Executive resolved that the closure of the Urban Rangers service was necessary in order to contribute savings towards the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

In common with other services being considered for closure [minutes nos. 138 & 139], the Urban Rangers service was discretionary and while it provided a valuable service to users of the city's parks and open spaces it did not directly contribute to the Council's refocused strategic priorities and the withdrawal of the service would contribute significantly towards the achievement of the necessary financial savings set out in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

The Council needed to find £1 million of ongoing revenue savings in

2013/14, rising to £3 million of ongoing revenue savings by 2016/17. Every effort had been made to implement savings without an impact on frontline services but the Council had now reached a point where it was necessary to cease provision of some discretionary nonstatutory services in order to achieve the level of savings required as a result of the Government's austerity programme.

APPENDIX B(i)

Extract from Committee

EXECUTIVE

25 MARCH 2013

SUBJECT: MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2013-18 :PROPOSAL TO WITHDRAW AND CLOSE THE COMMONS WARDEN SERVICE [PART A]

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF HOUSING & COMMUNITY SERVICES

LEAD OFFICER: STEVE BIRD, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (COMMUNITIES & STREET SCENE)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present to Executive the Business Case relating to a proposal to close and withdraw the Commons Warden Service in order to contribute to the required budget savings targets set out in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The attached Business Case (**Appendix 1**) examines the implications of a proposal to close and withdraw the Commons Warden Service. The proposal, if implemented, would involve the deletion of one post from the staffing establishment and the redundancy (or potential redeployment if possible) of 1 full time member of staff.

3. Background

- 3.1 The key drivers underpinning this review are:

- The local government finance settlement the City Of Lincoln Council received in December 2012 has left the Council needing to find £1million of ongoing savings in 2013/14, rising to an estimated £3million per annum by 2016/17.
- Whilst the Council remains committed to Lean systems reviews in order to achieve cost efficiencies the scale of reductions required now mean that the Council finds itself at the point where it can no longer make the size of savings demanded without impacting on front line services.
- Towards the end of 2012 the Leader of the Council, along with Executive members and the Corporate Management Team conducted a detailed review of Council spending.
- A driving principle of this review was to accept that the organisation must do fewer things well and therefore, although the Strategic Plan was only approved last year, careful consideration was given to further refocusing the Council's priorities. A number of considerations has led to these now being defined as:
 - **Growing the local economy**
 - **Protecting the city's poorest people from the effects of the**

recession

• Increasing the supply of affordable housing

- Once this had taken place the Executive and Corporate Management Team undertook a detailed review of the Council's current budgets, including a review of all savings achieved since 2008. Budgets were considered from a number of perspectives including the way in which they contributed to these priorities.
- In addition to ensuring that the Council balances its budget it is committed to achieving a position of financial sustainability from which the Council has a steady base and is in the best position to grow moving forward. A revised strategy entitled "Towards Financial Sustainability" (TFS) has been developed to deliver this.
- As part of this fundamental review and the TFS Strategy a number of potential savings have been identified for 2013/14 over a wide range of services. These savings include, amongst others, a proposal to withdraw the Commons Warden Service during 2013/14.

These drivers are set out in the attached Business Case.

3.2 The proposed closure and withdrawal of the Commons Warden Service was put to staff and key stakeholders in January 2013.

- Formal presentations to trade unions through the Joint Consultative Committee on the Council's financial position and an initial face to face meeting with trade union representatives have been held and formal consultation in relation to this proposal began on 17 January 2013 with those staff directly affected.
- The Commons Advisory Panel was also advised of the proposal and invited to submit their views and comments. The Commons Advisory Panel discussed the matter at its meeting on 11 February 2013 and the relevant extract from the minutes of that meeting is enclosed with the Business Case.

3.3 During February 2013 a number of individual responses were received from interested stakeholders and these responses are also set out in the attached Business Case.

4. Business Case (attached)

4.1 The Business Case setting out the proposal and an examination of the risks and service impact is attached including:

- Details of the scope and objectives of the review
- Summary of existing service provision including staffing arrangements and staffing establishment
- Summary of the proposal and reasons for the proposed withdrawal and closure of the service
- Appraisal of the proposal including financial and staffing implications
- Stakeholder responses to the proposed withdrawal and closure of the service
- Analysis of the service impacts, principle risks associated with the proposal and equality impacts.
- Outline implementation plan and timetable if the proposal is approved.

- Key decisions required

5. Stakeholder consultation

5.1 The proposal to withdraw and close the Commons Warden Service has been subject to consultation through the Commons Advisory Panel. The Panel discussed the proposal to close and withdraw the Commons Warden Service at its meeting on 11 February and resolved that:

- Commons Advisory Panel to make its views expressed collectively on the proposed cuts to the Commons Warden and Urban Rangers Service via the formal consultation process, expressing its deep regret and requesting in the strongest terms that the Council should not go ahead with the proposals.
- In the event that the Council should have to take the decision to withdraw the Commons Warden and Urban Ranger Service a special meeting of Commons Advisory Panel be convened to look at a way forward in the coordination of volunteers within organisations across the City and to set up a watch scheme for the Commons.
- Members of the public, Karl McCartney, MP for Lincoln, and Alan Hardwick, Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincoln be invited to attend the above special meeting of Commons Advisory Panel.
- Lincolnshire Police be invited to nominate an advisory representative to serve on the Commons Advisory Panel.

A copy of the relevant extract from the minutes of the Commons Advisory Panel meeting is enclosed with Appendix E to the attached Business Case.

5.2 Views and comments have also been received from the following individual organisations:

- West End Residents Association
- Lincoln Commons Horse Association
- Lincoln Fieldpaths Association
- Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust
- Open Spaces Society
- Cross O'Cliff Residents Association
- Long Leys Road Residents Association

These responses are summarised in Section F of the Business Case and set out in full in Appendix E to the Business Case. All of the responses received to date express objections to or concerns about the proposed withdrawal of the service.

6. Timeline

6.1 The outline timeline for withdrawal and closure of the service is included within Section H of the Business Case and is designed to allow for an orderly wind-down and exit from the service, the giving of the requisite redundancy notice period for affected staff and consideration of opportunities for redeployment

through the Council's redeployment pool

- 6.2 The proposed withdrawal and closure of the service may be accelerated if employees under notice of redundancy have opportunity of redeployment elsewhere in the authority or job offers outside the authority conditional upon them taking up employment prior to the planned closure date.

7. Resource Implications

Finance (including impact on Savings Targets)

- 7.1 The forecast budget savings arising from a decision to close the Commons Warden Service against current expenditure over the 5 years of the current Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) are as follows:

Net saving 2013/14 (part year)	£7,100
Net saving 2014/15	£36,650
Net saving 2015/16	£37,300
Net saving 2016/17	£37,970
Net saving 2017/18	£38,650
Total saving over the 5 year MTFS	£157,670

- 7.2 Savings in 2013/14 assume withdrawal and closure of the service by July 1st i.e. 9 months of savings only in first year and also includes redundancy costs and other salary adjustments in 2013/14 that may be incurred in relation to the deletion of the posts of Commons Warden. Such costs will be funded from the Invest to Save fund.
- 7.3 The full cost breakdown is detailed in a separate report under Part B of this agenda.
- 7.4 These savings are costed against current budget expenditure. There is a possibility that one of the consequences of the withdrawal of the service may be an increase in the level of vandalism and other damage to the Commons as a result of the withdrawal of the regular patrols made by the Commons Warden but this cannot be accurately forecast.

Staffing

- 7.5 Staffing implications are set out in **Section E** of the Business Case. The Council's Management of Change Policy has been applied.
- 7.6 Consultation has taken place with staff and unions on the proposed closure of the service. The end of the first stage of formal consultation on the proposal was 21st February 2013. The Council's Joint Consultative Committee will consider the proposal at its meeting on 19 March 2013. Any issues highlighted in the responses received will be summarised in the Appendix D to the Detailed Business Case.

8. Policy Impacts – Strategic Priorities

- 8.1 The City Council needs to find £1million of ongoing revenue savings in 2013/14, rising to £3million ongoing revenue savings by 2016/17. Every effort has been made to implement savings without impact on front-line services but the Council has now reached a point where it is necessary to cease provision of some discretionary non-statutory services in order to achieve the level of savings required as a result of the Government's austerity programme. The Council has therefore refocused its strategic priorities as follows:
- Growing the local economy
 - Protecting the city's poorest people from the effects of the recession
 - Increasing the supply of affordable housing
- 8.2 The Commons Warden Service is a discretionary service that provides a valuable service to users of the city's commons but does not directly contribute to the Council's refocused strategic priorities set out above and withdrawal of the service would contribute significantly to achievement of the necessary financial savings set out in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 8.3 The risks and impacts of withdrawal are set out in the Business Case. Should the Council's Executive decide not to proceed with withdrawal and closure of the service equivalent levels of savings would need to be identified from other service areas.

9. Recommendation

- 9.1 Executive is asked to:
1. Consider the attached Business Case relating to the proposal to withdraw and close the Commons Warden Service taking into account:
 - a. The need to find significant financial savings in the General Fund Revenue budget to meet the targets set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy
 - b. The responses received to the proposal from stakeholders and the Commons Advisory Panel.
 - c. The views of the Policy Scrutiny Committee meeting 20 March
 - d. The views of the Joint Consultative Committee meeting 19 March 2013.
 2. Subject to consideration of the Business Case and responses to the proposed closure of the service, to approve or otherwise the proposal to withdraw and close the Commons Warden Service
 3. In the event of a decision to close the service, to authorise the Director of Housing & Community Services to issue notices of redundancy to the one affected member of staff and to proceed to implement the decision in accordance with the Council's managing change policy and procedures.

Key Decision

Key Decision Reference NA

No.

Do the Exempt Information Categories Apply No – Any exempt information is contained within a separate report in Part B of the agenda for this Committee

Call In and Urgency: Is the decision one to which Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply? No

Does the report contain Appendices? Yes

If Yes, how many Appendices? One: Business Case and associated appendices

List of Background Papers: None

Lead Officer: Steve Bird
Assistant Director (Communities & Street Scene)
Tel 873421

**Business Case for withdrawing the Commons Warden
Service**

March 2013

**Report By: Director of Housing & Community Services
Lead Officer: Steve Bird, Assistant Director (Communities &
Street Scene)**

A. Scope and Objectives of the review

Drivers for the Review of the Service:

The local government finance settlement the City Of Lincoln Council received in December 2012 has left the Council needing to find £1million of ongoing savings in 2013/14, rising to an estimated £3million per annum by 2016/17.

Whilst the Council is committed to Lean systems reviews in order to achieve cost efficiencies and reductions of the scale required, we now find ourselves at the point where we can no longer make the size of savings demanded of us without impacting on the services we provide.

Towards the end of 2012 the Leader of the Council, along with Executive members and the Corporate Management Team conducted a detailed review of our spending.

A driving principle of this review was to accept that the organisation must do fewer things well and therefore, although the Strategic Plan was only approved last year, careful consideration was given to further refocusing the Council's priorities. A number of considerations has led to these now being defined as:

- ❖ **Growing the local economy**

- ❖ **Protecting the city's poorest people from the effects of the recession**

- ❖ **Increasing the supply of affordable housing**

Once this had taken place the Executive and Corporate Management Team undertook a detailed review of the Council's current budgets, including a review of all savings achieved since 2008. Budgets were considered from a number of perspectives including the way in which they contributed to these priorities.

In addition to ensuring that the Council balances its budget it is committed to achieving a position of financial sustainability from which the Council has a steady base and is in the best position to grow moving forward. A revised strategy entitled "Towards Financial Sustainability" (TFS) has been developed to deliver this.

As part of this fundamental review under the Council's Towards Financial Sustainability Programme a number of potential savings have been identified for 2013/14. These savings include, amongst others, a proposal to withdraw the Commons Warden Service during 2013/14.

B. Summary of the existing service

Current Service Delivery:

The city's Commons Warden Service was introduced in February 2007 by the appointment of a single Commons Warden whose role and focus is to take prime responsibility for co-ordination of all issues relating to the day to day management and maintenance of the commons.

The service employs one full time Commons Officer on a 37 hour per week contract but working to a rota spread over seven days of the week. The post is dedicated to the care of the Commons, and patrols all three of Lincoln's commons addressing issues of both maintenance and management. Similar to the Urban Ranger service, patrols are undertaken using a motorcycle suitable for off-road use.

In order to provide a physical presence when the commons are most used the Commons Warden operates to a shift pattern that includes working outside normal hours, and although dedicated solely to patrol of the commons the Commons Warden's working rota is coordinated with that of the Urban Ranger Service to try to ensure that cover is available for the Commons Wardens shift patterns, holidays & any long term sickness absences.

The Commons Warden works out of a base at Hartsholme Country Park so as to enable the Warden to draw on nature conservation expertise within that Team, but he/she also has a work station at the Grandstand Community Centre on the West Common that is used frequently to provide an on-site presence and improve accessibility to commons users and visitors.

Alongside regular high visibility patrols of the Commons the main duties and responsibilities of the post include (in no particular order):

- Issue of fixed penalty notices for dog fouling and littering
- Addressing, deterring and reporting anti-social behaviour and illegal use of the commons
- Liaison with the Community Services staff and grounds maintenance contractor to ensure the commons are well maintained
- Acting in an ambassadorial role, meeting and talking to users and visitors to the Commons to promote responsible use of the Commons and address any concerns they may have
- Promoting the commons with those who don't use the commons
- Development and delivery of the Commons Management Plan and associated action plan.
- Attending meetings with relevant environmental groups and the Commons Advisory Panel

The Commons Warden is equipped with a high visibility uniform and operates mobile patrols of the Council's commons by motorcycle and on foot in an extended shift system covering evenings and weekends which sees the Warden work some evenings and weekends and bank holidays when

Commons use is at a peak. The Commons Warden works under the direction of the Team Leader (Open Spaces) and works in coordination with the Urban Ranger Service, the Council's Anti-social Behaviour Team and the Police.

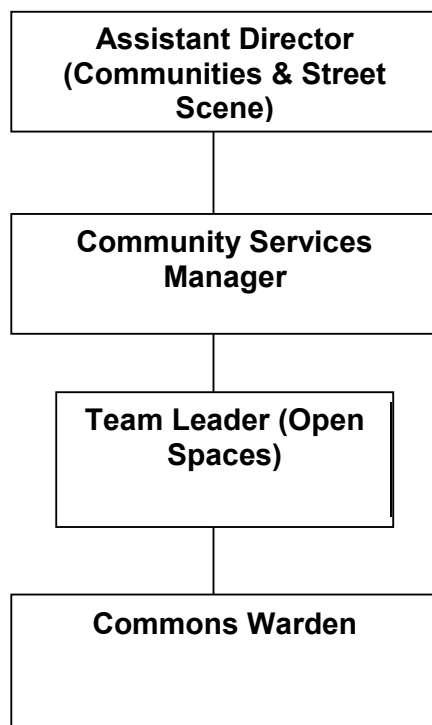
Staffing:

The Commons Warden Service currently consist of the following staff -

- 1 Commons Warden (Full time post – salary scale 6)

Overall line management of the Commons Warden is undertaken by the Team Leader (Open Spaces) who also has responsibility for a range of other services including day to day management of the council's grounds maintenance contracts

Current Structure – Urban Ranger Service



Description of key roles from Job Description:

The key duties and responsibilities of the Commons Warden are to:

1. To carry out patrols of common land (50%)
2. To offer advice and assistance to the public (5%)
3. To co-ordinate/assist with the apprehension of those in breach of the Commons Act or Council policies, and present documentation and evidence sufficient to secure prosecutions (15%)
4. To draft a management plan and information for the commons, and to submit applications for funding (10%)
5. To collect and collate information and general data, including historic information and information on biodiversity, in relation to Lincoln's commons (10%)
6. To participate in the organisation and presentation of talks to schools and other interested groups on the role of the service in connection with the promotion of open spaces (5%)
7. To be responsible for the security of all equipment and carry out regular checks and basic maintenance (5%)
8. To ensure that site specific health & safety tasks are carried out as directed by the designated Responsible Officer

The proportion of time allocated to each element of the job is indicative only and may vary from time to time

C. Proposal Summary

Outline proposal

The proposal is for the full withdrawal of the Commons Warden Service and deletion of the post of Commons Warden from the staffing establishment in order to contribute to the £3m budget savings identified in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Full year revenue savings will be of the order of £36,650 in 2014/15. Actual savings in 2013/14 will be of the order of £7,100, based on 9 months of savings and potential redundancy costs if staff cannot be redeployed. Withdrawal of the service will provide net revenue savings of £157,670 to the General Fund over the life of the Medium Term Financial Strategy as illustrated in Section D.

As the staffing resources available to the Commons Warden Service are limited to 1 post the option of providing a lower level of service based on lower staffing levels are extremely limited. The option of replacing the current full time post with a part time post could be considered however this will not

- a) Contribute significantly towards the savings targets identified in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy / Towards Financial Sustainability Programme;
- b) Deliver against the principle of doing fewer things well – a part time post will inevitably lead to a decline in outputs.
- c) Will not fundamentally contribute to the revised Council priorities.
- d) Will not provide sufficient staff hours to operate a rota of patrols and other activities covering weekdays, weekends and evenings as now and provide sufficient resilience of service allowing for holiday entitlements and any sickness absence.

The scope and brief of this review has been to examine a proposal to close and withdraw the service and therefore these options have not been considered in any more detail at this stage.

D. Detailed appraisal of option

The withdrawal of the Commons Warden Service and the deletion of the 1 post of Commons Warden will involve the cessation of the service and related activities in section B above or (where essential), the delivery of elements of those activities in an alternative way. For example the Council will still have a duty to respond urgently to reports of vandalism and damage on the Commons which present an immediate health and safety risk to users and would need to make alternative arrangements via other staff or contractors to respond to such reports from the public but this would be a purely limited responsive service.

It is inevitable that the withdrawal of the service will lead to both a perceived and actual reduction in the provision of services to users of the Council's Commons.

The withdrawal of the Commons Warden Service will mean that the commons will no longer be routinely patrolled and may add to the public's fear of crime and a potential increase in anti-social behaviour and vandalism on the commons but it is difficult to assess the extent or cost of any such impact and this will need to be kept under review.

Any reports of criminal activity, anti-social behaviour or vandalism on the Commons will need to be referred on directly to the Police and/or to the Council's Anti-social Behaviour Team and be prioritised along with other reports of such activity. However given the existing workloads and competing demands on such services it is inevitable that service levels in terms of responses to reports of anti-social behaviour and breaches of commons bye-laws will be adversely affected.

The Commons Management Plan sets out a number of actions, responsibility for which would fall to the Commons Warden post to implement. Deletion of the post will not necessarily mean that the Commons Management Plan cannot be delivered but the timescale over which it may be delivered will have to be extended.

Savings identified with the proposal:

A summary of the predicted savings against current budgets are as follows–

Year	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Net savings	£7,100*	£36,650	£37,300	£37,970	£38,650

* 2013/14 savings based on withdrawal of service from 1 July 2013, therefore delivering savings from start of qtr 2. Identified savings include potential redundancy costs

A more detailed breakdown of the financial data including staff redundancy costs is presented in the report in Part B of the agenda for the meeting.

E. Staffing Issues

Under this proposal, **one full time post** will be deleted from the organisational structure.

- Commons Warden (Salary Scale 6)

The post is currently filled on a permanent appointment and should the Council proceed with the proposal to withdraw the service the post holder would be at risk of redundancy unless he/she can be redeployed to suitable alternative employment within the Council.

If the service is closed then the post of Team Leader (Open Spaces) will at some point need the job description and person specification revising. However because the Commons Warden Service forms a relatively small part of the duties and responsibilities and extended range of services managed by that post it is not envisaged that the changes will substantially affect the salary grade of the post. The post of Team Leader has not therefore been formally included in the current consultation although the post holder is fully aware of the proposal.

The Council's Management of Change Policy is being applied in terms of consultation on this proposal and the affected member of staff has been notified of the proposal and consulted under the Policy including the right of representation by their trade union or other representative.

The post holder has not submitted any written comments in response to the proposed closure of the service.

The Unison trade union has submitted a general response to the package of measures and proposed budget savings identified in the Medium Term Financial Strategy and in regard to the Commons Warden and Urban Ranger Service commented generally as follows:

- “Unison acknowledges the need to save money due to government cutbacks, however the withdrawal of services should always be a last resort. Not only do withdrawal of services lower the public’s esteem of the Council, but also the dramatic changes to individual staff members affected by possible redundancy, affect, hugely, staff morale throughout the authority.”

On the specific proposal to withdraw the Commons Warden service Unison commented as follows:

- “the public perception is that the Council don’t care about anti-social behaviour and vandalism”

In the event that Council decide to proceed with the proposal to close the Commons Warden Service the current post holder will be issued with redundancy notices and unless suitable alternative employment can be found for the employee through the Redeployment Pool he/she would be entitled to redundancy payments calculated in accordance with the Council’s Redundancy Payments Scheme. Further details are set out in the report in Part B of the agenda for the meeting.

F. Stakeholder Responses

Following announcement of the proposed closure of the Commons Warden Service alongside the publication of the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy the Commons Advisory Panel was advised of the proposal and the Panel’s comments and or those of the constituent member & member organisations were invited.

Comments on the proposed closure of the Commons Warden Service have been received from:

- West end Residents Association
- Lincoln Commons Horse Association
- Lincolnshire Fieldpaths Association
- Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust

- Open Spaces Society
- Cross O Cliff Residents Association
- Long Leys Road Residents Association

These responses are set out in **Appendix E (i)**

For completeness the relevant extract from the minutes of the Commons Advisory Panel meeting held on 11 February 2013 at which the proposal for closure and withdrawal of the Commons Warden Service was discussed are attached at **Appendix E (ii)**

All of the responses express concern at the proposal to close and withdraw the Commons Warden Service. The Commons Advisory Panel resolved to request in the strongest terms that the Council should not go ahead with the proposal. However in the event that the Council do decide to proceed with the proposal the Commons Advisory Panel have agreed to convene a meeting to explore ways in which some form of volunteer group and “commons watch” may be established.

G. Analysis of the Service Implications, Risk and Equality Impact Assessment

A summary of the main concerns raised in response to the proposals and identified risks and mitigations from withdrawing the service are set out below;

Comments/Impact/Risk	Mitigation
<p>Lincoln Commons Horse Association</p> <p>Consider that the Commons Warden and Urban Rangers have made Lincoln’s open spaces better places since their introduction.</p> <p>Reduced liaison for commons could lead to worsening condition of the</p>	<p>The Council has an established Community Services Team, which includes one Team Leader dedicated to open space management. This person was the key point of contact before the Commons Warden Service was established, and would remain</p>

<p>commons and poorer standards for associated horse welfare and public safety issues.</p> <p>Unclear how new management plan for commons will be progressed without dedicated resource.</p> <p>Unclear who will now tackle ASB issues and believe that the open spaces generally will be less safe.</p>	<p>so if the warden service is lost. In the absence of a dedicated staffing resource in the form of the Commons Warden and other work pressures may mean that responses to general complaints/enquiries may not be dealt with as promptly or detailed, the Council has a general duty to ensure that any immediate health and safety issues would continue to be addressed promptly.</p> <p>The action plan arising from the Commons Management Plan would be affected by the loss of staff resource, and whilst it would remain as an agreed and endorsed plan for the commons, delivery of the action points within it would need to be prioritised against other Community Services commitments.</p> <p>The enforcement of laws and byelaws is a matter that would have to be reported to, and prioritised by the Police.</p> <p>If not a Police matter, general Anti-social behaviour issues would be picked up and prioritised by the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Team.</p>
<p>Long Leys Residents Association</p> <p>Consider that the Commons Warden and Urban Rangers have made Lincoln's open spaces better places since their introduction.</p> <p>Notes the legal duty of the Council to maintain the commons.</p> <p>Considers that the protection of the commons will be put at risk</p> <p>Unclear how new management plan for commons will be progressed</p>	<p>The Council accepts its responsibilities under the Lincoln City Council Act, and will ensure that it prioritises work and action at these sites accordingly.</p> <p>See comments above.</p> <p>See comments above.</p>

<p>without dedicated resource.</p> <p>Asks who will provide enforcement in open spaces?</p>	<p>The enforcement of laws and byelaws is a matter that would have to be reported to and be prioritised by the Police.</p>
<p>West End Residents Association</p> <p>Consider that the Commons Warden and Urban Rangers have made Lincoln's open spaces better places since their introduction.</p> <p>Removal of Commons Warden means no resource to progress the Commons Management Plan.</p> <p>Asks who will respond to crime and ASB in open spaces if these services stop?</p>	<p>See comments above.</p> <p>See comments above</p>
<p>Cross O'Cliff Residents Association</p> <p>Notes with regret the intention of the Council to close this service. Considers it to have been a valuable service in terms of liaison, management, and enforcement.</p> <p>Asks who will perform the commons warden's duties if the post is lost.</p>	<p>Please see comments in other sections of this appendix covering the various duties.</p> <p>There will be no dedicated post to perform the current duties of the Commons Warden.</p>
<p>Open Spaces Society</p> <p>Believes that without this service the commons will deteriorate, becoming less well managed, less safe, and increasingly littered.</p>	<p>The availability of a dedicated staffing resource in the form of the Commons Warden post since 2007 has been a valuable additional resource over and above the previous staffing establishment that has enabled the Council to improve the attention given to commons issues. Should this dedicated resource be lost, then inevitably the Council will not be able to respond in the way it has been able</p>

<p>Considers that closure of the service will not stop the costs, merely transfer them.</p>	<p>to, and tasks and issues will need to be prioritised according to the resources available. However, the Council acknowledges its responsibility to care for the Commons, and it will ensure that adequate resources are deployed to meet its legal responsibilities.</p> <p>Any costs that would transfer as a result of a closure of this service would need to be accommodated by the respective agencies within their own priorities. Any costs transferring within the Council would have to be accommodated within existing budgets.</p>
<p>Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust</p> <p>Notes the recent progress to develop a Commons Management Plan, and that its implementation would permit the Council to submit positively to government on the indicator for Accessible Natural Greenspace 'Positive conservation management 160.00'</p> <p>Notes the potential for volunteers to assist with conservation management/maintenance, but recognises that this requires staff resources to organise and operate.</p>	<p>The potential to impact on this indicator is noted.</p> <p>Increasing the input from volunteers could be explored further but experience and work with such (for example in Hartsholme Park) concurs with the view expressed that this is a specific area of work and requires staff resource to plan and control volunteers to ensure that work is undertaken properly and safely. The loss of the Commons Warden would mean the loss of volunteer work on the commons. The Council will continue to consider opportunities for increased volunteer working on the commons regardless of the outcome of this proposal.</p>

<p>Specific objection to closure of services based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not supporting any cuts that affect conservation management • Impact on the Commons Management Plan. 	<p>The action plan arising from the Commons Management Plan would be affected by the loss of staff resource, and whilst it would remain as an agreed and endorsed plan for the commons, delivery of the action points within it would need to be prioritised against other Community Services commitments.</p>
<p>Ramblers Association</p> <p>Considers that the Commons Warden and Urban Rangers have done an excellent job.</p> <p>Considers the Commons Warden to have been especially beneficial in terms of liaison, maintenance, and ecology.</p> <p>Concern that without both services there will be nobody addressing misuse of the commons.</p>	<p>See comments above re Commons Management Plan</p> <p>The enforcement of laws and byelaws is a matter that would have to be reported to, and prioritised by the Police.</p>
<p>Other risks:</p>	
<p>Expectation that work currently undertaken by the Commons Warden service will need to be absorbed by other staff elsewhere within the service or organisation</p>	<p>There is no spare capacity to absorb the pro-active work undertaken by the Commons Warden but to the extent that members of the public and commons users report breaches of the Commons Act, damage, vandalism and anti-social behaviour on the commons, demand on the Customer Services Team and the Community Services Team generally will not diminish. This will have to be carefully monitored by the Assistant Director and Service Manager.</p>
<p>Reduction in resources for responses to emergencies under the Emergency Plan</p>	<p>During declared emergencies under the Emergency Plan the Commons Warden could be deployed in a forward liaison role by the Council's operational command. Other staff would be deployed in such a role if necessary but the mobility provided by motorcycles would be lost</p>

Copies of the full responses of stakeholders are attached at **Appendix E(i)**

An Equalities Analysis on the proposed closure has also been carried out and is attached at **Appendix A**

H. Implementation plan

The broad implementation Plan for this restructure is as follows:

- Staff Consultation starts - letter & meeting with those directly affected (with representation if requested) - Offer of HR rep & TU present as well for those staff directly affected –**issued on 17 January 2013**
- Initial responses to proposal invited – **21 February 2013**
- JCC considers business case – **19 March 2013**
- Policy Scrutiny Committee considers Business Case – **20 March 2013**
- Executive considers business case –**25 March 2013**
- Call in period ends –**5 April 2013**
- Implementation starts – **8 April 2013**
- Notice of redundancy issued to relevant staff and consideration for redeployment – w/c **8 April 2013**
- Gradual exit from programmes and handovers where relevant - **8 April – 14 June 2013**
- Service withdrawn – **14 June 2013**

This timetable may be accelerated if the post holder obtains the offer of redeployment within the Council or the offer of employment outside the authority which is conditional upon acceptance of the offer of employment prior to expiry of the employees notice period.

I. Key Decisions Required

The key decisions required to enable the Detailed Business Case to move to implementation is:

- Executive Committee will be required to decide whether to proceed with the proposal to withdraw the Commons Warden Service
- In the event of such a decision, Executive Committee will be asked to give authority to officers to issue notices of redundancy to the 1 affected member of staff and to implement the Council's managing change procedures.

Appendix A: EQUALITY ANALYSIS

Attached

Appendix B: FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Summarised in Section D and detailed as set out in report in PART B of the agenda papers.

Appendix C: TRADE UNION COMMENTS

To be added after Joint Consultative Committee has met on 19 March 2013

Appendix D: RESPONSE FROM STAFF

None received.

Appendix E: RESPONSES FROM COMMONS ADVISORY GROUP & OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Attached

Appendix F: POLICY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE COMMENTS

To be added after Policy Scrutiny Committee has met on 20 March 2013

SECTION A

Name of policy / project / service	Withdrawal of Commons Warden Service
<p>Background and aims of policy / project / service at outset</p>	<p>The City Council needs to find £1million of ongoing savings in 2013/14, rising to an estimated £3million per annum by 2016/17. Every effort has been made to implement savings without loss of service, but the council has now reached a point where it is necessary to cease provision of some non-statutory services in order to achieve the level of savings required. The council has therefore refocused its priorities and these are now defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing the local economy • Protecting the city's poorest people from the effects of the recession • Increasing the supply of affordable housing <p>The Commons Warden Service does not directly contribute to these refocused priorities and withdrawal of the service will contribute to delivering financial savings required to meet the council's Medium Term.</p> <p>The service consists of one fulltime (37 hours/week) post established in February 2007, with shifts spread over the seven days of the week. The post is dedicated to the care of the Commons, and patrols all three of Lincoln's commons addressing issues of both maintenance and management. In order to be accessible when the open spaces are most used he has a shift pattern that includes working outside normal hours, and to prevent excessive overlap with the Urban Ranger Service, their shifts are taken into consideration in shift planning. The varied shift pattern means that although the warden is only likely to spend a couple of hours a day on each common, the timing cannot be predicted and therefore the fact that the warden might be around provides some reassurance to commons users from a personal safety perspective.</p> <p>Alongside high profile site patrols the main duties include (in no particular order):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue fixed penalty notices for dog fouling and littering • Address, deter and report anti-social behaviour and illegal use of the commons • Liaison with the Community Services staff and grounds maintenance contractor to ensure the commons are well maintained • Meet and talk to the users to address any concerns they may have • Promote the commons with those who don't use the commons • Development of the management plan and associated action plan.

<p>• Meet with relevant environmental groups and the Commons Advisory Panel</p> <p>Statistics relating to incidents dealt with by the Commons Warden over the past year indicate that there could be a limited potential impact on protected characteristics (see Section B for further comment).</p> <p>Consultation responses suggest that without the presence of a warden people would feel less safe. In some cases, but not all, it is evident that some isolated comments have been made by older, disabled or female persons, although other comments may have come from people with different characteristics. From the latest survey there appears no cluster of comments around a particular protected characteristic. There is no evidence to suggest that these groups would be less safe than any other groups. However, in mitigation of this feeling that they would be less safe work with the Commons Advisory Panel on replacement initiatives such as Park Watch have been suggested. Whilst the Panel have shown a willingness to work with the council on replacement initiatives, no specific programme of work has yet been planned. In addition the Communities and Street Scene Service will continue to work in close partnership with Police in respect of common land.</p> <p>It should be noted that a separate savings proposal is to withdraw the Urban Rangers Service who work closely with the Commons Warden.</p>	<p>Person(s) responsible for policy or decision, or advising on decision, and also responsible for equality analysis</p>
<p>Decision – Executive EA – Steve Bird ADCSS</p> <p>Executive Members Portfolio Holder for Health and Recreational Services Director of Housing and Community Services ADCSS</p>	<p>2</p>

SECTION B

This is to be completed and reviewed as policy / project / service development progresses

	Please describe the effect and evidence that supports this?*			Is action possible to mitigate adverse impacts?	Details of action planned including dates, or why action is not possible
	Is the likely effect positive or negative? (please tick all that apply)	Positive	Negative		
Age			X	NA	See background section
Disability		X		<p>If requested the council could ask its contractors to assist in such searches, but no off road motorcycles would be available so searched would be on foot</p>	<p>When reviewing progress on the Commons Management Plan consideration will need to be given to the timing of works on access issues to ensure they are prioritised appropriately.</p>
Gender re-assignment			X	NA	

Pregnancy and maternity			X	No differential impact	NA	Existing contracts provide for graffiti removal and will remove it promptly when reported.
Race		X		Three incidents of graffiti were reported by the Commons Warden in the past year. If graffiti were of a racist nature it may not be reported, and therefore removed as quickly.	The grounds maintenance or cleansing contractor can provide this service, but only when seen and reported. The Urban Rangers may remove it when they see it, so it would be impossible to remove it more quickly.	
Religion or belief			X	No differential impact	NA	
Sex			X	See background section above for general evidence.	NA	See background section
Sexual orientation			X	No differential impact	NA	
Marriage / civil partnership			X		NA	
Human Rights (see page 8)			X		NA	

* Evidence could include information from consultations; voluntary group feedback; satisfaction and usage data (i.e. complaints, surveys, and service data); and reviews of previous strategies

Did any information gaps exist?	Y/N/NA	If so what were they and what will you do to fill these?
No		

SECTION C

Decision Point - Outcome of Assessment so far:

Based on the information in section B, what is the decision of the responsible officer (please select one option below):

- **No equality or human right impact** (your analysis shows there is no impact) - sign assessment below
- **No major change required** (your analysis shows no potential for discrimination, harassment)- sign assessment below
- **Adverse Impact but continue** (record objective justification for continuing despite the impact)-complete sections below
- **Adjust the policy** (Change the proposal to mitigate potential effect) -progress below only AFTER changes made
- **Put Policy on hold** (seek advice from the E&D officer as adverse effects cant be justified or mitigated) -STOP progress

Tick here

Conclusion of Equality Analysis
(describe objective justification for continuing)

In the context of needing to deliver financial savings, the Commons Warden Service is not a statutory function, and has limited potential to contribute to the revised strategic priorities.

Closure of this service has the potential to impact on the management of the commons through failure to progress parts of the management plan and slower responses to maintenance and enforcement issues, which could in turn impact negatively on perceptions of safety and vulnerability for some open space users potentially across all characteristics.

The Commons Advisory Panel have recognised this and would work with the council to mitigate these impacts. The local Police are not currently represented in the Commons Advisory Panel, but are to be invited to join shortly. Police membership of the Commons Advisory Panel would mean it would be well placed to both feed into, and take advice from, the Commons Advisory Panel so as to establish priorities for Police resources.

When and how will you review and measure the impact after implementation?*

The local Police would be asked to provide reported crime statistics for the commons as a part of their engagement with the Commons Advisory Panel. The Commons Advisory Panel will then monitor these.

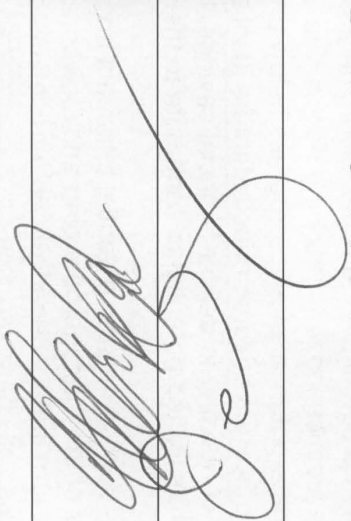
The council established questions relevant to perceptions of managing public safety in public open spaces within its annual Citizens Panel Survey this year. This has provided a benchmark form which to monitor perceptions in the future.

Checked and approved by responsible officer(s) (Sign and Print Name)

Steve Bird

Date

7th March 2013



Checked and approved by Director (Sign and Print Name)

John Bibby

Date

7th March 2013

X

When completed, please send to info.equality@lincoln.gov.uk and include in Committee Reports which are to be sent to the relevant officer in Democratic Services

The Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance to the Public Sector Equality Duty is available via: <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/new-public-sector-equality-duty-guidance/>

APPENDIX C

CoLC and Employee Joint Consultative Committee

19 March 2013

40. Medium Term Financial Strategy 2013 - 2018 Proposal to withdraw and close the Commons Warden Service

The Director of Housing and Community Services

- a. presented to Committee the Business Case on the proposed changes to close and withdraw the Commons Warden Service in order to contribute to the required budget savings targets set out in the Councils Medium Term Financial Strategy
- b. highlighted the key drivers underpinning the review as detailed at paragraph 3 of the report and advised on the staff consultation that had taken place
- c. gave an overview of the Business Case and highlighted the following:
 - o Scope and Objectives of the Review
 - o Summary of Existing Services
 - o Proposal Summary
 - o Detailed Appraisal of Option
 - o Staffing Issues
 - o Stakeholder Responses
 - o Analysis of the Service Implications, Risk and Equality Impact Assessment
 - o Implementation Plan
 - o Key Decision Required
- d. referred to the Stakeholder Consultation undertaken through the Commons Advisory Panel and summarised the views that were expressed
- e. highlighted the further views and comments that had been received from individual organisations listed at paragraph 5.2 of the report
- f. referred to Part 2 of the report and presented the detail behind the overall summary figures within the Business Case including the impact on savings targets
- g. advised on the staffing implications and detailed the proposal of the deletion of one full time post from the staffing establishment
- h. referred to the supplementary paperwork circulated at the meeting and highlighted the comments received from staff

Members noted and considered the contents of the report.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

WEST END RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION



183 Ca~~l~~holme Road

Lincoln LN1 1RU

19th Feb 2013

Mr J Bi~~l~~by

Lincoln City Council

Dear Sir

Removal of Commons Warden and Urban Ranger Service

We wish to object to the removal of the above services in the strongest possible terms for the following reasons:-

Commons Warden :- Is responsible for the supervision of all three commons within the City boundary and having recently completed the Commons Management Plan will this have been just a paper exercise with no actual worth? His duties are varied and many but he is only one person and limited only to common land.

Urban Rangers:- The removal of these posts would provide by far the most serious threat to the City's open spaces and council property. They patrol approximately 90 sites within the City and are frequently the first line of response to users of Parks, Play Areas and Commons; generally making these areas safe for adults and children to enjoy. Since the Urban Ranger posts were commissioned we have seen a massive drop in anti-social behaviour on Whittons Park and West Common, with much vandalism being curtailed by the public contacting the Urban Ranger service and the rapid response of the team. Who will provide this response in their place?

There is obviously a great need for this service (the statistics speak for themselves) and the loss could result in those areas becoming unsafe to use as it is apparent that abusive behaviour, drinking gangs (driven out of the City centre) and marauding youths are becoming more of a concern.

WEBSITE: www.wera-lincoln.co.uk

E-MAIL: wera@hotmail.co.uk

We feel very strongly that the areas of open space used by our community are under threat with the entire Council interface with our open space users being removed and we would request that you inform us what protection for the public at large will be put in place for these much loved and cherished areas.

We await your reply with great interest.

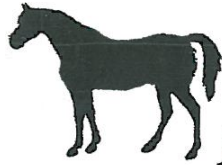
Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'G Woolfenden', written over the text 'Yours faithfully'.

G Woolfenden (Chairman)

Cc Mr S Bird

Coun N Murray



LINCOLN COMMONS HORSE ASSOCIATION

Mr J. Bibby

Lincoln City Council



The Lincoln Commons Horse Association would like to put forward our concerns, and objections regarding the proposed axing of the Common Warden and Urban Ranger Services.

The focus of our concerns relate to the Lincoln Commons, however this in no way diminishes the importance of their roles in other recreational areas in and around Lincoln.

We will look at the two services separately as all be it they overlap in many instances.

The Commons Warden

How refreshing it was to have an identified person and role dedicated to the commons with whom we could liaise, bridge between the commons' users and the city council officers. Areas addressed through the Commons Warden include areas such as grass management, safety and welfare, fencing, vandalism. Also importantly, someone who could identify a horse, locate the ownership and work with them in problem solving – or seek intervention from outside agencies if rarely required.

A management plan for the commons has now been passed which details interventions to enhance and improve this unique open space. The Commons Warden's role is highlighted repeatedly in this management plan, and a great deal of time and thought was given to this document, what happens to the plan now?

Urban Rangers

This is a service of great importance and has been demonstrated time and time again in its effectiveness in both prevention and dealing with misdemeanours on our commons.

Who do the public turn to as regards to antisocial behaviour issues and safety and welfare concerns of those accessing the parks and recreational areas? The Police, who are already over stretched and have to prioritise their case loads.

Prior to the Urban Ranger service, the commons were often a haven for unsavoury characters, vandals, litter bugs, drugs and alcohol abusers, and sexual offenders. Although some of the problems will be ever present, the commons are now considerably safer places for children to play, people to exercise and enjoy their rights to roam.

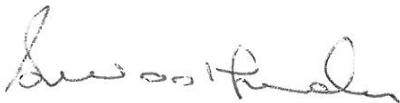
The commons are patrolled regularly with easy accessibility, the rangers are highly visible, which is both a reassurance and a deterrent. They have an approachable and helpful attitude and have always responded to incidents when requested.

Without this monitoring through the current ranger service, we can foresee that the commons will become unsafe places. Those who genuinely enjoy these spaces for recreation, walking and having quality family time will shy away from the areas, as they become unsafe and unclean through increased crime, damage and litter. This would be a sad and sombre outlook for areas of land that enhance the city's boundaries and are enjoyed not just by locals, but by visitors attracted by its historical and unique persona.

We sincerely hope you will take on board our comments and concerns, as we truly believe this service is too valuable to lose for all.

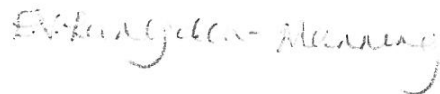
We await your response with interest.

Yours faithfully



Mrs Barbara Woolfenden

Chairperson of LCHA



Mrs Emma Langdon-Manning

LCHA representative for the
Commons Advisory Panel

From: Miriam Smith (GMAIL) [mailto:miriam@dunelm.org.uk]
Sent: 19 February 2013 10:25
To: Bird, Steve (City of Lincoln Council)
Subject: Commons Warden

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your letter of 22 January 2013 regarding the proposed withdrawal of Commons Warden Scheme. I realise that with such a shortfall of nearly £3 million that that cuts will be necessary but why reduce both the Commons Warden and Urban rangers? This is a retrograde step. These gentlemen do valuable work in preventing people from misusing the Commons.

The Lincoln Commons are important open air public assets within the City Boundary and must be cared for. Since his appointment the Commons Warden has done valuable work in improving the infrastructure of the Commons. Although some of this may continue, it will be more difficult to do so without a "man on the ground". South Common was beginning to look an eyesore and needed horses to graze it. Although there are still not enough horses there, the Commons Warden has encouraged owners to graze there. Will this continue if he goes? Will South Common deteriorate again?

In three months last year he reported that there had been 72 incidents on the Commons which had been dealt with. He had dealt with 45 of these personally. Without patrols these incidents will surely increase. The police are cutting back on manpower and won't necessarily be able to help. According to those living near the Commons they do not come as quickly as the Commons Warden or Urban Rangers when an incident is reported. Some incidents are not actual law breaking but could affect enjoyment of the Commons by the general public – e.g. excessive litter, minor law breaking such as drunks.

The introduction of the Commons Warden halted the decline in the state of the Commons. Are we to return to this? Will the Commons become embarrassing neglected areas on three of the approach roads to Lincoln? Please do your sums again and find the money for this service.

Yours Sincerely,

Miriam Smith
Lincolnshire Fieldpaths Association

From: Caroline Steel [mailto:CSteel@lincstrust.co.uk]
Sent: 20 February 2013 16:52
To: Bird, Steve (City of Lincoln Council)
Subject: Proposed withdrawal of the Commons Warden Service

Dear Steve

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust has worked constructively with the City Council and through the Commons Advisory Panel over the last few years to introduce Management Plans for the Commons. The Trust was very pleased to hear that the Council has now formally approved the plans and anticipated an increased level of work in the future to maintain the richest parts of the commons and increase biodiversity in the poorer areas, improving extremely important Accessible Natural Greenspaces within the city. Implementation of the management plans would bring the three Commons into 'positive conservation management', allowing the Council to report to Government on this achievement under Single Data List Indicator 160.00.

The Commons Advisory Panel has commented on the essential nature of maintenance of the perimeter fencing and the value of the Commons Warden in discouraging anti-social behaviour. Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust has nothing to add to these comments, but would like to register its concern over the potential for reduction in resources going towards maintaining and improving the wildlife value of the Commons, much valued by the people who use them. It has been said that volunteers could do more: this is likely to be true, but they need coordination: the Trust has a large volunteer force, but activity is coordinated by staff. Concerns for Health and Safety of volunteers, insurance requirements etc emphasise the need for staff to take responsibility for volunteer welfare. You have experience of this at Hartsholme and Swanholme.

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust appreciates the financial constraints under which the Council must operate. However, we can not support any reduction in resources dedicated to conservation management nor any delay in implementation of the management plans: we do not want to see the condition of the Commons deteriorate.

Regards

Caroline

Caroline Steel
Head of Conservation
Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust
01507 526667
www.lincstrust.org.uk

Charity no. 218895. Registered in England, no. 461863. Registered offices: Banovallum House, Manor House Street, Horncastle, Lincs LN9 5HF.

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, safeguarding wildlife and wild places in Lincolnshire and promoting understanding and enjoyment of the natural world from the Humber to The Wash.



Steve Bird Esq
Directorate of Housing and Community Services
Lincoln City Council
City Hall, Beaumont Fee
Lincoln LN1 1DE

TEL 01491 573535
EMAIL hq@oss.org.uk
WEB www.oss.org.uk

14 February 2013

Dear Mr Bird

Budget proposals—commons warden service

The Open Spaces Society is Britain's oldest national conservation body with a particular interest in the protection and management of common land. We played a key role in the implementation of the Lincoln Commons Act 1985 and the establishment and activities of the Commons Advisory Panel.

Lincoln's commons are of exceptional importance and value, extensive green spaces close to the heart of the town which have remained relatively unspoilt for centuries. They provide inspiration and recreation to Lincoln's population, as well as to those who come into the city to work. The council should treasure these unique assets.

We are therefore dismayed to learn that your council is considering closure of the commons warden service. This, at relatively modest cost, ensures that the commons are well managed, safe places for people to enjoy, clear of crime and litter. The commons provide health and happiness to thousands of people each year. The service is a vital investment in the future of your ratepayers. Without the excellent warden service, the commons would deteriorate; they could become unpleasant places which people no longer wish to visit. Whereas at present they are something in which the city can take pride, they could so easily become an embarrassment. And you would merely be transferring costs to other bodies and departments—such as the police and the health service.

We believe that such a cut would be shooting yourselves in the foot. We strongly urge you to maintain this excellent service which does your city proud.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate Ashbrook".

Kate Ashbrook
General Secretary



The Open Spaces Society 25a Bell Street Henley-on-Thames RG9 2BA

Charity no 1144840 Registered in England and Wales, limited company no 7846516



Cross O Cliff Residents' Association
c/o 2 Orchard Walk
Lincoln LN5 8PL

Dear Sir or Madam

As an organisation we note with regret the Council's intention to disband the Common's Warden service.

The City Commons are greatly valued assets, which help make Lincoln unique; we are concerned that the loss of this management service will have serious negative effects on this special environment. The presence of the warden keeps crime and illegal camping under control, maintaining the commons as safe places for the public, and ensures that management of the commons is kept up. In addition the Commons warden has been an important facilitator of communication between the public, the Commons Advisory Panel and council officials. The commons warden's role was also key in the planning and delivery of our organisation's own successful Country Fair held twice on South Common in recent years.

If this decision were irreversible, we would want to be assured explicitly about how the common warden's functions will be carried out in the longer term.

Yours faithfully

Catrin Morrissey
On behalf of the Cross O Cliff Resident's Association

Bird, Steve (City of Lincoln Council)

From: John Shipton [jshipton1949@hotmail.co.uk]
Sent: 14 February 2013 21:51
To: Bird, Steve (City of Lincoln Council)
Cc: Bibby, John (City of Lincoln Council)
Subject: The proposed withdrawal of the Commons Warden and Urban Rangers service...
Importance: High

The Long Leys Residents' Association believe that the withdrawal will be detrimental to the City of Lincoln.

First, let's look at the Commons Warden position.

This was instrumental in the later part of the 20th century in where then the Common Warden looked after the three commons in Lincoln for their maintenance, security, upkeep, and appearance, to include the well being of the horses which grazed the commons. This came about due to the three Commons being protected by the Lincoln City Council Act 1985 which states that the City Council 'has a duty to maintain and to preserve the aspect of the Commons as an open space. The position was abolished at a later stage because of the council's budget cuts.

Secondly, the Commons Warden post was reintroduced in February 2007. The Commons Warden position is dedicated to the future enhancement of Lincoln's Common Land.

The role is to:-

- Patrol the Commons (alongside the Urban Rangers)
- Issue fixed penalty notices for dog fouling and littering
- Watch out for anti-social behaviour and illegal use of the commons
- Make sure the commons are well maintained
- Meet and talk to the users and non-users of the commons
- Meet environmental groups and commons advisory panel

After a lengthy process and much discussion, a management plan was agreed by the City of Lincoln Council and the Lincoln Commons Advisory Panel. This was given approval and adopted by the Executive only just recently. The Common Warden is to play a major part and role of its implementation.

With the abolition of the Common Warden, it is believed that the management plan will fail as well as monitoring what has been written in the document. This is not the best way forward for the protection, etc, for the West Common, the South Common, and the Cowpaddle.

Now let's look at the Urban Rangers which are under threat.

There are three Urban Rangers. The council's Urban Rangers are responsible for looking after the city's many open spaces.

This included all parks in Lincoln, the three commons, dealing with anti social behaviour, abuse, and all sorts of problems affecting them.

Both the police and the public welcome them and they act as a deterrent plus give valuable advice.

Without them who will police the open spaces of Lincoln?

Kindly read this account made by a local resident of the Long Leys Road area of Lincoln from the residents' forum...

LOSING A COMMUNITY NEED AS THIS WILL AFFECT ALL

□ by Jeff » Thu Jan 31, 2013 9:23 pm

Urban Rangers employed by the City of Lincoln Council patrol the parks, open spaces and the three commons sited in and around Lincoln. They act as a deterrent with the use of motorcycles and attached to their helmets are video cameras. When it comes to tackling yobbery, littering and dog foulers they are on the front

15/02/2013

Extract from Committee

COMMONS ADVISORY GROUP

11 FEBRUARY 2013

16. Commons Rangers Redundancies

Lincoln Commons Horse Association presented a short report raising concerns regarding the potential loss of the Commons Ranger Service and questioned how this would affect the running of the Commons and the management plan for the future.

Steve Bird, Assistant Director, Community Services, Leisure and Sport:

- a. updated Commons Advisory Panel on further financial restraints imposed on the Council by the local government finance settlement
- b. advised that this had resulted in proposals put forward to form part of the strategy to achieve our financial target in 2013/14, which included withdrawal of the Urban Ranger and Commons Warden Service
- c. urged members of Commons Advisory Panel to respond to the consultation process either in person or together in groups within their individual organisations.

External Members of Commons Advisory Panel commented on the proposed cuts to the Urban Rangers and Commons Warden Service as follows:

- Comment: The cuts would be detrimental to the City resulting in further incidents of anti social behaviour on the City Commons.
- Question: Why couldn't the money ring fenced from parking charges on the South Common be used to fund the Commons Warden?
- Officer response: There was still a receipt to be added to the income for match day parking on Boxing Day 2012; it currently stood at £6,048.00. This sum of money would not fund a Commons Warden.
- Comment: The proposed cuts took out a whole tier of protection currently afforded to the City Commons and parks. Commons Advisory Panel should make its objections extremely clear; once this protection had gone it would be difficult to know who to contact in the event of incidents of anti social behaviour as the police did not get involved unless only in specific cases.
- Comment: It was difficult to comprehend why the Council were proposing to withdraw from a need for 4 rangers to police the Commons and parks to having none at all.
- Response by Chair: No one was saying this. The Council had been instructed to cut £3 million from its revenue budget. Urban Rangers had not always existed. We bought into the service when the police were short of financial resources. We had the resources then but not now. The police had a legal duty to respond to incidents of crime and disorder.

- Comment: We must assess which services remained essential to the Commons, for example, maintenance of fences. What did the rangers do? Were there other ways of performing essential tasks?
- Officer Response: The proposed cuts only related to the budget for the Commons Warden and Urban Rangers. The wider budget for fencing remained protected.
- Comment: There had been more anti social behaviour over the last few years; the Urban Rangers were excellent at pre-empting problems before they escalated.
- Comment: The situation in respect of the golf club lease should be reassessed to increase the Council's income stream.
- Response by Chair: The lease for the Carholme Club extended over a long period of time and was a small amount of money compared to the extent of the savings to be made. The core budget for the Commons still remained.

Councillor C Burke advised that although he fully agreed with the sentiments made; financial restraints imposed by central government meant that cuts had to go so deep we must dispose of essential services we believed in.

A discussion took place around how the community could respond positively to ease the pressure on the Commons should the proposed cuts go ahead. The following suggestions emerged from discussions held:

- Park Watch Schemes
- Volunteering
- Increased signage
- Engagement with the community
- Use of Community Service Volunteers
- Use of 'ring fenced' car parking fund to employ a part time coordinator to organise volunteers

RESOLVED that:

1. Commons Advisory Panel to make its views expressed collectively on the proposed cuts to the Commons Warden and Urban Rangers Service via the formal consultation process, expressing its deep regret and requesting in the strongest terms that the Council should not go ahead with the proposals.
2. In the event that the Council should have to take the decision to withdraw the Commons Warden and Urban Ranger Service; a special meeting of Commons Advisory Panel be convened to look at a way forward in the coordination of volunteers within organisations across the City and to set up a watch scheme for the Commons.
3. Members of the public, Karl McCartney, MP for Lincoln, and Alan Hardwick, Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincoln be invited to attend the above special meeting of Commons Advisory Panel.
4. Lincolnshire Police be invited to nominate an advisory representative to serve on the Commons Advisory Panel.

APPENDIX F

Policy Scrutiny Committee 20 March 2013

38. Medium Term Financial Strategy 201318: Proposal to Withdraw and Close the Commons Warden Service

John Bibby, Director of Housing and Community Services

- a. presented the Detailed Business Case on the proposed changes to close and withdraw the Commons Warden Service in order to contribute to the required budget savings targets set out in the Councils Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- b. highlighted the key drivers underpinning the review as detailed at paragraph 3 of the report and advised on the staff consultation that had taken place.
- c. gave an overview of the Business Case and highlighted the following:
 - o Scope and Objectives of the Review
 - o Summary of Existing Services
 - o Proposal Summary
 - o Detailed Appraisal of Option
 - o Staffing Issues
 - o Stakeholder Responses
 - o Analysis of the Service Implications, Risk and Equality Impact Assessment
 - o Implementation Plan
 - o Key Decision Required
- d. referred to the Stakeholder Consultation undertaken through the Commons Advisory Panel and summarised the views that were expressed.
- e. highlighted the further views and comments that had been received from individual organisations listed at paragraph 5.2 of the report.
- f. referred to Part 2 of the report and presented the detail behind the overall summary figures within the Business Case including the impact on savings targets.
- g. advised on the staffing implications and detailed the proposal of the deletion of one full time post from the staffing establishment.
- h. referred to the supplementary paperwork circulated at the meeting and highlighted the comments received from staff.

Question/ Comment 1:

Members asked if it was feasible for a 'watch scheme' to be introduced with volunteers providing the service.

Response:

The Director of Housing and Community Services advised that Park Advisory Groups, Commons Advisory Panel, Stakeholders and other community groups were committed to preserve these facilities and if the decision was taken to withdraw the service a group of volunteers could come forward to assist to monitor the open spaces.

Members felt that whilst it was appreciated that there were savings that needed to be made, a joined up solution to combine the two services would possibly alleviate the problems of withdrawing the service.

It was therefore, proposed by Councillor Kerry and seconded by Councillor J Kirk, which was debated:

- Committee recommends to the Executive that the proposals in the business case be rejected and that the Executive consider a proposal to join the urban ranger service and the commons warden service together to provide some kind of cover.

RESOLVED that

1. the Executive be recommended to reject;
2. and that the Executive consider a proposal to join the Urban Ranger service and the Commons Warden service together to provide some savings but which would mitigate the risks across the city if the service was withdrawn completely.

Extract from Committee

Additional Information

EXECUTIVE

25 MARCH 2013

SUBJECT:	MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2013-18 :PROPOSAL TO WITHDRAW AND CLOSE THE COMMONS WARDEN SERVICE: SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT
REPORT BY:	DIRECTOR OF HOUSING & COMMUNITY SERVICES
LEAD OFFICER:	STEVE BIRD ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (COMMUNITIES & STREET SCENE)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 Further to the report circulated with the agenda for the meeting, to present additional information relevant to the proposal to withdraw and close the Commons Warden Service.

2. Further comments from staff

3.1 Having consulted and invited comments from staff on the initial proposal, copies of the report and business case relating to the proposal to withdraw and close the Commons Warden Service were shared with the affected member of staff. No further comments on the proposal have been received.

3. Further information on the scale and type of work undertaken by the Commons Warden Service.

3.1 Further information on the scale and type of incidents dealt with by the Commons Warden Service has been requested and the Community Services Manager has compiled a summary analysis of the incidents dealt with in the calendar year 2012 (attached as Appendix G).

3.2 This provides a summary analysis of the number, nature and type of incidents dealt with by the Commons Warden Service during the calendar year 2012, together with comments on how such matters might be responded to (or not as the case may be) if the service is withdrawn.

3.3 This information supplements the information set out in Section B of the Business Case.

4. Comments from Lincolnshire Police

4.1 No specific comments have been received from Lincolnshire Police on the proposal to close and withdraw the Commons Warden Service although the Police have commented on the proposal to withdraw the Urban Ranger Service, details of which are included in the relevant report elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting.

COMMONS WARDEN INCIDENTS 2012						
Category / Description	TOTAL number of incidents	REACTIVE Attended in response to call	PROACTIVE Discovered during patrols or reported by public in person during patrols	ACTION CURRENTLY TAKEN BY COMMONS WARDEN	Suggested alternative reactive response	Suggested alternative proactive response
Bins – overflowing, vandalised, missing	10	0	10	CW pass to contractor to resolve	Issues will be passed directly to the contractor for resolution, if sufficient information is provided by the individual reporting. If not, issue will be passed to CCO, to visit the site, gather more information and pass to the contractor.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Responses are expected to be slower as a result. Issue would then be passed to contractor.
Animals – loose dogs, lost dogs, horses loose, distressed animal, animal welfare	17	10	7	Various – can be dealt with directly by the CW (help locate lost dog, free stranded animal) or alongside partner organisation, or passed to relevant individual / organisation	Issues passed directly to PPASB (Animal Warden) if relating to animal welfare or loose animal. PPASB may pass on to RSPCA, Lincoln Commons Horse Association or other relevant organisation. No action will be taken in relation to lost animals.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue might be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Issue would then be passed to PPASB or another organisation, dependant on circumstances.
Motorbikes – individuals or groups riding bikes or mini motos in parks	7	3	4	CW speaks to offenders and advises that behaviour is not acceptable. If appropriate bring to attention of Police / CCTV	Public will be encouraged to contact Lincs Police who will prioritise response based on severity and resource available.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue may be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Issue would then be passed to Police who would prioritise and respond if possible.
Alcohol – drinking and related aggression	8	2	6	CW speak to individuals, move on, advise on not leaving litter, not to be a nuisance to others. Aid Police in response.	Issues passed by Customer Services to PPASB, or Lincs Police dependant on severity. In either case response will be dependant on resource available.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue may be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Issue would then be passed to Police or PPASB who would prioritise and respond if possible.
Drugs – individuals taking drugs in parks / open spaces	2	1	1	CW speak to individual and advise behaviour must stop. Where appropriate refer to Lincs Police / aid Police in response. Ensure drug-related litter is removed.	Public will be encouraged to contact Lincs Police who will prioritise response based on severity and resource available.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue may be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Issue would then be passed to Police who would prioritise and respond if possible.
Fly tipping	9	2	7	CW advises PPASB if evidence may be available. Otherwise issue work order to contractor for removal. Either way ensure removal.	Customer Services will refer to CCO who will assess whether evidence is available. Refer to PPASB if so. Refer direct to contractor for removal if not. Either way ensure removal.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Responses are expected to be slower as a result. CCO would pass to PPASB if evidence may be available, or direct to contractor for removal otherwise. Either way ensure removal.
Graffiti	7	0	7	CW removes if straightforward to do so, or reports to contractor for	Customer Services refer CCO to check location, assess if a photographic record if required, help track patterns and refer to contractor for removal.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc.

				removal					Responses are expected to be slower as a result. Issue would then be passed to contractor after record made in order to help track patterns.
Groups – dealing with groups who may be intimidating to others, or who are causing nuisance to others	5	3	2	CW speaks to groups, advises on not causing nuisance to others, reminds them of any relevant bye laws, where appropriate disperse and move on, or contacts Police.	Issues passed by Customer Services to PPASB, or Lincs Police dependant on severity. In either case response will be dependant on resource available.			Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue may be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Issue would then be passed to Police or PPASB who would prioritise and respond if possible.	
Homeless – checking welfare, providing advice on where to go, moving on homeless-related camping	12	4	8	CW speaks to individuals, gives advice about where they can go for help if required, advises on any relevant bye laws and avoiding nuisance to others.	Customer Services report to Homelessness Officer.			Proactive patrols would not be replaced. It is possible that an issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Issue would then be passed to Homelessness Officer.	
Litter	13	3	10	CW removes litter or refers to contractor for larger quantities. In some cases, CW asks groups or individuals to pick up litter that their group has left. Where appropriate issues FPN.	Customer Services pass direct to contractor. In the event of an individual witnessed littering, and if the caller is happy to be a witness, issue passed first to PPASB.			Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Responses are expected to be slower as a result. Issue would then be passed to contractor.	
Hazardous litter – discarded needles and other drug-related litter, glass, dog fouling including intelligence re offenders	4	0	4	CW removes needles / glass, or refers to contractor. Where appropriate issues FPN.	Customer Services pass direct to contractor for emergency removal. In the event of an individual witnessed littering, and if the caller is happy to be a witness, issue passed first to PPASB.			Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Responses are expected to be slower as a result. Issue would then be passed to contractor for emergency response.	
Missing person – reported missing or vulnerable person found	5	5	0	CW helps to look for a missing person in response to a report from the Police or a member of the public, aided by their knowledge of the area and off-road bike, or find a vulnerable person alone in an open space and help reunite them.	Public will be encouraged to contact Lincs Police.			Proactive patrols would not be replaced. It is possible that an issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Issue would then be passed to Lincs Police.	

Other vehicle – issue relating to a vehicle other than a motorbike, e.g. car driving in to park, abandoned or blocking access.	None in the sample year	CW would speak to driver and move on, or pass to CCO if abandoned vehicle.	If reported abandoned vehicle, pass to CCO. If considered to be a H&S issue, CCO would deal with the matter as a priority.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. It is possible that an issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Issue would then be dealt with as appropriate (as a matter of priority if H&S issue).
Injured / distressed adult / child	None in the sample year	Give first aid, help to safe point or call ambulance (make report if accident relating to use of commons facilities)	Caller advised to contact emergency services. Details taken if accident relating to use of open space.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. It is possible that an issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Issue would then be passed to Lincs Police.
Vandalism / Damage to gate / fencing / play equipment / sports pitches or other facilities / secure unlocked gate	24	Attend to damage directly if possible. Otherwise report to relevant officer / contractor to repair. If aware of offender, speak to them or refer to Lincs Police if appropriate. Where appropriate take legal advice on further action.	Call referred to CCO who will assess and pass on to relevant contractor. Caller advised to contact Lincs Police if witnessed vandalism.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Responses are expected to be slower as a result. Issue would then be passed to contractor.
Damage to green environment / wildlife	4	Attend to damage directly if possible. Otherwise report to relevant officer / contractor to repair.	Call referred to CCO who will assess and pass on to relevant contractor. Caller advised to contact Lincs Police if witnessed vandalism	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Responses are expected to be slower as a result. Issue would then be passed to contractor.
Issue Fixed Penalty Notice for litter or dog fouling	None in the sample year	CW speak to offender, takes name and address and explains that enforcement action may be taken. Passed information to Enforcement Officer for FPN to be issued, and any follow-up paperwork.	In the event of a member of the public reporting that they have witnessed an offence, Customer Services would refer them to PPASB who would review the case, take statements and issue a FPN if appropriate, along with any follow-up paperwork.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. In the event of a member of staff witnessing and offence whilst visiting the site for another reason, or a member of the public approaching them with the details of an offence, the information would be passed to PPASB. PPASB would review the case, take statements and issue a FPN if appropriate, along with any follow-up paperwork.
Concern about standards of maintenance or facilities	3	CW speaks to complainant (if reactive) and passes comments to relevant officer (or take direct action if appropriate)	Call referred to CCO who will take action as appropriate.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Responses are expected to be slower as a result. Issue would then be passed to relevant member of staff.
Aggression / fighting / bag snatch / verbal assault / robbery suspect /	5	CW speaks to individuals if appropriate and safe to do so. Aid Police with their knowledge of the area and off-road bike. Provide information to Police.	Caller advised to contact Lincs Police who will prioritise and take action where possible, dependant on resources available.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. It is possible that an issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Issue would then be passed to Lincs Police.

suspicious person / air rifle / flashing / public urination / find missing wallet			Advise public when to talk to Police.			
Fire – talk to individuals starting fires, clearing fire damage	11	3	8	CW speaks to individuals if known. Advises on bye laws. Moves on. Ensures fire out and cleared up. Where appropriate takes legal advice on further action and takes part in that further action as required.	Caller advised to contact Fire Brigade if fire still burning. Referred to CCO who will direct contractor to ensure fire is out and remains cleared.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue would be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, contractor report etc. Responses are expected to be slower as a result. Issue would then be passed to Fire Brigade or contractor, as appropriate.
Camping – moving on campers	5	0	5	CW speaks to individuals if known. Advises on bye laws. Moves on. Ensures any mess is cleared. Where appropriate, takes legal advice on further action and takes part in that further action.	CCO would attend and make an assessment if resources allow.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue might be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, in which case member of staff would advise offender on bye laws and, if comfortable doing so, move them on.
General public queries / interaction incl for other services	12	0	12	CW speaks to public and advises / passes on comments / provides contact details where appropriate.	Call referred to CCO who will deal with each case as appropriate.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. It is possible that a member of the public would approach a member of staff visiting the site for another reason, in which case their comment / enquiry would be dealt with as appropriate.
Other – carry out survey / take photographs	2	2	0	CW carries out work in response to management requests.	Other staff carry out the work, as appropriate.	N/A
Troughs – action to repair or replenish animal troughs	5	2	3	CW carried out work or refers to repairs team	CCO would attend and take appropriate action.	Proactive patrols would not be replaced. Issue might be picked up by other means, e.g. staff visiting the site for another reason, in which case member of staff would take the necessary action.
Total	170	53 (31.2%)	117 (68.8%)			

THESE FIGURES ARE BASED ON A SAMPLE YEAR AND MAY VARY

CCO = Community Contracts Officer
PPASB = Public Protection & Anti-Social Behaviour team

APPENDIX B(ii)

Minute Extract

Executive: 25 March 2013

138. Medium Term Financial Strategy 201318: Proposal to Withdraw and Close the Commons Warden Service

Purpose of Report

To present to the Executive the business case relating to a proposal to close and withdraw the Commons Warden Service in order to contribute to the required budget savings targets set out in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Decision

1. That the proposed closure of the Commons Warden service be approved.
2. That the Director of Housing and Community Services be authorised to issue a notice of redundancy to the one affected member of staff and proceed with the implementation of the decision in accordance with the Council's Management of Change policy and procedures.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Policy Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on the 20 March 2013 requested the Executive to consider joining the Urban Ranger Service and the Commons Warden Service to provide some savings which would mitigate the risks across the city if the service was withdrawn completely. This was rejected for the reasons set out in the "Reason for Decision" below.

Reason for Decision

Having regard to the consultation responses provided by staff and the public, in addition to the views of the Policy Scrutiny Committee and the City of Lincoln Council and Employee Joint Consultative Committee, the Executive resolved that the closure of the Commons Warden service was necessary in order to contribute savings towards the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

In common with other services being considered for closure [minutes nos.137 & 139], the Commons Warden service was discretionary and while it provided a valuable service to users of the city's parks and open spaces it did not directly contribute to the Council's refocused strategic priorities and the withdrawal of the service would contribute

significantly towards the achievement of the necessary financial savings set out in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

The Council needed to find £1 million of ongoing revenue savings in 2013/14, rising to £3 million of ongoing revenue savings by 2016/17. Every effort had been made to implement savings without an impact on frontline services but the Council had now reached a point where it was necessary to cease provision of some discretionary nonstatutory services in order to achieve the level of savings required as a result of the Government's austerity programme.

APPENDIX C(i)

Extract from Committee

EXECUTIVE

25 MARCH 2013

SUBJECT:	TOWARDS FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY – CEASING OF WARD BUDGETS
REPORT BY:	DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
LEAD OFFICER:	CAROLYN WHEATER – ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (LEGAL AND CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICES) & STEVE SWAIN, PRINCIPAL DEMOCRATIC OFFICER

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To advise on a proposal to discontinue the provision of ward budgets.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 As part of the budget proposals consideration has been given to discontinuing the ward budget scheme. Ceasing the scheme would provide a saving of £33,000 per annum.

3. Background

- 3.1 Part 1 of the Local Government Act 2000 gives the Council broad powers to promote the social, economic and environmental well being of its area. It is of particular relevance to promoting Members' community leadership role and the development of this scheme.

- 3.2 In the Strategic Plan 2007 –2012, a provision was identified for £1,000 per Ward Member to spend on community projects in their own wards. The wording within the strategic plan was:

Outcome Sought:

“Greater involvement of local residents with Councillors through the operation of Ward budgets”

Operation:

“The introduction of Ward budgets, whereby each Councilor takes control of a small budget to deliver/support community initiatives”

- 3.3 The scheme was approved by Executive on the 26 August 2008. The initial budget for 2008/09 was rolled forward into 2009/10 which gave each member a sum of

£2,000 to allocate in that year. Each member has had £1,000 to allocate in subsequent financial years.

4. Proposal

- 4.1 Following the recent all member seminar on the Medium Term Financial Strategy, Ward Budgets were identified as an item that could be offered up as a potential saving.
- 4.2 Ward Budgets were set up to provide funds to be spent on a wide variety of schemes to benefit the residents of a Councillor's ward. It is unlikely that the ceasing of the scheme will cause any undue consequences for any individual/organisation as funding was not to be provided towards the every day running costs of organisations. Examples of Ward Budgets awarded during the financial years 2011/12 and 2012/13 are detailed on **Appendix 1**.

5. Policy Scrutiny Committee Comments

- 5.1 The Policy Scrutiny Committee considered the proposal at its meeting held on 12 March 2013 and made the following comments:-
- The funding had been useful
 - Once the Council had achieved financial sustainability consideration should be given to reinstating the ward budgets scheme

6. Strategic Priorities

- 6.1 The Council's refocused priorities are as follows:-
- Growing the local economy
 - Protecting the city's poorest people from the effects of the recession; and
 - Increasing the supply of affordable housing

and are supported by the Towards Financial Sustainability programme.

- 6.2 The proposal to discontinue the ward budget scheme will offer up a saving which will be included within the programme.

7. Organisational Impacts

7.1 Finance

- 7.1.1 If the scheme is discontinued a saving of £33,000 per annum would be made which would contribute to the Towards Financial Sustainability target.

7.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules

- 7.2.1 There are no legal implications arising from the report.

7.3 Equality, Diversity & Human Rights

7.3.1 An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out on the scheme and the key findings incorporated into the scheme when it was approved in 2008. It is not anticipated that any equality, diversity and human rights issues will arise if the scheme ceases. It is unlikely that the ceasing of the scheme will cause any undue consequences for any individual/organisation as funding was not to be provided towards the every day running costs of organisations. A further Equality Impact Assessment has now been completed in respect of ceasing the scheme this has confirmed that the ceasing of the scheme will not affect any particular group/characteristic differently.

8. Recommendation

8.1 That the Executive discontinue the Ward Budgets scheme.

Key Decision Yes

Do the Exempt Information Categories Apply No

Call in and Urgency: Is the decision one to which Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply? No

Does the report contain Appendices? No

List of Background Papers: No

Lead Officer: Steve Swain, Principal Democratic Officer
Telephone 873439

APPENDIX 1

Examples of Ward Budgets 2012/13

WARD	APPLICANT	AMOUNT
Glebe	St Giles Gala Committee	£989.50
Glebe	St Giles Community Non Profit Group	£225
Castle	SWINGS	£450
Castle	Tom Ward Court	£608.98
Abbey	Developmentplus	£600
Abbey	Witham Hill Gymnastics Club	£150
Carholme	Age Concern UK Lincoln Activity Centre	£300
Carholme	St Faith's Church Hall	£300
Park	Developmentplus	£1,895
Park	Parent Plus	£50
Boultham	Boultham Glebe Allotments	£300
Boultham	St Francis Hill: Friends of the School	£500
Moorland	Energise (Acts Trust)	£2,182.56 (Partly funded by a Boultham Ward Councillor)
Minster	Parents Supporting Parents	£200
Minster	St Nicholas Church	£435.09
Hartsholme	3 rd Birchwood Rainbow	£219.41
Hartsholme	Hartsholme Country Park Advisory Group	£492
Birchwood	Lincolnshire Businesses for Breakfast	£236.24
Birchwood	Broomhill and Sorrel Court Centre	£340

Examples of Ward Budgets 2011/12

Ward	Applicant	Amount
Glebe	GTA Parent Forum – St Giles Children Centre	£104.63
Glebe	Chad Varah School	£1,000
Castle	North Lincoln Horticulture Society	£1,500
Castle	Energise Arts Trust	£300
Abbey	Lincoln Baptist Church	£325
Abbey	Multiple Miracles	£601.37
Carholme	St Faiths PCC	£900
Carholme	West End Jam Factory	£240
Park	Lincoln City Football Club Supporters Trust Project	£600
Park	Parent Plus	£400
Boultham	Hartsholme Cricket Club	£995
Boultham	Risby Green Tenants	£516.67
Moorland	Moorland Community Centre	£1,680
Moorland	Familyfocus	£1,000
Bracebridge	Hill Holt Wood	£2,987.52
Minster	St John's Parish Church	£893
Minster	Pathfinders	£479.67
Hartsholme	Hartsholme Country Park Advisory Group	£540
Hartsholme	LIVES	£1,550
Birchwood	Birchwood Colts JFC	£500
Birchwood	Lincoln South Methodist Circuit	£470.57

APPENDIX C(ii)

Minute Extract

Executive: 25 March 2013

140. Towards Financial Sustainability Ceasing of Ward Budgets

Purpose of Report

To advise on a proposal to discontinue the provision of Ward Budgets.

Decision

That the Ward Budgets scheme be discontinued.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

Reason for Decision

As part of recent budget proposals consideration had been given to discontinuing the Ward Budgets scheme. Ceasing the scheme would provide a saving of £33,000 per annum.

The scheme had been established to provide funds to be spent on a wide variety of schemes in order to benefit the residents of a councillor's ward. It was unlikely that the ceasing of the scheme would cause any undue consequences for any individual or organisation as funding had not been provided towards everyday running costs.

Members noted the comments of the Policy Scrutiny Committee, with particular regard to the utility of the scheme and the request that consideration should be given to the scheme's reinstatement once the Council had met its financial sustainability targets.

SCRUTINY CALL-IN REQUEST FORM

SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULES (14-15)

(To be completed by at least 2 Members)

All parts of this form must be completed.

1. DECISION

Title: Executive Minutes 25/03/2013

Minute No: 137,1348,140

Date Taken: 25/03/2013

Decision Maker: Executive

1. REASON FOR CALL – IN

Please identify the ground(s) and reason(s) on which you believe the decision should be Called In.

The list below may assist you to identify the areas where you believe there are defects in the decision making process.

- That having regard to the nature of the decision and the circumstances in which it was made, the decision has been taken on the basis of inappropriate or insufficient consultation
- That the decision maker has failed to give adequate reasons for the decision
- That the decision maker has failed to take relevant considerations, or has taken irrelevant considerations into account, or has come to a decision which no reasonable decision maker, taking everything properly into account, could have come to

- That the decision is contrary to policy framework
- That the decision is contrary to or not wholly in accordance with the budget
- That the decision cannot be justified and is open to challenge on the basis of the evidence considered.
- That a viable alternative was not considered.

<p>The Ground(s) for Call-In is:</p> <p>Failed to give adequate reasons,failed to take relevant considerations,Viabale alternative was not considered</p>	<p>The reason supporting the ground(s) is:</p> <p>All of these considerations have been taken on narrow financial grounds and their ability to create savings towards the MTFS is the only justiofication for them. The urban and commons rangers were created to provide extra security, and to create a perception of safety for all residents and contributed to all residents not only those of the refocused strtegic priorities.All of the consultations panel,scrutiny and advisory groups reported that the withdrawal of these services was a retrograde step and at best should be amalgamated. However these opinions were totally discounted on only financial grounds.</p> <p>The ward budgets have been popular and utilised by all councillors on a cross party basis and have been useful to small groups for pump priming and small scale services. It is the only finances in the gift of back benchers and directly is fed into the wards. This if withdrawn hits all residents no matter where they live. Lastly this is theonly way that these decisions can be properly discussed as they have not been exposed to public debate and voting in full council.I know of no other place that this happens</p>
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SUGGESTING AN OUTCOME What recommendation to the Executive do you want to make?


To reassess and look at savings from staff savings and partnership working

CALL-IN SUPPORTED BY THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS (this should be at least 2 members)

Name CLY HILTON SPATT

Signature 

Name CLY RONALD HIAS

Signature 

Date 2/4/13

Date 2/2/13